

HV Mfg

SPRING 2014

COMPANY PROFILE

Fryer Machine Systems, Inc.

Manufacturing solutions

LEADERSHIP PROFILE

Meet Russ Yeager

Lean Six Sigma for all

P-Tech comes to the Valley



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Cover photo: Larry Fryer on the factory floor at Fryer Machine Systems, Inc., by Tom LeBarbera/Picture This Studios



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Harold King
Executive Vice President
Council of Industry

DEAR READER

Hudson Valley manufacturers and productivity

United States manufacturers, according to OECD statistics, are the most productive in the world, with their workforce far surpassing the worker productivity rate of any other major manufacturing economy. Measured simply as output per hour, worker productivity is probably the single most important indicator of an economy's health: it drives real incomes, inflation, interest rates, profits and share prices. Higher productivity means higher wages and living standards.

Manufacturers drive productivity in two important ways. First, we develop the cutting edge technological advances that make all workers more productive. It is United States manufacturers, for example, that are behind the microprocessor in the smartphone or laptop that keeps you connected to the world; and we develop and produce the flu vaccine that keeps you at your workstation. Second, for more than a century, we have led the effort for more efficient processes and continuous improvement. From the division of labor to the assembly line to Lean manufacturing and Six Sigma, manufacturers are always working to make products faster, better and less expensive.

In this edition of HV Mfg. we present several examples of local manufacturers making an impact on productivity (Robotics in the Real World and Lean Six Sigma for All). We profile a company (Fryer Machine) whose equipment is used by manufacturers around the world to improve their productivity. We meet a leader (Russell Yeager) who has spent his career building efficient and productive manufacturing companies. And we preview a new educational program (P-TECH) designed to build the skilled and productive workforce of the future.

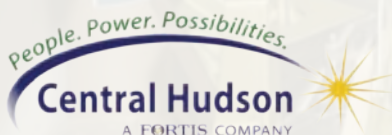
Also included in this edition is the 2014 Council of Industry Membership Directory, a list of some of the most productive and innovative companies in the world and the organizations that support them. Since 1910 the Council of Industry has been a resource for our region's manufacturing sector. Indeed, local companies created this organization in an effort to help them comply with regulations, train workers and build economies of scale—that is to say, to help them be more productive. 

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Managing energy risk with the Energy Buying Consortium

Employing sound strategies to minimize our members' exposure to volatile energy markets while maximizing their opportunity to save.



The Council of Industry's electricity buying consortium marks its 10th anniversary in 2014. That decade has seen plenty of growth and savings but, above all, there has been a great deal of learning. We have learned about energy markets and their deregulation as well as the industry's terminology and jargon. Most importantly, we have learned about risk management and procurement strategies. Now, 10 years on, our consortium participants are educated and informed consumers of electricity, employing sound strategies that minimize their exposure to the volatile energy markets while maximizing their opportunity to save.

Origins

New York was a regulated electricity market until 2000, when the New York Public Service Commission began separating the charges for electricity and its delivery in the state. In separating electricity and its transmission, New York gave consumers the power to choose. Thus, customers were able to select an energy supply company

(ESCO), and have the possibility of reducing their electric bills while retaining the same poles and wires. Early on, however, only the state's largest firms were taking advantage of this option while many smaller firms were content to remain with their utilities. This was especially true in our region, where Central Hudson had long managed to keep its rates comparatively low. By 2002 this environment was changing as additional rules were put in place to encourage more firms to explore the marketplace.

It was at about this time that I was introduced to Kelly Douvlis, a business development manager with the ESCO Tractabel Energy Services. Kelly was (and remains) a seasoned professional in the energy business. With Masters degrees in electrical engineering and business administration, as well as experience working for a utility and in wholesale level markets, Kelly was looking for new ways to reach firms in the



Kelly Douvlis, Business Development Manager at Direct Energy (left) and Harold King, CEO of Council of Industry.

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The consortium provides all its participants the same level of expertise and resources that large companies enjoy. This includes access to market data and information, favorable contract terms and flexible purchase options.

Mid-Hudson region to help them capitalize on the deregulated markets.

Kelly wanted to meet to discuss electricity deregulation and the resulting opportunities it presented to our members. What little experience I had with the deregulated electricity markets made me skeptical that there actually were any opportunities for our members, but I invited Kelly to meet with me at the Council's Desmond Campus office.

At that meeting, on the porch of the Desmond on a beautiful summer day, Kelly explained the changing electricity market and how there would be opportunities for smaller firms to proactively manage their energy prices and protect themselves from the volatility of the open market. "Through an aggregation," she said, "we can give your small and mid-sized manufacturers the same resources and opportunities big companies have."

That phrase turned on the proverbial light bulb over my head. This was the phrase I came to use over and over as CEO of the Council of Industry. Whether referencing training or advocacy, regulatory compliance or insurance, the Council, I would point out, leverages many smaller firms to maximize their voices, their resources and their buying power.

The First Class

In the summer and fall of 2004, as we held seminars and information sessions to explain deregulation and the opportunities it presented to our members, Central Hudson proved to be a big help. A member of the Council of Industry since the 1910's, Central Hudson was, and continues to be, a big supporter of manufacturing and its manufacturing customers and has earned the respect of those customers by providing excellent service through the years. It was significant, therefore, that Central Hudson participated in the information sessions, explaining deregulation and encouraging Council members to seek other sources to purchase their electricity. "It was and is important that our region's businesses are able to make informed decisions regarding their energy supply," says John Masergian, Media Relations Director at Central Hudson Gas & Electric. "Working with a trusted association like the Council of Industry proved to be successful in providing the resources businesses need."

By the end of 2004 a core group of companies – 14 in all – formed the first class of the Council of Industry buying consortium. Ten years later, all but two of those 14 remain part of the group. "We have been in since the beginning," says Eastern Alloys VP of Operations John Malmgreen. "At first we relied completely on Kelly Douvlis' advice about when to buy and which product to choose. Now, while we still listen carefully to her and others, we are so much more informed that we are comfortable making the decisions ourselves and, I think, quite successfully too."

The Consortium in 2014

Over the years the group has grown to nearly 40 participating companies. Some things have changed since that first year. For example, we now partner with Direct Energy Business. Direct, which recently bought Hess Energy Marketing (HEM) is one of the nation's leading energy service companies. Al Lussier, Director of North and West Sales for Direct, is appreciative of the Council consortium. "Direct Energy

A long term goal of the consortium is to become a true aggregation treating the purchase of the electric load of the entire group as if it were a single entity or even doing a “power pool,” purchasing a hedge from the wholesale market.

Business greatly values what the Council of Industry does throughout this region,” he says. “Our long term partnership and the solutions we offer were built by listening to the Council of Industry and its members. The partnership allows us to review and sign new contracts with Council members on an ongoing basis and that ensures the best energy management approach for each member’s business.” With Direct’s acquisition of HEM we are now able to offer natural gas as well as a variety of electricity product options.

Some important things have not changed over the course of the decade. “Managing energy risk is not a practice of predicting energy markets, but of having a proactive procurement strategy and being disciplined in executing decisions,” says Duvlis. “This was and remains the fundamental guiding principle that has brought members of the consortium energy savings and budget certainty for over 10 years now.” Second, true to Duvlis’ original concept, the consortium provides the expertise and resources once enjoyed only by large companies to all of its participants, including access to market data and information, transparent contractual terms and flexible purchase options.

One more thing that has not changed is the focus on working with a single energy service company as our provider. While it is tempting to procure energy by way of the lowest bidder, to pit companies against each other the way you might for office supplies, the Council Electricity Consortium remains committed to the concept of a long-term, mutually beneficial strategic relationship with one supplier. On the part of Direct Energy, “The partnership with the Council exemplifies our commitment to providing a suite of total energy management solutions to businesses to better manage their bottom line,” says John Schultz, Business Vice President of East Sales.

