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## A Workforce for the Future

DSCC Joins Forces with Intern Delaware

A PUBLICATION OF THE  
 DELAWARE STATE  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

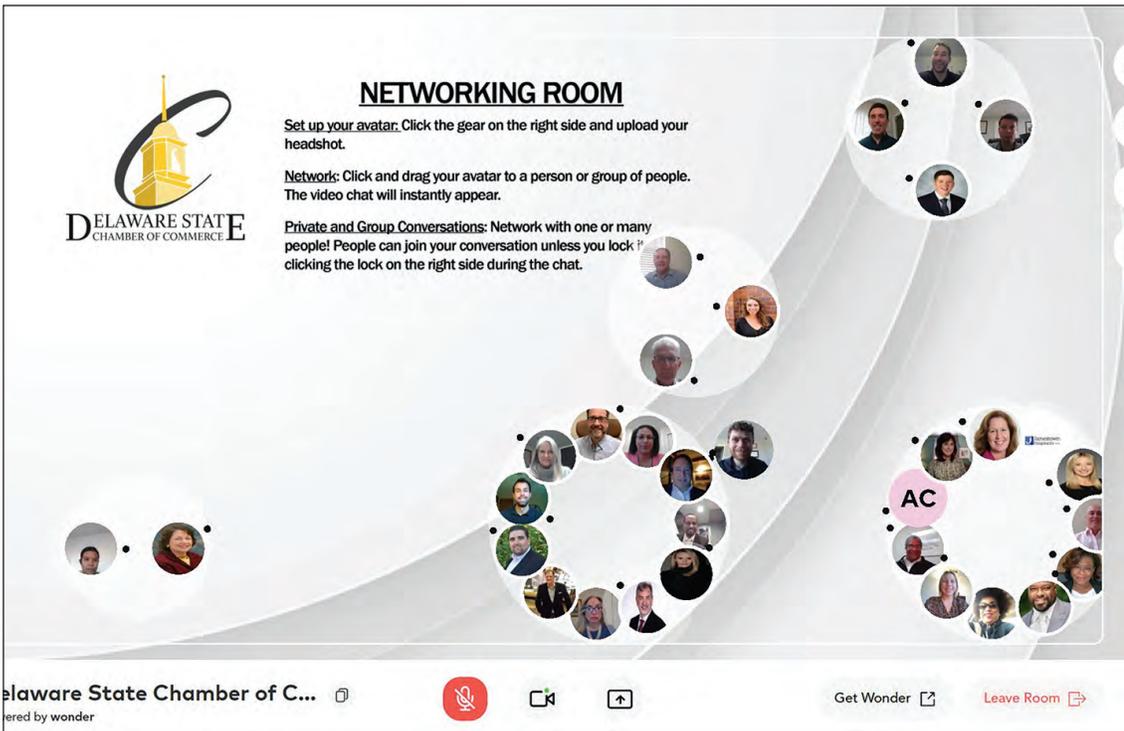
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*The future of networking?  
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for a virtual networking  
breakfast.*

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## On The Cover

Pictured are 2020 Intern Delaware participants, Grace Slate and Jonathan Martinez. Grace will graduate from Wilmington University this spring and begin working full-time at CSC. Jonathan will start full-time at Belfint, Lyons & Shuman after graduating from Goldey-Beacom this spring. *Photos by Nick Wallace Photography*

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# Message from the President



Michael J. Quaranta

In January of 1981, I started my Washington, D.C. internship in the office of then U.S. Senator David Durenberger of Minnesota. Little did I know then, but the experience would change me, my career interests, and where I would one day work and live. I am a proud (but broke!) parent of three current, college-age kids. The oldest, my son Frank, is a senior at Ryerson University in Toronto. He

is a journalism major who is completing his second college internship. His first internship was at the Voice of America and the second is with a publication called The Washington Diplomat. These experiences will help lead him to “what’s next” as he transitions from student to employee. Similarly my colleague Kelly Basile, a native Ohioan and University of Delaware alumna, came to the State Chamber via an internship nine years ago and never left. She’s grown to now serve as our vice president of communications.

A guy that worked on my car for years got his start in an autos class back in high school. While I was employed and out pumping gas as a high school sophomore, he worked “under the hood” and was in the garage changing oil and tires, and later started calibrating carburetors, and replacing points, plugs and condensers – when that was a thing! He went on to create quite a reputation and eventually bought that gas station and made a handsome income as a small business owner. His work life took off because he had been given basic training while in school and hired on as an apprentice at that garage.

These stories are unique and fun to tell, and all share a common thread: it all got started with an apprenticeship or internship. Would you like to start an apprenticeship or internship program? We can help.



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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

# General Assembly Continues During Unprecedented Times

BY JAMES DECHENE

LAST MARCH, the General Assembly went into recess prior to the annual Joint Finance Committee meeting break. Amid the “See you in six weeks” goodbyes were a handful of pending bills and the beginning discussions around seemingly mundane things like what the rest of session would look like and starting to plan the Chamber’s End-of-Session Brunch, Manufacturing Day, and Small Business Day in Dover events. Then came COVID-19, which, as we all know now, would go on to upend virtually every aspect of our lives, making the mundane a thing of the past.

Along the way those events would eventually take place, virtually. So would an election, bringing to Dover a large, new crop of legislators excited to represent their constituents after a campaign like no other. In furtherance of the “new normal” (I, like many of you, am so tired of that term), the new General Assembly would continue to meet virtually, swearing in of new legislators would be held via Zoom, and we’ve all gotten to navigate session days and committee meetings with the inevitable plea of “Can you hear me?”.

One aspect I find myself sorely missing (and for those who know me, the irony on this is thick like pancake syrup) is the personal interactions at Legislative Hall – not just between lobbyists and legislators, but for the general public and for legislators to make their collegial relationships stronger as well. This new normal is certainly different. Trying to make eye contact during a meeting, but not sure if you should be looking at the camera or at the screen in order to see how the meeting is going is but one change, insignificant as it may seem.

The new normal has also brought with it legislation that will impact State Chamber members in new and interesting ways. There are certainly bills that are introduced on a regular basis, like minimum wage, personal income tax changes, and bills that impact human resources or consumer protections, like data privacy. But there are also bills that are more reflective of what is happening in states around us, and nationwide. Marijuana legalization, environmental justice related to legacy business activities, and changing the nature of what has traditionally been the role of the employer – such as offering retirement plans, which will potentially be offered by government – are each small examples of what this year and next will bring.



Throughout this year, if there’s one lesson I’ve learned it is how important it is for small- and medium-sized employers in Delaware to educate their elected officials about themselves. There are approximately 57,000 licensed businesses in Delaware, and an estimated 825 have 50 or more employees. The remaining 56,000-plus have employees that choose to work for them and are engaged in meaningful careers important for Delaware’s future. The stories of how employers became creative to keep their workforce employed over the last year, offered training opportunities, provided benefits, and pivoted to new economic avenues to keep the lights on are all important for legislators to hear in a time where those stories are drowned out by the other side.

One of the State Chamber’s main responsibilities to its members is advocacy, helping employers share these stories. We curate events throughout the year, like Small Business Day in Dover each May, and work with individual members to connect with their elected officials and showcase the good work being done across Delaware.

No one is as good a storyteller about your business and successes than you.



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# Member news & Notes

## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: Aqua Science BY COLIN HEFFINGER

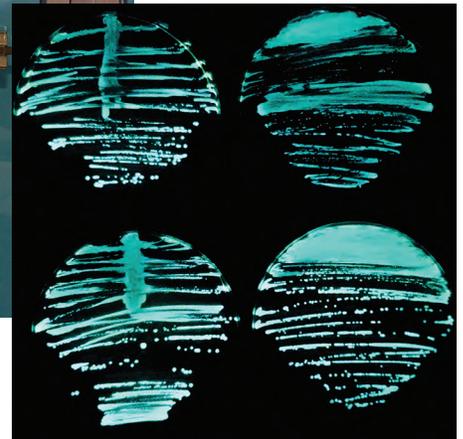
» Water is the essence of life. Its quality is essential throughout all ecosystems and levels of society, from drinking water to industrial water, to wastewater and beyond. Effectively testing water quality is at the forefront of sustaining our world – through the power of science. Using the marine bacterium *allivibrio fischeri*, a strand of bacteria that has been utilized for over 30 years to measure toxicity in water, foods, sediments, and soil, an emerging business known as Aqua Science is leading the path to future innovations in water testing for Delaware and beyond.

“Measuring toxicity levels is essential because you want to make certain that drinking water is safe,” states Iwona Evans, owner and CFO of Aqua Science. “Testing wastewater is really important because that water is released into waterways, which impacts local wildlife. We started providing water toxicity screening tests to Delaware and the neighboring states. We want to make sure the water is healthy in Delaware and the surrounding area.”

Aqua Science, founded by Iwona Evans and Alan McQuillin, began in Newark as a group of highly trained experts for *allivibrio fischeri* production and reagent manufacturing in February 2020. Together they provided the spark to create and grow the business with



*Left, Iwona Evans, founder, owner and CFO, poses in front of AquaScience's building. Below, the BioLight is a bioluminescent bacteria. The light levels are measured before and after exposure. Changes in light determine levels of toxicity in samples.*



their interest and passion to develop a better water testing product for customers. Since then, Aqua Science has expanded into creating their own instruments and reagents as well as offering their staff to fulfill custom reagent work outsourced from local biotech companies throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a business that started just on the eve of the global pandemic, Evans explains its impact on Aqua Science and its growth. “Not knowing what was ahead made a big challenge for us,” Evans explains. “But we quickly realized the good and bad of the current events. The whole world seemed to stop and slow down – which gave us time to set up our building, equipment, and R&D.

Within 6 months we had our first product out the door and available to customers. Aqua Science's product, the BioLight, is currently the highest quality bacteria reagent in the ecotoxicity market.”

Evans reflects on the impact of her employees. “We will always be grateful for this amazing team. It is special when you go to work in the morning and see your employees happy and motivated each day. As Aqua Science continues to grow, we'll be focused on hiring new employees within Delaware. The degree is important but lack or level of it is not a limiting factor – knowledge, work ethics, and motivation is what matters.”

## NONPROFIT SPOTLIGHT: **Junior Achievement of Delaware**

BY DANIEL LA MASTRA

» One of the biggest hurdles that many young people face, is acquiring the skills and knowledge needed to maintain financial and economic stability while also planning for their futures. The task of learning about the many intricacies that comes

students around robust curriculum and compelling learning experiences to prepare young people for success in work and life. “JA shows kids how to earn and manage money, explore career options, and how to be entrepreneurial in their approach to obstacles and opportuni-

From the employer perspective, we give employees meaningful ways to have structured interactions with young people so that employers can build their workforce pipeline from the ground up.”

This is exemplified in the many Learning Experiences that JA offers, with



with planning and keeping up with one’s personal finances can be daunting, especially to those who lack the resources and knowledge. Inspiring young people by giving them the tools and experience for economic success is what Junior Achievement of Delaware does every day.

Junior Achievement (JA) is a global nonprofit designed to connect successful adult role models, teachers and K-12

ties,” says Rob Eppes, president of Junior Achievement of Delaware. “This is accomplished by focusing on our three pillars: financial literacy, work readiness, and entrepreneurship, which are JA’s primary content areas.”

When asked about JA’s role within the community, Eppes explains, “From the student perspective, we make whatever learning that’s happening at school relevant to students’ lives and futures.

one of the more popular being JA Biztown, a day-long visit to a simulated town where elementary students learn to work in banks, restaurants, and even vote for mayor. JA Biztown helps students learn and understand how to play an active role in the economy as a working member of his or her community.

Junior Achievement also offers the JA Career Exploration Fair, which is a program that introduces students to a wide range of career options across many different industries. Events like this are important because it encourages high school and middle school students to think about their

futures and what type of career they might want to pursue.

Like any other organization, Junior Achievement has pivoted how it delivers programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The nonprofit was able to convert to online learning quickly because JA USA had already started investing in online experiences prior to the pandemic.

“When the pandemic hit, suddenly we were so grateful that JA USA had made

these investments and had content that they could turn around pretty quickly,” remarked Eppes.

When talking about JA’s demand within schools and the community Eppes says, “JA is in greater demand by educators today than it’s ever been. We are more aligned with the Department of Education priorities and standards, particularly around Career and Technical Education.”

This fact alone is substantial proof that Junior Achievement is adapting to meet today’s workforce demands. JA USA has expanded their reach to the point where more than 4.8 million students per year attend some sort of JA program, with Delaware reaching 17,000 students a year on average, through partnerships with 160 schools and agencies.

Eppes was inspired to work for JA when he began participating in the original JA Company Program during his freshman year at Newark High School. At a young age, Eppes saw how JA could empower young people to truly take charge of their futures. “When I come to work every day, I am a living, breathing example of JA’s impact on the life of a young person.”



**Daniel La Mastra** interned for the State Chamber in the spring of 2021. He recently graduated from the University of Delaware with a degree in world history.



## Chair Message

BY KATIE K. WILKINSON

»» Let’s talk about the importance of internships! At Fulton Bank, our

team is very excited about welcoming both a summer intern as well as a military intern in the coming months. Internships can provide employers and potential employees with the opportunity to “test drive” a job, a team, and an organization. In some ways it is a “no strings attached” approach to recruitment.

### *Let’s talk about the importance of internships!*

Internship development is also a way for leaders to empower others on their team to lead and manage in a way that provides growth for the employee and skill building for the intern. This creates a “manager in training” arrangement, which can enhance responsibility and accountability for all.

How many of you can look back on the start of your career and point to an internship or a summer job that really helped launch you into – or out of – a career trajectory? My grandfather was a banker in Philadelphia, and he was my hero. I didn’t know much about banking at the time so we started to talk about it. I really believed that I wanted to follow in his footsteps. In my early college years, I landed a summer job as a bank teller with Bank of Delaware. I loved it,

and it really did start to prepare me for my current career. I learned critical soft skills around customer service, listening, communication, professional dress, and task accuracy. I interacted with so many interesting people with different backgrounds and stories and learned to navigate conflict and complaints.

During my junior year in college, I recall telling my roommate (who had no interest in banking) that I wanted to find an internship at the Federal Reserve Bank. It didn’t matter to me where it was; I just felt like that was my perfect opportunity. I was actively seeking this kind of an opportunity when suddenly my roommate ran into our room waving a newsletter from the college Career Development Office. There it was – an internship with the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston! I landed it and it was truly the launchpad for my career in banking.

I’m not sure what my career path would have looked like without those opportunities. Organizations and people invested in my professional and personal development through these internships. The experiences helped me develop strong skills in communication, customer service, and listening. We need to continue to invest in such programs – as a business community and as a Delaware community committed to growth, equity, and success. Supporting apprenticeship and internship programs – like Intern Delaware – and retraining programs such as Forward Delaware, are solid, proven ways that we can invest in our best natural resource, human capital.

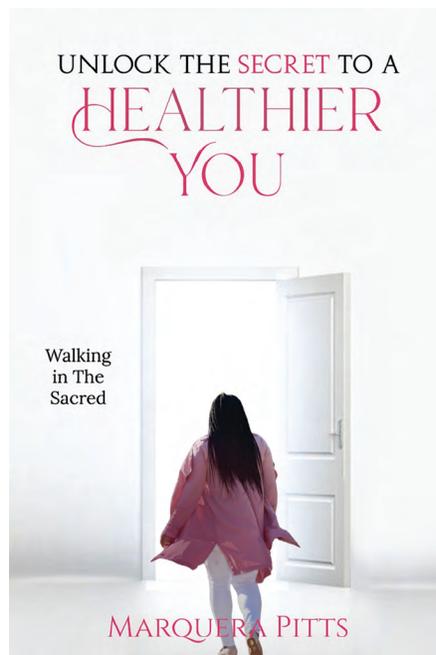
## DIVERSE SUPPLIER SPOTLIGHT:

### Your Wellness Butterfly BY COLIN HEFFINGER

» For over a year now, each of us has endured through the immense challenges brought upon by the COVID-19 pandemic. Businesses have been forced to adapt to survive. Infrastructure and demand needs have shifted to meet increased changes in the workplace. But one of the most significant changes was the shift to highlighting awareness to utilize this time in defining our individual values and purpose. Your Wellness Butterfly, a business focused specifically on promoting women's health and wellness, continues to impact and inspire women to discover their internal values, overcome unhealthy habits, and push forward to accomplish their goals throughout life ahead.

Your Wellness Butterfly LLC, founded in January 2018 by Marquera Pitts, offers a 90-day one-on-one health and wellness coaching program that emphasizes the physical, mental, and emotional aspects of positive change to overcome bad habits and develop new, healthy ones. Through various techniques such as breathing-focused meditation, speaking positive words of affirmation, and accountability focused tasks, Pitts helps women define exactly who they are as an individual and guide towards regaining control of their lives. Pitts also provides an online membership group delivering support and encouragement with other women. To find out more information, readers can search Marquera Brooks on Facebook.

