

**For Immediate Release
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Pioneer Surgical leads Michigan's new economy

Governor Granholm holds Marquette business as an example of the future

Marquette, MI: Pioneer Surgical Technology, creator and manufacturer of innovative spinal and orthopaedic implants, is being hailed by Gov. Jennifer Granholm as a leader in a new focus for our state's economy.

"We need to diversify our state economy," Granholm said during her December 16 visit to the Marquette-based company. "I'm happy to promote Pioneer Surgical Technology as the wave of the future for the state."

Granholm was touring the state to discuss the \$2 billion job creation plan she signed into law in November. The majority of that funding will go to create jobs in four areas: life sciences, advanced manufacturing, alternative energy and homeland security. She noted that Pioneer fits two of those categories: life sciences and advanced manufacturing.

During the visit, Granholm met with Pioneer's CEO, Dr. Matthew Songer, who discussed with her the company's history and plans for expansion.

Songer noted that the company is planning another major facility expansion next year - a previous expansion project was completed two years ago - and developing new and innovative products. The company is currently working on artificial spinal discs that preserve motion and researching biologics: the science of encouraging the body to naturally repair itself.

"Dr. Songer has done unbelievable things here in Marquette," Granholm said. "We want Dr. Songer to be the Bill Gates of Michigan."

Granholm toured the facility with four students and teacher Derek Anderson from Marquette's Bothwell Middle School's entrepreneurship program. The group visited Pioneer's high-tech manufacturing and assembly areas, its advanced testing facility and clean-room packaging area.

"It's important for students to understand how relevant their education is to the world of work," Granholm said.

Songer also discussed with students what areas of their education they should focus on if interested in pursuing a career in the biomedical or advanced manufacturing fields. He recommended studying math, English and a foreign language such as Chinese.

Steve Severson, Pioneer's chief operating officer, agreed.

"We have to have experienced people to work at a manufacturing facility like this," he said.

Granholm invited Severson to testify before the state legislature on why high school education standards should be increased.

"This company is doing great work here in Michigan, and I hope they continue to expand," Granholm said.

Pioneer Surgical Technology is a full service, ISO 13485/1996 certified, medical device firm dedicated to researching, developing, manufacturing and marketing specialized spinal and orthopaedic implants and instruments. Pioneer develops and markets solutions for surgical procedures that have proven difficult or problematic for both surgeons and patients. Pioneer's innovative and improved systems target today's toughest surgical problems. Their pioneering foresight has made them a leader in developing an outstanding workforce that produces the highest quality instruments and implants for numerous surgical cable procedures. Pioneer is aggressively developing into a growth-focused, full line spinal company in which all employees are considered partners and function as a team.

For more information, contact Pioneer at (906) 226-9909 or visit their website at www.pioneersurgical.com.

Dr. Matthew Songer, center, and Gov. Jennifer Granholm, right, discuss clean-room packaging procedures with Donna Williams, a Pioneer Surgical Technology employee, during the governor's recent visit.

Pioneer Surgical Technology's COO Steve Severson, left, explains a portion of the company's manufacturing process to Gov. Jennifer Granholm while touring the facility with Dr. Matthew Songer, right, the company's CEO.