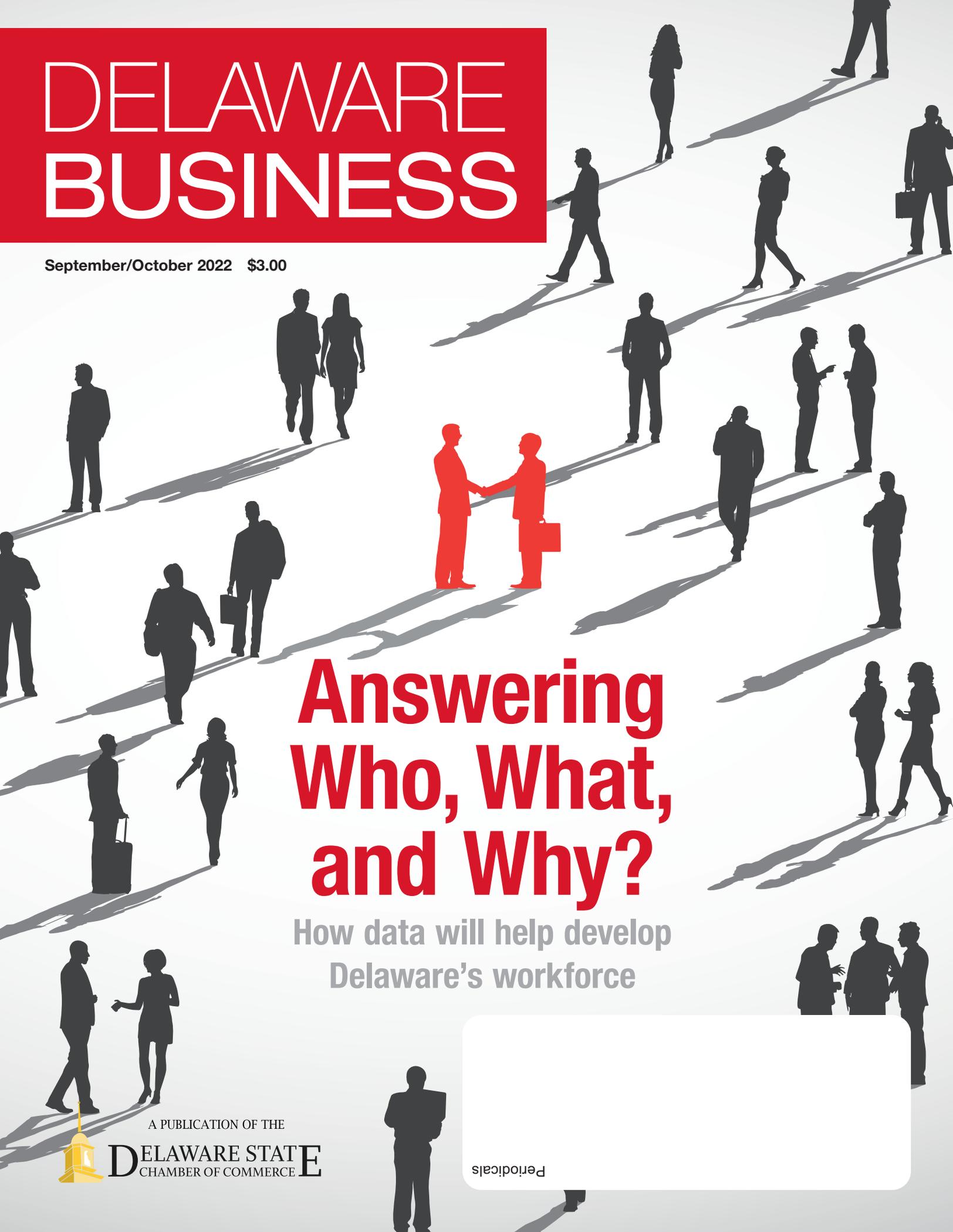


# DELAWARE BUSINESS

September/October 2022 \$3.00



## Answering Who, What, and Why?

How data will help develop  
Delaware's workforce

A PUBLICATION OF THE

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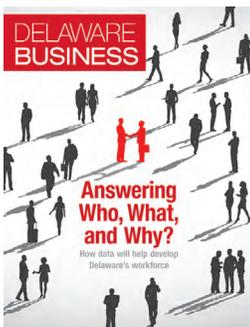


*Behind the scenes of the making of our new podcast series, which features the experts—our members! Pictured is DSCC’s Kelly Basile (middle) with SoDel Concepts’ Scott Kammerer (left) and Ferris Home Improvements’ Reds Ferris (right) at Bluecoast Seafood Grill & Raw Bar in Rehoboth Beach.*

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# Message from the President



Michael J. Quaranta

Across the state, companies spend huge sums of money on workforce training and development. I have no exact number to share, but when you add up what all companies—large, medium, and small—spend on upskilling, it has to be a figure in the tens of millions per year, maybe more. Businesses of every size engage in training because they need people with the

skills necessary to carry out their mission. The programs are critical to the success of employees and companies alike, and because technology and trends are a constant moving target, the need to train never really ends.

If you or I oversaw a company training program, we'd have all the tools necessary to make certain those programs matched the exact needs of our employer, and we would have good insight into company plans and outside influences that might alter our training programs.

*...technology and trends are a constant moving target, the need to train never really ends.*

Recently, the Delaware Workforce Development Board engaged Zogby Analytics to interview a couple hundred employers representing businesses from every industry, size, and location around our state. The goal of the study was to find out more about their current and future workforce needs. This is critical research because the State finances schools and training providers who offer programs to school-age kids, young people, adults seeking new opportunities, unemployed Delawareans, and others looking to connect with an employer and a good paying job. The amount of taxpayer money financing these programs is substantial and we do a disservice to both the taxpayers of this state and the people enrolled in these programs if the training they are provided doesn't lead to a job.

If we hope to remain competitive and keep and attract great jobs to our state, it will take all of us—private employers and State-funded skills providers—doing our very best to make sure that every training dollar spent leads to a good job.

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## LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

# Elections Have Consequences

BY TYLER MICIK

A WISE MAN once said that elections have consequences and the fate of most issues is decided on Election Day. While this sentiment still holds true, oftentimes the fate of elections are decided in September during the primaries instead of election day in November. According to the Delaware Department of Elections, as of January 2022, Delaware has 754,025 registered voters. That consists of 359,413 registered Democrats; 207,655 registered Republicans; and 163,579 Independents. Democrats hold every statewide office, have a 14-7 advantage in the Senate and a 26-15 majority in the House.

With every House and Senate seat up for election, this once-in-a-decade election is a crucial time for Delawareans to select the people into office who reflect their goals and interests. Voters will have a lot on their minds as they head to the polls. Gas and food prices, the cost and availability of child care and baby formula, and more are all direct and weekly expenses that challenge many Delawareans. In addition to household costs and expense issues, we expect these issues to resurface in 2023.

### PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS

Project Labor Agreements (PLAs)—also known as Community Workforce Agreements—are collective bargaining agreements between labor organizations and contractors that govern the terms and conditions of employment for construction projects. Although the bill did not pass, legislation was introduced this past session with the objective to mandate that all public works projects over \$3 million be subject to a PLA. Supporters of the legislation claim that PLAs advance efficiency, quality, and timeliness of public works projects. The concern for all Delawareans should be that non-union contractors account for over 80 percent of the construction work performed here in Delaware. Therefore, workers will come from outside Delaware to work jobs with PLAs.

### PAID LEAVE

Paid leave is a challenging topic, and every employer struggles when an employee is ill. In the last session of the General Assembly, proposals were circulating that would have mandated paid sick leave. Every business leader we know cares about their employees and their health, and they have policies to manage through times when people are ill.

They need people at work as most businesses are still struggling to find and fill available vacancies. If there ever was a time when business managers were being as flexible as practically possible, this is it. For most companies, the last couple of years have been an “all-hands-on-deck” sort of time. Businesses offer policies that afford employees time away when they are sick, and employees understand what those policies are when they begin their employment. Many employers compensate employees for time away due to an illness, and others do not, based upon the economic realities of the company, the industry and more.

### CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

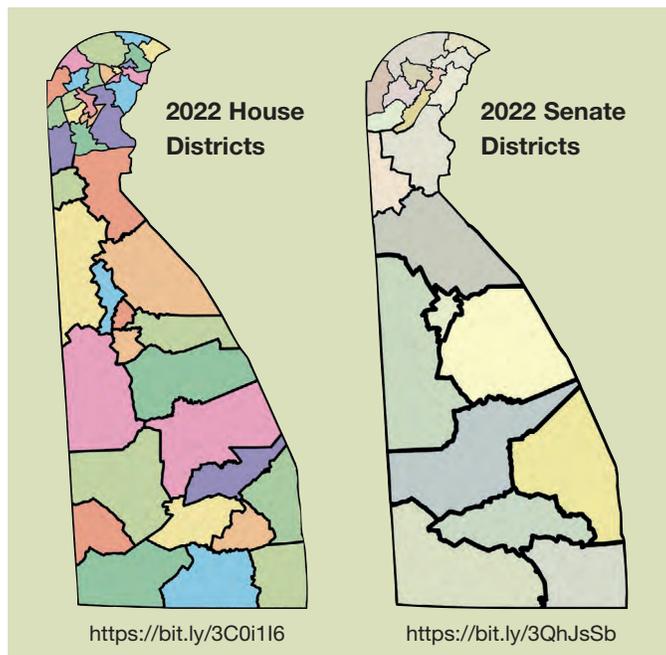
Legislation known as the Delaware Climate Change Solutions Act was introduced and heavily debated this past session. The legislation will likely appear again along with other proposals aimed at reducing emissions to combat climate change and create policy that aligns with the recommendations outlined in the Governors Climate Action Plan. While many businesses have taken steps on their own to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and help create a better environment for their employees and the communities which they serve, support for mandated greenhouse gas emissions targets and reductions continue to grow and future legislation needs to be drafted with input from all stakeholders.

### LEGALIZATION OF RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA

Advocates of legalization view it as a moneymaker for the state and argue

it is a social justice initiative. Despite an amendment that would allow employers to keep and maintain a zero-tolerance policy, some employers still have concerns. Opponents question the long-term health and economic impacts of recreational marijuana use, in addition to concerns regarding testing for impairment.

These important issues and many others will likely be worked on in 2023. Remember to vote—primaries are on September 13 and the General Election is on November 8—and reference the new district maps to learn more about the candidates running to represent not only the community where you live but also where you work. If you are interested in which candidates the State Chamber is supporting, feel free to contact me.



# Working Together for Climate Change Solutions

BY SECRETARY SHAWN M. GARVIN

CLIMATE CHANGE—here and around the globe—is the biggest threat we face today, but it also provides the greatest opportunity if we address it together.

Delaware’s Climate Action Plan, released last November, identifies where we are with our efforts to reduce emissions and improve resiliency; utilizes the best available science to help us anticipate the greatest challenges we will face; and offers alternatives for how we can move forward with additional actions.

In developing the plan, we understood from the beginning the importance of engaging a wide range of stakeholders, including residents and representatives of business and industry.

Leaders in the business community are already incorporating climate change into their enterprise risk management assessments as they set goals and implement changes to reduce their carbon footprints. They are also embracing emerging technologies in green energy fields, opening new opportunities for jobs and economic growth.

These professionals and experts—working in the energy, transportation, industrial, and buildings sectors—provided valuable input on challenges and opportunities in the development of Delaware’s Climate Action Plan.

Additional input from advocacy groups and residents through a series of in-person and online workshops helped to further shape the plan.

While the plan itself does not dictate any specific state actions, it provides a menu of options—a GPS if you will—building off more than a decade of work on emissions reduction and resiliency efforts to guide our decision-making now and into the future.

Examples on the resiliency side include the Delaware Sea Level Rise Advisory Committee, established in 2010, which published a series of reports on how we could best prepare for and adapt to this threat. The 2014 Delaware Climate Change Impact Assessment provided an overview of past and projected future trends in Delaware, and what these mean for Delaware’s public health, water resources, agriculture, infrastructure, and ecosystems. The 2017 Climate + Health Conference



resulted in a report highlighting how climate change is affecting public health.

On the emissions reduction side, Delaware is a member of the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), a multi-state carbon dioxide cap and trade program. We adopted a Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard to ensure more of our energy needs would be met with renewable sources. And we instituted incentive and rebate programs to help businesses and Delawareans improve their energy efficiency and reduce emissions.

These efforts have put us on track to meet Governor John Carney’s pledge to reduce emissions by at least 26 percent from 2005 levels by 2025, but we know we must do more.

A report released in July of this year, “An Economic Analysis of the Impact of Climate Change in the State of Delaware,” pinpoints our vulnerabilities and highlights the cost of inaction to Delaware’s economy and our way of life.

The challenges are real, as are the opportunities, and there will be considerable input and discussions in determining the best paths forward—from expanding upon current initiatives to enacting new legislation or regulations as warranted. The Climate Action Plan provides a tool to help inform those discussions.

Working together, we can meet the challenges of today, and put ourselves on a path to a healthy and prosperous future. ■

*The purpose of these articles is to provide the platform for two perspectives to be shared. The views are that of the authors.*



**Shawn M. Garvin** is Secretary of the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control. Learn more about climate change in Delaware at [de.gov/climateplan](http://de.gov/climateplan).

# Limited Resources Should Be Used Strategically

BY ROBERT W. WHETZEL, ESQ.

IN NOVEMBER 2021, the State of Delaware issued its climate action plan (the “Climate Plan”) after a process of workshops, surveys, and review of comments from stakeholders. The Climate Plan follows a series of specific actions to address climate issues in Delaware, including enactment of the Renewable Energy Portfolio Standards Act; participating in the National Clean Diesel Campaign; signing a Declaration of Intent with neighboring states to create the Transportation and Climate Initiative; membership in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative; and several Executive Orders directing state agencies to take actions to address greenhouse gas emissions, energy efficiency, and resiliency.

The Climate Plan focuses on the minimization of greenhouse gas emissions and maximization of resilience to the impacts of climate change. To reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the Climate Plan identifies several areas for action, including increased use of clean and renewable energy, increased use of energy efficiency measures, and emissions reductions from the transportation sector. Specific recommendations include strengthening Delaware’s Renewable Energy Portfolio Standards, ensuring that Delaware is prepared for offshore wind energy opportunities, strengthening building codes for energy efficiency, and improving industrial energy efficiency.

To maximize resilience, the Climate Plan identifies a wide-ranging set of actions, including measures to protect and conserve resources, resources and training for communities and stakeholders, a management plan for natural resources and emergency response, and agency support to implement resilience actions. The Climate Plan recommends updates to regulatory processes to include climate change impacts in permitting and regulatory actions, as well as the wetlands and subaqueous lands permitting process. It also suggests development of a climate resilience playbook to contain model ordinances for resilience strategies at the county and municipal levels, and assisting communities to practice



executing emergency response plans.

Although the Climate Plan is fairly comprehensive, it remains largely aspirational with most of the implementation details to be developed. From the perspective of the business community, it is crucial that the State use its limited resources in the most efficient way possible to achieve the objectives in the Climate Plan. Delaware is very small and has a relatively tiny impact on global greenhouse gas emissions. Although emissions reductions will be a significant component of the Climate Plan going forward, specific emissions reduction proposals should be evaluated with costs and benefits in mind. In some cases, Delaware’s resources may be better spent on infrastructure improvements and increasing resiliency to address expected sea level rise and increased precipitation and flooding.

