

FabTechExpo2015 Mission Report

- FabTechExpo2015, held in the McCormick Centre, Chicago, November 9th-12th 2015
- Attending from Niagara Region:
 - Roy Timms, Chair NIA, President, TIMBRO Design-Build
 - Michael Whatling, Niagara Precision
 - Lyse Moreau, International Sew Right
 - Charles Moreau, International Sew Right
 - Dan Degazio, Manager, Economic Development & Tourism, City of Welland
 - Jim Thibert, General Manager, Fort Erie Ec. Dev. & Tourism Corporation
 - Brian York, Director, Economic Development & Tourism Services, City of St. Catharines
 - Bob Seguin, Director, NED
 - Tim Reynolds, Manager, Business Attraction, NED
- FabTech Facts:
 - FabTechExpo2015, North America's largest collaboration of technology, equipment and knowledge in the metal forming, fabricating, welding and finishing industries, welcomed more than 1,700 exhibiting companies and a total of 43,836 attendees from over 90 countries last week to Chicago's McCormick Place.
 - It was the event's largest and most successful installment yet, featuring over 730,000 square feet of exhibits; combined with special events and keynote presentations.
 - A straw poll of Niagara's participants received very positive feedback on the value of the event. In fact, both Niagara Precision and International Sew Right left Chicago with 'very strong' leads for contract work. Further, this exhibition is an invaluable tool for the EDO's, regarding cutting edge trends applied and advanced manufacturing technologies.

- FabTechExpo2016 will be held in Las Vegas, Nevada, November 16th-18th 2016. This event may not be on the NED-NIA business attraction event shortlist for 2016; but, **FabTechCanada2016**, a smaller, Canadian version of FabTechExpoChicago, is in our work plan for March 22nd-24th at the Toronto Congress Canada. NED is exploring Niagara booth possibilities for this show.
- Canadian Consulate Chicago:
 - NED hosted Consul General of Canada at Chicago, Roy Norton to a breakfast and presentation regarding Canada's primary areas of focus in the Illinois-Missouri-Wisconsin [Chicago's Consulate's territory] area.
 - This breakfast meeting was attended by all of the Niagara participants listed above.

Highlights from Roy Norton's Presentation:

- The Canadian Consulate in Chicago is one of 12 Canadian Consulates in the United States. Canada also has its Embassy in Washington; 3 Consulate/Trade Offices; and 3 'Presence Offices' including the Buffalo Presence Office, working under the direction of the Canadian Consulate in New York.
- Priority Sectors: agriculture/agrifood, life sciences, clean tech, advanced manufacturing [aerospace and defense], investment and innovation.
- The Consular General provided a myriad of statistics on the three states he is responsible for, and their trade with Canada – available on request.
- Opportunities for Canadian firms highlights in the presentation:
 - Chicago is the U.S. capital of trade shows
 - There is a rising innovation ecosystem in the Midwest:
 - Chicago: IT, Life Sciences/Healthcare, Digital Manufacturing & Design
 - St. Louis: AgTech, Plant Science, FinTech
 - Kansas City: Animal Health
 - Milwaukee: Water
 - Incubators/Accelerators: 1871, MATTER, The Brew, The Yield Lab, SixThirty and DMDII

- The Trade Commissioner Service in Chicago:
 - Dan Degazio, Brian York, Jim Thibert, Roy Timms and Tim Reynolds held a subsequent meeting with Tina Kotrych and Alexis Roy, Trade Commissioners. Their priority areas are agriculture, advanced manufacturing and Financial Services.
 - Dan Degazio, Brian York and Tim Reynolds held another meeting with Sidney Salvadori, Trade Commissioner. Sidney emphasized the need for a critical mass of companies from Niagara [or any region of Canada] to attend these kinds of trade shows. Her areas of focus include food and innovation.

These face-to-face meetings are invaluable – and these Trade Commissioners are now considered to be more useful assets on the ground in the Midwest for the Niagara Region.

TMR