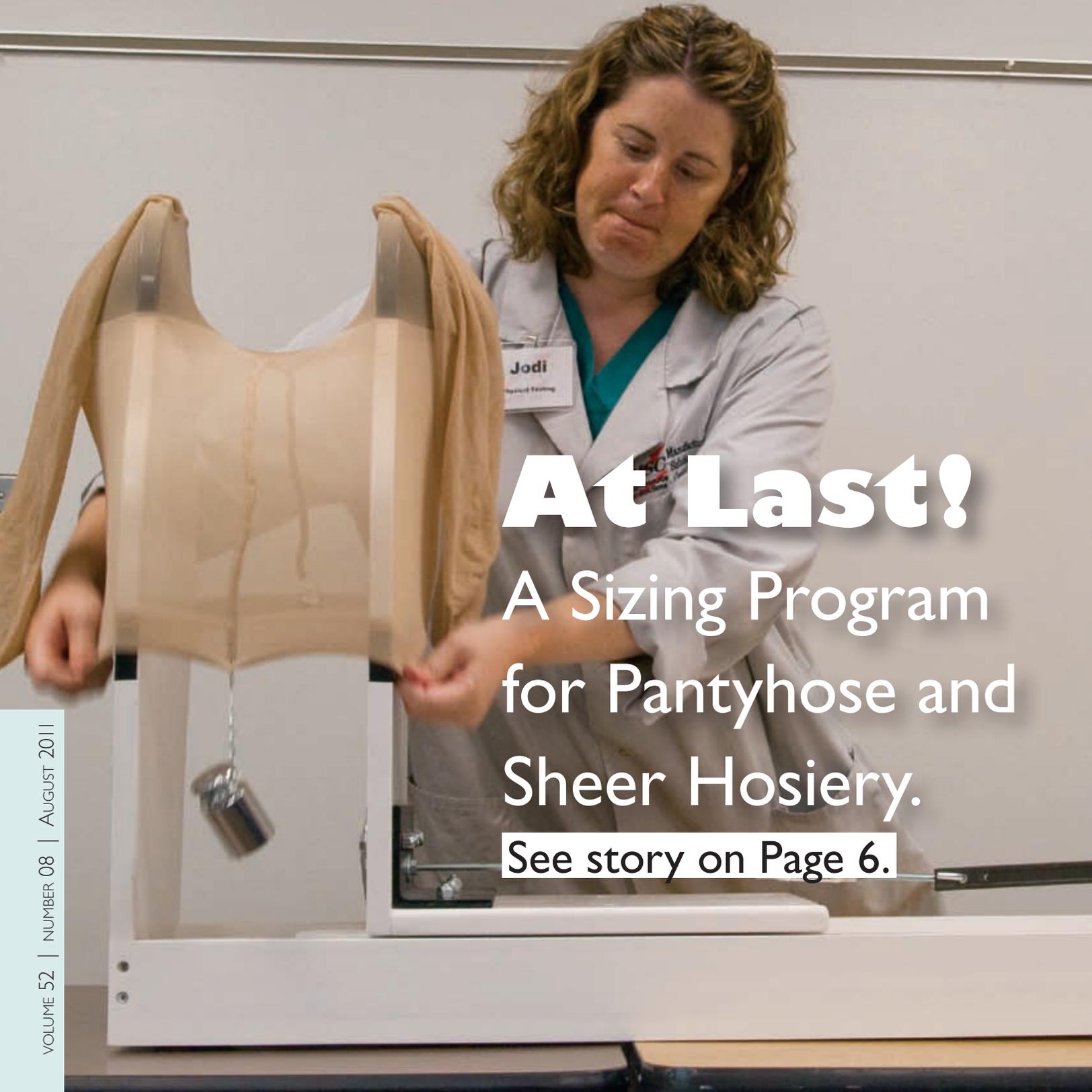


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See story on Page 6.