As noted in the Climate Plan, stakeholder involvement is critical to the development and adoption of successful regulatory programs, as is input from the business sectors that will be impacted by new requirements. New legislation or regulation should provide certainty and predictability to the impacted stakeholders if the Climate Plan’s goals are to be achieved. Recent legislative initiatives—although well intentioned—fell short of the goals of clarity, predictability, and stakeholder engagement. Delaware can and should do better. ■

*The purpose of these articles is to provide the platform for two perspectives to be shared. The views expressed in this article are those of the author and not necessarily those of Richards, Layton & Finger or its clients.*



**Robert W. Whetzel, Esq.** is a director at Richards, Layton & Finger.



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# Member news & Notes



## BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: **CR Meyer** BY REGINA DONATO

» Sometimes you need to consult an expert. When it comes to finding an industrial contractor for your project, look no further than CR Meyer. Since 1888, CR Meyer has been serving and building the vision of manufacturers in a multitude of industries including: food and beverage; hydro/power generation; maintenance services; mining; converting/printing/plastics/

packaging; oil and gas; scrap and recycling; pulp and paper; heavy rigging; and general industrial services.

Founded in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, CR Meyer has expanded to eight additional offices across the United States. Their Chester office in Pennsylvania has been proudly serving the Delaware Valley's manufacturers since 2005. "Whether it's brand-new equipment, replacement-

in-kind equipment, or just a capacity increase investment, we love to support the manufacturing sector of the United States," says Joe Debes, project director in Chester. "We are trusted subject matter experts when it comes to equipment installation, planning hour-by-hour shutdowns, and front-end loading planning with our clients."

*continued on page 9*



## NONPROFIT SPOTLIGHT: **Boy Scouts of America Del-Mar-Va Council** BY AMANDA SCHIMMEL

» Exponential advancements in technology, coupled with society's increasing acceptance of working from home, has unfortunately delegated soft skills to the backburners in our current workforce. In lieu of developing people skills, professional relationships now often rely on email exchanges, with younger generations opting for a lone-survivor mentality. Hard skills may get you the job, but communication, teamwork, and people skills are the foundations of a successful career. The need to introduce and foster these qualities during a child's formative years weighs heavily upon us now more

than ever before. Boy Scouts of America (BSA) addresses this need through its experience-based programs.

Established in 1910, the mission of the Del-Mar-Va BSA "is to develop character and citizenship in young men and women [by] developing the leaders of today and tomorrow," says Pat Press, president of the board of directors of the Del-Mar-Va Council. "The BSA provides a really unique opportunity for young people to engage in programs to develop—at a very young age—leadership skills that are easily transferable to any future endeavors."

The BSA largely revolves around community-based work, "instilling the value of service towards others," explains Ray Teat, director of finance for the BSA. What really sets the organization apart is the chance to apply learned information to real-life experiences. Within the programs, there are a plethora of opportunities for large group presentations and collaboration. Press explains that "from the time they're in cub scouts, kids are working together in groups for the purpose of accomplishing the challenges together." Moreover, while parent volunteers are encouraged to participate, the real organizational burden lies upon the kids, who are responsible for bringing the right equipment to the events.

Integrating such skills at this age is key in fostering the next generation of professionals entering the workforce.

At only 14 years old, each prospective Eagle Scout must have the communication, leadership, and coordination skills necessary to fulfill the award requirements. “It is unquantifiable in terms of the experience that [these skills] bring to that person,” says Press. Team building and conflict resolution are what make someone successful in the workplace, and this award is the culmination of everything the scout has learned throughout the program. Additionally, the Eagle Scout award highlights one’s dedication and tenacity when listed on a resume. The mandatory council-wide meeting and subsequent report that must be written further seal the knowledge within their minds.

With an emphasis on leadership, character development, and core values, the outlook for tomorrow’s workforce looks promising in the wake of the Boy Scouts of America. Teat perfectly summarizes the organization’s lasting impact when he remarks, “This program really doesn’t ever leave someone. Whether they exit the program or have a really great experience as a young person, it changes them forever.”



**Amanda Schimmel** served as a communications and events intern with the State Chamber. She is currently in her fourth year at the University of Delaware and is pursuing B.A. degrees in both Economics and English with a Spanish minor.

### **Business Spotlight** continued from page 7

But their areas of expertise don’t end there. While the Chester office’s main area is equipment installation by millwrights, CR Meyer also employs boilermakers, carpenters, concrete finishers, electricians, laborers, ironworkers, masons, pile drivers, and pipefitters. “We are an all-encompassing contractor by choice,” explains Sandeep Mehtani, general manager of the Chester office. “Our vision is to be the all-inclusive partner of choice for our customer’s industrial contracting needs—from concept to completion, and beyond—by bringing creative solutions to the table for the most complex projects.”

Another niche is CR Meyer’s design/build capabilities, which are primarily run out of their Oshkosh office. Some benefits of design/build that clients experience include earlier involvement to control and determine costs; deliver long-term return on investment; minimize risk; save time with fast-track construction; accommodate changes of unexpected conditions; and assure the use of the most appropriate materials and design methods to deliver the best overall value.

CR Meyer’s team of architects, engineers, and designers use Revit® building design software built for Building Information Modeling (BIM) to collaborate effectively on customers’ design/build projects. BIM implements a 3-D model-based approach to simulate and analyze building designs that result in a better understanding of design complexity and labor and materials scope. CR Meyer teams work better together with customers to evaluate constructability and design intent before construction

begins, gaining greater downstream visibility earlier in the process.

Some of CR Meyer’s larger clients in the area include Kraft-Heinz, SUN Chemical, Procter and Gamble, and Kimberly Clark. And for CR Meyer, it’s all about the clients. “We are in the business for building long-term relationships,” Debes remarks. “As a company we’ve always had this priority. Historically, we chose our satellite offices based off the needs of our customers, and we are looking forward to continuing fostering these relationships in the future by being that all-inclusive contractor of choice in the area.”

Being a contractor can be challenging and unpredictable. COVID-19 resulted in stalled projects and spiked material costs. While the workload ebbs and flows depending on the needs of their clients, CR Meyer does their best to ensure their employees have work to perform. The Chester office employs anywhere from 40 to 120 men and women in the field at any given time as well as approximately 10 to 20 more in the office.

In addition to taking care of their employees, CR Meyer understands the importance of giving back to the community and supporting their employees in their volunteer efforts. Over the years, they have helped move historic artifacts for the Chester Historical Society, move heavy items—like statues—for local businesses, and work closely with the Boys and Girls Club of America. CR Meyer believes in making a difference and strengthening communities by supporting local charitable organizations and programs in areas where their people live and work.



## DIVERSE SUPPLIER SPOTLIGHT: **Social Contract** BY REGINA DONATO

» Why stick to the status quo when you can re-write it? It's easy for communities to become comfortable with the behaviors and policies that they deem "normal," yet as time progresses and issues become apparent, change must not just be encouraged but enacted. Topics like trauma-informed care, diversity and inclusion, workforce development, gun violence, affordable housing, and environmental justice are all pressing issues in recent years that businesses, governments, and communities are highly focused on. Social Contract, a women- and minority-owned social and collective impact consulting firm, strives to facilitate change in these important policy areas.

The idea of a social contract is not a new one, with the term dating back to the Age of Enlightenment in the 17th century. Famous philosophers like John

Locke and Thomas Hobbes wrote about social contract theory involving the rights of government over man, the "state of nature" and societal norms, all of which were new—and somewhat controversial—thoughts. Wilmington-based Social Contract founded their consulting firm in 2017 with a similar idea. "We're all about re-writing the status quo," explains Managing Partner Ron Berry. "We do this by helping the community solve complex problems through a collaborative approach."

Many companies or local governments have an idea for social change in place, but don't have the means to connect the dots between various stakeholders and generate actionable items to make it happen. This is Social

Contract's sweet spot, whose team helps to create concrete plans to engage the community, break down silos between sectors, integrate research, and develop partnerships and funding streams to sustain new initiatives.

Social Contract's diverse staff helps guide clients through five stages of change: from discovery, design,

implementation, and measurement, to sustainability. "One thing to make clear is that we're not an advocacy organization," says Meghan Wallace, founding partner. "But we do like to say that we advocate for the best practice. We can see who has successfully tackled a problem in the past, expand or adapt those practices, and build toward community impact with our clients."



Social Contract is behind a lot of the work led by Governor John Carney and his wife Tracey on addressing and healing trauma within the state. With the help of Social Contract, the governor's office signed Order 24 in 2018, setting course for Delaware to become a trauma-informed state and now a national example in trauma-informed care.

Tracey Quillen Carney, first lady of Delaware, reflected, "Social Contract was brought in to help the Family Services Cabinet Council organize these things from the state and government perspective, and also to help the private sector and the nonprofit sector, to bring everybody together, rowing in the same direction on this initiative...The whole idea is to get people out of silos, and get everyone who deals with children and families talking to each other, knowing what each other is doing, sharing objectives....and Social Contract coming in as an agent of structure, all that together, got us going." While much of their efforts were done behind the scenes, this vital work could not have been done without the help of the Social Contract team.

Change-makers: that's what the staff at Social Contract are. Each year since 2017, the team has doubled in size, a true testament to the success and the positive company culture fostered within the organization.

We live in a divisive time. It seems like people disagree on everything at times. But according to Meghan Wallace, there's a silver lining. "There's a lot of things people agree on, right? And that's a good starting point." she remarks. After all, while change is a constant, it isn't easy. It takes a lot of hard work to make it happen, and Social Contract is truly leading the way.

## Chair's Message BY NICK LAMBROW

»» In my 35-plus-year career, I can think of plenty of times when the outlook was cloudy, but never a time when there was so much disagreement about the current state. Declaring whether the U.S. economy is in recession, which may seem simple, is suddenly a matter of opinion.



Without weighing in on that debate, I can say three things with confidence: Businesses are facing unprecedented challenges; finding qualified labor is paramount; and Delaware is well-placed to succeed.

Businesses have been whipsawed by a massive shift in consumer spending over the past year, from heavy purchases of retail goods towards services. Fiscal stimulus over the pandemic topped off checking accounts and waves of COVID-19 variants kept consumers buying physical goods until this year.

Now the data shows a downshift in that spending and a consumer stepping back into travel, leisure, and professional services.

While a shift is occurring, there is a noticeable slowdown in aggregate spending as pandemic-era savings declined and consumers face higher prices at the pump and grocery stores. That inflation has pushed national consumer sentiment down to record levels in the widely watched University of Michigan survey. That same inflation has hit businesses that are facing record-high producer prices via a combination of expensive commodities and wage pressure.

Residential construction has also been hit by a near-doubling of the national average 30-year mortgage rate as the Federal Reserve raised interest rates to fight inflation. Delaware builders have held their own, with housing permits rising 55 percent from pre-pandemic to a peak in mid-2021 and have since come back down.

Through it all, Delaware businesses have excelled. Those involved in the retail boom scrambled for labor in a challenging environment of the Great Resignation. This year our service companies are enjoying stronger consumer spending, but still face the labor challenge. A positive sign for our state is the regained labor force that now exceeds the pre-pandemic level, a feat not yet seen nationwide.

But with all the dynamic change that has occurred, Delaware firms require new skills and finding a good match still proves challenging. Competition for workers remains high. Job openings in Delaware reached 74 percent above the pre-pandemic level by the end of 2021, according to Indeed. That has fallen a bit in 2022, but still 54 percent higher than before COVID-19.

The outlook remains uncertain, but I expect Delaware businesses to remain strong. While business and workers have stepped up to meet the challenges, the competition for labor is a journey, not a destination. Our policymakers must continue to support workforce and regulatory initiatives that will enable the ongoing growth of our economy, worker productivity, and shared success.



## FUJIFILM Imaging Colorants, Inc. Opens State-of-the-Art Manufacturing Facility

**\$19 MILLION INVESTMENT FOR FUJIFILM'S FIRST DISPERSION MANUFACTURING FACILITY IN THE U.S.**

» FUJIFILM Imaging Colorants, Inc., a leading global inkjet ink technology partner to equipment manufacturers, integrators, and ink formulators, celebrated the official opening of its first of two new facilities in New Castle, Delaware dedicated to the production of aqueous ink inkjet dispersions.

The New Castle site is Fujifilm's first dispersion manufacturing facility in the U.S. The new facility—a \$19 million investment—will create more than 21 new professional, managerial, engineering, and skilled labor jobs. The newly added space, at approximately

8,100 square feet, includes state-of-the-art manufacturing and process control equipment, adding to the current 40,000 square feet of occupied manufacturing space at the site, which employs 90 people.

"I am proud that we have been able to deliver this brand-new production facility according to our original plan, despite the challenges that the pandemic presented us with, and we're here to celebrate that today," said Ian Wilkinson, president and chief operating officer at FUJIFILM Imaging Colorants, Inc. "We extend our heartfelt thanks to all who were a part of this project, from our own

teams to our vendors and local and state dignitaries. I have no doubt that this expansion will continue to create significant growth opportunities for both Fujifilm and the customers we serve."

"This expansion would not have been possible without the exceptional efforts of our global project team both here in New Castle, and the UK," said Melissa Toledo, Delaware general manager at FUJIFILM Imaging Colorants, Inc. "The excitement of our team regarding this expansion is palpable, and we are looking forward to continued growth both in our production capacity and job creation here in New Castle."



Fujifilm's high purity reactive dispersant (RxD) pigment dispersion products are important to the development of aqueous inkjet inks for a variety of fast-growing inkjet markets, including packaging, textile, and commercial printing. They use a proprietary cross-linking technology to lock each pigment particle in a secure polymer cage, resulting in a highly stable dispersion that enables the design of ink formulations that can meet demanding performance requirements. Fujifilm supplies aqueous inks to digital printer Original Equipment Manufacturers and RxD pigment dispersions to ink formulators.

In addition to this new facility, the construction of a second facility, which will add 11,000 sq. ft. of new operational space to the overall site, began this spring and is expected to be operational by summer 2023. Upon completion, the two plants will double Fujifilm's production capacity of pigment dispersions in the U.S. to meet the fast-growing demand for inkjet printing globally.

## AFFILIATE SPOTLIGHT:

# Delaware Manufacturing Association

BY TYLER MICIK

»» The Delaware Manufacturing Association (DMA), an affiliate of the State Chamber, met in late June for their quarterly meeting. The DMA's mission is to enhance the competitiveness of Delaware manufacturers, serve as manufacturers' advocate at the state and local governmental level, advise the State Chamber on topics that specifically impact manufacturers—such as government regulation, trade and tax policy—and sponsor networking events focused on the needs of manufacturers.

Given the timing of the meeting, the committee discussed several policy issues pending before the General Assembly. Of note was HB 435, the Community Workforce Agreement; HB 487, Craft Training Requirements in Public Works Contracts; and SB 305, the Climate Change Solutions Act. While all these bills did not pass this session, they will likely be worked on again next year and will have a direct impact on not only manufacturers but also all Delaware employers and their employees.

The committee also discussed new opportunities to reach young talented individuals and produced new

ideas to break an old narrative—that manufacturing in Delaware is dead or manufacturing jobs are dirty, and employees are underpaid. The truth is this narrative couldn't be further from reality. In fact, according to the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM), manufacturing employment rose nationally by 29,000 in June. Through the first six months of the year, the sector hired 242,000 employees, building on the 365,000 workers added in 2021—the most since 1994. Additionally, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis and Labor Statistics, manufacturing workers in the United States earned \$92,832 on average, including pay and benefits.

Did you know that there are more than 700 manufacturers in the First State? Manufacturing in Delaware is thriving and growing, and great opportunities exist. Manufacturers are looking for people who are interested in not only building their future but also the future of Delaware.