"It takes time to become healthier," Pitts explains. "Women have to value themselves and give time for healing. It



is important to value the what and the why of their situation – what has taken you to the point where you are now? Why do you want to do this change? You must realize that it is time to heal. It is all a process, and the butterfly represents change and growth."

In addition to the 90-day program, Pitts offers her first published book, *Unlock the Secret to a Healthier You*, as a step-by-step guide to overcoming bad habits and defining your personal values to heal and grow. A comprehensive workbook is also available providing additional accountability and tasks to reinforce the focal points of different stages in the book. She is also in the process of writing a second edition, focused on the steps moving forward after women overcome their unhealthy



habits and better understand their defining purpose.

Pitts encourages women to reach out to her who are struggling to overcome a bad habit or aiming to regain control over their lives. "Whatever you are pushing for in life, there is a process and you just need to give yourself some time to push through. Greatness is on the other side. You really must know who you are to move forward. Women are being changed and inspired. They are truly believing in themselves, that they can accomplish things. This is a life-long change – through inspiration, motivation, accountability, and discipline. I've seen nothing but growth in women and look forward to more."

Interested readers can explore further details about **Your Wellness Butterfly** and *Unlock the Secret to a Healthier You* at [www.yourwellnessbutterfly.com](http://www.yourwellnessbutterfly.com).

# Are You Protected Against Cybersecurity Threats in Your Business?

CONTRIBUTED BY DIAMOND TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

»» For nearly 25 years, Diamond Technologies has been on the cutting edge of systems and integration technology.

Diamond Technologies was a software development company that has successfully evolved into a systems integration, support, and consulting organization for public and private partners. With 50 employees, the firm oversees system management across numerous states. Locally, solutions span across several Delaware agencies, along with notable private clients including, the YMCA, Bank of America, Henrietta Johnson Medical Center and BrightFields environmental services.

But the more technology businesses use, the more access points for cybersecurity attacks there are, and some attacks are already on your computer right now. Diamond Technologies Vice President of Security and Architecture Duncan Bachen said that in recent years, it has become exceedingly difficult to secure corporate infrastructure with technologies from the past.

Even with the best virus protection out there, Diamond Technologies estimates that more than 99% of all attacks in the past year relied on human error to allow a security breach. Sixty percent of small to midsize businesses within six months of a cyber-attack go out of business.

Bachen's vantage point, most businesses are aware of security issues like phishing or clicking on an ad that contains embedded viruses. But what he is seeing more of these days is hybrid attacks where viruses are



piggybacking on authentic software that is downloaded online.

Often, those viruses, attack vectors and automated scripts are looking for one thing: complete access.

"The people who send those out don't care about the administrative assistant or the engineer. They want the person who has all the keys to all the doors inside," he said. "And once they get in, they get everything. The theory is to attack the one person who is credentialed."

To head off internal attacks, Diamond Technologies recommends implementing Zero Trust framework, or an attitude of trusting nothing, verify everything and limiting access inside the company. The strategy aims to reduce the bad actor's chances to get access into the system.

"It may seem like it's overkill, but it's set up so that no specific user has any real privilege, and they are limited to what they can do," Bachen said.

"Most business owners understand the risk, but then they get a little leery about slowing staff down," Bachen said. "The

compromise needs to be how to put the security in such a way to keep them doing their jobs."

What sets Diamond Technologies apart from other firms in the region is that its team includes those with backgrounds in major manufacturers, banking, pharmaceutical companies.

"With the team we have hired, we've created a warehouse of information to better protect companies, so companies don't have to build the system on their own."



**Duncan Bachen** is vice president of architecture and security services at Diamond Technologies.

He has been an IT professional for over 25 years, and is certified as MCSE, MCSA, and MCP, pursuing a CISSP and CEH. Visit [diamondtechnologies.com](http://diamondtechnologies.com) to learn more on securing your business.



*A view of Wilmington  
Country Club's clubhouse  
from the 18th hole.*

## Wilmington Country Club To Host The 2022 BMW Championship

BY JOHN S. RILEY

» Many Delawareans are familiar with the Ed Oliver Golf Club in Wilmington, but few know about the club's namesake. Fewer still are aware of the former Wilmington Country Club caddie's connection to the BMW Championship, the prestigious PGA TOUR event set to visit Wilmington in August 2022.

As the third-oldest event on the PGA TOUR schedule, the BMW Championship dates back to 1899 when it debuted as the Western Open. That's what it was called in 1941 when, only weeks before the World War II draft pulled 25-year-old Ed "Porky" Oliver into the Army, the Wilmington native beat Ben Hogan and Byron Nelson at Phoenix Country Club in Phoenix, Arizona, for the title.

To attract the 1941 Western Open, business leaders who wanted to

raise Phoenix's national profile raised \$5,000. With great pride, the Arizona Republic headline announced: ARIZONA AWARDED ONE OF THE TOP SPORTS EVENTS IN THE COUNTRY.

Eighty-one years later, Delaware will be the center of the golf universe when the 2022 BMW Championship comes to the South Course at Wilmington Country Club. Renamed in 2007, when BMW became the sponsor, the BMW Championship is the penultimate event of the PGA TOUR's FedExCup Playoffs.

The field features the top 70 PGA TOUR players competing to win the J.K. Wadley trophy and a spot in the season-ending TOUR Championship. Past BMW Championship winners include the biggest names in golf, such as Jon Rahm, Justin Thomas, Dustin Johnson, Jason Day, Rory McIlroy, and Tiger Woods.

Some things have changed since 1941 – Oliver earned \$1,000 for his victory, while the purse for the 2020 BMW Championship was \$9.5 million – but the championship still puts a spotlight on its host city.

The average PGA TOUR event draws 25 million U.S. viewers, and broadcast and streaming coverage reaches up to one billion homes in 227 countries and territories. Wilmington and Delaware can expect millions of mentions leading up to the BMW Championship and immense media exposure during the event.

The BMW Championship should also provide a significant shot in the arm for the local economy, with an estimated \$30 million economic impact. Attendance for the week could reach 140,000, with spectators absorbing thousands of hotel nights, filling restaurants, and creating



*Ed “Porky” Oliver is the only Delawarean to ever win this championship.*

additional tourism opportunities.

This will be Delaware’s first PGA TOUR event, and there are multiple opportunities to watch the world’s best players take on one of the country’s finest golf courses. Ticket information will be available later in the year, and more than 2,000 members of the community will have a chance to volunteer during championship week.

Corporate hospitality options offering a unique way to experience the championship are already selling quickly. To learn more, visit [bmwchampionship.com/2022-hospitality](http://bmwchampionship.com/2022-hospitality).

Just as in Oliver’s day, all proceeds from the BMW Championship will benefit the Evans Scholars Foundation and its mission of awarding full tuition and housing scholarships to youth caddies. Since 2007, the BMW Championship has raised more than \$35 million for caddie scholarships, helping send more than 3,000 caddies to college.

## COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT:

# Environmental Committee BY TYLER MICIK

Members of the State Chamber’s Environmental Committee met in early March to discuss a series of amendments proposed by DNREC to the Brownfields Development Agreement (BDA). The Delaware Brownfields statute was originally enacted in the early 1990s and was among the first statutes of its kind in the country. The goal was to promote the redevelopment of historically contaminated and abandoned sites, which had a stigma of being difficult to redevelop due to potential environmental contamination and liability concerns. The Brownfields statute protects developers from being liable for existing environmental contamination at a site, and the program does not require the brownfield’s developers to perform a cleanup unless or until they decided to proceed with development activities at a site.

Since then, by all accounts the program has been a tremendous success. Various sites across the state have benefited from the program, including the University of Delaware’s STAR Campus and many of the riverfront development sites in Wilmington.

After DNREC proposed amendments to the BDA, the State Chamber advocated against revisions in the language of the agreement that would impose greater liability on brownfields developers than provided in the original statute, potentially deterring the development of abandoned sites. The State Chamber’s recommendations were taken into consideration and the problematic revisions were altered.

This is good news for brownfields developers because it continues the liability protections contemplated by the original brownfield’s legislation. It’s also good news for economic development, since the Brownfields program allows redevelopment of abandoned and underutilized sites around the state.

The Environmental Committee also submitted comments on DNREC’s proposal to increase Natural Minor (Reg. 1102) permitting fees. The proposal would increase costs on smaller emitters like dry cleaners. While the State Chamber is supportive of an increase, the Chamber has concerns about raising fees at this time. Several local dry cleaners have been forced to close or reduce their hours during the COVID-19 pandemic because more people are working from home and not using their services. Similarly, other industries reduced work schedules or rolled back hours. The State Chamber suggested delaying an increase until 2022 or beyond to support businesses struggling to recover post-pandemic.

Want to join the conversation and influence policy decisions that help shape the future of Delaware? Contact **Tyler Micik** at [tmicik@dsc.com](mailto:tmicik@dsc.com) or (302) 576-6590.

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## CarePortMD's VAX Machine

BRINGING AFFORDABLE CARE TO THE PEOPLE

BY ASHOK SUBRAMANIAN, MD

» The CarePortMD Vax Machine Program is helping distribute life-saving COVID-19 vaccinations and testing to places that are the hardest to reach across the Delaware Valley. CarePortMD specializes in improving access to affordable, coordinated health care with its regional network of retail clinics as well as traditional cloud-based telemedicine. The Vax Machine mobile medicine program represents a powerful third option of “taking the clinic to the home or workplace.”

The concept of CarePortMD was born from a quarter century of experience attending to patients in emergency departments that were buckling under the stress of primary care shortages amidst exploding epidemics of chronic diseases like hypertension and diabetes. Barriers to access led to overcrowding in emergency departments because many patients were forced to use them for non-emergent conditions.

This generated unsustainable expense, while diminishing opportunities for the delivery of preventive care, given the complaint-focused nature of emergency medicine.

Access to health care took a devastating hit during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the simple act of attending a doctor appointment represented a potentially riskier situation than the original ailment. Gaps in care and prevention widened, and disparities in access to care increased.

CarePortMD has experienced significant growth over the past six months by responding to the needs of the public through the delivery of in-demand health services like chronic disease monitoring, urgent care, COVID-19 testing vaccinations, and consulting for organizations interested in implementing COVID-19 mitigation strategies such as interval workforce screening and quarantine/return-to-work algorithms.

A major differentiator for CarePortMD is its inclusive and collaborative culture. Rather than introduce a new tier of care, they function more as a patient-centric platform that catalyzes efficient connection between patients and existing community care resources, providing episodic gap-closing care when necessary. Telemedicine technology allows CarePortMD to connect patients with their own doctors and specialists whenever possible to preserve continuity of care.

The collaborative nature of the business is further illustrated by the Vax Machine program, which is closely aligned with the mission of the Delaware Division of Public Health, who supplies vaccines, and with other local businesses and Chamber members like Carvertise and Fulton Bank, who have helped make the Vax Machine program a success.

The Vax Machine is available to make regular stops at local businesses to help deliver occupational, urgent, and preventive health services to help keep them open, operational, and healthy during the pandemic and beyond. Services include mobile blood testing, EKGs, diabetic screenings, hypertension wellness, COVID-19 testing and vaccinations, and 24/7 telemedicine. For more information, please visit [www.CarePortMD.com](http://www.CarePortMD.com) or email [info@careportmd.com](mailto:info@careportmd.com).



**Ashok Subramanian, MD** is the CEO and CMO of CarePortMD, LLC.

# Manufacturing & Policy Conference Recap

» The State Chamber's Delaware Manufacturing Association (DMA) held its Spring Manufacturing and Policy Conference on March 24th. The event featured Governor John Carney who announced plans to invest more in Delaware's economic infrastructure and expressed continued support towards retraining initiatives like Forward Delaware.

Carolyn Lee, executive director of The Manufacturing Institute, provided a keynote on closing the skills gap. Lee cited that creating jobs is only half the story – filling jobs is the other half.

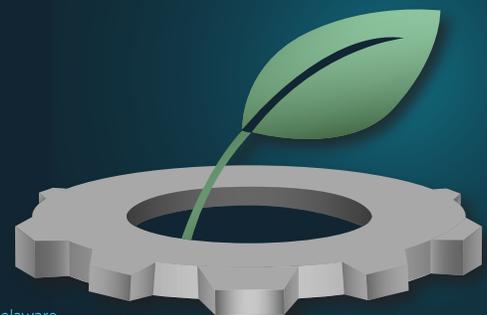
She explained that over the next decade, we will need to fill 4.6 million jobs, and 2.4 million jobs will go unfilled by 2028 because workers lack the skills to fill them. To tackle this issue, she offered two strategies:

1. Train and upskill workers for these vacant jobs by expanding programs and partnerships that engage government, schools, and industry along with providing incentives for manufacturers to invest in on-the-job hard and soft skills training.
2. Change perceptions about what modern manufacturing really is today – it is no longer an assembly

line but an extremely innovative and constantly changing sector that offers above average pay, good benefits, and meaningful work. Part of changing perception includes recruiting women, veterans, and young professionals to the industry.

The event also hosted a discussion on recreational marijuana legalization with experts from California and Oregon where marijuana is already legalized. The discussion was held just before the bill was heard in the House Health and Human Development committee that same day.

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## DPP announces plan to create a more inclusive tech talent pipeline for Delaware

» Delaware Prosperity Partnership (DPP) has completed a strategic plan to support a more diverse tech talent pipeline in Delaware, with support from JPMorgan Chase.

DPP partnered with 50 stakeholders representing Delaware businesses, nonprofits, education and workforce development organizations to launch a statewide strategy to build a more diverse, inclusive and highly qualified tech talent pipeline in Delaware for 2021 and beyond.

“Delaware has a world-class science and technology workforce,” said Governor John Carney. “This partnership with JPMorgan Chase, Delaware businesses, nonprofits and education organizations will build on that advantage and prepare even more Delawareans to compete for jobs of the future. This pipeline project is part of a larger effort in Delaware to invest in our workforce, attract new business investment and make Delaware an even better place to live, work and raise a family.”

“As our economy continues to change, we know that we must also change the way we train people, so they’re able to compete for well-paying careers,” said Tom Horne, Delaware Market Leader for JPMorgan Chase. “We’re proud to work with Delaware Prosperity Partnership — their plan will help to advance career pathways, promote inclusive economic growth in Delaware and strengthen the support system that prepares our residents for jobs of the future.”

Delaware Prosperity Partnership’s strategy addresses three key factors



identified in a landscape analysis of the current IT pipeline:

1. IT needs remain a key concern for Delaware employers, with IT jobs needed at all levels (entry to highly specialized) across IT domains (software, networks, cyber security, data management and tech support).
2. Changing skills and the accelerated digitization of our economy in the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbate bottlenecks in IT hiring.
3. Greater focus on upskilling those already in the workforce and continued expansion of education pathways are needed to address IT talent needs.

IT talent supports an array of industries in Delaware. Two-third of IT jobs are found outside the traditional “tech” sector in areas of finance, healthcare, manufacturing, education and government. From August 2019 to July 2020 alone, Delaware averaged

more than 4,000 IT job postings and 474 hires per month. Nearly three-quarters of Delaware IT workers are male, almost 60% are white and nearly one quarter are Asian. Black and Latinx talent currently fill only about 15% of IT jobs.

Delaware enjoys a widely recognized IT talent pipeline, with more than 17,000 jobs filled by IT professionals and degrees in computer science and information technology rising by about 20% over the last two years. Yet more IT talent is needed to create a competitive advantage. The plan guides future IT workers through five stages of career preparation:

- **Career Awareness:** Promotes career info, pathways, structures and routes to career advancement.
- **Interest & Exploration:** Helps diverse populations easily access ways to explore IT careers and interests and connect with other diverse workers in IT.

- **Training & Education:** Reflects the education and training needs of youth and adults.
- **Career Entry:** Helps workers from underrepresented populations find IT jobs and feel valued.
- **Career Advancement:** Highlights clear pathways for career advancement and peer support and builds a sense of community within IT occupations.

Key to the success of this rollout will be Delaware's ability to align state policies and resources to accelerate the impact of the IT talent strategy. The strategy proposes establishing an employer training tax credit and establishing a work share program that uses unemployment insurance for part-time layoffs so employers can hold on to key employees and use reduced workloads to provide needed training.

It also proposes that dislocated workers receive unemployment when training for a high-demand occupation and that working adults receive credit for skills training provided by the state's public institutions. In terms of ongoing industry-workforce connections, the strategy proposes that the state's workforce board partner with industry to fund and support sector councils and strategies, advocates for programs that integrate wrap-around services with training to increase access for low-income residents and encourages policies that also help justice-involved citizens gain skills that will lead to employment.

"There are a lot of exciting things going on in Delaware, and this tech talent pipeline plan to place opportunities in front of people who may not yet even know that a tech career could be in their future is one of them," said Kurt Foreman, president and CEO of DPP, which is itself a public/private partnership.

