

NEPIRC NEWS

northeastern pennsylvania industrial resource center

August 2024 | Volume 46

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National News



How Regions and States Can Use Strategic Sector Investments to Advance Supplier Diversity

This Brookings report states that to advance supplier diversity and generate more inclusive outcomes, it will be critical to evolve how regional networks operate and, over time, build a more inclusive business ecosystem. One vital effort is to build the capacity of intermediary institutions to develop and execute an ecosystem strategy. To cite one promising example of expanding intermediary capacity: Leaders in New York have developed a new Supply Chain Activation Network (SCAN) to facilitate lasting change in the business ecosystem as part of their winning \$40 million Regional Technology Hubs proposal to the U.S. Economic Development Administration. SCAN would advance a four-pronged strategy, comprised of a) expanding services at Manufacturing Extension Partnerships to support suppliers, b) establishing a purchaser roundtable to facilitate networking and matchmaking, c) developing a directory of regional semiconductor supply chain assets and needs to track growth opportunities, and d) improving processes and governmental resources to better reach and support small and diverse-owned businesses. Many of these assets are present in other states and could be deployed for similar

objectives.

[Learn More](#)

Lack of AI Regulation Remains Obstacle in Manufacturing, ITA Official Says

Heather Evans, International Trade Administration (ITA) Deputy Assistant Secretary for Manufacturing Industry and Analysis, singled out some key tech programs she believes are helping to advance AI and manufacturing in the U.S. – including the Manufacturing Extension Partnership and the Economic Development Administration’s tech hubs. “Funding for those programs is going to be really important to achieving any of this growth and distributing that across the country,” Evans said.

[Read More](#)

State News

Team PA Launches "Factory of the Future" Resource to Help Pennsylvania Manufacturers Accelerate Technology Adoption and Improve Competitiveness

[Team PA](#), the non-profit committed to accelerating Pennsylvania’s long-term economic future, recently announced the launch of the "[Factory of the Future](#)" – a free online resource that empowers Pennsylvania manufacturers to learn more about the integration of advanced manufacturing technologies, such as big data and analytics, cybersecurity and robotics. The resource also allows manufacturers to connect with local organizations who can support them through the process.

The "Factory of the Future" resource was created with Team PA’s [Manufacturing Competitiveness Collaborative](#), a network of more than 100 organizations working to accelerate the growth of Pennsylvania’s manufacturing sector. Participants include leaders from manufacturing companies, public agencies, organized labor, non-profits and university partners.

This resource distills common steps companies can take to integrate advanced manufacturing technologies, elevates local resources across Pennsylvania and includes company case studies and industry tools related to each step.

[Get Started](#)

Shatter the Stigma: Supporting Recovery in the Workplace ECHO; Transforming Workplace Perspectives on Addiction

Join this uplifting virtual program to learn about the advantages of supporting employees who are overcoming substance use disorder. Supporting recovery in the workplace sets companies and employees up for success. Through education and training, employers have the power to normalize the recovery journey for affected employees, shatter the stigma they often experience and boost overall workplace health.

Tools to Empower Employers

Bi-monthly, virtual sessions provide employers guidance on:

1. Reducing workplace stigma in support of substance use recovery
2. Strategies for preventing terminations due to manageable relapses

[Learn More & Register](#)

Regional News

Manufacturing Industry Partnership Meets in Towanda

In late July, the [Northern Tier Regional Planning & Development Commission](#) (NTRPDC), in coordination with NEPIRC, hosted the second Manufacturing Industry Partnership meeting in Towanda. NTRPDC and NEPIRC were joined by manufacturers across the region.

Leo Gilroy, NEPIRC's Director of Leadership and Organizational Development, gave an engaging presentation titled "Building a Corporate Culture That Works." Leo explained how trust within an organization supports the rest of the structure. Without it, an organization is unable to build strong professional relationships, which are key to increased productivity. Manufacturers left energized and motivated to bring back these, and other key points, to their places of business.