If you are a manufacturer in the First State and want to help grow and strengthen Delaware's manufacturing sector, the DMA is for you. Contact Tyler Micik at [tmicik@dsc.com](mailto:tmicik@dsc.com) to learn more.

*Did you know that there are more than 700 manufacturers in the First State? Manufacturing in Delaware is thriving and growing, and great opportunities exist. Manufacturers are looking for people who are interested in not only building their future but also the future of Delaware.*

## How Can Motorists Find Relief from Record High Gas Prices

BY JANA TIDWELL

Records are meant to be broken. However, not every broken record is a good thing. A 14-year record high average gas price record was shattered in June. In Delaware, the previous record high gas price of \$4.06/gal, set back in June 2008 was broken when prices hit \$4.99/gal on June 14. The previous national record high average gas price of \$4.11/gal, also set in June 2008, was broken when prices hit an average of \$5.01/gal, also on June 14.

How are record-high gas prices impacting motorists? A recent AAA poll indicates Delaware drivers are adjusting their daily driving habits to accommodate for record gas prices. Almost 75 percent of Delaware drivers say they have adjusted their daily driving behaviors because of gas prices. More than 44 percent are consolidating or running fewer errands, and more than 54 percent are limiting their driving in any way they can.

AAA's poll also noted only about half of Delaware drivers say they commute to work. Of those who typically commute, about 20 percent say they try to work from home more often and about 15 percent say they carpool or ride share to work more often. And even though gas prices began to retreat, these adjustments in behavior will likely linger as long as gas prices stay above \$4.00/gal, possibly even longer.

Multiple factors determine the fluctuation of prices at the pump—the price of crude oil (50-60 percent of a gallon of gasoline is made of crude oil), refining costs, taxes, supply and demand, international conflict, economic

uncertainty, COVID-19, and hurricane season to name a few.

AAA offers motorists the following tips to help maximize fuel efficiency that can save motorists money in the long run:

- Get your vehicle checked out. Perform regular car maintenance at the intervals recommended by the vehicle manufacturer in the owner's manual or as indicated by the in-car maintenance reminder system.
- Keep tires properly inflated. Under-inflated tires can decrease your gas mileage by approximately three percent.
- Know your octane. Do not purchase mid-grade or premium gas unless your owner's manual specifically recommends it. According to AAA research, Americans waste more than \$2.1 billion annually on premium gas in vehicles designed to run on regular fuel.
- Avoid idling. Idling gets zero miles per gallon. Letting your vehicle idle for more than 10 seconds uses more gas than shutting it off and restarting.
- Observe the speed limit. Gas mileage decreases rapidly at speeds above 60 mph. Each 5 mph you drive over 60 mph is like paying an additional 15¢ per gallon of gas. Using cruise control on the highway helps you maintain a constant speed and, in most cases, will save gas.



- Drive sensibly. Aggressive driving (speeding, rapid acceleration and braking) wastes gas, lowering your gas by 33 percent at highway speeds and by five percent around town.
- Consolidate trips. Combining errands into one trip saves you time and money.
- Gas discount programs. Take advantage of wholesale and grocery retailer gas discount programs. AAA Members who join Shell Fuel Rewards® by December 31, 2022 and make your first transaction within 30 days of joining get automatic Gold Status, saving 30¢ per gallon on the first fill up and save 5¢/gal every day on each individual fill up of up to 20 gallons from participating Shell stations.



**Jana Tidwell** is the manager of public and government affairs at AAA Mid-Atlantic.

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# CHAMBER SCENE



Intern Delaware participants posed for a picture with Lieutenant Governor Bethany Hall-Long.



Senate President Pro Tempore David Sokola and Speaker of the House Peter Schwartzkopf keyed our End-of-Session Policy Conference at Delaware State University in June.



Rep. Michael Smith was awarded the Small Business Guardian Award at our End-of-Session Policy Conference. Sen. Bruce Ennis was also honored.



Our June networking breakfast was hosted outdoors at the Boy Scouts of Del-Mar-Va Council's Akridge Scout Reservation in Dover.



Anthony Delcollo, Tariq Hook, Christina MacMillan, and Ted Lauzen sat on a panel to discuss the importance of soft skills at a joint Delaware Young Professionals Network, Leadership Delaware & Intern Delaware event.



Cheryl Corn, Mark Brainard, and Lora Johnson of Delaware Technical Community College pose with DSCC's Kelly Basile in front of Incyte's living wall.



Incyte's Executive VP of Human Resources Paula Swain addresses guests at our July networking breakfast.



The Joint Military Affairs Committee recognized the 2022 "Warrior Friendly" businesses—M. Davis & Sons and Zip Code Wilmington. Governor Carney also issued a proclamation announcing that July 25 is "Hire a Veteran Day" in Delaware.

# WELCOME

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Established in 2018, Survivor Ventures emerged out of a pursuit to fill the enormous gap in economic opportunity for survivors of human trafficking. The company believes economic empowerment is the key to releasing survivors from "the life" and hypothesize that a trauma-informed approach to gainful employment may be the most critical service required to reduce recidivism rates, particularly for a population who only know "work" as a painful and traumatic experience.

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# Paid Leave is a Win-Win for Workers and Employers

BY KIMBERLY WHARTON

PAT RISHER WORKED full time and was a caregiver for her mother, son, and husband at different times. She knows firsthand the challenges that can occur when balancing work and caregiving duties.

As an AARP volunteer, Pat was excited to hear that Senate Bill 1—the Healthy Delaware Families Act—passed during this year’s legislative session in Delaware. The bill, which offers paid leave time for Delaware workers, would have been a huge help to her while she cared for her family members, in particular for her husband after he had a quadruple bypass and then a stroke.

Her husband was left unable to walk and spent several months recovering in a nursing home. Pat did what many of us would do—she visited him every day and monitored his care, ensuring he had what he needed and was recovering well.

However, during the months that Pat was caring for her husband, she wasn’t getting paid nor contributing to her 401k retirement plan. She opted to take time off through the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) for a short period of time, but when her benefits expired she received no compensation. Pat shared her story numerous times with AARP members and has fully supported paid leave alongside AARP’s advocates.

When employees can take time off from work for caregiving emergencies, they experience less stress and are ultimately more productive in the workplace. Paid family leave is beneficial for employers and small businesses because employees have less unexpected sick time, lateness to work, and days off. Better talent retention and training costs are also beneficial to employers who offer paid leave. Additionally, unpaid family caregivers save Delawareans money by keeping their loved ones out of

*Unpaid family caregivers in Delaware contribute more than 108 million hours of unpaid care each year, valued at approximately \$1,580 million annually.*

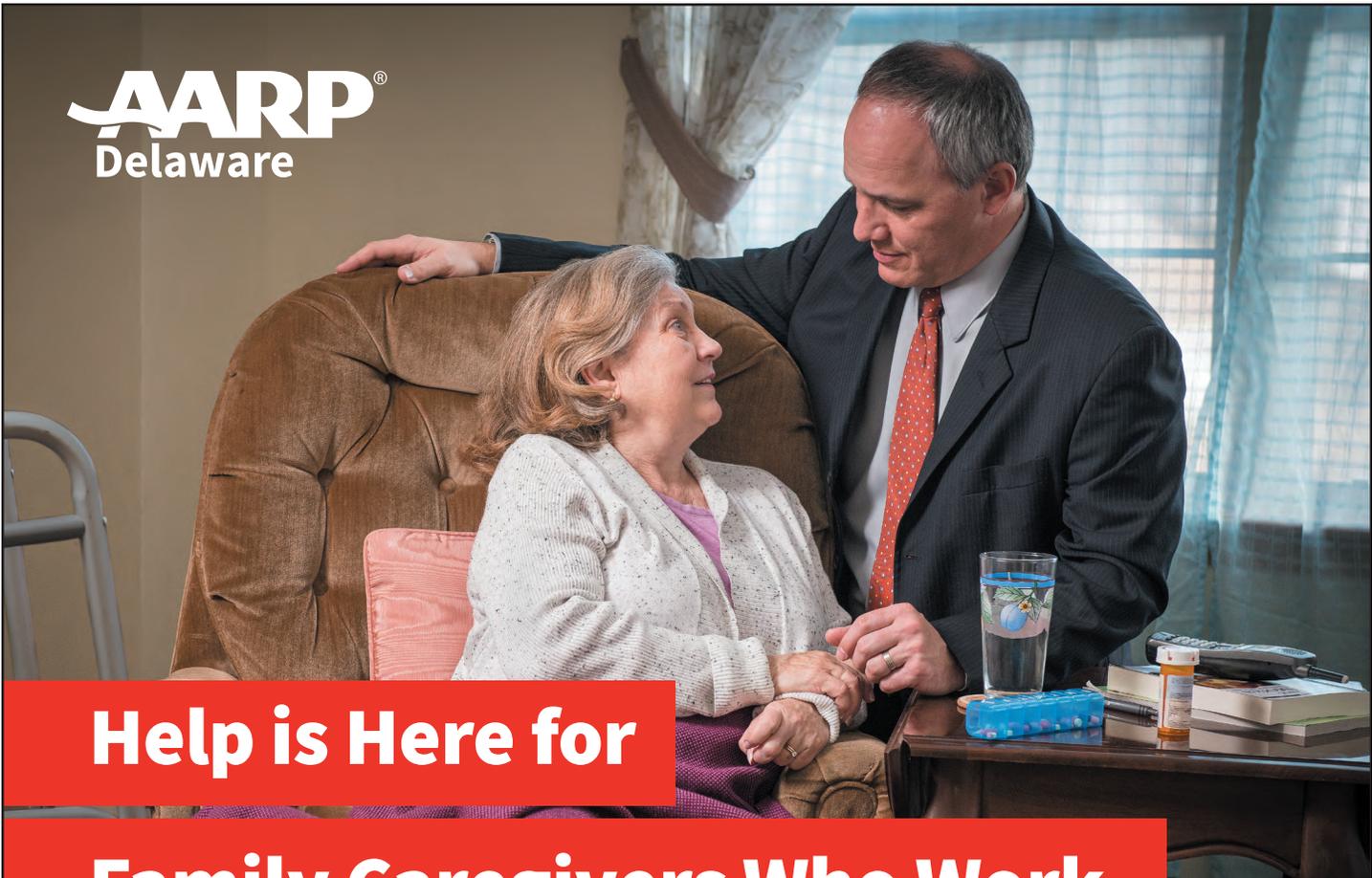
taxpayer-funded nursing homes and preventing costly hospitalizations.

In Delaware, 84 percent of people age 45 and older support requiring employers to provide paid family leave for employees who are unpaid caregivers. Recent research by AARP found that if employers and governments enacted more supports for working family caregivers aged 50 and older, not only would the productivity of these workers increase, the policies could also cause the U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) to grow by as much as \$1.7 trillion by 2030. Moreover, a recent U.S. Department of Labor survey revealed that length of leave was not substantially higher in states that offer paid family leave, about 30 days vs. 28 days.

Today’s new generation of workers will have greater motivation on the job if they know employers have their back when it comes to family caregiving responsibilities. Taking care of a loved one shouldn’t cost you your job. ■



**Kimberly Wharton** is the communications director at AARP Delaware.



**Help is Here for**

**Family Caregivers Who Work.**

The Healthy Delaware Families Act is now law—creating a statewide paid family leave program. Workers will now be able to take time off from their jobs to recuperate from illness or to care for a loved one or a new baby, without the fear of losing their paycheck.

Paid leave also benefits employers by increasing employee loyalty and retention. This can save an employer money by avoiding separation costs as well as the costs of recruiting, hiring, and training new workers.

AARP Delaware fought for paid family leave so Delaware workers don't have to choose between caring for a loved one or keeping their jobs.

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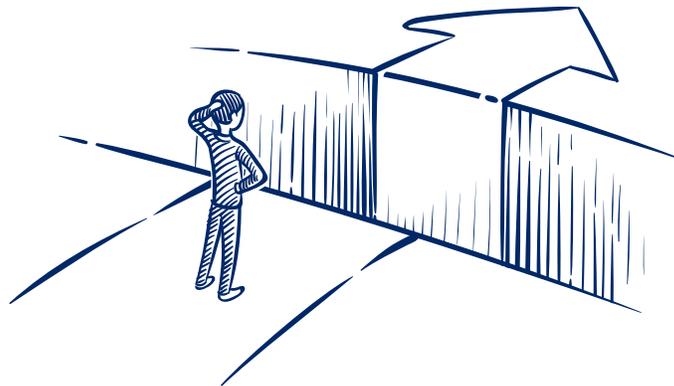
Paid for by AARP

# The Cliff Effect

An employer’s perspective to the benefits cliffs and the workforce

BY ALEX RUDER, FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ATLANTA

**SOCIAL SAFETY NET** programs—for example, food, child care, and housing assistance—provide critical financial support to low- and moderate-income families and help individuals to meet their basic needs while they advance in their careers.



However, a significant barrier to career advancement occurs when employment income rises above the income eligibility thresholds for these safety net programs. In these situations, career advancement opportunities may not pay off. Instead, they can result in the family being financially worse off or financially no better off than before the wage increase. In popular terms, we call the first situation—being financially worse off—a benefits cliff, and the second situation—being financially no better off—a benefits plateau. These losses can discourage career advancement, increase financial insecurity, and affect employer efforts to attract and retain talent.

More generally, the loss of means-tested public assistance is an effective marginal tax rate on income gains. With high effective marginal tax rates on income, some workers have a financial disincentive to invest in their

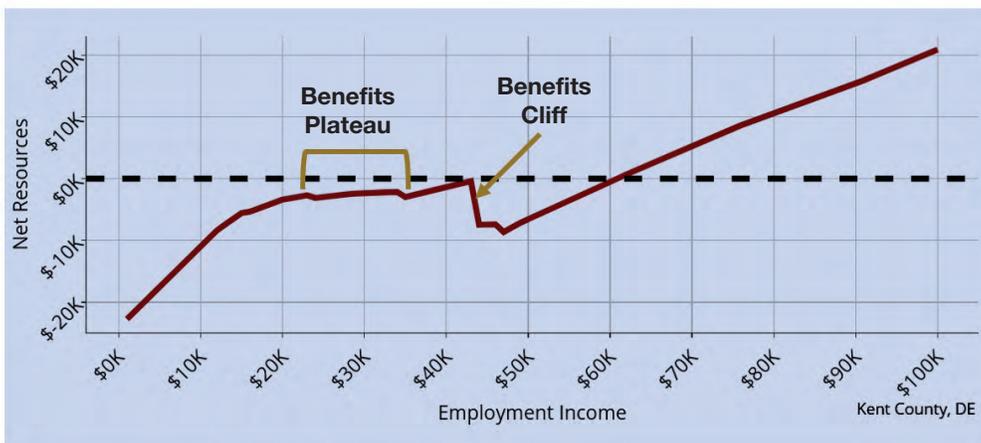
own human capital and advance from lower-wage work to jobs that lead to economic self-sufficiency. To develop solutions, it is important first to understand how these means-tested programs support or impede a worker’s opportunities.

## Delaware Example

The figure illustrates how benefits losses affect a hypothetical worker with two children (ages 2 and 5) living in Kent County. The worker receives several public assistance programs to help make ends meet: food assistance, healthcare assistance for the worker and her children, child care subsidies, and the Earned Income Tax Credit. The red line represents an important metric called net resources, which are calculated as the sum of employment income and public assistance minus basic household expenses and taxes.\* The figure shows how net resources change as the worker’s income rises from just over \$0 per year to \$100,000 per year.