## WSFS and BMBC merge

### TRANSACTION SOLIDIFIES TOP POSITION IN THE GREATER PHILADELPHIA AND DELAWARE REGION

WSFS Financial Corporation and Bryn Mawr Bank Corporation (NASDAQ: BMTB), jointly announced on March 10 the signing of a definitive merger agreement whereby Bryn Mawr Bank Corporation (Bryn Mawr) will merge with WSFS Financial Corporation (WSFS), in a transaction valued at approximately \$976.4 million. Simultaneously with the merger, The Bryn Mawr Trust Company (BMT), the wholly owned subsidiary of Bryn Mawr, will merge into WSFS Bank, a wholly owned subsidiary of WSFS. The combination of two of the high performing, locally-based financial services companies in the Greater Philadelphia and Delaware region solidifies WSFS' position as the preeminent, locally-headquartered bank for this region. With nearly \$20 billion in assets and an approximately \$43 billion Wealth Management business as of December 31, 2020, WSFS believes that following the merger it will be the only bank in the region with distinct market-share advantages, including market knowledge, local decision-making, a full-service product suite and a balance sheet to compete with larger regional and national banks.

Under the terms of the agreement, stockholders of Bryn Mawr will receive 0.90 of a share of WSFS common stock for each share of Bryn Mawr common stock. The per share value equates to an implied value of \$48.55 for Bryn Mawr stockholders based on the closing price of WSFS stock on March 9, 2021.

"This combination aligns with our strategic plan," said Rodger Levenson, WSFS' Chairman, President and CEO. "Combining with Bryn Mawr allows us to accelerate our long-term strategic objectives, including scale to continue to invest in our delivery and talent transformations. This combination also creates the premier wealth management and trust business in the region and the sixth largest bank-affiliated wealth management and trust business nationwide under \$100 billion in assets. Together, we are poised and positioned to continue to serve and outperform for all our constituents, and to deliver sustainable high performance for years to come."

Frank Leto, President and CEO of Bryn Mawr, said, "We strongly believe in the value creation by combining with WSFS and enhancing the strengths of our institutions. This is a sound decision for Bryn Mawr, our stockholders, our Clients and the communities we serve. We are combining with WSFS because it is an established institution with deep roots in the region and the utmost focus on doing the right thing for our Clients."

The combination is WSFS' ninth since 2010, including traditional banks and other fee-based businesses in south-eastern Pennsylvania and Delaware. WSFS' proven track record of successful integrations, combined with its strong organic growth and purposeful expansion into the Greater Philadelphia region, has resulted in significant community and economic investments.

## 2020 Superstars in Education Honored with Surprise Grants



From overcoming language barriers to fostering social emotional learning to readying high school students to enter the workforce, Delaware is home to innovative approaches to education that are worth celebrating. The Delaware State Chamber of Commerce and its workforce development affiliate, The Partnership, Inc., named three programs in 2020 as Superstars in Education award winners, all of which exemplify creativity and efficacy in education.

Last May, the State Chamber was unable to hold its annual Superstars in Education awards ceremony due to the pandemic. Instead, in March the State

Chamber took the celebration to each school for a small, in-person award presentation and banner hanging. Each school also received a surprise \$1,000 grant from The Partnership, Inc. to expand their program.

The 2020 Superstars in Education are:

### W.O.L.V.E.S. READING PROGRAM

#### Las Américas ASPIRA Academy, Charter School

The W.O.L.V.E.S. Reading Program is aligned to Las Américas ASPIRA Academy's (LAAA) mascot, mission, and vision by fostering a culturally inclusive community that honors and helps all students realize their full

potential in English and Spanish content area classrooms and beyond. The program enhances the balanced literacy framework at LAAA by embedding language acquisition scaffolds so that all students, English Language Learners (ELLs) included, improve their literacy achievement, and ultimately close the reading achievement gap.

"Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA) is thankful that the Superstars in Education Committee takes the time to acknowledge the hard work of teachers and their devotion to student success. The monetary grant will allow LAAA to expand the W.O.L.V.E.S. Reading Program by purchasing more books in which our teachers can embed language acquisition scaffolds, ultimately helping students overcome language barriers so that they can read grade level, complex texts," said Emily Edmonds-Eveland, Ed.D., director of curriculum and instruc-



tion. “The 2020 Superstars in Education Award has also allowed LAAA to continue to share the W.O.L.V.E.S. Reading Program, an open-source curriculum created by teachers and for teachers, with more schools throughout the great state of Delaware and across the nation.”

### STUDENT ADVISORY PROGRAM

#### Talley Middle School, Brandywine School District

At Talley Middle School, teaching and fostering positive social behaviors is important to academic success and creating responsible citizens in the local community. The program was created with the goal to foster positive connections through peer relationships, student-staff relationships, mentoring, social-emotional learning opportunities, and character building.

“The entire Talley family is honored to receive this recognition for our hard work over the past several years. All of us – staff, students, and families – recognize the importance of a strong, positive school culture and the impact it has on learning, social-emotional development, and behavior,” said Kenneth Rivera, principal. “Ultimately, students feel more connected to school and more comfortable discussing a variety of topics with their peers, staff members, and families.”

### SUSSEX TECH HEALTH PROFESSIONS PROGRAM

#### Sussex Technical High School, Sussex Technical School District

Of the school’s 17 career-technical areas, the Health Professions Program

is the most popular. Through classroom and clinical instruction, students gain hands-on experience and training for a range of careers in medical or healthcare fields. The four-year program prepares students to ultimately achieve certified nurse assistant (CNA) status, which allows graduates to enter the job market immediately upon graduation or to work in their field and earn an income while pursuing higher education.

“Our students are dedicated and incredibly inspiring. We are immensely proud of our graduates who have gone into careers in health care and related fields, from research to biomedical engineering,” said Sussex Tech Health Professions instructor Nancy Massaro, M.Sc., RN. “This recognition is all about the great work that they do every day, in the classroom and in their clinical experience.”

“With the CNA credential, Sussex Tech graduates can go to work immediately in a high-demand field,”

said Sussex Tech Health Professions instructor Tamara Lewis, MSN, RN. “Our students work tirelessly to understand the rationale behind the theory and practice the skills they need to succeed. We also appreciate our partnerships with local nursing homes which allow our students to gain real-world experience in their field.”

Since 1989, Superstars in Education has been charged with recognizing outstanding educational programs and individual achievements. This program serves to leverage the business community’s investment in the future workforce. Delaware’s economic outlook is dependent upon the foundation we build in our schools. Whether it is ensuring our children are globally competitive, are ready to hit the ground running at a trade job, or are prepared to excel in institutions of higher education, The Partnership, Inc. is committed to developing tomorrow’s workforce.



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# WHAT'S NEXT? Chamber Calendar

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\$25 Admission



JUNE 18, 2021

### 9<sup>th</sup> Annual DYPN Golf Outing

The Delaware Young Professionals Network will hit the golf course for an afternoon of golfing and networking. Foursomes will include three young professionals and one mentor. Following nine holes, we will reconvene on the patio for happy hour.

\$50 Members

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## END-OF-SESSION POLICY CONFERENCE

JUNE 8, 2021 • #EOSCONF

JUNE 8, 2021

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# A Workforce for the Future

State Chamber and Intern Delaware join forces to retain top talent in the First State

BY KANA TURLEY | PHOTOS BY NICK WALLACE PHOTOGRAPHY

ALTHOUGH BUSINESSES around the nation often struggle to find workers qualified to meet the demands of today's labor market, the challenge of recruiting talent is especially relevant to Delaware. According to Zippia, 71 percent of graduates from Delaware colleges and universities leave the state for their first job. Another study by the Wall Street Journal reveals that more than 42 percent of Delaware graduates move to Philadelphia, with another 26 percent moving to New York, Baltimore, or Washington, D.C. These trends are a source of growing concern for employers in the state and emphasize the need for a focus on talent retention, particularly around young professionals who are the leaders of tomorrow.

These are the concerns that underlie the mission of Intern Delaware, a nonprofit dedicated to building Delaware's future workforce by keeping talent in the First State. Since its launch in fall 2019, Intern Delaware

has partnered with over 21 Delaware companies to coordinate experiences for summer interns that focus on the benefits of living and working in the First State.

Through a series of educational events featuring state leaders in government, business, and law, interns learn about the advantageous aspects of Delaware's economy and culture, as well as professional development topics like networking, mentorship, and career advice. These unique experiences and conversations increase the likelihood of young professionals choosing Delaware as an ideal place to jumpstart their careers after graduating college.

After its inaugural summer in 2020, there's already hard proof that the concept is working. Intern Delaware's first cohort included 147 students with 37 percent of senior participants accepting a full-time job offer in Delaware after graduation. More than half of those students attended Delaware colleges.

*“We’re in constant competition with other states and metropolitan areas around the country for young talent. I cannot think of anything more important than a program like Intern Delaware to attract young people to our state.” — Governor John Carney*



“Intern Delaware is really about selling the Delaware experience, and that’s not just the tax structure,” explains Intern Delaware board chair, Scott Malfitano. “It’s our research and development sector, it’s our culture, it’s our accessibility. Everyone knows about the tax structure, but we need to show we can outweigh any place.”

Intern Delaware’s concept is one that can truly be accomplished in a place like Delaware whose dynamic business ecosystem and geographic size allows the program to provide participants with unique access to influential leaders, exposure to many industries and career opportunities, hard and soft skills development, a network, and more. Altogether, it creates a sense of community that is diverse and meaningful – something that studies show plays a large role in where young professionals to choose to live and work.

The 2021 cohort begins this June. Companies looking to become involved in the program by hosting summer interns should visit **InternDelaware.com** or contact Alexis Williams, program manager of The Partnership, Inc. at [awilliams@dsc.com](mailto:awilliams@dsc.com).

*Opposite page: 2020 Intern Delaware participants, Grace Slate and Jonathan Martinez. Above: Grace and Jonathan pose next to the Wilmington W at the new CSC Station coworking innovation site in downtown Wilmington. The W was created by local artists through the It’s Time Wilmington Campaign.*

Moreover, engaging businesses to be a part of this developmental process streamlines their own hiring process by filling positions with talent that has already begun training and is considered a culture fit. It’s a win-win for both young talent and employers.

These innovative aspects of the program are evident to the young professionals who experienced Intern Delaware’s inaugural summer of 2020. According to Eseosa Wilkinson, an intern with the Delaware Prosperity Partnership, “This organization has allowed me to meet interns from other companies, professionals from different businesses, and elected officials. This allows me to understand all that Delaware has to offer.”

In a similar vein, CSC intern Emma Gogol states, “I’ve had the opportunity to speak with government officials and high-level professionals. That would never happen in other places besides Delaware.”

# Internships & Apprenticeships

*“We see a sequential progression of development and training that helps prepare new entrants to the workforce,”*

—Mike Quaranta, State Chamber President

Looking forward, Intern Delaware has big plans to expand and include more diverse businesses, especially those in Kent and Sussex counties. In March, the State Chamber announced that its nonprofit workforce development affiliate, the Partnership, Inc., will include Intern Delaware under its umbrella.

To meet the growing and changing talent needs of its member businesses, The Partnership realigned its mission and priorities to become better focused on workforce development and creating a pipeline of talent in Delaware. Joining forces with Intern Delaware was a natural fit to the workforce readiness pathway the State Chamber aims to create with The Partnership’s now four flagship programs: Delaware Principal for a Day, Superstars in Education, Intern Delaware, and the Delaware Young Professionals Network.

“We see a sequential progression of development and training that helps prepare new entrants to the workforce,” says State Chamber president, Mike Quaranta. “It starts by connecting our members to schools to clarify



workforce needs and skills challenges through Delaware Principal for a Day. We then recognize high schools, training programs, college and university classes that are innovative and targeted to employer needs through our Superstars in Education awards program. For those that go on to college and participate in an internship program, Intern Delaware is a way to connect interns from all participating employers and help build a talent pipeline of young, bright professionals for Delaware employers. New hires can then join the DYPN and grow their professional network, gain leadership skills, and further embed into a life here in Delaware.”

By joining the State Chamber and playing a crucial role in the Partnership’s efforts toward workforce development, Intern Delaware looks forward to reaching greater heights in 2021. “The main goal is to ensure a statewide offering to serve businesses throughout the state,” says Malfitano. “There are many incredible companies within our borders, and we’re just starting to scratch the surface with companies in Kent and Sussex counties. Joining up with the State Chamber will give this program the chance to grow and connect businesses with young talent.” ■



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**Kana Turley** served as a communications intern for Intern Delaware in 2020. She now works at CSC as a member of the business licensing team and continues to serve on the communications committee for Intern Delaware.



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# Addressing the Ongoing Need for Skilled Employees

Q&A with Secretary of Labor Karryl Hubbard

**Forward Delaware holds a lot of promise for underemployed Delawareans. Tell us about this initiative and how implementation is going?**

Despite the pandemic, where so many Delaware workers were displaced, employers have ongoing workforce needs for skilled employees. When Governor Carney issued Executive Order 43, the Department of Labor, Division of Employment and Training, and the Delaware Workforce Development Board, created the Rapid Workforce Training and Redeployment Initiative, or Forward Delaware – a short-term training program designed to assist Delaware employers and workers impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.

Funded with CARES Act dollars, the program targeted skill training in key areas: health care, IT, construction/trades, hospitality/food service and logistics/transportation. Delaware allocated \$15.5 million to support this initiative, with a goal of reaching more than 3,000 participants using 26 existing training providers. These funds allowed our training providers to increase their capacity. Those interested in training and employers who have workforce needs in the targeted areas should visit Forward Delaware at [www.forwarddelaware.com](http://www.forwarddelaware.com).

**Employers of every industry and size value workers with soft skills. Soft skills, like emotional intelligence and teamwork, and leadership abilities are increasingly becoming the hard skills to attain. How do you approach this developmental challenge within the Department of Labor?**

We have developed workshops focusing on soft skills and the importance of highlighting those skills when applying for jobs. Our occupational skills trainers incorporate soft skills when training on “hard” or occupational skills. Training partners also coach clients on these soft skills.

**Automation is going to change the workplace and we have seen some of those changes during this pandemic. What do you think employers need to key in on for the next five years?**



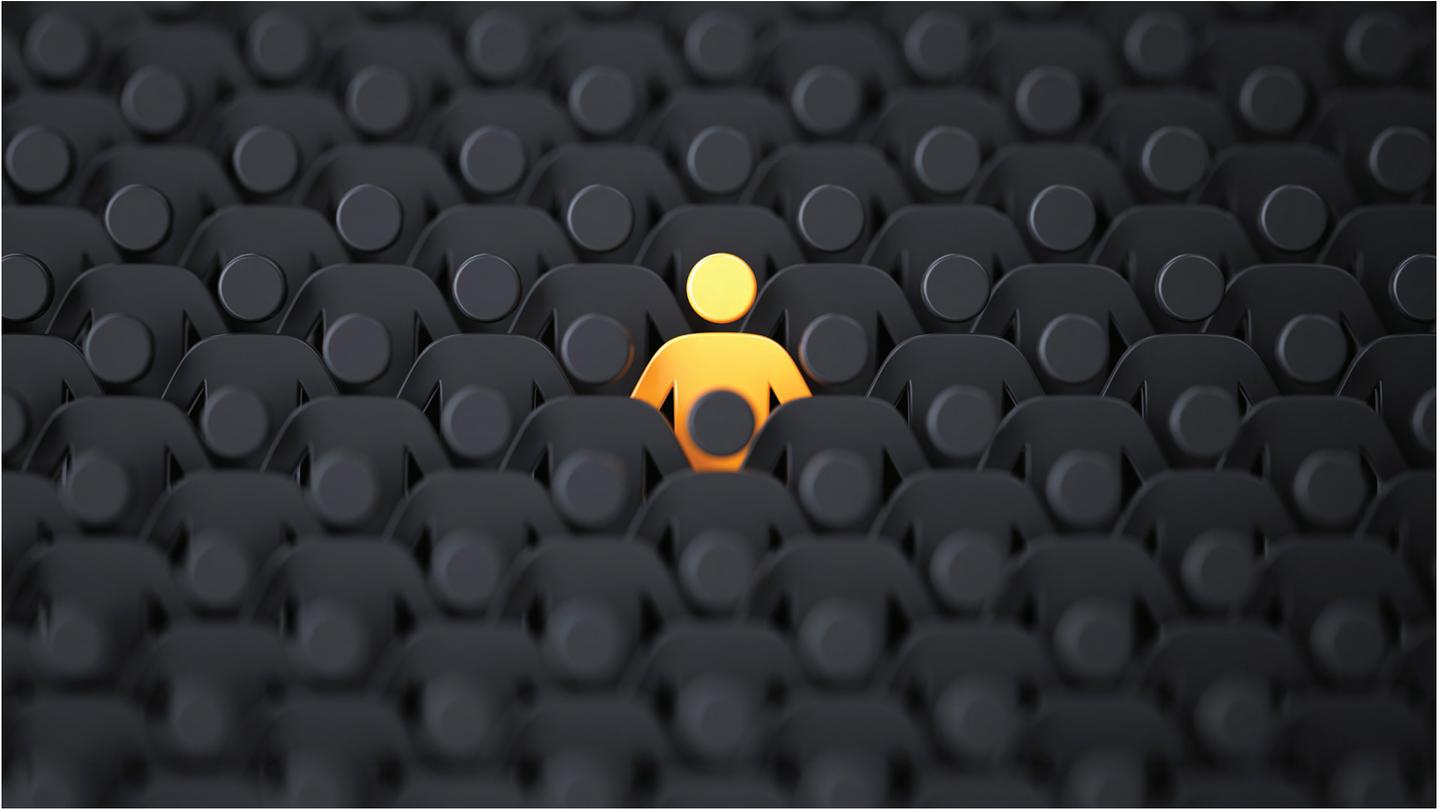
Employers should examine areas that could be impacted by technology. Employees remain a key resource to identify efficiencies, so address employee concerns with transparency if possible. They also need to provide continued training, upskilling and cross training opportunities, and diversify staff by hiring people with strong critical thinking skills and those that can adapt to change. I would also suggest that employers work together within industries to address common needs.

