



**HV
MFG**

**THE COUNCIL OF INDUSTRY
MAGAZINE**

SPRING 2026

**THE NEW
MANUFACTURING
PLAYBOOK**

COMPANY PROFILE

CERVEN SOLUTIONS

LEADER PROFILE


SCOTT ARONSON

PECO Producto Electric Corp

CAPITALIZING ON CHANGE

Mid-Hudson Manufacturers Navigate Global Uncertainty

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COMPANY PROFILE



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ON THE COVER

Scott Aronson is the President at Producto Electric Corporation (PECO) in Orangeburg, NY. They are a supplier of electrical conduit fittings and specialty cable support systems.

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COUNCIL OF INDUSTRY CEO



THE NEW MANUFACTURING PLAYBOOK

DEAR READER

Welcome to the Spring 2026 Edition of HV Mfg, the Council of Industry's magazine by, for and about Hudson Valley manufacturers.

Manufacturing today is defined by two conflicting realities: persistent uncertainty and steady momentum. This dual reality is playing out across the Hudson Valley in 2026. Workforce shortages, shifting trade policy, high interest rates, inflation, and global conflict continue to challenge manufacturers. Yet advances in AI, reshoring, capital investment, and renewed focus on domestic production are creating real opportunities for growth.

This edition of HV Mfg features articles that shed light on some of these issues and profile firms - both young and old - that are competing, and winning, on this new playing field.

We feature a roundtable discussion with several Council members who sell capital equipment across the globe to learn how they are navigating tariffs and interest rates, along with other challenges. Their conversation highlights some broader trends in our sector, namely that automation and heightened demand for customized factory equipment are accelerating and that developing a skilled manufacturing workforce is as important as ever.

Our Company Profile highlights Poughkeepsie-based Cerven Solutions, a custom machine shop founded in 2020 by brothers Sean and James Cerven. Author Ciara McEneaney, the Council of Industry's Member Services Coordinator, tells their entrepreneurial story that is inspiring and showcases Cerven's technology-based approach to running their business, providing valuable insights.

Our Leader Q&A is with Scott Aronson, CEO of Producto Electric Corporation (PECO). PECO has supplied electrical conduit fittings and manufactured specialty cable support systems for some of the country's most demanding environments for nearly 90 years. Scott entered the business in 2021 and has been working to modernize the operation, while maintaining the family first culture that builds employee and customer loyalty.

We also have a piece from Marist University professors Dr. Barry Silverman and Dr. Ibrahim Shaikh that offers tips for manufacturers to achieve growth in a world defined by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA). Casey Marvel, Vice President at Ostroff Associates, encourages Council members to advocate for their businesses, and the sector, by engaging with policy makers through associations like the Council of Industry.

Thomas J. DeMayo, Nick DeLena, and Jim Szumlaski, Partners at Accounting Firm PKF O'Connor Davies, help us understand the CMMC compliance framework and what manufacturers need to do to be defense industry suppliers. Emma Oliver, Workforce Development Manager at the Council, writes about SUNY's efforts to develop internship opportunities for all their students to better prepare them for the workplace. And Kathy D'Agostino principal at Win at Business AI argues that Implementing AI in your business is not a technology problem as much as it is a people strategy.

We also have our regular Spring features including news briefs, and our Member, Associate Member and Supporting Member Directories.

I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to the many organizations who placed advertisements in HV Mfg. Your support of Hudson Valley manufacturing, the Council of Industry, and this publication is greatly appreciated.

Finally, we are pleased to share some exciting news for our association. The Council of Industry has been named the Mid-Hudson Manufacturing Extension Partner (MEP) by Empire State Development. This designation, which includes funding from the National Institute of Science & Technology (NIST) and Empire State Development's Division of Science, Technology and Innovation (NYSTAR) programs, will enable our association to expand and improve our programs for the Region's small and medium sized manufacturers.

I hope you enjoy this edition and thank you for reading.

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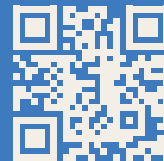
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THE MANUFACTURING ECONOMY

NAM CEO Outlook Survey Shows Manufacturers Trade Challenges Persist

As the review of the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement gets underway, a majority of manufacturers report they utilize either Canada or Mexico for critical parts of their supply chains—at a time when trade uncertainty remains manufacturers’ top business concern, according to the National Association of Manufacturers Q1 2026 Manufacturers’ Outlook Survey. The survey also shows manufacturers’ optimism is rising, with 75.3% reporting a positive outlook for their company, up 5.4 percentage points from the previous quarter. Key findings:

- For the first time since 2023, manufacturers’ outlook topped the historical average of 74.3%, and manufacturers expect most indices to improve meaningfully over the next 12 months.
- 70.6% of manufacturers cited trade uncertainties as a top business challenge for the fifth consecutive quarter.
- For the second consecutive quarter, rising health care/insurance costs (69.8%) remained the second most-cited business challenge for manufacturers.
- Raw material and other input costs are anticipated to rise at the same pace as projected in Q4 (4.1%) and ranked as the third-highest business concern at 57.5%.
- Sales and production are projected to rise 3.8% and 3.5%, respectively, up from the previous quarter’s forecast of 2.8% and 2.4% growth.
- 54.6% secure critical inputs from either Canada or Mexico—82.2% of those manufacturers say they source raw materials or other inputs from either country.

Empire Manufacturing Survey: Activity Little Changed in March

Manufacturing activity held steady in New York State, according to the March survey. The general business conditions index fell seven points to -0.2, with just over 30 percent of firms reporting an increase in activity and the same percentage reporting a decrease.

- The new orders index was little changed at 6.4, pointing to a small increase in orders, while the shipments index fell six points to -6.9, indicating that shipments declined.
- The unfilled orders index rose two points to 10.8. The delivery times index rose ten points to 13.7, indicating that delivery times lengthened. Inventories moved higher.
- The supply availability index dipped three points to -3.9, suggesting that supply availability was slightly worse than last month.
- The index for number of employees rose two points to 5.8 and the average workweek index was little changed at 1.9.

- The prices paid index fell thirteen points to 36.6, and the prices received index was little changed at 21.4, indicating that input price increases moderated while selling price increases held steady.
- The index for future business conditions came in at 31.0, suggesting that firms continued to be optimistic about the outlook.
- The capital expenditures index rose three points to 21.6, a multi-year high, indicating that capital spending plans strengthened.

Tariff Refund Process Could Be Ready By The Spring, Customs Official Says

In a filing with the Court of International Trade March 27th, Brandon Lord, executive director of U.S. Customs and Border Protection’s trade policy and programs directorate, said the CBP is working on a new system that will simplify the process. He said it should be ready in 45 days and require “minimal submission from importers.” The filing comes after a judge earlier in the month ordered the government to start paying back all importers the illegal tariffs they paid – with interest.

In the filing, Lord said as of March 4, over 330,000 importers have made a total of over 53 million entries with CBP and paid about \$166 billion in tariffs that now have to be refunded. Lord estimated that under the current system, refunds would take more than 4.4 million man hours to complete. But he said the agency is confident they can develop and implement a new process that will streamline and consolidate refunds and interest payments. The system should be ready in 45 days, he said. “This new process will require minimal submission from importers,” he wrote. “It will also minimize errors by ensuring accurate IEEPA refund calculations through system validations and allowing for a review period for CBP to resolve any discrepancies with the importer and to confirm no other outstanding enforcement issues or no revenue is owed.”

CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT, SAFETY AND HEALTH

EPA Repeals Landmark Climate Finding In Huge Regulatory Rollback

The Trump administration in February overturned an Obama-era scientific finding that serves as the legal basis for federal greenhouse-gas regulation, the Environmental Protection Agency said. Repealing the so-called endangerment finding, a scientific determination that greenhouse gas emissions endanger human health, would remove the legal foundation for broader greenhouse gas regulation and would mark the Trump administration’s most wide-reaching climate policy rollback. The repeal is expected to be

published later this week and cited EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin saying it would amount to “the largest act of deregulation in the history of the United States.”

An EPA spokesperson said the endangerment finding was used by the Obama and Biden Administrations to “justify trillions of dollars of greenhouse gas regulations covering new vehicles and engines.” On January 30, a federal court ruled that the Department of Energy violated the law when it formed a climate science advisory group whose report was meant to support the EPA’s repeal of the endangerment finding, potentially making the final rule vulnerable to legal challenges. While many industry groups backed the repeal of vehicle emission standards, many were reluctant to show public support for rescinding the endangerment finding because of the legal and regulatory uncertainty it would unleash.

Hochul Proposes Delays To Clean Energy Goals To Minimize Impact On New Yorkers

In an op-ed published in the Empire Report, the Governor wrote that while she stands by the stated goals of the CLCPA, its implementation should be pushed back to ensure its affordability for New Yorkers. The law has a stated goal of shifting 70% of the state’s total energy needs to renewable sources by 2030, with a 100% renewable grid by 2040. “I have repeatedly said that utility rates in our state are too high. And while the Climate Act is not the driver of the high energy prices we are experiencing, the undeniable fact is we cannot meet the Climate Act’s 2030 targets without imposing new and additional crushing costs on New York businesses and residents,” the Governor wrote.

The most clearly stated proposals in the Governor’s op-ed involve shifting the deadline to reduce the state’s greenhouse gas emissions from the end of 2030 to a new target, 2040 and changing the emissions limits are regulations are tied to. In addition, she proposed changing how emissions are measured under the law to align with international standards used by nearly every other state or risk failing, despite having spent billions of dollars. Any proposed changes would require passage through the New York State Legislature, which birthed the law in 2019 alongside the Cuomo Administration. Governor Hochul wrote that she will push for changes during state budget discussions.

TECHNOLOGY AND CYBERSECURITY

New ABB Study: Cybersecurity Now Ranks As Top Concern Among Automakers, Suppliers

Automotive manufacturing leaders rank cybersecurity as their top concern across all regions of the world and supplier tiers, beating out more traditional issues such as cost reduction and newer ones such as AI and flexible manufacturing, according to a newly minted survey. ABB Robotics’ Automotive Manufacturing Outlook Survey for 2025 found that 95% of vehicle makers rated cybersecurity as a significant manufacturing concern, with 53% ranking it “extremely significant.”

“Cybersecurity is no longer something manufacturers are thinking about for the future—it is something they must address at the heart of production today,” said the managing director of ABB’s automotive business line, Joerg Reger. “As factories become more connected, software-driven and data-intensive,

cybersecurity has become a core manufacturing discipline.” Across companies, OEMs and first- and second-tier suppliers ranked cybersecurity as the most significant area. The ranking also dominated across manufacturers in North America, Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. Cost reduction and automation and robotics followed closely behind.

Jeff Bezos in Talks to Raise \$100 Billion for AI Manufacturing Fund

Jeff Bezos is in early talks to raise \$100 billion for a new fund that would buy up manufacturing companies and seek to use AI technology to accelerate their path to automation. The fund, described in investor documents as a “manufacturing transformation vehicle,” is aiming to buy companies in major industrial sectors such as chipmaking, defense and aerospace. It would dwarf the size of some of the world’s largest buyout funds and rival SoftBank’s \$100-billion, tech-focused Vision Fund.

Bezos was recently appointed co-CEO of Project Prometheus, a new startup that is building AI models that can understand and simulate the physical world. Bezos plans to use the company’s technology to boost the efficiency and profitability of businesses owned by the fund, a playbook that some investment firms are similarly deploying in sectors such as accounting and property management. Project Prometheus is separately in talks to raise up to \$6 billion in funding, according to people familiar with the matter.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Rising Health Premiums Are Eating Into Worker Paychecks

Recent increases in U.S. health benefits costs are holding down increases in U.S. workers’ wages. Three economists at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York—Jaison Abel, Richard Deitz and Nick Montalbano—gave that assessment in an analysis. The data shows that average wage growth in the New York Fed’s region has fallen every year since 2022, to 3% this year, from about 6% in 2022, when the pandemic labor crisis reached its peak. Meanwhile employer health benefits costs have increased by about 20% over that same period.

In response to a February NY Fed Survey participants reported that their health benefits costs increased by an average of 13% this year. The employers with rising health benefits costs told the New York Fed that they had increased workers’ wages an average of 3.8%. If health benefits costs had not increased, the average increase in wages could have been 4.7%, the economists estimated. The 0.9-percentage-point reduction in wage growth is “the equivalent of a 20% drag on wage growth,” the economists said. “Since health insurance expenditures represent a significant portion of total labor compensation for many firms, the true cost of employing workers at these firms has been climbing faster than wage increases alone suggest potentially squeezing profit margins and making labor more expensive than it appears from the wage bill alone.”

JOLTS Report: Openings and Hiring Fell in February, Manufacturing Openings and Hires Down

Total job openings declined 4.9% from January and -5.0% from February 2025 to 6.882 million in February from an upwardly

revised 7.240 million in January (previously 6.946 million), according to the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey. The number of unemployed increased while openings declined, meaning that the excess of unemployment over openings rose. The number of unemployed has exceeded the number of openings for seven consecutive months, highlighting the softening of labor market conditions over that period.

- Manufacturing openings fell 71k, the first decline in three months.
- Total hiring plunged 9.3% m/m (-498k) to 4.849 million in February, the lowest level since April 2020, from 5.347 million in January (previously 5.294 million). The hiring rate slumped to 3.1%, also the lowest since April 2020, from 3.4% in January.
- Total separations fell 3.4% m/m (-173k) to 4.971 million in February from 5.144 million in January (previously 5.203 million). The separation rate slipped to 3.1% from 3.2%. The February reading was the lowest separation rate since March 2013.
- Within private sector separations, quits declined 157k, layoffs rose 62k and other separations fell 67k. Quits are generally voluntary separations initiated by the employee.
- Even though layoffs have risen in each of the past two months, they have moved little since last fall.
- Low levels of quits indicate that there is more difficulty finding a new job, while flattish layoffs indicate that firms are less willing to lay off existing workers, a general theme of the current economic environment.

Council of Industry Adds Project Manager to List of Trades Offered Through Apprenticeship Program

The Council of Industry Leads the Manufacturing Intermediary Apprenticeship Program (MIAP) in the Hudson Valley. MIAP is an employer-led program to help manufacturers upskill their workforce utilizing New York State Department of Labor registered manufacturing apprentice trades. Apprenticeship has two basic elements, On-the-Job Training (OJT), consisting of a skilled employee person capable and willing to share their experience with an apprentice, in a hands-on manner, and Related Instruction (RI), the learning of more theoretical or knowledge-based aspects of a craft. This program makes apprentice training accessible to all manufacturing firms in the region.

Project management is emerging as one of the most essential disciplines in modern manufacturing. Organizations are increasingly dependent on skilled project professionals who can translate strategy into execution, balance complexity with clarity, and deliver measurable value. The Council of Industry's 12-month long project management trade is tailored to develop Project Managers who possess these necessary skills.

COUNCIL NEWS

Meet the 2026 Manufacturing Champions

We are proud to announce the 2026 Manufacturing Champions - Leaders who are strengthening manufacturing in the Hudson Valley. Manufacturing Champions build businesses, develop talent, create innovative programs, and strengthen partnerships that help the region's manufacturing community grow and succeed.

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Cedric Glasper, President & CEO, Mechanical Rubber

- Cedric Glasper is a manufacturing leader known for his commitment to both industry and workforce. Since 1995, he has helped revitalize struggling facilities and preserve jobs through four strategic acquisitions that prevented plant closures and restored opportunities for displaced workers.

Ben Katzenstein, President & Owner, Star Kay White

- Star Kay White, Inc. is a fifth-generation manufacturer that has produced ice cream ingredients, frozen desserts, and specialty flavorings since 1890. In 1984, Star Kay White employed 16 people and was transitioning from a 15,000-square-foot plant in the Bronx to a new 30,000-square-foot facility. Under Ben’s leadership, the company has expanded to four buildings across 15 acres totaling approximately 170,000 square feet and now employs more than 150 people, many of whom are local Hudson Valley residents.