The Manufacturing Industry Partnership meets quarterly and is open to any manufacturer in the Northern Tier. The next meeting is scheduled for Oct. 24 at 8 a.m., location to be determined. The topic of focus for October's meeting will be on recruitment and retention.

Anyone interested in learning more about the industry partnership or would like to attend should contact Melissa Fleming, NTRPDC's workforce director, at Fleming@NorthernTier.org. Any manufacturers in the Northern Tier interested in learning more about the leadership training opportunities that NEPIRC offers should contact Ashley Tice at Ashley@NEPIRC.com.

[Read Complete Article](#)

Gentex, Lockheed Officials Tout F-35 Fighter Jet, Local Workforce

On August 7th, two manufacturing firms with facilities in northeastern PA touted the importance of the F-35 Lightning II fighter jet's impact on national security at Gentex Corporation. The aircraft, designed by Lockheed Martin, features stealth technology, advanced sensors and weapons capacity and range. Gentex is one of 63 companies throughout the country providing components for the F-35.

"It's next-generation technologies," said Robert McCay, Vice President of Aircrew Systems for Gentex. "We provide a modular helmet system that houses all the personal protection situational awareness capabilities to enable the aircrew member to complete the mission and have increased mission effectiveness. Everything is about lightweight, center of gravity to have that pilot have less weight on their head, so they can perform the mission and survive if they need to eject."

McCay estimates Gentex has produced more than 3,500 helmets for F-35 jets, which include noise reduction headsets and oxygen masks. James King, Director of Government Affairs for Lockheed Martin, noted the company recently delivered its

1,000th F-35 jet. "It took nearly 20 years to get to this point," he said. "One of the keys of this jet is how much information is coming into it and the shaping allows you to get closer to the enemy before they detect you. The ability to bring the entire force to bear on the enemy is a game changer. We're not getting that from any other system on the battlefield today."

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Reading

The Latest from NEPIRC



Hot Off the Press: NEPIRC's 2024/2025 Professional Development Training Catalog

As many of you know, NEPIRC offers training courses and workshops that provide new skills, fresh insights, and networking opportunities that can help its clients meet everyday challenges and achieve long-term goals. To make it easier for clients to plan their professional development trainings, NEPIRC has released its first year-long training catalog and calendar. NEPIRC has also redesigned its Training & Events webpage to improve the overall user experience and make it easier to search for and find upcoming training programs.

- [CLICK HERE](#) to download and browse NEPIRC's 2024/2025 Training Catalog.
- [CLICK HERE](#) to download and view NEPIRC's 2024/2025 Training Calendar overview.
- [CLICK HERE](#) to check out NEPIRC's new Training & Events webpage.

Questions about any NEPIRC training program? Email Info@NEPIRC.com.



Alliance & Lackawanna College Continuing Education Support MFG Day as Top Level Sponsors

MFG DAY 2024 has already amassed 94 sponsors, and NEPIRC is thankful for these companies that make this annual event possible! NEPIRC would like to especially recognize [Tech42](#), [APEX Accelerator at NEPA Alliance](#) and [Lackawanna College Continuing Education](#) for being this year's top level sponsors.



As part of their sponsorships, Mike Pickreign, President of Tech42, will lead a morning breakout session entitled, *Building High Performance Compensation Systems: How to Get Your Team Rowing in the Same Direction*; Kara Smith, Government Procurement Program Manager of APEX Accelerator, will moderate a morning panel discussion entitled *Cybersecurity & CMMC*; and Lackawanna College Continuing Education will host groups of high school students from Lackawanna County who will attend MFG DAY. The students will have the opportunity to visit exhibitor booths, attend breakout sessions and hear from NEPIRC's Manufacturing Ambassador Dream Team.

Visit www.NEPIRCMFGDAY.com to view all of this year's sponsors, along with learning more about the event. If you're interested in sponsorship, email Chelsey@NEPIRC.com. Sponsorships will sell out soon, so do not wait to lock in yours!