**Building a more inclusive and diverse workforce is a priority for State Chamber members. What advice do you have for business members as they seek out diverse talent pools to hire from?**

Leadership should survey workplace culture. Look at hiring and interview practices for unintended biases. For example, check whether a job really requires a bachelor's degree before advertising for one. Assess your top performers and consider what skills the person has that make them successful in the job. Employers can utilize Delaware JobLink to find a diverse range of people and talents. This free service is available to search for employees based on skills, abilities, talents, location, work, and much more.

**What is on the horizon for workforce development? What do you think Delaware needs to do in order to prepare itself to meet new and changing demands in the labor market?**

It is no secret that workforce development is a federal and state priority. It will be key to use data and business intelligence to adjust workforce investments accordingly. Conversations around inclusion and poverty elimination mean that we need to engage citizens differently, develop relationships and reach untapped populations, those with disabilities, and with histories of incarceration. We will provide ongoing support for predominate industries in Delaware, but we also must be prepared to pivot to new industries including information technology, green tech, and sustainability. ■



# Talent Finance for the New Economy

More affordable, less debt, better outcomes

BY SARAH MILLER

OUR ECONOMY COMPETES nationally and globally on talent – this was the case even before pandemic shocks shifted many jobs to a remote posture. Now, in 2021 and beyond, we’re entering the most dynamic labor market we’ve ever experienced. One in which access to talent has been democratized now that more and more employers are hiring for remote positions, education programs have shifted to virtual delivery models lowering barriers to enrollment and skills and short-term credential currency in the labor market is on the rise. We are moving toward an innovation-based global economy that will be driven by talent. This fundamental economic shift will bring major disruptions for employers, learners, students, and workers alike. Ultimately, employers will increasingly compete on innovation, agility, and resilience, also driven principally by talent. Therefore, talent development and engagement will be key factors in their success.

The current systems and methods for developing our talent which fuels our businesses and economy are structured for a different time –

not the fast-paced, evolving market we have today. Now, more so than ever, in-demand skills are constantly changing, the jobs we’ve lost in the pandemic might not come back at scale or will fundamentally change in their structure – this creates opportunity for employers and workers, but it also creates greater risk in the labor market. Simply put, the current approaches we have to finance the necessary education and career readiness for the talent supply our economy demands fail to adequately meet labor market needs. We need to create different ways to invest in people and skills that keep pace with innovation and advance economic opportunity, enhance diversity and inclusion in the labor market and increase our global competitiveness.

This is why the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation, in close partnership with the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta’s Center for Workforce and Economic Opportunity, the Greater Houston Partnership, WorkingNation, the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB), and the Education Finance Council (EFC) are leading a movement in

the field we're calling Talent Finance. This work started with a call to action in our white paper, *Talent Finance: A New Consensus and Return-to-Investment*, where we lay out nine guiding principles for engaging stakeholders and developing new financing approaches which create more equitable, affordable and fair, accessible financing options which expand choice in funding instruments for both worker and employer. We offer 16 recommendations for new public-private approaches focused on enhancing upside talent investments, managing downside employment and income risks, human capital accounting and reporting, and data and technology infrastructure we'll need to gain wider adoption and scale of new talent finance investments.

Now that we have a foundation from which to ideate and iterate the solutions, we hope to see in the field we are moving into action. Over the course of the next few months the Talent Finance initiative is working with several pilot teams from across the country to develop their plan for new financing mechanisms. We are working with a broad range of stakeholders from state systems of higher education, to business collaboratives, to county commissioners, workforce boards, colleges and independent school districts to help them design alternative financing approaches to develop their talent. Ideas in development include income share agreements, Pay for Success career impact bonds, creating a fund of funds, revolving loan funds, lifelong learning accounts – the list goes on and we're just touching the tip of the spear. Our work with this cohort will continue over the next several weeks and will result in joint fund raising to implement some ideas and scale others for broader impact.

Throughout our process it's the objective of the partners to help to advance on-the-ground ideas, document case studies, gather stories from stakeholders and learners, use our platforms and bullhorns to share best practices across our networks and the field at large. Ultimately, we are working towards building innovation co/labs focused on necessary state

and federal policy changes to incent more private investment, accounting standards and data infrastructure to streamline and gather insight from these investments and the development of a fund of funds investment strategies.

Scaling the innovations in these financing approaches will require all of us – state and federal policy

makers and changers, employer networks and collaboratives, new data and HR infrastructures to capture insights and partnerships with workforce intermediaries. Innovating how we finance talent development is crucial to the Federal Reserve system as it expands choice for workers and learners,

creates a more equity-based approach for more low-income workers to access the skills that they need and works in service of our full employment mandate. Similarly, these innovations are critical in the private sector to ensure business and industry are investors in, not just consumers of, talent which is why the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation is leading the movement. We expect the weeks and months ahead to gain a lot of insight, be positioned to foster innovation and scale and create a new way we can finance the talent development we need now and into the future as we recover from the pandemic shocks and help to guide us into an economy that will work for everyone.

If you have new financing strategies underway or are interested in piloting something in your region or organizational footprint please join the movement with us. We know there is much hard and interesting work ahead – we are excited to go on this journey to change the way we finance talent with you. ■



**Sarah Miller** is senior adviser for the Center for Workforce and Economic Opportunity at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta.



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4. Affordable and Fair
5. Data-Driven and Outcomes-Based
6. Transparent and Accountable
7. Empower Workers
8. Accessible
9. Equity-Based

Source: Tyszko, Jason (2020). *Talent Finance: A New Consensus and Return-to-Investment*, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation

# Closing the Skills Gap

## Streamlining Recruitment and Training with Sector-Based Regional Initiatives

BY SHARON ABRAMS, SPHR

AS MORE BABY BOOMERS RETIRE every day, we lose their business and institutional knowledge. Much of corporate America has not accomplished adequate knowledge-transfer processes, which result in rushed and painful training and retraining of vacated positions. Factored together, employers struggle with succession planning, career pathing, and on-the-job training. We find ourselves in a knowledge and skills gap with no pipeline of talent to fill open positions.

The question posed is, “How do we build a supply of talent to fill the demand of entry- and mid-level positions quickly?” Below are two forward-looking initiatives that help bridge these gaps for specific positions.

### University of Delaware

The University of Delaware offers the first and only accredited trust management minor in the United States. Students build a foundation of skills in trust law, tax, investments, and business through traditional coursework and completing a summer internship in the trust industry. The program was first imagined by a team of trust professionals led by Cynthia Brown, president of Commonwealth Trust Company, while she was wrestling with recruitment, training, and retention of trust administrators. The group came up with a regional initiative concept and developed it with the

Delaware Bankers Association, a consortium of well-respected members of the Delaware trust industry, in conjunction with the Delaware Economic Development Office and University of Delaware. This collaborative effort created a program that defines success for both students and participating companies. The program is run by Jennifer Zelvin McCloskey, JD LLM, who advises, coaches, and helps place these students with companies in the trust industry.

Quite often, the student continues to intern for more than the required 120 hours and is offered a regular, full-time position as a trust administrator upon graduation. The internship provides experience to the student, which enables them to start a position above entry-level. It also benefits the trust companies in that they make a hire that understands its products and services to their clients.

The trust industry and the University formed an advisory board to the minor as a means of ensuring that the students’ focus continues to be aligned with the needs of industry.

### Year Up

Year Up is a national 501(c)3 workforce development organization committed to ensuring equitable access to economic opportunity, education, and justice for all young adults—no matter their background, income, or zip code. Employers face a growing need for talent



*Jennifer Zelvin McCloskey, J.D., LL.M., Director of the UD Trust Management Minor along with her students welcome the founding sponsors, the Delaware Trust & Estates community, and Lerner College professors to a networking event showcase the Trust Minor students’ professionalism and technical skills.*



*Year Up Wilmington students listen to speeches from their peers, staff, and community leaders during their graduation ceremony (pre-COVID). There are now more than 20,000 Year Up alumni across the country.*

while millions of talented young adults lack access to meaningful careers. These inequities only further perpetuate the opportunity gap that exists in our country—a gap that Year Up is determined and positioned to close. Year Up’s intensive training program utilizes a high expectation, high support model where students learn in-demand, technical and professional skills and apply them during a corporate internship. Students are matched with internships in roles that companies are trying to fill. Last year, 87% of graduates in the Philadelphia/Wilmington area became

gainfully employed, enrolled in college, or both within four months of graduating the program.

Year Up also partners with local businesses to participate by teaching, judging and coaching student

elevator speeches, interview skills and resume preparation. Wilmington’s banking industry, in particular, offers six-month corporate internships to help students get their foot in the door, network, and receive further hands-on training.

To ensure the correct skills are being developed, Year Up conducts community scans to determine employers’ needs. Training programs are developed based on those demands and industry trends.

Students might ask, “What’s in it for me?” An educational stipend to offset expenses during training as well as the internship is offered to program participants. One of the more valuable professional skills gained are the soft skills, which set these students apart to hiring managers. The graduates are adaptable, comfortable with business communication,

anticipate and solve problems, and readily accept feedback. Once a graduate of Year Up, students belong to a supportive network of over 20,000 alumni for mentoring, job leads, or just a listening ear.

Often, after their internship, participants are offered regular, full-time employment with benefits. Many times, those benefits include tuition reimbursement that allow many to continue with their higher education, especially since they can earn up to 30 ACE college credits for their 12 months at Year Up.

Sector-based regional initiatives such as these need planning and commitment to yield the phenomenal payoff for both businesses and the community. Yet they are proven ways to close the knowledge and skills gaps. They play a significant contribution to building Delaware’s talent pipeline for today and tomorrow. ■



**Sharon Abrams, SPHR** is the human resource manager at Commonwealth Trust Company.

*The Harvard Business Review calls Year Up, “A breakthrough way to source entry-level talent.”*

# Building Skills Through Hands-on Experiences

State Chamber members support interns and apprentices



*Assurance Media Structured Cabling Skills Development Course*

## ASSURANCE MEDIA

The construction industry as a whole has struggled in recent years with recruitment, and Assurance Media, a premise security, audiovisual systems, and structured cabling specialty contractor is no exception. The skills needed to perform in our line of work require years of experience that the current labor market lacks. The average tenure in this industry is one to three years, but it takes at least three years to gain the experience needed to perform well on a job site.

Apprentices are vital to the future growth of our company. Assurance Media is an active participant in the Delaware Department of Labor Apprenticeship Program and currently has four apprentices enrolled in the four-year program. In addition, our team created “Rising Stars,” which is an internal mentorship program. Every apprentice, including new employees, is automatically enrolled in the program and receives a mentor to serve as a guide for their first 90 days. The program empowers the Assurance Media field team to integrate new hires and transport them to their highest potential. In collaboration with the local and state apprenticeship/co-op programs, Assurance Media, along with others in the construction industry, are investing in the next generation today.

## BELFINT LYONS & SHUMAN

Belfint Lyons & Shuman (BLS) considers its college recruiting process an important part of our firm-wide recruiting and long-term success of not only our firm, but also our industry and the talent in Delaware. We listen and build relationships with our interns, professors, and college career services departments, and through participation in community programs like Intern Delaware, to attract the best candidates.

Our goal is to initially engage talent via our externship program, where high school students and students early in their college term are introduced to a career in accounting. Students can then interview for our summer internship program where they not only gain experience, work with clients, and network with the BLS team but will also be considered for a staff accountant position. Many BLS team members started their career journey in our summer internship program and have advanced throughout the firm! In fact, 25% of BLS’ current team started as interns, and that includes our managing director, Michael French, who began as an intern in the 1980’s and worked his way up to this important top leadership role.

*“This internship exceeded my expectations where I was introduced to the firm’s rotational development program and positive work environment. I look forward to learning more in each practice area and joining the community BLS offers.”*



– Emily Bowman, Rowan University



*Pictured are Dietrich Yontz, Liam Jordan, & Samantha Pearlman with Nickle President & CEO Steve Dignan. Dietrich, Liam, & Samantha graduated from local vo-tech high schools in 2018 and are currently enrolled in the state apprenticeship program. In 2018, they were recognized by Associated Builders & Contractors for showing outstanding academic achievement while successfully completing a co-op program and moving on to the state apprenticeship program.*

## NICKLE ELECTRICAL COMPANIES

The State's apprenticeship program is the greatest feeder pattern for Nickle to hire electricians. About 70% of the organization's employees have either completed the program or are currently enrolled. Even before entering the apprenticeship program, the students are committed to their education through high school co-op programs, which makes them that much more valuable and dedicated to the industry. Apprentices are required to do four years of both schoolwork and hands-on work, so the impact of the program is that Nickle employs the highest quality electricians in the tri-state area. That kind of enthusiasm requires just as much commitment from Nickle as we invest the same amount of time and energy into their education as they do.

## M. DAVIS & SONS

Apprentices are an integral part of our team at M. Davis & Sons, and we continuously advocate for the vo-tech schools whose students in the trades are potential job candidates. "Graduation from an apprenticeship program is just as important and meaningful as that of a college graduation," states our CEO Peggy DelFabbro.

We believe that supporting our team members in our apprenticeship program is one of the best avenues for them to gain trade knowledge and upgrade their wages once they complete the program and earn their Journeyman Certificate. These tradespeople are then able to pass on their invaluable knowledge and expertise on job sites. Apprentices are the future of our industry and workforce, and we are proud to have 75 apprentices that are currently enrolled through the State of Delaware.



*"My favorite part of the internship was working alongside one of the audit teams and learning from them as part of their team. I look forward to applying what I learned when I start as a Staff Accountant and continuing to work with BLS team members."*



– Jonathan Martinez, Goldey-Beacom College

*"The internship program at BLS was an amazing experience that gave an in-depth insight into the public accounting profession. All of the staff were extremely helpful and friendly!"*



– Alyce Smith, Rowan University



# Help Delawareans build a more secure future.

## Support DE EARNs.

Even before the effects of the pandemic, too many hard-working Delaware small business owners and employees had no easy way to save for their future. Now more than ever, we need to make it easier to start saving. Luckily, there's one simple way to give every Delawarean a path to save for retirement—passing DE EARNs.

Now is the time to get this done. DE EARNs is good for workers, good for small businesses, and will save taxpayer dollars. That means it's good for all of us.

**Tell your state lawmakers to help all Delawareans build a more secure future by passing DE EARNs.**

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Lucretia B. Young  
AARP Delaware  
State Director

## We Must Put a Secure Future Within Reach

As Delawareans, we aren't saving enough for retirement. That is especially true for the 66% of Delaware residents that work for themselves or small businesses without a workplace retirement savings plan. Without decent savings, we will face tough decisions about housing, medicine, and food in our later years. That is why AARP Delaware is working with state

leaders to pass DE EARNs to ensure that all Delawareans can have a chance to grow the savings they need for a secure future.

Research shows that many small businesses want to provide a retirement savings plan for their employees but can't due to how complicated and costly it can be. As a business owner, DE EARNs allows you to access a simple retirement option. All you have to do is pass the program's information on to your employees and add a payroll deduction—with zero employer fees, no employer match, and no fiduciary responsibility. And, it will help you compete in attracting and retaining top talent.

We know your employees are the lifeblood of your business. With DE EARNs, your hard-working employees can save for retirement right out of their regular paycheck so that they can take control of their future. They will set up their account, remain in control of it, and retain the account if they change jobs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us the importance of being prepared for an uncertain future, including having savings. While Social Security is a critical piece of the puzzle, it alone is not enough to depend on. Now more than ever, small business owners and employees need state lawmakers to make it easier to save for the future. Join us in calling on our leaders to pass DE EARNs now.

Volunteer with AARP Delaware by contacting us at [dearp@aarp.org](mailto:dearp@aarp.org).