We believe that there are more and lasting savings to be had by working with our single supplier to understand the markets and regulatory climate, to keep fees to a minimum, to monitor prices and buying opportunities year round and to leveraging our collective consumption for the best price over time. Council members get calls from electricity brokers almost weekly, but these brokers generally offer only quick fixes. They don’t help the companies understand what they are buying and, for the most part, charge way too much for their “service.” Our model has proven successful and we will stay with it for the foreseeable future.

What’s Next?

Even if nothing changes, the consortium will be successful so long as we continue to help the participants make informed procurement decisions. Some possible changes might include additional and more efficient use of technology to keep our members informed about market trends and buying strategies. A long-term goal of the consortium is to become a true aggregation, treating the purchase of the electric load of the entire group as if it were by a single entity or even doing a “power pool,” purchasing a hedge from the wholesale market. Such a purchase would certainly offer more opportunities to manage risk and produce savings. “The opportunities are great,” Duvlis says, “that’s why we continue to work to increase participation and grow the consortium.”

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Proposed Tax Breaks for New York Manufacturers: Less than meets the eye

What appear, upon first glance, to be proposals highly beneficial to manufacturers are really very narrow breaks for a very few companies in the sector.

In early January, Governor Cuomo released his 2014 Executive budget. This budget is an attempt by the governor to meet the current fiscal and economic challenges of New York by both reducing costs and improving the state's economic climate through investment and economic development.

Governor Cuomo included several items in this budget that are intended to promote the manufacturing sector in the state to help spur economic growth. This is welcome recognition for a sector that, according to the US Bureau of Economic Analysis, contributes some \$70 billion to the economy, ranking it 6th among the 50 states. Moreover, according to the U.S. Commerce Department, manufacturing has a larger multiplier effect than any other major economic activity: \$1 spent in manufacturing generates \$1.35 in additional economic activity.



Photo courtesy office of the Governor



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The Devil is in the Details

Specifically, the Governor's budget proposes:

- defining “manufacturer” as a taxpayer or combined group with more than 50% of gross receipts from the sale of goods produced by manufacturing; excludes power generation and distribution, natural gas extraction and distribution, co-generated steam, film/TV/commercial production and fuel blending.
- defining “qualified New York manufacturer” as a taxpayer or combined group that is a manufacturer and with either at least \$10 million or 100% of its manufacturing property in NYS; or a taxpayer with 2,500 manufacturing employees and \$100 million in manufacturing property in-state.
- limiting the Article 9-A investment tax credit to “qualified NY manufacturers” and to qualified agri- and mining business;” defines qualified agri-business and mining as taxpayer/combined group with at least 50% of gross receipts from such in-state activity; eliminates the ITC for air and water pollution control equipment, security broker/dealers, investment advisory services, and film production; prohibits the ITC for property that had already served as the basis for the ITC or EZ-ITC.
- creating a new refundable credit under Articles 9A and 22 equal to 20% of real property taxes paid by a qualified NY manufacturer; excludes PILOT payments, any RPTs deducted from ENI or federal AGI calculations, or RPTs used to calculate another tax credit. Recaptures credits if RPTs are subsequently lowered after legal challenge or other actions.
- reducing the Article 9-A entire net income tax rate to zero, effective 1/1/14, for a qualified NY manufacturer with a MTCD surcharge apportionment factor of zero (the bill also proposes the adoption of single sales factor apportionment for purposes of the MTCD surcharge.)

Given these facts, investing in the State's manufacturing sector is a good strategy for sparking the economy and broad based tax relief for the sector has been seen by the Manufacturing Alliance of New York (MANY) as the best way to grow the sector. Indeed, it has been one of the group's top priorities since its founding in 2008. “The devil,” the saying goes, “is in the details” and deep within the budget proposal are several details—itemized above—that call into question the real value of the proposals to the sector.

What appear, upon first glance, to be proposals highly beneficial to manufacturers— including corporate franchise tax reductions, 18A eliminations and property tax cuts (all measures that the Manufacturers Alliance have advocated for years)—are really very narrow breaks for a very few companies in the sector.

One large example can be found in the geographic barriers that are included within the Governor's proposal, specifically surrounding the MTA region. As a proponent of increasing commerce and business, MANY has always found it counterproductive to make geographic

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barriers for policy and tax break incentives.

The MTA Region exemption is challenging on two fronts. First, excluding all the manufacturing firms in Long Island, New York City and the Hudson Valley immediately excludes many of the State's manufacturers. In fact, according to the Alliances Manufacturing Research Institute Study done in 2010, New York City alone is the single largest center of manufacturing in the State, with more than 81,000 jobs and \$4.2 billion dollars in payroll from 2009 alone. To make this definition to exclude anyone within the MTA region is going to impact a large portion of our State's manufacturers, all of whom deal with the same high taxes and challenging business climate as their sector partners in the rest of the State.

Second, to put a restriction on tax exemption for business located outside of the MTA region that conducts business there is another example of counter productivity. The State should never be in the business of discouraging their manufacturers from conducting any sort of business that generates revenue, especially within their own State. With that, MANY highly recommends a serious analysis and reconsideration of the geographic barriers being proposed in the MTA region, both for businesses located there and upstate manufacturers who conduct business there.

The Manufacturers Alliance continues to work with the Administration, Senate and Assembly on moving forward a pro-manufacturing agenda.



In addition to the State's budget, we work throughout the year on business friendly legislation that will help create a better business climate for our critical sector.

By KARYN BURNS

Council of Industry Director of Government Affairs and Executive Director of the Manufacturers Alliance of New York.



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LEADERSHIP PROFILE

Russell Yeager,
President of Alcoa Fastening Systems

PROUD AS HUCK

Opportunity in every challenge

HV Mfg sat down in Kingston with Alcoa Fastening Systems President Russell Yeager to discuss fastening equipment, industry challenges and specifics about what's involved in leading a manufacturing plant in the Hudson Valley.





HV Mfg: So how did a kid from Erie, Pennsylvania end up running a manufacturing operation for a Fortune 500 company like Alcoa?

R.Y.: Well, it wasn't a straight line and there have been many stops along the way! I worked in safety, human resources and production for several companies. Over time, I learned from a variety of

experiences and gained a lot of knowledge about manufacturing processes and about people. When I graduated from Gannon University I got a job in the admissions office. Soon after that I was offered a job with a small manufacturer of high pressure fittings in Cleveland. That was my first entry into manufacturing and, it being a small shop, I got to experience all areas of production, from machining and heat treat to inspection and assembly. After a couple of years I left them for a foundry/machine shop where they needed someone to manage and update their safety programs. When they needed someone to take on the role of HR Manager, I thought it would be interesting and grabbed the opportunity.

HV Mfg: What did you major in at Gannon?

R.Y.: I was a Sociology/Business major. I was very interested in working with people and thought about getting into Human Resources – we called it ‘personnel’ back then – but Gannon did not offer that degree.

HV Mfg: You mentioned a variety of experiences. What kind of things did you do?

R.Y.: Well, let's see. I had to implement safety programs where none existed and the owners thought ‘this is a waste’. That was an interesting experience. I have done recruiting of skilled labor as well as of people at senior management level. Several of the workplaces where I was in charge of HR were organized, so I have led labor negotiations — that is something I do here at Alcoa as well. I have had to close plants and lay people off. I have the excitement to expand plants and rapidly add workers. Budgets, audits, sales marketing and financial analysis, you name it, I've done it.

I got to Kingston just before Alcoa bought the plant. I was recruited here as Director of Human Resources. I think they liked my experience with unionized plants and with safety and health as well as the fact that I was very familiar with different types of manufacturing. Alcoa bought the plant in 2000 and in 2002 I was put in charge.