As the worker’s income rises, her public assistance support gradually declines or terminates immediately. The figure highlights two specific barriers for this worker. First, a benefits plateau affects the worker from approximately \$22,000 to \$35,000 per year. Within this range, even though her income increases by \$13,000, her overall net resources are stagnant. The worker experiences no increase in standard of living. The gradual reduction in programs such as food assistance and the Earned Income Tax Credit creates this plateau.

In contrast, the sudden loss of child care assistance at about \$43,000 per year of income creates a benefits cliff. The loss of the child care subsidy sets the worker back considerably. After the loss, the worker is as well-off financially making \$44,000 per year as she is making \$13,000 per year. In other words, the worker has no financial incentive to increase their employment income by \$31,000 per year.



Source: Atlanta Fed Policy Rules Database Dashboard. Notes: figure assumes single adult with two children ages 2 and 5 receiving the Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program, adult and child Medicaid, health insurance marketplace subsidies, Child Care and Development Fund child care subsidies, and the Earned Income Tax Credit.

### What Can Employers Do?

Improving these outcomes for workers and, by implication, employers requires a wide range of changes in policy and practice. For employers that want to take action, no definitive set of best practices yet exists to guide their efforts. The issue is relatively new for employers and, with the increasing availability of data on benefits cliffs and plateaus, the opportunities for innovation are significant. For example, employers around the country are actively engaged in piloting practices such as:

- Use tools like the Atlanta Fed's Career Ladder Identifier and Financial Forecaster to increase awareness for senior leadership and management
- Identify how public assistance loss creates barriers for internal career paths and in-demand entry-level occupations
- Research how internal compensation and benefits mitigates or exacerbates the problem
- Partner with community organizations with expertise in financial coaching and workforce development to assist workers and provide expert guidance to leadership

As these pilots develop and their success is evaluated, the collection of best practices for employers will expand. Employers interested in discussing solutions can contact the Atlanta Fed's Advancing Careers Initiative team for a more in-depth discussion at [cliff@atl.frb.org](mailto:cliff@atl.frb.org). ■

*The views expressed here are those of the author alone and not necessarily those of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta or the Federal Reserve System.*

*\*We include estimates for the following basic household expenses in Kent County: child care, food, health insurance, housing, transportation, utilities, and miscellaneous expenses such as clothing. See the Atlanta Fed Cost of Living Database for technical details.*



**Alex Ruder** is principal advisor at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta.

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# Delivering Superior Access and Care

Beebe Healthcare piloting virtual nurse program to benefit patients and nurses **BY LORETTA OSTROSKI, RN**

BEEBE HEALTHCARE is always looking for ways that technology and innovation can improve the patient experience and ease the burden on caring nurses. In January, Beebe became one of the first hospitals in Delaware to test a six-month pilot that created a “virtual nurse” for one floor of the Margaret H. Rollins Lewes Campus.

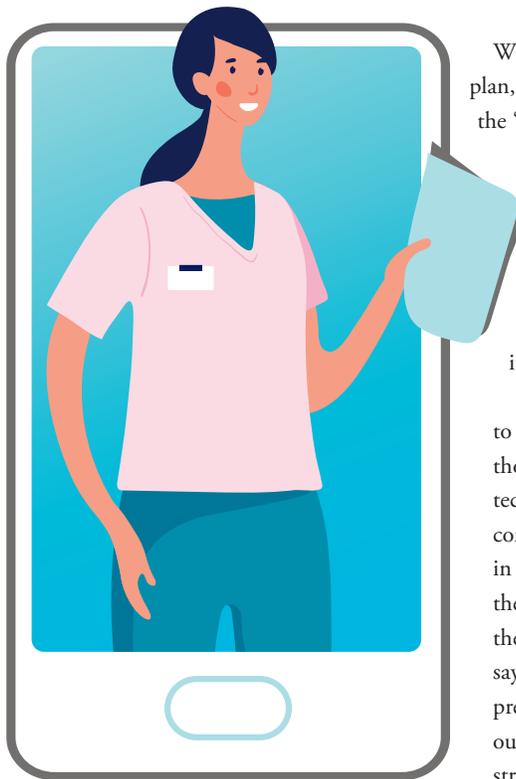
The results have been astounding with patients and nurses responding positively to the change. CMS provides a survey to patients that allows them to speak on the many aspects of care that the patient receives. Since implementing this virtual nurse program, Beebe’s scores for nurse communication have increased by 20 percent!

The virtual nurse can alleviate many time-consuming requirements of bedside nursing, while also being a timely resource if a patient or family member has a question.

“It’s really a win-win for everyone. Patients love having a nurse to communicate with at the touch of a fingertip on the iPad,” says Dareth Penuel, BSN, RN, nurse manager of Medsurg, Oncology, Hospital at Home & Virtual Nurse. “We really think this concept can play a role throughout the hospital for certain individuals. As a charge nurse on the floor, it can be such a resource for bedside nurses to have this extra help. It can save a nurse up to 20 minutes if a virtual nurse takes care of discharge.”

Some tasks a virtual nurse can take on include:

- New admission and patient discharges
- Patient education for diagnosis or medication
- Follow-up pain assessments and plan of care
- Family member updates
- Assisting bedside nurses in follow-up questions or cosigns they can take care of additional patients.



When Beebe announced its five-year strategic plan, “One Beebe,” one of the main strategies for the “Delivering Superior Access and Care” goal is to customize a path to care with technology as a foundation.

The virtual nurse program is just one example that achieves this. Beebe is also working on expanding virtual care and telehealth throughout Beebe Medical Group and its outpatient offices.

“Beebe is focused on delivering superior access to care and experience to patients by making thoughtful investments in people, infrastructure, technology, innovation, partnerships, and comprehensive services to ensure that everyone in our community can enjoy convenient access to the best healthcare experiences that exceed both their expectations and overall industry standards,” says David A. Tam, MD, MBA, CPHE, FACHE, president & CEO. “This also means supporting our workforce by finding innovative ways to streamline patient care and their roles.

“Beebe has always been about people—from our patients and their families to our team members. This will never change. Patients and people first remain the framework for One Beebe because Sussex County is Our Specialty.” ■



**Loretta Ostroski, RN**, is vice president of Inpatient Nursing and Emergency Services at Beebe Healthcare. Learn more about One Beebe at <https://www.beebehealthcare.org/one-beebe>.



# CONGRATULATIONS 2022 CEO OF THE YEAR

Dr. David Tam – Beebe Healthcare

David A. Tam, MD, MBA, CPHE, FACHE, has been named *Delaware Business Times* CEO of the Year in the Large Nonprofit category.

*"I'm incredibly honored to be selected for this award, but this recognition would not be possible without the dedication and passion of Team Beebe as we focus on healthcare from all angles for all people because Sussex County is Our Specialty. Specializing in Sussex County means more than just being here – it means taking the necessary steps to truly understand our neighbors' evolving health needs and expectations, and to provide them the services they want and need, close to where they live, work, and visit."*



## Medical cannabis in Delaware has come a long way.

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\* DHSS

\*\* Medical Society of Delaware



# The Power of Benefits

Health coverage covers more than just an annual check-up

BY NICK MORIELLO

IT SEEMS LIKE EVERY COMPANY is hiring, but positions aren't being filled. The reasons are varied and sometimes have nuances between different industries, but for any business leader, it's about finding good people and then keeping them.

This isn't news, but more and more we are learning that benefits beyond a paycheck are driving factors for jobseekers. Flexible scheduling, remote work offerings, and attention to mental wellness and whole family units can be differentiators when attracting and hiring qualified team members.

One benefit that people continue to place a high value on is health insurance. Why? Almost everyone will need health care services at some point. Without it, a person could be left paying the entire bill out of pocket or forego care altogether.

Living with a chronic illness such as diabetes or asthma can also be costly. The American Diabetes Association estimates that the average annual cost of diabetes is \$16,752 in medical expenses per person. Without health insurance, people with chronic conditions may have to carry the full burden of those expenses.

As conditions and health issues like these continue to rise, many insurers now offer access to tools that help with diabetes management, smoking cessation, exercise goals, and nutrition. There are also more virtual care options and increased access to mental health support. There are many services and resources available, and insurers will work closely with businesses to help educate, enroll, and empower their team members to get the most of their care plans.

Health insurance is more than just covering costs. Plans and programs can help keep a workforce healthy and productive. By incentivizing preventive care, providing access to holistic approaches to wellness, and

leveraging technology, employers can help their workforce maintain and improve their health. This could mean fewer sick days, less burnout, and lower stress.

Here are some questions to consider when shopping for coverage:

- Do your current plan offerings fit the needs of your workforce? A large manufacturer, for instance, may need different coverage than a small start-up tech company.
- Is your health insurance helping to improve and maintain everyone's health? Affordable prescriptions, wellness programs, and mental health services can collectively keep your workforce healthy and may reduce costs by preventing more serious conditions.
- Does your team have coverage for the doctors and hospitals they trust? Having the right network of providers is important, including specialists, dental and vision, and flexible geographic coverage.

Another thing to consider is whether your insurer and healthcare providers are utilizing value-based reimbursement (VBR) models. Unlike the historical fee for service model in which provider payments were based on how many services were provided, such as visits or tests, VBR programs adjust payments based on quality of care, patient experience, and improved outcomes.

While many factors influence an individual's choice of employer, you can help attract and retain talent with benefits that not only keep people healthy but improve quality of life. ■



**Nick Moriello** is president of Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Delaware.

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\* According to the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.



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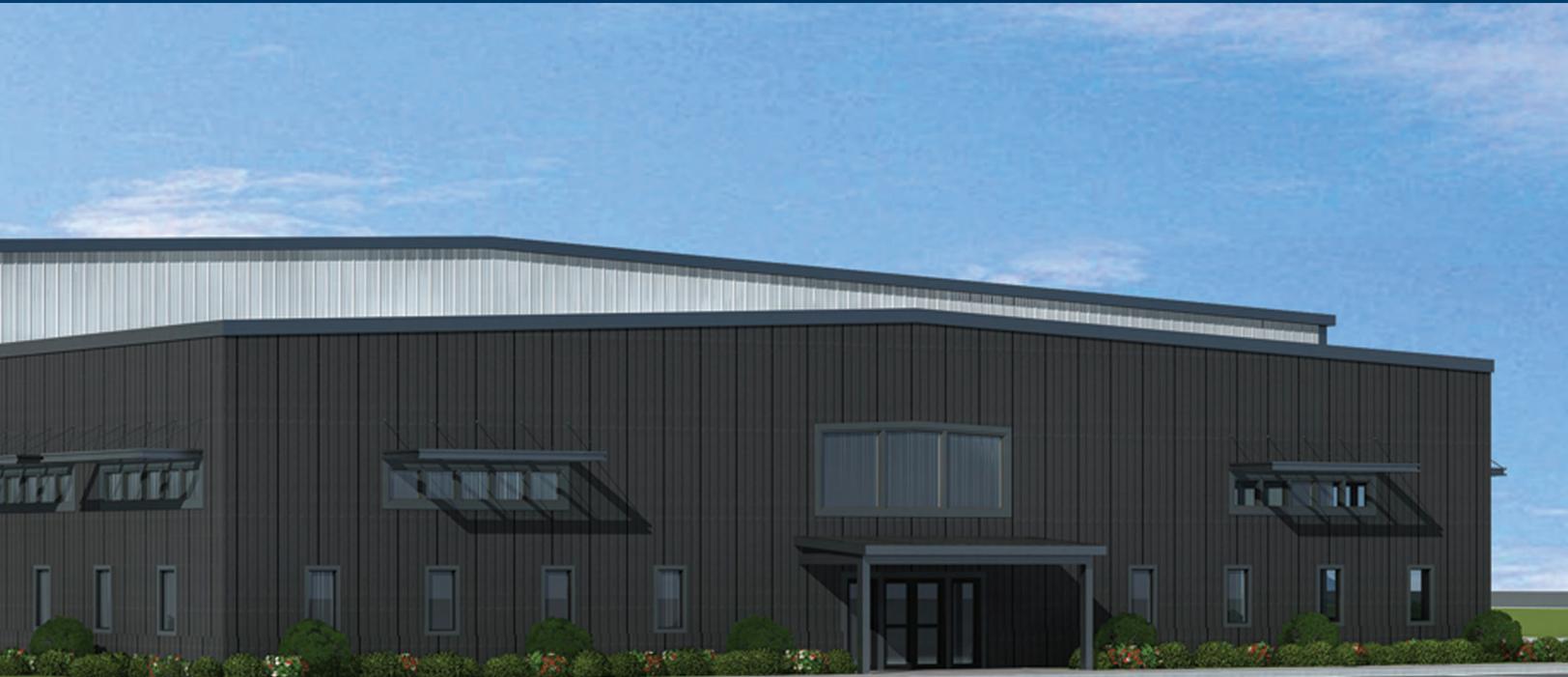
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**Family Business Grows into New Facility:  
MILLER METAL FABRICATION INC. in BRIDGEVILLE, DELAWARE**

**GROWING | CONNECTING | BUILDING**

# FAMILY BUSINESS GROWS INTO NEW FACILITY

*By Allison Hayes*

While some family businesses get stuck on one way of doing things with leadership hesitant to make changes, Miller Metal Fabrication Inc. is not afraid of new technology or new ideas. And by working with the Delaware Manufacturing Extension Partnership (DEMPEP), they have found many new ways to improve operations, manage growth, and thrive in a tough economy.

Martin (Marty) Miller II founded the company in 1983 when he was working as a mechanic maintaining farm equipment and decided to use his ingenuity and metal-working skills to build his own business. Based in Bridgeville, Delaware, Miller Metal is a family-owned custom metal fabrication business that offers laser-cutting, CNC Forming, CNC HD plasma-cutting, CNC punching, tube laser cutting, machining, design for manufacturing, welding, and fabrication. Some of the industries the company serves include commercial kitchens, transportation, industrial refrigeration, and architectural/structural fabrication.

Miller II said he has not had any formal business education, but was self-educated in business principles and processes. He was doing things “by the book” but found that he was often going against his gut. That’s when he was introduced to Lean thinking through an introduction to DEMPEP. The Lean process is a learning journey consisting of continuous problem-solving cycles which drive an organization toward a desired future vision. DEMPEP’s Lean journey with Miller Metal began in 2007 and continues today to educate and inspire their employees and leadership to utilize the tools and techniques of Lean thinking to create and deliver the most value from the customer’s perspective while consuming the fewest resources.

“At first I was very skeptical about DEMPEP, but after I listened to what they were presenting, it immediately changed,” said Miller II. “The concepts of Lean resonated with me, especially my disdain for bureaucracy and nonvalue-added efforts. This also upended the age old ‘we have always done it this way’ philosophy. DEMPEP

not only helped with the training in these concepts, but how we can implement them on the actual shop floor. I would recommend their services to any manufacturer in the state.”

DEMPEP is a federally and state funded non-profit organization committed to helping Delaware’s manufacturers improve their global competitiveness. DEMPEP is the official representative of the MEP National Network in Delaware. The MEP National Network™ is a unique public-private partnership that delivers comprehensive, proven solutions to U.S. manufacturers, fueling growth and advancing.

DEMPEP operates as a recipient through Delaware Technical Community College in partnership with the United States Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology, the Delaware Division of Small Business, and the Delaware State and local Chambers of Commerce. Through these partnerships, DEMPEP draws its resources from local and national universities, community colleges, research institutions, private consultants, and a network of 51 MEP Centers located in all 50 states and Puerto Rico. With these unique relationships, the Delaware MEP can provide its clients confidential access to their industries best practices, processes and business improvement methodologies.