Dr. Jonah Schenker, District Superintendent, Ulster BOCES

- Dr. Jonah Schenker has served as District Superintendent of Ulster BOCES since March 2023 and been part of Ulster BOCES since 2010, serving in a range of instructional and leadership roles, including founding principal of the Hudson Valley Pathways Academy. He recently led the expansion of the Career and Technical Center into its new location at iPark87, a project that serves as a state and national model for advanced manufacturing education. Dr. Schenker has aligned the BOCES curriculum with industry needs by collaborating directly with business leaders.

The Gene Haas Foundation - The Gene Haas Foundation was formed in 1999 with a simple but important mission: “To introduce to and educate individuals for the field of manufacturing technologies specifically CNC machining.” The Foundation’s philosophy is simple: if you give a student the right tools, you give them a career for life. Across the Hudson Valley, you can find workers whose journey started because of a Haas scholarship or a program supported by their grants. They have fundamentally changed the landscape of technical education in our region.

Empire State Development Names the Council of Industry the Mid-Hudson Region’s Manufacturing Extension Partner (MEP)

Empire State Development Names the Council of Industry the Mid-Hudson Region’s Manufacturing Extension Partner (MEP)

The Council of Industry will be the Mid-Hudson Region’s MEP beginning this Spring. The Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) is administered by the U.S. Department of Commerce’s National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). The program’s primary mission is to strengthen and empower small and medium-sized U.S. manufacturers through state-designated MEP Centers located across the U.S. and in Puerto Rico. In New York State the program is run by NYSTAR (New York State Division of Science, Technology and Innovation) a division of Empire State Development (ESD) that fosters tech-led economic growth.

The Council of Industry will use its MEP status and funding to strengthen its programming and build upon its 116-year history serving manufactures in the Mid-Hudson region.

“MEP funding will help us scale and expand our program offerings,” said Johnnieanne Hansen, Council of Industry CEO. “We look forward to the opportunity to work more closely with our education, economic development, and other association partners across the region to help Mid-Hudson manufacturers grow and meet the challenges of global competition.”



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CAPITALIZING ON CHANGE

MID-HUDSON MANUFACTURERS NAVIGATE GLOBAL UNCERTAINTY



The industrial landscape is being defined by what economists are calling the “Great Rebalancing,” as we navigate the first half of 2026. After half a decade of unprecedented supply chain volatility, shifting trade blocs, inflation and interest rate shock, along with a radical restructuring of global trade norms, the manufacturing sector has entered a new era – one where uncertainty is no longer a temporary hurdle to be cleared, but a permanent feature of the terrain.

This transition is felt most acutely by Hudson Valley capital equipment manufacturers, which are the companies that build the machines that build the world. Because their products represent significant, long-term investments for their clients, their order books serve as the most reliable “early warning system” for the broader economy.

When a company buys a multi-million-dollar piece of equipment, they are doing more than upgrading a factory; they are signaling a belief in future demand.

In February, the Council of Industry convened a roundtable with the leaders of five Hudson Valley capital equipment manufacturers. Their insights provide a roadmap for understanding how regional innovation is intersecting with the global economy.

THE CAPEX CONFIDENCE METRIC: A GLOBAL COOLING?

Capital equipment investment is the heartbeat of industrial health. Historically, high investment levels precede periods of expansion, while a pullback suggests that manufacturers are “turtling,” or protecting their cash reserves and waiting for a more favorable climate.

Right now, that climate is mixed. While the U.S. economy has avoided a “hard landing,” the global picture is one of fragmentation.

In Hawthorne, Westchester County, Oliver Stauffer, CEO of Packaging Technologies and Inspection (PTI), has witnessed this hesitation firsthand.

PTI, a leader in package quality testing for the life sciences, usually sees a predictable end-of-year surge in orders, Stauffer said. However, that momentum failed to materialize as 2026 began.



Oliver Stauffer, CEO of Packaging Technologies and Inspection (PTI).

“We were looking for some level of relief or an opportunity, but now it looks like demand is just not coming back to where it needs to be,” Stauffer added.

This reflects a broader global trend in the Life Sciences sector. After the hyper-investment of the early 2020s, the biotech and pharmaceutical industries are facing a “valuation correction.” With higher interest rates increasing the cost of capital, global firms are taking fewer risks on new product lines, leading to a direct slowdown in the demand for the high-precision testing equipment that PTI provides.

THE DEATH OF THE “OFF-THE-SHELF” MACHINE

While volume demand may be fluctuating, its nature has fundamentally changed. We are witnessing the end of the “Commodity Age” of machinery.

In an increasingly competitive global market, customers are no longer looking for standard solutions; they are looking for a competitive edge through customization.

At MPI Inc. in Poughkeepsie, President Aaron Phipps has seen his business model evolve in real-time. MPI, which produces sophisticated wax-room equipment for investment casting, finds that customers are still investing, but they are demanding machines that are made for specific, often proprietary, processes.

Customization isn’t just a design preference; it’s a financial and logistical burden. Custom projects are often 50 to 100 percent more expensive and significantly extend lead times, Phipps noted.

For the equipment manufacturer, every custom order is a “first-of-its-kind” project, he continued, introducing risks in engineering and component sourcing that don’t exist with standardized products.

This sentiment is echoed in Milton at Sono-Tek Corporation. President Steve Harshbarger has leveraged the company’s ability to pivot between clean energy, semiconductors, and medical sectors to keep the wheels turning.



Steve Harshbarger, President Sono-Tek Corporation.

“As long as you price it accordingly, customization can be a benefit and your margins can be really nice,” Harshbarger said. “But it does pull a lot of resources and unplanned scheduling delays to meet these big custom orders that manufacturers in the U.S. are now seeing.”



“As low-cost manufacturing becomes more automated, U.S. companies are maintaining their lead by becoming “Consultative Manufacturers,” solving complex engineering problems rather than just selling hardware.”



Aaron Phipps, President at MPI Inc.

This shift toward customization is happening globally, as well as in the Hudson Valley. As low-cost manufacturing becomes more automated, U.S. companies are maintaining their lead by becoming “Consultative Manufacturers,” solving complex engineering problems rather than just selling hardware.

RESHORING VS. THE TARIFF BARRIER

One of the most significant narratives of 2026 is the “Return to the States.” After decades of offshoring, the fragility of global logistics has pushed companies to bring production closer to the end consumer.

Deborah Smook, co-founder of Turbofil Packaging Machines in Mount Vernon, sees this movement as a primary engine for her company’s success. For a specialized firm with just over 20 employees, the demand for local packaging solutions is a bellwether for the health of the U.S. supply chain.

“People want to keep and bring production here to the U.S.,” Smook said. “So, our local customers are building new capabilities and new lines.”

THE FRICTION OF TRADE POLICY

However, this domestic growth is facing a significant headwind of geopolitical protectionism.

The tariffs that remain in place have created a paradox for Hudson Valley manufacturers. While they protect domestic markets, they also increase the cost of the raw materials – heavy metals, advanced ceramics, and specialized electronics – that the U.S. is not currently equipped to produce at scale.

Sono-Tek’s Harshbarger points out that this uncertainty causes a “freeze” in the sales cycle.

Customers are increasingly sitting on products, asking manufacturers to delay shipping in hopes that a change in tariff policy might save them thousands of dollars in import/export duties. This makes inventory management a nightmare for local firms who find their warehouses filled with complete machines that they cannot yet invoice.

THE “WAR OF THE STATES” AND REGIONAL COMPETITION

While geopolitics is a factor, local geography is presenting its own set of challenges. Neil McGill, Vice President of Allendale Machinery, highlights a growing domestic tension: The high cost of doing business in New York.

Hudson Valley manufacturers are finding themselves in a battle of location, as the cost of living and energy prices in the Northeast continue to climb. McGill has observed a steady migration of work, and sometimes

entire facilities, to Southern and Mid-Western states.

“We’re losing work down to the Carolinas and Midwest,” McGill warned. “We’ve also seen some of the bigger guy’s close shops and move down south... they slowly closed out upstate or in Long Island.”

To survive in New York, manufacturers must be more efficient, automated, and specialized than their southern counterparts.

The “New York Advantage” is no longer about cost; it is about the density of talent and the proximity to high-tech hubs, like the semiconductor corridor and the growing defense clusters.



Neil McGill, Vice President of Allendale Machinery.

THE TALENT GAP: AI, AUTOMATION, AND THE HUMAN ELEMENT

Across every roundtable participant, one challenge remained the undisputed top-of-mind issue: **Workforce**.

We are amid a massive demographic shift. Our aging workforce means the retirement of the some of our most experienced machinists and engineers. In 2026, finding the right hire has become a technological battle.

Aaron Phipps at MPI noted that the hiring process is now cluttered with AI-generated resumes, making it nearly impossible to discern true experience from digital misdirection.

AUTOMATION AS A WORKFORCE STRATEGY

For many, the answer to the labor shortage isn't hiring, it's more robots. Turbofil has embraced this "Automation First" philosophy.

"If we can bring in a machine that will do something faster, or better, then right now we're just going for it," Smook said.

STRATEGY	IMPLEMENTATION	OUTCOME
Robotic Integration	Replacing repetitive manual assembly with cobots.	Higher throughput without increasing headcount.
Cross-Training	Teaching existing staff to manage automated systems.	Increased employee value and retention.
"Unattended" Shifts	Investing in machines that can run "lights-out" overnight.	Maximizing the ROI of capital equipment.

This represents a global shift in the "Human-Machine" relationship: We are no longer using machines to replace people, but to liberate people from the tasks that no one wants to do.

ENVISIONING THE 2027 HORIZON: WHY OPTIMISM PREVAILS

Despite the tariffs, the labor shortages, and the geographic competition, the leaders of the Hudson Valley remain "overly optimistic." This is because they are standing at the intersection of the world's most exciting technologies.

- As the U.S. continues to subsidize domestic chip manufacturing and expand its defense capabilities, the Hudson Valley is perfectly positioned to serve as the "High-Precision Machine Shop" for these industries.

- The "Invisible" Innovation: Steve Harshbarger believes that the U.S. is currently in the middle of a massive high-tech boom that simply isn't being reported by mainstream media. "If any of it comes to

fruition, it'll be pretty exciting to see what the capabilities are," he says.

- Purpose-Driven Work: For leaders like Deborah Smook and Aaron Phipps, the satisfaction comes from seeing their machines solve real-world problems. Whether

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it's a packaging machine that delivers life-saving medicine or a wax-injection system that creates aerospace components, the work being done in the Hudson Valley has a tangible, global impact.

are proving that the "Made in New York" label is still one of the most prestigious, and necessary, marks in the global market.

THE HUDSON VALLEY INDUSTRIAL DNA

People enter manufacturing because they enjoy the unconventional, Neil McGill said. In a world of digital abstractions and gig economy uncertainty, the capital equipment sector offers something rare: the ability to point at a massive, complex, perfectly functioning machine and say, "we built that."

The Spring 2026 outlook for the Hudson Valley is not one of easy growth, but of resilient evolution.

By leaning into customization, embracing the "Automation Leap," and navigating the complexities of a reshored global economy, these five companies



Debra Smook and Eli Uriel, owners of TurboFil Packaging Machines in Mount Vernon.

"The Spring 2026 outlook for the Hudson Valley is not one of easy growth, but of resilient evolution."

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OPERATIONS AND GROWTH

BY DR. BARRY SILVERMAN AND DR. IBRAHIM SHAIKH | MARIST UNIVERSITY

ACHIEVING GROWTH IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

Growth in 2026 isn't about outrunning the storm; it's about building an ecosystem where marketing stabilizes the exterior and governance strengthens the core.

Manufacturers today operate in what business leaders call a VUCA world, one defined by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. It is not just a management term. It reflects the day-to-day reality of industrial operations where market conditions shift overnight, technology cycles shorten, and customer expectations evolve faster than production lead times.

From trade policy shifts and reshoring incentives to election-year volatility, political uncertainty continues to influence business strategy. Meanwhile, technological disruption, from AI and automation to advanced materials and digital platforms, is rewriting traditional value chains faster than most firms can adapt. Many industrial leaders are asking a similar question: How do we sustain growth in the face of so much change?

Across the Hudson Valley and beyond, manufacturers are navigating this turbulence by returning to fundamentals. They are building trust, communicating clearly, and reinforcing operational reliability. Drawing on decades of research and industry experience, Dr. Barry Silverman and Dr. Ibrahim Shaikh emphasize that successful firms in uncertain times treat marketing and innovation governance as twin strategic levers of growth anchored in evidence rather than intuition. As Dr. Silverman notes, "When markets are unsettled, consistency becomes a competitive advantage. Marketing and communication are no longer just about awareness. They are about stability."

Amid these forces, it is not enough to cut costs or wait for conditions to settle. The firms that thrive govern their growth with



discipline by aligning strategy, marketing, and innovation into one resilient ecosystem.

STRATEGIC LEVERS FOR GROWTH

MARKETING AS A STABILIZING FORCE

In uncertain times, effective marketing becomes a stabilizing force for customers and employees alike. It's what keeps relationships intact when budgets tighten and competition intensifies. As Dr. Silverman's research and consulting work demonstrate, manufacturers that focus on clarity, credibility, and consistency in their messaging position themselves as reliable partners—an attribute customers value even more during disruption.

INDUSTRY EXAMPLES

Caterpillar, for example, has used its 'Let's Do the Work' campaign to reinforce its image as a partner in productivity rather than just an equipment supplier. By spotlighting the people and industries it serves—from construction crews to farmers—Caterpillar's storytelling strategy builds emotional connection and long-term trust in a market often driven by short-term price pressures.

Similarly, Siemens' 'Ingenuity for Life' initiative translates complex technology into human-centered narratives about energy reliability, digital manufacturing, and sustainability. These stories tie operational performance metrics directly to customer value, demonstrating how stability and clarity in communication strengthen market confidence.

The most forward-thinking manufacturers are also using data-driven insights—from CRM systems, market analytics, and digital engagement—to anticipate shifts in demand and adapt early. Firms like Rockwell Automation reinforce this trend through initiatives such as "Expanding Human Possibility," highlighting how digital platforms and data insights can help manufacturers anticipate operational needs and deliver greater value to customers.

TURNING INSIGHT INTO ACTION

In short, as Dr. Silverman argues, marketing under uncertainty isn't about selling harder—it's about building trust. In a VUCA environment, marketing becomes the connective tissue that binds relationships and sustains confidence.

Manufacturers can strengthen relationships by leveraging their unique assets, from proprietary processes to trusted partnerships, that directly create value for customers. Strategic storytelling helps translate these technical capabilities into clear growth narratives, showing how a company's expertise, innovation, and reliability solve real-world problems.

Equally important is the use of data-driven marketing to better understand and anticipate customer needs. By analyzing market trends, website analytics, and CRM data, manufacturers can uncover new opportunities, enhance lead generation, and even shape future product development.

THE POWER OF CONSISTENCY

Finally, consistency remains the cornerstone of trust. Companies that communicate regularly and transparently across digital channels, trade events, and internal teams establish a sense of stability and longevity that customers value in turbulent times. This lesson resonates strongly with manufacturers across the Hudson Valley's diverse industrial base.

INNOVATION GOVERNANCE AS A RESILIENCE BUILDER

While marketing anchors external relationships, innovation governance strengthens the organization from within by addressing internal resource constraints and political uncertainties. Dr. Ibrahim Shaikh's research on open innovation governance shows that companies capable of balancing internal capacity with external collaboration outperform peers in volatile environments. For smaller manufacturers, governance does not require a large research organization. It simply means having a disciplined process for deciding which new technologies, partnerships, or product ideas are worth pursuing and which are not.

Over the past two decades, many U.S. manufacturers outsourced portions of their in-house R&D to control costs and focus on short-term performance gains. That improved efficiency but weakened

internal innovation capacity to adapt when external disruptions hit.

Today, the conversation is changing. Forward-looking firms are rebuilding strategic capacity—reinvesting in their people, technical infrastructure, and manufacturing depth. They're realizing that long-term competitiveness depends on balancing openness with strategic ecosystem controls that leverage global partnerships without outsourcing the core capabilities that define their competitive advantage.

INDUSTRY EXAMPLES

Schneider Electric offers a strong example of this balance. Through its 'Innovation at the Edge' program, Schneider connects internal R&D teams with external startups, partners, and universities. These relationships are governed through clear frameworks that keep intellectual property, safety, and strategy anchored inside the company while enabling faster experimentation on the outside.

