



Center Stage Member Spotlight

Lisa Armstrong - Schaeffler Group USA Inc.



Schaeffler Group USA, Inc. is one of Wayne County's largest employers. The automotive and industrial supplier has remained an industry leader since establishing its roots in Wayne County over 40 years ago. The global company has approximately 75 plants across the world – 13 of which are stationed in the Americas. We had a chance to speak with Lisa Armstrong, Director of Corporate Development and Strategy for Schaeffler Americas, about the heart and soul of the Wooster plant.

Known as the e-mobility competency center, Schaeffler's Wooster plant is led by a strong global team whose foundation is built upon, innovation, agility, and efficiency.

"We continuously strive to break new ground, externally with our products and services and internally with our production process and information technology. Schaeffler paves the way in the automotive industry with a passion for pioneering motion" Armstrong described.

Using the company's leadership principles and values as a guiding force, Armstrong and her team are responsible for developing strategic plans to achieve the long-term goals set by its corporate strategy. You can read more about Schaeffler's Roadmap 2025 [here](#).

While there are many layers to Schaeffler's strong foundation, perhaps the most crucial aspect is its dedication to innovation. Schaeffler's tagline "We Pioneer Motion" is a testament to what it has been doing since its doors opened in 1977 in Wooster.

“Essentially, we want to shape the future of mobility,” Armstrong stated. “In cooperation with our customers, partners, and society we want to be able to identify problems and deliver solutions.”

Schaeffler’s innovation has been the driving force behind its adaptability, and it has even won several prestigious awards.

When the company originally started, its focus was on the production of various clutch products for manual vehicles. Though it was successful, leadership was not complacent. They were aware of a change on the horizon and ready to capitalize on this opportunity. Shortly after opening, Schaeffler transitioned to the production of automatic vehicle components.

Today, Schaeffler finds itself in a similar situation with the industry shifting toward electrification. Schaeffler is the forerunner in developing products like e-motors, e-axles, mechatronics, and various technologies for autonomous driving. These innovations maintain Schaeffler’s position ahead of the curve.

“Because It’s been several years since Schaeffler transitioned into e-mobility,” Armstrong stated. “The solutions we’re seeing now were developed years ago. With the recent changes in the automotive industry, it is extremely exciting to watch these products come to light.”

Armstrong explained the rate at which e-mobility will completely take over the Automotive industry will depend on various outside forces like consumer preferences, policy changes, and government regulations. So, when it does happen, Schaeffler is more than ready.

Schaeffler’s innovation and ingenuity has positioned the Company as a finalist for the Automotive News 2021 PACE Award. Schaeffler’s modular hybrid transmission currently being used by Ford Motor Company is a top contender. The award honors innovation developed by a supplier that is new to the automotive industry, that is in use, and that “changes the rules of the game.” Schaeffler was also recognized as a top-performing global supplier at the 22nd annual Ford World Excellence Awards for this same product.

So how is Schaeffler able to innovate so well?

The answer is simple. Investment in its employees and research and development.

The Wooster plant is known for its training and mentoring programs. Located behind the 800,000 sq. ft. facility is "The Schaeffler Academy". The academy provides resources like software training, product knowledge education, foreign language classes, and more. It even houses an on-campus daycare, making childcare easier for employees.

Schaeffler is also home to a state-of-the-art apprenticeship program. Incidentally, in 2017 Schaeffler received an ATD award of excellence from the Association of Talent Development – a global learning and development organization. The program is also one of Ohio's largest registered manufacturing programs.

In affiliation with The University of Akron, The University of Toledo, Kettering University, Ohio Northern University, and The Ohio State University, Schaeffler also offers a Co-op Program. The program creates an opportunity for students in the business and engineering fields to start training and learning about the company, the industry, and the people, giving them a jump on their careers. Their current CEO of the Americas, Marc McGrath, started in the Co-op Program.

Additionally, Schaeffler has recently partnered with The Ohio State University to launch its Schaeffler Hub for Advanced Research (SHARE) program. The program's purpose is to focus on the development of solid-state electrolyte battery development with plans for fuel cell research and development. The program will be researching and developing technologies for the future of mobility while building on Schaeffler's long-term commitment to supporting academic and economic growth in the state of Ohio.

With its continuous improvement and passion for innovation, Schaeffler has set itself up to be the supplier of choice in the automotive and industrial markets for years to come. It is fully equipped to navigate through unknown waters and come out full steam ahead. With discussions of growth in the near future, the outlook at Schaeffler is one full of opportunity.

To learn more about Schaeffler Group USA, Inc., visit www.schaeffler.us.