Through education, consulting, and hands-on implementation, DEMPEP helped Miller Metal to streamline its processes, deliver the most value to customers while consuming the fewest resources, and grow the business. DEMPEP also assisted Miller Metal with acquiring its ISO 9001-2015 certification. This allows the company to maintain and grow its business in industrial markets that require this certification.

Since October 2007, Miller Metal has grown from 31 employees to 104 and from producing 5,000 pounds to 25,000 pounds of steel per day. The company has also substantially increased its gross revenues. As a result of this growth, the company has outgrown its current

rented facility, and has purchased nearby land to build a 60,000-square-foot manufacturing plant with 7,320 square-foot office space, a 56% increase in square footage. The approximately \$7 million project, slated for completion next year, includes state grants for required road improvements to the entrance of the property that will also benefit other area businesses. The new facility is also expected to create 20 new jobs by 2025 and increase capacity to support a 30% projected growth.

In the fall of 2020, Miller Metal again reached out to the DEMEP for assistance in designing the layout of its new facility. After meeting with the team and gathering data and information regarding current demand, processes, and layout, DEMEP conducted a five-day plant layout event in January of 2021. Working with Miller Metal leadership and employees, the team developed a detailed layout for the new facility which optimized material flow and minimized material handling, reducing waste in the process. The layout provided for material storage and was designed to easily accommodate the addition of new equipment in the future. In addition, the team established the process for how jobs would be scheduled and processed through the facility.

“Everyone at the company is on board,” said QMS Manager and Key Account Manager Stephanie Knestaut. “We changed to a project management style of customer management. Project Managers now have individual responsibilities over their own customers, a method that was not used before. It allows them to see the big picture and have a more personal relationship with their customers.”

Martin Miller III said he sees many benefits of the company’s Lean approach to business.

“We cross train employees so they can take on more roles,” he said. “It helps to build stronger relationships with customers, be more productive, have reduced lead times, and become a partner to our customers.”



Miller Metal employee Clarence Sampson chats with DEMEP Field Agent Kim Kilby and Marty Miller III as they stand in front of a Trumpf Laser Cutting machine.

*“I would recommend DEMEP’s services to any manufacturer in the state.”*

~ Marty Miller II, Founder, Miller Metal Fabrication Inc.

The Millers also see the advantage of Lean accounting, which was a “game changer” for the way they did business.

“Lean takes you back to your instincts,” said Miller II. “It just makes sense.”

As the company continues its journey, the Millers intend to continue working with DEMEP to manage their growth and expand their services.

“The new site will increase capacity, reduce foot traffic and parts travel, and continue to use technology to make us more productive,” said Miller III.

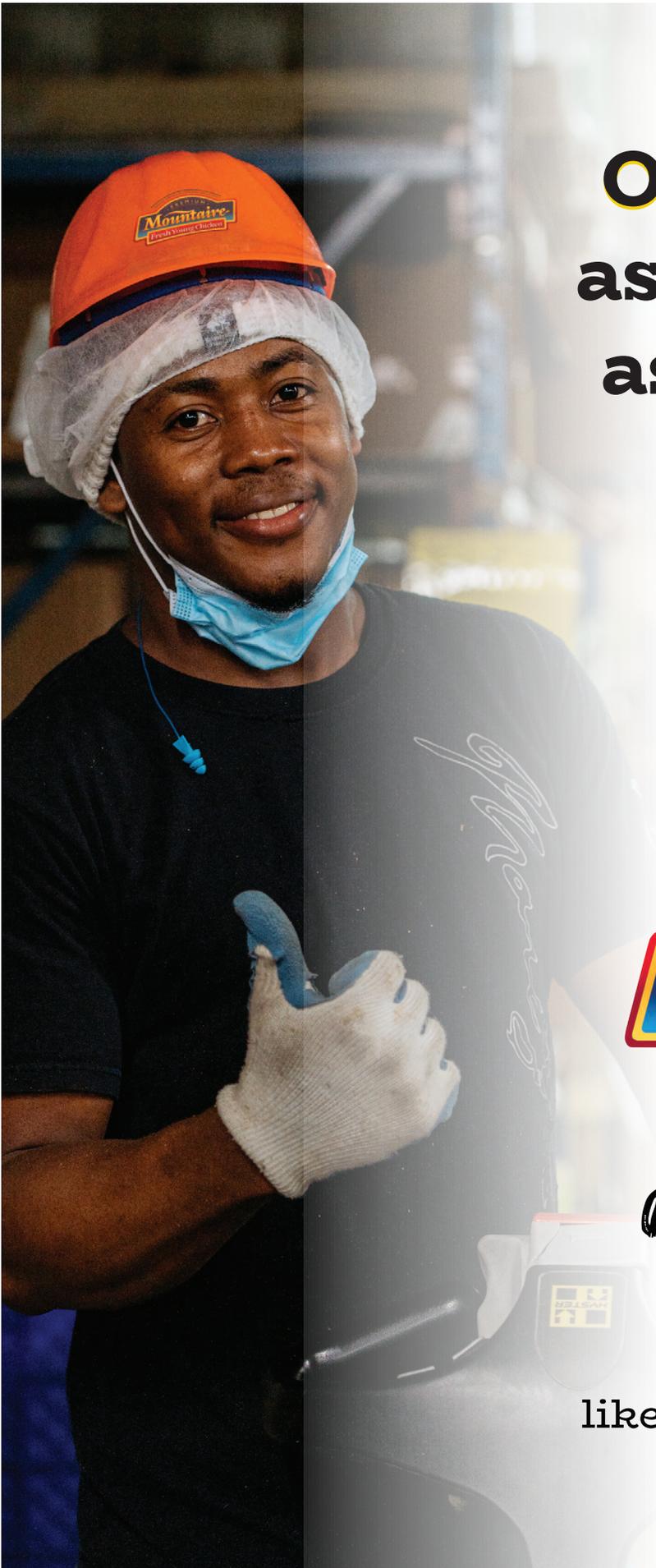
The future is bright – and Lean – for Miller Metal.



From left to right, DEMEP Field Agent Kim Kilby, Stephanie Knestaut, Dave Miller, Marty Miller III, Paul Miller, and Mike Elehwany.



Miller Metal employee Mike Story working on the Trumpf Press Brake.



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## From the Shop Floor to the Board Room

Why diversity is essential to the manufacturing industry

BY SUSAN KELLIHER

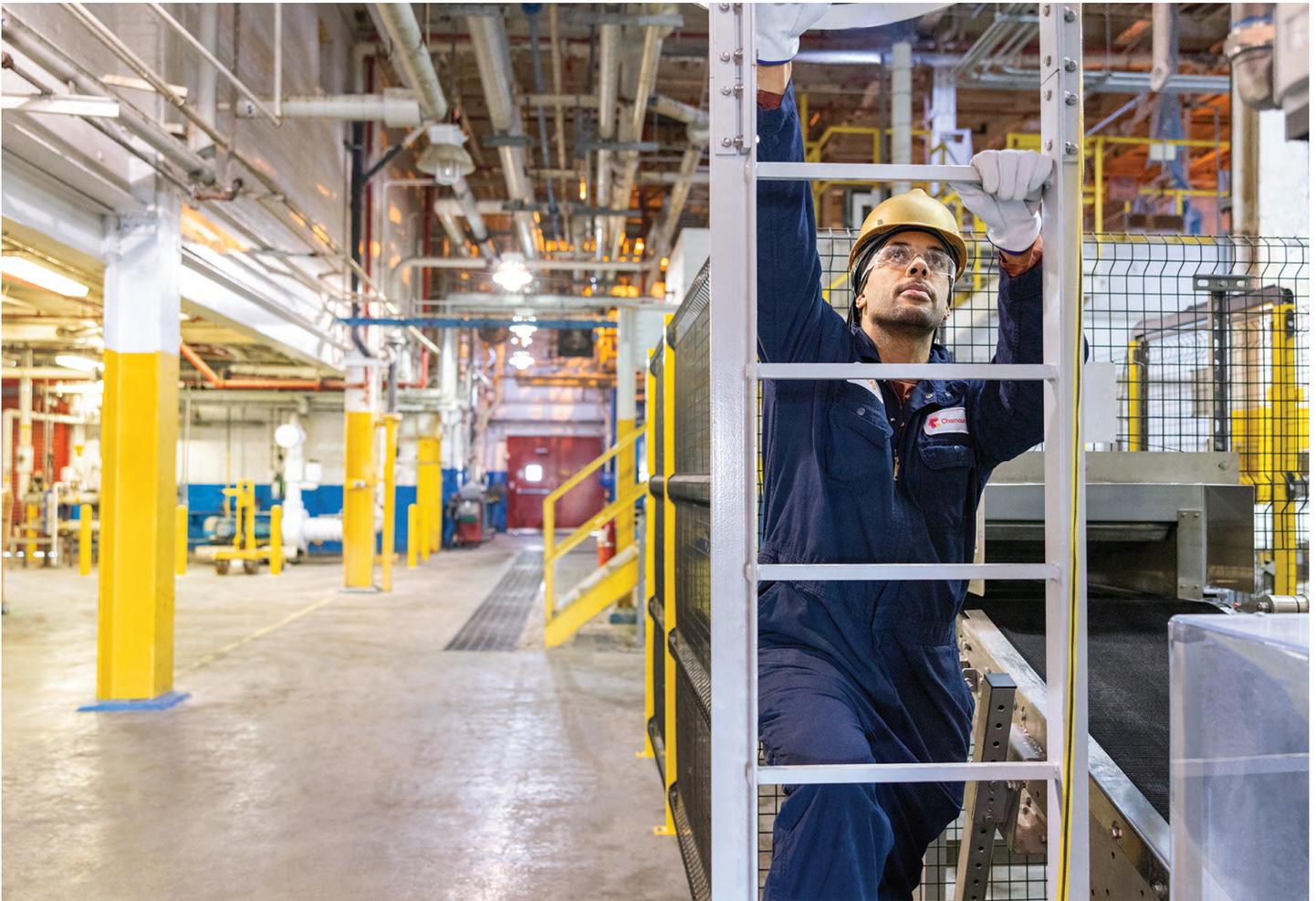
U.S. MANUFACTURING has long been a vital economic driver. And in recent years, its resurgence has brought about a renewed sense of opportunity to deliver innovation and greater societal impact. That's certainly true at Chemours, where we are working to realize our vision to make the world a better place through the power of our chemistry—which we believe begins at our manufacturing sites.

Despite immense global challenges over the last couple of years, the manufacturing sector has remained resilient with industrial production in the U.S. reaching its highest levels in more than a decade, while manufacturing jobs both here in Delaware and across the U.S. are returning to pre-COVID levels.

With an evolving industry and around 800,000 open manufacturing jobs nationwide, it is essential that we embrace thoughtful and innovative strategies to identify, hire, and retain the best talent. That's exactly what we're doing at Chemours through our commitment to inclusion, diversity, and equity.

There's no doubt that the chemical industry, and the larger manufacturing industry, has suffered from a lack of diversity in the past. But at Chemours, we see this gap as an opportunity for positive change, and we are proud to be at the forefront of creating a more ethnically and gender-diverse workforce. From the shop floor to the board room, we have set ambitious goals to fill 30 percent of all U.S. positions with ethnically





diverse employees by 2030 and 50 percent of all executive level positions with women by 2030, with a commitment to reach full gender parity in all positions globally as soon as possible.

To be clear, making a more inclusive, diverse, and equitable workplace isn't just an altruistic act, it is imperative to the long-term success of any company or organization. When we foster greater diversity and create a more inclusive and equitable workplace, we create stronger and more creative teams that help our company innovate and thrive.

Not only do we as an industry and a company need to actively seek out this talent, but we must also invest in the future and build a pipeline of talent that is wide, deep, and inclusive. And in Chemours' case, that means investing in STEM education for all.

We must nurture that talent early on and create more career opportunities, specifically in communities that have historically been underserved, under-resourced, and underrepresented.

To do that, Chemours is making meaningful investments in the communities where we operate. We're doing this through programs like the Chemours Future of Engineering, Science, Trades and Technology School Partnership Program, or ChemFEST where we've already invested \$4 million to help provide educational resources to Delaware-based middle school students to spark their interest in the sciences and help pave the way for a future career in high tech industries like manufacturing. ChemFEST is replicated in many of the communities where we live and operate. Building from middle and high school, we are creating a path for talent

through the Future of STEM Scholars Initiative (FOSSI) partnering with the American Institute of Chemical Engineers, the American Chemistry Council, and HBCU Week Foundation to provide scholarships to students pursuing STEM degrees at Historically Black Colleges and Universities. I am so pleased to see that many of our FOSSI scholars are being mentored by Chemours employees and we actively recruit them for internships and ultimately full-time positions.

We believe these investments are critical, not just for Chemours, but for our industry, our communities, and our entire society.

It's an exciting and pivotal moment for the entire U.S. manufacturing sector, especially for those looking for a rewarding and dynamic career. And with the ongoing labor shortage, it is incumbent upon our industry to embrace strategies that help develop, attract, and retain a diverse and skilled workforce. I am so proud to be a team that is creating an inclusive, diverse, and equitable workplace, and is a leader in investing in the next generation of innovators. It's that winning formula that will help Chemours realize our vision that together, we will make the world a better place through the power of our chemistry. ■



**Susan Kelliher** is the chief people officer at Chemours.



## A Career in Manufacturing?

How about a career in beer! BY ERIC BECK

WHEN YOU HEAR the word manufacturing, I bet a brewery doesn't come to mind. BUT manufacturing is at the heart of every brewery, keeping the place running and crafting the beers we all enjoy.

Today, there are nearly 6,000 craft breweries in the U.S., and another 3,000 brewpubs.<sup>1</sup> Located in Milton, Del., Dogfish Head is one of the largest craft breweries in the country. In addition to our tasting room, R&D brewery and distillery, we'll brew, package, and ship around 4 million cases of beer per year. We couldn't do that without our roughly 110 manufacturing—or as we say, “brewing”—co-workers that are on the ground, inside the facility every day.

My team is probably tired of me saying this, but it's true, what makes Dogfish special is our co-workers. We have a team of thoughtful, passionate, and curious individuals that genuinely care about each other

and the community we serve. Milton is our home, and our neighbors are our customers (and many are actually co-workers). When hiring, we strategically seek folks that will contribute to our evolving culture.

Working at a brewery is a rare combination of art and science on an industrial scale. We're turning seasonal crops of barley, hops, fruit and more into a variety of delicious beers. But to do so, we must first understand the science behind the ingredients and how they interact with one another. Only then can we devise unique recipes and processes to achieve desired flavor profiles.

Dogfish makes beer in roughly 200-barrel (or ~2,000-case) increments. Our equipment is large, and it runs fast, with a high degree of automation. This is where electrical and machinist skills become a necessity. Our can line runs at a speed of 300 cans per minute and our bottle line runs more

than twice as fast. When things break, and they do, we must diagnose the issue quickly to get back up and running.

Our motto is, “Together we are HEAVY,” meaning together we can accomplish more than we can individually, and our brewing co-workers are the epitome of that. Our co-workers across the brewery are resourceful and curious, and they aren’t afraid to get their hands dirty, jumping in to help wherever needed. In fact, they yearn for

opportunities to step outside their worlds, garner new skills, and learn about new facets of the business. It’s that curiosity and desire to learn that not only draws people to this industry but enables them to grow their careers within it ... that and of course, free beer!