Bosch demonstrates a similar principle through its 'Open Bosch' venture-client model. This initiative allows Bosch's business units to collaborate with startups under a structured governance system, ensuring that new technologies are validated and integrated without compromising quality or control. Bosch's Open Source Program Office (OSPO) further institutionalizes this discipline—managing open-source engagement across divisions and ensuring that innovation remains both open and secure.

Likewise, Hyundai Motor Group blends internal capability-building with open ecosystem orchestration. Its 'ZER01NE Accelerator' and 'CRADLE' global innovation hubs connect external startups with internal business units for co-development projects. Hyundai uses clear proof-of-concept and governance stages to decide which projects scale into production—maintaining agility without losing coherence.

Rolls-Royce provides a complementary case of innovation governance through its 'IntelligentEngine' strategy, which integrates AI, data, and digital twins directly into the design and servicing of engines. By aligning digital analytics with traditional engineering depth, Rolls-Royce has strengthened both capability and capacity, ensuring that technological openness feeds long-term resilience rather than eroding it.

THE HUDSON VALLEY OPPORTUNITY

FROM MANUFACTURING BACKBONE TO "QUANTUM VALLEY"

Nowhere is this transformation more relevant than in the Hudson Valley. What was once a corridor defined by mainframe computing and electronics manufacturing is increasingly being described as the nation's emerging "Quantum Valley" now positioning itself at the intersection of artificial intelligence, quantum computing, and next-generation industry.

A major catalyst is IBM's growing quantum computing presence in Poughkeepsie. The company has expanded its quantum data center, which now operates one of the world's largest concentrations of utility scale quantum computers and serves researchers and

"Growth in uncertain times comes from building strong capabilities and participating in collaborative innovation networks."

companies around the world through the cloud. IBM has also announced plans to develop the world's first large scale fault tolerant quantum computer, a system expected to perform tens of millions of quantum operations and unlock new possibilities for solving complex industrial problems.

For regional manufacturers, the opportunity extends well beyond quantum computing itself. Large technology platforms rely on extensive supply chains to design, build, and maintain the systems that power advanced computing. Precision machining firms produce specialized components. Electronics manufacturers supply control systems and circuit assemblies. Industrial manufacturers build cooling systems, power infrastructure, and advanced materials needed for high performance computing environments.

As AI and quantum data centers expand, the companies developing these technologies will increasingly depend on suppliers across the broader manufacturing ecosystem. For Hudson Valley manufacturers with expertise in advanced materials, precision fabrication, electronics, and industrial systems, the growth of this technology cluster represents a new set of opportunities to participate in the next generation of industrial innovation.

These developments also illustrate the importance of innovation ecosystems in uncertain times. New technologies rarely emerge from a single company or laboratory. They grow through networks of manufacturers, research institutions, technology firms, and skilled workers that together create the capabilities needed for the next era of industry. In this sense, the Hudson Valley's emerging "Quantum Valley" reflects the same principle discussed throughout this article: growth in uncertain times comes from building strong capabilities and participating in collaborative innovation networks.

THE PATH FORWARD

Growth in uncertain times requires more than endurance; it requires ecosystem alignment. Marketing provides the voice of stability. Innovation governance provides the backbone of capability. Together, as Dr. Silverman and Dr. Shaikh note, these disciplines form an ecosystem that helps manufacturers move confidently through change.

As the Hudson Valley steps forward as a hub for quantum and AI-driven manufacturing, its firms have the chance to lead nationally—not by avoiding uncertainty, but by managing it better than anyone else.

Those who align brand strength with governance discipline will not only weather turbulence but help define the future of American industry.

Research Note

This article draws on the complementary research programs of Dr. Barry Silverman and Dr. Ibrahim Shaikh at Marist University. Dr. Silverman's work on brand resilience and generative AI explores how storytelling, credibility, and data-driven marketing build stability in volatile environments. Dr. Silverman's applied research on brand strategy and consumer behavior, presented through the American Marketing Association and in his dissertation, complements this framework by highlighting how cultural and technological shifts reshape brand trust and market performance. Also, Dr. Shaikh's research on open innovation

governance examines how firms can balance external collaboration with internal capacity to foster technological resilience. Together, their scholarship and consulting experience provide a practical framework for governing growth and marketing strategy under conditions of uncertainty. Key supporting publications include Shaikh & Randhawa (2022a, Technovation), Shaikh & Randhawa (2022b, Industrial and Corporate Change), and Shaikh & Bogers (2025, Digital Policy, Regulation and Governance), which elaborate on open innovation governance, ecosystem orchestration, and capacity–capability alignment.

This article was developed collaboratively by the authors with ethical use of AI-assisted editing tools.

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The return of manufacturing to the U.S. is a welcome one with benefits that extend to retailers, consumers and distributors. Demand is on the upswing despite increasing competition and shrinking margins. Although price increases are difficult to engineer, many other enticing growth strategies are well worth exploring – from cost-cutting and workflow improvements to automation, outsourcing, acquisitions and global expansion.

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LEADER PROFILE

SCOTT ARONSON, PRODUCTO ELECTRIC CORPORATION (PECO) | WITH HV MFG STAFF

FROM LIFE SAFETY TO MANUFACTURING LEADERSHIP

Guiding PECO Into Its Next Chapter

For nearly 90 years, Producto Electric Corporation (PECO), has supplied electrical conduit fittings and manufactured specialty cable support systems for some of the country's most demanding environments.

Unlike many manufacturing leaders, PECO's President Scott Aronson did not grow up in the family business. Instead, he came to manufacturing with the perspective of those who depend on safe and reliable infrastructure every day.

Before joining PECO, Aronson co-owned a consulting firm that provided fire protection, life safety, and emergency management services exclusively to healthcare facilities. The firm was later acquired by the international engineering company Jensen Hughes, where he remained a senior executive for 4 years before transitioning to PECO.

Much of his previous work focused on protecting patients and staff in complex care environments. That commitment continues today through pediatric disaster preparedness efforts and philanthropic initiatives supporting the people and communities those healthcare facilities ultimately serve.



HV MFG recently spoke with Aronson about his journey to PECO, the challenges of growing and modernizing a 90-year-old business, and the leadership principles guiding the company into its next chapter.

HV MFG: For readers who may not be familiar with PECO, how do you describe the company and the work you do?

SA: At our core, we're a supplier and manufacturer of electrical conduit fittings and accessories, the components electricians use to connect, secure, and organize the conduit that houses electrical wiring, so everything remains safe and code compliant.

But what really defines us are our specialty product lines. We manufacture cable supports used in vertical risers for high-rise buildings, and hazardous location products, specifically explosion-proof flexible couplings that go into high-risk environments like paper plants, oil and gas facilities, and anywhere sparks could create a serious problem.

HV MFG: So, your products are really part of the infrastructure behind the scenes.

SA: Exactly. Most people never see them, but they're critical in making sure electrical systems are safe and reliable.

HV MFG: Where would people encounter PECO products in the real world?

SA: Our cable supports are in almost every high-rise building. For example, we were the exclusive cable support supplier for JPMorgan Chase's new headquarters at 270 Park Avenue in NYC, and we supported major projects like the Freedom Tower. You'll also see our explosion-proof flexible couplings in paper or chemical plants, oil and gas facilities, gas stations, really anywhere that would be considered a true hazardous location under the National Electric Code (NEC).

HV MFG: Cable supports and explosion-proof flexible couplings are a specialized product. Can you talk a little more about that part of the business?

SA: Yes, we manufacture both products here in Orangeburg. We

are 1 of 2 companies in the U.S. for the cable supports and we are one of only a handful of companies that manufacture explosion-proof flexible couplings for hazardous locations. These are both narrower markets than commodity fittings and where performance and reliability matter far more than price alone.

HV MFG: Why are those specialty products so critical in those environments?

SA: For cable supports, you are often dealing with high rises with substantial wiring going throughout the building. If you cannot hold the wires in place, they could pull free and potentially create a fire along with system failures.

For the flexible couplings, in some environments, there's a higher threat that a spark could cause a fire.

If there's humidity, water exposure, dust, or flammable materials involved, and you're running electrical systems through those areas, you need protection that prevents ignition risk. It's not optional. There are absolute requirements for using hazardous location products because of the risk if something fails.

HV MFG: We understand that before joining PECO, you built a career in life safety and emergency management. Tell us a little about that background and what drew you into that field.

SA: In college I considered a few different paths, including law or law enforcement. I did an internship with the police department, had the chance to do a few ride-alongs with the FBI field office, and spent some time in courtrooms. I realized pretty quickly I was looking for something in the middle, not in the trenches but not in a courtroom either.

I studied management with a concentration in Homeland Security and went on to co-own and lead a consulting firm focused on healthcare safety, fire protection, and emergency management.

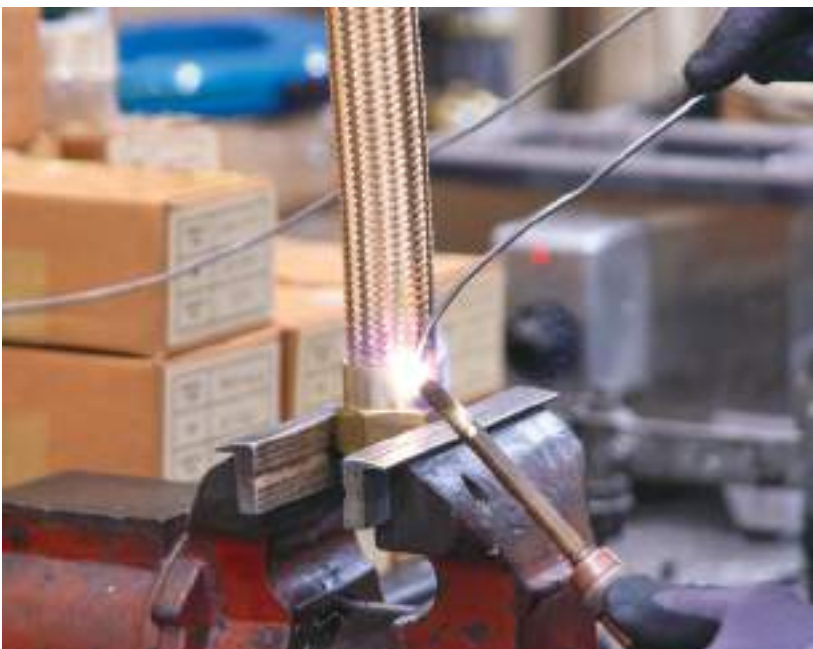
Our team worked primarily with hospitals and healthcare systems across the United States and Canada, helping them meet strict life safety codes and prepare for disasters and other emergencies. It was rewarding to know that the code consulting, training, and disaster exercises helped prepare healthcare facilities to protect their patients and staff in emergency situations. After more than 15 years building the company, we merged it into a larger international engineering firm, where I remained on as a senior executive until early 2021.

HV MFG: How did that experience influence the way you approach this role today?

SA: A big part of that work was reviewing building plans for hospitals and healthcare facilities, making sure they met strict life safety codes to reduce fire risk and protect patients and staff.

When you do that work, you're constantly asking, "What's the failure point? What's the consequence?"

HV MFG: So that mindset carried over when you stepped into your role at PECO?



Finishing touches being applied to an Explosion-proof Flexible Coupling for hazardous locations.



Patrick Romano, VP of Sales, and Scott Aronson, President, reviewing inventory and packaging.

SA: Absolutely. When I look at something like an explosion-proof flexible coupling, I don't just see a product. I see the environment it's going into. I understand the concept of why the code requires it, and I understand what's at stake if it's not a highly reliable product.

HV MFG: Walk us through the company history and how PECO ended up here in Rockland County?

SA: It was started by my great-grandparents in the Bronx. Back then they called it "the shop," and my mom, who is also one of the PECO owners, even worked there in the late 1950s. There was a significant fire in the basement in the mid-1970s, and after that the business relocated here.

My great uncle, Art LeMay, ran the company until he passed at 91. He started as a shipping clerk and later enlisted in the U.S. Army, serving from 1944 to 1946 as a Browning Automatic Rifleman in the Pacific theater. After returning home, he spent the next 70 years leading and growing the business.

HV MFG: He sounds like an interesting man, tell us a little more about Art and your experience with him and PECO before officially coming on board.

SA: My uncle was known for building strong personal relationships with our suppliers and customers, and we are still benefiting from his efforts. He was also incredibly determined. After feeling like he missed something by not completing his college education, he decided to go back to school and graduated from Columbia University at age 67. Funny thing, he was jokingly upset because there was a 72-year-old woman in his class so he could not claim to be the oldest one there.

He was also an avid runner, completing 24 New York City Marathons and running them into his late seventies. I had the honor of running the final 13.1 miles of his last marathon with

him. While he may not have had as much pep in his step at that time, he was almost at a full sprint up the final hill in Central Park. So amazing to see his excitement and desire to finish strong.

When I was younger, I used to visit the Orangeburg location, and I still have fond memories of him treating me like a special guest. He would even put "Welcome Scott Aronson" up on the sign in the lobby. As I got older, we would run the Manchester Road Race together and casually talk business. That is when I started to see the connection between the work I was doing in disaster preparedness and what he was doing in manufacturing and supplying major construction products.

After he passed, I came down to help work through the estate and support the team through the transition. What started as helping stabilize things quickly became an opportunity to step back, listen to the team, and understand where the business needed support. I saw PECO as a gem that hadn't been invested in for more than 20 years.

HV MFG: What leadership lessons did you take from building your own company that you then applied at PECO?

SA: One of the biggest lessons is to listen first. When you build a company, you learn quickly that the people closest to the work usually have a clear view of what's working and what isn't.

When I came into PECO, many of the people who worked with my uncle were still here, and there was tremendous institutional knowledge. My first priority was to understand where the real pain points were and where the team needed support.

From my background in running my previous business and with several acquisitions I was involved with, I was used to stepping into complex situations, assessing what's actually happening, and then bringing in the right expertise where it's needed. Sometimes that means investing internally, and sometimes it means working with outside partners rather than trying to build everything yourself. At that time, RBT was that partner for PECO as they stepped in to run our finance/accounting, but also to provide leadership support while we prepared to navigate the next steps.

HV MFG: What were some of the changes you decided to make once things stabilized?

SA: First was our leadership team. We had a wonderful team at PECO, yet several of the team members were staying on to honor my uncle and holding off on their retirement. I can't thank them enough for making sure we were ok before transitioning out.

We worked to bring two industry insiders to run our operations and sales with a focus on enhancing how we did business and preparing us for growth in the industry. They partnered up with

“At the end of the day, we stay focused on what we can control: supporting our team, building relationships, and delivering reliable products.”

our existing team to evolve PECO into what we are today. A special thanks to Ryan Vass and Patrick Romano for being these change agents and for Nancy Jaccoi in making sure the best practices of the past PECO were incorporated into everything we do today.

HV MFG: Where did you go next with infrastructure and operations?

SA: It started with infrastructure improvements and core systems, including a new ERP platform, and later we expanded our warehouse to help increase capacity and efficiency.

We also made a deliberate shift in mindset, focusing on responsiveness, growth, and the overall customer experience.

At the time, our average turnaround could be four to seven days. Today, same-day or next-day shipping is the norm and that alone has shifted how the market views us since some of our competitors, in our specialty product space, are quoting 20-plus weeks on products we can deliver in days or weeks. That’s meaningful.

HV MFG: That’s impressive, especially considering how difficult it can be for smaller suppliers to compete in this space. What growth opportunities are you seeing?

SA: Large data centers are a major driver of our growth right now. They are wire-intensive environments that demand robust infrastructure and advanced cabling solutions. That plays directly to our strengths.



Irick Georges, Plant Supervisor, preparing a shipment for a project in New York City.

We’ve also expanded our geographic reach, adding representation in Southern California and Nevada and strengthening our presence in markets like Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Indiana, Ohio, and Chicago. The opportunities are out there for more rapid growth, but we need to continue to focus on strategic growth.

HV MFG: This is a time of uncertainty for manufacturers. How is that impacting your planning?