# IS YOUR BUSINESS SUPER?

Apply now for the  
2021 Marvin S. Gilman Superstars in Business Award  
and tell Delaware why you deserve star status!



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Wednesday, November 3, 2021



# WHAT MAKES YOUR BUSINESS SUPER?

This application form is a simple self-evaluation that can improve your business management skills and put you in the running to win the 2021 Marvin S. Gilman Superstars in Business Award!

## Step 1 / Self-Evaluation:

- If your organization is a business, please use Form A.
- If you are a nonprofit, please use Form B.

Please answer the questions by completing the application online at [www.dsc.com/superstarsinbusiness](http://www.dsc.com/superstarsinbusiness). Electronic PDFs and paper versions are also available for reference, but your application must be submitted online. Please contact Helana Rodriguez at [kbasile@dsc.com](mailto:kbasile@dsc.com) or (302) 576-6564 with questions.

## Eligibility:

- Member of the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce.
- In business for at least three continuous years.
- 150 employees or fewer.
- Previous Award of Excellence recipients and applicants that were not selected for an award may resubmit their same application up to three years back.
- Previous Superstars in Business winners may re-apply after five years.

If you would like to be connected with a previous Superstars in Business winner for assistance in completing your application, please contact Helana Rodriguez at [hrodriguez@dsc.com](mailto:hrodriguez@dsc.com) or (302) 576-6575.

## Step 2 / Submission:

All applications must be submitted online. Applications must be submitted to the Superstars in Business Committee no later than Friday, July 16, 2021 at 12 p.m. No late entries will be accepted. Please note that materials submitted cannot be returned, but all information remains confidential.

*\*\*Each question has a word count limit. Please follow those word count limits. Applications longer than the outlined limits will not be accepted.*

## Step 3 / Application Review:

Within each category, the finalists may be contacted for additional information or validation of the information submitted. The review made at this step is held in strict confidence.

## Step 4 / The Awards:

Each winner will be presented with a special award recognizing their superior achievement on November 3, 2021 at a luncheon in the Gold Ballroom of the Hotel du Pont in Wilmington. Marketing and recognition will be given to all the Business Superstars throughout the year.

**Awards may be judged in the following categories** (Please note that categories will be decided upon at the Selection Committee's discretion based on number of entries and quality of applications):

- 1 to 24 employees
- 25 to 59 employees
- 60 to 150 employees
- Nonprofits

Below each question we have provided you with 'Superstar Suggestions.' They aim to help you form more robust answers and provide suggestions on what information may make your response more competitive. These are not requirements, but may help judges compare your business against other applicants. Please answer questions as concisely as possible.



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**ENTRY DEADLINE: July 16, 2021 at 12p.m.**

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**\*Join us on April 21 at 8:30 am for a workshop on how to best write your application. Register at [www.DSCC.com](http://www.DSCC.com)\***



# Form A for BUSINESSES

Please answer all questions as concisely as possible online at [www.dscc.com/superstarsinbusiness](http://www.dscc.com/superstarsinbusiness)

1. **Business name, address & phone number; primary contact and CEO's name, title, phone number & email.**
2. **450 total words: Background information**
  - **Please describe your business.** *Superstar suggestion:* Assume reader has no understanding of your industry.
  - **List the number of years in business and briefly explain how your business was started.**
  - **Number of employees and average tenure** (Please distinguish between full-time and part-time).
3. **450 words: Please provide your business mission statement and/or business philosophy including core competencies and strengths. How do you align your day-to-day operations to this statement / philosophy?**  
*Superstar suggestion:* Provide your mission statement, vision statement, guiding principles or strategies for success. How is your mission statement communicated to your clients, employees, investors and/or the general public (i.e. word of mouth, through marketing materials, etc.)? Also explain how they were developed – were they customer or leadership driven, and how do you ensure they are understood by your entire company? Tell us here if you have team building meetings, strategy sessions and/or safety meetings that may include a regular discussion on these important guiding statements.
4. **450 words: What are your key metrics and tools and how are you measuring your results? How do you use these to proactively measure your performance and guarantee future success?**  
*Superstar suggestion:* Here is the place to highlight any strategies and measures taken that resulted in savings, stability or growth. You should be monitoring outcomes that are consequence of its operational performance and then serve as predictors of future performance. How do your results measure up to other companies in your industry? Be specific and tell us about innovative tools you use to market or boost sales, which in turn produced a good ROI. Customer loyalty, years of experience, low associate turnover and industry awards are all competitive weapons. We want to know that your business is sustainable and will be around in the years to come. Actual financial metrics (i.e. revenue growth percentage, profit margin, etc.) could separate your application from the competition. **\*Remain assured that all information is kept confidential.**
5. **450 words: When thinking about your customers, what makes your business stand apart from your peers and/or similar businesses?**  
*Superstar suggestion:* Please use this question to outline how you identify customer needs and priorities. Tell us if you are measuring customer satisfaction or if you have moved to customer loyalty or customer advocacy. How do you engage your customers? Share with us how you brand your company and how you maintain it (i.e. social media, online networking, marketing campaigns, etc.). Tell us if you have a customer database or process to retain information about customers to use in the future. If you have a formal process for tracking and resolving complaints, please highlight your program here and brag about your results. What makes your business a Superstar?
6. **450 words: A qualified workforce is a main concern for all businesses. How do you recruit and retain your associates?**  
*Superstar suggestion:* What are your key workforce practices and how are they directed towards creating and maintaining a high-performance work environment. How do you determine and meet the needs of your employees? If associate training or education reimbursement programs are a big part of your employee retention program or your quality/safety programs, please tell us about that too. Specific examples are appreciated.
7. **450 words: What recent or current significant challenges have you had to overcome to continue to be a successful business? Identify and describe the steps you took.**
  - a) **If your business was specifically impacted by COVID-19, please expand here.**
  - b) **What recent or current significant challenges have you had to overcome not specifically related to COVID-19?***Superstar suggestion:* How were the challenges identified and did you anticipate them coming? If they couldn't be predicted, what did you learn for the next time to make the company stronger? For these opportunities, financial or otherwise, how did the leaders of the organization rally and engage associates to adapt to change and meet the challenge? Please list challenges within the past two years.
8. **450 words: Discuss the nature and involvement of your community service efforts from leadership to employees.**  
*Superstar suggestion:* We want to know what organizations your company chooses to align with and why. How in depth is your involvement? How does your owner/leadership's commitment and involvement influence the corporate culture as it related to community service efforts? Describe investments of time, as well as causes supported financially. Highlight efforts regarding care for our environment, care for underserved communities and/or social equality. Do you have a formal program that includes fundraising or service hours donated? Are the commitments or passions you have for certain causes conveyed in your marketing, company brand and culture?



# Form B for NONPROFITS

Please answer all questions as concisely as possible online at [www.dccc.com/superstarsinbusiness](http://www.dccc.com/superstarsinbusiness)

1. **Business name, address & phone number; Primary contact & Executive Director's name, title, phone number & email address.**

2. **450 words: Background information:**

- Please describe the work of your nonprofit.
- Number of years serving the community.
- Number of paid staff and average tenure (Please distinguish between full-time and part-time).
- Number of volunteers and their average tenure.

3. **450 words: List your organization's functional expense allocation as a percentage of total expenses:**

Program Services \_\_\_\_\_, Fundraising \_\_\_\_\_, Management & General \_\_\_\_\_

**What is the calculation of your unrestricted net assets to current operating expenses? \_\_\_\_\_**

*Superstar suggestion:* A well-run nonprofit should meet standards where at least 65% of its total expenses are on program activities. Please explain if your organization's ratio is below that. Also, a well-run nonprofit should avoid accumulating funds that could be used for current program activities. To meet this standard, the organization's unrestricted net assets should be no more than 3x the size of the past year's expenses or 3x the size of the current year's budget, whichever is higher. Please explain any variance from this standard. Examples may be that your organization is planning on a large capital project, introducing a new program or in the midst of a capital campaign and the organization is accumulating funds for that expense.

4. **450 words: Please provide your organization's mission statement and/or philosophy including core competencies and strengths. How do you align your day-to-day operations to this statement / philosophy? Also please provide the number of people or groups that benefit from your organization** (Please provide results for each of the last three years).

*Superstar suggestion:* Provide your mission statement, vision statement, guiding principles or strategies for success. How is your mission statement communicated to your beneficiaries, staff, board, contributors and/or the general public (i.e. word of mouth, through marketing materials, etc.)? Also explain how they were developed - were they constituent or leadership driven, and how do you ensure they are understood by your entire organization? Tell us here if you have team building meetings, strategy sessions and/or safety meetings that may include a regular discussion on these important guiding statements.

5. **450 words: When thinking about your key constituents (i.e. recipients of service, board members, donors and / or customers), what makes your organization stand apart from your peers and / or similar nonprofits?**

*Superstar suggestion:* Please use this question to outline how you identify constituent needs and priorities. Are you measuring their satisfaction? How do you engage your constituents? Share with us how you brand your organization and how you maintain it (i.e. social media, online networking, marketing campaigns, etc.). Tell us if you have a database or process to retain information about your constituents to use in the future. If you have a formal process for tracking and resolving complaints, please highlight your program here and brag about your results.

6. **450 words: A qualified workforce and board of directors are main concerns for all nonprofits. How do you recruit and retain both your staff, board members and volunteers?**

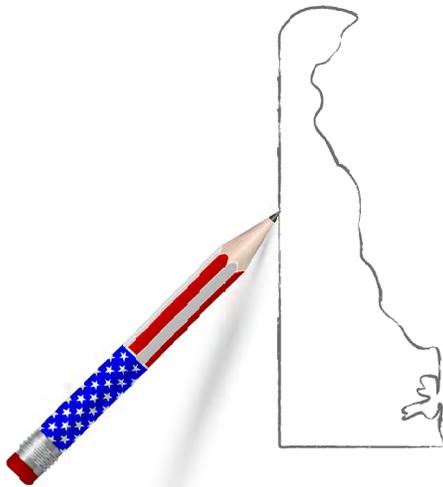
*Superstar suggestion:* What are your key workforce practices and how are they directed towards creating and maintaining a high-performance work environment. How do you determine and meet the needs of your staff, board and volunteers? How often does your board meet and are there term limits? What is the percentage of board members who make financial contributions to your organization? If associate training or education reimbursement programs are a big part of your employee retention program or your quality/safety programs, please tell us about that too. Specific examples are appreciated.

7. **450 words: What recent or current significant challenges have you had to overcome to continue to be a successful nonprofit? Identify and describe the steps you took.**

**a) If your organization was specifically impacted by COVID-19, please expand here.**

**b) What recent or current significant challenges have you had to overcome not specifically related to COVID-19?**

*Superstar suggestion:* How were the challenges identified and did you anticipate them coming? If they couldn't be predicted, what did you learn for the next time to make the company stronger? For these opportunities, financial or otherwise, how did the leaders of the organization rally and engage associates to adapt to change and meet the challenge? Please list challenges within the past two years.



# Legislative Redistricting 101

What to expect in 2022

CONTRIBUTED BY RUGGERIO WILLSON & ASSOCIATES

THE DECENNIAL U.S. CENSUS, also referred to as the Population and Housing Census, is designed to count every resident in the United States. As mandated in the Constitution, this process takes place every ten years. This data determines the number of seats each state has in Congress and is also used to determine the amount of federal funds distributed to local communities. At the local level, it also enables redistricting of state and local legislative districts.

The data provided through the Census assists in identifying any population loss and population growth across legislative districts. This

means that the lines can be modified based on population growth as well as population loss. The goal is to make each legislative district within five percent of each other in population size.

There are situations where a district will be physically relocated from a less populated area to a more populated area. For example, in 2010, a district was taken from Northern New Castle County and placed in the Smyrna/Clayton area in order to accommodate the population growth. There have also been situations where districts decreased in geographical size because the population within the district increased.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Census Bureau has delayed the reporting of the census data three times. Recently the U.S. Census Bureau directed states that they should anticipate receiving the reapportionment data by September 30, 2021. In a normal year, the data would be reported in either February or early March. The delayed sharing of data means the timeline to complete the redistricting process will be condensed to roughly 30 days. The act of drawing district lines is done by the leadership of both chambers, currently both held by Democrats, with the minority caucuses and the public having an opportunity to partake.

All 21 members of the state Senate and all 41 state representatives will be up for reelection in 2022. If additional legislative districts are established, in order for a candidate to be eligible in that new district, they will need to have been a resident for one year. What this means is that a special session will likely be held in either October or early November of 2021 to accommodate this one-year window.

During the special session, the legislature will vote on a piece of legislation often referred to as “meets and bounds legislation.” This legislation essentially lays out the boundaries of the districts using geographical descriptions of the land that identifies with the precise locations of the newly drawn districts. Once this legislation passes the General Assembly and is signed into law, the three counties and City of Wilmington will begin their redistricting processes.

Delaware continues to experience growth in the several regions of the state and that will require changing district populations to account for that fact. While it is challenging to predict the areas that are anticipated to change through the reapportionment process without any data being reported, it is safe to say that every legislative district will look different at the end of this process. ■

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# Forty Years Promoting Delaware by Promoting Delaware Companies

BY RICK BELL AND JARROD MELSON

IN THE HISTORY of the business entity, from the establishment of the Dutch East India Company, the first recognized modern corporation, to the complex variety of entities available today – perhaps no law has ever been as successful as the Delaware General Corporation Law at facilitating the successful formation and growth of businesses while balancing the rights and interests of management and shareholders.

Delaware's General Corporation Law, coupled with the expertise of its jurists and the breadth of case law informing its statutory terms, has dominated and directed corporate law in the United States. As a result, Delaware has achieved corporate law dominance in the U.S. and enjoyed financial abundance from its preeminent position for over two centuries.

We Delawareans are fortunate to benefit today from the foresight and intellect of some very wise individuals. These Delaware lawyers recognized the needs of the broader business community as well as investors, and crafted a set of laws that give broad powers to the Board and guarantee fairness to the Stockholders. Perhaps most importantly, these men and women saw the importance of continual growth and adaptation, allowing Delaware corporate law to adapt to new circumstances. The immense

legal talent and dedication of those engaged in the Corporation Section of the Delaware Bar Association, the Court of Chancery, and the Delaware Division of Corporations have continually risen to meet these challenges.

At Harvard Business Services, Inc., we promote the formation of Delaware entities and currently serve as registered agent for almost 100,000 Delaware companies of all types. Last year, our 39th year in business, we helped form more than 24,000 new Delaware companies for our clients from around the world and across the U.S. During the 2020 franchise tax season, we collected more than \$14 million from our clients for Delaware's General Fund.

The State's preeminent position in entity law brings significant benefits to the citizens of Delaware. Our franchise tax makes up more than one quarter of Delaware's General Fund, which is used to build roads, schools, and pay our hard-working State employees. In fact, many say that our franchise tax – which is paid primarily by out-of-state entities – is the primary reason Delaware can exist without imposing a sales tax. It's a big tax savings for every Delawarean every time they shop, and is a boon to Delaware's overall economic health and growth. It keeps money

in Delawarean's pockets, and it draws people from surrounding states to shop in Delaware.

At Harvard Business Services, Inc., we're Delawareans. We're headquartered in Lewes, Delaware with a full-time team of 44 Delaware residents. We appreciate and are steeped in the people and community of Delaware, especially in Sussex County – our home.

Over the four decades that we have served our clients, we followed a steady development plan, growing at a deliberate pace that allows us to build our staff and offer expanded services our clients need. In serving our clients with diligence and professionalism each day, we are contributing to Delaware's position in corporate affairs and the benefits it brings. We take pride in the opportunity to simultaneously serve our 100,000 clients and the people of Delaware. ■



**Rick Bell** is founder & chairman at Harvard Business Services, Inc.  
**Jarrod Melson** is Harvard Business Services, Inc.'s general counsel.

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# Weed and Work

## Beware of Employment-Related Provisions in Delaware Marijuana Legislation **BY TIM HOLLY**

AS OF MARCH 18, 2021, the issue of legalizing non-medical marijuana use is back in play in Delaware. The bill includes provisions specifically addressing “places of employment;” and it features provisions amounting to social engineering regarding unions and sex and color-based hiring.

It is disconcerting to many employers that this bill at least arguably implies that any employer policy or practice pertaining to marijuana, that is not specifically permitted, is prohibited. For example, the bill oddly states that it does not require an employer to permit use of marijuana at work. This arguably implies an intent to prohibit an employer’s prohibition of use outside of work.

Similarly, the bill oddly states that it is not meant to affect the ability of employers to discipline employees who are under the influence at work. This also arguably implies that employers are meant to be affected in their ability to discipline employees who are found under the influence of marijuana outside of work.

Delaware has still not gone so far as to restrict an employer’s right to hire, discipline, and fire employees for non-work activity, with some exceptions such as medical marijuana use outside of work. For example, a Delaware business could choose to prohibit tobacco use even outside of work or to discipline and even terminate employment for public intoxication from alcohol. Some employers – regardless of any legal constraints – may choose not to meddle in the private lives of their workers in such a way, perhaps out of concern that otherwise good workers may choose not to work for them. Other employers may have different values and choose differently. The point is that businesses, like people, value having autonomy to define for themselves – even if disfavored by others – what “personality” and “reputation” they will have, molded by the choices they make.