Get Your MFG DAY Tickets Today

ICYMI! 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 advocates at our region's largest manufacturing networking and best practices event.

Who should attend? Manufacturers, of course, but also any non-manufacturer that has a product or service that benefits the manufacturing industry, economic development professionals, students, job seekers and anyone who would like to learn more about this industry sector.

Tickets start at \$50 and include breakfast, lunch, networking, breakout sessions and keynote presentation.

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

NEPIRC
MFG DAY 2024
TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

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

MFG DAY

OCTOBER 4
Mohegan Pennsylvania
Wilkes-Barre, PA

[New NEPIRC About Us Video](#)

Now on Website



NEPIRC is excited for the release of its new About Us video! Thanks to an opportunity from the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)'s Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) National Network and CMTC (California Manufacturing Technology Consulting), NEPIRC worked with Beacons Point, a San Diego-based video production company, to bring the project to life. The video succinctly explains who NEPIRC is, our mission, what we do and how our team helps manufacturers everyday.

Head over to www.NEPIRC.com to view the video on our homepage!

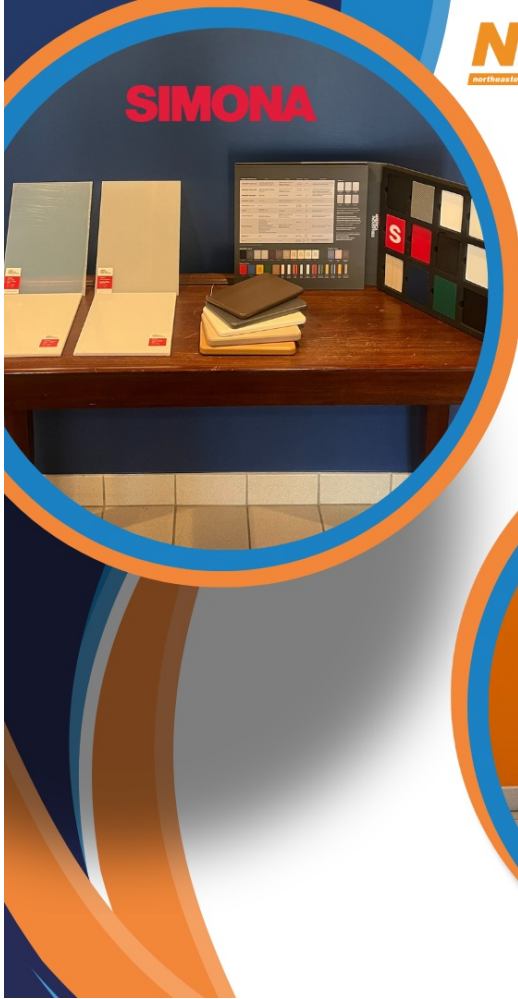
NEPIRC Receives Community Needs Grant from Scranton Area Community Foundation to Expand Dream Team Program

NEPIRC is pleased to announce that it is a first-time recipient of a \$10,000 Community Needs Grant from the [Scranton Area Community Foundation \(SAF\)](#) to support NEPIRC's Manufacturing Ambassador Dream Team efforts in Scranton and throughout Lackawanna County. NEPIRC's Dream Team program is focused on bridging the gap between education and careers in the manufacturing sector. The Dream Team initiative raises awareness of career options in advanced manufacturing amongst high school students by bringing young manufacturing professionals into the classroom to talk to students about their career journeys and how their careers have positively impacted their lives by highlighting real-life experiences. Dream Team Ambassadors are eager to share their stories with students throughout the city of Scranton and in the surrounding areas of Lackawanna County.



