



## *Your Source for Monthly Manufacturing News*

Questions, comments or feedback? Please don't hesitate to share your thoughts with us by emailing [Info@NEPIRC.com](mailto:Info@NEPIRC.com).

Visit our Website

## Manufacturing News from our Nation, State and Region

### National News

#### NIST MEP Announces Appointment of New MEP Director

NIST MEP is pleased to announce the appointment of Pravina Raghavan as the new Director of the MEP program. She officially starts at NIST on Dec. 6, 2021.

Pravina joins NIST MEP with more than 20 years of experience providing advisory services to businesses in the startup, growth, expansion and maturity phases of development. She most recently served as Executive Vice President in the Division of Small Business and Technology Development for Empire State Development, the New York state economic development agency. In that role, she led and managed the New York MEP, which provides more than \$10 billion in economic impact for the state, created and implemented the \$100 million New York Forward Loan Fund and Empire State Digital resource for COVID-19 small business recovery, and designed and implemented the state's \$800 million COVID-19 Small Business Recovery Grant Program.



Pravina is no stranger to the Department of Commerce, having served as senior advisor to former Deputy Secretary Bruce H. Andrews. In that role, she worked on a large number of economic and operational issues across the department, including strategic planning and policy development on various topics including emergency management, economic development, international trade, weather, budget, contracts, staffing and technology development.

She also served as Deputy Associate Administrator of Investment and Innovation at the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and was responsible for the Small Business Investment Companies program, Small Business Innovation Research program and High Growth Entrepreneur initiatives, and served as District Director for SBA's New York district office.

Before joining the federal government, Pravina was a Vice President with MTV and BET Networks, a founder and owner of a global strategic advisory firm and Business Development Director for Misys PLC, one of the world's largest banking software companies. She was also an associate at Broadview International, a London investment bank and worked at AT&T in several finance and management roles, including her last five years as Mergers and Acquisitions Director for Europe and Asia. Pravina has a Master of Business Administration in finance from Seton Hall University and a Bachelor of Science in finance from The Pennsylvania State University.

---

## Opportunity to Inform DoD of Financing Policy for Small Businesses

[George Mason University](#) (GMU) is conducting a study with the [U.S. Department of Defense \(DoD\)](#) that examines financing obstacles facing small businesses. DoD does not have a clear picture of how small businesses get financing and under what terms, the payment terms they operate with when serving as a subcontractor, how they perceive cost accounting requirements and other related issues. GMU is looking for owners/CEOs and C-suite executives of small businesses that conduct commercial and/or defense business to participate in a short survey to inform future DoD financing policy for small businesses. They are looking for firms that have annual revenues under \$30 million and less than 1,250 employees. The survey should take about 30 minutes to complete and will ask you about the financing and payment terms typically encountered in your business as well as your experience, if any, with government cost accounting. The data in this study will be confidential. [CLICK HERE](#) to take the survey.



---

## State Update

### PennTAP Announces Spring 2022 Grant Opportunities for the Learning Factory

Earlier this month, the [Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program \(PennTAP\)](#) released information about available opportunities with the [Learning Factory](#) for spring 2022.



**PennState**  
College of Engineering

### LEARNING FACTORY

The Learning Factory at Penn State provides undergraduate engineering students the chance to tackle real-world design problems utilizing classroom engineering design knowledge and tools. These projects, scoped and presented by sponsors, allow students to practically design or improve an idea that the business may not have the resources or manpower to tackle. Through the collaboration with the Learning Factory program, PennTAP can provide needed technical assistance to help move company ideas forward through design, proof-of-concept, testing and prototype assistance. There is a \$3,500 donation needed to sponsor a team of four to six senior engineering students for a 15-week semester project.

For spring 2022, PennTAP is offering the following:

- PSU's Smeal College of Business' Farrell Center for Corporate Innovation and Entrepreneurship has generously provided funding to PennTAP for fall 2021 and spring 2022. With the remaining monies, PennTAP is able to fund five projects at 100%.
- PennTAP continues to have matching foundation funds to sponsor four projects at 50%. The organization prefers the grant is used for a small, mid-sized company.

Each of these programs requires a short application to be completed by the company. Project proposals are due by December 19<sup>th</sup>. Should you have questions, please email Eric Esoda, NEPIRC President & CEO, at [Eric@NEPIRC.com](mailto:Eric@NEPIRC.com).

## Regional News

### Praxis Modular to Build the Largest Volumetric Modular Facility in North America in Luzerne County

[Praxis Modular](#), headquartered in New York City, recently announced that it plans to open a massive modular factory in the former Sears warehouse in the Hanover Industrial Estates in Luzerne County. The 275,000-square-foot facility would be the largest volumetric modular facility in North America!