The fact that this bill at least implies that it means to meddle in (and restrict) employer choices as it pertains to how to handle a currently-illegal substance – giving it even more protective treatment than other things including tobacco and alcohol use – strikes many employers as bizarre. Beyond the narrow issue of marijuana, this bill builds concern about the appetite of Delaware law makers to erode the freedom of Delaware businesses to choose for themselves what standards will define them – including through further erosion of the employment at-will doctrine.

Another problem with this bill pertains to the definition of “work.” The definition is a positive change from a prior version of the bill in that “at

work” has been defined essentially to mean “while doing work” – rather than “at the employer’s place of work.” With a trend towards working remotely, especially during the pandemic, this is a needed improvement to an arguably restrictive bill. However, managing remote workers already presents problems for employers, and a law like this bill would create ambiguity and new conundrums for employers. For example, would an employee who works from home or travels for work, who possesses marijuana in the same space where they perform work, possess marijuana “at work” such that an employer would be allowed to prohibit and discipline for that? Could an employer face liability in such a situation?

The bill presents a further practical challenge for employers in that, while it declares that it does not “intend to affect the ability of employers” to discipline employees who are under the influence of marijuana at work, it defines “under the influence” to mean “because of marijuana use, the individual is less able than the individual would ordinarily have been, either mentally or physically, to exercise clear judgment, sufficient physical control, or due care in exercising the responsibilities of their job.” That definition arguably requires employers to measure all employees before any marijuana use so that they will be in a position to establish the “less able” part of the required analysis. For many legitimate reasons, it is predictable that employers will not develop and perform base rate testing. Even for those who do, there is likely to be a challenge in showing the “because of” part of the test is met – e.g., perhaps fatigue, a strong wind, or any number of excuses other than marijuana could be blamed for diminished ability. To be sure, if this bill becomes law, there will be greater risk for an employer who disciplines an employee even when the employee indisputably arrives to work having recently used marijuana.

In terms of social engineering, this bill also contains a provision showing a preference for unions. And what if you discovered that the bill seeks to compel a private business to demonstrate a plan that, rather than requiring truly equal employment opportunity for all and forbidding discrimination against any who are of a protected class under the law, focuses on the hiring specifically of men and people who are not “of color?” Some might argue that would present legal problems and, perhaps more importantly, present an example of unacceptable institutionalized, systemic sexism and racism. Many would find that to be socially irresponsible. Does this bill do that? Further discussion can be found online at [www.dsc.com/legislativejournal](http://www.dsc.com/legislativejournal).



Simply put, this bill creates risk and hassle for Delaware businesses and forces them to shoulder more than their fair share of burden from what would be a massive social change during already very trying times. If this bill becomes law, it is predictable that clever attorneys who help their clients grapple with marijuana issues in the employment context will argue about statutory construction concepts (e.g., “expressio unius est exclusio alterius”) and the implied covenant of good faith and fair dealing, among other things. While clever attorneys are more than happy to accept payment from businesses to create arguments that deal with the issues this bill would create, is more of that what Delaware businesses need?

Even if Delaware lawmakers find it wise, prudent, and consistent with their view of the will of their constituents and good State governance to legalize non-medical marijuana use, they should rethink the employment-related pieces of this bill and not seek to impose on private businesses either unions or sex-based or color-based hiring practices. ■



**Timothy M. Holly** is a partner at Connolly Gallagher LLP.

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# The Impact of Humidity on Your Home Office

BY COLIN HEFFINGER

AS THE WORLD BEGINS to gradually shift back to in-person events and expanded business capacity, the trend of home offices will continue to reside and flourish even beyond the extent of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has illuminated the significance of maximizing our productivity and comfort while working at a home office. Though sometimes overlooked, proper humidity levels play a critical role in our health, the health of our pets, and the longevity of wood and appliances throughout our homes. By educating ourselves on how humidity impacts our health and how to maintain it at optimal ranges, we can live healthier lives as we continue to work from the comfort of our homes.

The infographic shown on the right, *A Look at Proper Humidity* by ACHR News, outlines optimal humidity levels and the variety of reasons maintaining optimal humidity levels is important for you and your home.

John Millett is the divisional manager of operations at Schlosser & Associates Mechanical Contractors, a Newark-based business started in 1954 that has expanded its operations to heating, air conditioning, plumbing and a variety of other projects for homes and businesses. Millett explains how readers can measure humidity levels in their home. “The easiest way to measure humidity is through a humidistat or thermostat. The quality of your thermostat makes a big difference. Monitoring optimal humidity levels is important to our health as well as our homes.”

“Our bodies need to always be moist,” Millett continues. “Heaters dry out our homes and bodies. Humidity keeps our mucus membranes moist which in return helps us heal faster, stay healthier and breathe easier, especially during sickness. It helps keep dust, dirt, and pet hair down and out of the air. It also prevents all woodwork from swelling – floors, furniture, cabinets, and more.”

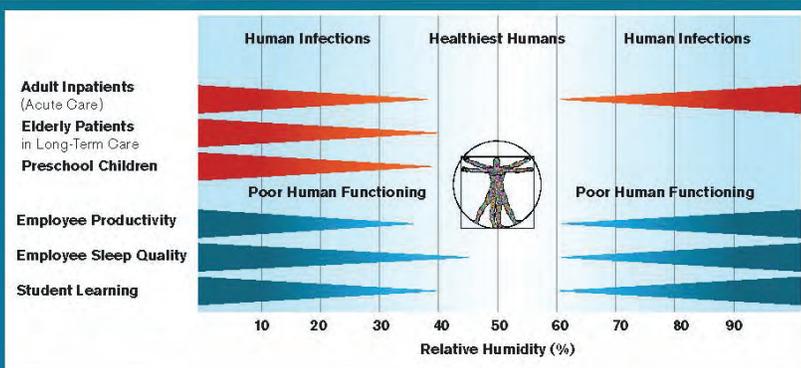
“Whatever you do on your property impacts how you heat and cool your home,” Millett explains. “Cooking, outside humidity, indoor temperature, a fireplace, or an attached greenhouse can all contribute to indoor humidity levels. Any form of forced air dries out your house like the Sahara Desert, in turn needing the proper level of humidity to be brought into your home. Where are you going to plant new trees and which ones are you taking down? The trees block wind and sunlight from entering your home. The sunlight has hidden heat in it called ‘latent heat’. This raises the temperature in your home, and you have to keep that in mind when thinking about interior humidity in the long run.”

Homeowners may feel overwhelmed trying to understand how to maintain optimal humidity levels and the different factors involved. The goal is to aim for the 40 percent range for relative humidity. By maintaining humidity levels, homeowners can lower their temperature and still feel the same. An average home that prefers 70 degrees for interior temperature can have 30 percent relative humidity and lower its temperature down to 67 degrees – saving money over time. Purchasing a standard humidifier, even a small one, can assist in maintaining humidity and their ease of use make them an excellent worry-free option. An additional option is air scrubbers, which are used in a variety of places from homes to airplanes and are an effective way to eliminate dangerous airborne particles like bacteria and viruses.

Schlosser & Associates provides a variety of services including the installation of electric or digital air filtration, ultraviolet air purification, humidification, and dehumidification. When advising homeowners on the role of air humidity in their homes, Millett offers, “We recommend checking the batteries to your smoke alarms when you check your air filters four times a year. This helps keep you and your home safe.” ■

# A LOOK AT PROPER HUMIDITY

IAQ-conscious homeowners might be interested to know how humidification can preserve not only their health but the health of their home, too.



Indoor relative humidity in the range of 40 to 60 percent is optimal for human health.



With proper humidification, evaporative cooling of the skin is decreased. As a result, higher thermostat setpoints can save energy (and money) while keeping occupants just as comfortable.



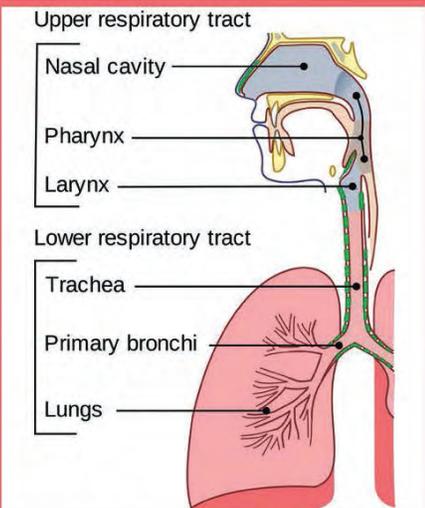
Sitting in a room with 20 percent relative humidity, the average person becomes clinically dehydrated in eight hours. In addition to external irritation, dehydration also impairs brain performance.



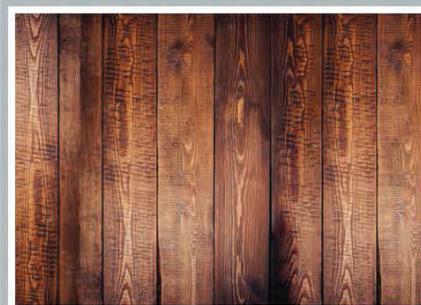
A healthy level of relative humidity increases the effectiveness of cleaning. It decreases surface recontamination from the resettling of infectious aerosols.



Homeowners will preserve the performance and lifespan of their systems by enlisting a professional for recommended care, always starting with shutting off power prior to maintenance. PHOTO COURTESY OF DERRICK NOH, CC BY 2.0



Proper indoor humidity maintains lining of the upper and lower respiratory tract, which helps to avoid illness.



Benefits of adequate humidity extend beyond personal health. It also protects hardwood floors from avoidable damage.

Health-related items via Dr. Stephanie Taylor, CEO of Taylor Healthcare Commissioning Inc. After working as a physician for many decades, Dr. Taylor obtained a master's degree in architecture as well as an infection control certification. Dr. Taylor is a graduate of Harvard Medical School (MD) and Norwich University. She has numerous research publications in nature, science, and other peer-reviewed journals and writes an IAQ column for Engineered Systems. Additional info courtesy General Filters and Lennox.

Infographic Courtesy of ACHR News



# Wellness Vacation Planning

Investing in time off increases your mental health wealth

BY ANIKO CZOBOR CTC

IT'S SAFE TO SAY the world is stressed right now. People get up early, work all day, take care of their home and family, and barely have time to sit down before the cycle starts again. Taking time off to revitalize and rejuvenate is more important now than ever.

Whether you have just a few days or multiple weeks of paid time off, research shows that if you don't take advantage of time off from work, your stress and mental health will suffer. Burnout can lead to a decrease in health, motivation and performance, affect memory, and place a stressor on relationships. People who take time to relax are less likely to experience burnout, allowing them to be more creative, focused, and productive than their overworked, under rested counterparts.

One of the biggest boosts to health and happiness can come from planning a vacation. The New York Times reported that taking a vacation every two years compared to every six will greatly reduce the risk of heart disease and heart attacks. Studies also show that planning several short getaways a year will improve your overall health.

Although missing a connecting flight or losing luggage in a foreign airport is sure to boost your anxiety, traveling has been scientifically proven to lower stress levels rather dramatically. Here is where an experienced travel professional can work behind the scenes to ensure your trip is as seamless and stress free as possible.

Taking a vacation after being stuck at your desk job is the best way to break through the monotony of life and temporarily leave the environment

and activities that cause stress.

Traveling the world is not just fun and exciting, it can be a form of stress management that helps reduce depression risk. It also leads to life enrichment. The money you invest in travel will only make you richer. Experiencing history and cultures around the world will enhance your life, and the memories will last a lifetime.

Wellness tourism is a growing industry defined as travel associated with the pursuit of maintaining or enhancing one's personal well-being. Activities like hiking a new park or sailing on your favorite body of water offer an opportunity for personal betterment and community engagement.

After a full year of quarantine, people are now receiving the vaccine. The ability to travel will soon return. There's no better time than now to start thinking about planning your next wellness vacation – whether that trip is near home or across the globe.

Take care of yourself, and travel! ■



**Aniko Czobor** is owner of Your PASSPORT to Travel LLC, a full-service travel agency. She stands by ready to help you plan your next wellness vacation.

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# Is Poor Nutrition Hurting Your Bottom Line?

BY MEGAN MURPHY

THE ESTIMATED ECONOMIC BURDEN of chronic disease over the next 35 years is \$95 trillion in the United States alone. This includes both direct (e.g., illness treatment) and indirect (e.g., lost productivity and disability) health care costs.<sup>1</sup> Six out of 10 American adults suffer from a chronic disease<sup>2</sup> and obesity is by far the greatest risk factor.<sup>3</sup> Many of the cardiometabolic diseases, such as heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes, are “caused by our industrial diet, which means they are avoidable if we transform the food we grow, the food we produce, and the food we eat.”<sup>1</sup> One study discovered “nearly half of all the deaths in the U.S. in 2012 caused by cardiometabolic diseases were associated with suboptimal eating habits.”<sup>4</sup> The Food is Medicine movement advocates the prevention and treatment of chronic illnesses through food.

## The Real Cost of Chronic Illness

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Office of the Actuary 2019-2028 projections indicate that U.S. healthcare spending will reach \$4.2 trillion—or \$12,749 per person—this year and is projected to reach \$6.2 trillion by 2028.<sup>5</sup> Combined direct and indirect healthcare costs for

chronic health conditions totaled \$3.7 trillion in 2016, or nearly one-fifth of the U.S. economy, and diseases caused by obesity and being overweight accounted for 47 percent (\$1.7 trillion) of those costs.<sup>3</sup>

## Early Results Look Promising

Here’s the good news. While unhealthy eating may have gotten us into this dire situation, improving our diet is the solution. “Food and nutrition interventions can aid in prevention and management, and even reverse chronic disease. Introduced at large scale, proven interventions could save millions of lives and billions in healthcare costs each year,”<sup>6</sup> notes the Aspen Institute’s Food is Medicine Initiative.

“Food is medicine” interventions are no or low-cost programs administered by clinicians through the health care system that may include medically-tailored meals, groceries, and produce prescriptions. Massachusetts and California have piloted programs with high-risk populations that have shown positive results. Findings from Massachusetts’ program revealed that “receipt of medically tailored meals was associated with a 16% net reduction in overall health care costs, 49% fewer inpatient hospital admissions,

and 72% fewer admissions into skilled nursing facilities compared with the control group.”<sup>7</sup>

### Healthy Eating Reduces Insurance Costs

Business leaders see the direct impact that chronic disease has on their company’s health plan costs. Implementing employee programs that promote healthy eating will help reduce chronic illness and result in enormous savings, especially considering that suboptimal diets cost approximately \$50 billion each year.<sup>8</sup> Savings include reducing or eliminating expensive prescription drug costs, fewer emergency room visits, hospital stays and doctor’s appointments and lower co-pays, insurance rates, and more.

### We’re Here to Help

Lyons Companies strengthens businesses by proactively addressing risk management issues and providing cost-containment solutions. We monitor trends, like the Food is Medicine movement, to advise clients on potential business implications. We partnered with RCA Nutrition to help educate clients about targeted approaches to therapeutic food programs and nutritional coaching as a tool to improve lives and help drive down healthcare costs. If you would like to learn more about this partnership or other cost-containment strategies, contact us at: [benefits@lyonsinsurance.com](mailto:benefits@lyonsinsurance.com) or 1.800.456.5508. ■

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**Megan Murphy** is the employee benefit team leader at Lyons Companies.



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# Cultural Experiences Essential to Health and Wellbeing

Arts Helped Lift Spirits During the Pandemic  
and Will Help Create Community as We Emerge

BY JESSICA BALL AND MARK FIELDS

ARTS AND CULTURE may not be on the top of our minds during a global pandemic, but whether we have been aware of it or not, they play a critical role in our overall health and well-being during a time of great uncertainty and stress.

While spending time at home to avoid crowds of people, we have been singing along to chart topping songs, reading the latest best-selling novels, watching our favorite films and shows, and perhaps trying out a new dance move trending on TikTok. All of these artistic experiences were

developed and implemented by workers in our significant and impactful “creative economy.” According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, America’s creative economy is a growing industry valued at \$878 billion. In Delaware, the creative economy is a \$1 billion industry that employs about 9,000 people.

We spent the last year seeking creative outlets and opportunities for self-expression, and that’s a good thing. Scientific evidence shows that this dramatically lowers our cortisol levels, which are markers for stress.

*Left: Choristers from the Choir School of Delaware perform a virtual Black History Month concert. Right: Baritone Grant Youngblood and Pianist Aurelien Eulert from Opera Delaware perform for an appreciative audience at The Country House.*

But that is not the only way that cultural pursuits are good for everyone. The past couple of decades yielded much research and evidence supporting the connection between arts engagement and significant benefits to our social, emotional, physical, and mental health. There is good reason that art therapy is a growing field used to treat a range of illnesses, including depression and anxiety.

