Top manufacturers are awarded

Carl Chinn and winners of the Express & Star Manufacturing Awards, at the Mount Hotel, Tettenhall Wood

By Laura Blyth

Bosses from a host of leading companies in the West Midlands toasted their successes at the first ever Express & Star Manufacturing Excellence Awards Lunch.

Ten firms picked up manufacturing awards and celebrated at a special lunch held at the Mount Hotel in Tettenhall. The event was also attended by Professor Carl Chinn, who instigated the awards, and Express & Star editor Adrian Faber.

The Manufacturing Excellence Awards, sponsored by the Manufacturing Advisory Service in the West Midlands (MAS-WM,) were set up to honour long-standing firms which continue a proud industrial tradition while adapting to modern times.

The scheme was open to firms that have been operating for at least 30 years and has up to 250 staff.

Professor Chinn has been handing the awards out to the winning firms over the past year. He said: "It's an outstanding achievement when you look at the firms here today. They are giving value to workers, their families and the wider neighbourhoods."

Mr Faber, who also spoke at the event, said: "Manufacturing matters and that's why we are here. All these members represent the finest traditions of the West Midlands and companies that actively make things."

One of the winners, Roy Taylor, managing director at Oldbury-based Malthouse Engineering Co Ltd, which specialises in steel profiling, presented Professor Chinn with a steel ornament, modelled on his hand. It came with an Aston Villa glove on, in tribute to his favourite football team.

Mr Taylor, aged 66, said: "We are very proud to get one of these awards."

Stephen Preston, 56, managing director of iron castings manufacturing firm Kirkpatrick Ltd, based in Walsall, added: "It means a lot to us and has boosted workforce morale."

The full list of award winners is as follows:

Avery Weigh-Tronix, of Smethwick, scales and weighing equipment.
Bird Stevens, of Brierley Hill, presswork, fabrication, sheet metalwork, assembly and tube manipulation.
H&R ChemPharm (UK) Ltd, of Tipton, wax and oil-based product.
Hinton Perry & Davenhill Ltd, of Dudley, roof tiles and bricks from rare Staffordshire clay.
Jabez Cliff & Company Ltd, of Aldridge, royal warrant holder making saddles and bridles.
James Grove and Sons Ltd, of Halesowen, button manufacturer.
Keith Carrier & Son, of Willenhall, lock and key restorers and architectural ironmongery.
Kirkpatrick Ltd, of Walsall, high-quality malleable iron castings.
Malthouse Engineering Co Ltd, of Tividale, largest steel profiler in the UK;
Robinson Brothers, of West Bromwich, speciality chemicals.

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