



Contact: Sharon Halsey
803-657-6183
sharon@silvercrescentsc.org

Contact: Sam Patrick
(864) 787-0820
sam@patrickmkt.com

SECRETARY OF COMMERCE BOBBY HITT TO KEYNOTE 2011 SALUTE TO MANUFACTURING LUNCHEON

*Former Upstate executive to address industry, business and political leaders
at Salute to Manufacturing gala; 22 finalists for honors named*

SOUTH CAROLINA, August 16, 2011 – South Carolina Secretary of Commerce Robert M. “Bobby” Hitt III, the former manager of corporate affairs at BMW Manufacturing Company in Spartanburg, has been named to keynote the 16th annual *Salute to Manufacturing Awards Luncheon* at Greenville’s *TD Convention Center* on September 22, 2011.

Secretary Hitt will address an expected gathering of several hundred manufacturing industry, business, civic and political leaders from across the Palmetto State at the annual luncheon, to be held this year in Greenville. Twenty-two companies from across South Carolina have been named finalists for 2011 *Silver Crescent Awards*, which recognize the achievements and contributions by South Carolina’s top manufacturers.

Secretary Hitt has brought a wealth of manufacturing experience, insight and advocacy to South Carolina’s Department of Commerce from his past leadership position with BMW Manufacturing. Prior to joining BMW, Secretary Hitt served as the director of planning and development for the Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough law firm in Columbia, and was instrumental in bringing BMW Manufacturing to the Upstate. He also worked for 17 years as managing editor of both *The State* and *The Columbia Record* newspapers.

Secretary Hitt is immediate past chairman of the S.C. Manufacturers’ Alliance, vice chairman of the Public Affairs Steering Committee for the Southeast Region of the National Association of Manufacturers and has served on the executive committee of Advance SC and on the board of the S.C. Centers of Economic Excellence, among numerous other business and civic commitments.

Now in its tenth year, the *Silver Crescent Awards for Manufacturing Excellence* program honors manufacturing organizations from across the Palmetto State for their contributions to South Carolina’s educational system, commitment to workforce, environmental stewardship, and product or process improvements.

Named as finalists for honors in the competition are:

Large Manufacturer Finalists (500+ employees)

Cummins Turbo Technologies, Ladson
Freightliner Custom Chassis Corporation, Gaffney
Honda of SC Manufacturing, Inc., Timmonsville
Lockheed Martin Aeronautics, Greenville
Michelin North America, Greenville
Robert Bosch LLC, Charleston

Mid-Sized Manufacturer Finalists (200-499 employees)

BorgWarner, Seneca
Domtar Paper Company, LLC - Marlboro Mill, Bennettsville
Jostens, Inc., Laurens
Shaw Industries Group, IN, Central
US Engine Valve, Westminster

Small Manufacturer Finalists (under 200 employees)

Adex Machining Technologies, Greenville
Cox Industries, Inc., Orangeburg
Cytec Industries, Inc., North Augusta
G & G Metal Fabrication, Inc., Sumter
Meritor, Manning
Precision Machine Components, Brunson
PropertyBoss Solutions, Greenville
Rina's Kitchen, Inc., Summerville
SKF Charleston, North Charleston
Sumter Packaging Corp., Sumter
Treblich, Inc., Greenville

Tickets to the luncheon and a preceding reception are \$40 per person, and are available online at www.silvercrescentsc.org or from program administrator Sharon Halsey at (803) 657-6183. Sponsorship packages inclusive of tickets are also available. Seating is limited, and interested attendees are encouraged to secure tickets immediately.

Presented annually by The Silver Crescent Foundation, the *2011 Silver Crescent Awards* are co-sponsored by *Marketplace Staffing*, one of South Carolina's leading staffing and productivity solution providers; by *CPM Federal Credit Union*, which has proudly served South Carolina manufacturers since 1955; by *Dream It, Do It of South Carolina*, and by *SC Biz News, LLC*.

To learn more about the *Silver Crescent Awards* and the *Salute to Manufacturing Luncheon*, visit www.SilverCrescentSC.org or contact Sharon Halsey at (803) 657-6183.

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