

ARIZONA MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP (ARIZONA MEP)

Arizona Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Arizona's MEP) was created through a partnership between the Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) whose goal is to become the central resource for technical assistance and all things manufacturing for Arizona's existing community of small and medium-sized manufacturers.

Arizona MEP offers products and services that match the needs of manufacturing companies in Arizona and provides focused, concrete advice, training and hands-on assistance in growing businesses and improving profitability.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

MEP Center impacts are based on clients surveyed in FY2023



\$101.9 Million

Total Increased/Retained Sales



910

Total Increased/Retained Jobs



\$41.5 Million

New Client Investments



\$11.7 Million

Cost Savings

CONTACT US



100 N. 7th Avenue
Suite 400
Phoenix, AZ 85007



(602) 845-1200



www.azcommerce.com/programs/arizona-mep



davidg@azcommerce.com

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LATHAM INDUSTRIES SMART STRATEGIES FOR GROWTH START WITH PEOPLE

ABOUT LATHAM INDUSTRIES. Latham Industries is a leading electronics contract manufacturer based in Phoenix, Arizona, offering high-quality printed circuit board (PCB) assembly for aerospace, medical, industrial and security businesses to name a few. Some of the services Latham offers are surface mount, plated-through-hole, and mixed technology PCB assembly, along with prototyping, box builds, design and engineering, materials management, BGA reballing, and rework and repair. Founded in 2016 by Tracey Latham, the owner and CEO, the company has grown by focusing on people, quality, state-of-the-art equipment, and new growth markets. In 2022, Tracey Latham was the recipient of the SBA Small-Business Person of the Year Award for Arizona.

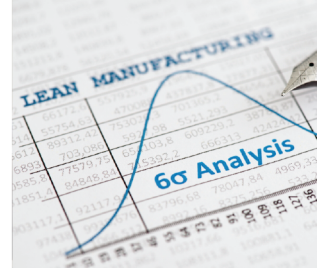
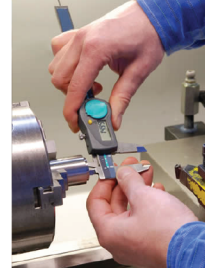
THE CHALLENGE. Arizona MEP (AZ MEP), part of the MEP National Network™, began working with Latham in 2020, starting with a company assessment to understand goals and set a plan of action.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. AZ MEP helped Latham prepare an incumbent worker grant application, identify the training needed, and source the trainers based on the previous assessment. "The grant allowed us to improve skills, maintain employee certifications, and certify to ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management system," said Latham. The incumbent worker training grant also helped the company pay for the audit and training for ISO 9001:2015, freeing up company funds to purchase new equipment and invest in a new ERP system.

For Latham, differentiating the company on quality opens up more business opportunities, especially in the growing medical device market. The regulatory requirements for medical devices are increasingly stringent throughout every step of a product's life cycle. To secure the business, Latham needed to earn ISO 13485:2016 certification, which demonstrates the company's ability to provide medical devices and related services that consistently meet customer and applicable regulatory requirements. With AZ MEP's help, Latham Industries completed a gap analysis for ISO 13485 to help them prepare for a successful audit. The company recently passed the audit and is waiting for the final report to make the certification official. "With ISO 13485 certification, the medical device field opens up a new business opportunity for us," said Latham.

"It's difficult being a small business and understanding what's out there to help us. What AZ MEP offers is a huge asset for a small company. I don't have time to research consultants or search for resources, but AZ MEP has a team that delivers soup-to-nuts services for manufacturers. The help we received is a win-win because the employees improve their skills and become more valuable to the company, which leads to pay increases for them. And the company can gain certifications that help open doors for more business, resulting in more job hires and higher wages."

-Tracey Latham, Owner



RESULTS



Over **\$69,000** invested in new equipment



\$25,000 in new sales



Over **\$20,000** in cost savings due to tax credits

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