

USM in Warren Supplying Intermediate Driveshafts

by Gerald Scott

Auto supplier U.S. Manufacturing in Warren is part of the 2012 Cadillac XTS success story – as well as a part of the car itself.

That's why USM had a booth at the SAE Detroit Section dinner last week that celebrated the story of how GM designed and engineered the well-received Cadillac XTS passenger car.

USM provides parts to most of GM's passenger car product line-up, including the XTS.

Mike McGory, product engineer at U.S. Manufacturing, staffed the booth that USM had on display at the SAE dinner at the San Marino Club in Troy.

"What we have is the intermediate driveshaft for the front driveline of the Cadillac XTS," he said. "It's our patented Vari-Lite technology, it's extruded, Variable Wall, we keep the thin areas and thick areas where we need them, reduce a lot of mass. We've done a lot of work on our bearing technology.

"It improves performance based on stiffness, strength of materials. We do a lot of work on our heat-treat, induction hardening, through-hardening."

He said parts are made to GM's specifications but that parts are fatigue-tested and tolerance tested by USM before they're handed over to GM. USM ships its parts directly to GM final assembly plants, by the way.

"We ship right to the plants: we ship to Oshawa, we ship to Ramos, we ship a couple parts over to Europe and a couple parts to China/Asia," McGory said.

U.S. Manufacturing is located on the site of the former Chrysler tank plant, which was retired by the Army back in 1997. USM has occupied the site since then, along with a couple of neighboring tenants.

The space formerly occupied by Noble, a stamping concern, has already been rented out and the combined USM/Noble space at the big site is more than 1 million square feet there on Van Dyke south of 12 Mile Road.

Besides GM, other customers of USM include the Ford F-150 and F-250 trucks and axle work for Chrysler.

"We do a lot of Dana work, and they supply Chrysler," McGory said. "We do some GM Tier I and Ford Tier I work."

Asked if he hears "echoes of tanks" inside the former tank plant, McGory laughed and said, "No, but we've had to do a lot of cement work since we worked in there, where they had underground tunnels going back into TACOM (across the railroad tracks). We'd put a machine down and build concrete (under it to support it)."

Overall, USM provides Variable Wall Axle Tube Housings, hollow shafts, front and rear axle shafts,



Mike McGory

transmission shafts and steering parts to the greater auto industry. USM also does warm form ex-

trusions, precision machining and a variety of welding, including inertia and friction welding.

Ragan Named Development Officer

DETROIT – Focus:HOPE has named Steve Ragan to its senior leadership team as Chief Development and External Relations Officer. He manages the organization's fundraising, government affairs and communications.

Most recently, Ragan was the chief development officer and government relations officer for the Make It Right Foundation, a

national non-profit founded by actor Brad Pitt to help rebuild the lower 9th Ward in New Orleans that was demolished by Hurricane Katrina.

Currently a resident of Dearborn, Ragan is also a 1989 graduate of the University of Michigan and attended the Harvard Institute for Education Management at Harvard University in 2004.

GM Milford PG Breaks Ground On 'Solar Tree'

MILFORD – Envision Solar International announced it has broken ground for the deployment of a Tracking Solar Tree with Envision Trak, Envision's proprietary tracking solution and SunCharge, column-integrated Electric Vehicle charging station, all at GM Milford Proving Ground.

The dual-synchronous solar tracking system gives the array the ability to capture 25 percent more solar power than a conventional fixed solar canopy. The structure will produce up to 30,000 kilowatt hours per year and provide enough solar energy to charge six electric vehicles per day.

The deployment, part of a larger program, is the second such Tracking Solar Tree on GM property in Michigan. In November, 2011, the two companies cut the ribbon on a Solar Tree at a GM site near the Tech Center in Warren.

"General Motors is a valued customer with whom we are growing our footprint," said Desmond Wheatley, President and CEO of San Diego-based Envision Solar.

Envision Solar says that all of its solar trees are engineered and built in the U.S.



Sergio Marchionne speaks with Yolanda Washington, a local resident, whose life and family was positively influenced by United Way.

Torch is Ignited that Lights the Way

DETROIT – Chrysler Group LLC Chairman and CEO Sergio Marchionne, who also serves as United Way for Southeastern Michigan's Campaign chair, kicked off the annual community giving campaign last week with a symbolic torch-lighting ceremony on Detroit's Hart Plaza to announce a \$35 million fundraising goal for the organization, which represents an 11 percent increase over last year.

Detroit Mayor Dave Bing and United Way President and CEO Michael J. Brennan, along with many community members, civic, business and community leaders and supporters, attended the event.

After standing dark for five years, the torch was relit to signify a monumental change in the way that the public and private sectors are working together to achieve a common goal – making greater Detroit one of the top five

places in the country to live and work by the year 2030, which is the year when children born in 2012 will graduate from high school.

Supporting United Way ensures that positive, lasting community change will continue to occur at a grassroots level, say United Way supporters.

The last few years have been financially tough for the organization, which relies on a combination of individual and corporate contributions, as well as grant funding, to survive.

"Metro Detroiters also have gone through tough times more than once, and they have always demonstrated the courage and determination to get back on their feet," Marchionne told the crowd assembled in downtown Detroit.

Finally, the United Way campaign will now run through the end of the calendar year.



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