

# AROUND BOEING



Employees in Mesa, Ariz., participate in a game that helps them learn basic Lean principles. From left are Lavon Towe, Boeing Enterprise Data Management; Matiel Payton, with the Quality organization in Long Beach, Calif.; Pam Williams, Systems Engineering; and Vern Young, Production Engineering.

from Boeing. And office administrator Joni Morris said the class will help her eliminate elements of her job that are non-value-added. "I want to apply the analysis tools to routine tasks and ask myself: Does this task ultimately support the customer? Am I doing it right the first time?" Morris said. ■

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## ALSO AROUND BOEING

- Boeing in November took a major step in transforming the 777 line into a leaner and more efficient production system by implementing a moving assembly line to build this jetliner.

For now, the moving assembly line is used only during final assembly positions for the airplane, moving it at a steady pace of 1.6 inches (4.1 centimeters) per minute during production.

"A moving line drives efficiency throughout the system because it makes problems visible and creates a sense of urgency to fix the root causes of those problems," said Elizabeth Lund, director of manufacturing for the 777 Program.

- Boeing in November received a \$299.8-million U.S. Air Force contract to produce the fourth Wideband Gapfiller Satellite. This is the first option to be exercised on the WGS Block II contract, which was finalized in October. The Block II contract is valued at \$1.067 billion, if all options are exercised.

- Boeing in November unveiled a new Lean Enterprise site on the Boeing Web that serves as a single resource for companywide Lean+ information. The site pulls together Lean education, online training and organizational contacts and provides examples of Lean transformation across Boeing. The site, at <http://leo.web.boeing.com>, was redesigned in support of Boeing's Lean+ and Internal Services Productivity initiatives to increase productivity and growth. ■

## Learning Lean

What would you do with \$300 million? A class figures it out

BY LISA DUNBAR

For a brief time in October, a group of Boeing employees in Mesa, Ariz., were the owners of \$300 million. They could spend the "pretend" money however they saw fit—as long it was to improve a business process using Lean principles.

The employees were students in a day-long Lean office principles class in support of Lean+, Boeing's growth and productivity initiative to apply Lean not only on shop floors, but also in the office environment. The class revolves around an exercise in which teams identify and implement improvements to reduce cycle time within simulated business processes.

In the class, participants were allowed to spend \$300 million over three rounds

to make improvements. After each round, teams explained what they intended to improve and what process changes they implemented, and then reflected on whether their improvements worked.

The exercise revolves around a game created for the MIT Lean Aerospace Initiative. Both the game and the class lecture emphasize that to maximize value for the customer, processes must be improved as a system—as opposed to individual functions being improved independent of one another.

"Besides learning basic Lean concepts, students learn about the flow and complexity of business processes—and why sometimes the results of improvements may not be realized immediately," said Lean Office focal Todd Burow.

Participants said they'd put to use the lessons they learned.

Megan Prine, Employees Community Fund administrator at Mesa, said she'll apply what she has learned to her job by eliminating redundant steps in the process non-profit organizations use to apply for grants