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MOHAWK VALLEY

2023



The Central New York
BUSINESS JOURNAL

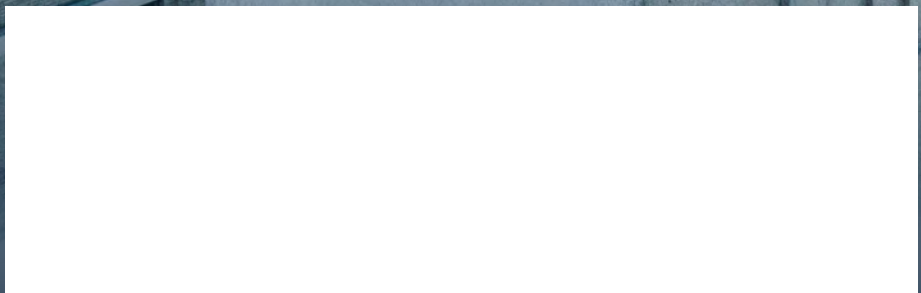
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On the cover: An aerial view of downtown Utica. Photograph courtesy of Zoey Advertising

A WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR

IN JULY, TURNING STONE RESORT CASINO CELEBRATED ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY. A GREAT DEAL HAS CHANGED DURING THIS TIME. THIRTY YEARS AGO, THERE WAS NO BLUEPRINT FOR HOW TO BUILD AN AWARD-WINNING DESTINATION RESORT. THERE WAS ONLY AN EMPTY CORNFIELD AND A BELIEF THAT WITH HARD WORK, PARTNERSHIPS AND A COMMITMENT TO REINVESTMENT, WE COULD BUILD AN ENGINE OF JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH.

While we are proud of everything we accomplished over these past three decades, it is in our nature to focus on what is yet to come and what must be done to achieve it.

As we prepare for the next 30 years, we know that the same level of commitment to reinvestment and partnerships, along with a bold vision for the future of our region, will be the key to its success for the next three decades and beyond.

As we embark on the next chapter of our journey, a \$370 million investment will re-envision Turning Stone Resort Casino for the next generation, ensuring that Turning Stone remains an industry leader and economic engine for Central New York for years to come. Early next year, we will break ground on a two-year project that will double our conference facilities with new meeting rooms, new ballrooms, outdoor courtyards and much more. When complete, this new convention space will help Turning Stone and Central New York attract even bigger events to the region.

In addition to the new conference facility, we will build The Crescent, a 258-room hotel that will be home to Salt Seafood & Raw Bar, our latest fine-dining restaurant. The Crescent will welcome guests with stunning architecture that is sure to make an unforgettable impression. Inside, one- and two-bedroom suites will offer an elevated experience with spacious layouts and elegant decor.

In the coming months, we will open our newest nightlife destination, NY Rec & Social Club. Located in Exit 33 at the former Lava Nightclub, NY Rec & Social Club will become the new home of The Lounge with Caesars Sportsbook and offer a unique entertainment experience.

Turning Stone will grow rapidly during the next two years, yet these changes are more than an expansion. They represent a true evolution and a commitment to the continued growth of our enterprises and this region. The success of Turning Stone has proven that when we invest in Central New York and everything it has to offer, there is no limit to what can be achieved. We know this will remain true for the next 30 years, just as it was true when Turning Stone welcomed guests for the first time.

While Turning Stone is the foundation for this evolution, it will impact all of our enterprises. That is why on October 1, Oneida Nation Enterprises will become Turning Stone Enterprises. This new, unified identity reflects the role of every employee in establishing Turning Stone as the region's top destination and extending its reputation across our operations.

It is appropriate that our 30th anniversary is defined by evolution. Constant progress has been our business model for three decades. It has shown us that as we grow and succeed, so do our employees and the region. As we celebrate this milestone and look to the future, we know that this symbiotic relationship will be key to sustaining this growth for generations to come.

Ray Halbritter

*Oneida Indian Nation Representative and
CEO of Oneida Nation Enterprises*



TURNING STONE
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The Mohawk Valley in Motion

The Mohawk Valley region's economic landscape has undergone a dramatic change that has turned pessimism and cynicism into confidence and progress, with more than \$2 billion in public and private investment already committed to revitalizing the area.

Several new development initiatives recently announced or started within the last year are adding to the region's continued economic vitality, which reaffirms the region's sustained economic momentum.

The Mohawk Valley has moved forward through gut-wrenching economic challenges. Now, the region's community and overarching economic revitalization continues.

SITE DEVELOPMENT: Marcy Nanocenter

In 2001, Mohawk Valley EDGE reported on the zoning, and partnerships between local, state, and federal agencies to pre-permit the site and attract the chip fab industry, stating that the industry's potential to strengthen the area "cannot be understated." Promises of more than \$2 billion of private investment, jobs, and spin-off benefits for future growth and stabilization of property values were set forth. After two decades plus of commitment, these efforts have transformed the Mohawk Valley.

In April 2022, Wolfspeed commenced operations of its state-of-the-art 200 mm SiC Mohawk Valley fab. Now, they are shipping SiC semiconductor products to customers. In 2022, Wolfspeed announced agreements with Lucid Motors, Jaguar Land Rover, and Mercedes-Benz — fueling electric vehicles from race-car drivers to commuters, alike. This work continues. As the industry emerges and expands, Wolfspeed plans to increase its investment at its Mohawk Valley Fab with additional tooling that would maximize production output, enabling the company to meet growing customer demand for

200 mm SiC semiconductors technology. The company anticipates that its total investment in the Mohawk Valley Fab will increase from \$1 billion to about \$2 billion as it increases production output from Marcy.

This past February, Park Grove Realty secured site plan and SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act) approvals from the Town of Marcy Planning Board for the Tech Barn project. Park Grove intends to build 182 market-rate apartments and 50 townhomes, planning for 40,000 square feet of commercial space and lifestyle amenities on a 33-acre site along the Marcy SUNY Parkway. This year, the New York Upstate Chapter of the American Planning Association recognized Mohawk Valley EDGE and Environmental Design and Research (EDR) with the 2022 Best Practice Award for master planning of Tech Barn. This award, and the overall planning process,



PHOTO CREDIT: WWW.NEXUSUTICA.COM

The Utica University Nexus Center is generating a major economic impact on the region by attracting key sport competitions.

highlight how innovative and state-of-the-art planning methods and practices help to create communities of lasting value.

At SUNY Poly, Semikron Danfoss has more than 200 employees at its power module factory and produces products for the automotive industry and other customers. The company views its SUNY Poly production facility as a "key growth center" for its North American operations and is looking at additional expansion



VIEWPOINT: STEVE DIMEO

PRESIDENT

Mohawk Valley EDGE

opportunities, reinforcing the workforce pipeline and future opportunities for the region.

CATALYSTS FOR INVESTMENT: Downtown Utica

In Utica, Mohawk Valley Health System (MVHS) is nearing completion of the state-of-the-art Wynn Hospital that is expected to open this October. The new downtown hospital enhances health-care delivery services in the Mohawk Valley and has been a major catalyst in the revitalization of downtown Utica.

This 10-story, 700,000-square-foot facility has changed downtown Utica's skyline, with more changes to come. Construction continues at the 1,350-vehicle downtown parking garage next to Wynn Hospital that is slated to open by the middle of the first quarter of 2024. Construction on the 94,000-square-foot physician medical office complex is progressing. It's a site that will include an ambulatory surgery center, as well as other medical services critical to Wynn Hospital and the region's health-care services.

At a total cost of \$64 million, the Nexus Center opened last December. Nexus has had an immediate economic impact in drawing major tournaments and sporting events that are proving to be a major tourism and entertainment draw for the region that is generating increased sales tax and bed-tax revenue for Oneida County. Earlier this year, Nexus was rebranded as the Utica University

Nexus Center. In 2024, The facility will host the IIHF Ice Hockey Women's World Championship and the World Lacrosse Box Championships.

In the last decade, there has been over \$1 billion of public and private investment within a mile radius of Hotel Street, a block of historic buildings that will soon undergo multiple changes, bringing new market-rate apartments and several ground-floor commercial units to the table.

GROWING DEVELOPMENTS:

Shovel-Ready Sites

Advancement continues in key regionally significant industries, in step with ongoing state-based initiatives.

Last year, Gov. Kathy Hochul unveiled the FAST NY Program to increase the inventory of shovel-ready sites that could be marketed to strategic industries of statewide importance, "supercharging" New York state's economy. Mohawk Valley EDGE is actively seeking to utilize FAST NY funding to advance two key development sites in Oneida County.

In coordination with Oneida County Airport and Economic Development staff, C&S Companies is finalizing the remaining scope and permitting items for 280 acres at the Griffiss International Airport's "Triangle Parcel." In addition to potential aeronautical use, the Griffiss Triangle site is well suited to capture supply chain growth resulting from Micron's mega memory semiconductor project in Clay.

Additionally, EDGE has applied to Empire State Development to advance the shovel-ready status of the remaining acreage at the Marcy Nanocenter Campus. EDGE will work with key partners to relocate electrical infrastructure, develop a supply chain facility that will support the region's high-tech manufacturing growth, and complete advanced site work at Parcel #2, capable of supporting an additional 1 million square feet of cleanroom space and additional support facilities.

These FAST NY funds will be sought to fund the critical site and infrastructure improvements to bring each site to the market at new heights, furthering economic potential.

Restoring Vibrant Communities

In 2022, Mohawk Valley EDGE secured two EPA grants: one for brownfield assessments and \$1 million for a Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund. These EPA grants are enhancing the region's ability to promote the repurposing of key vacant and underutilized buildings, including properties that have uncertain environmental issues requiring further study and potential environmental remediation. In the village of Oriskany, the former Waterbury Felt Mill site is set amidst an ongoing transition with EDGE and other community partners.

The Mohawk Valley region continues to successfully build vibrant urban centers by pumping life into new buildings. Redevelopment of the Commercial Travelers Building — located at 70 Genesee St., with 32 market-rate apartments, and commercial space — and the former Utica Steam Cotton Building — located at 600 State State St., with 64 market-rate apartments and commercial amenities, including Brooklyn Pickle — are two excellent examples in downtown Utica. Both projects are adding to the allure of downtown Utica as a 24/7 neighborhood.

This community-based positive impact is being noticed. The Mohawk Valley has gained major traction in securing project funding and attracting developer commitments for several key vacant and underutilized properties. Key sites poised for redevelopment include the former Duofold building in the village of Iliion; the Mayro Building at the corner of Genesee Street and



ADAM ROMBEL/CNYBJ

Griffiss Business and Technology Park has emerged as a major catalyst in the economic resurgence of the region's economy, driven by employers related to the region's strengths in semiconductors, cybersecurity, and uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS).

Bank Place in Utica; and, a new exterior building façade, roof and, mechanical improvements for the second and third floors of 131 Boston Place in Utica. Also in the works are the repurposing of vacant buildings on Hotel Street in the Lower Bagg's Square Historic District; demolition of the former Columbus School site in the City of Rome; and selected demolition and repurposing of the former Waterbury Felt Mill site in the village of Oriskany.

Projects & Impacts

In 2022, Mohawk Valley EDGE helped attract nearly \$1.3 million in grants and equipment financing for small businesses. The Oneida County Industrial Development Agency (OCIDA) approved \$123.8 million in tax benefits for eligible projects, and over the past five years, it has induced and closed on projects with around \$1.6 billion in public and private investment.

