March 9th was a date that 45 attendees gathered for a TC-CCAI sponsored tour of the New Flyer of America plant in St. Cloud, MN. New Flyer is a leading manufacturer of heavy-duty buses in the U.S. and Canada. The corporate headquarters are located in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada with manufacturing facilities and service centers located throughout the U.S. and Canada.

New Flyer started out in 1930 as a five-person operation and has now grown to an international organization of about 5,000 people. The St. Cloud, MN facility employs over 700 people.

The tour event began with a presentation of the St. Cloud New Flyer factory operation by Kory Mortezaee, a Manufacturing Engineer for New Flyer. Kory went through a full description of the total corrosion, prime and top coating processes. Following the presentation, the tour attendees were assigned to four group leaders who guided the tour groups around the factory complex.

Once on the factory floor the tour attendees were able to view the entire manufacturing and assembly process including the specialized bus painting methods. It was noted that each bus received two to three paint colors. New Flyer incorporates Lean Manufacturing and 5S standards into its industrial processes. Among the most impressive features of the plant layout were the extreme cleanliness and the factory lighting and also the overall orderliness of the tool and accessories stations throughout the factory.

Thanks to TC Chapter President Michelle Striggow for organizing this unique tour event.