August

MANUFACTURER OF THE MONTH

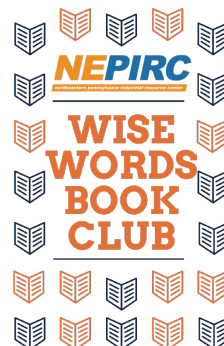


Manufacturer of the Month: SIMONA AMERICA Industries

[SIMONA AMERICA Industries](#) is Manufacturer of the Month! SIMONA is a leading global manufacturer and distributor of thermoplastic semi-finished parts. Located in Archbald, PA, SIMONA manufactures products for industries like chemical processing, semiconductor equipment manufacturing, outdoor living, food and beverage processing, playground, bathroom partition, retail display and sign and medical orthotics and prosthetics. SIMONA offers a wide range of products like plastic sheets, rods and welding rods.

NEPIRC thanks SIMONA for being one of northeastern PA's top manufacturers and a company that is known as an exceptional employer!

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



Don't forget! Plant Tour Headsets are Available from NEPIRC

If you enjoy reading books that help you become a stronger, more impactful professional and networking with others, then you need to join NEPIRC's Wise

NEPIRC now provides OSHA-approved plant tour headsets, including two speaker sets and 12 guest sets, free of charge. Email HeadsetRequest@NEPIRC.com to reserve yours today.

Also, don't forget to [CLICK HERE](#) to download NEPIRC's plant tour checklist guide, *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.

[Download Plant Tour Checklist](#)

Words Book Club!

This month's meeting of NEPIRC's Wise Words Book Club will be on August 22nd from noon to 1 p.m. via MS Teams. The group will discuss *Hidden Potential* by Adam Grant. Click the button below to learn more about this month's book and NEPIRC's Wise Words Book Club or email Chelsey@NEPIRC.com.

P.S. Don't worry if you won't have time to read the entire book this month. Join us in August, and get on track for September!

[Sign Up Now](#)

Upcoming Training Programs

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

Implementing a Problem Solving Strategy, taught by Mark Morgis:

- Thursday, September 5, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., at NEPIRC Hanover Twp.

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

- Monday, September 16, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., at the Community Giving Foundation in Berwick

OSHA 10 Training for General Industry, taught by Brian Matyjevich:

- Tuesday, September 17, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Thursday, September 19, 8 a.m. to Noon, at the TekRidge Center in Jessup

ISO 9001:2015 Internal Auditor Training, taught by Ray Kryeski:

- Wednesday, September 18 and Thursday, September 19, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at NEPIRC Hanover Twp.

Lean 101: Lean Principles Overview, taught by Mark Morgis:

- Friday, September 20, 8 a.m. to Noon, at the Hotel Anthracite in Carbondale

OSHA 30 Training Course for General Industry, taught by Brian Matyjevich:

- Tuesdays, September 24 to October 15, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., at BHG Business Campus in East Stroudsburg

8-Week Leadership Development Essentials, taught by Leo Gilroy:

- Thursdays, October 3 to November 21, 8 a.m. to Noon, at NEPIRC Hanover Twp.

[Learn More & Register](#)

Companies in Need of Suppliers

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

- **Eco-Friendly Packaging Tubes** – Massachusetts company seeking domestic supplier of small 2.5-inch flexible eco-friendly, translucent tubes for product protection. Materials used must be compostable, plant-based or made of 100% post-consumer recycled materials. The buyer's products are slipped within the tube and protect its finish. Some of the buyer's customers save the tube for product storage when not in use. Wall thickness of the tube is 0.012" and outer diameters of tubes (there are various sizes) range from ½" to slightly more than 1". Annual purchase quantities are expected to be over 100,000 units of each of 7 different sizes.
- **Non-Plastic Eco-Friendly Translucent Bags** – Massachusetts company seeking supplier of eco-friendly, non-plastic translucent bags for packing. Bag size should be 2.75" X 5" and 2 mil thickness. Bags will be in a roll with perforations for separation. No seal at top and open-ended. Does not need to be fully clear. Material should be biodegradable, compostable and/or plant-based and have a shelf life of 3 months minimum. Purchase quantity of 250,000/year minimum.



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