Annually, Griffiss Business and Technology Park generates about \$4.3 million in PILOT payments and property taxes that are distributed pro-rata to the City of Rome, Oneida County, and Rome City School District.

Griffiss Business and Technology Park has emerged as a major catalyst in the economic resurgence of the region's economy, driven by employers related to the region's strengths in semiconductors, cybersecurity, and uncrewed aircraft systems (UAS).

The UAS test site continues to grow. Last October, FAA designated and certified the 50-mile (Beyond Visual Line of Site (BVLOS) drone corridor from Griffiss to Syracuse. Last summer, SkyDome, the nation's largest indoor UAS testing



The Rome Health Medical Center.
PHOTO CREDIT: ROME HEALTH

Rome Health continues facilities transformation

BY TRACI DELORE
tde lore@cnybj.com

ROME — Transformation continues to be on the agenda at Rome Health, which will kick off a \$30 million project this fall to build four new operating rooms.

That comes in the wake of renovating the Rome Health Medical Center last year and the grand opening of a new women's surgical suite earlier this year.

"We're working through the final stages of the really specific design," for the new operating rooms, says Rome Health COO

Ryan Thompson. "We're working toward getting a shovel in the ground this year."

The four new operating rooms will replace ones in use for nearly 60 years and will be larger with all the necessary systems to power current surgical technology, Thompson says. Rome Health received \$26 million in state health care facility transformation grant funds for the project.

All the work is part of a continuing quest to provide the best services possible to the community, he says. That even carries over to patient technology with a newly redesigned website that is mobile friendly.

Between the construction projects and Rome Health's employees, the health-care system remains a robust contributor to the area's economy, Thompson notes.

"At nearly 1,000 employees, that's significant workforce generation in the community," he says. "I like to say that jobs bring more jobs."

According to a recent economic-impact analysis, Rome Health contributes more than \$158 million to the local economy. That includes more than \$16 million in tax dollars, according to a Healthcare Association of New York State, Inc., analysis.

The majority of Rome Health's funding comes from Medicare, Medicaid, and private insurance, and each dollar received gen-



PHOTO CREDIT: ROME HEALTH
The new women's surgical suite at Rome Health.

▶ ROME HEALTH, CONTINUED ON PAGE 38



CREATING A NATIONAL MODEL FOR YOUTH & FAMILIES IN THE MOHAWK VALLEY



Build *healthy* children & families



Increase *access* to supportive services



Promote children's social-emotional *learning*



Educate the next generation of *leaders*

ICAN's Family Resource Center is uniting two of our region's greatest assets: ICAN's youth and family programs and the Utica Children's Museum. A hub for learning, wellness, connectedness and FUN, this will be the first time that a children's museum is co-located and partnered with a human services non-profit.

The all new Children's Museum will be reflective of our community and will celebrate loving where we live, with exhibits that showcase workforce opportunity, culture, seasonal changes and more.



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Danfoss Silicon Power is located at
330 Technology Drive in Marcy.

PHOTO CREDIT: ZOEYADVERTISING.COM



Danfoss to power all North America facilities with solar energy by 2025

Danfoss North America recently signed a power-purchase agreement with CIG Capital, a U.S.-based project financing firm, to purchase about 75 megawatts (MW) of solar power from a solar farm in Texas, starting in 2025.

BY ERIC REINHARDT

Journal Staff | e einhardt@cnybj.com

The initial agreement term is 12 years, allowing Danfoss to fully replace its annual electricity usage in North America with green energy through at least 2037, the firm said in a May 1 announcement on its website.

Danfoss North America said it made

the agreement with an eye toward achieving its global decarbonization goals.

Danfoss Silicon Power is located at 330 Technology Drive in Marcy with operations in the Computer Chip Commercialization Center (Quad-C). The Quad-C facility is part of the SUNY Polytechnic Institute's campus in Marcy.

The new agreement will provide Danfoss with green certificates, sig-

nifying that it is supplying the North American electrical grid with the full amount of green electricity needed to power all 24 factories and 36 locations in North America, and will reduce Danfoss' carbon footprint in the region by 75 percent.

"As part of our ESG goals, Danfoss has committed to achieving carbon neutrality across our global operations by 2030,"

Soren Revsbech Dam, head of ESG and Decarbonization, Global Services Real Estate at Danfoss, said in the announcement. ESG is short for environmental, social, and governance.

“This agreement to secure green energy for our North America operations will reduce our global emissions by 21%. This is not only a significant step in our journey to becoming carbon neutral, but it also demonstrates that we are serious about putting sustainability at the heart of our business.”

CIG Capital will be building the 6-square-mile farm in the panhandle region of Texas. Groundbreaking is scheduled for November 2023, with the farm becoming fully operational by the spring of 2025. The solar-farm capacity is projected to be 509 MW of solar power, of which Danfoss will utilize 15 percent, the company said.

The next focus for Danfoss in its decarbonization efforts will be on reducing and reusing energy across its North America locations, employing various Danfoss technologies, such as oil-free, variable-speed compressors and other heating and cooling solutions that support heat recovery and energy efficiency.

As part of the science-based targets initiative (SBTi), Danfoss wants to become carbon neutral in its global operations (scope 1 & 2) by 2030 and says it will reduce its value-chain emissions (scope 3) by 15 percent by 2030. This commitment is included in the targets of Danfoss’ three step-change initiatives on decarbonization, circularity, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Danfoss says it has already seen progress in decoupling environmental impact from business growth by delivering 7 percent decrease in scope 1 and 2 emissions while growing 15 percent organically in 2022.

Additionally, the Danfoss headquarters campus site in Denmark became carbon neutral in 2022. The firm reached carbon neutrality through energy-saving projects, utilization of excess heat from processes and data centers, sourcing of green energy, and offsetting residual emissions. ■



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Genesis Group board elects new officers and trustees

UTICA — At a recent meeting of the Genesis Group board of trustees, the board approved the following individuals to serve as officers and trustees.

The 2023-2024 officers are:

- Board Chairperson — Gene Quadraro
- Vice Chairperson — Rebecca Ruffing
- Assistant Vice Chairperson — Christine Ossont
- Secretary — Adrian Colosimo
- Treasurer — Richard Presky

Other trustees named to serve on the Genesis board include: Vincent Coyne, Wesley Cupp, Keith Fenstemacher, Roxanne Mutchler, Frank Przybycien, Alice Savino, Renee Scialdo-Shevat, and Pamela Way.

The Genesis Group says it is a civic and community organization dedicated to adaptive leadership to meet new challenges and to create positive and transformational impact in the Mohawk Valley region. Raymond J. Durso, Jr. is its president and CEO. ■



Quadraro



Ruffing



Ossont



Colosimo



Presky



PHOTO CREDIT: IT'S A UTICA THING

It's a Utica Thing offers a *new vibe* with an *old Utica feel*

BY TRACI DELORE
Journal Staff | tdelo e@cnybj.com

UTICA — Charles Digristina has been in the restaurant business for more than 30 years, starting with his first pizzeria that he opened when he was just 19.

One pizzeria eventually turned into three, and then in 2014, he opened a food truck. Digristina named the food truck business “It’s a Utica Thing” after an encounter with a volunteer at a festival in 2013. He gave the volunteer some tomatoes so she could make some sauce. When she wanted to pay, Digristina told her no, just share some sauce with him when it was done.

“That’s what we do in Utica,” he recalls telling her. “It’s a Utica thing.” Digristina’s wife told him to put that slogan on a shirt.

“So, I actually did put it on a shirt, then a hat,” he says. “Then the side of a food

truck, and now on a new restaurant.” That’s how Charlie’s Pizza in North Utica became It’s a Utica Thing Kitchen & Bar, which celebrated its grand opening in June.

“This brand is really important,” Digristina says. “This brand is about [Thruway] exit 31. This brand is about the city of Utica.”

He credits his sons Vincenzo and Charlie with convincing him to reimagine his pizzeria into a full-service restaurant.

Leading up to the remodel, Digristina sold his New Hartford pizzeria to several employees and his Syracuse location to a relative. He closed the North Utica location on New Year’s Eve, and the work began.

“We gutted and emptied the entire restaurant,” Digristina says. Work included a complete overhaul of the kitchen, custom booths, creation of a community

area, new tables, and more. “We started at one corner, and we just didn’t stop.”

Digristina worked with Mark Barbado of Marand Builders and Renovators LLC on the project, which cost about \$400,000

▶ IT'S A UTICA THING, CONTINUED ON PAGE 38



Neighborhood Revitalization Brings New Life to Communities of All Sizes



Cornhill Revitalization Project partners announced plans for two neighborhood impact centers on October 24, 2022.

At the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties, we have a long-term commitment to help our partners bring about neighborhood revitalization—to breathe new life into communities from Little Falls to Camden. By definition, revitalization is the act or process of giving new life, fresh vitality or energy to someone or something. In this case, revitalizing neighborhoods embraces a wide range of programs, services, improvements—in short, supporting opportunity and enhancing quality of life.

Revitalization means different things for different communities, and it's happening all around the Mohawk Valley, with many nonprofit partners working to make the neighborhoods they serve the best that they can be. It won't happen overnight, but we're committed to long-term partnerships and collaborative efforts that will truly make a difference.

The Community Foundation's neighborhood revitalization roles are many: partner, collaborator, funder, facilitator. And our strategy is "multi-focused," so that positive change can happen in multiple

places now and for years to come. Utica, the largest community in our area, has multiple neighborhoods throughout the city with many pressing needs. Together with nonprofit, public and private sector partners, we are addressing critical longstanding challenges in innovative ways.

In Utica, the **Cornhill Revitalization Project**—an effort we've undertaken with Mid-Utica Neighborhood Preservation Corporation, Collective Impact Network, People First and the City of Utica—will create 100 new apartments and 30,000 square feet of commercial and community space at two newly constructed "impact centers" on West and James streets. In addition to addressing the city's affordable housing needs, the centers will provide their residents and the neighborhood's with access to nonprofit partner programs and services, community meeting spaces, a business incubator, a dedicated arts and media studio, gym and wellness facility, an urban grocery store, and much more. Dedicated staff and an online navigational platform will connect people in the neighborhood with the programs and services they

need, and the organizations that provide them.

Other "impact centers" are poised to make a big difference in the Mohawk Valley. Some of the following are already meeting needs, others are preparing to do more—and some will come online in the next few years.

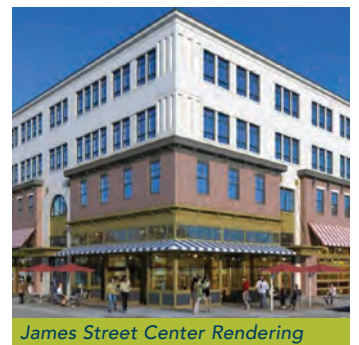
In Utica, **Johnson Park's new Community Center** will offer a food pantry, low-income housing, and community-use spaces. **50 Forward West Side's** Court Street building renovation will provide senior and neighborhood-focused programs, services, events, and more. **Midtown Utica Community Center** is rehabilitating community-use and meeting spaces for its new-resident-focused multicultural programs and services through a building renovation and upgrades. Downtown, the **Utica Center for Development's** Washington Street building rehab will provide enhanced community and meeting spaces, recreational programming, and an updated gym. **Artspace**, a planned new construction project on Park Avenue, stems from a national artist-specific concept. Its affordable housing will be available to artists

and others, and the building will feature community and gallery spaces.

