France-Atlanta 2015: Georgia Tech and Arts et Métiers ParisTech explored the Future of Manufacturing

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As part of France-Atlanta 2015, a seminar on the Future of Manufacturing was organized on Oct 28-29 by Georgia Tech Manufacturing Institute (GTMI) and French leading engineering school Arts et Métiers ParisTech (AMPT) – both institutions are highly involved in national structures for the development of advanced manufacturing – with the support of the Office for Science and Technology of the French Consulate.

Around eighty people attended the seminar: more than 30 were French experts, 2/3 of whom were teachers and researchers from Arts et Métiers ParisTech, and eight were representatives of leading French industries in the field (PSA–Peugeot-Citroën, Safran, KUKA, Fives Industries, and research institutions Cetim and CEA-Tech), and American experts were present as well, to identify how to develop the competitiveness of these new factories and generate high value-added jobs.

Opening of the seminar and overview of global trend in advanced manufacturing

The Honorable Jean-Yves le Déaut, French MP, and President of OPECST (a French committee that advises the Parliament in matters related to Science and Technology), opened the seminar by highlighting the necessity of maintaining strong ties between the technical and human aspects of the “Factory of the Future” and integrating those new factories in local ecosystems.

Two keynote addresses were given: Bill Flite, from Lockheed Martin, presented the National Network for Manufacturing Innovation (NNMI) and gave an overview of the technologies accelerating innovation in industry, the other keynote address was given by Dr Sylvain Allano, CSO of PSA-Peugeot Citroën, who discussed three major issues of the current revolution in automotive industry: urban mobility, clean technologies and safety. Allano stressed the relevance and the impact of 8 OpenLabs, where PSA-Peugeot Citroën is associated to academic partners, (one involves Georgia Tech and the French CNRS), to overcome technological bottlenecks.
The first part of the seminar was Webcast live.

**Specialized workshops: overview and identification of key issues by the experts**

Six workshops, attended by about 30 people each, focused on several issues ranging from the development of new materials for intelligent and eco-friendly products, the introduction of collaborative robots in factories, additive manufacturing, to digital fabrication processes and virtual reality, as well as water and energy consumption, pollution and waste production.

The second day of the seminar was centered on lab visits and on the identification of potential avenues for French-American collaborations, involving academic researchers, industrial experts and Ph.D. students.

The target objective of the seminar, which was to have French and American academics and industrials interact and assess their complementary strengths to lay the groundwork for scientific and technological collaborative projects, was reached. Arts et Métiers ParisTech and Georgia Tech have since then stated their intent to quickly set in motion collaborations, in association with industrial partners.