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inside

4 Legislative Column – Paul Fogleman

**6 Sheer Hosiery Sizing
Program Launched**

**9 Textile Technology Center Reports
Five-Fold Service Growth**

10 Industry Briefs

**10 N.C. Congressmen Introduce
Bipartisan Textile Research Bill**



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legislative column

by PAUL FOGLEMAN, Director, Hosiery Governmental Affairs Council

The Budget Maze

Republicans in control of the 2011 North Carolina General Assembly decided to make up for

lost time – 125 years.

Not since the 19th century had the GOP dominated both the House and the Senate. The new majority enacted a sharp right turn for the state government with legislation generally applauded by the business community.

On key votes, the Republicans were joined by pro-business Democrats. Those legislators opposing the more conservative agenda were punished when a special redistricting session convened in mid-July. Some more vocal Democrats were paired in one-member districts, meaning they will have to face each other in a primary. Others were put in districts with new boundaries and more registered Republican voters.

Because Republicans control the General Assembly in the redistricting year, they are in a position to create new districts to preserve their majority status for at least the next 10 years. And like Democrats in previous years, the new majority created strange districts – especially congressional districts – that resemble ink splotches or snake trails.

Because North Carolina is still under the Voting Rights Act, all districts must be approved by federal judicial officials. Democrats will argue that splitting counties and even precincts unnecessarily are in

violation of the federal guidelines. Republicans will offer as a defense the creation of more districts with a majority of African Americans and other minorities.

•••

As a result of redistricting, the 2013-14 Legislature will have a lot of new faces. Some veteran legislators already have announced their resignations. Sen. Debbie Clary has announced she will become a lobbyist. She would have faced another Republican in a primary as a result of redistricting.

Rep. Jonathan Rhyne of Lincolnton, who had returned after a 12-year absence, has resigned because his family has moved to Gaston County. Instead of facing Rep. Mitchell Gillespie in a primary, Rep. Phillip Frye has announced he will not seek re-election. New districts in eastern North Carolina could see Democrats disappear.

Rep. Jeff Barnhart of Cabarrus also has resigned to join a governmental affairs firm.

Republicans have targeted U.S. Rep. Larry Kissell and U.S. Rep. Mike McIntyre and created a new district that includes both. Among those Republicans looking at taking that seat are State Reps. Justin Burr of Albemarle and Jerry Dockham of Randolph County.

•••

The 2011 budget process is history. For the first time in recent memory, the legislators in both Chambers had crafted an annual spending plan by the first week of June. The \$19 billion appropriations bill cut

spending for education by 10 percent, with public education trimmed by just over 8 percent and the university system by almost 15 percent.

The community colleges received a 10 percent haircut, including appropriations for the Manufacturing Solutions Center and its hosiery testing program and the Textile Technology Center. Both centers are making up for state cuts with income from companies using the testing and research and development services.

Gov. Beverly Perdue, a proponent of education, opposed the cuts and vetoed the bill. The Senate easily overrode the veto. With five Democrats, the House also mustered enough votes to override. The five – including Rep. Bill Owen, former Rules Chairman, Rep. Jim Crawford, Rep. Dewey Hill, Rep. Bill Brisson, and Rep. Tim Spear of Creswell – also joined to override gubernatorial vetoes for medical malpractice caps, and waiting periods for abortions.

The Republican leadership rewarded the five with favorable districts for re-election and special earmarks for district programs.

Tort Reform

Republican leaders tackled an issue they were determined to change: tort laws. The first bill introduced was aimed at controlling awards for medical liability. Initially, the bill would have capped non-injury awards at \$250,000. This was later upped to \$500,000. Efforts to cap attorney fees failed. Opponents argued that persons suffering lifetime injuries due to errors in hospital emergency rooms would

(continued on page 8)



TRENDS

How to get more impact with your sales activity.

