

# INNOVATIVE FABRICATORS INC.

BEDFORD, INDIANA



**Darin McCullough**  
Vice President, Partner  
Innovative Fabricators  
Inc.

“Not only will the changes from our work with Purdue benefit the environment and our employees, but they will also allow us to be much more efficient and realize savings that far outweigh the small cost of the program.”



## Purdue, Innovative Fabricators Collaborate for a More Sustainable Future.

**“We were staggered by the results, both in knowledge gained and money saved. Purdue instructors were extremely knowledgeable about strategies that would benefit the company.”**

**JAY McCULLOUGH**  
President, Partner  
Innovative Fabricators Inc.

# With Purdue MEP's help, Indiana manufacturer realizes \$1.2 million in cost savings, efficiencies, and new sales.

The timing was just right for Innovative Fabricators (IN-FAB) Inc. to partner with the Purdue Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) through the E3: Economy, Energy and Environment Initiative. E3 is a collaboration of federal, state and local agencies that leverages resources to help manufacturers become more competitive and sustainable. The Bedford, Indiana-based company — a leading manufacturer in the automotive industry for shipping and in-house containers — was undergoing significant growth and approaching an anticipated slowdown in production.

"We were in a time of transition ahead of a large peak production session," says Jay McCullough, president of IN-FAB. "We knew this was a great time to have Purdue come in and really evaluate our overall operations for Lean manufacturing opportunities and areas for improvement."

Through a suite of technical services, including value stream mapping, environmental mapping and assessment, and energy assessments, IN-FAB discovered more than \$1 million in savings, efficiencies, and new sales.

"The E3 program has driven us to examine and implement several sizeable process changes," says Darin McCullough, vice president of IN-FAB. "The exercises taught us how to look with fresh eyes to find and eliminate non-value added activities."

Working with Purdue's instructors, IN-FAB executives re-evaluated their manufacturing layout and determined significant changes would lead to increased sales and more efficient operations. Purdue instructors led the value stream mapping initiative, which focuses on how to document, analyze, and improve the flow of materials and information used in manufacturing. As a result of the assessments,

the company completely revised the production layout and combined fabrication processes in the main plant, and then moved production to the second plant

"These changes significantly helped our employees, including creating a safer environment by reducing the use of forklifts through better production flow," Darin says. "We also greatly reduced the number of production meetings by ensuring better communication from the top down on projects."

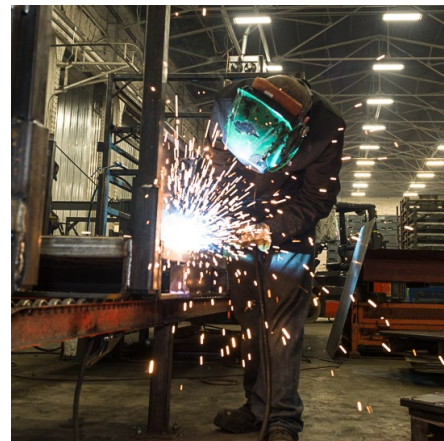
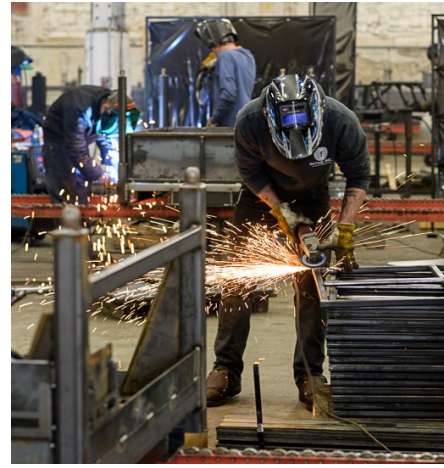
With a daily commitment to provide the highest standards of customer service and satisfaction, Jay and Darin lead a team of roughly 80 IN-FAB employees who produce custom fabricated products for some of world's largest auto manufacturers, including Toyota and Honda.

"We had leaders from several auto companies visit our location after we implemented changes from our partnership with Purdue," Jay says. "They thought our overall layout and flow were exceptional. It's a testament to the fantastic program Purdue offers to really make a difference for Indiana manufacturers."



"As a company dedicated to exceeding customer requirements through continuous improvement of our processes, we felt the Purdue program would be an ideal opportunity to

review our operation and identify key areas of improvement," says Ruth DeWell (above), quality engineer at IN-FAB. "We could not be more pleased with the outcome."



## Impacts:

- The key Lean opportunities identified led to a savings of **\$1,208,247**
- The WASTE Stream opportunities resulted in an annual cost savings of over **\$214,000**
- The recommendations set forth will result in a reduction in greenhouse gas (ghg) emissions of **42 metric tons** of CO2 equivalent