Across both counties, other impact centers are in place or are taking shape:

Camden Life Center, a project of the Center for Family Life and Recovery, recently celebrated the opening of its multi-partner Main Street facility, which provides a range of behavioral and mental health services, and community-use space. **Little Falls Youth and Family Center**, the former YMCA at 15 Jackson Street plans to expand on its long history of providing youth and family programs, and building rehab is underway for Rome's West Dominick Street **REACH Center**, an expanded facility that will help close service gaps in behavioral and mental health, and substance abuse and addiction services.

Revitalizing neighborhoods is just part of what the Community Foundation does in partnership with donors, nonprofit organizations, local government and others dedicated to our shared vision: A vibrant region with opportunity for all. With the area's resurgence in recent years, progress is happening—and there's a lot more to come. To support these ongoing neighborhood revitalization efforts or to learn more, visit foundationhoc.org/revitalization.



James Street Center Rendering



PHOTO CREDIT: GRIFFISS INSTITUTE MEDIA

Representatives of the companies involved in this year's HUSTLE Defense Accelerator are pictured here. This year's program is separated into a 12-week accelerate track or an 8-week elevate track, depending on the growth stage of each company involved. The Innovare Advancement Center, which is part of the Griffiss Institute in Rome, is hosting the HUSTLE Defense Accelerator. HUSTLE is short for Helping Upstate Science and Technology Leaders and Entrepreneurs.

HUSTLE Defense Accelerator participants prep for Demo Day

BY ERIC REINHARDT
Journal Staff | e.einhardt@cnybj.com

ROME — The nine companies involved in this year's HUSTLE Defense Accelerator at the Innovare Advancement Center at Griffiss Institute in Rome are preparing for their Demo Day, which is set for Aug. 17.

HUSTLE stands for Helping Upstate Science and Technology Leaders and Entrepreneurs.

Griffiss Institute broke this year's program into two tracks. The accelerate track is a 12-week program that is for early stage teams, and the elevate track is an eight-week program for more advanced teams.

"We had a broad mix of companies — those that were very early in their development and some that maybe had a couple of years under their belt, but were looking to explore the [U.S.] Department of Defense as a customer and a partner," Heather Hage, president and CEO of the Griffiss Institute in Rome, tells CNYBJ in a June 28 interview.

The HUSTLE Defense Accelerator is described as an "elite and immersive" accelerator for seed-stage tech startups pushing artificial intelligence / machine learning (AI/ML), cyber, quantum and UAS solutions with dual-use potential and the drive to elevate the United States' national security and economic competitiveness, per the Griffiss Institute's website.

Many of the participating teams are from upstate New York. They include a few university spinouts and some firms, such as EMPEQ, that have been participating in the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

"If you look into their lineage, [EMPEQ is] a great example of a company that has stood up in New York and moved around all the various startup resources in our Upstate ecosystem to be successful," says Hage.

Depending on what track they're involved in, the HUSTLE teams either started in late May or late June but all the participants are working toward the Demo Day, which is set for Aug. 17.

The teams that started in late May spent their first few weeks focusing on their value proposition, understanding the customer discovery landscape, working with the Griffiss Institute team to get some advisement on how to set priorities during the program. "How to make the most use of their time with us," says Hage.

In the eight-week program, teams step up their involvement with customers along

with the activity in the training and development exercises that help them to grow and make more connections in the Upstate region.

The activity includes guest speakers who talk about both their successes and failures as entrepreneurs and sharing technical expertise such as dealing with a business program or a financial issue, using government grants, and refining their business model.

“So when I say technical expertise, I mean both in the sense of technology connections but also in problem solving real issues for their business and our team connecting them externally with the custom resources that they need to be successful,” says Hage.

On Demo Day, the participating companies will be competing for investments from funding that was raised for the HUSTLE program totaling at least \$300,000, according to Hage.

The dollar amounts of the investments are up to the judges taking part in the Demo Day event.

“It gets allocated however the judges determine,” Hage notes.

She also tells CNYBJ that the general public is welcome to attend the Demo Day event. ■

Participating Companies

The companies involved in the 12-week accelerate track include:

- ◆ **Accessible Automation of Rome**, which developed a wireless temperature-control system;
- ◆ **Drone City LLC**, which describes itself as a “people-friendly drone-delivery services;”
- ◆ **Kquika**, which says it “discovered a way to assist airline enterprises in resolving flight delay issues and ultimately becoming customer-centric through predictive maintenance software;” per its website.

Those involved the 8-week elevate track include:

- ◆ **Paterson Aerospace Systems Corporation**, which describes itself as a “think tank of professional engineers and scientists with a passion for protecting environmental assets for safer and cleaner space exploration;”
- ◆ **BosonQ Psi**, which says it has a vision “to be the premier Simulation software company utilizing Quantum Computing to serve enterprise customers;”
- ◆ **LLUME** (organic robotics corporation) started at Cornell University and is working with Light Lace technology. The core team Light Lace is now working on “applying these game changing sensors to different form factors to provide real time feedback on motion, muscle fatigue, and vitals of professional athletes;” per its website;
- ◆ **EMPEQ** (Empower Equity, Inc.), which says its “Fast Site Survey combines One-Click Capture of detailed, accurate data on building equipment and customizable forms and templates to make site surveys up to 80% more efficient;” per its website;
- ◆ **Cyberspara**, which is “developing a transformational and unique game-based learning platform, called Digital-PASS to empower individuals to mitigate security threats from the Internet;” and,
- ◆ **Imagine Aerial**, which describes itself as “not only a drone company but a technical DATA company.” Its video, thermal, and live streaming have been deployed for U.S. Rowing, the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Border Patrol, and major municipalities, fire, police, real estate, developers, and private corporations.



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Syracuse-based NUAIR says the annual public-safety UAS summit is set for Aug. 8-9 in both Oriskany and Rome. UAS is short for uncrewed aircraft system.

PHOTO CREDIT: NUAIR



NUAIR, NYS to host annual state public-safety UAS summit

BY ERIC REINHARDT

Journal Staff | e.einhardt@cnybj.com

NUAIR and the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) are set to host the 5th annual NYS Public Safety UAS Summit on Aug. 8-9 in Oriskany and Rome.

The summit is open to all public-safety agencies. The summit's goal is to train and educate public-safety officials about the latest drone regulations and to showcase the latest uncrewed aircraft system (UAS) technologies designed specifically for public-safety operations.

The target audience for these events is a broad range of public-safety officials, including law enforcement, the fire service, emergency management, transportation, and public works.

Syracuse-based NUAIR is short for Northeast UAS Airspace Integration Research. The nonprofit focuses on UAS operations, aeronautical research, safety

management, and consulting services.

NUAIR manages operations of the FAA-designated New York UAS test site at Griffiss International Airport in Rome on behalf of Oneida County. It is also responsible for the advancement of New York's 50-mile UAS Corridor between Rome and Syracuse.

DHSES will host the first day of the summit on Aug. 8 at the State Preparedness Training Center (SPTC) in Oriskany. It will include a series of presentations on key policy issues, case studies, and best practices concerning the use of UAS for public-safety operations.

The first day at the SPTC is intended for public-safety officials, NUAIR said. It is not open to the general public or private-sector representatives.

NUAIR will then host the second day of the summit on Aug. 9 at Griffiss International Airport in Rome. The second day will include live demonstrations from UAS vendors with the latest technologies designed specifically for public-safety

operations.

The 2023 event will have more vendors, more live demos, and an upgraded sound system for presentations, NUAIR noted.

The 2022 UAS summit attracted more than 150 public-safety officials from across the state who received updates on the latest drone regulations pertinent to first responders and witnessed live demonstrations of the latest UAS technology and services designed specifically to help public-safety operations, according to the NUAIR website.

"DHSES works throughout the year to train public-safety officials on emerging trends and technologies to help them succeed in their missions. UAS has become more prevalent among emergency responders, and we are proud to support NUAIR in hosting this important annual training in Oneida County," Jackie Bray, commissioner of the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, said following the 2022 summit. ■



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Oneida Indian Nation centers evolution around Turning Stone brand

BY TRACI DELORE

Journal Staff | tdelo_e@cnybj.com

VERONA — Thirty years after opening Turning Stone Resort Casino and 10 years after reaching a landmark settlement with New York State and Oneida and Madison counties, the Oneida Indian Nation is not resting on its laurels.

The Nation is, in fact, undergoing an evolution that begins with improvements at Turning Stone and ends with a re-branding of its Oneida Nation Enterprises business arm.

“In July, Turning Stone Resort Casino celebrated its 30th anniversary,” Oneida Nation Representative Ray Halbritter said in a press statement. “A great deal has changed during this time. Thirty years ago, there was no blueprint for how to build an award-winning destination resort. There was only an empty cornfield and a belief that with hard work, partnerships, and a commitment to reinvestment, we could build an engine of job creation and economic growth.”

The Oneida Indian Nation’s econom-

ic impact on the region is substantial, according to an economic-impact study by Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics company.

Operational spending by the Nation for fiscal year 2022-2023 totals \$511.9 million, with another \$9.4 million coming from off-site spending by non-local visitors. The Nation paid out \$89.1 million in settlement-agreement payments last year, bringing the total to \$642.3 million since the agreement went into effect.

Last year, the Oneida Indian Nation also paid \$115 million to local vendors in Onondaga, Oneida, and Madison counties. Those payments generated a total economic impact of \$177 million and supported about 1,340 full-time and part-time jobs, the Tourism Economics study said. That total economic impact of \$177 million generated \$23.1 million in state and local taxes.

Rather than be content with what the Oneida Indian Nation has already built and accomplished, Halbritter has his sights always set to the future.

“As we prepare for the next 30 years,

we know that the same level of commitment to reinvestment and partnerships, along with a bold vision for the future of our region, will be the key to its success for the next three decades and beyond.”

In that light, a \$370 million project to reimagine Turning Stone will begin early next year. The two-year project will add 77,000 square feet of new events space, eight meeting rooms with 9,000 square feet of space, two ballrooms including a 30,000-square-foot grand ballroom, an outdoor courtyard and outdoor event space, an indoor parking garage with 2,000 spaces, and The Crescent, a 258-room hotel. Along with serving as home to fine-dining restaurant, Salt Seafood & Raw Bar, the hotel will feature king and double-queen guest rooms as well as one- and two-bedroom suites.

Existing conference spaces will be spruced up with new drop-down screens, projectors, other technology, and new décor.

