

Thursday, December 10, 2009

Michigan Lean Consortium elects officers



(Left to Right) Debra Setman, Willie Brown, Jason Schulist, Ken LePage, Phil Berry and Rick Fleming

The Michigan Lean Consortium, a diverse network of knowledgeable Lean professionals, has elected officers and appointed board members for 2010. Debra Setman of South Lyon, executive director of Strategy Development and Business Improvement at Johnson & Johnson, will serve as chair. Jason Schulist of Canton, director of Continuous Improvement at DTE Energy, will serve as vice-chair, which will make him the automatic chair in 2011.

The new treasurer is Willie Brown of Flint, General Motors retiree who worked in manufacturing and supplier quality. Secretary is filled by Chris Wilson of Ada, recently retired director of Operational Excellence for Amway Corporation. And Ken LePage of Canton, associate vice president of Process Excellence at St. Joseph Mercy Oakland in Pontiac, assumes the role of member liaison.

Rick Fleming, director of the Michigan Shingo Prize through The Right Place, and Phil Berry, senior director of Continuous Improvement at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, have been appointed board members.

Having grown up in a Lean household with parents who believed in the principles, Setman has learned to use them in business settings to drastically improve organizational productivity and save organizations hundreds of millions of dollars over the course of her career. Setman has used Lean philosophy in health care, manufacturing, law enforcement, insurance, interior design, construction and consulting in over 50 countries.

At Johnson & Johnson, Setman advises the company's 250+ operating companies on applying the Lean philosophy in consumer goods, pharmaceuticals and medical devices. She firmly believes Lean principles can turn around the economy of Michigan.

Setman earned bachelor degrees in German and political science from Michigan State University with minors in health studies and humanities. She received a master's degree in public administration from Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York, and completed the Ph.D. comprehensive exams in organizational management at Capella University.

During Schulist's time at DTE Energy, the company has saved over \$500 million while building continuous improvement capability within the organization, especially among C-level executives. Prior to joining DTE, Schulist worked for 13 years at General Motors in business development, corporate strategy and manufacturing operations leadership positions applying Lean, Six Sigma and organizational learning methods to various business challenges.

Schulist also spent two years as School-Pak's vice president of Strategy, Marketing and Operations. He earned a B.S. in electrical engineering from Marquette University, a M.S. in electrical engineering and an MBA from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as part of the prestigious Leaders for Manufacturing Fellows program.

During his 37-year career with General Motors Corporation, Brown gained extensive experience in manufacturing and supplier quality. Prior to his retirement in 2008, he was responsible for practicing Lean management with Tier I automotive suppliers in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

He successfully delivered comprehensive training and real application of Lean principles to more than 200 suppliers during the last nine years in corporate America. Brown also facilitated workshops in change management, constraint management, brainstorming, identifying and eliminating waste, and additional concepts to prepare the participants with tools to improve in their work environment.

Wilson recently retired at Amway Corporation with more than 20 years of leadership, domestic and international experience. His extensive supply chain operations background was a perfect fit for him to introduce Lean/continuous improvement to Amway.

He has helped create a learning organization where thousands of Amway employees are using problem-solving techniques to improve the way they do their jobs, while the company has significant cost savings. Well integrated into the Grand Rapids business community, Wilson has helped local non-profit organizations implement these Lean techniques into their work practices.

Along with his role at St. Joseph Mercy Oakland, LePage has worked as the Lean sensei in the Process Excellence group at Trinity Health. LePage previously worked for Ford Motor Company, where he led the implementation of numerous Lean manufacturing improvements and Six Sigma projects that resulted in over \$40 million in operational cost savings.

In 2005, LePage switched to the health care field by working for Johnson & Johnson's Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics ValuMetrix Services group and has implemented Lean projects at numerous hospital sites. LePage is a graduate of the University of Michigan with a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering.

Fleming has provided manufacturing companies and service firms with Lean manufacturing consulting, training and opportunity assessments for more than 20 years. After receiving his Masters in mechanical engineering from the University of Michigan, Fleming served as Lean manufacturing engineering manager for the Industrial Technology Institute, manager of Flexible Manufacturing Systems for Lamb Technicon and process control and machine design engineer for Union Carbide Corporation.

He became a certified lead auditor for ISO/QS-9000 (LRA-10-1347) and ISO 14001 (E-50-0056) with Stat-A-Matrix for EMS in 1996, and helped the EPA develop and conduct Green Supplier Network assessments.

Berry's major area of focus is to create and foster a culture of innovation and continuous improvement that enhances the position Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan has in the healthcare insurer market. Berry came to BCBSM in June 2009 with extensive professional experience in operations related leadership, management, mentoring and engineering roles with Fortune 100 companies specializing in Lean, Six Sigma, quality, operations and product development.

Berry was previously executive director of Continuous Improvement after three years as head of Quality for Acument Global Technologies (formerly Textron Fastening Systems). A certified Textron Six Sigma Black Belt with Design for Six Sigma focus, Berry holds a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Michigan.

The mission of the MLC is to offer a diverse network of knowledgeable Lean professionals who come together to share innovative practices. The organization aims to create a Lean culture in Michigan to ensure sustainable competitive advantage, which could translate into healthier businesses that offer more job opportunities leading to economic growth in the state.

The charter members of the MLC include: Amway, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, DTE Energy, Johnson & Johnson, The Lean Learning Center, Northwestern Michigan College, the Oakland University Pawley Lean Institute and the Michigan Shingo Prize through The Right Place. For more information, visit www.michiganlean.org.

SUMMARY

The Michigan Lean Consortium, a diverse network of knowledgeable Lean professionals, has elected officers and appointed board members for 2010.

Created by Amanda Benjamin (aabenjam@oakland.edu) on Thursday, December 10, 2009
Modified by Rachel Zynel (rezynel@oakland.edu) on Friday, January 20, 2012
Article Start Date: Thursday, December 10, 2009