

Wednesday, April 28, 2010

Pawley Lean Institute welcomes new chair to its Advisory Board

The Oakland University Pawley Lean Institute welcomes Edward Sosnowski, corporate lean manager of United Solar Ovonic in Auburn Hills, as the new chair of its Advisory Board.

The Advisory Board offers guidance to faculty and helps expand the visibility of the Pawley Institute. Sosnowski originally became involved through Jamie Flinchbach, the board's former chair, and someone he'd known professionally at his current and past jobs. Flinchbach thought Sosnowski would be a good fit for the board and approached him to be part of it.

"Ed is a creative and thoughtful lean champion," Flinchbach said. "I believe his creativity and energy can bring many new ideas to the institute."

Sosnowski is open to discussing new ideas while the role and capability of the Pawley Institute is being expanded. His new role is to provide an outside perspective to help the institute continue to grow both within the university community and in the surrounding areas. According to Sosnowski, education is the first and foremost focus, and the Pawley Institute aims to offer a unique experience. The Advisory Board offers assistance and guidance with future programs.

Sosnowski plans to build strong relationships with the faculty and the community and to uncover new ways for the board to provide more assistance. Calling the Advisory Board a good, diverse group of people from various industries with a vast skill set, he would like to energize them to be more involved.

Faculty members present programs to the board within the Pawley Institute to keep the board members informed and allow them to give feedback. Sosnowski plans to increase the frequency of board meetings to two or three times a year. Another goal of the Pawley Institute is to bring lean to the university. Sosnowski said he would like to help grow the use of lean within OU. "This would speak volumes to what the Pawley Institute is," he said.

One of Sosnowski's goals is to gain more exposure within the community as well as OU. He said he wants to maintain the Pawley Institute identity but be a multidiscipline school that shows how lean applies to a multitude of industries.

The Pawley Institute will have its own space at the Macomb-OU INCubator in July 2010 to allow more interaction with the community and local businesses. This will give the Pawley Institute the opportunity to use its expertise to help smaller companies and government, as well as the opportunity for students to receive real-world experience, where they would put their class lessons into practice.

Sosnowski said it's a win-win situation, where both the community and students are benefitting. "That's where the board of advisers comes in: we act as guides for the students."

Students have worked in kaizen (process improvement) teams on some of OU's processes, including the grade change process. According to Sosnowski, it would be unique in lean circles if the university took hold of lean, but changing the culture there would be difficult.

For more information about the Pawley Lean Institute and its Advisory Board, visit oakland.edu/lean.



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SUMMARY

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