The Turning Stone Hotel will undergo

▶ TURNING STONE, CONTINUED ON PAGE 36

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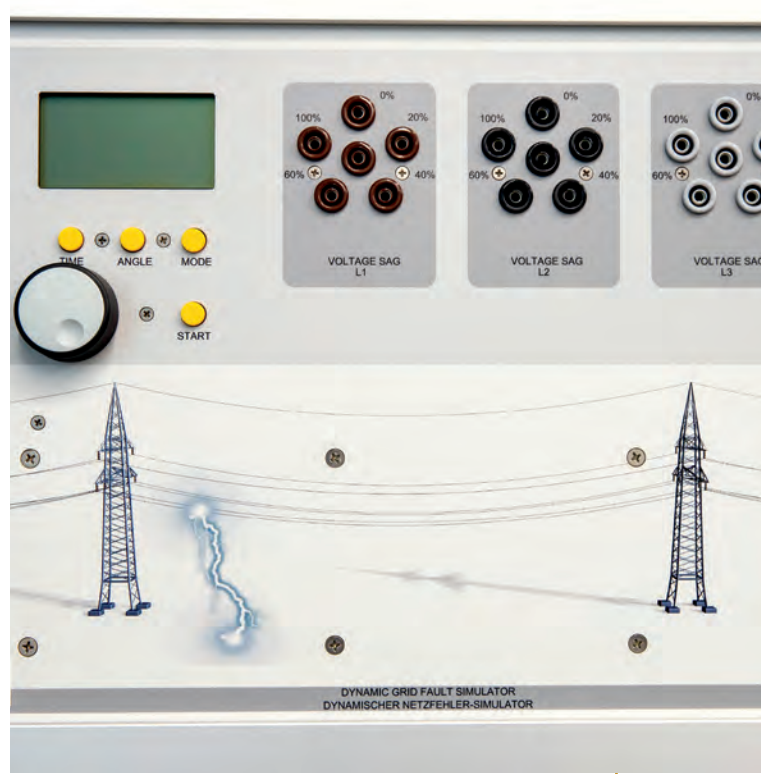
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PHOTO CREDIT: KRIS-TECH WIRE

Expansion project at Kris-Tech Wire will double its space

BY TRACI DELORE

Journal Staff | tdelo e@cnybj.com

ROME — Kris-Tech Wire is doubling down on its commitment to the Rome community with a building project that will double the company's production, warehouse, and office space at its 80 Otis St. headquarters.

"We're excited to continue investing in our people, customers, and community," President/CEO Graham Brodock said in a release announcing the project. "This

expansion is a statement of our belief in our business and team, and we look forward to yet another one soon."

The industrial wire and cable-products manufacturer is working with Syracuse-based design-build and construction firm VIP Structures on the project, which broke ground on July 12 and is expected to wrap up in early 2024. The new space will boast twice the production, warehouse, and office space and represents the Kris-Tech Wire's most-ambitious project since it opened a Houston, Texas stocking facility in early 2022. According to the VIP website, the original Kris-Tech building was 50,000 square feet with 26,000 square feet of additional warehouse space added shortly after that.

The project is part of a multi-year campaign to expand operations and product lines into emerging markets and support more jobs. Kris-Tech officials declined to

share any sales or employment figures.

The expansion is being added to Kris-Tech's existing facility and will house several additional production lines including the company's recently expanded tray cable division, stocking and storage areas, training rooms, and more. It also allows Kris-Tech Wire to consolidate a current offsite facility back into company headquarters.

The company plans to expand further into the tray cable market with new products and additional custom options. Tray cable is a multi-purpose product used across many commercial and industrial applications, including controls, power, lighting, and instrumentation or signal devices.

This latest building expansion marks the fourth project the company has worked on with VIP Structures.

"It's a tremendous partnership between Kris-Tech and VIP, and to help the Kris-Tech team grow through another



PHOTO CREDIT: KRIS-TECH WIRE

Kris-Tech Wire promotes Olguin to lead tray-cable division



John Olguin

PHOTO CREDIT: KRIS-TECH WIRE WEBSITE

BY ERIC REINHARDT

Journal Staff | e einhardt@cnybj.com

ROME — Kris-Tech Wire, a manufacturer of industrial wire and cable, has named industry veteran John Olguin as manager of its tray-cable product line.

The promotion allows Olguin to oversee the company's growing tray-cable division, the firm said in its announcement. It also coincides with the firm's plan to expand into the tray-cable market with new product offerings and additional custom options.

Tray cable is a multi-purpose product used across many commercial and industrial applications, including controls, power, lighting, and instrumentation or signal devices. It can be ordered with or without shielding and offers several in-

sulation and jacketing options, Kris-Tech Wire explained.

Olguin has been with Kris-Tech for nearly seven years, working in inside sales, outside sales, and now product line manager for the tray-cable division, the firm said.

The move is only one of several the company says are in the works for 2023, including the expansion of several key product lines across its portfolio.

"I'm honored to be one of the many team members who helped bring the tray cable product from conception to eventual UL approval," Olguin said. "More importantly, we get to work closely with our internal and external electrical partners to continue growing this product offering in the coming years."

John O., as he's known to most peo-

ple, has a "long history" in the electrical industry, starting with Gaines Electric in Long Beach, California. He later worked for Houston Wire & Cable, serving as an inside sales, outside sales, and branch manager, and Futronix as a district sales manager. He later was a founding member of Distributor Wire and Fittings (DWF), which sold to Omni Cable.

All of Kris-Tech's wire and cable products are custom-made at the company's Rome facility, and customers have the option of ordering unique prints, lengths, stranding types, twists, and packaging, including coils and reels.

Founded in 1984, Kris-Tech provides a full range of wire solutions for the building, commercial, and utility industries. ■

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RENDERING CREDIT: DELTA ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS, & SURVEYORS

Herkimer 9 Foundation has grand plans for the birthplace of basketball

BY TRACI DELORE
Journal Staff | tdelo e@cnybj.com

HERKIMER — The Herkimer 9 Foundation is on a mission to honor Herkimer as the first birthplace of basketball and promote that legacy by revitalizing the Main Street corridor through its Herkimer 9, LLC.

Both are the brainchild of Scott Flansburg, a Herkimer native who returned to the area during the pandemic. He created the foundation in September 2021 with the goal of recognizing Lambert Will for developing the game of basketball. James Naismith is credited for inventing the game in Springfield, Massachusetts in December 1891, but some believe Will, who was Herkimer YMCA director at the time, came up with the concept for basketball months earlier.

That goal grew to include creating some sort of anchor that would help revitalize North Main Street. The approach “was take those buildings that existed when it happened ... and revitalize them,” Flansburg says.

The result of that idea is a vision that includes creating the world’s largest basketball attraction featuring a 32-foot-diameter basket-

ball, building an athletics complex to host youth-basketball tournaments and other athletic events, and creating a 30,000-square-foot green space.

Similar to how the Utica University Nexus Center and National Baseball Hall of Fame have boosted sports tourism in their immediate regions, Flansburg believes his foundation can do the same for Herkimer.

“Why not the Lambert Will Center for Basketball in Herkimer?” he asks. He projects such a center could host events year-round, drawing thousands to the region.

Flansburg would also like to acquire the former Palmer House building, now home to some apartments and storefronts, and renovate it into a basketball-themed hotel with 30 suites, each featuring an NBA team.

Work is already underway at the former H.M. Quackenbush factory building, which the Herkimer 9 Foundation owns. While pavement is being torn out to make way for the green space, the foundation is hard at work finalizing plans to turn the former factory into a STEAM learning center, he says.

“Our goal is we will have a museum about Mr. Quackenbush,” he notes. The facility will also have some mixed-use space and could serve as the home of the New York State Basketball Hall of Fame. “We’ve got a lot of suggestions we’re weighing,” Flansburg adds.

Other possible plans include creating a pedestrian place on North Main Street, adding civic gates to signal the entrance to the historic basketball district, and adding a historical marker for the former Herkimer YMCA location where Lambert is thought to have invented basketball.

“You can’t fix everything, but ... we could fix that one block that has all that history on it,” Flansburg says.

The majority of funding for the project comes from private donations and investments, he says.



► **HERKIMER 9, CONTINUED ON PAGE 36**

PHOTO CREDIT: HERKIMER 9

NBT finances housing projects at historic buildings in Utica

BY JOURNAL STAFF
news@cnybj.com

UTICA — NBT Bank officials say that many transformative revitalization projects are making their mark on the Mohawk Valley region, and the bank is supporting the developers behind this important work.

Two local projects that NBT is financing involve the restoration of historic buildings to provide mixed-use space in convenient downtown Utica locations. These rehabilitated spaces will help serve the thousands of employees of the new Wynn Hospital, Wolfsped in Marcy, and other ongoing commercial development.

Utica Travelers Building

In 1904, the Commercial Travelers Insurance Co. purchased and demol-

ished the former bank/jewelry store at 70 Genesee St. and began construction of its new headquarters. The architect was Frederick Gouge, whose tower design reflects the influence of renowned architect Louis Sullivan. The building later underwent two more expansions, in 1918 and 1930.

Today, the towering 38,810-square-foot building is a visual anchor to the Bagg's Square in Utica. NBT Bank provided the construction loan and permanent financing. Completed in the summer of 2022, the building now boasts 32 market rate residential units and 10,000 square feet of commercial space.

Hotel Street Lofts

NBT Bank says it also provided the construction loan and permanent financing for the Hotel Street Lofts project.



PHOTO CREDIT: NBT BANK

David Kavney, NBT Bank's regional president.

The Hotel Street Lofts will be a certified historic rehabilitation of three connected buildings at 121, 123 and 137 Hotel Street in the center of downtown Utica.

The warehouse at 121 Hotel St. was built between 1888 and 1896 by the Warnick and Brown tobacco company and continued to operate as a warehouse for many years. The building at 123 Hotel St. was used as a trucking and storage

▶ NBT, CONTINUED ON PAGE 36

An advertisement for Barton & Loguidice. The background is a photograph of a historic, ornate building with many windows. In the foreground, a modern, light-colored building with the Barton & Loguidice logo is visible. The logo is in a stylized blue font. Text is overlaid on the image.

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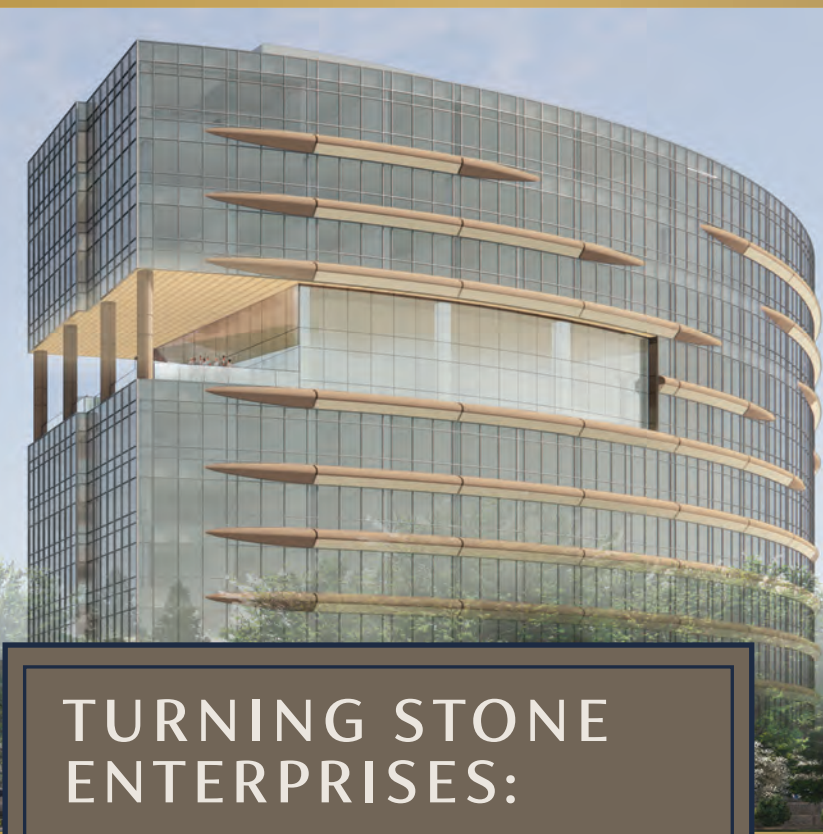
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- Gaming operations provided more than \$575 million in shared revenue for the state and local communities through payments under the historic 2013 settlement agreement
- New Tesla partnership brings the first Sales, Service and Delivery (SSD) center to the region
- \$370 million investment to re-envision Turning Stone Resort Casino for future generations
- Transformational expansion doubling convention meeting facilities
- The Crescent, a new 258-room hotel with stunning architecture, views and elevated experience
- Opening of our newest nightlife destination, NY Rec & Social Club in Exit 33



Quantum 4 International workshop at SkyDome promotes innovation

BY ERIC REINHARDT

Journal Staff | e einhardt@cnybj.com

ROME — It's an event that seeks to provide a platform where researchers, industry experts, policymakers, and academics can come together to exchange ideas, explore collaborative opportunities, and accelerate the development of quantum technologies on a global scale.

full potential.”