SA: Uncertainty is never a good thing and right now trade policy is driving a lot of uncertainty for our business. When tariffs move from 10 percent to 25 percent to potentially 50 percent and then are challenged or overturned, removed then reinstated, it becomes exceedingly difficult to plan. The issue isn’t necessarily the policy itself; it’s the back and forth that leads to uncertainty. Nothing feels locked in and it makes it harder to compete than it should be.

Immigration policy is another uncertainty that is impacting many of our employees. Our workforce is everything. These are good jobs, union jobs, and our team members are hardworking individuals who have followed the process, but immigration policy uncertainty is causing disruption and anxiety. Earlier this year, we experienced a situation where a couple of employees’ Temporary Protective Status (TPS) was set to vanish, only to be saved by an eleventh-hour court stay. In some cases, we’re talking about people who have been with us for a decade or more. That kind of back and forth isn’t abstract. It creates real stress that understandably carries into their families and the workplace every day.

But at the end of the day, we try to stay focused on what we can control: supporting our team, building relationships, and delivering reliable products.



PECO’s handheld scanning and verification process accelerates order picking and real-time inventory updates.

HV MFG: Beyond manufacturing, let's talk about your community engagement and philanthropy initiatives. We understand you have recently been recognized by The Arc of Rockland and The Arc of New York for PECO's work with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Why has this work remained important to you?

SA: The relationship between PECO and The Arc goes back decades. My great aunt resided in their group home program

"We're working with partners to expand our support for safe infrastructure in underserved regions in Peru."

in Westchester County, and my uncle welcomed individuals supported by The Arc into the business to work on projects. The program paused for many years, and once everything stabilized, it made sense to reconnect. The Arc has had such deep meaning for my family for decades, but what I didn't anticipate was the impact it would have on our team. It increased a shared sense of purpose, and our warehouse staff will tell you they even picked up the pace after watching how focused The Arc team members are.

And now they're truly part of our team and they join us for pizza parties and other special activities like everyone else.

HV MFG: Tell me a little more about the project in Peru and the efforts to support safe infrastructure in underserved regions.

SA: I remain actively involved in disaster preparedness through my work with Global Readiness Partners, which specializes in training for Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICU) and Pediatric Intensive Care Units (PICU). That work reinforces how important it is to safeguard the most vulnerable patients. When my family had the opportunity to visit a hospital under construction, the Vidawasi Pediatric Hospital in Peru's Sacred Valley, it was clear that my background and our products could have an impact in a region that currently has limited access to pediatric care. After meeting with the developers and talking about proper infrastructure safety, it was an easy decision to donate products and volunteer as a fire and emergency management consultant. We're working with partners to expand our support for safe infrastructure in underserved regions. Infrastructure matters. Safe buildings matter. Reliable systems protect people.

HV MFG: After everything we've talked about, your background in safety and emergency preparedness, modernizing a family business, and supporting your workforce, what do you try to get right as a leader every day?

SA: If we had more time, I could tell you about all the times I got it wrong. But, at the end of the day, I try to remove barriers and give people the tools they need to be successful.

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ADVOCACY

BY CASEY MARVELL | OSTROFF ASSOCIATES INC.

THE STAKES IN ALBANY

Why a Unified Voice Matters

THE STAKES IN ALBANY

Decisions are made in Albany that directly impact businesses across New York State every year. The issues of the day move through the political process where individuals, companies, trade associations, labor organizations, and advocates converge on the Capitol to lobby elected officials. It is an imperfect but essential process, one that has real and lasting consequences for New York's residents, businesses, and communities. For manufacturers in particular, the stakes could not be higher.

Policy choices, from tax rates and economic incentives, to energy, workforce, and labor initiatives, impact whether companies choose to expand here, invest in new equipment, adopt advanced manufacturing technologies, or, in some cases, consider locating production elsewhere.

A COLLECTIVE VOICE IN THE CAPITOL

Having worked directly with the Council of Industry on manufacturing related issues, as a partner of the Manufacturers Alliance of New York State, it's clear that the association, and the Alliance, provide tremendous value and critical resources for its member firms.

The Alliance ensures manufacturers are not navigating Albany alone. Through assessing and monitoring legislation for potential impacts on manufacturers, members benefit from early warnings and thoughtful analysis that help them understand what is at stake. Additionally, the Alliance routinely engages with elected officials, legislative staff, and executive agencies to streamline and amplify the voice of manufacturers.

Policymakers are often asked to vote on complex issues that span energy markets, global supply chains, workforce shortages, and economic development strategy. The Alliance plays a critical role in translating how these policies affect manufacturers on the ground, from the shop floor to the balance sheet.

WHEN MANUFACTURERS SPEAK, POLICYMAKERS LISTEN

That work, however, is most effective when manufacturers themselves become involved and communicate in real time the challenges and opportunities they are seeing.

Data and policy briefs matter, but firsthand stories from employers are often what resonate most strongly with policymakers. When manufacturers speak directly about what works, what does not, and what is needed to remain competitive, it brings policy debates into real-world focus.

COMPETING FOR ADVANCED MANUFACTURING INVESTMENT

The Manufacturing Alliance of New York enables manufacturing associations, like the Council of Industry to leverage their collective voices and present clear, unified messaging on the policies and laws moving through the halls of the Capitol. This unity is particularly important in an era when New York is competing aggressively with other states and countries for large-scale industrial and technology investment.

Semiconductor manufacturing is a prime example. Facilities require billions in capital investment, affordable and reliable energy, and a highly skilled workforce, along with a stable, predictable regulatory environment. Advocacy in Albany helps ensure state policies support semiconductor manufacturers and suppliers, while also strengthening New York's competitiveness for manufacturing investment.

This engagement matters not only during periods of growth and investment, but also during times of extraordinary uncertainty. During the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, the Alliance's communication channels proved especially critical. The Alliance worked closely with state officials to ensure manufacturing facilities could safely remain open by helping develop and implement clear health and safety protocols.

The Council of Industry also provides opportunities for manufacturers to engage directly in government advocacy locally and in Albany.

Each year, in partnership with the Manufacturers Alliance of New York, companies from the Mid-Hudson Valley and across the state head to Albany to meet with elected officials and to advocate on issues that directly impact manufacturers.

These meetings demystify the legislative process and reinforce the reality that lawmakers value hearing directly from employers who create jobs in their districts.

"Lawmakers value hearing directly from employers who create jobs in their districts."

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Because of these efforts, the Alliance has consistently secured funding for critical workforce development initiatives, including registered apprenticeships and training programs for advanced manufacturers.

These programs are especially important as manufacturers adopt new technologies and require highly specialized skills. State support for on-site training, upskilling, and partnerships with community colleges and technical schools starts with advocacy in Albany.

ENERGY POLICY & RELIABILITY

The Alliance has also been a leading voice in calling for an all-of-the-above energy strategy.

Manufacturers require energy that is not only clean, but affordable and reliable. Advanced manufacturing facilities, including semiconductor fabs, cannot tolerate frequent outages or volatile energy costs.

TAX POLICY AND PREDICTABILITY

Tax policy is another area where engagement matters. Strong tax policy means predictability, competitiveness, and return on investment.

Manufacturers make long-term decisions based on stable tax structures and incentives that encourage reinvestment, job creation, and expansion. Advocacy helps ensure lawmakers understand how decisions influence whether capital investment happens in New York.

Engagement through the Alliance, the Council, and individually, is how manufacturers help shape policies that support innovation, job creation, and long-term economic strength across New York State.

AFFORDABILITY AND HEALTH INSURANCE REFORM

Affordability is another area where engagement matters — particularly for manufacturers who are balancing the rising costs of healthcare while continuing to invest in their employees. One example is health insurance experience rating and supporting legislation that would reduce the eligibility threshold from 100 employees to 50 employees, aligning New York with federal standards.

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"Legislators hope to hear what businesses are seeing on the ground."

Experience rating rewards employers who invest in safety, wellness, and proactive health management by allowing premiums to reflect actual claims history. Expanding access to experience-rated plans can provide more mid-sized manufacturers with predictability and incentives to manage risk effectively.

Advocacy helps ensure lawmakers understand that affordability policies can directly influence hiring, wage growth, and whether investment happens in New York or elsewhere — and could improve competitiveness, particularly as many neighboring and competitor states offer more flexible, cost-effective insurance markets.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS BEFORE THEY'RE NEEDED

Regardless of the issue, most people feel frustrated by the political process. The good news is that there are many ways to participate and help influence governmental decisions.

While voting on legislation is a visible part of a legislator's job, much of their work is dedicated to constituent services, helping residents and businesses navigate government programs, agencies, and challenges. Sometimes the most effective step is also the simplest, such as visiting your local State Senator's or Assemblymember's district office and introducing yourself or inviting them to visit your factory to see what you make and meet some employees.

Political ideology often takes a back seat to problem-solving in this space. Representatives want to understand what employers and families in their districts are experiencing and how state policy affects their day-to-day realities. These conversations help build relationships long before a crisis or policy debate emerges.

Legislators hope to hear what businesses are seeing on the ground such as workforce shortages, rising costs, regulatory complexity, or opportunities for growth. Initiating these relationships does not need to come with a specific request. These conversations ensure that Albany's decisions are informed by local, real-world experience. If you have not taken this step, there is no better time to start.

Engagement through the Alliance, the Council, and individually, is how manufacturers help shape policies that support innovation, job creation, and long-term economic strength across New York State.

Casey Marvel is the Vice President of Ostroff Associates, a leading government relations firm at the intersection of business and public policy.





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COMPANY PROFILE

CERVEN SOLUTIONS | BY CIARA MCENEANY, COUNCIL OF INDUSTRY

PUNCHING ABOVE THEIR WEIGHT

AUTOMATION, AI AND MODERN MACHINING

A NEW GENERATION OF MANUFACTURERS



Brothers Sean (left) and James (right) Cerven founded Cerven Solutions out of their parents garage in 2020. The growing manufacturer of precision parts for the aerospace industry stays nimble by employing the latest and most advanced technologies.

In 2020, while manufacturers across the country navigated shutdowns and supply chain disruptions, two brothers in Dutchess County saw an opportunity. James and Sean Cerven launched a small but ambitious CNC machining shop inside their parents' one-car garage.

Cerven Solutions specializes in precision components requiring tight tolerances and complex geometry - serving aerospace, medical and emerging technology sectors - with prototype and low-volume production support.





Co-Founder Sean Cerven cutting bar stock to the required dimensions before creating a customer's part.

Much of their work involves intricate components, multi-axis machining and consistent documentation for customers developing new products or scaling early production runs.

When the brothers began the business, Sean was working full-time in manufacturing while finishing his MBA, and James was pursuing a degree in mechanical engineering.

Nights and weekends were spent experimenting with 3D printing and small-scale machining projects, an extension of their lifelong interest in building things in their father's hobbyist workshop.

What began as a side project quickly accelerated. The brothers soon discovered that buying a CNC machine was only the beginning. Tooling, holders, materials and supporting equipment added up quickly.

But they also recognized something else: manufacturers were struggling to get parts delivered on time.

"We started investing in tooling and materials and realized, this is expensive," James Cerven said. "Then we thought, if we make parts for other companies, the work can pay for the tooling. So, we started trying to get customers."

It worked.

The now four-person manufacturing facility focuses on rapid prototyping and low-volume production of custom parts and plate work. Their Poughkeepsie-based shop is filled with equipment, a stark contrast to where it all started.

REAL APPLICATIONS

Cerven Solutions broke into manufacturing with a fresh perspective on how a modern machine shop can operate. Fascinated by innovation and emerging technology, the brother's welcome new tools not as novelty or obligation, but as something that drives a

competitive advantage.

"It's exciting because we get to use new tech, and the machines we have are brand new, not older than us," said Sean Cerven. "We're trying to push the envelope as much as we possibly can because we know it makes us two to three times more efficient out of sheer necessity. It's a clear competitive advantage."

"Since we haven't been running the same product for 30 years, and we don't have someone standing at a machine to keep it loaded, we can begin with the end in mind."

That mindset guided their capital investments. The brothers purchased 3- and 5-axis machines, including a FANUC RoboDrill equipped with a tilt-rotary table, along with a robotic machine-tending system to maximize flexibility and scale repeat production.

In some cases, building a \$300 custom tool can reduce cycle time on repeat parts to 1,000 pieces in four minutes with minimal oversight, allowing the shop to run lights-out production on repeat jobs. At that pace, the return on investment can come in a single night of running.

For a small shop, that kind of automation allows production to continue with minimal oversight, increasing output without dramatically increasing head count.

Beyond automation on the shop floor, Cerven Solutions has embedded technology into its operations. The brothers built a customized internal application using AI-tools to track inventory, manage tooling levels, build orders and schedule production according to how their shop runs.

"It took a lot to get the app built so that it was secure for our type of work, but it's all worked out now," James Cerven said. "That's been at the front of our mind while we grow this business. Not just technology for technology's sake, but for real applications and ROI."

As the shop grew, so did the need for structure. Cerven Solutions formalized their operations and strengthened inspection and quality oversight. Hiring two additional employees allowed them to improve documentation control, traceability and production discipline, and foundational elements for a shop taking on more complex work.

PLAYING EVERY DAY

Starting a manufacturing business has been no small feat for the Cervens. While their youth brings energy and flexibility, it also means earning trust in an industry where many customer relationships span decades.

“Our customers appreciate that we’re not retiring in five years,” Sean Cerven said. “But when we first walk into a shop, sometimes they look at us and think, ‘no way.’ Later they tell us they thought we were their age too.”

To overcome that perception, the brothers let their work speak first. Initial prototype jobs often lead to repeat production runs, and consistent performance has helped turn new contacts into long-term partnerships.

Trade shows have played an important role in expanding their reach, allowing the brothers to meet manufacturers and buyers from across the country.

At the same time, they have focused on building connections closer to home. The Cervens have connected with other manufacturers, suppliers and potential customers across the Hudson Valley through regional manufacturing events and industry organizations, such as the Council of Industry.

They say those relationships have been invaluable. Experienced manufacturers in the region have offered advice and encouragement as the company has grown.

Several industry leaders have taken an interest in their progress and supported their growth, including Sean Hamilton, Director of Operations at Putnam Precision in Brewster, and Aaron Phipps, President of MPI Systems in Poughkeepsie.

These connections have helped the brothers navigate everything from supplier relationships to customer introductions as the business has grown.

Winning work was only part of the challenge. Running a manufacturing business requires learning – pricing strategy, managing cash flow, scheduling production and maintaining quality systems, while continuing to invest in equipment and technology.

“This is the most work and the most stressful thing I’ve ever done,” James Cerven said. “But it feels like we’re playing every day.”

Their technical training helped provide a foundation for that learning curve. Sean graduated from SUNY New Paltz with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, while also earning his MBA when the brothers launched the company. James began pursuing a degree in Mechanical Engineering before shifting his focus to working full-time in the shop.

That combination of engineering and business training now shapes how the company operates. Sean, 29, focuses primarily on operations, systems and long-term planning, while his younger brother James, 23, leads customer acquisition and production.

They also credit their outside perspective as an advantage. Without inherited shop habits or decades of legacy processes, they say they are more willing to question assumptions and redesign work flows when problems arise.

“When something comes up that might be common for a shop that’s been around for a while, they’ll just deal with it,” Sean Cerven said. “We’d rather figure out something different.”



Quality Assurance Manager Shane Richardson reviews a part inspection report. Shane ensures that all parts manufactured by Cerven Solutions machine meet AS9100 standards and customer requirements.

PUNCHING ABOVE OUR WEIGHT CLASS

The next phase of growth for Cerven Solutions is already underway. The company is preparing to meet the rigorous quality and documentation standards required for components used in launch systems. That preparation has meant tightening documentation practices, strengthening traceability, and ensuring every step of the manufacturing process can be verified and repeated.

“When you’re making parts that could ultimately fly on a rocket, everything needs to be in order,” Sean Cerven said.

Meeting those standards has pushed the brothers to further formalize processes across the

“We don’t need to have a massive shop to have a big impact.”



Machinist Jacob Kitchen tooling up the high precision, 5-axis machine for an aerospace job. Earlier he simulated the toolpaths with a CAM (Computer Aided Manufacturing) program to reduce as much as possible the risk of crashing or scrapping parts.

shop floor. The goal is not simply to enter another industry, but to continue raising the level of precision and accountability throughout their operations.