Research shows that even outside of therapeutic contexts, the arts have positive effects on our health. In fact, the World Health Organization's 2019 Health Evidence Network synthesis report shows the arts yield major health benefits across all stages of life. Studies show improved concentration in school for children who are read to at bedtime, and improved memory, attention, and executive function in older adults with dementia who are engaged through music, particularly singing.

The importance of the arts to our health has been made particularly evident during the pandemic, which posed challenges for maintaining mental



wellness and managing anxiety. The COVID-19 shutdown caused cultural institutions to shutter and artists to cancel events. Yet organizations and artists kept busy working to keep Delawareans connected and engaged during isolation with virtual and socially distanced services and programs.

Opera Delaware has been staging outdoor performances to serenade seniors under quarantine and health care workers on the front lines at ChristianaCare and Bayhealth. The Choir School of Delaware set up all of

## Beebe Healthcare welcomes board certified breast surgeon **Diana Dickson-Witmer, MD, FACS.**



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# Wellness and Health

their students with internet and laptops, which allowed the school to not miss a beat at music practice and at producing virtual concerts for their audiences. Artists from the Developing Artist Collaboration have been assembling and mailing out art kits to Delawareans seeking to use their brains and hands in ways that make them feel good.

The Grand not only provided a holiday light show to bring some festive spirit in an otherwise subdued December 2020 but it also worked with its own board, EDiS, and the United Way to raise funds to send frontline

health care workers through the light show for free. Out of the 35,000 regional residents who participated in the light show, more than 2,500 were health care workers who received a much-needed break from the stress of providing care during the pandemic.

Perhaps most important, Delaware's arts, cultural, and heritage sector is preparing now to help Delawareans emerge from the pandemic and resume some of their familiar routines. Attending a live concert or viewing an art or heritage exhibit – once finally safe – will be one of the most compelling ways to share human fellowship again after months of isolation.

There are many reasons to value creative expression as a dynamic, even integral part of our shared community here in Delaware. But the ability of the arts, culture, and heritage to create hope, lighten hearts, bring understanding and empathy, and point the way to a brighter future – even in the midst of this global crisis – should demonstrate their value to all. ■



*Cars of patrons drive through The Grand's Winter in Wilmington light show at the Wilmington Riverfront.*



**Jessica Ball** is the executive director of the Delaware Arts Alliance, a statewide cultural advocacy nonprofit. **Mark Fields** is executive director of The Grand Opera House in Wilmington.

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# Transitioning Back to the Workplace

Strategies to ease the transition BY LIZ BROWN, PCC

LAST MARCH, “business as usual” came to an abrupt halt as we were thrust into a time of great uncertainty and fear from the pandemic. What began as “Two weeks to stop the spread” became many months of a combination of remote work, virtual meetings, and working in an office with reduced staff. After the first month or two, most businesses were able to adapt to create a “new normal” for employees and remain productive. To say the time was stressful is an understatement, but most were able to adapt to the many demands caused by working and going to school from home.

As we begin to step back into the workplace, the transition might cause stress for many. Whether you are excited about getting back to the physical office or not, change can create some level of discomfort. Being prepared for the mental components of change can help reduce the impact. Here are some ways to ease the transition.

Create a stress reduction ritual. Try deep breathing, quiet walking, listening to music, gentle stretching, or journaling to reduce your stress. Start now so it will be a habit as you return to the office. These habits can help reduce the automatic fight or response that comes when we feel there is a threat in our environment. Since we have all been living with the feeling that there is a threat to our health in public places for the past year, it might take time even with the decreased threat to let the anxious feeling go.

Talk to others about your concerns. Everyone has been impacted by the shutdown in different ways but what we have in common is that it has been a time of challenge. While we do not want to dwell on the past, talk-

ing about fears and concerns with trusted friends, coworkers, or a professional, will help you process your thoughts and feel more in control.

Prepare for change. Working from home has its advantages. No commute, less formal work attire, and more flexibility with time. Transitioning back to the office has advantages as well. More social interaction, less distraction, and an increase in collaboration. Start to think about what you are looking forward to doing once you return. Maybe schedule a lunch or a walk with a colleague. Also, begin to plan for the commute, wearing business attire, and a more defined working day. This transition might be a good time to reevaluate pre-COVID habits that were not useful or necessary and think about new ways to schedule your day. This might be a useful exercise to do as a team as well.

Set expectations. It will take some time to readjust to the change. It is not like we are just coming back from a weeklong vacation. Allow some time in your schedule to reconnect with co-workers and others you have not seen “live” in the past year.

Enjoy! The past year has been difficult and as we are getting the virus under control, enjoy the process of catching up with people and savoring the normal of now. ■



**Liz Brown, PCC** is owner of Be Well Life Coaching.

## New “Stand By Me Minority Small Business” program will expand economic opportunities and increase access to capital for Delaware minority-owned small businesses

Barclays US Consumer Bank today announced its financial investment of \$1 million to the United Way of Delaware (UWDE), in partnership with the State of Delaware, to launch the Stand By Me Minority Small Business program, which will provide free financial coaching and business support services aimed at increasing market share and revenue for up to 50 Delaware minority-owned small businesses in underserved communities.



The Stand By Me Minority Small Business program is a part of Barclays’ Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) plan and will also include financial grants for eligible participants, ranging from \$3,000 - \$9,000, whose businesses have met

program milestones within the year-long engagement. Eligible Delaware minority small business owners can learn more about the program and apply starting March 15, 2021, until May 15, 2021, or until 50 program applications have been accepted, by visiting [standbymede.org](http://standbymede.org).

“Minority-owned small businesses, especially Black and Latinx business owners, face many financial challenges, which have been exposed and accelerated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Adam Ahmad, Community Reinvestment Act Officer, Barclays US Consumer Bank. “The Stand By Me Minority Small Business program is built on a proven model that offers minority small business owners not just a written plan and free training, but an experienced coach who will help the business owner put that plan into action. Through Barclays’ CRA plan, we strive to change the landscape and close the wealth gap amongst our minority population by giving back to the communities where we live, work and serve.”

## ChristianaCare Rated among the World’s Best Hospitals by *Newsweek*

For the third year in a row, ChristianaCare was ranked among the World’s Best Hospitals by *Newsweek*.

ChristianaCare, headquartered in Wilmington, Del., was ranked the 70th best hospital in the United States and No. 2 in the greater Philadelphia area. *Newsweek* recognized ChristianaCare



among the hospitals worldwide that “stand out for their consistent excellence, including distinguished physicians, top-notch nursing care and state-of-the-art technology.”

ChristianaCare was the only Delaware health system recognized by *Newsweek*. More than 2,000 hospitals were evaluated for the ranking.

“At ChristianaCare, we are guided by our values, love and excellence, and we are committed to being exceptional today and even better tomorrow,” said ChristianaCare President & CEO Janice E. Nevin, M.D., MPH. “Our continued

achievements in quality and safety are the result of unwavering focus by our caregivers on delivering the best outcomes and experience for every patient.”

## Dental Associates of Delaware Adds Newest Location in Millsboro

The Board of Directors of Dental Associates of Delaware announced the addition of their newest location in Millsboro.

Dr. Paul Collins joined Dental Associates of Delaware on January 1, 2021. Dr. Collins has been practicing in the Millsboro area since 1986 and established his current office in 1992. Dr. Collins and his exceptional dental team will continue to be the primary provider in that office. In the coming months, Dr. Collins will be joined by other dentists from Dental Associates of Delaware to increase their availability to serve the patients of Millsboro and its surrounding communities.

Dental Associates of Delaware Millsboro is located at 28318 Dupont Blvd, Millsboro, DE. The newest location joins five other locations in Brandywine, Hockessin, Middletown, Newark, and Wilmington. For more information visit [www.DentalAssociatesofDelaware.com](http://www.DentalAssociatesofDelaware.com).

## Beebe Medical Group Welcomes Renowned, Trailblazing Breast Surgeon Diana Dickson-Witmer, MD

Beebe Healthcare proudly welcomed preeminent breast surgeon Diana Dickson-Witmer, MD, FACS, to Beebe Medical Group.

A board-certified surgeon, Dr. Dickson-Witmer joins Beebe with decades of experience and expertise in the field of



*Diana Dickson-Witmer, MD, FACS*

breast surgery and oncology. She will lead the Beebe Center for Breast Health.

“Diana is a pre-eminent breast surgeon and has been a central figure in Delaware cancer care for years,” said David A. Tam, MD, MBA, FACHE, President

& CEO, Beebe Healthcare. “Beebe is committed to bringing experts in their field like Diana to care for those in Sussex County. She joins Beebe as we continue to Create the Next Generation of Care.”

## The Buccini/Pollin Group Reports Over \$300 Million in Lease Transactions Despite Pandemic

Delaware’s largest commercial landlord, The Buccini/Pollin Group (BPG), is pleased to report the execution of nearly one million square feet and \$300 million in lease transactions since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March of 2020. Amidst the changing corporate landscape, this positive leasing activity reflects a commitment to office space from existing and new tenants.

In the past 12 months, BPG executed over 75 new and renewal deals, representing stability across its commercial portfolio despite uncertainty in the market. In Delaware, BPG leased 459,000 square feet with a lease value over \$85 million and 442,000 square feet with a lease value greater than \$225 million in Pennsylvania.

Chris Buccini, the Co-President and Co-Founder of The Buccini/Pollin Group, remains confident about the Pennsylvania and Delaware real estate markets’ strength despite the challenges presented by COVID-19.

## Nearly \$2 Million Raised on Delaware’s Giving Day: Do More 24

Do More 24 Delaware, “Delaware’s Giving Day,” raised nearly \$2 million in 24 hours, shattering last year’s grand total and pumping more than 10,000 donations to nearly 400 nonprofits statewide. By every measure, this year’s campaign, conducted entirely online, surpassed all expectations and all previous years’ fundraising metrics. The Do More 24 Delaware event in 2020 raised \$390,691 in 24 hours across 276 participating nonprofits, with 41% of donors self-reporting as first-time donors.



United Way of Delaware President and Chief Executive Officer Michelle Taylor said, “I’m humbled by and grateful for this outpouring of support for so many nonprofits across Delaware. These organizations are on the front lines, every day, doing the work that keeps our community vibrant and whole. To see their work so obviously valued and honored by thousands of donors in an overwhelming show of support is both heartwarming and encouraging. Thank you, Delaware.”

Charlie Vincent, Executive Director of Spur Impact Association, agrees. “The pandemic has hit the nonprofit sector hard, but to raise nearly \$2 million for more than 400 nonprofits serving Delaware in 24 hours speaks to the generosity of all Delawareans, and particularly those young professionals trying to make an impact with their philanthropic dollars. We are proud that the Delaware Gives platform was able to power this event and look forward to seeing how much more we can do next year.”

“While market activity stalled across the industry in 2020, our Greater Philadelphia commercial portfolio experience increased occupancy and enhanced credit,” said Buccini. “BPG’s incredible year of leasing indicates that our tenant base does not see working from home as the long-term solution. We are eager for tenants to return to the workplace in full capacity, and we’ve intentionally paved the way for them to bring employees back safely and successfully.”

## Potter Anderson Chair Kathleen Furey McDonough Re-elected to Lead Firm

Potter Anderson & Corroon LLP announced the re-election of Kathleen Furey McDonough as Chair. The firm

also announced the partners who will serve on the Executive Committee with McDonough through the end of 2023.

The first woman to be elected Chair in Potter Anderson’s 196-year history as well as the first woman to lead a major Delaware law firm, McDonough has chaired the firm since 2018. Her practice focuses on litigation in the federal and state courts in Delaware, with an emphasis on labor and employment, trade secret and commercial litigation. She has been recognized by Chambers USA as a leading Delaware practitioner in labor and employment law each year since 2003.



*Kathleen Furey McDonough*

# Newsbites

“I am thrilled to be serving alongside such a talented, hard-working and dedicated team of colleagues,” said McDonough. “The Executive Committee and practice leadership for the new term will build upon our strong track record to help achieve even greater levels of success in the years to come. I welcome their judgment, insight and commitment to striving for what’s best for the firm and for our clients.”

## St. Georges Technical High School is first high school in the U.S. to use the Gene Editing Institute’s CRISPR in a Box Educational Toolkit™

St. Georges Technical High School in southern New Castle County, Delaware is the first high school in the United States to use ChristianaCare Gene Editing

Institute’s innovative CRISPR in a Box Educational Toolkit™ in a science class.

CRISPR in a Box brings to life the much-heralded CRISPR gene editing technology – the “genetic scissors” that allow scientists to edit DNA. The toolkit is designed for educational sessions in secondary and post-secondary schools and is suitable for remote learning.

“Gene editing is the future of medicine,” said Eric Kmiec, Ph.D., director of ChristianaCare’s Gene Editing Institute. “Our partnership with the Delaware Department of Education will help cultivate the next generation of genetic scientists and enhance Delaware’s position as a leader in the biosciences.”

“We are thrilled that students at St. Georges Technical High School will be the first In the United States to experience a live demonstration of CRISPR gene editing using our Innovative CRISPR in a Box educational toolkit,” said Siobhan Hawthorne, Education and Community Outreach leader at ChristianaCare’s Gene Editing Institute. “This toolkit will provide STEM students with a visual understanding of how the exciting CRISPR technology can unlock medical treatments to improve lives.”

Delaware Secretary of Education Susan Bunting praised her department’s partnership with ChristianaCare’s Gene Editing Institute to develop the “Seeds of STEM” course that teaches high school students about gene editing.

“Gene editing approaches diseases in new ways and will have significant impact in the health care and agriscience fields,” Bunting said. “This is a great example of an industry and education partnership investing in youth by providing hands-on knowledge and skills around emerging technology.”



## Carvertise Launches Inaugural Perks Program to Drivers

Carvertise, Inc., the leading rideshare-based transit advertising company, today announced the launch of an exclusive incentive program in collaboration with popular automotive specialty shops throughout the United States. Specialty shops participating in this program include Jiffy Lube, Pep Boys and Take 5 Oil Change. As part of this collaboration, Carvertise drivers will receive valuable discount codes and special savings opportunities on products and services such as oil changes.

“We’re thrilled to join forces with Jiffy Lube, Pep Boys and Take 5 Oil Change,” said Mac Macleod, CEO, Carvertise. “We are continuously looking for ways to add value to our rideshare driver’s lives, so the ability to start providing meaningful savings at places where our drivers go, will definitely be warmly embraced and used by our thousands of drivers,” Macleod added.

## Karins and Associates announced the hiring of a Senior Engineering Project Manager

Karins and Associates, a leading engineering and surveying firm headquartered in Newark, DE, announced the hiring of a Senior Engineering Project Manager at their Bryn Mawr location.

TammyRae Barr is an accomplished civil engineer with more than 20 years' experience in land development, water resources and infrastructure design with a focus in the Southeastern Pennsylvania. She has considerable experience in Delaware Valley and Lehigh Valley areas and has also worked on several projects in the surrounding states. Prior to her work in infrastructure, water resources and land development, she was involved with geotechnical and geo-environmental projects and has done a considerable amount of construction and survey related project work. TammyRae is affiliated with ASCE and the Women's Transportation Seminar.

## West Coast distributor Newacme expanding operations to Delaware and adding 34 new jobs

Newacme LLC, an Oregon-based distributor of consumer goods that sells both directly and through third parties, is expanding its operations to the East Coast with a 217,000-square-foot warehouse and distribution center in North Point's Delaware Logistics Park and adding 34 new jobs in Delaware.

Newacme is investing more than \$1.5 million in the New Castle, Delaware, site for racking, equipment, furniture and utility infrastructure. The company aims

## Manufacturing Firm Chooses Central Delaware to Relocate Its Global Business

Kent Economic Partnership brings another manufacturer into Kent County. Shore Industries, a custom manufacturer of shade sails, covers, seating, awnings, etc., is moving its headquarters and manufacturing company from Denton, Maryland to Dover, Delaware with plans to fill 16 new jobs in the area and projects growth and plans to expand its workforce in the future. Shore Industries, who makes custom outdoor living products, falls right in alignment with the type of business that Kent County needs to help maintain a healthy economy.

"Fortunately for us, Covid has had a positive effect on our business and we quickly outgrew our facility in Maryland, Mike Pugh, owner of Shore Industries said. "Central Delaware quickly mobilized to find us a site which could fit our current and future needs."

"The Kent Economic Partnership has an impressive track record of bringing good manufacturing jobs to Central Delaware under Executive Director Linda Parkowski, and Shore Industries is another great feather in their cap," said Sen. Trey Paradee, D-Dover, vice chair of the Senate Banking, Business & Insurance Committee. "Each of these small- and medium-sized companies are huge wins that will provide stable, good-paying jobs to Kent County residents for years to come. Each one of these companies relocating here also proves to other manufacturers that – even in a pandemic – Kent County is open for business."



years. Positions include warehouse associates as well as managers.

