

# NEPIRC NEWS

northeastern pennsylvania industrial resource center

July 2024 | Volume 45

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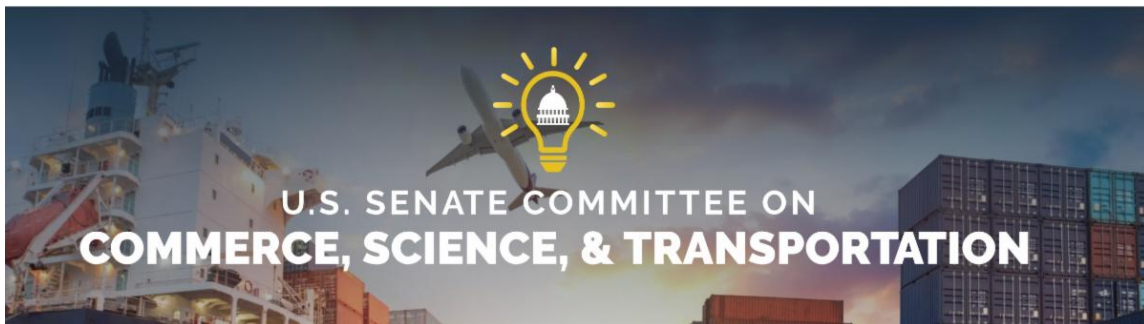
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## National News



### Cantwell, Moran Introduce Bill to Help Small Businesses Leverage AI Tools

U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell, Chair of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, and U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, a senior member of the Committee, introduced the bipartisan Small Business Artificial Intelligence Training and Toolkit Act of 2024 that would authorize the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) to work with the Small Business Administration (SBA) to create and distribute artificial intelligence (AI) training resources and tools to help small businesses leverage AI in their operations.

“In rural communities where capital resources and workforce are limited, AI has tremendous potential to fill the gaps and help small businesses with finance management, marketing, supply chain management and much more,” said Sen. Moran. “This legislation would help small businesses utilize AI to meet their needs, expand and innovate. Combining these tools with a trained workforce will help make certain the United States is utilizing AI to grow our economy and bolster our world-class businesses.”

[Read More](#)

### Be Clear About What You Plan to Solve With Automation

Robert Scipione, the Manufacturing Services Manager at the Michigan

Manufacturing Technology Center (Michigan MEP), writes in *IndustryWeek* that the most important aspect of a manufacturer's first automation project is to be clear about what problem you are trying to solve. Linking the initiative to financial performance and using a system mindset for adoption will help ensure the effort's success.

[Read  
Article](#)

## State News

### **Shapiro Administration Secures \$100 Million Expansion by Manufacturing Company Victaulic, Helping to Create 214 New Jobs in Tioga County**

On July 2nd, Governor Josh Shapiro announced the Commonwealth is investing \$1.5 million to support [Victaulic](#), the originator and world's leading producer of grooved mechanical pipe joining and flow control systems. Headquartered in Easton, PA, Victaulic's \$100 million expansion project will create at least 214 new, full-time jobs and retain an additional 1,611 jobs across the Commonwealth.

"With the support of the Commonwealth, Victaulic is investing \$100 million in Tioga County to expand its manufacturing capacity and create 214 new jobs," said Governor Josh Shapiro. "Since day one, my Administration has had a clear plan to double down on our investments in economic development so Pennsylvania companies, like Victaulic, can compete and win – and I want more companies to grow and succeed here in Pennsylvania. By investing in economic development projects like this one, we are creating good-paying jobs, reigniting our economy and supporting our communities."

With this investment, Victaulic will construct a 150,000-square-foot addition to its Lawrenceville foundry to accommodate new molding lines, melt furnaces, core machines and automated finishing and paint equipment to help produce larger scale products. The expansion will also include a 60,000 square-foot machine shop with state-of-the-art Computer Numerical Control (CNC) equipment. Victaulic received a funding proposal from the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) for a \$1.07 million Pennsylvania First Program grant and up to a \$428,000 Workforce and Development Network grant to train workers.