Q4I is held every year in the Mohawk Valley region. For the past three years, Griffiss Institute's Innovare Advancement Center in Rome has hosted the event, with this year's program held in Oneida County's recently completed SkyDome between June 27 and June 29.

Griffiss Institute describes itself as a “leading nonprofit talent and technology

change and networking among top minds in the field, we can accelerate the development of quantum technologies that will revolutionize industries worldwide.”

The Q4I workshop included a series of presentations, panel discussions, and interactive sessions led by experts in the field of quantum-information science. Attendees learned about the latest advancements in quantum computing, quantum communication, quantum sensing, and quantum algorithms.

The workshop also focused on the practical applications of quantum technology across various industries, such as health care, finance, cybersecurity, and energy.

“We are delighted to host the Quantum for International (Q4I) Workshop and bring together international collaborators in quantum technology,” Heather Hage, president and CEO at Griffiss Institute, said. “This workshop represents a unique opportunity to foster collaboration, share knowledge, and catalyze advancements in quantum technology that will shape the future of industries worldwide.”

The Q4I workshop provided an environment for networking, allowing participants to connect with potential collaborators, industry leaders, and government representatives from the U.S. Department of Defense, National Science Foundation, and other

agencies. Attendees showcased their research findings, demonstrated their quantum-technology solutions, and got involved in “insightful discussions that drive innovation.”

The Q4I workshop also addressed the ethical and security implications of



Oneida County's SkyDome hosted the 5th annual Quantum for International (Q4I) workshop between June 27 and June 29. The event is described as a technical networking event aimed at “fostering collaboration and innovation in the field of quantum technology.”

PHOTO CREDIT: GRIFFISS INSTITUTE MEDIA

The 5th annual Quantum for International (Q4I) workshop, a technical networking event aimed at “fostering collaboration and innovation in the field of quantum technology.”

As the global race for quantum-technology advancement unfolds, international cooperation and knowledge sharing have become “crucial to harnessing its

development organization at the forefront of emerging technologies.”

“The Quantum for International (Q4I) Workshop provides a platform for global collaboration in quantum technology,” Michael Hayduk, deputy director of the Air Force Research Laboratory Information Directorate, said. “We believe that by fostering knowledge ex-

▶ QUANTUM 4, CONTINUED ON PAGE 32

Skobla takes the helm at Rome Area Chamber of Commerce

BY TRACI DELORE

Journal Staff | tdelore@cnybj.com

ROME — When Kristen Skobla took over as executive director and CEO at the Rome Area Chamber of Commerce, she knew she had some pretty big shoes to fill.

William K. Guglielmo, who passed away on Feb. 23, had served as the chamber's president from 1996 until his retirement in January of this year after a 50-year career at the chamber.

"Certainly, I'm looking to pick up where he left off," Skobla says of her new role at the Rome Area Chamber, which she began on April 10. She has found her balance honoring Guglielmo's legacy while putting her own touch on the chamber.

Emerging from the COVID-19 pandem-

ic, when many of the chamber's typical offerings were paused, she says now is a good time to reset. The business world was changed by COVID, and it's an opportunity for the chamber to look at how it can best serve businesses today.

Skobla is starting that process by getting to know the organization, the community, and the chamber's members.

She's been busy meeting with members, having conversations, and eliciting input. "They are the ones with the most insight," Skobla says.

She wants to hear from all members on what they need from the chamber to best support them, what works, and what could be different. Skobla says she will then take that information back to the office and, in cooperation with the board of directors, analyze it all.



Kristen Skobla, executive director and CEO of the Rome Area Chamber of Commerce.

PHOTO CREDIT: ROME AREA CHAMBER

Some areas she is focusing on include dues — are they comparable to other chambers, are they accessible, and are

▶ SKOBLA, CONTINUED ON PAGE 37

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Expansion project boosts production and jobs at Wolfspeed's Mohawk Valley Fab

MARCY — Wolfspeed, Inc. (NYSE: WOLF) is in the midst of a production buildout that will put its Mohawk Valley Fab facility at full capacity by mid-2026 while employment and hiring activity remains well ahead of schedule.

BY TRACI DELORE

Journal Staff | tdelo_e@cnybj.com

MARCY — Wolfspeed, Inc. (NYSE: WOLF) is in the midst of a production buildout that will put its Mohawk Valley Fab facility at full capacity by mid-2026 while employment and hiring activity remains well ahead of schedule.

“We’re making very significant strides in the projected timeline of the build-out,” says Janet Chow, Wolfspeed’s VP of technology and new products. Earlier this year, Wolfspeed began work on a \$2 billion project to build out the rest of its 125,000-square-foot clean room.

The company currently has one full line up and running at the fab, Chow says.

“In about a year, we expect to double our capacity,” she adds, with the full buildout scheduled for completion by mid-2026. Wolfspeed recently announced it received \$1.25 billion — with an option for up to \$750 million more — in funding from an investment group led by Apollo (NYSE: APO). At full capacity, the Mohawk Valley Fab can produce about \$2 billion worth



of product in an anticipated \$20 billion market.

Employment now tops 400 people at the fab, Chow says. "We are aiming to get to 650 by full buildout." When the fab opened two years ago, the company's original projections called for 400 employees by the end of 2026 and 600 by 2029.

This year, Wolfspeed reached an important milestone when it began shipping the first materials from the fab to customers, Chow says. "It's definitely a very significant milestone for the team," she adds.

Another milestone was the addition of development activities at the fab this year. "We come out with new technology," Chow says. "A lot of time, it's driven by customers."

Some of the company's customers include Lucid Motors, Mercedes-Benz, and Jaguar Land Rover. The majority of the silicon-carbide semiconductors Wolfspeed produces go to the electric-vehicle industry, where they are used in the chargers and engines, Chow says.

Wolfspeed uses 200 mm silicon-carbide wafers to make the chips, while

the industry standard is 150 mm. The larger wafers, which measure about eight inches compared to about six inches for the 155 mm ones, allow Wolfspeed to fabricate 70 percent more chips from each wafer. And it takes the machinery the same amount of time to produce them, Chow adds, which really gives Wolfspeed a production advantage.

The company manufactures its own wafers at its Durham, North Carolina campus and announced last fall it will build a \$1.3 billion materials-manufacturing facility that will increase the company's production capacity by 10 times. It will primarily produce 200 mm wafers, but can also produce 150 mm wafers.

Wolfspeed recently announced a new 10-year deal with Renesas Electronics Corp. that provides Renesas a decade-long supply of 150 mm and 200 mm silicon carbide bare and epitaxial wafers from Wolfspeed. Renesas paid a \$2 billion deposit to secure the supply.

Renesas will use the supply of wafers to scale production of silicon-carbide power semiconductors starting in 2025.

"With the steepening demand for silicon carbide across the automotive, industrial, and energy sectors, it's critically important we have best-in-class power semiconductor customers like Renesas to help lead the global transition from silicon to silicon carbide," Wolfspeed President/CEO Gregg Lowe said in a statement.



The \$2 billion deposit from Renesas will help support construction of the North Carolina materials facility. Wolfspeed also announced plans to build a new fab in Saarland, Germany to better serve its global customers.

Wolfspeed's semiconductors, power-switching devices, and RF devices are used in the electric vehicle, fast charging, 5G, renewable energy and storage, and the aerospace and defense industries. ■

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Wynn Hospital readies for fall opening

BY TRACI DELORE
Journal Staff | tdelo e@cnybj.com

UTICA — Nearly four years after breaking ground on the Wynn Hospital, officials at Mohawk Valley Health System (MVHS) can see the finish line. However, there is still a lot that needs to happen before the planned Oct. 29 opening date.

At this point, much of the construction work is done or close to complete on the more than \$600 million project, so the focus now shifts to preparing for operations, Darlene Stromstad, president and CEO of MVHS, tells CNYBJ in an interview.

“We are not just picking up two hospitals and putting them into a new building,” she notes. “We are basically redeveloping the way we provide health care.”

The nursing model is changing, as is the layout of where various services are located. New information-technology platforms are being implemented and everyone needs to learn where the fire extinguishers and emergency exits are located.

“Everybody will go through safety drills, OSHA drills,” Stromstad says. All the computers need to be working and the

phones up and running so employees can hit the ground running on Oct. 29 when the facility goes live.

“The concept of a new facility is becoming very real,” says Stromstad.

The process leading up to this new facility began several years ago with a deep look at the health-care needs of the community, she notes. MVHS knew it needed a new hospital, and it wanted to make sure that facility focused on the services the area needs. That includes cardiology, stroke/neurology, maternity care, and all surgical services, she says.

MVHS then took that information to Seattle, Washington-based architecture firm NBBJ to design the building with an eye to infection prevention and patient privacy. MVHS then hired Providence, Rhode Island-based firm Gilbane Building Company, which has offices in Albany and Rochester, to build it.

The 10-story, 702,000-square-foot hospital includes 373 beds with about 30 private rooms on each of nine floors, 47 emergency department treatment spaces, a quick-access elevator connecting the emergency department to the birthing center, dedicated food/delivery elevators separate from patient/visitor elevators, conference and meeting space located on the edges of departments to allow for shared use, and design/layout elements to improve efficiency and reduce the risk of errors.

“It is a really magnificent building,” Stromstad contends. “It all makes such great sense today.” Patient areas are separate from visitor areas, and services are located in places where it makes sense, such as radiology located right next to the emergency department.

Overall, the hospital will be easier to navigate for staff and patients alike, she says. A lot of thought was put into

► WYNN HOSPITAL, CONTINUED ON PAGE 37

New Utica University president begins duties

BY ERIC REINHARDT
Journal Staff | e einhardt@cnybj.com

UTICA — When Todd Pfannestiel and his wife, Aimee Zellers, were learning about Utica University and he had a chance to interview for the provost position, he says he'd always had an ambition to become a university president.

"I knew from the time I first arrived here at Utica that this would be the institution that I really wanted the opportunity to lead," Pfannestiel says.

After serving as Utica University's provost since 2018, Pfannestiel is now leading the institution as the school's 10th president.

He succeeds Laura Casamento, who retired from the role July 31 after a seven-year tenure as president. Pfannestiel's appointment went into effect Aug. 1.

He spoke with CNYBJ on June 30.

Pfannestiel remembers getting the call



Robert Brvenik (left), chair of the Utica University board of trustees, sits with Todd Pfannestiel (right) at the February event announcing that Pfannestiel would succeed Laura Casamento as the university's president.

PHOTO CREDIT: UTICA UNIVERSITY WEBSITE

▶ PFANNESTIEL, CONTINUED ON PAGE 37

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Officials in *Utica* cut the ribbon at the grand opening of the new Giotto Center Community Health and Behavioral Services facility of Upstate Caring Partners in Utica.