Newacme, a privately owned business headquartered in Lake Oswego, Oregon, was founded in 2012. Approximately 60% of the company's customers are now located in the East Coast of the United States, and the company wanted a facility closer to

their consumers along the Interstate 95 corridor. Newacme's Delaware location joins its existing distribution centers in Los Angeles, Memphis and Dusseldorf, Germany, and will help the company provide more efficient distribution and localized customer service throughout the United States.

Working with the state Department of Labor to identify and recruit qualified candidates, Newacme plans to hire 34 new employees over the next three

"Newacme LLC is excited to open our

# Newsbites

East Coast Distribution Center in New Castle, Delaware. We were attracted to Delaware because of its strategic location and business-friendly approach to helping companies like ours to grow. The opening of this new warehouse will drastically save transition time of our commodities to the customers along the eastern coast. We look forward to providing innovative products to our customers while providing excellent service from our new location,” said Newacme LLC Chief Executive Manager Reed Liang.

## Corteva Agriscience Recognized as Manufacturing Leadership Award 2021 Winners

Corteva Agriscience was named as winners of multiple Manufacturing Leadership Awards from the National Association of Manufacturers. The categories and technologies honored for their outstanding achievements are:

Engineering & Production Technology for its Pyraxalt™ active product manufacturing and process optimization. Pyraxalt active is a potent nicotinic acetylcholine receptor inhibitor that blocks neurotransmission in affect insects.

Operational Excellence for its

spinetoram (now known as Jemvelva™ active) insecticide, the only IRAC Group 5 insecticide.

Sustainability for its successful Rinskor® active ingredient advanced technology and product manufacturing. Because of its agronomic and environmental benefits, Rinskor active was awarded a Green Chemistry



Challenge Award in 2018.

Additionally, Jonathan Jones, Fermentation Research Team Leader at the

Indianapolis, Indiana site, was selected for the Next Generation Leadership Award. Recognizing remarkable manufacturing professionals 30 years old or younger, this achievement recognizes manufacturing's brightest future stars who are leading the way for the possibilities of tomorrow. Jonathan is an active servant leader in various communities through the 100 Black Men of Indianapolis organization and through the Corteva Agriscience Grows Science Outreach program with emphasis on K-12 and collegiate student STEM enrichment. At Corteva, he is a leader in the Global African Heritage Alliance (GAHA) Business Resource Group.

## Morris James Welcomes New eDiscovery Associate

Morris James is pleased to announce the addition of Joseph C. Leonard as an eDiscovery Associate in the firm's Corporate and Commercial Litigation Group. Joe's arrival is one of the many ways in which the firm is deepening its commitment to providing clients with strategic and cost-effective eDiscovery services.

“Joe will be a valuable asset to our team,” says Albert Manwaring, Chair of the Corporate and Commercial Litigation Group. “His demonstrated ability to navigate complex litigation matters coupled with his commitment to excellence and client service will make him a great addition to our firm and client representations.”

Joe is a graduate of Temple University Beasley School of Law. Upon graduation from law school, he was an associate at an Am Law 100 firm in Philadelphia where he assisted clients in large-scale e-discovery matters.

At Morris James, Joe's practice will focus on partnering with in-house legal, IT, records management teams, and outside technology vendors, to provide start-to-finish litigation management.

## Delaware Tech Honors Senator Margaret Rose Henry for Women's History Month



In honor of Women's History Month, Delaware Technical Community College's Stanton and Wilmington campuses honored Delaware Senator Margaret Rose Henry, for her commitment to the state of Delaware and her accomplishments and public service over her decades-long career. View the video at: <https://vimeo.com/527793910/5bd51e24da>.

As a tribute, a video was created to honor Senator Henry, with remarks from Delaware Tech President Dr. Mark T. Brainard, Governor John C. Carney, and an introduction from Tynetta Brown, CEO of Philanthropy Delaware. Senator Henry also provided remarks and advice for others.

## Mountaire Announces Scholarship Funds Available

Mountaire Farms, the country's fourth largest chicken processor, has dozens of \$2,500 scholarships available for the children and grandchildren of employees, poultry growers, and grain producers. The deadline to apply is June 7, 2021.

To be eligible, a student's parent or grandparent must be employed by Mountaire Farms, or grow broilers, breeders, or grain (10,000-bushel minimum) for Mountaire. Applicants must enroll as a full-time college student carrying a minimum of 12 credits per semester in the current school year.

Successful applicants must be involved in extracurricular activities at school and in their community. Preference will be given to an industry-related course of study. A copy of the student's transcript must be attached to the application.

Students can apply online at our company website at [www.mountaire.com/scholarships/annual-mountaire-scholarship-program](http://www.mountaire.com/scholarships/annual-mountaire-scholarship-program).

## Nearly 70 Percent of Travelers Say They Are "Ready" to Travel

A record high 69.3 percent of travelers, since the pandemic began, say they are "ready" to travel, a sign of increased travel optimism as the vaccine rolls out across the country, according to a nationwide Destination Analysts survey conducted April 2-4, 2021. The vast majority, or 77.7 percent, of those surveyed are also now actively dreaming about and planning travel, the highest number this year.

Fueling the excitement about traveling are the newly updated CDC travel guidelines, which indicate that fully vaccinated people can travel at low risk to themselves. AAA believes this is welcome news for anyone considering

traveling in the coming months, especially as vaccines become more widely available. Many Americans are eager to travel, and this opens that exciting prospect for travelers heading into the summer travel season.

## Highmark Delaware Contributes \$1 Million to Build Ministry of Caring's Villa Maria Senior Housing Project

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Delaware announced a transformative contribution of \$1 million to help build Villa Maria, The Ministry of Caring's newest senior housing project in Wilmington's historic Brandywine Village neighborhood.

Once completed, Villa Maria will

provide 72 affordable one-bedroom apartments for qualifying low- and moderate-income seniors over the age of 62. The new residences replace vacant and dilapidated buildings on the 1900-2000 block of N. Market Street, with the project extending through the block to Hutton and Race Streets to the north.

"This incredibly generous gift from Highmark Delaware helps The Ministry of Caring provide 72 to 100 individual seniors with safe, secure, affordable housing in an enriching environment in their golden years and helps further the renaissance of the historically important Brandywine Village neighborhood," said Brother Ronald Giannone, OFM Cap., The Ministry of Caring's founder and executive director.



## Landmark Wins 'Grand Conceptor' Engineering Award for Avenue North Channel Restoration

Landmark Science & Engineering received the Grand Conceptor award for design of an innovative channel restoration project constructed at the Avenue North mixed-use development in Fairfax, Delaware. The project received top honors at ACEC Delaware's 2021 Engineering Excellence Awards' competition in the \$1,000,000 and below construction category at the Engineers-Week Banquet hosted by NSPE-DE/Delaware Engineering Society

Did you miss the Chamber Chatter online? Here are our most popular posts on social media...

 @Delaware State Chamber of Commerce

 @DelawareStateChamber  @DEStateChamber

# ICYMI

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

 We applaud this partnership between **Delaware State University** and Delaware Pathways 2 Apprenticeship, which opens the door for **#PeopleofColor** in Kent County, particularly from low-income communities, to access **#construction** union **#apprenticeship** programs.



DSU partners with the Delaware Pathways 2 Apprentice Program

[delawarepublic.org](http://delawarepublic.org) • 2 min read

 **@DrMarkBrainard:** 'Delaware Tech is Connecting Delawareans with Jobs.' We have learned a lot over the past year, much of which is going to help our students and our state long after the pandemic ends. Full story: <https://dsc.com/delawarebusiness.html>

**@DEStateChamber**  
**#netDE #DTCCpride**  
**@delawaretech**

**Delaware Tech is Connecting Delawareans with Jobs**



**DON'T WAIT. BUILD.**

Enroll now.



DELAWARE TECH

**@rossi\_chip:** We were honored to be a recipient of the **@DEStateChamber** Joint Military Affairs Committee's Warrior Friendly Business Award. Thanks to the men and women of the DE National Guard for your service.

**@BofA\_News** remains committed to veterans, service members and their families.



Accepting the Delaware Warrior Friendly Business Award on behalf of Bank of America and the Delaware Chapter Military Support & Assistance Group (MSAG) Leadership Team

**#NEWS: DSCC welcomes Intern Delaware under its umbrella to meet the growing & changing **#talent** needs of its members. The Partnership is realigning its mission to become better focused on **#workforcedevelopment** & creating a pipeline of talent in Delaware.**

<https://conta.cc/3v6oqvz>

**TALENT IS MOVING OUT OF DELAWARE AFTER GRADUATION**

**71%** of graduates from Delaware colleges and universities leave the state for their first job

**42%** More than of Delaware graduates move to Philadelphia and over 26% move to New York, Baltimore or Washington, D.C.



**NETWORKING ROOM**

Set up your avatar. Click the gear on the right side and upload your profile picture.

Network: Click and drag your avatar to a person or group of people. The video chat will instantly appear.

Private and Group Conversations: Network with one or many people! People can join your conversation unless you lock it by clicking the lock on the right side during the chat.



 **Josh Dubrow:** Nothing beats starting your day off with some old friends at a Delaware State Chamber of Commerce **#networkingevent**. Can't wait to be in person again!

**#MemberNews:** **Morris James LLP** announced the addition of Joseph C. Leonard as an eDiscovery Associate in the firm's Corporate and Commercial Litigation Group.

<https://bit.ly/3w4qq8b>

**@chemours:** Creating a more diverse & inclusive workforce at our company & in our industry is a business imperative that enables a sustainable future. Read more about our diversity, equity, & inclusion initiative in a **@DEStateChamber** article from our COO Mark Newman: <http://bit.ly/2MeB3mF>

"When we think about the future of our business and our industry, we must think about the people who fuel our potential. We must think about how we're cultivating future talent to ensure we are bringing diverse and innovative thinking to the forefront."

— **Mark Newman**  
Chief Operating Officer

**Chemours**



A rush of projects has located in DE, ranging from one of Amazon's largest fulfillment centers to a \$91M corrugated box #manufacturing plant, & also expanded here, including a growing consumer lending company & an international chemical biz @choosedelaware



New private-public approach paying off in Delaware job wins - DBT  
In the last three years, a rush of projects have come to or expanded here in Delaware, all thanks to the involvement of the Delaware Prosperity ...  
delawarebusinesstimes.com



**Delaware State University and JPMorgan Chase & Co.** continue to pave the way with this **United Airlines** partnership, which will train 5,000 pilots by 2030, with a goal of half of those students being women or people of color.

#aviation  
#diversityequityinclusion  
#workforcedevelopment



#MemberNews:  
**@whismangiordano** LLC announces the hiring of Mohammed Bouceddi as a staff accountant. <https://bit.ly/3tl13Xv>

**Las Américas ASPIRA Academy:** Today we celebrated the W.O.L.V.E.S. Reading Team, a group of 16 educators, who were awarded the 2020 Superstars in Education Award by The Delaware State Chamber of Commerce and The Partnership, Inc.

The award ceremony was postponed due to Covid; therefore, their achievement and accomplishments were recognized today by a visit from **Delaware State Chamber of Commerce**.

In addition to the award, Las Américas ASPIRA Academy, received a monetary grant of \$1,000 to expand the W.O.L.V.E.S Reading Program.

Thank you again to these educators for their contributions to the W.O.L.V.E.S Reading Program and commitment to helping students overcome language barriers.



#Manufacturing is one of Delaware's most impactful industries, & one of the things the state is known for — not only because of its roots but for the state's increasingly important central location on the East Coast, & the high-tech local #talent pool.

**Delaware Prosperity Partnership, National Association of Manufacturers - NAM, The Manufacturing Institute - MI**



Manufacturing in Delaware has evolved from its mill origins. Here's why industry is a 21st-century economic driver - Technical.ly Delaware  
technically • 6 min read



#MemberNews: **Highmark Health Delaware** Contributes \$1 Million to Build **Ministry of Caring's Villa Maria** Senior Housing Project in Wilmington, DE. <https://bit.ly/3usnSis>



Shoutout to DSCC member **Brandywine Zoo** on #NationalZooLoversDay! Go a little wild and visit Delaware's zoo this weekend: [www.brandywinezoo.org](http://www.brandywinezoo.org)



DSCC member **@comcast** is helping further close the #digitaldivide and give even more low-income Americans the tools and resources they need to succeed in an increasingly #digitalworld.



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# CALL THE CHAMBER

The State Chamber of Commerce staff works for you, serving our member companies and organizations statewide. This State Chamber staff directory lists phone numbers and email addresses, as well as individual areas of responsibility. If you need business assistance or information, please don't hesitate to call.



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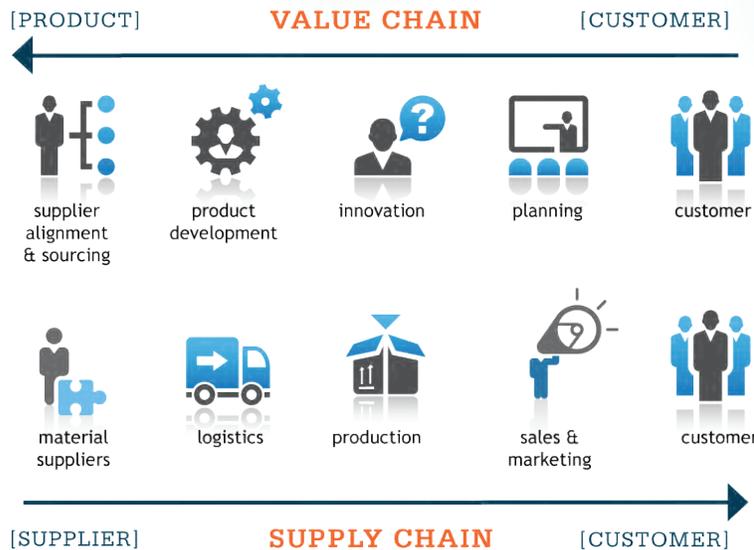
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The mission of the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce is to promote an economic climate that strengthens the competitiveness of Delaware businesses and benefits citizens of the state. The Chamber will provide services members want; it will serve and be recognized as the primary resource on matters affecting companies of all sizes; and it will be the leading advocate for business with government in Delaware.

# WHAT ARE YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN WEAKNESSES?

Risk is everywhere. It doesn't sleep. It often shows up uninvited and at the most inopportune time. Manufacturers most trusted resource, the NIST-Manufacturing Extension Partnership, provides a step-by-step roadmap to help manufacturers **address risk, increase visibility and create supply chains that function at optimum capacity.**

We'll show you how to apply constraint theory concepts that address risk, and account for total cost of ownership, so you may make informed sourcing decisions that increase the flow of products from suppliers to customers, using a value system model.

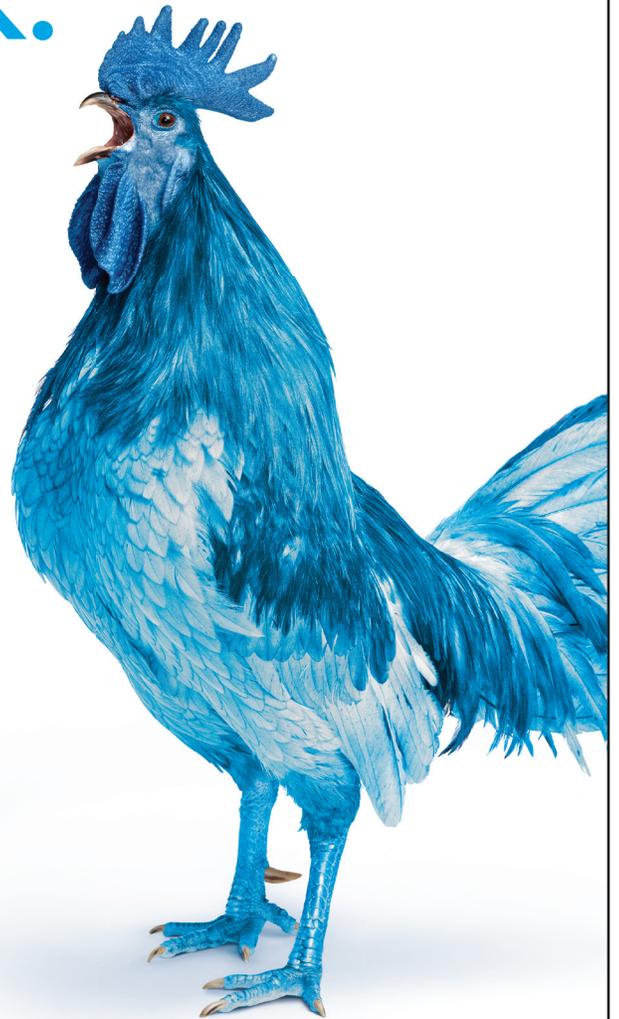


To learn more about Supply Chain Optimization, visit [www.demep.org](http://www.demep.org) or call 302.283.3131.

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