[Read Press  
Release](#)

### **Free Registration (a \$1,500 Savings) to AIMST Conference Available Through NEPIRC**

Through partnership with the event hosts and sponsors, NEPIRC is pleased to offer regional manufacturers free registration to the AIMST Conference 2024 taking place August 13th-15th in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

AIMST is an industry leading conference focused on providing in-depth discussions and solutions for heads of manufacturing, technology managers, ICS, IT/OT, SCADA and cyber security professionals to accelerate their digital transformation and transform their operational and automation systems.

Attendees of the event will leave with the knowledge to improve their systems to better monitor/control equipment, optimize value, prevent cyberattacks, increase supply chain efficiency and harness valuable data to optimize processes. With more

than 300 attendees and 60+ speakers, the conference is sure to have something for everyone. Information on the conference can be found at [here](#).

[Apply for FREE Registration](#)

## Regional News

### i2M Emphasizes Mindful Manufacturing

[i2M](#), located in Mountain Top, PA, was recently featured as the monthly profile in the Times Leader's Manufacturing Success Story Spotlight Series.

At i2M, high-quality plastic film is produced and customized through processes like calendaring, printing and laminating. The crew at i2M mixes and blends raw materials, turning those materials into a puddy-like substance, which can then be calendared — or compressed — to form a thin but sturdy plastic film. The film can then be shipped off to another manufacturer, where i2M's creations can be integrated into a store-ready product.

i2M's products can be broken down into three main categories: heavy-duty, precision and decorative. Heavy-duty products are built to last, emphasizing performance and sturdiness in their creation. Consider the lining of the baggage tunnels at Los Angeles International Airport. That material was made at i2M. Precision products are thinner than their heavy-duty counterparts and are typically waterproof. These products can be used in the manufacturing of camping tents and the vinyl material around bumper stickers. Decorative products are the ones you see on your pool liner and are especially effective against heat. They can also be used as laminates to other plastic products.

[Learn More](#)

## The Latest from NEPIRC



## Printable Resources for Manufacturers

DYK? NEPIRC has several downloadable and printable resources and reports on its website for manufacturers. [CLICK HERE](#) to browse the publications. We're sure you'll find at least one that will come in handy!

Is there a topic you'd like to see added to the NEPIRC library? Email your request to [Info@NEPIRC.com](mailto:Info@NEPIRC.com).



## Wall Street Journal Bestselling Authors to Present MFG DAY Afternoon Breakout Session

NEPIRC is pleased to announce that Dr. Katie Desiderio and Dr. Michael Frino, authors of *The Beekeeper: Pollinating Your Organization for Transformative Growth*, will present the [MFG DAY](#) afternoon breakout session entitled, *Becoming a Be Keeper*. The co-authors will discuss resiliency, grit and determination in the workplace amongst constant change.



Along with her work as a professor of management and tenured faculty member at Moravian University, Dr. Desiderio is principal partner in Learning of Proximal Development, LLC, an authorized DiSC partner, specializing in leadership development and the advancement of performance through learning. Dr. Frino has over 20 years of professional experience working for Fortune 500 companies in sales, leadership and organizational development. Michael obtained his PhD in organizational learning and leadership in 2010 and embraces opportunities to help individuals, groups and organizations reach their peak potential. They each enjoy helping organizations develop their most important



assets – their people.

To learn more about *The Beekeeper: Pollinating Your Organization for Transformative Growth* or to purchase a copy before MFG DAY, [CLICK HERE](#).

## MFG DAY Tickets Now on Sale

Tickets for [MFG DAY 2024](#) are on sale! Join NEPIRC on October 4th from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and connect with hundreds of manufacturers and industry professionals at our region's largest manufacturing networking and best practices event. Tickets are only \$50 for manufacturers and \$100 for non-manufacturers.