HV Mfg: Tell us about Alcoa Fastening Systems.

R.Y.: Alcoa is the world's third largest producer of aluminum and aluminum products. One of their product lines is fastening systems used by the aerospace, automotive and commercial transportation industries. Here in Kingston, we make the tools that are used to apply those fasteners. Our ‘Huck’ tools are very highly engineered pneumatic and hydraulic products.

HV Mfg: We remember when the company was called ‘Huck Manufacturing’. Is this why the line is still called Huck?

R.Y.: Yes, the Huck brand had a great reputation in the industry so we kept the name.

While the facility has changed

owners numerous times since it's founding in the 1940's—Federal Mogul, Thiokol, Cordiant and finally Alcoa Fastening System is 2000—there has

been a lot of continuity, even through the changes. We have many employees who have worked here through all those owners.

HV Mfg: What do you see as Alcoa Fastening Systems' biggest challenges in the next several years?

R.Y.: We are dealing with several challenges, but the biggest is being able to compete globally. Part of our business, specifically on the aerospace side, is very highly engineered and customized. Here, we do very well. We work closely with customers like Boeing and Airbus to make sure our products are meeting their ever-changing demands. These proprietary products are very profitable, but only for a short time. Our other business—transportation and commercial—is more competitive with global completion and the selling of engineered products. These industries are much more price sensitive and many other competitors exist, offering other installation options. The tolerances for building and assembling the tractor-trailer for coal cars are not nearly as complex as they are for the fuselage of a passenger or fighter jet. We offer innovative solutions to meet those high demands. Some of our global competitors can make things cheaper than we can, but our focus is to make highly engineered total installation systems and offer a high-valued product. We do not lose out on lower technology and cheaper installation applications. Figuring out how to continue to win business, stay profitable and understand market placement in an ever-changing environment while keeping our high-tech edge is the biggest challenge going forward.



“Figuring out how to continue to win business, stay profitable and understand market placement in an ever-changing environment while keeping our high-tech edge is the biggest challenge.”

HV Mfg: What are the opportunities?

R.Y.: I guess with every challenge there are opportunities. Like I said, aerospace is a big opportunity for us as long as we can continue to be innovative and offer solutions to our customers' challenges. Looking ahead, we see opportunity in the areas of noise abatement and ergonomics. Making



our tools quieter, lighter and easier to maneuver will make us more attractive in the marketplace. We think customers in all the industries we serve are willing to pay a little more for a tool if it is less likely to cause injury to a worker and, by virtue of its design, makes them more productive.

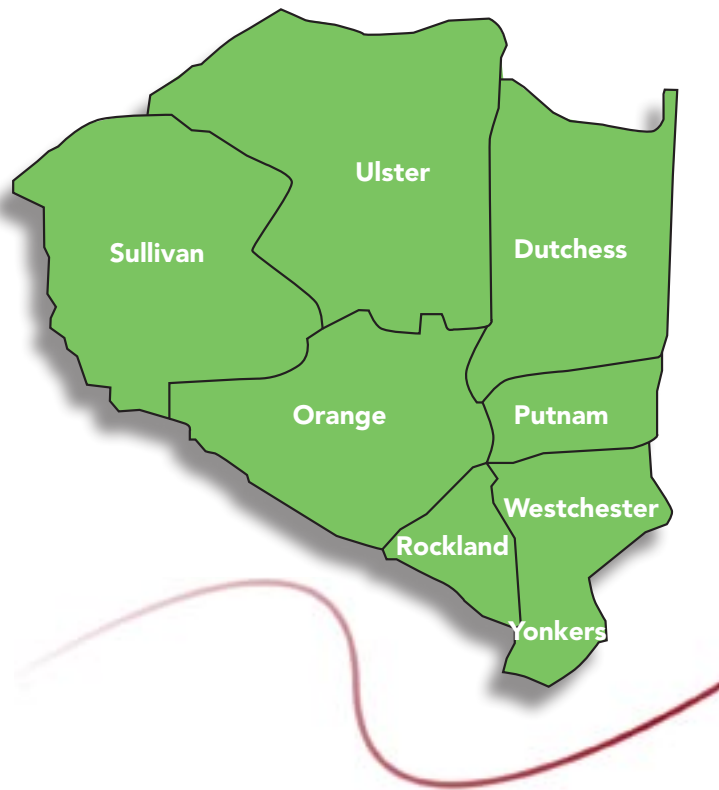
HV Mfg: You describe a company that needs really good workers to succeed – what qualities do you look for in a manager? What about your frontline workers?

R.Y.: We look for enthusiasm, adaptability and a willingness to learn. I've been doing this stuff for a long time and will tell anyone – ‘you are your attitude’. That is true for all positions though, obviously, if we are hiring for an engineering position we look for an engineering degree. The same is true for skilled workers, such as machinists. What differentiates one candidate from another is their attitude.



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“It is too easy to get burned out by working too many hours and to neglect personal lives. I want people who can work hard, but are also able to let it go when it is time to go home. Those people will contribute to the company for decades, not just a few years.”

by being visible, available and communicating. It is my job as the leader of the organization to keep everyone on the same page; to set clear goals and then to provide our people what they need to achieve those goals.

HV Mfg: What do you think makes a good leader?

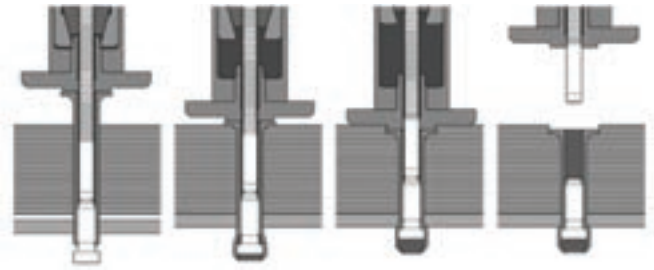
R.Y.: Knowing your strengths and weaknesses is important – then playing to your strengths and mitigating your weaknesses. I also think it is really important to be proactive, to think ahead. I guess we call that strategic thinking. You never know when a door is going to open, so you need to be prepared when one does. That means anticipating opportunities and, on the flip side, potential problems. Along those lines, it is important for a leader to continue to manage. Most bad situations can be avoided by managing, that is to say,

by being visible, available and communicating. It is my job as the leader of the organization to keep everyone on the same page; to set clear goals and then to provide our people what they need to achieve those goals.

HV Mfg: Do you think that your approach is a little different because you came out of Human Resources?

R.Y.: I guess that may be true. I’m probably more aware of the need to effectively communicate with the entire workforce because of past HR experiences. I am also, maybe, a bit more sensitive to the value of building consensus, to respect all who contribute. I am also 100 percent committed to workplace safety, which is definitely

drawn directly from my HR background. One more thing that probably comes from the HR side is that I believe, for the long-term success of Alcoa



Fastening Systems, it is essential for each employee – whether hourly or top management – to strike the right work/life balance. It is too easy to get burned out by working too many hours and to neglect personal lives. I want people who can work hard, but are also able to let it go when it is time to go home. Those people will contribute to the company for decades, not just a few years.

HV Mfg: Finally, this company has been a member of the Council of Industries for more than six decades; you serve on our board of directors and were also president of the board. What is the Council good at and what can it do better?

R.Y.: I have always found the interactions between people who work in manufacturing to be the most valuable. The HR network, the EHS network, and the CEO meetings are great. I think it is too easy to get caught up in your own company and your own industry to the point of putting yourself in a box. I appreciate hearing what others are dealing with, everyone learns from those experiences. I also can’t say enough about the training – especially the supervisor training. As far as what we can do better, I would say making the greater community aware of the manufacturing sector in the Hudson Valley. Specifically, that there are good jobs, careers really, in manufacturing. We really need good people if we are going to compete in our industry.



