

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Craig Van den Avont, President of GAM Enterprises, was elected to the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center Board of Directors**

**Mount Prospect, IL –February 8, 2017** – Craig Van den Avont, President of GAM Enterprises was elected to the Illinois Manufacturers Excellence Center (IMEC) Board of Directors.

IMEC is a part of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), a Congressional program directed under the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). IMEC, the Illinois MEP, was founded in 1996 to improve the productivity and competitiveness of Illinois' small and mid-sized manufacturing firms, by helping to optimize operating capacity, implement advanced process innovations, increase sales, enter new markets, and improve profitability. IMEC is led by a board of directors comprised of the leaders of manufacturing companies. The board of directors is focused on increasing the productivity and global competitive advantage of organizations in Illinois and provides input on the organization's policies, programs, and performance.

*"The IMEC Board of Directors plays a key role in the success of the organization,"* said Dr. David Boulay, President of IMEC. *"The involvement of manufacturing leaders like Craig gives us the unique perspective of the individuals that work in the manufacturing environment every day. They help us to drive forward our purpose to foster long-term economic and workforce competitiveness by providing the feedback and experiences related to performance and practices required to be successful in today's highly competitive industrial climate."*

Craig founded GAM Gear in 1998 with Gary Michalek, which eventually merged into GAM Enterprises in 2013. Today, GAM Enterprises manufactures precision gearboxes, couplings, and other mechanical solutions for automation technology. Craig is responsible for the strategic leadership of the company and management of the overall operations, sales, and P&L of the business. He has implemented a focused business strategy that included a new competitive priority, strategic partnerships, and instituted flexible operations that utilize lean principles. Craig successfully led the company through the design of a complete product line and implementation of full U.S. manufacturing within twenty-four months. This dramatic transformation has allowed GAM to reduce lead-times, increase capacity, and has given GAM the ability to respond quicker to customer needs.

*"I am excited and honored to be elected to the IMEC Board of Directors,"* said Van den Avont. *"I have worked with IMEC for several years as a client and understand how they can help transform organizations through effective training and mentorship. This is a great opportunity that will allow me to share my operational experiences and help other organizations succeed in their manufacturing journeys."*

In the past Craig served as Chief Engineer at a servo motor manufacturer, as well as an aeronautical engineer at an aerospace manufacturer. He is APICS-CPIM certified, a member of the Association for High Tech Distribution and Motion Control & Motor Association, as well as the Entrepreneur's Organization. Craig is a STEM advocate and actively encourages students to consider a future in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math.

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#### **About GAM**

GAM is your complete source for Gear Reducers, Servo Couplings, Linear Mounting Kits, and other innovative mechanical products used in automation technology. With a wide range of standard products as well as the engineering expertise and manufacturing capabilities to develop customized solutions, GAM can help with your motion control applications. Being flexible to meet the needs of customer requests and great service are what set them apart from the rest. For more information contact GAM, 901 E. Business Center Drive, Mount Prospect, IL 60056, Telephone 888-GAM-7117, FAX 847-649-2501, <http://www.gamweb.com>. GAM is also on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/company/gam-gear-llc>, Twitter [http://twitter.com/#!/GAM\\_Gear](http://twitter.com/#!/GAM_Gear), and Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/GAMGear>.

#### **About IMEC**

IMEC is a non-profit economic development organization focused on fostering long-term economic and workforce competitiveness across the state of Illinois. Committed to driving organizational improvement and enterprise excellence, IMEC provides a range of hands-on, goal oriented solutions in continuous improvement, strategy, workforce, technology and top line growth to lead organizations to their competitive future. IMEC is funded in part by the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Manufacturing Extension Partnership and through fees paid by Illinois businesses for IMEC's services. IMEC has seven offices statewide and 48 full-time industry improvement specialists. For more information, visit [www.imec.org](http://www.imec.org).