

# Lieberman touts plant as model

By SCOTT WHIPPLE  
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NEW BRITAIN — Sen. Joseph Lieberman told Peter Pan Electronic employees the work they are doing "is probably larger than you realize," and that their company is a model for competing in the global marketplace.

"If we pool our resources, our innovation and our willingness to work hard, this country will be full of opportunity for future generations," he said.

The state's junior senator was in town Monday to tour a manufacturing plant that will benefit from the \$500,000 federal grant to Central Connecticut State University's Institute of Technology and Business Development. The grant was reported last Thursday in The Herald.

Peter Pan Electronics on John Downey Drive manufactures solenoid valves and specialty valves for a variety of applications. It boasts a workforce of 125 and sells to Japan and China.

Company President Paul Mangiafico presented Lieberman with a Peter Pan Electronics T-shirt.

Lieberman told him he would wear it proudly and "bring a little of your Kaizen attitude back to the United States Senate."

Peter Pan used Kaizen and lean manufacturing methods to streamline operations and stay competitive in the global marketplace.

("Kaizen" is a Japanese



HERALD PHOTO — LAUREN TAGLIATELA  
U.S. Sen. Joseph Lieberman talks with Bob Danielewicz, a 24-year employee of Peter Pan Electronics in New Britain. Lieberman was in the city Monday to announce a \$500,000 grant to the Institute of Technology and Business Development.

term that means continuous improvement: "Kai" means continuous; "zen" means improvement. Lean is a customer-driven, waste-reduction manufacturing approach that improves workforce efficiency.)

During his plant tour, Lieberman stopped to talk with Mark Mangiafico.

Peter Pan's chief engineer told the senator that business was doing so well that it "spawned" a lean approach to

get products out the door faster.

CCSU President Jack Miller said he was grateful to Lieberman and other members of the Connecticut delegation for working to support ITBD and its ongoing projects.

Miller noted that one of the many Senate committees Lieberman serves on is Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

"This partnership is an

excellent example of the kind of work that can be done when the university, private industry, the state and federal government work together on a project," Miller said. "At Central, 94 percent of our students are from the state of Connecticut; our graduates stay in Connecticut and build the economy of this state."

Calling the \$500,000 federal funding "critically important" to manufacturing, Miller cited

the loss in sales this industry sector has suffered in the state. Central's president credited Rick Mullins, ITBD's managing director and his staff for their hard work. He also thanked Bernard Sweeney, district director of the Small Business Association in Hartford, for SBA's involvement.

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