COMPANY PROFILE

FRYER MACHINE SYSTEMS, INC.

Manufacturing solutions

A “can do” attitude has stood Fryer Machine Systems in good stead since 1982, leading to continued growth as the company has turned its focus to built-to-order engineered machine tools that provide specialized solutions for industry.

[PHOTO: LARRY FRYER ON THE FACTORY FLOOR]



Manufacturing Manager Eric Swart records test measurements on a Fryer ET-18 lathe, one of the machines in Fryer's Easy Turn Series of toolroom lathes.

Albert Einstein once said, "In the middle of a difficulty lies opportunity." The founding of Fryer Machine Systems, Inc. embodies this very idea: when things don't go as planned, find the workaround solution; look for the silver lining; don't just give up, because you never know where a detour might take you.

Back in the early 1980s, Larry Fryer was an engineer for a machine tool company based in Wisconsin. After being laid off in 1982, during an economic downturn, he decided to set up his own business and run it from the second bedroom of his East Chester apartment. His new company handled the servicing and updating of Computer Numerical Control machines. CNC machines are automated machining tools that are controlled with precisely programmed commands encoded on a computer. These differ from machining tools that are controlled manually, via hand wheels or levers, or are mechanically automated via cams alone. "Many of the machines at this time were still using paper tape to store the commands and we would go in and convert them to computers," explained Fryer.

The company grew and, after a couple of years, moved into machine tool distributorship as well. By 1988 it had distributorships in 11 states and 18 sub-dealers. By

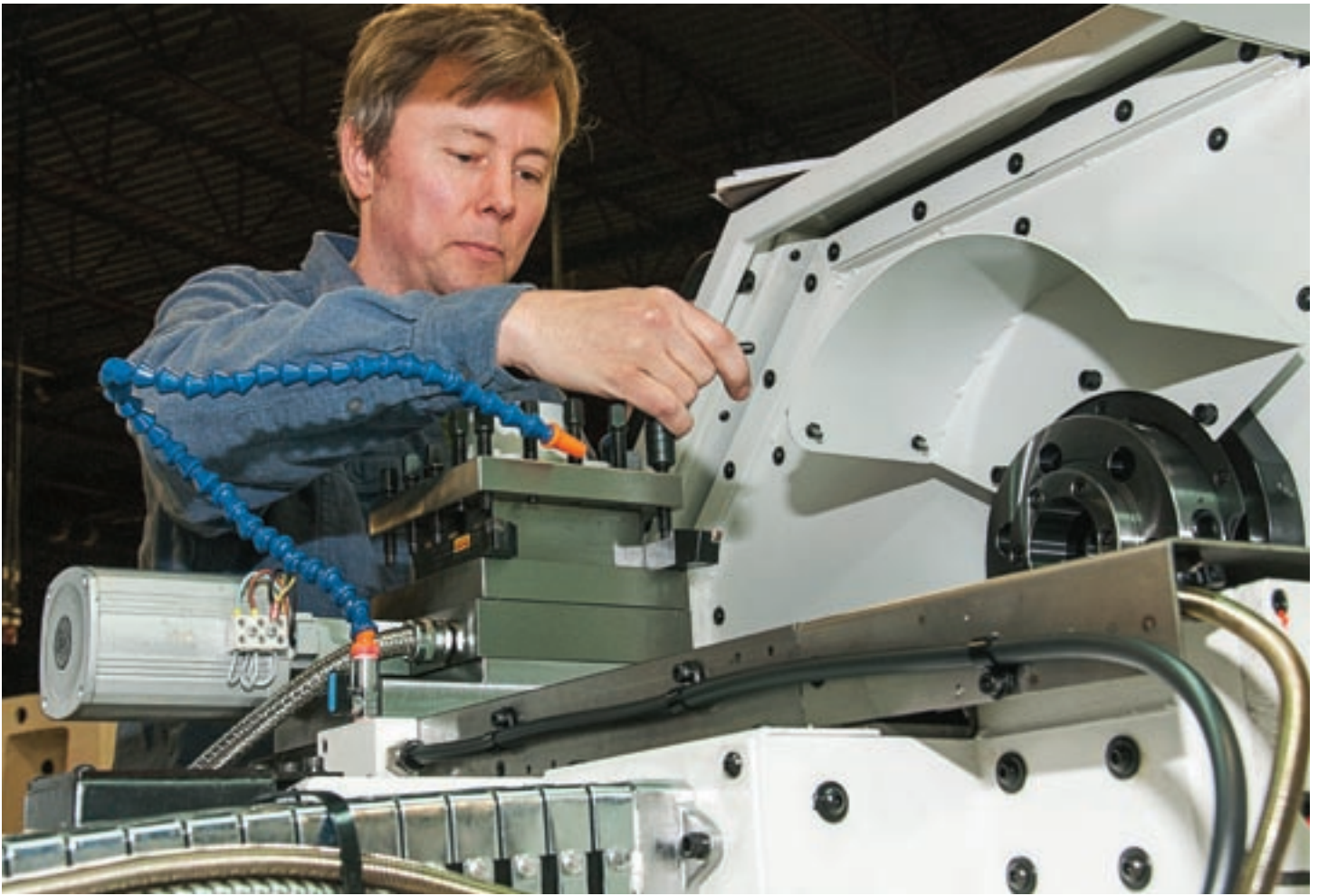
The MB14— a toolroom 3 axis bed mill—was a hit when it was introduced in 1994 and Fryer was stacking orders like hotcakes, with 200 orders in the first year alone. The first MB14 machine manufactured is still in use. Pictured here is the most recent update.

1992, the expanding company moved into a 10,000 sq. ft. building in Patterson, NY and, two years later, was manufacturing a toolroom 3 axis bed mill, the MB14, under its own brand – Fryer Machine. Business was booming and soon, until a larger building was completed, they had to erect a 5,000 sq. ft. tent next to their facility to house additional operations. The MB14 was a hit and they were stacking orders like hotcakes, with 200 orders in the first year alone. What set this machine apart from others on the market were its bed mill—which made it sturdier—and its quill, or handle, that enabled the operator to work the machine manually when needed, making it more accurate and more versatile. The first MB14 machine Fryer manufactured is still in use in Providence, RI. Fryer said, "I have contacted the company

to let them know that whenever they are ready to retire that machine there is a place for it here — I want it back."

There were growing pains during the mid 1990s. Keeping a workforce large enough to meet demand meant hiring people that had minimal skills and then training them on the job. Space was another issue, as the tent would attest to. But in 1998, Fryer Machine Systems received assistance from the Putnam County Economic Development Corp. and the Hudson Valley Technology Development Center to secure the resources and expertise





Fryer currently employs 56 people and considers them its greatest resource. It is the production workers, engineers and mechanics who rise to meet each challenge that have propelled this company to success.

orders were canceled,” said Fryer.

A company reinvents itself

When a business is growing very fast and the demand for its products is great, it is easy to overlook the areas that may not be as efficient or effective as they could be. The silver lining to these tough times in the early 2000s was the chance it gave Fryer Machine to take stock and reinvent itself. The SBA aided Fryer in securing a disaster loan to help keep the business afloat during this difficult time, but the company had to let two-thirds of its

necessary to build the 40,000 sq. ft. facility they currently occupy. At this point they were manufacturing CNC lathes with the first “conversational” touch controls, the Touch 2000 CNC control. By the turn of the century, Fryer’s product line included 22 different machine tool models for tool room and production shops. They were selling machines both here in the US and internationally.

In 2001 that whirlwind came to a halt. As the events of September 11th, shook the world and the global economy struggled, Fryer Machine lost 60% of its sales almost overnight. “September 11 had a chilling effect on our sales. Not only did we stop receiving new orders, but many existing

employees go, keeping only the best and brightest.

