

2019 SMU NextGen Leadership Award Nomination

Name of Person Making the Nomination: Kelletha Blackburn, Marketing Comm. Manager, Tempel

Nominee: Meredith Meade

Job Title: NAFTA Steel Purchasing Manager

Company: Tempel Steel Company

Reason for Nomination

Meredith Meade has exhibited many characteristics that have added tremendous value during her 10-year career at Tempel. Meredith's strengths center around her ability to develop supplier relationships, successfully implement change, manage information systems, apply automation to improve workflow and mentor others. As a result of Meredith's supply chain savviness, her efforts in the last year alone have resulted in roughly **\$3 million in yearly cost savings**, which has won nearly **\$50 million in new business revenue** in Canada and Mexico. The new business has **directly resulted in expanding the manufacturing space at Tempel Burlington (Canada) along with hiring 75 additional employees** to accommodate the new demand. It has also **supported Tempel's creation of a new Automotive Focus Factory in Tempel de Mexico** that will focus on complex electric vehicle (EV) and hybrid laminations.

Supporting Documentation or Evidence

- **Innovation:** Meredith has automated a variety of processes that were previously completed by hand, which has saved time and improved data accuracy. **Previously, Tempel's process to close a single mill claim took more than 200 days** to recover and involved a highly manual entry procedure. **Meredith took the initiative to automate this process, which has reduced the days to close a claim to 30 or less, which has dramatically improved the recovery rate resulting in \$500,000 in credits in just the first two years.** This process is now implemented at every Tempel facility worldwide. Meredith has also **led the charge in automating several manual entry processes** including an MRP report and a foreign order tracking report, among other inventory and demand reports. In fact, **the MRP report previously took more than three days to generate and now is automated** so that it can be generated **at the simple click of a button.**
- **Leadership:** Meredith has a **proven aptitude for converting strong relationships into tangible business improvements** that collectively benefit Tempel, its customers and suppliers. An example is the **creation of joint sales calls with customers that include our suppliers on new**

opportunities generating new revenue for both Tempel and suppliers while **producing strong supply chain options for the customer**. These activities have **enhanced the perception of Tempel within the supply base** allowing for greater partnerships with suppliers. Meredith endeavors to **develop young talent at Tempel by encouraging them to solve existing problems with new solutions**. She **leads an informal cross-divisional group**, which meets when necessary to collectively solve data reporting problems within the organization. Meredith also **mentors and coaches** beyond her direct reports including **assisting sales with forecast analysis** and **working with local buyers in the divisions with negotiating strategy**.

- **Rising Star:** Due to her outstanding demonstration of innovation and leadership, **Meredith has been promoted an amazing seven times during her 10-year career at Tempel**. She began her career at Tempel in the Pricing Department and moved into purchasing in 2014 as Corporate Buyer where she began developing her skills in purchasing. Since then, she has risen to the position of NAFTA Steel Purchasing Manager managing \$150 million annually in steel purchases. In the past year, Meredith **negotiated \$2 million in savings**, which **enabled a new customer contract that is projected to produce \$26 million in annual revenue**. This contract has helped **make it possible for Tempel Burlington (Canada) to double its manufacturing space and hire an additional 75 full-time employees**. Meredith has also proven her expertise at working with suppliers by **facilitating a 6.5 percent price decrease on the cost of steel**, which allowed Tempel to secure the contract for an **\$18 million NAFTA EV opportunity**. This contract was the basis for justifying the building of Tempel de Mexico's Automotive Focus Factory.