Textiles and hosiery industry vendors have used **TRENDS** magazine to open doors. Multi-national, veteran established manufacturers, and smaller niche players all look at market innovations in **TRENDS**. National and state legislation affecting the industries – manufacturing and distribution – are covered in easy-to-read articles. Happenings within the industries and retailers are included to help marketers and purchasing executives.



* **Paul Fogleman**, a veteran experienced in hosiery and textiles operations, can help you with your advertising and public relations opportunities with **TRENDS**. Contact him at pfogleman@informinc.net

Sheer Hosiery Sizing Program Launched



Jodi Lynch, special projects director for the new sizing and fit program for sheer hosiery, demonstrates the use of devices used for measuring the stress and tensions.

Manufacturers, Retailers, Marketers Attend Rollout By MSC, Consortium

*By Paul Fogleman,
Trends Publisher*

The hosiery technology staff in the Manufacturing Solutions Center at Catawba Valley Community College has rolled out a system for measuring size in the manufacture of sheer hosiery products.

The program culminated a five-year undertaking in cooperation with The Hosiery Association, the industry's nation trade group.

Manufacturers, marketers, retailers and quality control managers participated in the introduction of the methodology and the equipment which is being sold by the THA.

Jody Lynch, quality control director at the Manufacturing Solutions Center, explained the process which was followed by an industry consortium which crafted the program. Ms. Lynch was the central staff leader in the compilation of data and its implications for measurements.



Dan St. Louis, director of the Manufacturing Solutions Center, pays tribute to the industry leaders who worked together over a five-year period to establish a process for setting standards for sizing of pantyhose and other sheer hosiery products.



Ms. Sally Kay, president of The Hosiery Association, explains how companies can purchase devices and information for the implementation of the THA-sponsored program.



Jodi Lynch, special MSA projects director for the sizing task force.



Industry representatives attend the rollout of the sizing procedures. Others participated through online connections to the presentation.

Since 2006, the consortium, under the leadership of MSC Director Dan St. Louis, has wrestled with the issue of finding data to measure body mass for sizing of pantyhose and legwear. The breakthrough came from the Textiles Technology Clothing Center (TC2) which had accumulated extensive information from body scanning throughout the world.

Next, the consortium had to resolve how the data is to be used, Ms. Lynch said. The answer came with the development of “volumetric” forms. Next they had to determine how to use standard forms to accommodate various lengths and sizes. Cylindrical forms measure the pull on legs with a separate device to test pantyhose tops – areas of hips and crotch.

At the rollout event, attended by more than 30 people, Ms. Lynch explained how data was converted into cubic inches for charts that include height and weight of women. She also demonstrated how to

use the smooth surface leg forms developed for the THA and the apparatus for tops.

The system has its limitation, Ms. Lynch noted. It does not have sizing data for low-rise or high-compression garments.

While the results of the undertaking gives retailers and their vendors common data for communications, there is no mandate to change current sizing, it was explained. Vanity sizing will continue to be a marketing issue.

The consortium members included Ame Luther, Bill Redding, Billy Jean Willis, C.J. Plummer, Gene Fonville, Pam Brower, and Larry Small at Acme-McCreary Hosiery Co. in Asheboro; Dale Segraves, Hanesbrands; Dan Kearson and Sheryl Powell, Americal Hosiery; Mike Simmons and Ricky Alford, Kayser-Roth Hosiery; Irwin Glenn and Melissa Gross, Holt Hosiery; T. Jackson, Bossong Hosiery; Lisa Elliott, Fine Line

Hosiery; Richard Somers, JC Penney Co.; Tammie Rollins, Consumer Testing Laboratory/ Walmart Stores; Jim Lovejoy, TC2.

In addition to St. Louis and Ms. Lynch, Rick Small, Tony Whitener, and Randy Burns were hosiery center staff members working on the assignment.

Sally Kay, THA president, announced that charters, leg forms and pantyhose tops equipment can be purchased through the THA. The cost is \$2,500 for members and \$5,000 for non-members. The package is available to testing laboratories and companies throughout the world, it was announced.