Cerven Solutions is also becoming more selective about the projects it takes on. The brothers are balancing prototype development with production work that fits their capabilities and long-term strategy as demand grows.

Yet they are not rushing to expand their footprint - The focus remains on maximizing the output of the space and systems they have built.

“We don’t need to have a massive shop to have a big impact,” James Cerven said. “Even at our size now, our output is easily that of a shop with double or triple the number of people. We can really punch above our weight class by staying disciplined about how we run the shop.



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Co-Founder James Cerven setting up Robot, our 'employee' of the month, for its next job. The robot allows Cerven Solutions to run parts continuously day, night and over the weekend.

Ciara McEneaney is the Member Services Coordinator for the Council of Industry.



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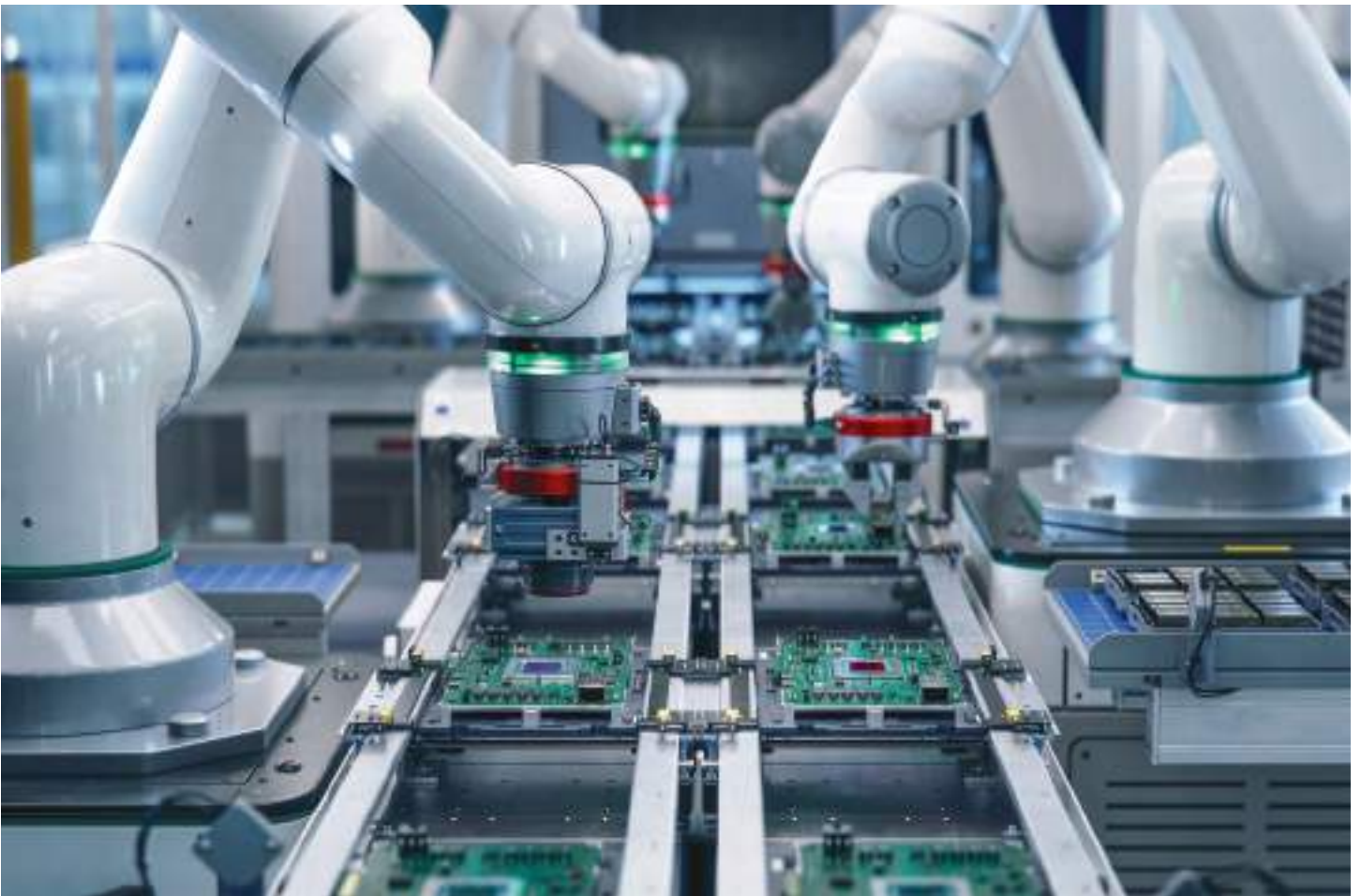
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INNOVATION

BY KATHY D'AGOSTINO | WIN AT BUSINESS AI

THE FIRST INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION
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Eighty percent of manufacturers plan to increase their AI investment in the next two years. That is not just a trend, it's a line in the sand. Companies that invest in and engage with AI tools are gaining an advantage, while those that ignore the technology risk falling behind.

Across the industry, manufacturers are beginning to experiment with AI to solve practical problems: speeding up quoting, diagnosing equipment issues, analyzing production and financial data, improving quality control, and capturing institutional knowledge before it walks out the door.

What may surprise many people is that these are not massive IT projects led by teams of developers. More often, they are small initiatives led by owners, engineers, managers, and teams looking for ways to remove friction from everyday work.

In many cases, the tools cost less than a monthly cell phone bill.

Michael Esposito, owner of Newburgh-based Orange Packaging, is one example.

His family's fourth-generation manufacturing company has been producing custom packaging solutions for nearly 75 years. Operating out of more than 150,000 square feet of manufacturing space with multiple production lines, the company designs and manufactures thermoformed packaging, point-of-purchase displays, and merchandising solutions for customers across a range of industries.

Three years ago, he began experimenting with AI tools to see whether they could help streamline some of the company's most time-consuming processes.

One of the first areas he explored was operational and financial analysis. Using AI, he built an application that reduced his 48-hour quoting process to five minutes.

Feeding two years of financial data into an AI tool and prompting it to act as the company's CFO, Esposito uncovered something surprising: \$300,000 in annual overtime that neither he nor his financially sharp brother had previously flagged.

In another case, using a \$20-a-month AI subscription and his cell phone camera, he diagnosed a machine problem his team initially believed required

a \$4,000 motherboard replacement. The AI analysis revealed the machine only needed a software update and a spare computer they already owned, allowing the machine to run again the same day.

Since then, the company has continued using AI to tackle problems across the business, from operational bottlenecks to hidden cost drivers.

THIS IS NOT A TECHNOLOGY PROBLEM. IT'S A PEOPLE STRATEGY.

Talk to almost any small or mid-sized manufacturer about AI adoption, and you will hear the same thing: the technology is not the hardest part. The real challenge is people. It's overcoming skepticism and fear by helping teams understand how these tools fit into the work they already do. Even when AI produces clear results, resistance from teams is common.

"Changing habits is the biggest obstacle," Esposito said. "I've told the team this isn't about their jobs; it's about making their work easier." But even with those reassurances, fear and hesitation are still part of the transition.

That challenge also represents the opportunity. Manufacturing is full of natural problem solvers. The leadership opportunity is to provide guardrails and clarity, then enable people to see the potential of these tools for themselves and use them to save time, solve problems, and improve how the business operates.

Even the companies making the most progress are still figuring out what that path forward looks like.

THE RIFT NOBODY TALKS ABOUT

Here is what the success stories above do not show: even the most advanced AI adopters are still operating without a clear roadmap.

Michael Esposito has generated extraordinary results, yet he has no formal system for tracking the total savings AI has created for his company. The value is real; it's just not always visible.

He also knows his team carries critical institutional knowledge that AI could help turn into standard operating procedures. That opportunity is clear, but the path to capturing it has not yet been fully defined.

Other manufacturers are navigating similar questions. Randy Copeman, Chief Technologist at Milton-based Sono-Tek Corporation, sees the same dynamic. Founded in 1975, Sono-Tek designs and manufactures ultrasonic spray coating systems used in industries ranging from medical devices and microelectronics to clean energy and semiconductor manufacturing.



Sono-Tek's FlexiCoat Inline spray coating system.

His team is already using AI tools to support engineering work, internal research, and everyday communication. But their larger ambition, making decades of proprietary technical knowledge searchable and accessible through AI, is still evolving.

"The challenge isn't whether the technology works," Copeman said. "It's finding the right tools and resources to take it from experimentation to something scalable and systematic."

That gap between experimentation and structure is where many companies find themselves today.

Experimenting with AI produces moments of value. Applying it deliberately creates compounding value.

Most small and mid-sized manufacturers cannot afford unlimited trial and error. They need a starting point, a priority list, and a path forward.

Closing this gap requires a shift in how we view the "AI project." It isn't just a software rollout; it's a fundamental business initiative.

In an industry where margins are tight and the talent gap is widening, manufacturing leaders must align their focus, linking technology directly to operational efficiencies, clear ROI, and the growth of their people.

WHERE TO START? STOP ASKING WHAT AI CAN DO. START ASKING WHAT IS SLOWING YOU DOWN.

Successful AI adoption starts with people, not technology. For manufacturing leaders, this is about more than just ROI; it is about Return on Employee (ROE). While much of the public conversation around AI focuses on faster emails or marketing copy, the real opportunity for manufacturers lies in the “hard” operations.

AI works best when it acts as a force multiplier, absorbing the repetitive, manual tasks of quoting, data analysis, and technical troubleshooting. When you help an employee use AI to diagnose a machine in minutes instead of days, you aren’t just improving a metric; you are increasing the ROE by making that employee more productive, creative, and indispensable.

FOCUS ON THE FRICTION

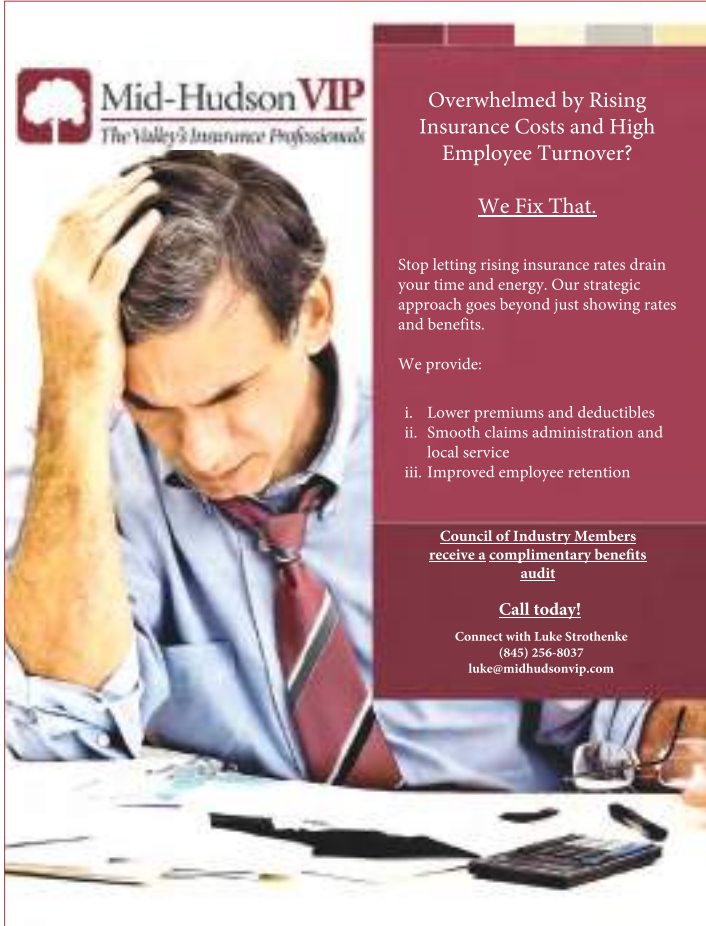
The most common and costly mistake businesses make is starting with tools instead of problems. They buy a subscription and then go hunting for a use case. This almost always produces underwhelming results and reinforces the idea that AI is a distraction rather than a driver of growth.

To turn AI into a competitive advantage, start focusing on the friction in your processes.

- **Identify the High-Value Bottlenecks:** Don’t start with the easy stuff. Start by identifying the manual processes that consume the most time or create the most errors. Orange Packaging focused on building an estimating app that reduced a 48-hour quoting process to five minutes because it was their biggest bottleneck. Other manufacturers have found success by improving quality control and using AI to analyze inspection data and identify defects earlier in production. Others are applying AI to supply chain planning, forecasting demand more accurately, managing inventory levels, and anticipating disruptions before they impact production.

- **Score by ROI and ROE:** After identifying friction, prioritize opportunities where AI can deliver a double win: a clear ROI (dollars saved) and a strong ROE by freeing skilled employees for higher-value work. For example, capturing institutional knowledge from experienced technicians and engineers can create immediate ROE by helping newer employees troubleshoot problems faster, reducing downtime and service delays. Manufacturers are also using AI to analyze production data to improve scheduling and optimize throughput across the shop floor, increasing output without adding labor.

- **Standardize and Assign:** To scale beyond experimentation, you must build discipline. Choose a paid professional tool, standardize its use, and assign an owner. This includes ensuring your privacy settings are configured to keep company data out of public training models. Every AI initiative needs two things to move off the whiteboard: a name attached to it for accountability, and a clear usage policy, so the team knows exactly what data is



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The Fear is Valid. The Paralysis is Not. Most security risks can be mitigated by moving from “free” tools to “pro” versions and setting three simple rules:

1. Check the Toggle: Most paid AI platforms allow you to turn off “training.” This ensures your data stays private and isn’t used to improve the public model.
2. Set a Data Policy: Clearly define what can be entered (operational friction points) and what cannot (proprietary code or protected customer data).
3. Appoint a Scout: You don’t need a technologist; you need a “Scout” someone curious and organized to stay current on privacy settings as the systems evolve.

safe to share and what stays behind the firewall. (See sidebar: *The Fear is Valid. The Paralysis is Not.*)

- **Capture the Quiet Wins:** If you cannot show the results, you cannot make the case for growth. Document every win, no matter the scale. This includes massive wins, like flagging \$300,000 in missed overtime, but also individual victories: an employee solving a stubborn machine problem in minutes, a manager identifying a new operational opportunity, or a team member mastering a new AI skill. When you track these “invisible” gains, you prove the value of the initiative to your team, your bank, and yourself.

THE REVOLUTION DOES NOT WAIT.

Going forward without a plan is the quietest risk a manufacturer can take. It won’t lead to a dramatic collapse, but a slow drift where contracts and talent gravitate toward competitors who have mastered these tools.

The businesses gaining momentum right now are not the ones with the biggest budgets or the most developers. They are the ones that have built the discipline to use AI deliberately, documenting every success along the way. They understand that every problem solved and every new skill learned by an employee adds to their competitive edge.

Whether it is a small shop solving a tooling crisis or a multi-generational company like Orange Packaging uncovering hidden costs, the winners are those who didn’t wait for a perfect roadmap. They started where they were, focused on the friction, and kept moving.

The first Industrial Revolution changed machines; this one is changing how humans work.

The gap between leading and following is no longer measured in decades. It is measured in the decisions you make this year.

Kathy D’Agostino is the founder of Win at Business AI, and a Certified AI Skill Development Trainer and Consultant.





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Council of Industry Partners with SUNY to Improve Workforce Readiness Through Internships



Harold King, President; Emma Olivet, Workforce Manager; and Chris White, Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development and Upward Mobility, at the SUNY Internship Summit

In the evolving landscape of Hudson Valley manufacturing, a practical new bridge is being built between the classroom and the factory floor.

The Council of Industry and the State University of New York (SUNY) are working to address a long-standing challenge: ensuring that the next generation of workers arrives not just with technical potential, but with the professional reliability required to succeed in today's demanding economy, through a new collaborative initiative.

Acting as an intermediary, the Council of Industry will actively encourage the employment of SUNY student interns at local Mid-Hudson employers.

This is more than just filling vacancies; it's about shifting the fundamentals of how we prepare young people for the rigors of the modern economy. As work becomes increasingly digitized, especially in manufacturing firms, the "human element" – the ability to show up, communicate, problem solve, and follow procedures – has never been more valuable.

