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## 2023 TRSA Annual Production Summit & Plant Tours in Kansas City, MO

Alexandria, VA May 22, 2023 TRSA hosted its Annual Production Summit & Plant Tours in Kansas City, MO. During this two-day event, 91 attendees traveled from across the country for a full day of professional development focused on plant production, followed by a day of touring two Kansas City-area facilities. The opening day of the Production Summit kicked off with a keynote speech from Dr. Melissa Furman, MS, DBA, founder and consultant at Career Potential LLC. Furman's speech was titled *Managing and Leading the Future Workforce*. During her keynote address, she gave guidance on challenges that affect the future workforce such as burnout, generational gaps and acknowledging personal biases. Attendees were then given the chance to attend two of four breakout sessions.

The first breakout session was on preventative maintenance and was delivered by Joel Bell, engineering director at UniFirst. Bell coached attendees on the importance of technology investment and forethought in keeping operations in satisfactory conditions. The second breakout on automation and emerging technology was delivered by Gerard O'Neil, owner and CEO of American Laundry Systems and Scott Voss, vice president of technical engineering & installations at Ellis Corp. Their session was centered on the emergence and implementation of new technologies to decrease cost, starting with incremental gains that will likely remain manual labor-intensive. The final two breakouts were on Energy Efficiency and Water Treatment & Usage and were delivered by Michael Lewis, senior client advisor at APPI Energy; John Schultz, director of water solutions at Ellis Corp. and Keith Ware, an industry veteran that is currently a consultant.

After a brief lunch and Legislative Update by Kevin Schwalb, vice president of government relations at TRSA, attendees reconvened into one group for a session on how industry colleagues are faring with pounds/pieces per operator hour under post-COVID labor scenarios that can result in laundries paying more for less production. This session was titled *Identifying People/Equipment and Productivity Measures*, and was delivered by Todd Leeth, strategic growth leader at Spindle. The attendees then broke into small groups of their choosing to have facilitated roundtable discussions on issues affecting the industry such as automation, training, and recruitment and retention. The attendees were able to air their pain points and offer advice at a peer-to-peer level.

The first day of the Production Summit ended with a General Manager's Panel Discussion where three panelists were able to discuss operational factors at their plants and their perspectives on their roles within the industry. The panelists were Peter Brown, general manager at Mickey's Linen, McKenzie Lee, general manager at AlSCO, Naples; and Matt Shapiro, general manager at Walker Medical Linen Service. On May 11, the attendees broke into two groups to participate in plants tours of the Kansas City plants of both Crothall Healthcare and Cintas.

Crothall Laundry began processing laundry in their 50,000 square-foot facility in 1973. Crothall specializes in healthcare laundry and averages 260,000 lbs. of laundry per week at this branch. The facility utilizes one, six-module (220 lb.) tunnel washer with seven dryers, one 14-module (105 lb.) tunnel washer with six dryers, two 165-pound extractors with two dryers and two 65-pound extractors with two dryers.

Cintas welcomed TRSA and the summit attendees to its 44,000-square-foot facility, where they kicked off the tour by discussing the company's employee-partner engagement concepts that help promote workplace safety, a key component in a multi-faceted optimization program that emphasizes its employee-partners'

voice. Visitors were then guided through the facility to show the organizations safety procedures across different aspects of the plant including fleet safety, industrial wash alley safety and much more.

Lewis summed up the Summit experience as both a presenter and attendee when he said, "I enjoy meeting the people of the industry as they tell their stories. You get a wealth of knowledge when you get to speak to people who have decades of experience running plants."

#### **About TRSA**

TRSA ([www.trsa.org](http://www.trsa.org)) members supply, maintain and launder linens, uniforms and other reusable textiles helping retailers, businesses, healthcare and long-term care facilities, restaurants, hotels, government, and other organizations to enhance image and provide clean, safe environments for employees and customers. The \$40-billion North American linen, uniform and facility services industry employs nearly 200,000 people at 1,600 facilities. TRSA advocates for fair, balanced regulatory and tax policy and promotes the environmental benefits of reusable textiles. TRSA quantifies our industry's commitment to cleanliness, sustainability and safety through its Clean Green, Hygienically Clean and Safety & Health Certification programs and helps companies increase productivity, sustainability, safety and professionalism through training, research, benchmarking, and information-sharing.