A similar undertaking for performance testing of socks was completed almost 10 years ago. Standards for wear, color fastness, and construction were established and are widely used throughout the hosiery industry. **T**

The Budget Maze from page 4

not be able to afford professional care with a one-time \$500,000 award (minus attorney fees).

Another bill in the last days of the session limits liability for products manufactured in North Carolina which have been approved by regulatory agencies. The bill also protects owners of property who use defensive action when confronting trespassers.

Workers Comp

The short title of the bill: Protect and Put NC Back to Work. The author: Rep. Dale Folwell, deputy Speaker of the House. The results: Workers Compensation that gives employers and employees more access to medical records and requirements for injured persons to accept employment upon successful treatment and recovery. Employees are limited to 500 weeks of compensation – 9.5 years – for temporary total disability. The time limit is waived for severe permanent injuries, including spinal injury, loss of both hands, both arms, both legs, or both eyes. This also applies to severe burns.

After organized opposition from trial lawyers and employee groups, a compromise was hammered out by representatives of N.C. Chamber, employer groups, and attorneys. Folwell described the maneuvering of the bill as the most difficult challenge of his legislative career.

Regulatory Reform

Legislators made numerous changes to the Administrative Procedures Act (APA) restricting the process which state agencies adopt and implement rules and regulations.

Fiscal impact reports must accompany proposed

regulations. The bill also sets forth “principles” which must be followed: rules must be clearly authorized by federal or State law and necessary to serve public interest; agency must seek to “reduce the burden upon those who must comply with the rule”; rules must be written in a clear and unambiguous manner; rules must be based on sound scientific, technical, economic or other relevant information.

The Department of Natural and

Economic Resources, the Environment Management Commission, the Coastal Resources Commission, the Commission for Public Health, and other agencies are named in the legislation.

During a series of hearing conducted across the state, small and medium-sized business executives told of regulatory roadblocks encountered when trying to expand. ■

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Chairman Jim Booterbaugh (far end) presides over the recent advisory board for the Textile Technology Center in Belmont. The board of industry leaders provides input for programs that are valuable to the new textiles industry.

Textile Technology Center Reports Five-Fold Service Growth

Industry Revenue Will Top \$1 Million

With annual industry revenue on track to top \$1 million, more manufacturers are depending on the services of the Textile Technology Center for quality control and testing of new products.

During the June meeting of the center's advisory board, Center Director John Anderson said the five-year strategic plan for the operations is meeting its goals. There has been a five-fold increase in revenue since 2008, he announced.

The 2009-10 revenue stream of \$775,000 was 90 percent from textile services, including testing and research and development. Smaller funding streams came from training programs, waste and environment research, and contributions from the center's foundation.

This year, about 95 percent of revenue is generated from textiles customers with training, assessing projects, and foundation support bringing in 5 percent. Annual revenue is projected at \$1,007,021.

Sources of textile revenue reflect the sophistication of the 21st century textile industry: microscopy testing, polymer

extrusion, fabric formation, yarn prototyping, physical testing, and analytical chemistry.

The appropriation from the N.C. General Assembly was cut by 10 percent as legislators addressed issues of a challenging economy and resistance to tax increases. The 2011-12 appropriation is \$821,258.

Anderson also presented a list of equipment priorities for the current fiscal year to support services including flammability testing, sample extruder, sample package dyeing, pad dyeing, picker for small scale carding, AFIS cotton tester, and other smaller acquisitions. They will be purchased with funds from the foundation, Golden Leaf Foundation, or state funds earmarked for capital needs.

Created by the textile industry in Gaston County almost 60 years ago, the center has enjoyed a renaissance since it became a subsidiary of Gaston College five years ago.

Jim Booterbaugh, sales executive with National Spinning Co., is chairman of the advisory board. **■**

Industry Briefs

ILG Contracts With Hagggar

International Legwear Group (ILG) now is sourcing and manufacturing a line of men's socks for Hagggar Clothing Co. ILG is based in Hickory NC.