BEYOND THE TEXTBOOK: THE LANGUAGE OF WORK

For many students, internships are their first true exposure to the high-stakes world of the modern workforce. While academic programs excel at teaching theory, “employability skills” are best forged through experience.

An internship delivers students the fundamental skills of communication, punctuality, and adherence to workplace procedures.

In a manufacturing setting, these are safety and productivity requirements. Learning how to communicate with a supervisor, understanding the importance of a 7:00 am start, and following precise Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are the bedrock of a successful career.

By placing students in these environments early, the Council and SUNY help them build a professional “muscle memory” that serves them regardless of their eventual specialty. These programs provide a “safe-to-fail” environment, where lessons in accountability are learned under the mentorship of seasoned industry professionals.

Understanding why a safety protocol is followed, or how a delay ripples through a supply chain, is eye-opening for an intern. By the time they complete their stint, an intern moves past the “student” mindset and adopts a “professional” one defined by accountability.

When a student returns to the classroom after a semester internship, they bring a new level of seriousness to their studies, understanding the why behind the math and the reason for the rigor.

THE VALUE OF THE INTERMEDIARY

One of the primary hurdles for small to mid-sized employers is the administrative lift required to start an internship program. Many firms have the willingness to mentor but lack the direct connection to the massive SUNY system.

This is where the Council of Industry plays its most vital role.

Johnnieanne Hansen, CEO of the Council of Industry, sees this as a core mission for the organization.

“We see this collaboration with SUNY as a real opportunity to bring value to our members, as well as other firms in the region,” Hansen said. “We know internships are a critical workforce pipeline tool for both employers and students. So, if we can help create more opportunities, everyone wins.”

Through this partnership, the Council acts as the “translator” between academia and industry, Chris White, Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development and Upward Mobility at SUNY, explains.

“Intermediaries, like the Council of Industry, who already have very strong connections with businesses, members who are part of the community, can take those connections and leverage them to provide expertise about how to start or scale internship programs.”

SUNY COMMITS TO ALIGNING EDUCATION WITH INDUSTRIAL OUTCOMES

The driving force behind this shift is a commitment to ensuring higher education delivers tangible value to both the students and the local economy.

In 2023, SUNY Chancellor John King established a goal that every undergraduate student take part in an internship or other



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experiential learning program tied to High-Impact Practices.

Chris White is taking on this challenge. He notes that the modern university must be an active participant in the regional and state economy.

“I think today’s version of higher education has to be – and the chancellor is very, very committed to this – tied to outcomes,” White continued. “More specifically, it’s what industry is looking for. It’s what students are looking for and one of the best ways to ensure success.”

White recognizes that the path to a career is rarely a straight line. The SUNY system serves a massive, diverse population whose needs are as varied as the companies within the Council of Industry and the Mid-Hudson region as a whole.

“Our students are wide-ranging, just like the needs of a business are incredibly wide-ranging,” White adds.

By tying educational experience to specific industrial outcomes, SUNY is “reverse-engineering” its workforce development to reflect the realities of Hudson Valley workplaces, including manufacturing shop floors today.

THE CAREER HUB: A DIGITAL MATCHMAKER

Central to making these experiences a reality is the Council of Industry’s Manufacturing Career Hub.

Historically, finding a qualified job or intern candidate depended on informal personal networks or scrolling through a dozen disjointed job boards. This platform – built and managed by the Council – acts as a specialized digital clearinghouse, where manufacturers post their specific needs and candidates, including those for internships from across the SUNY system.

For a time-strapped shop manager, the Career Hub is a legitimate gamechanger. It eliminates the administrative headache of navigating dozens of individual job boards and campus offices, providing a single, streamlined portal to access regional talent.

By hosting this centralized tool, the Council of Industry is moving Hudson Valley internship recruitment into a modern, data-driven, highly accessible era.

A WIN-WIN FOR THE REGION

While SUNY Internship Intermediary Program is still developing, the early results are promising.

Employers are finding that interns coached on employability skills become productive faster. Meanwhile, students see a path forward that doesn’t require leaving the Hudson Valley to find high-value work.

The “everyone wins” scenario, described by Johnnieanne Hansen, is becoming a reality. Local employers get a vetted pipeline, and the students get a head start on a lucrative career, while the region’s economy benefits from a stronger, more experienced workforce.

Our foundation is solid, by aligning our educational institutions with our industrial leaders, we are creating the future of the Hudson Valley.

Emma Olivet is the Workforce Development Manager at the Council of Industry.



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COMPLIANCE

BY THOMAS J. DEMAYO, NICK DELENA AND JIM SZUMLASKI | PKF O'CONNOR DAVIES

CMMC COMPLIANCE

A COMPETITIVE IMPERATIVE FOR DEFENSE MANUFACTURERS



Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) compliance now determines which manufacturers can compete for U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) contracts. To help minimize exposure across the defense supply chain, the DoD requires any business pursuing contract work to demonstrate that it – and its suppliers – have achieved defined levels of effectiveness in internal cybersecurity controls. For many organizations, this means strengthening existing programs. These requirements now apply broadly across the Defense Industrial Base (DIB).

" CMMC establishes required cybersecurity standards for defense contractors and suppliers. Increasingly, it serves not merely as a compliance requirement, but as a qualification threshold for participation in the defense marketplace."



For manufacturers, compliance frequently extends beyond traditional IT environments into plant-floor operations, engineering systems and third-party suppliers supporting production, logistics and quality control. Even companies that consider themselves “indirect” defense suppliers may fall within CMMC scope due to embedded components, technical drawings or controlled unclassified information (CUI) flowing through manufacturing systems.

FROM COMPLIANCE TO QUALIFICATION: UNDERSTANDING THE CMMC FRAMEWORK

CMMC establishes required cybersecurity standards for defense contractors and suppliers. Increasingly, it serves not merely as a compliance requirement, but as a qualification threshold for participation in the defense marketplace.

In manufacturing environments, CMMC requirements often intersect with legacy systems, proprietary production data, CAD/CAM files and operational technology (OT) not originally designed with modern cybersecurity safeguards in mind. Early planning

and careful scoping are especially critical for organizations operating long equipment lifecycles or decentralized facilities.

CMMC consists of three levels, each corresponding to increasingly rigorous technical requirements for a prime or subcontractor’s cybersecurity safeguards. The program became official on November 10, 2025. It was introduced after Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) audits found that only 4 percent of companies in the DIB had implemented DFARS 252.204-7012 by the December 31, 2017 deadline.

LEVEL 1: Satisfied through self-attestation.

LEVEL 2: Requires engagement of an independent CMMC Third-Party Assessment Organization (C3PAO).

LEVEL 3: Can only be certified by the DIB Cybersecurity Assessment Center (DIBCAC), a division of DCMA within the DoD, after obtaining Level 2 certification.

These levels represent specific contractual requirements and serve as benchmarks for businesses pursuing DoD work.

The degree of rigor increases with each level. Level 1 requires implementation of 15 safeguards. Level 2 requires 110 safeguards and 320 underlying assessment objectives. As of November 30, 2025, approximately half of the 1,000 companies that had initiated Level 2 certification had succeeded. Level

3 requires an additional 24 requirements from NIST SP 800-172. Both Levels 2 and 3 require C3PAO certification, which remains valid for three years.

A C3PAO may provide certification services or advisory services — but not both for the same contractor. For example, if PKF O’Connor Davies performs a certification assessment, we cannot consult, conduct gap assessments or assist in drafting remediation plans for that same organization.

These measures are designed to protect CUI. Although CUI falls below the threshold of classification under Executive Order 13526 or the Atomic Energy Act, it is still sensitive technical, operational or security-related information.

Within manufacturing organizations, CUI commonly appears in engineering drawings, technical specifications, bills of materials, testing data and quality documentation shared across internal teams and external suppliers. Identifying where this information is created, stored and transmitted is often one of the most challenging — and frequently overlooked — components of CMMC readiness.

“For manufacturers within the defense supply chain, CMMC compliance is no longer solely a cybersecurity issue. It is a competitive, operational and strategic consideration.”

THE IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE: WHAT CONTRACTORS SHOULD ANTICIPATE

CMMC will be implemented in four phases, two of which are already underway:

PHASE 1 – Began November 10, 2025, the effective date of the 48 CFR Part 204 CMMC acquisition rule. The DoD includes CMMC self-assessment requirements in solicitations as a condition of award.

PHASE 2 – Begins November 10, 2026. In addition to Phase 1 requirements, the DoD intends to include CMMC certification requirements for applicable solicitations and contracts.

PHASE 3 – Begins November 10, 2027. CMMC certification will be required for all DoD solicitations and contracts and as a condition to exercise an option period. This phase includes Level 3 requirements for applicable contractors.

PHASE 4 – Begins November 10, 2028. Full implementation. CMMC program requirements will apply to all solicitations and contracts, including option periods.

WHERE ORGANIZATIONS COMMONLY FALL SHORT

Scoping remains one of the most common areas of failure. The CMMC Level 2 Scoping Guide requires contractors to categorize assets as CUI assets, security protection assets, contractor risk managed assets, specialized assets or out-of-scope assets.

External cloud storage must meet security standards equivalent to those defined by the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP) moderate baseline.

Self-assessments constitute formal attestations to the government, and misrepresentation of a score may expose an organization to enforcement under the False Claims Act.

Manufacturers frequently struggle with scoping because production systems, engineering workstations and third-party vendor access are often interconnected in ways that are not fully documented. A single improperly scoped machine or shared network segment can unintentionally bring an entire facility – or multiple facilities – within CMMC scope.

SELECTING THE RIGHT CMMC ADVISOR

Given the operational and regulatory complexity involved, advisor selection is a strategic decision.

Organizations should seek professionals who understand how cybersecurity requirements intersect with manufacturing environments and who can provide executive-level guidance when a full-time Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) is not practical. A virtual CISO (vCISO) model can provide access to dedicated cybersecurity and information privacy specialists, experienced IT operational and compliance professionals and expertise in business continuity, disaster recovery and incident response.

Advisors should also demonstrate experience supporting broader government cybersecurity compliance frameworks, including Risk

Management Framework (RMF) and Authorization-to-Operate (ATO) initiatives, as well as National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication 800-53 program development and implementation for classified and CUI.

Penetration testing capabilities are particularly important for organizations pursuing CMMC Level 3 and certain NIST 800-53 baselines.

In addition, defense contractors benefit from advisors who understand the broader regulatory environment, including Defense Contract Audit Agency (DCAA) expectations and the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), which govern the federal government's procurement process.

As your organization competes for DoD contracts, selecting experienced, multidisciplinary advisors is critical.

For manufacturers within the defense supply chain, CMMC compliance is no longer solely a cybersecurity issue. It is a competitive, operational and strategic consideration. Companies that address these requirements proactively are better positioned to protect intellectual property, maintain customer trust and remain eligible for high-value defense contracts.

Our Cybersecurity and Privacy Advisory team works with defense contractors and manufacturers to navigate CMMC readiness, certification strategy and broader government compliance requirements while maintaining the independence required of a certified assessor.

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F&F FACTORY, a division of Fit and Fun Playscapes LLC, is an asset-based provider of custom print, cut and engraved products and services to commercial and industrial markets. Our specialty is large print formats including banners, backdrops and decals and cutting/engraving plastics, woods, leather, cork, paper, foam, glass, stone and some metals. We are based in Poughkeepsie, New York, are 100% women owned (WBENC, PANYNJ and SBA Certified), and about 90% of our products are made in the USA. We maintain a 3M™ MCS™ Warranty.

FRYER MACHINE SYSTEMS, INC.

70 Jon Barrett Road, Robin Hill Industrial Park
Patterson, NY 12563
www.fryermachine.com
PHONE: (845) 878-2500

Manufacturer of CNC machining centers and lathes designed for tool room, prototype, and mold-making uses.



GAP

110 Merrit Blvd., Fishkill, NY 12524
www.gapinc.com
PHONE: (845) 897-6000

Gap Inc. is a leading global retailer with a collection of brands including Old Navy, Gap, Banana Republic and Athleta. We're committed to serving the needs of our customers while delivering long-term value to our shareholders.

GIULIANTE MACHINE TOOL INC.

12 John Walsh Boulevard Peekskill, NY 10566
www.gmtgear.com
PHONE: (914) 835-0008 x11

Giuliante Machine Tool, Inc. has an unparalleled commitment to customers dating back to the foundation of the company in 1978. From a simple beginning as a two-man operation in a small 3,500 square foot shop in Port Chester, NY to the expansion to 10,000 square feet from 1995 to 2010, to the present 27,000 square foot organization it is today, GMT has earned a reputation for superior quality, vision, and customer satisfaction.

GTI GRAPHIC TECHNOLOGY, INC.

PO Box 3138, 211 Dupont Avenue, Newburgh, NY 12550
www.gtilite.com
PHONE: (845) 562-7066

Design and manufacture of specialized lighting systems for visual color evaluation, color matching and color communication for the graphic arts, photographic and industrial markets.



HOWMET AEROSPACE

1 Corporate Drive, Kingston, NY 12401
www.howmet.com
PHONE: (845) 331-7300
Manufacturer of installation tooling.

HUDSON VALLEY PLASTICS

85 Charles Colman Blvd, Pawling, NY 12564
www.hudsonvalleyplastics.com
PHONE: (845) 855-1201

Designers, manufacturers and assemblers of plastic injection molded parts and components.

HV SHRED, INC. DBA LEGAL SHRED

28 Bill Horton Way, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590
www.legalshred.com
PHONE: (845) 705-7279

HV Shred, Inc. dba Legal Shred is a AAA NAID Certified locally owned data destruction service. We destroy confidential paperwork, hard drives, usb drives, laptops, cell phones and the spectrum of electronics. Clients get a certificate of destruction to demonstrate their due diligence to comply with the alphabet soup of federal regulations protecting consumers' confidential information. Helping to protect the environment, Legal Shred recycles shredded paperwork.



IBM CORPORATION

2455 South Road MD P907, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
www.ibm.com/us/en/
PHONE: (845) 433-6326

IBM, headquartered in Armonk NY, is a leading cloud platform and cognitive solutions company. IBM provides integrated solutions that leverage information technology and knowledge of business processes. Products and services include Cloud, Mobile, Cognitive, Security, Research, Watson, Analytics, Consulting, Commerce, Experience Design, Internet of Things, Technology support, Industry solutions, Systems services, Resiliency services, Financing, and IT infrastructure.

INDUS PRECISION MANUFACTURING

50 N. Harrison Avenue #9, Congers, NY 10920
www.indusmfg.com
PHONE: (845) 268-0782

Indus Precision Manufacturing is a family-owned, woman-owned, and minority-owned machine shop in Rockland County, serving industries such as semiconductor, defense, and aerospace for over 27 years. With expertise spanning national and international markets, we specialize in high-precision manufacturing services, including CNC machining, waterjet cutting, CNC bending, welding, hardware installation, and painting. Certified to AS9100D and ISO 9001:2015 standards, and ITAR registered and JCP certified, we work with a wide range of materials such as stainless steel, aluminum, Inconel, copper, and brass. Our unwavering commitment to quality, innovation, and customer satisfaction has made us a trusted partner for delivering complex, high-quality solutions tailored to our clients' unique needs.



JAMES L. TAYLOR MANUFACTURING COMPANY

130 Salt Point Turnpike, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603
www.jamestaylor.com
PHONE: (845) 452-3780

James L. Taylor Mfg. has been manufacturing woodworking equipment in Poughkeepsie, NY since 1911. With three distinct product lines we aim to help our customers improve their processes with American made, well built, efficient and safe machinery. JLT Clamps is our custom shop clamping line that focuses on door, drawer, edge, and face gluing applications.

Taylor Clamps which includes Clamp Carriers, Door Pros, conveyORIZED applicators, and return conveyors. Cameron Automation is the third product line and is focused on computer controlled optimizing equipment. Ripping, cross cutting, panel sizing, color matching of panels, and automated nesting of flooring bundles has been our focus for the past 25 years.

JBT CORPORATION

134 Flatbush Avenue, Kingston, NY 12401

www.jbtc.com

PHONE: (845) 340-9727

Manufacturer & distributor of equipment for the food processing industry.