About 120 new jobs will be created at the location where Praxis will produce wood, light gauge steel or structural steel modules for projects throughout the northeastern United States. This is excellent news for our region, and NEPIRC is thrilled that Praxis Modular chose to locate its facility in northeastern PA!

---

*If your company has great news you'd like us to share with our manufacturing community, please contact Chelsey Coslett, NEPIRC's Manager of Marketing & Stakeholder Engagement, at [Chelsey@NEPIRC.com](mailto:Chelsey@NEPIRC.com).*

## NEPIRC News

### Senator Bob Casey Visits NEPIRC to Discuss the Center's Success

Last week, NEPIRC was delighted to play host to [U.S. Senator Bob Casey](#)! Senator Casey enjoyed a tour of NEPIRC's offices, Multimedia Studio and Innovation Space Lab. He also met with NEPIRC staff, stakeholders and regional manufacturing executives to hear about the organization's achievements, recognize NEPIRC's Silver Award from the [International Economic Development Council](#) (IEDC) and discuss the business environment our clients are facing. Senator Casey shared insights regarding the recently passed American Rescue Plan, Infrastructure Investment Act, Jobs Act, and Build Back Better Plan and spoke about their impacts upon our bridges, roads, mass transit systems, broadband infrastructure and overall economy.



Attending Senator Casey's visit were NEPIRC staff, Eric Joseph Esoda, President & CEO, Drew Mackie, EVP & CFO, Dale Parmenteri, Vice President of Consulting Operations, and Chelsey Coslett, Manager of Marketing & Stakeholder Engagement, Rikki Riegner, Executive Director of PA MEP, and members of NEPIRC's Board of Directors, such as Grace McGregor Kramer, [McGregor Industries, Inc.](#), Garry Hartman, [Cheetah Chassis Corporation](#) and Bruce Daniels, [Medico Construction Equipment/Action Lift, Inc.](#)

Senator Casey's visit was incredibly enlightening, successful and a wonderful opportunity to showcase NEPIRC's mission and purpose to one of Pennsylvania's most respected legislators. We are grateful for Senator Casey's support of the [Manufacturing Extension Partnership](#)!

---

### New Date Added for NEPIRC's No-Cost Leadership Development

## Essentials

Due to three sold out sessions for NEPIRC's no-cost Leadership Development Essentials in December, another date has been added. On Thursday, December 16<sup>th</sup> from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., join Leo Gilroy, NEPIRC's Director of Strategy & Innovation, as he discusses workplace challenges and topics that include self-awareness, power & authority, risk & failure and leadership style. Attendees usually go on to participate in NEPIRC's eight-session Leadership Development Essentials Certification course upon completion.



This session will be held via MS Teams. [CLICK HERE](#) to register.

---

## NEPIRC Announces Winter/Spring 2022 Training Schedule

NEPIRC is pleased to announce its training schedule for the winter and spring of 2022:

**Six Sigma Yellow Belt Training** – Tuesday, February 1<sup>st</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; taught by Brian Matyjevich, NEPIRC's Lean Enterprise Consultant & Master Black Belt; presented in a hybrid format.



**Leadership Development Essentials** – Wednesdays from February 2<sup>nd</sup> through March 23<sup>rd</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to noon; instructed by Leo Gilroy, NEPIRC's Director of Strategy & Innovation; in person only.

**Six Sigma Green Belt Training** – Thursdays from February 3<sup>rd</sup> through March 3<sup>rd</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; led by Brian Matyjevich; presented in a hybrid format.

**Project Management Program** – Thursdays from February 3<sup>rd</sup> through April 7<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 to 11:30 a.m.; facilitated by Leo Gilroy; virtually through MS Teams.

**SolidWorks® Essentials Training** – February 28<sup>th</sup> through March 4<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; instructed by TriMech Training

**No-Cost Overview of ISO 9001:2015 Requirements** – Wednesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> from 8:00 to 11:00 a.m.; led by Brian Matyjevich and Ray Kryeski, NEPIRC's Mechanical Engineer; virtually through MS Teams.

**ISO 9001:2015 Internal Auditor Training** – Wednesdays from March 9<sup>th</sup> through March 30<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to noon; taught by Brian Matyjevich and Ray Kryeski; presented in a hybrid format.

**Critical Thinking & Problem Solving Camp** – Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, April 7<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; facilitated by Brian Matyjevich; presented in a hybrid format.

For more information about each of these courses and to register, please visit NEPIRC's [Training & Events](#) webpage.