Durham Mill Inks Buster Brown Line

Prime Life Fibers Inc. in Durham, NC, has announced a three-year license agreement to manufacture and market Buster Brown Socks. The socks will be 100 percent cotton, it was reported. A three-pairs package will whole for \$3.99 with a suggested retail of \$9.99. Prime Life also makes underwear under the Everwear and Wearever names.

Hosiery manufacturing has a long history in Durham with Durham Hosiery Mills founded by industrialist Julian S. Carr in the early 1900s.

K Bell Gets Marc Echo

Karen Bell, founder and CEO of K.Bell hosiery company, has signed an agreement with designer Marc Ecko. K. Bell will design, source and sell the Marc Ecko brand with a rollout at the August MAGIC show in Las Vegas.

FITS Adds Women's Line

FITS Socks in Niota, TN has introduced its first women's line at the Summer Outdoor Retailers Show in Salt Lake City, UT. The new upper-end sock is made in one of the oldest hosiery plants in the U.S., dating back to 1902.

Gel Spa Socks

MD Wellness has introduced a sock for persons suffering with ailments linked to dry, scaly skin. The new Gel Spa socks have components that moisturize the feet. The socks sell for \$13.99 a pair in drug stores. The content is 80 percent cotton, 18 percent polyester, and two percent spandex. 

N.C. Congressmen Introduce Bipartisan Textile Research Bill

Two North Carolina congressmen have introduced a bipartisan bill to stimulate research and development of performance textiles.

Republican U.S. Rep. Howard Coble of Greensboro and Democrat U.S. Rep. David Price of Chapel Hill are sponsors of a bill creating a \$5 million competitive grants program to encourage high-tech textile products such as those used by the military.

The measure is called the American Textile Technology

Innovation and Research for Exportation Act. It would be based in the U.S. Department of Commerce.

The American Manufacturing and Trade Action Coalition hailed the act as an important step to assure the competitiveness of the U.S. textile industry

“Federal research funding has been the seed corn contributing to the innovation of products and manufacturing processes that have put tens of thousands of Americans to work,” said Auggie Tantillo, executive director. 

E.W. (Pic) Walton Industry Advocate

Elwood (Pic) Walton Jr. who died in Hickory recently is remembered as proponent for cooperative efforts to improve the hosiery industry in North Carolina.

Walton served as president of Walton Knitting Mill in Hickory which was founded by his father. The mill specialized in fine-gauge men's socks and employed 75 persons.

Walton was a founder and the third president of the Catawba Valley Hosiery Association which later became the Carolina Hosiery Association. He served several terms on the board of directors and chaired the hosiery exposition which was staged in Hickory during the 1960s and 1970s. He also served on the board of the National Association of Hosiery Manufacturers.

Walton served on the vestry of Church of the Ascension, Episcopal, and was a member of the Hickory Rotary Club. He was preceded in death by his wife, Nell. Survivors include two sons, Billy and Bobby. 

BREAKING THE SOUND BARRIER

The Hosiery and Textiles Governmental Affairs Council looks forward to working with legislators in Raleigh in 2011. Republicans with a pro-business agenda will set priorities for state government, including how state finances are invested. Emphasis will be on smaller government and the best return on dollars invested by the state.

We congratulate the new leaders in the House and the Senate. Also we look forward to working with new members of the General Assembly as we present our case for the continued support of the Textile Technology Center and the Manufacturing Solutions Center with its successful hosiery industry testing and research programs.

There will be a lot of noise with competition for state money. We invite textiles and hosiery companies that continue to employ over 100,000 North Carolinians to join us in support of the value-added services of our centers.