K

KATE MCLEOD

54 Elizabeth Street, Red Hook, NY 12571

www.katemcleod.com

PHONE: (646) 798-9768

Kate McLeod creates solid body care that delivers the most concentrated moisture on earth, harnessing the unrivaled healing power of pure plant butters. Our waterless formulas melt nature's most nourishing ingredients directly into the skin, transforming a daily routine into a grounding ritual of care.

L

LAMOTHERMIC

391 Route 312, Brewster, NY 10509

www.lamothermic.com

PHONE: (845) 278-6118

Lamothermic Precision Investment Casting Foundry was born from our founders' passion for engineering complex investment castings. Founded in 1975 by brothers Amos and Gideon Noach, we have grown from that 2-person operation into a corporation employing over 75 people in a 50,000 square foot manufacturing facility. We remain owner-operated, and our commitment to quality and customer service is part of everything we do.

Quality + Best-In-Class Engineering = Satisfied Customers: Lamothermic is your premier supplier of precision investment castings - quality first, every time. Our commitment to superior quality combined with our best in class engineering and advanced automation means that our customers get the best castings for their needs.

M

MCKESSON CORPORATION DISTRIBUTION CENTER

10 Hudson Crossing Drive, Montgomery, NY 12549

www.mckesson.com

PHONE: (845) 769-4127

McKesson is the oldest and largest healthcare company in the nation. We deliver one-third of all medications used daily in North America with operations in more than 16 countries. We work with health care organizations of all types to strengthen

the health of their business, helping them control costs, develop efficiencies and improve quality.

MECHANICAL RUBBER PRODUCTS

PO Box 593, 77 Forester Avenue, Warwick, NY 10990

www.mechanicalrubber.com

PHONE: (845) 986-2271

Custom Plastics and Rubber elastomer manufacturer which uses die cut, extrusion, lathe cut, mixing, molding, sheeting and stripping processes along with the fabrication of Engineered Flexible Connectors that includes Expansion Joints, Pump Connectors and Flue Ducts.

METALLIZED CARBON CORPORATION

19 South Water Street, Ossining, NY 10562

www.metcar.com

PHONE: (914) 941-3738

Metallized Carbon Corporation has been supplying industrial customers worldwide with Engineered Carbon/Graphite Solutions for Severe Service Lubrication since 1945. Corporate headquarters are in Ossining, NY with manufacturing facilities located in Ossining, Mexico and Singapore. Metallized Carbon manufactures the Metcar family of Solid, Self-Lubricating, Oil-Free materials. With over 65 years of Application Engineering experience, the Company offers the field expertise and the hard data necessary to provide the Solid Choice for Lubrication to a wide variety of industries. Metallized Carbon is ISO 9001/2008 registered including product design and material development. We operate under the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR).

METRIX TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION

8 Nancy Court, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590

www.metrix.com

PHONE: (845) 221-4800

Metrix Technology Corporation provides electronic printed circuit board (PCB) assembly as a service to its customers. The range of services we provide include surface mounted (SMT, SMD) and through-hole (TH) component assembly, wire harness construction, and box build. No quantity is too small. We routinely assemble prototypes as well production quantities as large as 10,000 per year. We also provide electronic design, reverse engineering, and design maintenance services. The company has been in business in Dutchess County since 1998. Let us be "Your Team at Metrix."

MICROMOLD PRODUCTS, INC.

7 Odell Plaza #133, Yonkers NY 10701

www.micromold.com

PHONE: (914) 969-2850

Micromold manufactures a broad line of corrosion resistant plastic products for the process industries. We specialize in standard and custom products made from PTFE, Kynar, polypropylene, PEEK, nylon, Kel-F, and UHMW.

Our products include: a complete line of dip pipes and spargers, available in either solid PTFE, or PTFE lined and jacketed steel; complex reactor internals; PTFE valves; PTFE and Kynar strainers; and our FLUOR-O-FLO™ PTFE NPT threaded piping system.

Micromold also makes a full line of CNC machined parts for process industry OEMs including ball valve seats, butterfly valve

seats, pump seals and instrumentation components as well as a complete range of plastic screw machine parts for process industry OEMs and distributors.

MILLROCK TECHNOLOGY, INC.

39 Kieffer Lane, Kingston, NY 12401

www.millrocktech.com

PHONE: (845) 339-5700

Millrock Technology, a world recognized leader in freeze dryers and related systems, manufactures equipment for the pharmaceutical and biotech industries. Freeze Dryers, used in the laboratory and production range from 2 to 200 square feet of shelf area that meet the rigid criteria of the FDA's 21CFR part 11 and GMP. Experience since 1957.

MOTION LABORATORIES, INC.

520 Furnace Dock Road, Cortlandt, NY 10567

www.motionlabs.com

PHONE: (800) 227-6784

Motion Laboratories is a full service fabrication and assembly facility based in New York that produces high quality portable electrical power distribution systems, electric chain hoist control systems, weight monitoring systems, metering equipment, testing equipment and cable assemblies. Incorporated in 1985, we bring over 30 years of experience to our customers.

MPI, INC.

165 Smith Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

www.mpi-systems.com

PHONE: (845) 471-7630

MPI is the worldwide leader and innovator of wax-room equipment, specializing in sophisticated wax injection systems, automated pattern processing, and pattern production services. With over 3,200 machines still in service globally, MPI continues to revolutionize wax pattern production and processing through automation and integrated robotic systems. Customers benefit from increased quality, yield, and productivity while reducing cycle times. MPI also offers state-of-the-art Global Service Support to ensure customer satisfaction.

N

NERAK SYSTEMS

4 Stagedoor Road, Fishkill, NY 12524

www.nerak-systems.com

PHONE: (914) 763-8259

NERAK designs and builds material handling equipment since 1987 and since 1997 in USA. NERAK is specialized in vertical conveyors for a wide range of bulk and unit goods, including powders & chemicals, food & pet-food, bags & boxes, barrels & kegs, totes & trays, and airport baggage.

NERAK equipment features a unique rubber block chain that allows quiet and lubrication free operation, as well as durability even in the harshest environments.

NERAK Systems Inc., a subsidiary of NERAK GmbH Foerdertechnik from Germany, represents the NERAK brand for the USA, Canada and Mexico.

NICHE MODERN

PO Box 311, Beacon, NY 12508

www.nichemodern.com

PHONE: (212) 777-2101

Modern lighting that is "Made" not manufactured. Niche glass is hand-blown in NY and joined together with contrasting elements, simple lines, and gorgeous color. Authentic and original lighting designs.



ONSEMI

Development Drive, Hopewell Junction, NY 12533

www.onsemi.com

PHONE: (512) 457-3900

onsemi specializes in delivering industry-leading intelligent power and intelligent sensing solutions that help our customers solve challenging problems and greatly improve the safety, sustainability, and power efficiency of end products in the automotive and industrial markets. In the Hudson Valley, onsemi manufactures 300mm silicon semiconductor wafers that contain the chips that go into onsemi products.

OPTIMUM WINDOW MANUFACTURING CORP.

28 Canal Street, Ellenville, NY 12428

<https://optimumwindow.com>

PHONE: (845) 647-1900

Since 1985 Optimum Window has made its mark in the Steel Window industry as the largest and most diversified manufacturer of Steel Windows and Doors in the United States. Competitiveness being the drive for all entrepreneurs, Optimum has continued its growth with a series of custom high-tech metal window and door systems designed for commercial, high-end residential, and landmark applications.

ORANGE DIE CUTTING CORP.

(DBA ORANGE PACKAGING) AND ORANGE VAC INC.

THERMOFORMING

PO Box 2295, 1 Favoriti Avenue, Newburgh, NY 12550

www.orangepkg.com

PHONE: (845) 562-0900

Family owned and operated by the Esposito family since 1950. Protective Packaging. POP Displays Temporary & High End Permanent. Thermoforming. Specialty Die Cuts. Product Packaging & Fulfillment & Shrink Wrapping. Acrylic Fabrication.

P

PACKAGE PAVEMENT COMPANY, INC.

PO Box 408, 3530 Route 52, Stormville, NY 12582

www.packagepavement.com

PHONE: (845) 221-2224

QUIKRETE® cement products, SPECMIX® bulk mortar system and Package Pavement Blacktop Repair products.

PAWLING CORPORATION

PO Box 200, 32 Nelson Hill Road, Wassaic, NY 12592

www.pawling.com

PHONE: (845) 373-9300

Impact Protection Systems, Entrance Matting Systems, Athletic Flooring, Parking and Traffic Safety Products.

PAWLING ENGINEERED PRODUCTS, INC.

157 Charles Colman Blvd, Pawling, NY 12564

www.pawlingep.com

PHONE: (845) 855-1000

Pawling Engineered Products, Inc. designs and manufactures highly specialized seals, gaskets, and other unique elastomeric products for many different industries. Noted especially for its Pneuma-Seal® line of inflatable seals, clamps, and actuators, ours is a history of challenging convention and solving tough problems with inventive yet thoroughly practical solutions.

PERRONE LEATHER, LLC

182A Riverside Drive, Fultonville, NY 12072

www.perroneco.com

PHONE: (518) 853-4300

Perrone Leather has a long and storied history in the leather industry, with a tradition of excellence that spans more than a century. Founded in Gloversville, New York, a hub of the American leather-making industry in the 1900s, Perrone Leather has always been dedicated to crafting high-quality leather products.

In 2023, Perrone Leathers & Textiles was acquired by ADHETEC and is now part of a comprehensive and holistic approach to transportation interior solutions. This united front will drive innovation, maximize synergies, and create a new industry standard for sustainability, customization and performance.

PK-30 SYSTEM, INC.

2452 Lucas Turnpike, High Falls, NY 12440

www.pk30system.com

PHONE: (845) 687-9774

PK-30 System is a meticulously designed and engineered aluminum glazing framework system providing a flexible, beautiful, environmentally friendly and cost effective way to divide interior space. It is suitable for both residential and professional interiors and can be used in widely varying configurations including sliding doors, hinged doors, pocket doors, folding walls and fixed panels.

POST MATERIAL HANDLING, INC.

21 Stone Castle Road, Rock Tavern, NY 12575

www.posthoist.com

PHONE: (845) 238-1200

We know that maintaining a safe and sterile manufacturing environment is as important to you as it is to us. That's why at Post, we're experts in the creation of stainless steel pharmaceutical grade material handling equipment that will withstand corrosion, rust, and harsh environments. From bin lifts to industrial control systems, our products are the epitome of excellence, so yours will be too.

POLY CRAFT

36-60 Industrial Place, Middletown, NY 10940

www.PolyCraftInd.com

PHONE: (631) 234-5300

At PCI, obstacles aren't barriers, but rather catalysts for innovation. We don't merely face challenges; we embrace them, transforming each hurdle into an opportunity for creativity.

PCI goes beyond traditional packaging. We specialize in providing packaging solutions that surpass conventional expectations. Our expertise spans various industries, and our capabilities include precision printing on a wide range of materials such as pouches, poly bags, and roll stock. We understand the unique needs of each market segment.

PRATT & WHITNEY ADVANCED COATING TECHNOLOGIES

60 Turner Drive, Middletown, NY 10941

www.pw.utc.com

PHONE: (845) 692-6613

Thermal Barrier Coatings

PRESIDENT CONTAINER GROUP

290 Ballard Road, Middletown, NY 10941

www.presidentcontainergroup.com

PHONE: (845) 516-1600

President Container is a leading manufacturer of Corrugated Shipping Containers and Point of Purchase Displays In North America. We use sustainable materials and produce over 2.2 billion square feet of corrugated products annually. We specialize in items for the Food & Beverage, Cosmetic, Garment and other commercial industries. Our stock carton division offers one of the nation's largest selections of stock boxes. To see a selection of our stock cartons please visit President Industrial Products.

PRODUCTO ELECTRIC CORP (PECO)

11 Kings Highway, Orangeburg, NY 10962

www.peco-electric.com

PHONE: (845) 359-4900

Producto Electric Corporation (PECO) was founded in 1935. We are an electrical manufacturing company based in Rockland County.

PECO is a source of world-class electrical conduit fittings and accessories for thousands of electricians, contractors, and distributors across the United States and Canada. We have several product series that we manufacture at our New York facility (customization and wire configuration) to meet the specialty needs of our customers for high-rise buildings and hazardous locations. This includes our Cable Supports for vertical risers and Flexible Couplings (Hazardous Locations/Explosion-proof).

PTI (PACKAGING TECHNOLOGIES & INSPECTION)

8 Skyline Drive, Hawthorne, NY 10532

www.ptiusa.com

PHONE: (914) 337-2005

PTI is the leading manufacturer of non-destructive package inspection technologies for the pharmaceutical, medical device and food industries. We offer inspection systems for package integrity testing, seal integrity, leak testing and container closure integrity testing (CCIT). Our technologies exclude subjectivity

from package testing, and use test methods that conform to ASTM standards. PTI's inspection technologies are deterministic test methods that produce quantitative test result data. Our technologies conform to ASTM and other regulatory standards. We specialize in offering our customers the entire solution including test method development and equipment validation. PTI installations have been successful in globally transferrable and validated test methods around the world.

PUTNAM PRECISION

PO Box 409, 3859 Danbury Road, Brewster, NY 10509
www.putnamprecision.info
PHONE: (845) 207-7229

Putnam Precision, established in 1967, is a modern contract manufacturing facility. We employ over 200 people utilizing the latest multiple axis Swiss CNC lathes, three, four and five axis milling machining centers, stamping, laser welding and assembly services. We foster a strong partnership with our customers by our early involvement in the design cycle straight through to full production capacity. This is accomplished by a strong commitment to continuous improvement, reinvesting in our personnel and equipment and lead by an excellent management team with a high level of adherence to quality.

R

RALPH W. EARL

5930 East Molloy Road, Syracuse, NY 13211
www.rwearl.com
PHONE: (315) 454-4431

Ralph W. Earl is a distributor of components and systems primarily for industrial automation. We provide our customers with motion control solutions utilizing pneumatic, hydraulic, and electronic technologies. In addition to industrial automation, we handle process and structural applications, as well as mobile equipment for the construction and agriculture industries. With approximately 55 employees, we service Upstate New York and Northern Pennsylvania, representing over 60 suppliers and providing value-add services such as assembly, fabrication, repair, and engineering.

REELEX PACKAGING SOLUTIONS, INC.

39 Jon Barrett Road, Patterson, NY 12563
www.reelex.com
PHONE: (845) 878-7878

REELEX is the world leader in advanced manufacturing of machinery and packaging design for sustainable reel-free wire, cable, and cord packaging. REELEX's state-of-the-art patented machinery helps manufacturers lower the costs of their products and improves the experience for wire, cable, and filament manufacturers shipping products to market. With twist-free, tangle-free technology, REELEX provides an improved experience for installers by increasing efficiency and product yield and reducing job site waste. REELEX's innovative partnering model assures manufacturers that REELEX is committed to the highest quality of service and success and provides a permanent resource to develop future product ideas.

REGIONAL FOOD BANK

580 New York 416, Montgomery, NY 12549
www.regionalfoodbank.net
PHONE: (518) 786-3691

The Regional Food Bank is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that collects donated food from the food industry and distributes it to more than 1,000 partner agencies and programs feeding our neighbors in need throughout 23 counties of northeastern New York. The food provided by the Regional Food Bank helps to feed over 350,000 people each month. In 2024, the Food Bank distributed more than 54 million pounds of food (enough for 45 million meals) to our neighbors in need. The Regional Food Bank is a member of Feeding America, the national network of food banks.

S

SABO INDUSTRIAL CORP.

2 Little Britain Road, Newburgh, NY 12550
www.saboindustrial.com
PHONE: (845) 562-5751

Sabo Industrial offers space saving industrial wastewater treatment equipment along with the Cleartreat® line of separating agents. Wastewaters containing a wide range of contaminants can be treated with the Cleartreat® products rendering them safe for discharge or reuse. Sabo Industrial is the largest stocking distributor of Cleartreat® in the US. Sabo also manufactures standard bag filters for use in a bag filter housing as well as our specially designed bag filters for use in our wastewater treatment equipment. These bag filters are specifically designed to meet the requirements of open head discharge filtering.

SCHATZ BEARING CORP.