The company also needed to find a way to build higher-quality machines with less, and that is exactly what it did. Larry Fryer explains, “We came out of this time a stronger, more profitable, nimbler company.” The result is that quality is now manifested in every machine Fryer makes and in its focus on providing solutions to customers’ problems. When a customer needs a machine that can make parts in a certain way or with a specific material, Fryer’s engineers will find a way to build that machine.

Over the last decade, Fryer Machine Systems has focused on built-to-order engineered machine tools that provide specialized solutions. Case in point: Raymond Corp., a forklift manufacturer in Syracuse, NY, came to them with a problem. The company was receiving numerous orders for forklifts, but could not produce them fast enough to meet demand. Raymond needed to manufacture rails for their forklifts that were 40 or more feet long. With their existing equipment, machining these rails required multiple steps. Fryer was able to engineer and manufacture a machine that would produce the rails more efficiently, by enabling the machine to move along the rail rather than requiring the rail to move through the machine. This solution increased Raymond’s production capability from 40 forklifts a week to 70.

In another example, an engineer from Boeing came to Fryer with an elbow duct workpiece that required 9 different operations to produce. “He had an idea of a way to manufacture the part using far fewer steps, but everyone told him it wouldn’t work. We said, let’s give it a try. It didn’t work, but we did find another solution that reduced the operations in manufacturing the elbow and Boeing now has the patent on it,” said Fryer.



ATK, another aerospace manufacturer, came to Fryer for help in producing a machine that would cut through a super abrasive material without needing to have the tool bits constantly replaced. Fryer was able to come up with a CO2 laser that cuts along 5 axis to solve the problem. It is this formula of problem-solving that has worked well for Fryer Machine. Sometimes customers come to them looking for a solution; sometimes one of its sales people will hear a customer discussing a problem and ask the engineers, “Can’t we do something that would fix this?”

This “can do” attitude propelled Fryer to further expand in 2007, adding 7,000 sq. ft. to the manufacturing and training facility. And this year, another 8,000 sq. ft., which will include a showroom, has been added. The product line now includes 5-axis machines and over 40 models and Fryer is the largest purchaser of Siemens controls in the US. While many items in the company’s inventory come from global suppliers, there are also some products from local companies, such as Council of Industry member Hatfield Metal Fabrication, Inc.

Fryer currently employs 56 people and considers them its greatest resource. It is the production workers, engineers and mechanics who rise to meet each challenge that have propelled this company to success. Of course, finding workers that are able to be problem solvers as well as manufacturers is not easy. “That is one of the pluses

to being a business here in the Hudson Valley; there is better access to a higher-skilled workforce than you would find in many other locations,” Fryer explains. “Still, finding qualified, experienced machinists is next to impossible. We can find some engineers and welders, but they often are green and don’t have the experience we would like. If they are the type that will rise to the challenge, we will work with them and they learn as they go.” Fryer is excited about the Advanced Manufacturing Lab that just opened at SUNY Westchester and is hopeful this and other initiatives promoting STEM education and manufacturing will be beneficial for the workforce. Fryer himself has a degree in electrical engineering, but is a self-taught machinist.

“We have to use expertise and knowledge as our edge against the competition because there is a higher cost of doing business in New York,” said Fryer, acknowledging that the Hudson Valley also presents some obstacles to manufacturers. Regardless of the added costs and challenges, however, Fryer Machine isn’t going anywhere because, as far as Fryer is concerned, “The quality of life here is great ... good schools, parks, and great views. It’s the best place in the country to live.”

Opposite page: Eric adjusts cutting tool prior to testing; above: Builder Glen Conforti prepares to mount a power drawbar; below: Glen adjusts spindle belt tension on a Fryer MB-16, a toolroom bed mill with manual quill.





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P-Tech comes to the Valley

Classes start in the fall at four New York State funded Hudson Valley schools designed to graduate students with extensive technical knowledge and real-world skills. The program promises to help manufacturers meet future workforce needs.



THERESA KEEGAN is a freelance writer in the Hudson Valley. She can be reached at tkeegan1@yahoo.com.

In our dynamic world, preparing students for a future career is a real challenge, especially since many of their jobs will likely be in positions or fields that don't exist today.

Enter the P-Tech solution. This new school model, "Pathways in Technology Early College High School," is designed to graduate students with extensive technical knowledge and real-world skills as well as with both a High School and an Associate's degree. And it's coming to the Hudson Valley.

"It's an energized program and will get these kids excited about a career path," says Frank Falatyn, president of Fala Technologies. "We need to offer students options, different types of schooling, and this is one of those rare opportunities where we can try something different."

"This country should be doing everything it can to give more kids the chance to go to schools like this," said President Obama on his October 2013 visit to the nation's first P-Tech in Brooklyn, NY.



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“We are making sure our students are more prepared for life after graduation by linking up the skills we teach in the classroom with the needs of 21st century employers... These public-private partnerships are a model for success for our students, our employers and our regional economies.”

Governor Cuomo

Although the six-year program, begun in 2011, has yet to send off its first graduating class, P-Tech has been quickly-embraced by nearly everyone who is seriously grappling with education reform. After the program launched, in Brooklyn, NY, Chicago soon started four similar schools and New York City added two more sites. By 2013, President Obama was citing P-Tech in his State of the Union address as a welcome innovation in education. In August 2013, Governor Cuomo announced funding for 16 similar programs statewide and these schools expect to welcome their incoming freshman classes this fall.

Students in the innovative six-year program will earn both a high school and an Associate's degree without incurring any tuition costs. Along the way, they will have opportunities to work with area businesses in internships, mentor programs and, for some, summer employment.

The Hudson Valley Region has received state funding to start four new P-Tech programs and the plans for them are as diverse as is the region. Newburgh will host a program focused on Information Technology while the upper Hudson Valley program (Dutchess, Ulster, Sullivan and Orange counties) will focus on Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) and manufacturing. Rockland

will focus on training in IT as well as the engineering and health fields, while Yonkers' emphasis will be on architecture. The fields may be diverse, but the premise is the same.

“This is the integration of three different things: high school, industry and college,” says Kevin Rothman, who will be the new principal at what the Newburgh school district has named Excelsior Academy. “P-Tech is looking for students who, historically, would have difficulty completing high school and/or an Associate's college degree. We're really preparing kids to have the thinking and problem-solving skills that, no matter the profession they choose, will help them be successful.”

P-Tech offers a comprehensive approach to learning. The inaugural



“When it comes to strengthening our schools, we know one size doesn’t fit all students. We have to innovate... The P-TECH model brings business, schools and colleges together to help students prepare for college and career success. We know the P-TECH model keeps students engaged in school and learning. And we know it provides excellent career opportunities for students when they graduate.”

State Education
Commissioner
John B. King, Jr.

program in Brooklyn replaces 40-minute classes with block scheduling, has introduced a longer school day and extended the standard 180-day school year. Aside from covering the standard academic subjects and rounding students out with athletic teams, P-Tech offers specialized evening and enrichment programs. Parents are actively involved in school activities and the partnership with IBM—designers of the concept—is inextricably linked with everything the school does. Each student has a one-on-one mentor from IBM, which brings the company to the school and the students to the workforce.

Stanley S. Litow, president of I.B.M.’s International Foundation, the company’s philanthropic arm, and a former deputy schools chancellor in New York, has said that the P-Tech curriculum was actually mapped backward: I.B.M. employees were polled to discover the nature of the skills that were truly required to do their jobs and would be of value for students to learn.

On an average day, traditional classes like math and English are interspersed with technology and business-centric courses, such as “workplace learning,” which teach networking, critical thinking and presentation skills. In their second year, students can take classes in physics and global studies as well as the business-specific courses and college-level courses in speech, logic and problem solving.