Another intriguing aspect of manufacturing is, like any sports team, it takes an army of support to ensure success. Aside from those physically making the beer, we have co-workers in safety, quality, planning and engineering, as well as hospitality at our Tasting Room in Milton, our Chesapeake & Maine and Brewings & Eats restaurants in Rehoboth, the Dogfish Inn in Lewes, and our taproom in Miami.

At Dogfish, we have a long history of co-workers moving through various parts of our business. As part of The Boston Beer Company family, we have the advantage of offering growth opportunities across



the country working with any of our amazing beverage brands—Samuel Adams, Truly, Angry Orchard, Twisted Tea, Coney Island Brewery, and Angel City Brewery). For example, I’ve been with Boston Beer for 13 years. During that time, I’ve held five different jobs in four different locations.

Manufacturing can be a lot of things, opening doors you may not have imagined, and that’s the beauty of it—you’re always learning.

You are exposed to many different areas of a business, discover what you enjoy and what you don’t, and then possess the skills and flexibility to steer your career in whatever direction you desire.

Shameless plug ... we’re always looking new co-workers! To view open roles, visit [www.bostonbeer.com](http://www.bostonbeer.com). ■

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.brewersassociation.org/statistics-and-data/national-beer-stats/>



**Eric Beck** is the director of operations at Dogfish Head Craft Brewery, part of The Boston Beer Company.

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# Growing a New American Industry

Offshore wind is an opportunity for Delaware businesses

BY BRADY WALKER

DELAWARE TOOK AN IMPORTANT STEP this summer towards joining America's growing offshore wind economy.

In June, Delaware and 10 other east coast states met at the White House to join the new Federal-State Offshore Wind Implementation Partnership. The partnership aims to expand the American offshore-wind supply chain in states like Delaware, including manufacturing facilities for offshore-wind components, port capabilities, logistics networks to install projects, and workforce development to fill good-paying jobs.

Here's why this partnership is so critical: The U.S. has set a goal to create 44,000 American offshore wind jobs, power more than 10 million American homes with renewable offshore wind energy, and avoid 78 million metric tons of carbon dioxide pollution by 2030.

Achieving that goal will require a significant ramp up in domestic offshore wind supply chain. The University of Delaware's Special Initiative on Offshore Wind estimates that offshore wind, a new American industry, represents a \$109 billion revenue opportunity for U.S. businesses and workers. These new jobs will include roles in manufacturing, welding, machining, engineering, construction, and operations, among many more.

In 2021 alone, the offshore wind industry committed \$2.2 billion in new funding for U.S. supply chains, including nine major American





manufacturing facilities that will produce the foundations, towers, cables, and blades of offshore wind turbines.

In New Jersey, for instance, Ørsted has committed \$1 billion to create new green jobs and build specialized manufacturing capabilities. In New York, we're bringing construction and steel manufacturing work to the Albany area to construct advanced foundation components for wind turbines.

As the developer of Skipjack Wind—which will generate enough clean, renewable energy to power nearly 300,000 homes in our region—Ørsted is committed to helping Delaware businesses join this new American industry. Skipjack Wind will create nearly 750 new permanent jobs and thousands more construction jobs in our region. In addition, new offshore wind cable and tower manufacturing facilities made possible by Skipjack Wind's development will create hundreds—perhaps close to 1,000—of additional new permanent jobs in our region.

We are also planning to enable significant investment in energy infrastructure that benefits Delaware. As we seek to develop Skipjack Wind's landfall and interconnection infrastructure, we will create new jobs for Delawareans and Delaware businesses. We invite Delaware businesses to register at [orstedprocurement.com](http://orstedprocurement.com) for potential contracting opportunities with Skipjack Wind, Ørsted's broader U.S. portfolio and the suppliers that help deliver offshore-wind farms and grid-modernization projects.

As the operator of one out of every three offshore-wind turbines globally, Ørsted will harness its expertise to complete Skipjack Wind's cable landfall and point of interconnection in a way that utilizes Delaware's workers and respects local communities.

By joining the new Federal-State Offshore Wind Implementation Partnership, Delaware has positioned its workforce to fully participate in this new American industry. I encourage any Delaware business interested in offshore wind to register on our procurement website or contact us with questions. ■



**Brady Walker** is Ørsted's head of government affairs and policy in Delaware and Maryland.

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# Critical Materials for Semiconductor Chips



DuPont semiconductor materials enable the world's most advanced integrated circuits **BY RYAN MAUS**

TODAY, SEMICONDUCTOR CHIPS are found everywhere—in your laptop, cell phone, car, credit cards, and even your home appliances. But what you may not know is that products developed and produced at DuPont's CMP Materials Center in Newark, Delaware, are critical to manufacturing some of the most cutting-edge chips in the world. To make high-quality chips it takes high-quality fabrication materials, such as those we make right here in Delaware.

At our Newark CMP Materials Center, we develop, test, and manufacture advanced polishing pads and slurries used in an enabling process called chemical mechanical planarization, or CMP. CMP is a critical step that is used many times throughout the chip fabrication process. Chips are built up through multiple layers of materials on a silicon wafer, and CMP is used to carefully remove excess materials after deposition to create a smooth surface. Each successive layer of nanoscale circuitry in these complex chips must be created with the utmost precision. Consider for a minute that variations in height are measured in angstroms, a unit of length that is one hundred-millionth of a centimeter. DuPont pads and slurries help our customers achieve an extremely fine level of control and our breadth of offerings can be used to meet different performance needs and process conditions.

## OUR INNOVATION ROOTS RUN DEEP

Delaware's technology innovation in CMP spans more than 50 years and multiple generations of companies, with our business first getting its start as Rodel, Inc. Rodel was founded in Delaware in 1968 by William Budinger (himself a former DuPont employee), who developed a technology that could remove dust and excess ink from plates in a printing press. The name Rodel was a play on "rollers of Delaware," but you may



recognize it because the Rodel Foundation, a nonprofit the Budinger family founded, continues today in its mission to support public education in Delaware.

The roller cover technology was later evaluated for additional applications, and ultimately, collaboration with IBM led us to use these principles to design a material that could create a flat (planar) surface on a semiconductor wafer, followed by the introduction of our first polishing pads for CMP. The DuPont IC1000™ polishing pad quickly established itself as the industry standard for planarization. Continuous improvements in our manufacturing operations and advanced quality control systems have enabled it to remain an industry benchmark to this day.

As chip fabrication processes grow in complexity, we continue to tighten quality specifications, and continue to innovate in new

product offerings including our VisionPad™ and Ikonix™ polishing pad platforms, and Acuplane™ and Novaplane™ slurries. In 2020, the American Chemical Society recognized key contributors to our CMP pad portfolio recipients of its Heroes of Chemistry Award, acknowledging the valuable impact of this technology.

### GLOBAL COMPANY, LOCAL IMPACT

Our Newark facility is unlike many other U.S. tech companies, as it's not merely a manufacturing plant. In addition to production, we have research and development, a full polishing lab, quality engineers, a warehouse, supply chain, marketing and business executives onsite operating as one team. We work closely with teams at our sites in Taiwan, Korea, and our joint venture—NITTA DuPont Inc.—in Japan to develop, scale, and supply materials, while collaborating on best practices and global customer needs.

As the semiconductor industry continues to expand to meet increased demand, leading chipmakers are building massive new facilities in the U.S., and demand for materials is escalating. This creates even more opportunity for our CMP business to grow and innovate. We aim to be viewed as our customers' "partner of choice" by building collaborative relationships that last. As a technology hub, we frequently host customers from the U.S.,

Asia, and Europe, who come to tour the facility, meet with our local experts, and discuss new technology projects.

Finally, I'm proud of the Newark site's long record of giving back to our community. Through our employee resource groups and volunteer programs, we strive to impact the surrounding region as part of our sustainability goals. These include partnering with Special Olympics for 27 years (with more than 1,000 DuPont volunteers participating in 2022), supporting Junior Achievement of Delaware, and serving as a program partner of Jobs for Delaware Graduates. We're also advancing sustainability through improvements to our own operations such as programs that reduce water usage onsite and technology innovations to bring our customers products that are more sustainable.

DuPont is a significant enabler for the semiconductor industry and we're proud of how our technology and our people are driving advanced manufacturing here in Delaware. ■



**Ryan Maus** is the site leader for DuPont's CMP Materials Center in Newark, Delaware.

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## Helping to Fuel Delaware's Economy



# Data-Driven Development

Delaware Workforce Development Board issues study to better understand workforce needs **BY BRAD ZUBER**

DELAWARE FACES STIFF COMPETITION in attracting businesses to the state, and success hinges on having the skilled workforce that new and existing employers need. Indicative of the challenges we face is that the number of jobs employers need to fill is significantly greater than the number of available individuals with the right skills and experience. Playing an increasing role in plugging that gap is the Delaware Workforce Development Board.

The 53-member Board was established in its current form by a 2020 executive order signed by Governor John Carney. Its membership is comprised of elected officials, state agency and department heads, members from the private sector, and representatives from the state’s labor community. It is, of course, a large board and no doubt filled with diverse viewpoints, but the focus remains on enhancing Delaware’s workforce via the following approaches:

- Vetting and then investing in workforce training programs that build the skills required for today’s employment world;
- Interacting with businesses to ensure the right skills are being targeted; and
- Enhancing tools to link individuals with potential employers.

While not a household name for most Delawareans, the Board has certainly been active. When Scott Malfitano became chair last August, his focus was building on the Board’s many successes but, as importantly, working across the state to broaden the Board’s impact. As Malfitano notes, “the demand for jobs and competition within our region has changed over the past two years. Our board looks to increase our effectiveness and impact through new initiatives.”

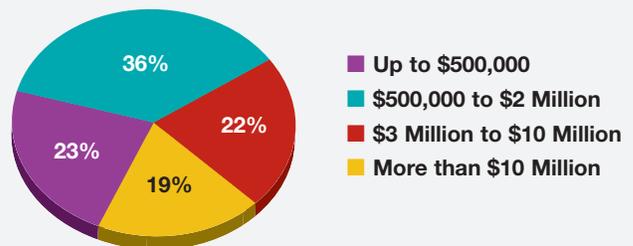
Malfitano and Joanna Staib, who became executive director last September, can point to a number of recent improvements. The Board has a broader statewide representation. It has increased its focus on data transparency by ensuring businesses are aware of the available programs and candidly evaluating the success of each. With the establishment of a business engagement committee, the Board is better able to understand the changing marketplace and work to adapt programs to those changes. Related to the committee is an investment in a temporary network of business engagement liaisons to—in the Board’s words—“engage businesses in the process... to understand their business hiring needs and jobs available in Delaware, to provide input into training programs, and to expedite the hiring process for the unemployed/underemployed.” Another

enhancement is an effort to ingrain the concept of return on investment (ROI) into the Board’s conversations, budget, and program evaluations. The focus is on what works, but as Malfitano says, “the best measure of ROI is a job at the end of training.”

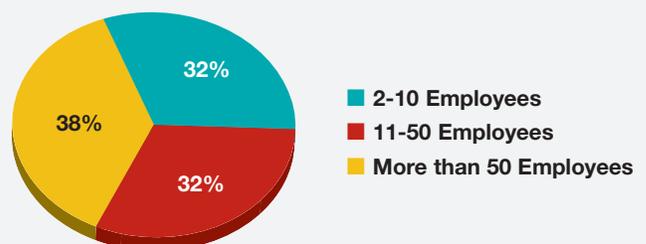
A more recent step was the Board’s decision to turn to Zogby Analytics for a comprehensive survey of Delaware’s business decisionmakers. It is a significant effort, but as Staib explains, “understanding the employment marketplace helps the Board ensure its resources are used in the most effective way. The more we understand what employers want, the better we can help individuals become employees.” In short, it’s another element of the focus on ROI.

The survey is representative of the Board’s innovation, or as Jonathan Zogby, CEO of Zogby Analytics, notes, “It was forward thinking of Delaware’s Workforce Development Board to utilize advanced survey research methodologies to better understand Delaware businesses’ current needs.” He adds, “Zogby Analytics, in conjunction with the Board,

**Surveyed Respondents: By Revenue**



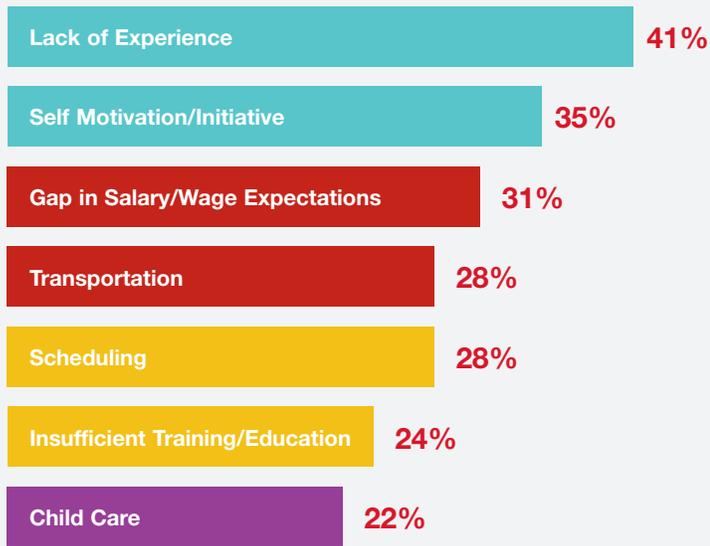
**Surveyed Respondents: By # of Employees**



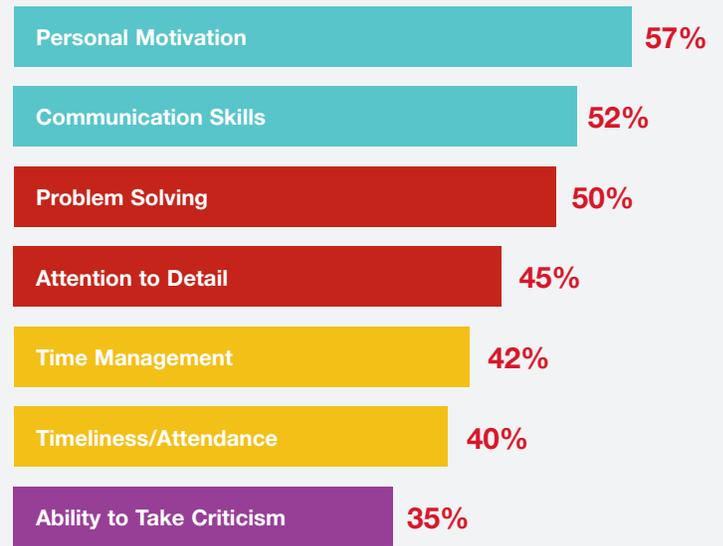
Source: Preliminary Survey Results – Zogby Analytics.

# Education & Upskilling

## Issues Cited: Barriers to Hiring



## Issues Cited: Among Job Applicants and New Employees



Source: Preliminary Survey Results – Zogby Analytics.

produced a hybrid methodology of online and telephone samples to reach a large and well-balanced sample of businesses.”

Although the survey is still in process, over 250 business decisionmakers have been interviewed and Malfitano, Staib, and the Board are already sorting through the available data. A cross section of industries were represented, meeting the Board’s goal of an even distribution among employers of all sizes based on both number of employees and revenue.

The preliminary survey reveals critical barriers to hiring, with 40 percent of employers citing a lack of experience, and relatedly, 24 percent citing insufficient training and education (respondents could select multiple barriers). A lack of self-motivation/initiative was cited by 35 percent of respondents.