10 Fairview Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
www.schatzbearing.com
PHONE: (845) 452-6000

Manufacturer of ball bearings for aircraft control, space, semiconductor, medical, thin section, custom-designed and other general purpose applications.

SCHREINER GROUP LP

300 Corporate Drive, Suite 10, Blauvelt, NY 10913
www.schreiner-medipharm.com
PHONE: (845) 848-9110

Pharmaceutical label printing.

SELUX CORPORATION

PO Box 1060, 5 Lumen Lane, Highland, NY 12528
www.selux.us
PHONE: (845) 834-1400

Architectural lighting; luminaires.

SIG SOURCING

95 Ann Street, Newburgh, NY 12550-5523

www.sigsourcing.com

PHONE: (845) 562-5546

SIG Sourcing, established in 1989, is a Newburgh, NY-based offshore contract manufacturing service for North American original equipment and contract manufacturers to outsource their custom, high-labor-content, low-value-add assemblies (e.g. box build assemblies, PCBAs, wire harnesses, power cables). We have decades-long Asian factory relationships and handle everything from component consignment to quality control to USA inventory management to customer shipments and returns. We are a turnkey sourcing service that eliminates the frustrations and risks that manufacturers encounter when handling overseas assembly manufacturing and global logistics themselves. Our mission is to help North American manufacturers focus on their high-value-add activities, improve margins, and enjoy a more stable supply chain.

SMITH & WARREN

127 Oakley Avenue, White Plains, NY 10601-3903

www.smithwarren.com

PHONE: (914) 391-9204

Smith & Warren produces the finest quality Police Badges, Fire Badges, EMS Badges, Sheriff Badges, and Military Badges. In addition, Smith & Warren also creates the best quality uniform insignia, commendation bars, medals, and leather accessories. Trust Smith & Warren for the best quality badges, insignia, and accessories, and don't forget that all Smith & Warren badges are backed by our exclusive Full Lifetime Warranty. No other badge is covered by such an extensive guarantee. We manufacture each badge in our highly efficient 27,000 square foot facility in White Plains, New York. USA manufacturing is the surest way to maintain the quality of our product and service.

SONO-TEK CORP.

2012 Route 9W, Milton, NY 12547

www.sono-tek.com

PHONE: (845) 795-2020

Sono-Tek Corporation (Nasdaq: SOTK) is a global leader in the design and manufacture of ultrasonic coating systems that are shaping industries and driving innovation worldwide. Our ultrasonic coating systems are used to apply thin films onto parts used in diverse industries including microelectronics, alternative energy, medical devices, advanced industrial manufacturing, and research and development sectors worldwide. Our product line is rapidly evolving, transitioning from R&D to high-volume production machines with significantly higher average selling prices, showcasing our market leadership and adaptability. Our comprehensive suite of thin film coating solutions and application consulting services ensures unparalleled results for our clients, and helps some of the world's most promising companies achieve technological breakthroughs and bring them to the market.

SPOG TRAILERS

392 North Montgomery Street, Newburgh, NY 12550

www.spogtrailers.com

PHONE: (855) 720-2290

The SPOG Trailers is engineered to match the solar power generation capacity of an average home, delivering clean, renewable energy wherever you need it. Whether you choose our smallest model or the largest, each trailer is equipped to produce substantial power to support household needs, charge electric vehicles, and power off-grid adventures.

STAR KAY WHITE INC.

151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920

www.starkaywhite.com

PHONE: (845) 268-2600

Star Kay White is a well-known and trusted ingredient supplier with a company culture of legacy, responsibility, and appreciation for the many esteemed employees, families, and organizations who have helped us through this journey.

SUN CHEMICAL

1057 Lower South Street, Peekskill, NY 10566

www.basf.com

PHONE: (914) 737-2554

Sun Chemical product portfolio ranges from chemicals, plastics, performance products, agricultural products and fine chemicals to crude oil and natural gas. It combines economic success with environmental protection and social responsibility, thus contributing to a better future.

SUPERPOWER INC.

21 Airport Road, Glenville, NY 12302

www.superpower-inc.com

PHONE: (518) 346-1414

SuperPower Inc. is a leading manufacturer and provider of second-generation high-temperature superconducting (2G-HTS) wires. For the past 10 years or more, we have provided, and contributed to, many solutions to various advanced applications and projects for our customers.

2G-HTS wires, unlike the conventional copper conductors, can transport the current with no resistivity, ultimate zero-ohms: This means that the power devices can be shrunk down to very compact sizes with no Joule-heats, when it is operated under cryogenic temperatures (77K, 30K, 4.2K, for instance). Our partners, by using our wire, have demonstrated very-high-current cables capable of more than 10 thousand Amperes, or advanced magnets of ultra-high field more than 40 Tesla.

Such high-power cables and superb coil-magnets will serve for future systems such as next generation NMRs for advanced bio-medical sciences, compact fusion reactors to solve climate changes. Future mobility will come true by HTS- hover transportation, electric-airplanes, or space-aircrafts. Thus, we will continue to contribute to the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



TOWER PRODUCTS INCORPORATED

1 Tower Drive, Saugerties, NY 12477

www.towerpower.com

PHONE: (845) 246-2357

Tower Products Incorporated is a 100% Employee Owned company solely based in Saugerties. The Tower mission is to provide the very best broadcast video production and audio recording solutions to a worldwide marketplace via our manufacturing capabilities as well as our distribution & retail channels. Tower has two sales channel brands: Markertek and TecNec Distributing. Markertek sells to broadcast television, sports & live event franchises, houses of worship, government and educational institutions. TecNec's customers are engaged in reselling products, installing products or integrating them into other manufactured goods. Innovation through collaboration, Tower's manufacturing brands specialize in custom value-added products and services when conventional off-the-shelf solutions simply are not enough. Tower has 6 brands which manufacture products in our Saugerties facility. These brands are known as Complex, Sescom, Laird Digital Cinema, Ocean Matrix, Delvcam and My Custom Shop. Our primary manufacturing capabilities are fiber optic cable assemblies, copper cable assemblies, AV rack panels, AV wall boxes, light manufacturing (board assembly) and custom services via CNC, laser engraving and UV printing.

TURBOFIL PACKAGING

30 Beach Street, Mount Vernon, NY 10550

www.turbofil.com

PHONE: (914) 239-3878

Since 1999, TurboFil has consistently established new benchmarks by creating durable and creative solutions for some of the toughest applications in the industry. At TurboFil, liquid filling and assembly machines are our only business. Although we have a broad range of standard equipment, we also focus on custom, built-to-spec and specialized machines. In order to meet the demand for systems that fit seamlessly into existing operations, we have developed a range of packaging equipment that is unmatched in reliability, efficiency and cost effectiveness. And, because we understand that every line has its own unique requirements, each of our machines is customized to the individual needs of our customers.



UAP PRODUCTION LLC

453 NY-17K, Rock Tavern, NY 12575

www.uapcompany.com

PHONE: (845) 567-9464

UAP Production LLC strives to be the artists source for all objects cast or fabricated in metal, embracing all the tasks necessary and appropriate to fulfill that aspiration, including enlarging, mold making, structural and metallurgical engineering, repairs, restoration and consummate craftsmanship. We aspire to excellence in the delivery of technology and manufacturing services, always trying to make the newest art with the latest technology. To achieve this

goal, we partner with our suppliers to combine cutting edge technology with old world craft and tradition, endeavoring to give artists satisfaction and seeking continuous improvement in our employees skills and craftsmanship.

UNILOCK

51 International Blvd, Brewster, NY 10509

www.unilock.com

PHONE: (845) 230-4500

Unilock, North America's leader in the manufacturing and distribution of high quality concrete landscape paving stones and retaining wall products.

UNSHATTERED

1090 New York 376, Wappingers Falls, NY 12590

www.unshattered.org

PHONE: (845) 867-6999

Unshattered creates sustainable employment for those who have no safe community to return to after recovery from addiction and/or trauma. We are a community of like-minded women, expressing our value and purpose through work, and committed to ongoing personal and professional development. This combination of community, employment, and personal development ultimately gives our women the opportunity to find their purpose and live an addiction-free life.

Unshattered is committed to demonstrating that the cycle of addiction can be broken and we are proud to be a facilitator of lasting, positive change.

USHECO, INC.

138 Maple Hill Road, Kingston, NY 12401

www.usheco.com

PHONE: (914) 658-9200

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www.dcwib.org

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www.ulsterboces.org

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www.wdiny.org

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CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTORS, SMRCA, FABRICATORS ERECTORS & REINFORCING CONTRACTORS

330 Meadow Avenue, Newburgh, NY 12550

www.ccahv.com

PHONE: (845) 562-4280

Construction Contractors Association is dedicated to the advancement of the construction industry in the Hudson Valley region. CCA seeks to promote the orderly development of the Hudson Valley, encourage a business friendly environment and help provide our members with the skills, resources and support to be competitive.

EMPIRE CENTER FOR NEW YORK STATE POLICY

30 South Pearl Street Albany, NY 12207

www.empirecenter.org

PHONE: (518) 434-3100

The Empire Center is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit think tank located in Albany, New York. Our mission is to make New York a better place to live and work by promoting public policy reforms grounded in free-market principles, personal responsibility, and the ideals of effective and accountable government.

HUDSON VALLEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (HVEDC)

10 Matthews Street, Goshen, NY 10924

www.hvedc.com

PHONE: (845) 220-2244

The Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation (HVEDC) is a comprehensive resource for businesses relocating to (or expanding within) the Hudson Valley, which includes Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Orange, Ulster, Dutchess, and Sullivan counties.

HVEDC works closely with a mosaic of business, academic, government, and community leaders to collaboratively navigate and shape a brighter economic future for the Hudson Valley by driving business innovation, attraction, and expansion throughout the region.

PATTERN FOR PROGRESS

PO Box 425, Newburgh, NY 12551
www.pattern-for-progress.org
PHONE: (845) 565-4900

Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress is a not-for-profit policy, planning, advocacy, and research organization whose mission is to promote regional, balanced, and sustainable solutions that enhance the growth and vitality of the Hudson Valley.

ORANGE COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

40 Matthews Street, Suite 104, Goshen, NY 10924
www.orangenyc.com
PHONE: (845) 457-9700

With nearly 1,700 members, the Orange County Chamber is a leading advocate for business in the Hudson Valley region.

ORANGE COUNTY PARTNERSHIP

40 Matthews Street, Suite 108, Goshen, NY 10924
https://www.ocpartnership.org/
PHONE: (845) 294-2323

Center of Economic Development Orange County New York The Orange County Partnership is your resource for development opportunities in Orange County. Free Business Development Resources From site selection assistance, financing options, and employment training to marketing, the Orange County Partnership is your premier (no-cost) resource for economic development support. The Orange County Partnership's team of economic development professionals works with commercial real estate brokers, developers, site selection firms and regional and statewide economic development agencies to find the most advantageous and cost-effective locations for corporate attractions and expansions.

ULSTER COUNTY REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

214 Fair Street, Kingston, NY 12401
www.ulsterchamber.org
PHONE: (845) 338-5100

The Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce provides services and advocacy on behalf of its membership and the community to advance the region's economic health and vitality. We are the Voice and Choice of business in the Ulster County region to stimulate and nurture sustainable economic growth.

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P.O. Box 678, Walden, NY 12586
www.fischsolutions.com
PHONE: (845) 590-1630

Fisch is an award winning IT Managed Service Provider that provides business, government, & not-for-profits IT support, cybersecurity, IT consulting, CMMC compliance and More.

WESTECH SOLUTIONS, LLC

333 Mamaroneck Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605
www.westechsolutions.com
PHONE: (914) 595-6335

Established in 2005, Westech Solutions, LLC (Westech) is an award-winning Managed Services Provider (MSP) renowned for its innovative technology solutions that facilitate business transformation. We specialize in delivering forward-thinking solutions that align with our client's business objectives so that they can overcome challenges and seize opportunities in the ever-evolving digital landscape.

TROUT SOFTWARE

304 Wall Street, Kingston, NY 12401-3850
www.trout.software
PHONE: (646) 215-1813

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The Council of Industry
The Manufacturers Association of the Hudson Valley

845.565.1355 | councilofindustry.org | councilofindustry.org/join

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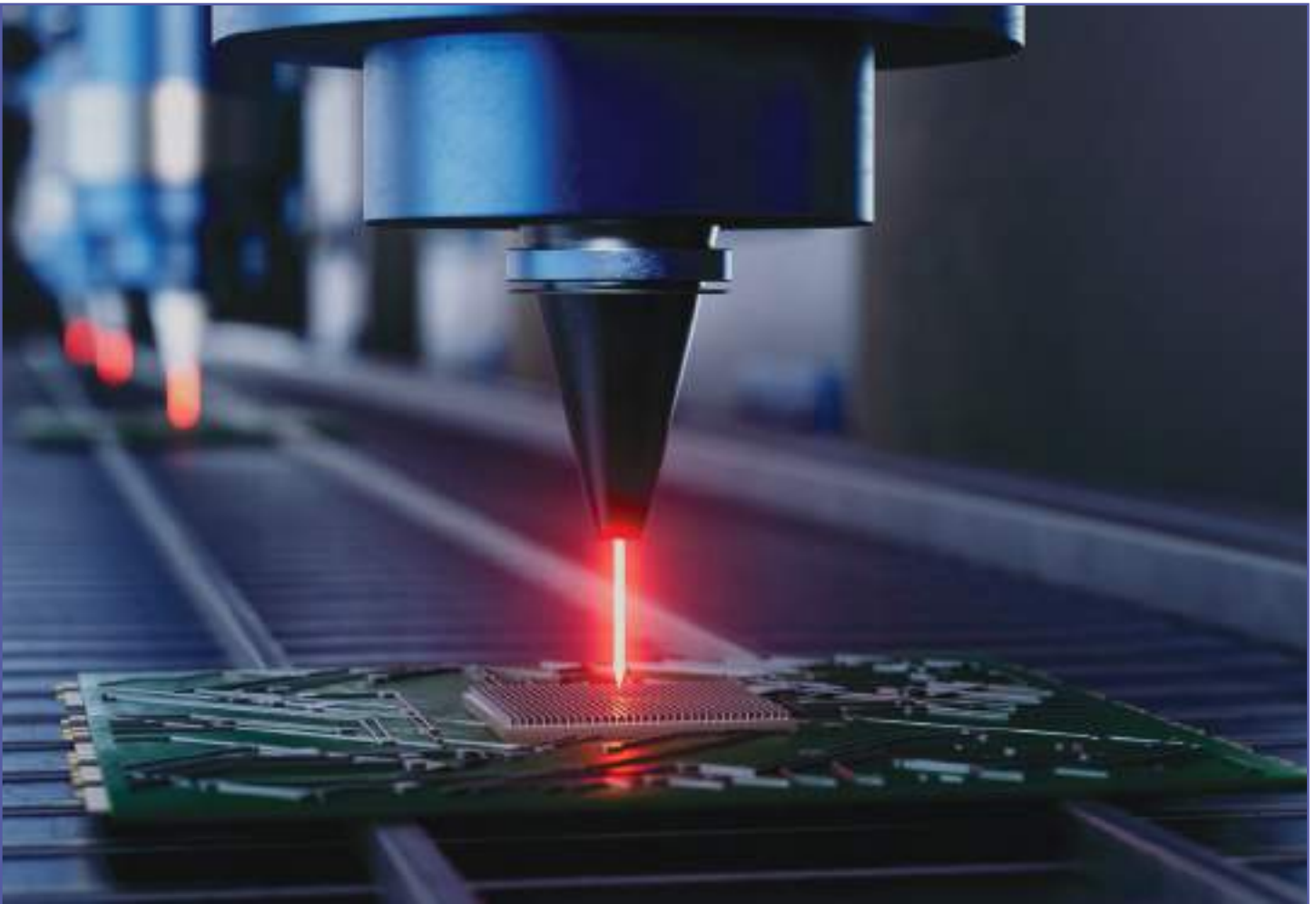
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The Council of Industry

263 Rte. 17K, Suite 106
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Council of Industry
Helping Mid-Hudson Manufacturers Grow Since 1910



The Council of Industry
The Manufacturers Association of the Hudson Valley

councilofindustry.org