PHOTO CREDIT: UPSTATE CARING PARTNERS

New Upstate Caring Partners name better reflects agency's work and mission

BY TRACI DELORE

Journal Staff | tdelo_e@cnybj.com

UTICA — Upstate Caring Partners (UCP) has gone through several changes in recent years, from a change in leadership to its change to the Upstate Caring Partners name earlier this year. The new name reflects the growing role the organization plays in caring for the community it serves.

The agency began in 1950, started by a group of grandparents and parents whose children had cerebral palsy. Then known as United Cerebral Palsy, the organization initially served seven children

from the basement of Kernan Elementary School in Utica. Around 2010, the agency changed its name to Upstate Cerebral Palsy. Louis Tehan joined the organization in 1979 and led as its CEO until he retired in 2018.

Today, the nonprofit's scope goes well beyond just serving those with cerebral palsy. UCP says it is now a leader in special education, residential and community services, as well as a provider of behavioral-health services to people in the Mohawk Valley and beyond.

"Our name had become a misnomer," UCP Executive Director Geno DeCondo says. The agency's services have grown

and diversified so much that it was a disservice to have cerebral palsy in the name. The former name ignored the services UCP provides in the areas of substance-abuse and mental-health treatment, as well as its work with autism patients. In fact, he says, autism is now the leading diagnosis the agency sees.

That's why the nonprofit started off this year with the new name. "The caring partners piece really resonated with us as it's really what we see our role as," DeCondo says.

UCP is also changing more than just

► *GIOTTO CENTER, CONTINUED ON PAGE 35*

Changing the narrative on manufacturing jobs

It's key to developing the next generation of manufacturing workers

I recently asked a roomful of eighth graders, "Close your eyes and picture yourself walking down a street. You come across a manufacturing plant. What do you see?"

They imagined broken sidewalks, weeds, tall fences, and ugly brick buildings emitting thick, black smoke. Their responses were familiar — I'd heard them before in other classrooms. They were repeating negative stereotypes that have dominated the storyline about manufacturing jobs for decades.

This representation couldn't be further from the truth. But its long-term impact on recruitment is very real. It's time to change the narrative.

There's a major disconnect between students' perceptions and the reality of advanced manufacturing in New York state. We should open young people's eyes to industries such as micro-electronics and semiconductors, whose workers are in brand new, state-of-the-art facilities with multimillion-dollar equipment. It's a high-tech, fast-moving environment with well-paying jobs.

Many of these skilled jobs are going unfilled, contributing to a workforce shortage that, if unaddressed, could hamper New York state's ability to take advantage of increasing demand for advanced manufacturing production.

At the Advanced Institute for Manufacturing (AIM) — the Mohawk Valley region's center for the New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership working with Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC) — we hear



VIEWPOINT:
CORY ALBRECHT

Advanced Institute for Manufacturing

these concerns frequently. Across the board, small- to mid-sized enterprises in our geographic footprint struggle to fill open positions as baby boomers retire and the next generations of talented men and women overlook the manufacturing sector.

Addressing these labor shortages means pushing back against misperceptions, showcasing start-of-the-art facilities, and demonstrating that advanced manufacturing is an industry suited to build an interesting and stimulating career.

At AIM and MVCC, we manage two programs for companies to help them build their workforce: the SUNY Apprenticeship Program (SAP) and the New York College Apprenticeship Network (NYCAN). Both involve an earn-and-learn model, where companies give their employees flexibility both to work and attend related instruction at local community colleges. The program, which covers tuition costs, allows companies to fill high-skill and high-demand positions while offering new employees a path to earning those advanced qualifications.

► NARRATIVE, CONTINUED ON PAGE 35

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Utica Public Library plans exterior improvements

BY TRACI DELORE

Journal Staff | tdelo e@cnybj.com

UTICA — After investing almost \$1 million into the interior of the building, the Utica Public Library is now turning its sights toward sprucing up the outside of the building that opened in 1904.

The library will use a combination of \$101,900 in state Downtown Revitalization Initiative funding, plus a \$22,300 Community Development Block Grant to spruce up the front of the library, which faces Genesee Street.

“We’re replacing a semi-arch walkway that leads to the front of the building,” says Chris Sagaas, library director. Several bluestone pillars will also receive some work. “We anticipate this will happen in late summer or fall,” he adds.

The Utica Public Library, along with Munson and the Thea Bowman House, serves as a quality-of-life anchor along Utica’s Genesee Street, Sagaas says, and the goal for the area is to improve quality of life, make it more walkable, and improve traffic conditions for safety.

“This is one step in what we hope to be a continuing revitalization and reinvestment in the area,” he says of all the work the library has planned.

Beyond fixing up the walkway and pillars, the library is also preparing to oversee the community garden space it offers on its one-plus-acre campus

“We expect we’ll be jumping further into that as August approaches,” Sagaas says of the garden space. The library is working to coordinate various volunteers from colleges or community organiza-

tions to help “remodel” the space with new garden beds.

In September, the Utica Public Library will keep to a garden theme as it hosts the District V of the Federated Garden Clubs of New York State annual flower show. This is the third time hosting for the library, and it’s just one of many events

The Utica Public Library is also working more closely with organizations like the Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce, Sagaas says. The library’s goal is to work with local vendors whenever it can, especially since there is state construction funding for libraries to use with local contractors and businesses. That makes librar-



PHOTO CREDIT: UTICA PUBLIC LIBRARY



PHOTO CREDIT: UTICA PUBLIC LIBRARY

and activities the library offers throughout the year.

Today’s library is about so much more than checking out a book to read, Sagaas notes. The library serves as an important resource for many, especially those who don’t have reliable access to the internet at home due to financial constraints or lack of availability.

For those who do have technology available, the library is continually growing its collection of e-content, he adds. “Fifty percent of our materials budget goes to e-content now,” Sagaas says. That includes access to things like the New York Times, a comics database, and even Wi-Fi expanders to boost the internet range into the surrounding neighborhood.

ies drivers of the local economy, he adds.

“We support local as much as possible,” Sagaas says. As part of its interior upgrades, the library purchased two desks from Utica company Hale Manufacturing for a cost of about \$40,000.

The Utica Public Library is working with Utica costume and puppet company, Geppetto Studios, Inc., along with the Players of Utica’s local actors and storytellers, to host Professor Lalli’s Library of Curiosities. The library received \$5,000 in funding from CNY Art’s community regrants program for the event.

The walk-through scary experience, geared toward adults, is just another way the library adds to the area’s entertainment and quality of life, Sagaas says.

“More people are coming back to use us,” he says, so it’s important the library offers something for everybody. ■

AmeriCU appoints small-business relationship manager for Mohawk Valley region

BY JOURNAL STAFF
news@cnybj.com

ROME — AmeriCU Credit Union has created a new role of small business-relationship manager of the Mohawk Valley to help support the growth and success of local small businesses and has promoted Michael Cook to fill the role.

Cook will provide tailored guidance and assistance to help businesses achieve their financial goals. AmeriCU contends that the new position will foster growth,

▶ AMERICU, CONTINUED ON PAGE 35

SIGN'S UP IN SCHUYLER



Crews recently wrapped up work on setting up the new directory sign for the Herkimer County Industrial Development Agency's (IDA) Schuyler Business Park. The companies that operate facilities in the business park, include The Fountainhead Group, Inc., a manufacturer of lawn, garden, and sanitation-sprayer technology that has a warehouse in the park; Pepsi, which operates a 60,000-square foot warehouse and distribution center there; and Wilcor International, a wholesaler of camping and other outdoor equipment. The sign was installed by Valley Signs, a signage, large-format printing, and graphics provider based in Clayville.

PHOTO CREDIT: HERKIMER COUNTY IDA FACEBOOK PROFILE

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MOHAWK VALLEY CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

Ranked by No. of Members

Rank	Name Address Phone/Website	No. of Board		Sample of Membership Benefits	Top Executives	Year Estab.
		No. of Members	Members Paid Staff			
1.	Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce 520 Seneca St., Suite 102 Utica, NY 13502 (315) 724-3151/ greateruticachamber.org	500	24 3	business advocacy, networking events, health/dental-insurance plans, cost-saving programs, educational programming, advertising & promotional services, referrals for members, website directory	Kari Puleo, Executive Director	1896
2.	Rome Area Chamber of Commerce 139 W. Dominick St. Rome, NY 13440 (315) 337-1700/ RomeChamber.com	400	26 3	marketing & business promotions, workforce development in schools, professional development in the workplace, legislative action, medical & dental-insurance plans	John Calabrese, Chairman of the Board	1912
3.	New Hartford Chamber of Commerce 48 Genesee St. New Hartford, NY 13413 (315) 796-1520/ newhartfordchamber.com	299	10 0	networking opportunities, acts as voice in government, training, business contacts, newsletters, customer referrals, qualified website-traffic cooperative promotion and publicity, members-only discounts and services	Mark Turnbull, President	1972
4.	Herkimer County Chamber of Commerce 420 E. German St. Herkimer, NY 13350 (315) 866-7820/ herkimercountychamber.com	247	17 2	member referrals, web listings, networking and advertising opportunities, acts as voice of business, seminars	Richard Dowe, Board President	1968
5.	Greater Oneida Chamber of Commerce 117 E. Railroad St. Oneida, NY 13421 (315) 363-4300/ oneidachamberny.org	137	17 1	advertising, networking, website, annual events, high-school scholarship, newsletter, member-to-member benefits	Rachel Siderline, President	1893

THE LIST

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ABOUT THE LIST

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QUANTUM 4

[continue d fr om page 22](#)

quantum technology. Experts explored the challenges and potential risks associated with the widespread adoption of quantum technologies and discuss strategies to “ensure its responsible development.”

About SkyDome

SkyDome is the nation’s largest indoor anechoic chambered uncrewed aircraft system (UAS) experimentation facility, described as a “transformational” investment in Oneida County’s UAS test site. It provides year-round, indoor testing of advanced drone technologies, including artificial intelligence-based flight controls and autonomous swarms of

small drones, per the Oneida County website.

Oneida County created and developed the \$13 million project. The county contributed \$4 million, supported by a \$4.5 million grant from the CNY Rising Upstate Revitalization Initiative (URI) and \$4.5 million grant from the Mohawk Valley URI.