---

## Limited Sponsorships Still Available for NEPIRC's MFG DAY

NEPIRC is grateful to the 60+ original MFG DAY sponsors and exhibitors that continue to support NEPIRC's May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022 event. However, there are still a limited number of sponsorships available for new companies that want to be part of the region's largest gathering of manufacturing leaders,

decision-makers and innovators. Those new sponsors will capitalize on an expanded event agenda, which now includes a highly interactive and informative workforce attraction and retention component – sure to attract even more attendees. Organizations interested in becoming a sponsor should contact Chelsey Coslett, NEPIRC's Manager of Marketing & Stakeholder Engagement, at [Chelsey@NEPIRC.com](mailto:Chelsey@NEPIRC.com). You can also [CLICK HERE](#) to learn more.



---

## Congratulations to NEPIRC's Recent Six Sigma Green Belt Graduates!

Earlier this month, we celebrated NEPIRC's most recent Six Sigma Green Belt graduates. For four weeks, this group of individuals from several regional manufacturing companies, like [EAM-Mosca Corporation](#), [Noble Biomaterials](#), [General Dynamics OTS](#), [PFNonwovens](#), [Tyoga Container Co.](#), [Collins Aerospace](#), [Romark Logistics](#) and [PSA Systems](#), gathered together to learn about Six Sigma concepts, roles and implementation approaches that will enable them to identify Six Sigma execution opportunities. The graduates were also responsible for performing, or assisting in the performance of, a Green Belt project. Brian Matyjevich, NEPIRC's Lean Enterprise Consultant & Master Black Belt, instructed this program.



NEPIRC's next Six Sigma Green Belt course will be held on Thursdays from February 3<sup>rd</sup> to March 3<sup>rd</sup>. To learn more about this program, [CLICK HERE](#).

---

## Noble Biomaterials Employees Complete Corrective Action and Root Cause Analysis Training

A group of employees from Noble Biomaterials recently completed NEPIRC's Corrective Action and Root Cause Analysis Training instructed by Brian Matyjevich.

During the one-day training, the group learned about problem identification and root cause investigation preparation, containment of the problem, process flow vs. corrective action, procedure vs. process, problem definition and requirements and problem solving tools. Before the session commenced, the students shared some of the most pressing job-related issues they face everyday, which allowed them to practically apply the learned principles throughout the training. Best wishes to this fantastic group of professionals!



---

## NEPIRC's Wise Words Book Club - Coming Soon!

NEPIRC is excited to announce that we are replacing the *NEPIRC NEWS* "What We're Reading" section with a monthly hybrid book club! Each month, book club members will meet either virtually or in person (their preference) to review and discuss a *New York Times* best selling business or professional development book.

Keep an eye out for next month's *NEPIRC NEWS* e-newsletter, which will announce the first book being covered and initial meeting details. Stay tuned!



## New Business Opportunities: Companies Looking for Suppliers

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

- **AMTRAK Employee Uniforms** – Manufacturer needed for production of uniform components and accessories for AMTRAK passenger rail service employees, including Conductors, Food Service staff, Customer Service staff and Station Service employees. Items range from jackets, vests and trousers to ties, outerwear and aprons. Total of 122 uniforms immediately needed with potential for 10-year, high-quantity contract. Total uniform count to surpass 5,600 over 10 years. Most shipping to Arkansas. Drawings and other specifications available through NEPIRC.
- **Flexible Heating Duct** – 4” diameter UL 181 Certified Class 1 Connector. Length can be any multiple of 25 feet – 25, 50, 100, etc. Consists of steel wire wrapped into a coil with mylar sheets laminated around it to create a flexible heat duct. Immediate demand is 250,000 linear feet/month at a desired price of \$0.16/linear foot. Destination is Elkhart, IN, but shipping terms are flexible.
- **Fishing Nippers** – To cut fishing line easily. Final design will be collaboratively developed with potential manufacturer. Initial concept is 90mm long x 20mm wide x 20mm high crafted from three pieces of die cast aluminum, two stainless steel blades and screw, stainless steel hook clearer (secured w/ epoxy) and spring. Initial order of 250-500 units – then scaled to 200-500/month. Cost of \$10-\$20/unit individually packed in cardboard boxes and shipped to Bozeman, MT preferred.

Companies interested in these supplier opportunities are encouraged to contact Dale Parmenteri, NEPIRC's Vice President of Consulting Operations, at [Dale@NEPIRC.com](mailto:Dale@NEPIRC.com). Please use "Supplier Opportunity" as the subject line for an immediate response!

---

Use these quick links to learn more about NEPIRC:

[Upcoming events](#)  
[Visit us on the web](#)  
[E-mail us](#)