[CLICK HERE](#) to purchase your tickets now!

**NEPIRC**  
**MFG DAY 2024**  
TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

**MANUFACTURERS: \$50**  
**NON-MANUFACTURERS: \$100**

**MFG DAY**

**OCTOBER 4**  
Mohegan Pennsylvania  
Wilkes-Barre, PA

**ASSISTANCE FOR MANUFACTURERS**

**STARTUP MANUFACTURING ASSISTANCE IN NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Industrial Resource Center (NEPIRC) provides technical assistance and advice to startup manufacturers and makers who want to take their business to the next level.

### WHAT IS AN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCE CENTER?

Across Pennsylvania, Industrial Resource Centers (IRCs) provide expert assessment, benchmarking, consulting, workforce training and talent attraction services to startup, small and mid-sized manufacturers looking to scale their operations.

### HOW CAN NEPIRC HELP A STARTUP MANUFACTURER?

NEPIRC is the Industrial Resource Center serving the northeastern, northern and parts of central Pennsylvania. Since 1988, NEPIRC has been assisting regional manufacturers in achieving their growth and profitability objectives by accelerating their entry into new markets, easing their adoption and integration of new technologies, simplifying their attainment of industry certifications, maximizing their productivity and providing training that upgrades the technical and leadership skills of their workforce. Many services available to startup firms are offered at no cost or very low cost to the company.

### WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH NEPIRC?

NEPIRC offers an array of assistance to startup manufacturers, including:

**SUPPLIER SCOUTING**  
Identifies PA-based suppliers of raw materials, subcomponents, packing and packaging materials, printed materials and other inputs. Creates localized supply chains.

**FACILITY EVALUATION**  
Assistance in evaluating and selecting a facility to meet your needs.

**SHOP FLOOR LAYOUT**  
Optimizes shop floor layout for maximum efficiency and minimum waste.

**MACHINERY SELECTION**  
Assistance in selecting the best machinery for the task.

Many other forms of assistance are available. Contact NEPIRC for more information.

NEPIRC  
570.879.8946  
Info@NEPIRC.com  
NEPIRC.com

## Penn's Northeast Features NEPIRC in its Northeastern Pennsylvania Small Business & Entrepreneur Resource Guide

NEPIRC is honored to be featured in *Northeastern Pennsylvania's Small Business & Entrepreneur Resource Guide* developed by [Penn's Northeast \(PNE\)](#). Many thanks to PNE for including NEPIRC and highlighting how our organization provides assistance to the region's manufacturers.

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the complete Guide.

## NEPIRC's Manufacturing Ambassador Dream Team Receives Grant from the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board

NEPIRC recently received a Business Education Partnership Grant from the Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board that will enable the organization to publish a new

*Manufacturing & Me Guide* that will raise intermediate school student awareness of STEM careers available across the advanced manufacturing sector in Lackawanna County and across northeastern PA.

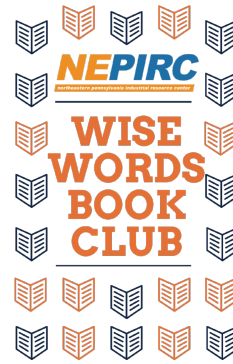
The grant will also encourage students to explore advanced manufacturing curriculum available through local career and technical centers (CTCs) and area colleges. Grant proceeds will also enable NEPIRC Manufacturing Ambassador Dream Team members to attend summer STEM camps being hosted by Penn State University (Scranton campus), Johnson College and the CTC of Lackawanna County.



## **Manufacturer of the Month: Truck-Lite**

[Truck-Lite](#), a worldwide leader in advanced LED lighting systems for commercial trucks, buses and trailers located in Wellsboro, PA, is this month's NEPIRC Manufacturer of the Month. Established in 1955, Truck-Lite was the first company in the transportation industry to use polycarbonate material for light housing and lenses. Throughout the years, Truck-Lite has built a company with engaged leaders, innovative engineers, system-minded operations specialists and relationship-focused sales and marketing experts. Truck-Lite provides an excellent work environment and has grown into an international company with over 1,000 employees. With over 250 industry patents, Truck-Lite is constantly developing purposeful solutions for the challenges its clients face. NEPIRC thanks Truck-Lite for providing such great services and high-quality products to its clients!