That business partnership is a key component of P-Tech’s promise. “Great outcomes are achieved by working together,” says Harold King, executive director of the Council of Industry, which, along with Mediacom, is the lead business partner for P-Tech in the upper Hudson Valley. “P-Tech is much more flexible and dynamic than traditional education or vocational programs. Our members will be very interested in supporting this.”

The business component of the Upper Hudson Valley P-Tech will be somewhat different from Brooklyn’s. Council of Industry members—



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P-Tech Can't Solve Everything

It will be six years before the first class of P-Tech graduates start providing skilled workers to local manufacturers, so the program doesn't provide a solution to immediate workforce problems. Devon Luty, president of Dorsey Metrology, currently struggles to find employees and training programs that can produce the workers she needs. She credits the efficacy of existing adult education programs in manufacturing, but many are multi-year, part-time programs, which are not suited for people who have other employment and fiscal obligations.

"What would be ideal is finding people who are younger, interested in formal education and creating a program to train them that way," she says. "By the time I've found individuals I want for a job they already have families. They can't take a leap of faith to go to these training programs."

"P-Tech is looking for students who, historically, would have difficulty completing high school and/or an Associate's college degree. We're really preparing kids to have the thinking and problem-solving skills that, no matter the profession they choose, will help them be successful."

Kevin Rothman
Principal, Excelsior Academy

producing a wide range of products and the majority employing fewer than 100 workers—generally seek more diverse skill sets than their larger counterparts. "Students will be able to see many aspects of a company," says King. "This is a chance to demonstrate to kids, early on, that there are lots of opportunities and mobility in smaller companies, that you can advance very quickly within them and that, with the STEM training as a fundamental basis, the possibilities are limitless."

He believes that as P-Tech students visit and interact with the companies over the years, they'll ultimately develop a better idea of real world opportunities, such as in information technology, human resources, sales or production.

"And when jobs open up, the P-Tech students' resumés will be at the top of the pile," says King. "This is a pipe-line. It's a long-term solution for supplying those mid-level skills that are missing in our workforce."

The training in STEM at the upper Hudson Valley P-Tech school can't come soon enough for some area employers. However—as the STEM school involves four counties, 47 school districts and crosses the Hudson River—it is one of the most complex of the schools to implement. Most P-Techs are operating within a single school district and partnering with local community colleges and businesses. They often become an independent school within a school.

"There are some challenges," admits Bonnie Meadow, grant coordinator for Ulster BOCES. "But we believe they can be overcome. We're dealing with our reality and the demands of our circumstances."

One reality that is driving interest in this school's formation is that the region's manufacturing companies are not able to find skilled workers to replace their older and retiring employees. Unless a new skilled workforce crops up soon, there will be huge problems throughout the region.

Organizers of the Upper Hudson Valley P-Tech, which will likely be located in Kingston, expect about 50 freshman students for its inaugural year. The school could expand to serve about 120 students in each grade,



with an expected average total of 700 students in attendance when it reaches capacity.

It is going to take a degree of trust for parents to enroll their children in the innovative P-Tech program, says King. "I think the attraction will be different for different people. Some parents may predominantly be attracted by the free degree (possibly with the chance to earn it in under the 6 years.) Others will want their children to have the extra shot at a good career. And some will see this program as a way to keep kids interested when they don't function optimally in a traditional high school."

"We'll have to make the extent of the work involved clear to the parents," says Newburgh's Rothman. "The kids are going to be expected to work harder. We have goals for these students and expect them to be successful."

"We are committed to trying to solve problems, to deliver STEM education in the region," Meadows says. "The area needs this option."

P-Techs Coming to the Hudson Valley

Information Technology

Business: IBM

Higher Education: SUNY Orange;

K-12: Newburgh Enlarged City School District

Computer Information Technology, Engineering and Health & Green Building Technology

Businesses: Avon, Fairway Testing, All Bright Electric, Hightech Security Services and Wick Arborists

Higher Education: Rockland Community College, Westchester Community College and SUNY IT;

K-12: Regional consortium led by Rockland BOCES with fiscal lead North Rockland Central School District

Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM)

Businesses: Council of Industry, MediaCom

Higher Education: Ulster Community College, Dutchess Community College, Orange Community College, Sullivan Community College and SUNY New Paltz;

K-12: Regional consortium led by Ulster BOCES with fiscal lead Kingston City School District

Architecture

Businesses: Fuller D'Angelo and Yonkers Workforce Investment Board

Higher Education: Westchester Community College;

K-12: Yonkers Public Schools

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Lean Six Sigma for all

Though originally developed to improve industrial practices, the principles of continuous improvement are today being applied to processes in all sectors, including healthcare, service, education, finance and government.

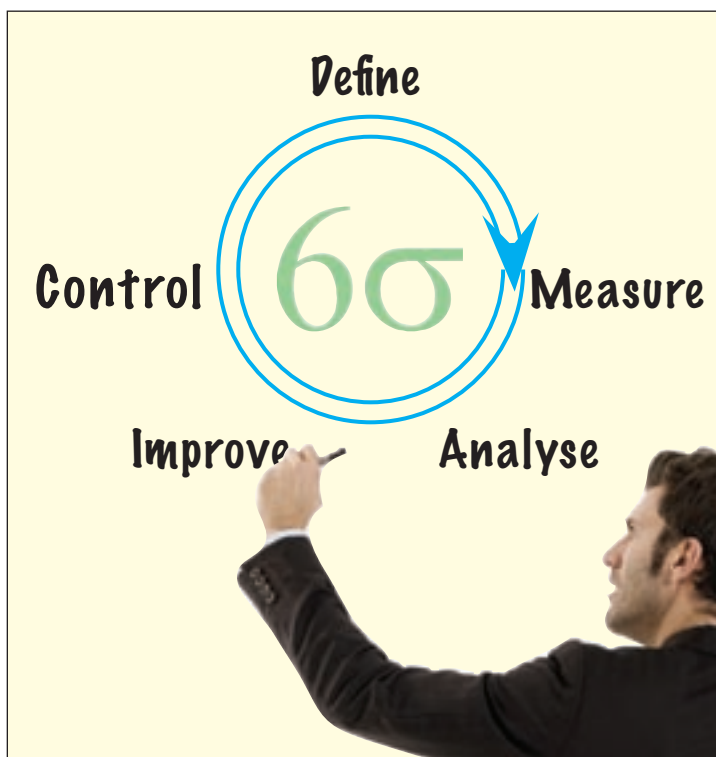
There have been many approaches to driving continuous improvement over the past decades.

Methods such as total quality management, quality circles, problem-solving, process re-engineering, just in time, and others are familiar to many. While some organizations have had great success with one or another of these, others have struggled or experienced numerous “false starts.” Two other popular approaches are lean and Six Sigma. Lean, in general, focuses on eliminating waste and decreasing cycle time, while Six Sigma is geared toward reducing variability and improving quality. Today, more and more organizations are fully integrating these two continuous improvement methodologies. Lean Six Sigma (LSS) focuses on eliminating waste in systems and on implementing statistical methods to drive breakthrough improvements to an organization’s processes.

There are several reasons why LSS has been successful where other quality efforts have failed. A key reason is its focus on the financial impact of the project. By keeping track of the impact cumulative projects have on the organization’s bottom line, management is more convinced about the value of the program and more readily supports it.

A second reason for success is found in the tools of the typical LSS toolkit, which have

VINCENZO BUONOMO is a senior program manager at Rochester Institute of Technology’s Center for Quality and Applied Statistics. He can be reached at 585-475-7207 or vxbsp@rit.edu



been demonstrated to lead teams to positive results. Third, using the DMAIC (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, and Control) structured problem-solving method can significantly reduce waste and variability, lead to preventative solutions, and ultimately improve customer satisfaction. And, finally, the effort to seek breakthrough improvements keeps an organization ahead in this highly competitive environment

Organizations Using Lean Six Sigma

While the DMAIC problem-solving process and many of the concepts and tools were originally developed to improve industrial practices, today they are being applied to processes in all sectors including healthcare, service, education, finance, government and

others.

