

Changing the Game: Toyota Employees Earn National 'Women in Manufacturing' Award

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GEORGETOWN, Ky. (April 21, 2017) – At a reception in Washington, D.C., Thursday, The Manufacturing Institute recognized 130 recipients of the Women in Manufacturing STEP (Science, Technology, Engineering and Production) Ahead Award, including two women from Toyota.

Lisa Lawrence, a 28-year Toyota employee and body weld manager at Toyota Motor Manufacturing, Kentucky, Inc., and Nora Arellano, a senior engineering manager at Toyota Technical Center in York, Michigan, and Purdue University graduate, were each recognized for their leadership and accomplishments in manufacturing.

The STEP Ahead Awards honor women who have demonstrated excellence and leadership in their careers and represent all professional levels of the manufacturing industry. Honorees are nominated by their peers for significant contributions to the field in areas such as productivity, cost reduction and customer satisfaction.

“It’s inspiring to see the many achievements of women in our industry and at Toyota,” said Susan Elkington, 2014 STEP Ahead award honoree and senior vice president of Toyota’s vehicle plant in Georgetown, Kentucky. “These honorees represent the bright minds fueling our industry. Highlighting such accomplishments is important in changing the way talented young people, particularly women, look at manufacturing in the future.”

A recent survey from Deloitte and The Manufacturing Institute found that six out of ten open skilled production positions are unfilled due to a talent shortage, which is partly attributed to an underrepresentation of women in the industry. Women currently make up nearly half of the labor force, but represent only about 27% of all manufacturing employees.

“These women exemplify the path an exciting career in manufacturing can take,” said Heidi Alderman, 2017 Chair of STEP Ahead and Senior Vice President of Intermediates North America, BASF Corporation. “STEP Ahead recognizes women nationwide for their significant achievements to the field of manufacturing, and the positive impact on their companies and the industry as a whole.”

The STEP Ahead Awards are part of the larger STEP Ahead initiative, launched in 2012, to examine and promote the role of women in the manufacturing industry through recognition, research and leadership for attracting, advancing, and retaining strong female talent.