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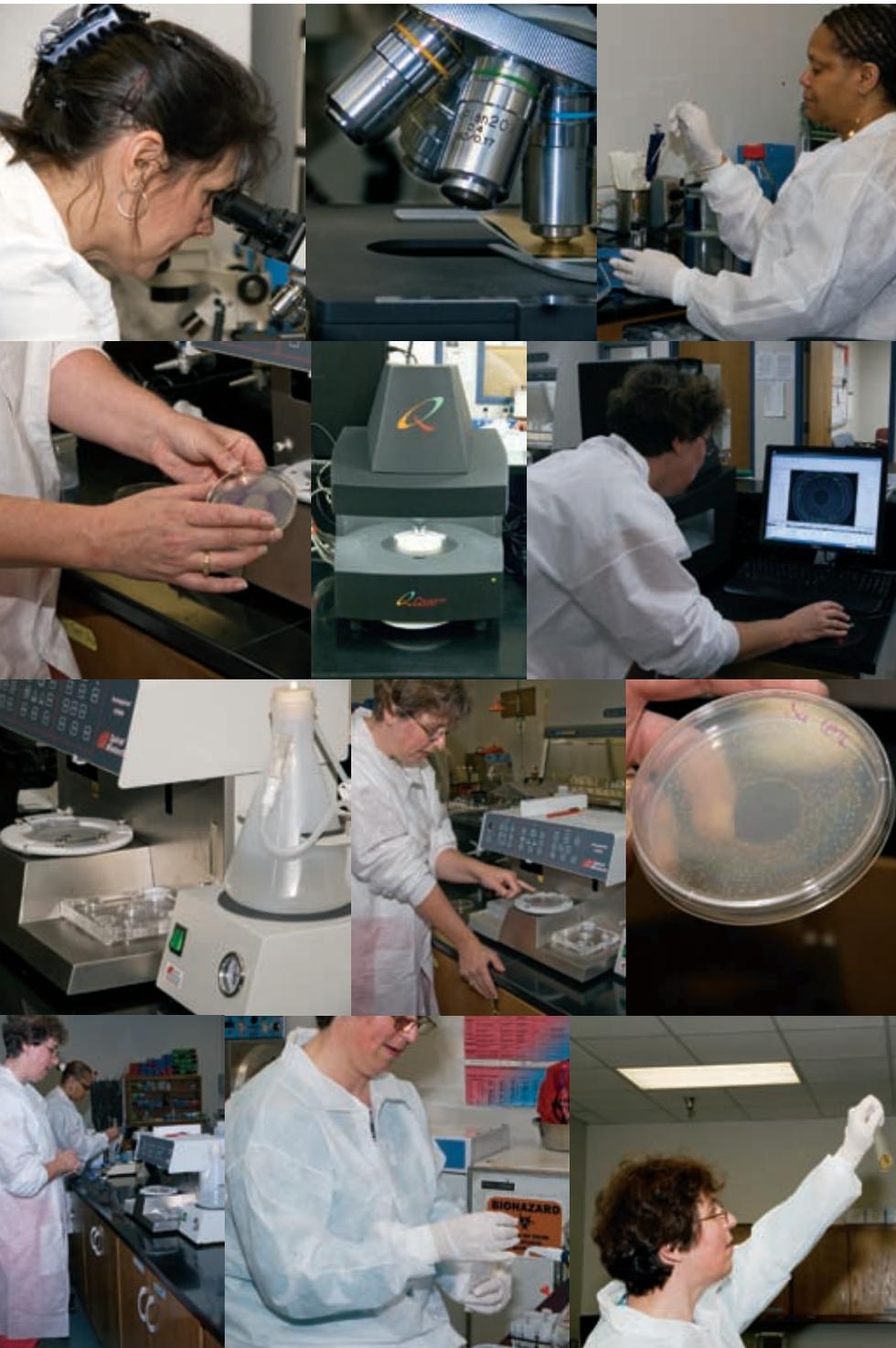
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If our official name is too much to remember, just call us the Manufacturing Solutions Center. We are ready to assist you with new products, new manufacturing strategies, new markets.

Traditional manufacturers have an old history with our state. But they are an important force in the new economy.

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