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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. 