

# NEWS RELEASE



## **Lean Learning Center**

40028 Grand River, Suite 300

Novi, Michigan 48375

[www.leanlearningcenter.com](http://www.leanlearningcenter.com)

### **FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

Contact Nancy Lesinski

Lesinski & Associates

248-709-3040

[nancylesinski@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nancylesinski@sbcglobal.net)

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***For immediate release***

## **Lean Leaders Gather at Lean Learning Center Alumni Forum to Reflect on Lean Transformation**

*Dennis Pawley Addresses Today's Lean Leadership Challenge*

**Novi, Mich., Dec. 12, 2005** – The Lean Learning Center's recent first annual Alumni Forum brought together lean leaders from diverse industry sectors, professional societies and academia to exchange ideas and information about lean manufacturing implementation. The three-day event consisted of a combination of activities highlighted by a presentation from Dennis Pawley, Lean Learning Center partner and former DaimlerChrysler Executive VP of Manufacturing and Labor Relations who lead the development of the Chrysler Operating System. Mr. Pawley addressed the topic of lean leadership and the necessity for organizational change at the executive level in order to affect and sustain lean transformation; that leaders must be teachers and role models – not just managers. “If you cannot teach, you cannot lead,” said Pawley. He also spoke about the importance of teamwork and creating a lean as evidenced by successful lean enterprises.

During the Alumni Forum, attendees participated in The Candy Factory Simulation to provide hands-on reinforcement of the importance of lean rules and principles in daily activities. Attending companies also each presented their current successes and barriers in the culture shift to lean with discussion and evaluation provided by all attendees.

The recurring themes throughout the presentations were the importance of scheduling time to reflect upon the lean journey, the critical need for upper level management to be involved in the process, and the development of key communication channels to keep everyone in the enterprise engaged in the lean program.

The gains to be made through lean manufacturing initiatives were clearly apparent. Poultry processor Simmons Foods (Siloam Springs, Ark.) referenced during the event a simple reconfiguration of its freezer/fryer area, suggested by an employee after she was exposed to lean principles and rules, which garnered the company a \$1.2 million savings. To date in 2005, Simmons believes that it has eliminated \$11 million in cost out of its processes due to lean.

“We felt that bringing the leaders of lean together would provide an excellent forum for helping gather ideas to accelerate change back at their facilities,” said Lean Learning Center partner Andy Carlino. “Sharing experiences of successes and well as failures among peers can be an excellent learning tool.” Attendees represented a wide range of industries from video duplicator Technicolor to automotive suppliers to Oakland University (Rochester, Mich.), where Dennis Pawley founded the Pawley Institute for lean learning.

Founded in 2001 to address the gaps and barriers that are holding back companies from successful lean transformation, the Lean Learning Center, in combination with corporate partner Achievement Dynamics, a provider of management consulting, provides a full complement of lean transformation services. The Lean Learning Center has a dedicated lean learning facility that was designed specifically as an adult education center, offering a creative learning environment specially tailored to develop lean thinkers and leaders. Industries served include manufacturing, healthcare, public utilities, retail, aerospace, communications, technology, investment equity, service and more. To request a curriculum brochure or for more information, call 248-478-1480 or visit [www.leanlearningcenter.com](http://www.leanlearningcenter.com).

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**Photo Caption:** *At the recent first annual Lean Learning Center Alumni Forum (Novi, Mich.), keynote speaker Dennis Pawley addressed the topic of lean leadership and the necessity for organizational change at the executive level in order to affect and sustain lean transformation.*