



Photo by Jennifer Arnold

Next Innovations CEO Arnold Volker (from right) receives the Governor's Commendation from Sen. John Carlson with Walker Mayor Scott Bruns, Rep Larry Howes and Cass County EDC Director Gail Levenson also attending the ceremony.

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The Cass County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) presented a Governor's Commendation Oct. 25 to Next Innovations, Ltd., of Walker, as part of Minnesota Manufacturing Week.

Because of the importance of manufacturing jobs to the local economy, Next Innovations CEO Arnold Volker was recognized for his company's contribution to the economy.

Each manufacturing job supports another 1.9 jobs elsewhere in the economy by supporting supplier purchases, employee spending and transportation jobs.

Manufacturing has the second-largest payroll of any business sector in Minnesota, and 33 percent of all jobs in the state are in

manufacturing, according to Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED).

In Cass County, manufacturing jobs comprised 5.1 percent of all jobs in 2011. Manufacturing supports many other industries including transportation, construction, financial services and indirectly through employee spending. Thus the 5.1 percent of manufacturing jobs play a large part of the overall economy. These jobs depend on manufacturers like Next Innovations, Ltd.

Cass County welcomes new manufacturers and the EDC provides the highest level of service and resources to this sector. The EDC has a loan fund for manufacturing businesses. About 33 percent of business projects completed with EDC assistance are in the manufacturing sector.

Cass County has the second-lowest industrial and commercial tax rate to encourage manufacturing and industrial development. A workforce of 17,087, or 55 percent of county population, is within the 16-65 age bracket. The EDC is willing to work with potential manufacturers to secure any available state, federal or local incentives to help create quality jobs.

The Cass County EDC is a community nonprofit corporation focused on helping businesses create jobs and capital investment in Cass County.