



1 Oakwood Blvd., Suite 195, Hollywood, FL 33020 / 844-251-3219 - 954-367-7728 / gawda@gawda.org

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For More Information: John Ospina, Executive Director; 954-367-7728 x 240; jospina@gawda.org
Diane Stirling, GAWDA Media; 315-445-2347 x 120; dianes@datakey.org

GAWDA's 2017 Spring Conference Bigger, Better, More Mobile Than Ever

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. — The yearly Spring Management Conference (SMC) of the Gases and Welding Distributors Association (GAWDA) is bigger and better – and this year, more mobile – than ever before.

Registration for the May event, with more than a month to go, is at a record level, according to GAWDA Executive Director John Ospina. He announced today that registered attendees (which includes distributors, suppliers, manufacturer's representatives, plus their guests) totals more than 550 registrants. This tops registration numbers for the past four years at this same time, he noted.

Booth registrations for the GAWDA Spring Contact Booth Program, a vendor showcase, also filled up at record pace, Ospina said. With all available spaces were taken as of March 22, the 2017 show will house 127 supplier members, vendors and manufacturers showing off their latest products and services. The Contact Booth Program is a major networking opportunity for distributors to learn of the latest available products to augment their businesses, according to Ospina. It's also a major venue for suppliers, manufacturers and distributors to meet face-to-face those they may not get to see too often. The show also provides a chance for them to obtain information about new offerings directly and to build relationships, Ospina said.

In addition, GAWDA is introducing a new mobile app. The technology is designed to make it easier for distributors and suppliers to network, and for registered attendees to interact and communicate while at the SMC and later at other GAWDA national events. The app provides all information attendees need, from a full list of who is registered, detailed schedule of activities, maps to event locations, and local information, such as city maps and ride sharing contacts. The app now is available on the App Store for iPhone and on Google Play for Android phones.

The SMC is being held Thursday, May 11 through Saturday, May 13 in Boca Raton, Fla. At the Boca Raton Resort & Club, a Waldorf Astoria Resort.

Guest speakers include Christopher Mapes, chairman, president and CEO of Lincoln Electric Holdings, Inc., who will address opportunities for career education; and Curt Steinhorst, from the Center for Generational Kinetics, who will speak about communicating with younger generations. In addition, Alan Beaulieu, GAWDA's chief economist and principal of ITR Economics, will provide a detailed economic forecast for the industry; and Kelly Latimer, a test pilot for the Virgin Galactic Launcher One program, will speak at the Women of Gases and Welding Committee of GAWDA luncheon.

More information and links for registration are at www.gawda.org.

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