New York State Senator Joseph Griffo (R-Rome) also secured a \$950,000 grant for the facility. ■

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MOHAWK VALLEY COMPUTER/IT CONSULTANTS

Ranked by No. of CNY IT Consultants on Staff¹

Rank	Name Address Phone/Website	No. of CNY IT Consultants No. of CNY Employees	Services	Key Executives	Year Estab.
1.	M.A. Polce 401 Phoenix Drive Rome, NY 13441 (315) 338-0388/mapolce.com	28 42	implementation of services in disciplines such as managed information technology, cybersecurity, public & private cloud hosting, backup & recovery, networking & wireless, unified computing, storage, virtualization, technology consulting, and voice systems	Michael A. Polce, President	1998
2.	Capraro Technologies, Inc. 401 Herkimer Road Utica, NY 13502 (315) 733-0854/caprarotechnologies.com	18 NA	information assurance, custom software development (smartphone apps), software as a service (SaaS), disaster recovery, backup systems, phone archiving, surveillance systems, VoIP phone systems, managed-IT solutions, and cloud consulting and hosting	Gerard T. Capraro, President	1993
3.	CCNY Tech 145 New Hartford St. New Hartford, NY 13413 (315) 724-2209/ccnytech.com	10 NA	managed-service provider for IT infrastructure for small- to mid-sized businesses	Scott Fluty, CEO & President	1988
4.	Total Solutions I.T. Inc. 8057 Seneca Turnpike Clinton, NY 13323 (315) 724-9410/totalsolutions.com	7 NA	outsourced IT services for small- to mid-sized businesses	Michael Morrill, President	1998
5.	Quanterion Solutions Incorporated 266 Genesee St. Utica, NY 13502 (315) 732-0097/quanterion.com	5 NA	cloud migration/managed-services provider, network architecting and security monitoring, cybersecurity assessment/penetration testing, desktop and server support	Eric MacDiarmid, President Alex MacDiarmid, VP	2000
6.	MV Cioni Associates, Inc. P.O. Box 779 New Hartford, NY 13413 (315) 734-1168/mvcioni.com	2 2	consulting that optimizes technology decisions, operations, and performance	Mark V. Cioni, President	2005

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MOHAWK VALLEY ECONOMIC-DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

Ranked by No. of Paid Staff

Rank	Name Address Phone/ Website	No. of Paid Staff	Services Offered	Key Executives	Year Founded
1.	Mohawk Valley EDGE 584 Phoenix Drive Rome, NY 13441 (315) 338-0393/mvedge.org	13	a vertically integrated resource for businesses in Oneida and Herkimer counties, providing solutions for project financing, packaging, retention, and attraction	Steve DiMeo, President Shawna Papale, SVP of Economic Development	1997
2.	Rome Industrial Development Corp. 584 Phoenix Drive Rome, NY 13440 (315) 338-0393/romeindustrial.com	13	commercial/industrial real-estate development and management, site/building location assistance, incentive and financial packages	Christian Mercurio, VP of Planning and Development	1959
3.	Griffiss Local Development Corp. 584 Phoenix Drive Rome, NY 13441 (315) 338-0393/GriffissBusinessPark.com	11	promotes, facilitates, and oversees the redevelopment of the former Griffiss Air Force Base	Elis DeLia, Board Chair Steve DiMeo, Authorized Representative	1995
4.	Herkimer County IDA 420 East German St., Suite 101A Herkimer, NY 13350 (315) 866-3000/herkimercountyida.org	4	exemption from sales taxes, mortgage-recording taxes, real-property tax exemption, low-interest loan financing	V. James Bono, Board Chairman John J. Piseck, Jr., CEO	1969
5.	Madison County IDA 3215 Seneca Turnpike Canastota, NY 13032 (315) 697-9817/madisoncountyida.com	2	site location, business recruitment, business retention and expansion, business startup, and financial assistance; nonprofit bonding	Kipp Hicks, Executive Director	1975
6.	Oneida County IDA 584 Phoenix Drive Rome, NY 13441 (315) 338-0393/oneidacountyida.org	NA	sales-tax exemption, mortgage-recording exemption, real-property tax exemption, bonding	David C. Grow, Board Chair	1970

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MOHAWK VALLEY LARGEST EMPLOYERS

Ranked by No. of CNY Employees

Rank	Name Address Phone/Website	No. CNY Employees	Nature of Local Operations	Parent Co. — Headquarters	Top Local Executives	Year Estab.
1.	Oneida Nation Enterprises 2037 Dreamcatcher Plaza Oneida, NY 13421 (315) 829-8900/ OneidaNationEnterprises.com	4,500	Turning Stone, YBR Casino & Sports Book, Point Place Casino, The Lake House at Sylvan Beach, Oneida Technical Solutions LLC, Maple Leaf Markets, SavOn Convenience Stores, marinas, Salmon Acres, Oneida Indian Nation Outfitters, Coop-Lafrance	Oneida Indian Nation — Oneida	Ray Halbritter, Oneida Indian Nation Representative & CEO of Oneida Nation Enterprises	NA
2.	Mohawk Valley Health System 1656 Champlin Ave. Utica, NY 13413 (315) 624-6000/mvhealthsystem.org	4,300	health care, parent organization of Faxton St. Luke's Healthcare and St. Elizabeth Medical Center	same — Utica	Darlene Stromstad, President & CEO	2014
3.	Upstate Caring Partners 125 Business Park Drive Utica, NY 13502 (315) 724-6907/upstatecp.org	1,638	human-services agency	NA — Utica	Geno DeCondo, Executive Director	1950
4.	Indium Corporation 301 Woods Park Drive, Suite 301 Clinton, NY 13323 (315) 853-4900/indium.com	1,035	products include solders and fluxes; brazes; thermal interface materials; sputtering targets; and indium, gallium, germanium, and tin metals and inorganic compounds.	same — Clinton	Gregory P. Evans, CEO Ross Bertson, President & COO Mike McKenna, CFO Tim Twining, VP of Sales, Marketing, and Technical Service	1934
5.	Colgate University 13 Oak Drive Hamilton, NY 13346 (315) 228-1000/colgate.edu	999	higher education	same — Hamilton	Brian Casey, President	1819
6.	Oneida Health 321 Genesee St. Oneida, NY 13421 (315) 363-6000/oneidahealth.org	843	primary, specialty, rehabilitation, hospital, and extended care	Oneida Health Systems, Inc. — Oneida	Jonathan Schiller, President & CEO	1899
7.	Utica University 1600 Burrstone Road Utica, NY 13502 (315) 792-3111/utica.edu	825	higher education	same — Utica	Todd Pfannestiel, President	1946
8.	The Masonic Care Community of New York 2150 Bleeker St. Utica, NY 13501 (315) 798-4800/MasonicCares.com	750	residential skilled-nursing care, residential adult care, independent housing for seniors, short-term and long-term rehabilitation services, home care, and child care center	Trustees of the Masonic Hall & Asylum Fund — New York	Robert Raffle, Executive Director Jill Wynne, Controller Tammy Fontaine, Administrator - Skilled Nursing Facility	1893
9.	Hamilton College 198 College Hill Road Clinton, NY 13323 (315) 859-4011/hamilton.edu	733	liberal-arts college	same — Clinton	David Wippman, President	1812
10.	SUNY Polytechnic Institute 100 Seymour Road Utica, NY 13502 (315) 792-7500/sunypoly.edu	442	polytechnic university	State University of New York — Albany	Andrew Russell, Officer-in-Charge	1966
11.	Vernon Downs Casino and Hotel 4229 Stuhlman Road Vernon, NY 13476 (315) 829-6800/vernondowns.com	265	casino, harness racetrack, hotel, restaurants, catering, event center, weddings	American Racing and Entertainment, LLC — Nichols	Charlie Otto, President & GM, Tioga Downs & Vernon Downs	1953
12.	Presbyterian Home for Central New York 4290 Middle Settlement Road New Hartford, NY 13413 (315) 797-7500/ communitywellnesspartners.org/presbyterian	261	health care	Community Wellness Partners, Inc. — Clinton	Jeremy Rutter, President/CEO Anne Connor, CFO Jenee Kawejsza, Assistant Administrator	1967
13.	ICAN 310 Main St. Utica, NY 13501 (315) 792-9039/ican.family	240	provides individualized and non-traditional services and care to the highest risk individuals and families with social, emotional, mental health and behavioral challenges	same — Utica	Steven Bulger, CEO/Executive Director	1997
14.	Herkimer County Community College 100 Reservoir Road Herkimer, NY 13350 (315) 866-0300/herkimer.edu	191	higher education	State University of New York — Albany	Cathleen McColgin, President	1966

THE LIST

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sustainability, and success for the Mohawk Valley.

Cook brings more than 23 years of financial experience to the role, including 15 years as manager of AmeriCU's Herkimer financial center.

"I am excited about establishing connections with local small businesses," Cook said in a release. "Throughout the last 15

years, I have provided assistance to our Herkimer members, and now I am eager to extend the same support to our business members."

Cook received an associate degree in business from Herkimer County Community College.

Rome-based AmeriCU Credit Union is a member-owned, nonprofit financial institution with total assets of \$2.7 billion. It serves more than 160,000 members with 20 locations around central and northern New York.



■ Michael Cook

PHOTO CREDIT: AMERICU CREDIT UNION

GIOTTO CENTER

continued from page 28

its name, he notes. It's working hard on implementing a new clinical model in its educational, residential, and community programs in an effort to achieve better outcomes for the people it serves.

"We went out and consulted with some of what we consider the best experts in the field," DeCondo says, and developed a model that works to understand physical health and how it impacts behavioral health.

Previously, a lot of time was spent managing behavior and just trying to get through the behavior, he says. "We said, 'There's got to be more here.'"

Under the new model, understanding physical-health factors that lead to behavioral-health issues has made a huge difference. For many of UCP's clients, things such as an inability to communicate or chronic pain influence behavior. Mitigating those factors often results in a

rapid improvement in behavior, and that's where the magic happens, DeCondo says. "This puts people in a position where they can build skills and learn," he adds.

The change has had such positive results that UCP hired a doctorate-level researcher to collect and share data with other organizations to help them.

The new model has also attracted some top-notch talent to UCP, which has gone from having just one or two behavioral analysts to now boasting about 20.

UCP is also expanding and improving its behavioral-health model, primarily through its new Giotto Center Community Health and Behavioral Services facility. The agency celebrated the grand opening in May.

The new center is the culmination of three years of work, says Jenni Barlow-Gagnon, EVP of behavioral health services at UCP. Previously, services were provided at three separate locations, which created barriers for those seeking help.

The new 17,000-square-foot space brings behavioral services together under one roof at 1002 Oswego St. in Utica. Not only is the new location conveniently located along public transit routes, but it's also right next door to Upstate Family Health Center, a longtime partner of UCP, to provide primary and pharmacy care.

UCP provides a wide array of additional services including early intervention, pre-school, the Tradewinds Education Center for students ages 5 to 21 with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, residential programs for those unable to live at home, respite/self-direction/community/day habilitation programs to provide relief to caregivers, employment/vocational services, and the Technology Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities assistive-technology program.

With an annual budget of nearly \$110 million, Upstate Caring Partners operates 74 locations and serves more than 7,000 individuals annually with a staff of more than 1,600 employees. ■

NARRATIVE

continued from page 29

Along with cultivating the talent already within a company's ranks, the apprenticeship programs serve as a recruitment tool for new hires. Younger generations want to work someplace where they feel valued. They want to feel like they're making an impact by contributing to their organization. Formal participation in apprenticeship programs demonstrates to potential workers a company's commitment to employee growth and wellbeing — attributes that attract Gen Z applicants.

But formal apprenticeship programs are just one piece of the puzzle. Manufacturers that have successfully

addressed workforce issues employ an ongoing, multi-layered approach. In addition to apprenticeships, they connect with community colleges, high schools, and BOCES programs. They participate in school visits known as "Manufacturing Days" and attend career fairs, speaking directly to students to change their perspectives on career opportunities available in advanced manufacturing.

They connect with regional New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership centers, like AIM, which are teaming with experts available to help guide and support small to mid-sized manufacturing companies.

In other words, these employers are showing young people what manufactur-

ing in New York state is all about — exposing them to facilities and careers that capture the imagination. To hear it from someone like me, in a classroom, is one thing; to experience it is another.

