



News release

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**STEM and technical education keys to winning
the global competition battle, local business leader says**

America is in a battle to compete globally and the best weapon we have today is STEM education.

So said Nick Pinchuk, Snap-on Incorporated president and CEO on Thursday to more than 750 science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) educators attending the International Technology and Engineering Educators Association annual conference being held in the Wisconsin Center through Saturday.

"America has the greatest mobility rate and the greatest opportunities ... Today we have some challenges, and those challenges are embodied in some questions," said Pinchuk. "And those questions are: Why is the middle class shrinking? Is the income gap going to continue? What ever happened to the American dream?"

"I say the American workforce is not the question, but it is the answer – and technical education and STEM education is the key to unlocking it. What you do has never been more important. I see no path to continuing American prosperity without your success in what you do.

“Without your success oil doesn’t flow, cities don’t grow, economies don’t thrive, things aren’t being made, planes don’t fly and freedom doesn’t ring.”

Pinchuk said creating a capable workforce depends on a few key elements: Match STEM curriculum to what is needed by industry, learn the skills and knowledge used in the workplace and strive to ensure students possess them and better communicate the need for STEM education to business and government leaders.

“Businesses want to help – ask them to help,” Pinchuk said. “The purpose to go to school is not necessarily to gain an education – but it is to build a career.”

Pinchuk said a skilled workforce is the backbone of the American dream, and the backbone of a strong middle class. He indicated STEM education – and the problem solving skills gained through it – is the foundation for a strong workforce and a strong economy.

“If you go into STEM careers or into technical education – you will enable America to return to its strength,” he said. “The most important thing in America today is enabling our workforce, STEM and technical education.”

Business leaders indicate that the number one reason to locate a plant in a particular area is access to a skilled workforce, he continued. That workforce gains the skills through technical and STEM education.

“Your work has never been more important because of this global competition,” said Pinchuk.

Snap-on Incorporated is based in Kenosha and has a facility in Milwaukee.

Gateway Technical College collaborates with communities in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties to ensure economic growth and viability by providing education, training, leadership and technological resources to meet the changing needs of students, employers and communities.

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