*“The more we understand what employers want, the better we can help individuals become employees.”*

— Joanna Staib, Executive Director,  
Delaware Workforce Development Board

Respondents also noted a number of gaps exhibited by potential hires and new employees (again, respondents could choose multiple responses). Lack of motivation was cited here as well, this time by 60 percent of respondents, an outcome Malfitano and Staib called “certainly one of the most difficult to address.” About half of respondents cited issues with communication skills or a lack of problem solving/critical thinking. At least 40 percent cited deficiencies in the following areas: time management, timeliness/attendance, and attention to detail.

The world in general and many employment opportunities in particular continue to be more technology-focused so Zogby drilled down into

specific gaps in technical competencies. Respondents most often cited a lack of proficiency in Excel, Word, virtual meeting technology, data analysis, and IT networking.

The range of issues cited by respondents is quite broad, and some are more easily addressed than others. A lack of experience and insufficient training seem to fit perfectly with the Board’s mandate and it is possible that, for many, issues with communication skills and time-management will decrease as experience and training increase.

The survey also touched on the various channels used in recruitment efforts. Asked to select just one response, 40 percent of respondents cited “word of mouth, networking through current employees, referrals” as the “most useful,” with the online job-source tool, Indeed, at 20 percent. But reliance on word of mouth, networking, and referrals—while certainly excellent options—runs the risk of completely missing a broad segment of the potential workforce.

Two additional findings should be noted. There is an opportunity to increase the proportion of businesses willing to employ individuals who have been part of the criminal justice system. Doing so would expand the population of potential hires. More than 80 percent of respondents offered employment opportunities that do not require a college degree, which is significant given the climbing cost of college.

Such knowledge will be critical as the Board and other state decisionmakers work to ensure an effective and targeted use of the \$50 million Governor Carney has dedicated to workforce development under the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act.

The Zogby effort reinforces the Board’s focus on listening to businesses, but Malfitano and Staib stress it is really just the start of what the Board plans as its ongoing efforts to enhance, in the words of Governor Carney’s Executive Order, the “development and continuous improvement of the workforce development systems in the state” and the “identification and dissemination of best practices.” ■

The Delaware State Chamber of Commerce and the Better Business Bureau Serving Delaware are hosting the state's largest networking event of the year!

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**Goldey-Beacom**  
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## Education & Upskilling



THE STORY OF AMAZON cannot be told without detailing our expansion in Delaware. Amazon opened its first fulfillment center—our large facilities that pick, pack, and ship customer orders—in New Castle back in 1997. That facility is still operational, with employees that specialize in getting orders delivered the same day customers press “Buy Now” on Amazon.com. This is a case study in how our obsession with meeting evolving customer demands leads to continuous innovation on the ground.

In the 25 years since we arrived in the First State, our expansion here has paralleled the company’s global growth. Amazon now has seven facilities up and down Delaware, with four having opened in just the last year—including the state-of-the-art robotics fulfillment center on Boxwood Road outside of Wilmington and a delivery station in Seaford, our first site in Sussex County. All told, Amazon now has over 7,000 employees in Delaware.

As our operations and workforce have grown, so too has our commitment to our local employees and the state itself. All of our employees in Delaware earn at least \$15 per hour to start. Most frontline employees also have access to the same benefits that are available to me

*From left: T.J. Maloney, Karen Harcum, Representative Kimberly Williams, Governor John Carney, Jairaj Vora, Lieutenant Governor Bethany Hall-Long, and Maura Kennedy at Amazon’s Boxwood Road fulfillment center.*

and other corporate managers. This includes comprehensive health care coverage, 20 weeks of paid parental leave for those who give birth, and a 401(k) with a company match.

Perhaps most noteworthy is the decision Amazon made last September to invest \$1.2 billion in upskilling more than 300,000 employees by 2025. To accomplish this, Amazon dramatically expanded its Career Choice program to allow any employee who has been with the company for 90 days to receive pre-paid, fully-funded college tuition at partner schools. In Delaware, interested employees are able to attend the University of Delaware, Delaware Technical Community College, Wilmington University, or national online partners. Additional options also include technical training, GED courses, and ESL certificates.

We also work with local small- and medium-sized businesses to get their products to market and grow sales. Nowhere is this truer than in Delaware. With over 6,500 sellers on Amazon, the First State has the most sellers per capita in the country. Delaware-based sellers saw 35 percent year-over-year revenue growth in 2021, the third highest rate in the U.S., and sold more than 29 million products in Amazon's store. Average annual sales per business was over \$605,000—more than any other state.

One such business we are proud to work with is Harbeson-based JennyGems, whose owner Jennifer McMillan was named the “Delaware Woman-Owned Business Person of the Year” by the Small Business Administration in May. JennyGems started in 2015 as a home-based business, and has grown steadily since then. Sales of its made-in-America home décor products are up 50 percent year-to-date over 2021, and the company is moving to an expanded facility in the Delaware Coastal Business Park this fall.

We are excited to support this kind of growth in Delaware and remain grateful for the warm welcome we have received in the state. ■



**John Schwartz** is the site lead at the Amazon Prime Now Fulfillment Center in New Castle.



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# It's All Business on Broom Street

Padua Academy is developing the next generation of female innovators **BY JENNIFER BELL**

NESTLED IN THE HISTORIC Cool Springs neighborhood of Wilmington is an unsuspecting start-up fueling the imaginations and futures of teenage girls. Delaware's entrepreneurs of tomorrow have quite literally set up shop at Padua Academy and are quickly proving it's all business on Broom Street.

Sure other area secondary schools offer a business, entrepreneurship, or marketing elective, but at Padua, this junior-year elective serves as a prerequisite to putting ideas into action during their senior year in one of two experiential-based learning opportunities.

Seniors can interview for one of only eight slots in the highly competitive Business Leadership program. During this full-year elective, students run the school store under the supervision of teacher, Bethann Higley. This includes managing product development, sales and inventory both online and in-person, analytics, marketing, and other responsibilities.

"As they enter the workforce, our students will quickly realize how crucial communication, teamwork, and collaboration are to their success," says Higley, who teaches all courses. "In Business Leadership, they are

challenged every day to share their opinion and take into consideration other people's perspective. Everybody has their own ideas on what to introduce to the store, but we have budgets, and they need to decide together what is a priority," she continues. "Not only do they get a better understanding of how to run a business but they also experience personal growth that will stay with them for life."

During the past academic year, Padua's Business Leaders hosted two highly successful "sidewalk sales" that brought their behind-the-scenes efforts out to the public. Buyers are genuinely captivated by the fact that

*"As they enter the workforce, our students will quickly realize how crucial communication, teamwork, and collaboration are to their success." — Bethann Higley*



this isn't your "mom's school store" and everyone, including Padua's Alumnae, are more inclined to buy items knowing their purchase is not only expanding their wardrobe, but helping young women recognize their potential in the business world.

For those students solely interested in the business of ideation and implementation, this fall will mark the second year for Padua's dual enrollment entrepreneurship elective in which seniors earn three college credits in partnership with the University of Delaware (UD).

The students begin with identifying a problem in life or the world and work on a solution to solve it with creative problem-solving and communication. The course culminates in the spring with students pitching their ideas during the Diamond Challenge, hosted by UD's Horn Entrepreneurship program. The Diamond Challenge is a platform for

teens from around the world to learn entrepreneurship, engage with a like-minded community and compete for \$100,000 in awards.

This year's Padua team of Maggie Morris and Grace Stout advanced to the semi-final round with their social venture, "Two Birds," aimed at solving two problems at once—reducing food waste and food insecurity. Although an intense and high-pressure experience, it offers students an invaluable, first-hand look into the world of entrepreneurship and innovation, leaving many walking away inspired about the possibilities and opportunities that exist for them.

Business success resides in not thinking outside the box, but in recognizing there is no box. Padua has designed a learning environment that holds true to this belief. "Students express feeling a sense of accomplishment from bringing a product to life and seeing it sell well. Other students talk about how they grew more confident in sharing their voice," Higley says. "These are all skills they can take forward and apply to any career they decide to pursue." ■



**Jennifer Bell** is the communications coordinator at Padua Academy.

# New Castle County Vocational Technical School District is pleased to share highlights from the 2021-2022 school year



1,068 graduates & 1,093 career certificates earned



Hodgson Vo Tech named a Superstar in Education



Partnered with the City of Wilmington to revitalize housing



New career programs to meet the needs of the state and region



Read More!

Delcastle ~ Hodgson **#NCCVTworks** Howard ~ St. Georges



# Learning is Lifelong

Leadership Delaware expands training program **BY JENNIFER COHAN**

DELAWARE—AND THE NATION—are experiencing a workforce shortage in almost every business sector within all ranks of organizations. Employees have more options now than at any other time in our history as available jobs outnumber those available to fill them.

On top of this, we are facing another epic managerial challenge—one of age diversity as we now have five generations in the workforce. Each generation brings with it a unique set of strengths and challenges, which is requiring leaders to adapt how they manage their teams. Leadership and communication strategies that worked five, ten, twenty years ago, are not always effective in the workplace of today.

To make things even more challenging, technology continues to evolve and remote work is taking center stage in many employment decisions. Being nimble on work location and hours is no longer a perk employers offer; it is a necessity to compete for top talent. Managing

remote employees requires modern performance management skills and communication styles. These newly needed skills, knowledge, and abilities are all people centric, not management centric.

All factors combined are creating an emerging workplace environment, one where employers have a front row seat as they strive to create and maintain positive and productive workplaces. One thing we know for certain is that a new set of leadership skills are required. Leaders must be compassionate, flexible, and emotionally intelligent.

Leadership Delaware prides itself on its award-winning annual leadership emergence program, which has produced hundreds of amazing young leaders since 2009. Many fellows have gone on to make significant impacts in their communities. The program offers a series of issue-oriented forums and experiences, which are based on the belief that knowledge is a key element and prime motivator of leadership. An intensive, fast-moving

program, Leadership Delaware is described by fellows as “an MBA on the subject of Delaware!”

Recognizing that learning is lifelong, Leadership Delaware expanded its program to adults of any age in efforts to address the gap in training offerings focused on the challenges facing leaders in the current work environment. The newly launched Leadership Development Series focuses on teaching the leadership skills needed today by honing knowledge and developing competencies in understanding people and organizations. The series consists of six modules of classroom-style education: Leadership and People, High Performance Teams, Workforce Communication, Leading in a Hybrid Workplace, Public Policy, and Public Speaking. The units discuss new and emerging leadership styles, performance and conflict management, communication styles, organizational and human behaviors, and much more. Each session builds on the next, culminating in a wholistic leadership approach centered around people. If you are interested in this new program,

please visit [LeadershipDelaware.org](http://LeadershipDelaware.org) to learn more.

Send us your best, and we will make them exceptional! ■



**Jennifer Cohan** is CEO of Leadership Delaware, Inc.



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## Next-Level Internships

You provide fulfilling work, Intern Delaware enhances their experience BY HELANA RODRIGUEZ

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS are looking for more than just work experience when selecting their internships, which ultimately contributes to their decision on where to launch their careers and build a life post-graduation.

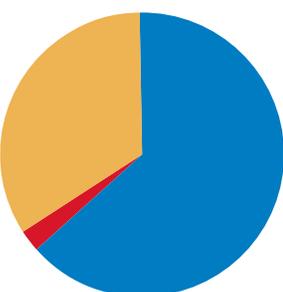
Internships offer the invaluable opportunity for both the employer and intern to take a ‘test drive’ and see if they are a good match. In today’s tight labor market, it’s a highly effective strategy for employers to identify talent and increase hiring conversion rates. With 70 percent of Delaware companies offering summer internship programs, the state has a huge opportunity to attract and retain emerging talent.

As an ‘add-on’ to a company’s existing intern program, Intern Delaware provides summer interns with access to professional development programming, networking opportunities, and exposure to business leaders and peers across all industries. The program is curated to help interns truly experience what Delaware’s unique economy and culture have to offer.

The 2022 Intern Delaware cohort wrapped up in August. Here’s a snapshot of their experience.

### WHAT THE INTERNS HAD TO SAY

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p><b>94%</b><br/>said Intern Delaware enhanced their internship experience</p> | <p><b>98%</b><br/>said they found value in the content and would recommend the program to other companies and interns</p> | <p><b>94%</b><br/>said they would recommend the program to companies and interns in the state</p> |
|---|---|---|



### DEMOGRAPHICS

- In-State: 34.1%
- Out-of-State: 63.6%
- International: 2.3%

### BY THE NUMBERS

|                            |                                 |                       |                     |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| <b>225</b><br>Participants | <b>24</b><br>Corporate Partners | <b>24</b><br>Speakers | <b>16</b><br>Events |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|

**21 states**  
including California, Arizona, Illinois, Texas, Ohio, and Alabama

**3 international countries**  
China, England, and Ireland



“Intern Delaware gave me opportunities to meet professionals alongside other interns throughout the state who have internships in different companies and departments. I love how in Delaware—as a small state—we have so much opportunity to succeed with professionals who are willing to take time out of their day and talk to the young interns.” —*Vidhi Patel, Belfint Lyons & Shuman, Home state: Delaware*



“My experience with Intern Delaware was awesome! It was a great way to get introduced to Delaware, while interacting with other interns and professionals in the area. The variety of events allowed me to make a wide array of connections and opened my eyes to the vast number of industries in the state. I learned a lot about what Delaware has to offer a young professional. I’ll be staying on with Chemours part-time and Intern Delaware was a major part of it.”

—*Adam Walter, Chemours, Home state: New York*



“The Intern Delaware experience has been incredible! I had the opportunity to connect with so many of my peers who will be great resources in the future. In addition, the speakers at the various events have all had their own areas of expertise and hearing their advice for all of us as young professionals has been priceless. There are not many programs that put this much time and effort into giving interns such a valuable opportunity, but this program has gone

above and beyond the expectations. I will be recommending this program to anyone I know interning in Delaware – it has made my internship unforgettable!” —*Joe Carriero, Fulton Bank, Home state: New Jersey*



Email Helana Rodriguez at [hrodriguez@dsc.com](mailto:hrodriguez@dsc.com) or visit [www.InternDelaware.com](http://www.InternDelaware.com) to learn more.

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# Racing to a Red Light?

Zip Code Wilmington helps you turn towards a tech career

BY DESA BURTON

I HAVE TWO CRITICAL QUESTIONS for you. Your happiness, the livelihood of your family, and prosperity of your community and this great nation depend on your answer. I'll start with the easy one first.

What do you want to be when you grow up? It is an innocent question often asked of children. We chuckle to ourselves as they respond—a firefighter, a doctor, a police officer—because we know the answer will change many times before they must make a decision. Little do we realize, with the rapid pace of technology, the same query will continue turning in our minds well into adulthood.

Jobs today require technical skill. Mathew Sigelman, CEO of EMSI Burning Glass, a leading labor market analytics firm, stated in testimony to the House Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Investment that “across the economy, 30 percent of the skills required in the average occupation today are different from those needed just a decade ago.” Whether you are a delivery driver, teacher, or accountant, today’s workforce demands an increasing and ever-changing level of familiarity and acumen with technology.

Thus, the true answer to the question of what we all want is to do meaningful work. Tech skills offer an opportunity to be at the center of the workforce. If

you do not have tech skills, you need to get them which brings us to the second, more challenging question.

Are you racing to a red light? Sigelman testified that the growth of our evolving economy “carries the tangible risk of obsolescence for many workers, particularly those who have been in the same job for an extended period [or] who have had limited opportunities for reskilling.” Any



receptionist of a now-remote company or cashier managing a self-checkout will tell you time and technology wait for no one. The same can be said for surgeons reskilling in robotic surgery or marketing executives analyzing online data. In other words, keeping up with technology is not just necessary for the next generation of workers, it is necessary for the current workforce.