In manufacturing companies, many LSS projects still tend to be focused on issues in production, assembly, packaging, quality, shipping, and inventory, but there is also a growing recognition in that major improvement opportunities exist “off the production floor,” commonly referred to as transactional processes. These processes include business development, customer surveys, product development, forecasting, hiring, information technology, order entry, payroll, quoting, software, and the warranty process.

Many small and medium size organizations have benefited from using Lean Six Sigma methodologies. Steven Pomeroy, President of Schatz Bearing Corporation, says “Our goal at Schatz has been to get the right people and give them the right tools. These are powerful tools. After

sending numerous people to Yellow Belt and Green Belt training, we have completed several successful projects and have many more in progress. We have targeted processes that we use regularly. The results have been impressive (in excess of \$100,000 per year savings) and there are endless future opportunities. Every company recognizes the need for continuous improvement. This is the way to do it.”

Training Levels

There are various levels of training and certifications available for Lean Six Sigma, and there is significant variation in the programs among training providers. RIT, for example, offers a comprehensive set of courses ranging from an introductory 1-day White Belt seminar to an intensive 24-day Black Belt certification. A three-day Yellow Belt and a 12-day Green Belt program provide participants with an appreciation of the value of a structured problem-solving approach as well as the tools to help a team identify and implement sustainable solutions.

Ideally, everyone in the organization will, at some point, become a team member of a continuous improvement effort. Consequently, many organizations decide that White Belt training is advantageous to give all employees a general awareness of the DMAIC process as well as some of the basic tools and have developed internal White Belt training materials. This approach helps develop a common language for implementing continuous improvement within the organization.

Yellow Belt training gives participants an excellent background in the basic problem-solving tools so that they can support Green Belts and Black Belts as effective team members. The Yellow Belts get experience going through the DMAIC process by working on making improvements to a process within their organization. At the conclusion of the training they come up with recommendations on improvements that might be implemented, but are not expected to actually carry out those strategies. It is suggested that up to 20% of the organization be trained at this level.

The Green Belt receives more training, in the course of which they will work on a project. Typically, once they complete the program, Green Belts spend only a portion of their time on projects, leading some smaller projects and assisting Black Belts with some larger projects. The suggestion is that up to 10% of the organization be trained at this level.

Black Belts get the most intensive training. In some larger companies the Black Belt may spend up to 100% of his or her time on projects, while in small to medium size companies this is not feasible. Consequently, it is recommended that they spend up to 50% of their time on the projects and that there be one FTE Black Belt per 100 employees.

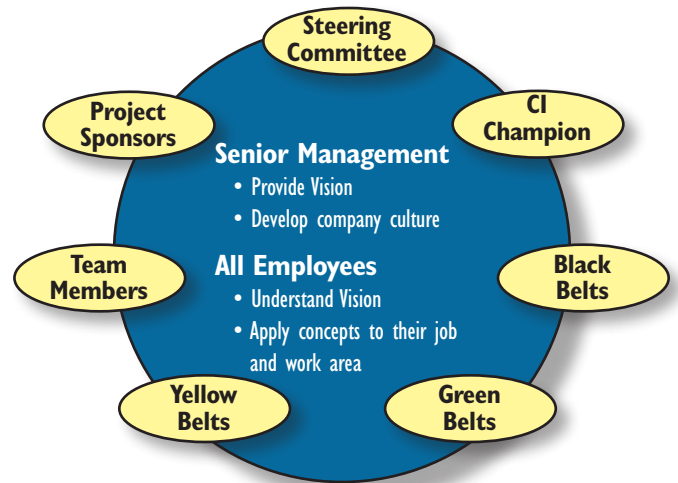
Organizational Structure for a Successful LSS Journey

Regardless of the organization, it is important that any training be supported by an organizational and communication structure that will sustain Lean Six Sigma. As with most initiatives, strong leadership is a requirement. A second key element is the focus on metrics. Metrics are critical to help determine the improvement opportunities, identify the root causes of problems and to evaluate the overall success of the Lean Six Sigma program.

There are several central roles that must be filled:

- Senior management support of and vision to develop a company culture that includes the involvement of all employees are critical and hence at the center of the diagram.

- A Champion drives and oversees the deployment of all continuous improvement efforts throughout the organization. These include prioritizing improvement opportunities, coordinating training, assigning



The way many companies have designed their organizational structure to successfully implement Lean Six Sigma. The recommendation is that all of an organization’s continuous improvement efforts (e.g. quality, safety, cost, delivery etc.) be included within this structure.

and monitoring project teams, maintaining a database of all the projects completed and underway, and evaluating the success not only of the projects, but also of the entire continuous improvement program. It is important that the person be a respected member of the organization and have a general knowledge of the system and its services. It also helps if the person is a Black Belt, or at least a Green Belt.

- The steering committee is the third critical component of the organizational structure. This group, typically chaired by the Champion, helps to establish the policies and procedures that will guide continuous improvement within the organization. The committee also helps to monitor the success of the program and to celebrate accomplishments. The size of the steering committee will vary, but it is recommended that it be a relatively small group (4-6 people) and that its membership be drawn from the leadership level and represent various functional areas. The members of the steering committee do not have to be Green Belts or Black Belts, but should have an understanding of the Lean Six Sigma methods.

- Each project team will have a sponsor who is typically a manager in the area where the project is focused. The sponsor’s role is to help the team gain access to resources that may be required, such as subject matter experts. In addition, the sponsor will help monitor the progress that the team is making. Sponsors do not have to be Green Belts or Black Belts, but they should have an awareness of the Lean Six Sigma approach. The recommendation is that sponsors complete the Yellow Belt training so they are introduced to some of the fundamental tools and given guidance on what to look for during the project review sessions at the end of each step in the DMAIC process.

LSS really needs to be aligned with the strategic goals and business objectives of the organization. These goals help provide the basis for the selection of the right projects, using factors such as the project’s value, resources required, and timing. Once the projects have been identified, the right people with the appropriate training need to be selected, and they need to follow the DMAIC structure problem-solving approach to make the improvement. All of the various improvement projects need to be managed, with frequent reviews and sharing of information. And, finally, organizations need to continually seek additional improvements while making certain that whatever improvements have been made are sustained. The finish line is perfection, so enjoy the journey!

Profile: Central Hudson Gas & Electric

The Bridge to Excellence

Since Central Hudson launched its continuous improvement initiative—dubbed “The Bridge to Excellence”—nearly four years ago, the tools and training of the Lean Six Sigma system have become deeply embedded throughout the entire organization. We have been able to create a culture of continuous improvement so that, on a daily basis, all employees are driving continuous improvement through a collaborative and innovative work environment.

Our goal was simple: leverage continuous improvement to transform our business so that Central Hudson could improve customer service, moderate bill pressures for customers and realize benefits that impact the bottom line! The Lean Six Sigma system was a perfect fit for our organization because it is data driven and fact based – just like we are – and once the results are obtained, they are permanently sustainable.

All Central Hudson employees have participated in Lean Six Sigma training and more than 500 projects have been implemented company-wide. As the tools provided by Lean Six Sigma have been assimilated into our employee’s daily responsibilities, continuous improvement is no longer seen as something done in addition to essential duties and responsibilities but as a fundamental activity.

Furthermore, our executives are deeply committed, visible and inspirational when it comes to continuous improvement. In fact, most serve as project sponsors and help ensure that continuous improvement projects align with business needs. The Champion serves as the leader and main catalyst of change to drive continuous improvement results across the Company. There are 15 Group Champions — key employees in each business group — across the organization who improve the flow of ideas through implementation and have helped accelerate the pace of continuous improvement at Central Hudson.

