

# CLABBER GIRL

TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA



**Ken Campbell**  
Executive Director of  
Manufacturing Operations  
Clabber Girl

“The training opened eyes to see the opportunities we have for improvement by working together and applying the tools learned in their day-to-day routine. Our strategic vision is to be the premier provider of food ingredient solutions. The Clabber Girl collaboration with Purdue is helping us do just that.”



## Clabber Girl Collaboration Baking Up Improvements

**“I have been impressed with the team-building that has come from this partnership. Our staff on the plant floor really have buy-in.”**

**GARY MORRIS**  
President and Chief Operating Officer  
Clabber Girl

# Clabber Girl, Purdue partnership helps shape future of food products leader.

When you think baking powder, you likely think of Clabber Girl. The name has been synonymous with the baking world for more than 130 years.

The Indiana company is clearly more than that today, with its Clabber Girl and Rumford baking powder brands, selling No. 1 and No. 2 in the market. It boasts 280-plus products — from cornstarch and cookie and dessert mixes, to coffee, gelatins, and freezer pops.

The business didn't become a dominant player by resting on its success. Instead, Clabber Girl has continued to evolve. In the early 2000s, the company diversified the primarily retail baking powder business to include formulation for food service, industrial applications, and private-label brands. Clabber Girl also expanded its offerings to include cornstarch, dessert, baking, and cookie mixes.

Clabber Girl executives, in the early stages of a five-year strategic plan, turned to experts through the Purdue University Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) for help in incorporating Lean manufacturing principles to identify and eliminate waste and improve quality.

This is no typical partnership. It's a "Clabberation" for this iconic company. Employees sport a red patch on their shirt pockets, testifying to their united commitment to the benefits of Lean manufacturing.

Results throughout the 200-employee company have been significant and immediate:

- Self-directed teams now work to optimize production flow as well as increase efficiencies and decrease waste.
- Changeover times were cut an average of 20 minutes per line, including a whole-grain cookies line that saw a 40-minute reduction in changeover time.
- The 0.6% reduction in waste will save \$317,000 in the next year.

"It is amazing to see the staff on the plant floor really have 'buy-in' to the concept," says Gary Morris, Clabber

Girl president and chief operating officer. "They see the value in Lean and are doing value-stream mapping on their own without prompting from management."

Clabber Girl, formerly part of the same Hulman & Co. operation that owned the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, uses the simple but powerful phrase as its mission statement: "Rich heritage. Quality ingredients. Culinary innovation."

The original Hulman wholesale grocery opened in a six-floor building in 1849, added a storeroom and spice mill in 1869, and expanded again in 1893 when it opened in its current location at Ninth and Main streets in downtown Terre Haute.

Ken Campbell, executive director of manufacturing operations, said the Purdue partnership has sparked a culture change. "Employees feel empowered. They have a voice. They are working together as teams to solve problems and make improvements for Clabber Girl and our customers."

## Manager Transformed Into Leader



Kumi McGuire

Kumi McGuire knows the Clabber Girl-Purdue partnership will help make the company's manufacturing operations more efficient. The director of purchasing also sees a personal benefit in her desire to grow professionally.

Each leadership training session led by Purdue MEP provided practical examples that she incorporates into her daily management duties. She also discovered a new way to view herself as a leader.

"Leadership is the art and science of getting the job done through the willing efforts of others. Leadership is the catalyst that transforms human potential into reality, yielding a positive result." That was extremely impactful," McGuire says.

## ABOUT MEP

Purdue Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) provides high-value solutions to help Indiana businesses maximize their success. As advocates for Indiana's thousands of manufacturers, our staff identifies areas of improvement, streamlines processes, and ultimately increases competitiveness. Purdue MEP serves hundreds of companies annually by implementing continuous improvement principles in the areas of productivity, growth, and technology.