If you'd like to be featured as a Manufacturer of the Month, please email [Chelsey@NEPIRC.com](mailto:Chelsey@NEPIRC.com) for more information.



## Reserve Your Plant Tour Headsets Today

Don't forget to download NEPIRC's latest resource, [From Start to Finish: NEPIRC's Guide to Impactful Plant Tours](#), which helps manufacturers ensure all bases are covered when it comes to planning, coordinating and executing plant tours. In addition, manufacturers can now reserve FREE plant tour headsets from NEPIRC.

NEPIRC provides OSHA-approved tour headsets, including two speaker sets and 12 guest sets, free of charge. Email [HeadsetRequest@NEPIRC.com](mailto:HeadsetRequest@NEPIRC.com) to reserve yours today. Also, don't forget to [CLICK HERE](#) to download NEPIRC's plant tour checklist guide.

Download Plant Tour  
Checklist

Do you like to read books that help you become a stronger, more impactful professional or leader? Do you enjoy networking with other professionals? If you answered "yes", then you need to consider joining NEPIRC's Wise Words Book Club! Here's the 411:

- NEPIRC's Wise Words Book Club meets on the fourth Thursday of the month from noon to 1 p.m. virtually via MS Teams, making it super easy and convenient to join
- The meetings always end on time, and it's not a problem if you don't finish the book beforehand.

The Wise Words Book Club will meet again on July 25th to discuss *The Beekeeper: Pollinating Your Organization for Transformative Growth* by Drs. Katie Desiderio and Michael Frino, who will speak at MFG DAY. The authors are also going to join us on the call, so it's a meeting you won't want to miss. Interested in signing up? Email [Chelsey@NEPIRC.com](mailto:Chelsey@NEPIRC.com) or click below.

Sign Up  
Now

## Upcoming Training Programs

### Fall Protection, taught by Brian Matyjevich:

- Wednesday, July 17, 8 a.m. to noon, at the TekRidge Center in Jessup

### OSHA 10, taught by Brian Matyjevich:

- Wednesday, July 24, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Friday, July 26, 8 a.m. to noon; virtually via MS Teams

### Two-Hour Leadership Development Essentials, taught by Leo Gilroy:

- Thursday, August 1, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., at NEPIRC Hanover Twp.

### Coffee & Coaching Breakfast Meeting: Workplace Safety, taught by Brian Matyjevich:

- Monday, August 26, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., at the TekRidge Center in Jessup

## Companies in Need of Suppliers

NEPIRC is relaying these potential new business opportunities to manufacturers across our region:

- **Additively Manufactured Parts** – Company in Washington state is seeking a supplier of additively manufactured (3D printed) parts using an HP Multijet Fusion printer and nylon build materials. The products are proprietary, but the company has all detailed drawings and CAD files and will provide once an NDA is executed. A variety of products would need to be made but in small batch and order quantities. The company believes that the HP Multijet Fusion printer is the best solution for the desired parts but is open to suppliers that would use other equipment if the end product is assured to have same features as those printed using the HP Multijet Fusion machine.
- **Heated Bicycle Grips** – Alaska-based company seeking an injection-molded heated bicycle grip. The grip, which will look similar to grips currently in use on most BMX-style bicycles, will have electronics located between two (2) injection-molded rubberized parts. The electronics will consist of a heated nichrome wire. Technical specifications and drawings are available upon request. Initial order of 500 pair is anticipated, with delivery to Anchorage, Alaska. Supplier in China has quoted cost of \$8.20 per pair. Domestic pricing of up to \$20.00 per pair would be considered.