Consider getting skilled through alternate routes if you are coming to a red light, or even a dead end, in your career. One way to do that is to attend Zip Code Wilmington! Zip Code Wilmington, located in downtown Wilmington, Delaware, is one of the top ranked coding bootcamps in the country. Zip Code Wilmington trains adults—many



with only a high school diploma and no coding experience—to become an entry level software developer or data engineer in just 12 weeks through its immersive, full-time program. Its graduates capture salaries averaging \$79,000, which typically doubles or triples the income they were making before attending the training program. Line cooks, baristas, delivery drivers, valets, cashiers, accountants, teachers, veterans, and so many others have successfully transitioned into a tech career through this opportunity.

This is real! Software coding bootcamps like Zip Code Wilmington can help you ditch the constant worry of layoffs and furloughs and move into a secure long-term, high-demand career that pays extremely well. In a short time, you will see just how valuable you can become with software programming skills.

With over 500 graduates, over 90 percent graduation rate, and transparent annually published outcomes, Zip Code Wilmington is also one of the few nonprofit coding bootcamps in the country. Its mission is to help build the economy of the region by giving those who want to move up a chance to enter a great tech career. As a nonprofit training program, it is incentivized to

succeed only if its graduates succeed. It is a resource deliberately designed to be accessible and affordable to support our community!

Ready, Set, Go! Now's the time to give yourself a raise, secure your family's future, and lift your community, perhaps at no cost to you. If you are low to middle income, financial help is available with the Break Into Tech Scholarship for Delaware residents or a Zip Code Wilmington scholarship for non-Delaware residents.

If you are a veteran, apply for VET TEC. Zip Code Wilmington is the only training provider in the mid-Atlantic Region for Veteran Employment Through Technology Education Courses (VET TEC)—a program offered through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs that provides scholarships and housing allowances to veterans. It also pairs them with an industry-leading training provider to help them acquire new technical skills to enter the job market.



Decide on a great future and get moving into a tech career! ■

**Desa Burton** is the executive director of Zip Code Wilmington.

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## Durante Elected President of the Delaware State Bar Association

Charles J. Durante, a partner of Connolly Gallagher LLP, was elected president of the Delaware State Bar Association. Chuck Durante is one of the founding partners of Connolly Gallagher, where he practices in taxation, trusts, and estates. He has served on the Bar Association's executive committee since 2014 and has chaired the Association's Sections of Taxation and of Trusts and Estates.



Charles J. Durante

The Delaware State Bar Association is devoted to maintaining high ethical and professional standards for lawyers, cultivating collegiality among Delaware lawyers, advocating on behalf of the courts, and promoting diversity and inclusion in the profession. As the 75th president of the Bar Association, he will serve a one-year term.

## Navient Funds New Delaware Tech Veterans Resource Center

Delaware Tech recently opened its new Veterans Resource Center in Wilmington, supported by a grant from the Navient Community Fund. Located at the Orlando J. George, Jr. campus, the center provides a lounge area for students with military ties to study and connect. It also serves as a meeting space for Veterans Inspiring Progress (VIP), a stu-



## Assurance Media, LLC Acquires Under/Comm, Inc.

Assurance Media, LLC— a locally-owned, Women Business Enterprise (WBE)— has acquired Under/Comm, Inc., a telecommunications company headquartered in Milford, Delaware. For a number of years, Assurance Media has recognized the need to expand its geographic footprint beyond New Castle County. The acquisition of Under/Comm will provide Assurance Media with an office and warehouse in Sussex County, which will greatly enhance the company's ability to service its current customers downstate and reach new customers on Maryland's eastern shore.

Assurance Media's president, Jennifer McKenzie stated, "Like many businesses in Delaware, our company has faced multiple challenges in recruiting skilled and trained technicians. In addition to the increased geographic footprint, the acquisition of Under/Comm will provide Assurance Media with a team of certified technicians and RCDD designers."

Under/Comm's commitment to excellent customer service and providing leading-edge low-voltage technologies aligns with Assurance Media's long-standing mission to deliver cost-effective solutions for premise security, multimedia, and information technology solutions. The acquisition brings the company another step closer to becoming the "go-to" vendor for all low-voltage technologies



delivering security, multimedia, communication, and efficient building operations in the Mid-Atlantic region.

dent organization that offers support and networking for the campus veteran community.

"We are grateful for the financial assistance provided by the Navient Community Fund to help us support student veterans at Delaware Tech," said Delaware Tech President Dr. Mark T. Brainard. "Our military veterans are valuable members of our college community.

We greatly appreciate their service to our country, and we are committed to their academic and career success."

"Both Navient and Delaware Tech are committed to providing service members and veterans with the resources they need to achieve their academic goals," added Mike Maier, a U.S. Navy veteran and chief information officer at Navient. "We thank Delaware Tech for

the opportunity to support this dedicated space for student veterans. The Navient Community Fund is proud to support student veterans with a place to study, build lifelong connections, and succeed."

This is the second Veterans Resource Center supported by Navient philanthropy. In 2016, the fund helped establish a Veterans Resource

Center at Delaware Tech's Charles L. Terry Campus in Dover.

## J.P. Morgan Supports LGBTQ+ Entrepreneurs

StartOut and J.P. Morgan announced the ten companies selected to participate in the StartOut Growth Lab accelerator program. StartOut, the nation's largest nonprofit organization supporting LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs, launched Growth Lab in 2017 with five participating businesses. Since then, the program has helped 56 early-stage companies raise more than \$756 million in funding and create nearly 3,650 new jobs, and counting. As the Steel-level Supporting Partner of StartOut and co-lead sponsor of Growth Lab, J.P. Morgan is proud to help launch Cohort 10 and continue to empower LGBTQ+ business owners nationwide.

"LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs represent one of the most innovative and rapidly growing segments of our nation's business community, and J.P. Morgan is proud to expand its support for StartOut in its mission to accelerate that growth," said David Barbee, who leads JPMorgan Chase Commercial Banking's LGBTQ+ initiatives. "We are excited to welcome Cohort 10 to the Growth Lab and know that their growth will catalyze solutions to some of the most pressing issues of the day, from the green economy to enhanced healthcare services and beyond."

"In partnership with our co-sponsor, J.P. Morgan, we are thrilled to kick-off Cohort 10 with this impressive group of innovators," said Andres Wydler, executive director of StartOut. "The companies who have graduated from the Growth Lab continue to have a substantial impact on their communities. We can't wait to help accelerate the growth of this next group of passionate entrepreneurs!"



## Green Energy Startup Chooses Delaware for Expansion

Versogen, an industry-leading green energy startup, has chosen Delaware as the site for a \$4.8 million expansion that includes moving its operations from The Innovation Space in Wilmington, Delaware to larger, upgraded facilities at FMC Stine Research Center in Newark, Delaware.

Versogen targets deep decarbonization of the sectors of our economy that are not possible by green electricity. The startup is focused on anion-exchange membranes (AEMs) and AEM-based electrolyzers to produce low-cost green hydrogen at scale. The company's systems are engineered to make green hydrogen affordable and sustainable—from the materials used in manufacturing to the costs of operations.

"Delaware has been a hub for innovation for decades. Versogen is the latest success out of Delaware's Innovation Space and a great example of the collaborative environment we have for economic development in our state," said Governor John Carney. "We are excited for Versogen's expansion, bringing new

jobs and important technologies to New Castle County."

Versogen's investment includes renovating Stine Building 115 and creating additional lab space at the site, which will be fully operational by 2024. The company's relocation will accommodate its next level of operations, which includes adding 49 new jobs over the next three years to the 16 positions currently staffing the company.

"At the FMC Stine Research Center, we work hard to change the world for the better," said Dr. Kathleen Shelton, FMC executive vice president and chief technology officer. "We are excited to welcome Versogen and applaud them for developing industry-leading green energy technologies. We appreciate Delaware Prosperity Partnership for the continued collaboration and actively building a strong entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystem in the State of Delaware."

## Emory Hill's Jon Hickey Named President of Rotary Club of Wilmington

Jon Hickey was installed as the 109th President of Rotary Club of Wilmington on July 7th. The ceremony took place

at the Hotel DuPont in Downtown Wilmington, with Past President Peter Horty presiding.

Jon has been an agent with NAI Emory Hill Real Estate Services for 20 years, with a particular emphasis on downtown Wilmington. He has served Rotary in a variety of roles over the years, including as a director, committee chair, and club secretary. He is a Paul Harris Fellow and has also worked at the district level on global grants.

Rotary Club of Wilmington has a rich history of service to the Wilmington community. Since its founding in 1915 as the 148th Rotary Club worldwide, the club has sought to “encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise.”

## Tom Horne Named 2022 Citizen of the Year

The Del-Mar-Va Council, Boy Scouts of America announced Tom Horne, head of Chase Consumer Branch Banking and JPMorgan Chase & Co. Delaware market leader, as the recipient of the 2022 Citizen of the Year Award. Mr. Horne will be honored on Tuesday, October 18, 2022 at the Oberod Estate near Wilmington, Delaware.

A born and raised Delawarean, Mr. Horne grew up in New Castle, graduated from William Penn High School, and earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Delaware. He remains actively involved with both schools, serving on the Graduation Advisory Board at William Penn, and on the President’s Leadership Council, the Lerner Business College



Tom Horne

## Delaware is Top 8 in State Highway Safety Laws

Delaware Safety Council, the nation’s first state safety council founded in 1919, announced that Delaware is one of only eight states to receive an overall Green Rating from the 2022 Roadmap of State Highway Safety Laws report. The report is issued by the ADVOCATES for Highway & Auto Safety.

The report breaks out every state and grades them by categories and the laws enforced in those categories. Delaware was rated Green (significantly advanced) in Teen Driving Laws and Distracted Driving Laws, Yellow (needs improvement) in Occupant Protection Laws—due to lack of a motorcycle helmet law—and Red (falls behind in recommended laws for this category) in Child Passenger Laws—due to the lack of a booster seat law and a no rear-facing through age two law.

In an opinion poll by Advocates gauging public concern about several highway issues, the top two concerns: Distracted Driving (caused by cell phones or mobile devices) and Impaired Driving were the same two categories that Delaware received Green Ratings.



Advisory Board, and as a member of the Executive Mentors-Scholars program at the University of Delaware. He also serves on the Foundation Board at Delaware State University, is a Board Member and past president of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Delaware, serves on the Easterseals Advisory Board, and is a member of the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and the Executive Council of the Delaware Business Roundtable.

## Wohlsen Construction Promotes Bud Grove

Wohlsen Construction Company announced that Bernard L. “Bud” Grove—who joined the Wohlsen team in 2011—has been promoted to senior vice president of senior living. In his role, Bud will lead Wohlsen’s senior living initiatives across its geographic footprint and provide support and expertise to assure client and project expectations are delivered.

## ChristianaCare Receives Top Rankings

ChristianaCare has been rated as a Best Hospital by *U.S. News & World Report* in its 2022-23 annual rankings. ChristianaCare was ranked the No. 1 hospital in Delaware and the No. 4 hospital in the Philadelphia region. The organization ranked 42nd in the nation in obstetrics and gynecology and also as high performing in orthopedics.

“This recognition is another affirmation that we continue to deliver high-quality, safe care and an exceptional experience to everyone we serve,” said Kert Anzilotti, M.D., MBA, chief medical officer at ChristianaCare. “The challenges of the past few years have been unprecedented, and our caregivers have risen to every one with an unwavering focus on excellence. We not only met the needs of our patients and community through the worst moments of the pandemic; we actually improved in our quality and safety metrics during this time.”

# WHAT'S NEXT? Chamber Calendar



**SEPTEMBER 15, 2022**

## Networking Breakfast at University of Delaware Athletics

Lets go Hens! Start your work day by networking with other business leaders in the new University of Delaware Whitney Athletic Center.

**FREE** for members



**SEPTEMBER 22, 2022**

## Delaware Networking Station

Join us for the Delaware Networking Station - your business connection destination. The Delaware State Chamber of Commerce and Better Business Bureau of Delaware are partnering for our annual joint tabletop mixer at the Chase Center on the Riverfront.

**FREE** to attend

**Exhibit tables** & sponsorship opportunities are available



**OCTOBER 13, 2022**

## Developing Delaware: Conversation, Collaboration, Innovation

Delaware is small, but diverse. We all benefit in the end if we engage in conversation and collaboration to generate job creation. The innovations created from these partnerships will help businesses thrive in Delaware. Join us in bringing together business leaders from around the state to participate in engaging discussions around workforce and economic development.

**\$55** Members

**\$75** Future Members



**OCTOBER 6, 2022**

## Networking Breakfast at Delaware Technical Community College

Join us for a morning of networking at Delaware Technical Community College's Wilmington Campus.

**FREE** for members

When you think of the Delaware State Chamber, think of

**#NETWORKING**

Fill up your calendar by visiting our events page online at

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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.



**Michael J. Quaranta**  
*President*  
(302) 576-6585  
mqaranta@dsc.com



**Kelly Basile**  
*Vice President, Strategic Communications*  
(302) 576-6564  
kbasile@dsc.com



**Melissa Brayman**  
*Office Administrator*  
(302) 576-6572  
mbrayman@dsc.com



**Regina Donato**  
*Manager, Program & Communications*  
(302) 576-6567  
rdonato@dsc.com



**Ken Evans**  
*Account Executive*  
(302) 576-6576  
kevans@dsc.com



**Tyler Micik**  
*Manager, Public Policy & Government Relations*  
(302) 576-6590  
tmicik@dsc.com



**Fred Miller**  
*Advertising/Retention*  
(302) 576-6579  
fmiller2@dsc.com



**Helana Rodriguez**  
*Director, The Partnership, Inc.*  
(302) 576-6575  
hrodriguez@dsc.com



**Matt Volk**  
*Digital Advertising Sales*  
(302) 576-6571  
mvolk@dsc.com



**Kerri Welcher**  
*Events Manager*  
(302) 576-6566  
kwelcher@dsc.com



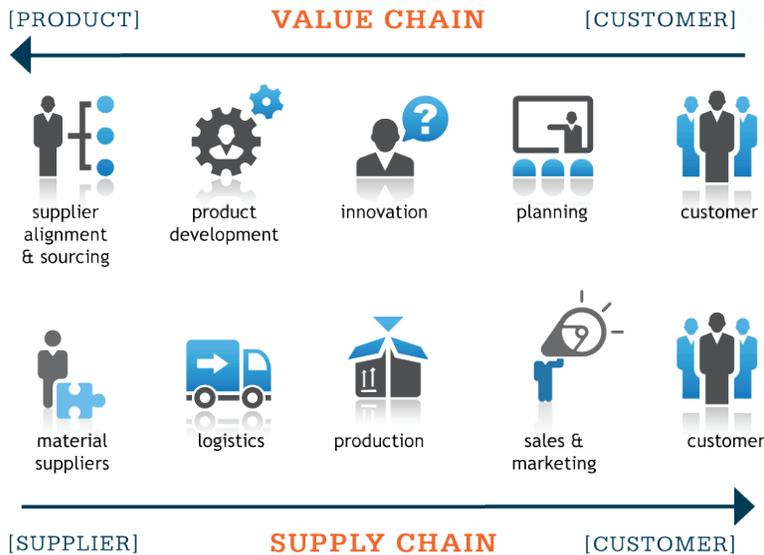
1201 N. Orange Street, P.O. Box 671  
Wilmington, DE 19899-0671  
(302) 655-7221  
www.dsc.com  
facebook.com/delawarestatechamber  
twitter: @DEStateChamber

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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