In summary, Central Hudson has made tremendous progress with its continuous improvement effort in four short years. Over 2,100 ideas have been submitted since inception and the company has realized over \$15 million in annualized benefits. Most important, continuous improvement and the Lean Six Sigma system have allowed Central Hudson to create a common language to reduce waste and deliver results, which has taken our performance to an even higher level.

— By Andrew Lindsay, LSS Champion

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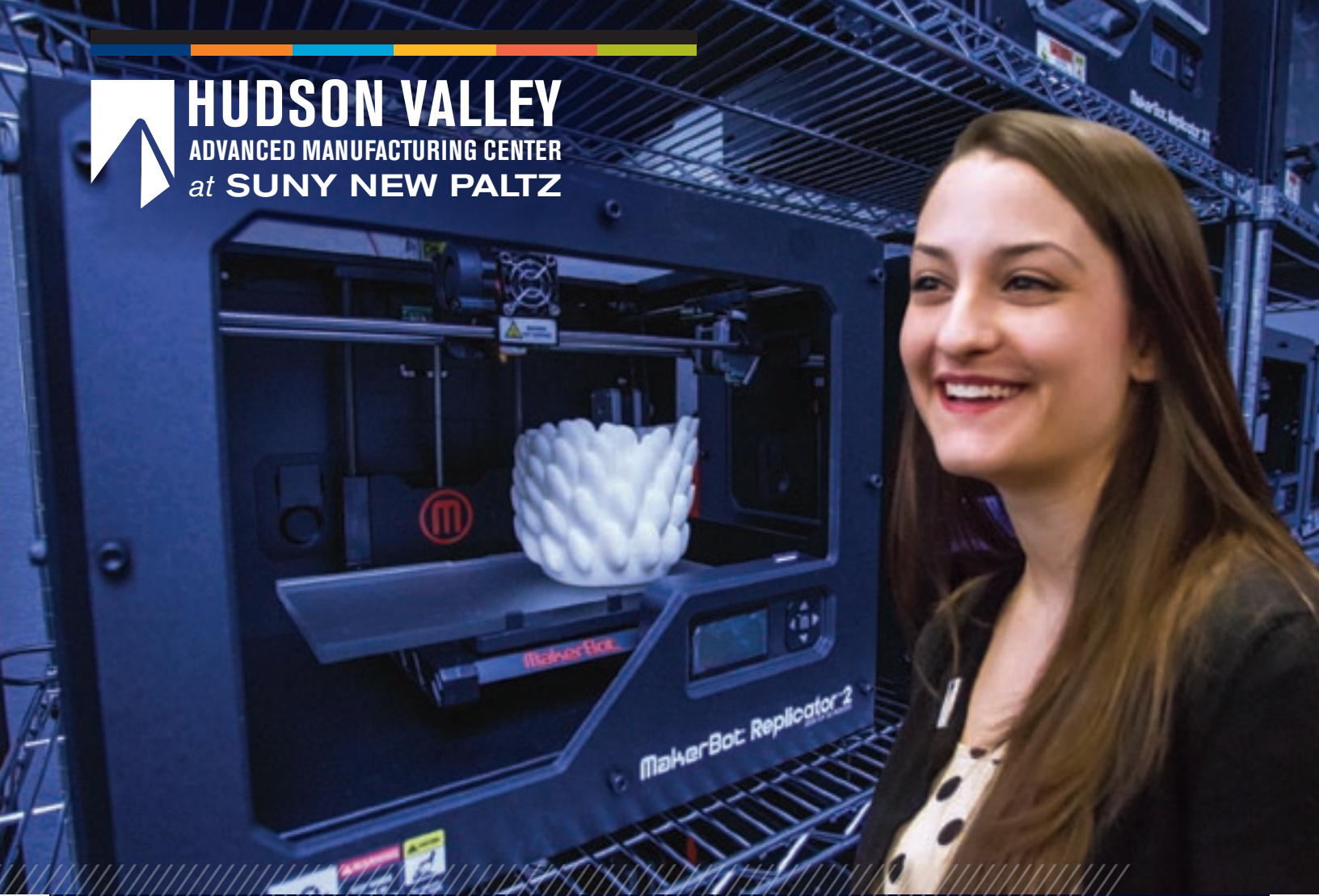
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WHAT WILL WE THINK OF NEXT?

By David King

Robots in reality

Manufacturers are realizing improvements in productivity and quality with the use of robotics, a technology now prevalent in virtually every industry.

Most of us got our first introduction to robots through a science fiction film or TV show. Remember R2-D2 and C3PO from Star Wars, Rosie the Jetsons' maid and the cleverly named "Robot" from Lost in Space? Catering to our every whim, with all sorts of flashing lights and buttons, it is easy to see the appeal these contraptions hold on our imaginations.

Still, despite inspiring countless fantasies, the robots we see on screen have never quite managed to make the jump to reality. That won't be changing anytime soon, but during the past decade or so, people who work in manufacturing have become very familiar with robots. In factories across the world, including right here in the Hudson Valley, robots are becoming more and more common, making a significant impact on productivity and the workforce. In 2008, the total number of robots in the world was 8.6 million (roughly the size of the population of New Jersey), and that number has been growing. In 2013, according to the Robotics Industries Association (RIA), shipments of industrial robots increased over the previous year in every region of the world, including an increase of 27% in the Americas.

Evidence of the growing importance of robots can be found in businesses throughout the Hudson Valley. "Robotics are more prevalent in manufacturing now," says Marc Harris, who teaches a class on advanced robotics in manufacturing at Ulster BOCES.

Bruce Phipps, the president of MPI Incorporated, a leading manufacturer of automated wax-room equipment, observes that robots have put "repeatability and quality" into the investment casting process, providing a reduction in leftover scrap and a higher casting yield. "Robots

will repeat a process flawlessly, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, whereas a human is not going to do that." Harris explains. The result is more efficient, cost effective and greener production.

DAVID KING, an English major at Gettysburg College, is a graduate of New Paltz High School.

Robots are being used for manufacturing in virtually all industries, including electronics, metal fabrication, wood, plastics, automotive, pharmaceuticals and renewable energy. The new breed of easily programmed robots automates routine and repetitive tasks: they cut and shape fabricated parts, assemble machinery and even inspect manufactured parts. They can die cast, drill, fasten, forge, make glass, grind, heat treat, load/unload machines, machine parts, handle parts, measure, monitor radiation, run nuts, sort parts, clean parts, profile objects, perform quality control, rivet, sand blast, change tools and weld. About 40 percent of industrial robots are used for "pick and place" chores.

Still, for all their benefits, robots come at a cost. Phipps acknowledges that automation is "taking the human labor out" of the casting process but, he adds, new job opportunities are created as well. "You need someone to build them," he says. "People worry," Harris states, "that robotics is going to put people out of work, but what they do is change the level of skills that you need." Presumably these higher-skilled jobs will also come with higher wages. While predicting future trends is always fraught with risk, some studies, including one commissioned by the International Federation of Robotics from UK research firm Metra Martech, have projected that robotics will be responsible for the creation of up to 3.5 million new jobs worldwide by 2020.



"Robots will repeat a process flawlessly, 24-hours a day, seven days a week, whereas a human is not going to do that."

—Marc Harris,
Robotics and Manufacturing
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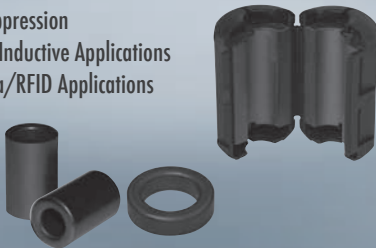
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CONTACT: Alan Seidman • aseidman@ccahv.com

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