It takes time to change perceptions, but companies investing in all the pieces — from SUNY Apprenticeship Programs to getting in front of the next generation of employees — will help manufacturing write a new story, one that is more reflective of the advanced nature of the work and more enticing to a younger workforce. ■

Cory Albrecht is the director of the Advanced Institute for Manufacturing (AIM) at Mohawk Valley Community College.

a three-year transformation into The Brook with fresh, modern rooms. The Lodge at Turning Stone begins the final phase of its three-year renovation in early 2024.

Architecture and design firm Gensler serves as development partner for the expansion project. Gensler, with 50 worldwide locations, serves more than 3,500 clients in numerous industries. The project will create about 3,400 one-time jobs and, according to the Tourism Economics report, generate a \$583 million one-time economic impact and \$20.6 million in state and local tax revenues.

Turning Stone currently features five hotels with 788 guest rooms and suites, 12 dining venues, gaming, a spa, golf courses, 125,000 square feet of meeting space, a 5,000-seat event center, a showroom, and a sportsplex for golf, tennis, and racquetball.

That sportsplex will relocate closer to the Shenandoah Clubhouse to make room for the new meeting and convention space, says Joel Barkin, VP of communications for the Oneida Indian Nation.

The former Lava Nightclub, located in Turning Stone's Exit 33 area, will transform into NY Rec & Social Club. Along with serving as the new home of The Lounge with Caesars Sportsbook, the venue will also offer entertainment experiences including more than 60 high-definition screens, fan caves, arcade games, pool tables, and an outdoor patio with fire pits.

"Turning Stone will grow rapidly during the next two years, yet these changes are more than an expansion," Halbritter said. "They represent a true evolution and a commitment to the continued growth of our enterprises and this region."

Name change

The evolution extends to the name Oneida Nation Enterprises, which will become Turning Stone Enterprises on Oct. 1. The name change represents a promise to continue the Nation's role in the evolution and revitalization of the region as well as enriching the lives of employees and guests and building a future for the Oneida people, it says.

The change brings the Turning Stone brand recognition



FILE PHOTO CREDIT: ZOEYADVERTISING.COM

across all of the Nation's enterprises, which includes YBR Casino & Sports Book, Point Place Casino, The Lake House at Sylvan Beach, The Cove at Sylvan Beach, Maple Leaf Markets, SavOn Convenience stores, the Salmon Acres hunting preserve, an RV park, two marinas, a maple business, and a cannabis venture. The Nation also recently announced it would open a Tesla electric vehicle sales center by 2025.

Turning Stone will also partner with Rome Health to create a 5,000-square-foot medical center located on its mezzanine level to provide urgent, convenience, cardiology, and primary-care services to employees, their families, and Turning Stone guests.

"It is appropriate that our 30th anniversary is defined by evolution," Halbritter said. "Constant progress has been our business model for three decades. It has shown us that as we grow and succeed, so do our employees and the region. As we celebrate this milestone and look to the future, we know that this symbiotic relationship will be key to sustaining this growth for generations to come." ■

HERKIMER 9

continued from page 18

Events such as golf tournaments have brought in additional funds.

The project is a labor of love for the

Herkimer native. Flansburg was born and raised in Herkimer before spending many years traveling as The Human Calculator. He is even listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the fastest human calculator.

"I've committed three years of my life to this project," he says. At the doorstep of Cooperstown and the Adirondacks, Herkimer should be a vibrant community, he says. If he has his way, it soon will be. ■

NBT

continued from page 19

facility and "is an excellent example of a turn of the 20th century brick warehouse" with open plans, timber framing, wood floors, metal fire doors, and numerous platform elevators, the bank says. The building at 137 Hotel St., built in 1885, was used as a commercial warehouse by wholesale grocers.

Construction is slated to begin soon

and will result in rehabilitated buildings that will house 72 residential units and 4,416 square feet of commercial space and 1,231 square feet of tenant amenity space, NBT says.

"We're honored to be able to support the ongoing transformation of our community in the Mohawk Valley," NBT Bank Regional President David Kavney said in a statement. "We're especially excited that these two historic locations will find new life that supports the vibrant downtown

environment so many are working to cultivate."

NBT Bank offers personal banking, business banking, and wealth-management services from offices in seven states: New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Maine, and Connecticut. The bank and its parent company, NBT Bancorp, are headquartered in Norwich. NBT Bancorp (NASDAQ: NBTB) had total assets of more than \$11.8 billion as of March 31. ■

they fair and equitable — along with programs and services such as networking opportunities and professional-development programs.

“What do our members and business community members need for professional development?” she asks.

Another focus includes making sure the Rome Area Chamber is always monitoring policy and service as an advocate for the business community it serves. “We want to make sure we are always advocating for them,” Skobla says.

She is also seeking to collaborate with other area chambers of commerce to share insights and best practices. With

chamber leaders in both Utica and Herkimer who are relatively new to their roles, it’s a unique opportunity for the new leadership to work together, says Skobla.

Other areas of focus include having the chamber serve as a connector between businesses and opportunities and resources available to them. Skobla also wants to ensure that both the chamber and its board of directors reflect the diversity of the community and that businesses are connected to the community’s youth as potential future employees.

Skobla, who audibly bubbles over with enthusiasm for her new role, brings 11 years of experience in non-credit workforce development at Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC) with her to

the job. She also concurrently served for four years as the executive director of MVCC’s Center for Leadership Excellence.

In those roles, Skobla worked closely with area businesses in all areas of workforce development. Her new role, she says, is just a natural shift with a similar focus.

She’s excited to take the helm of the chamber at a time when Rome is experiencing tremendous growth and revitalization. “I just want to be part of that upswing and revitalization,” Skobla says.

From growth in Griffiss Business and Technology Park to housing projects in the arts district, there are so many good things happening, she notes.

“If you haven’t been to Rome in a while, come see me,” Skobla concludes. ■

WYNN HOSPITAL continue d fr om page 26

the main entrance and emergency department entrance. Greeters will be on hand to help patients get to where they need to be. “Many of our patients do not speak English as their first language,” Stromstad says, so there will be interpreters stationed near the entrances as well.

MVHS is planning an Oct. 15 event to give the public the chance to tour the building before it is occupied. Then, the Wynn Hospital will be open for business on Oct. 29.

The health system is working with Health Care Relocations, a Canadian company with U.S. offices in Canonsburg,

Pennsylvania, to facilitate the move.

“They have moved more than 500 hospitals, so they know what they are doing,” Stromstad says.

Hammes Company, a Milwaukee, Wisconsin-based health-care consulting firm has served as a project-management company to facilitate the project.

Funding for the \$611 million Wynn Hospital project comes from a \$300 million grant from the New York State Department of Health and a \$50 million donation from casino magnate Steve Wynn’s family foundation. MVHS also secured \$180 million in financing through Barclays, a multinational investment bank

and financial-services company.

Earlier this year, the Oneida Indian Nation donated \$1 million, and John and Deanna Sammon contributed \$1.5 million.

Formed in 2014, MVHS is an affiliation between St. Elizabeth Medical Center and Faxton St. Luke’s Healthcare, which also includes MVHS Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, Visiting Nurse Association of Utica and Oneida County, and Senior Network Health.

MVHS is working with the City of Utica for its St. Elizabeth campus and Oneida County for its St. Luke’s campus on requests for proposals for reuse of those legacy hospital buildings. ■

PFANNESTIEL continue d fr om page 27

that the chair of the board of trustees asked to meet with him. As an internal candidate for the job, Pfannestiel understood the timeline for finding a successor well and knew whatever decision the university made would be coming likely within that day, calling it a “nervous” day.

“But when I got the call that afternoon to meet with him and then had that discussion, it was a relief that the search was concluded; excitement that really my dream to lead this institution was coming to fruition and every day since then has just been taking that excitement to a new level,” he says.

Pfannestiel begins his duties as president just weeks before the start of a new academic year. At the same time, Utica’s dean of business and justice studies begins his role serving as the school’s interim provost.

“There’ll be some changes in academic affairs structure moving forward as well,” Pfannestiel notes. “It’s a matter of just getting all the right people in positions in the right places.”

He begins as Utica University’s top offi-

cial knowing the university has strong data for enrollment heading into the upcoming academic year. In a March 22 school news release, Utica University said at the time first-year student deposits at the school were higher than they have been in more than 10 years, up 45 percent year-over-year.

“The report that I just received shows that our number of freshmen and transfer deposits together is still up 34 percent over last year, so it’s remained consistently high,” he told CNYBJ in the June 30 interview.

Pfannestiel credits the work of the university’s admissions and enrollment-management team. He also believes college students have quickly recovered from the pandemic.

“If you compare them to our staff, our faculty, what is clear is that students want to return for a traditional college experience, [something] many of whom never had an opportunity to take part in over the past two years,” he says.

President’s background

Pfannestiel has 25 years of experience in higher education, as a faculty member, school dean, and senior administrator.

Throughout the course of his tenure as provost and senior VP for academic affairs at Utica University, he has led and collaborated closely with faculty on a variety of initiatives to raise the academic profile of the university and further its mission.

Prior to joining Utica University, Pfannestiel served on the faculty of Clarion University of Pennsylvania for 20 years, earning the rank of professor of history. During his time at Clarion, he also served as dean of the College of Arts, Education, and Sciences, interim provost, and acting president.

Pfannestiel earned his Ph.D. in history from the College of William and Mary, where he was a Woodrow Wilson Foundation fellow in the Humanities; completed post-graduate studies at Duke University as a National Science Foundation graduate fellow in economics and completed his bachelor’s degree in history and economics at the University of Arkansas as a Fulbright College scholar.

A native of Oklahoma, Pfannestiel and his wife, Aimee Zellers, an associate professor of philosophy at Carlow University, reside in Sauquoit, Utica University said. ■

MOHAWK VALLEY

continued from page 3

center was dedicated and firmly established New York's leadership position in the growth and integration of UAS technologies into the nation's commercial air space. At Air City Lofts, Bonacio Construction, Inc. has built an additional 100 units of market-rate apartments. Kris-Tech Wire has commenced construction of a 75,000-square-foot expansion to its Griffiss-based specialty wire operation.

What's Next?

The Mohawk Valley region has established an aggressive agenda to attract

population additions, new investments, and attract job investments. EDGE's priorities for 2023 are centered around strategic site development, repurposing key buildings and sites, and leveraging opportunities to attract additional semiconductor, UAS, and advanced manufacturing opportunities to continue the region's upward economic trajectory.

Key challenges for the region are ensuring opportunities for traditionally underserved populations, strategic partnerships to increase training and workforce development pipelines — including greater emphasis on STEM education and reducing barriers that diminish labor-force participation.

The region's portfolio of projects and

opportunities, coupled with Micron's mega semiconductor project in Central New York, is creating opportunities for the Mohawk Valley that have not been seen since industry build-up during WWII, or the original conception of the Erie Canal. These opportunities hold the promise of attracting the population and changing the underlying dynamics of the region over the next 10 to 20 years, furthering a future rooted in growth and success. We are looking forward to what comes next. ■

Steve DiMeo is president of Mohawk Valley EDGE, a not-for-profit corporation dedicated to strengthening and growing the economy of the Mohawk Valley.

ROME HEALTH

continued from page 4

erates about \$1.60 in economic benefit to the community. "Those dollars are really well spent," Thompson contends.

The various construction projects have created numerous jobs, and the recent state news that the COVID-19 vaccine mandate for employees would no longer be enforced as the state Department of Health works to sunset the regula-

tion means overall employment at Rome Health may increase as well.

"This just helps us open up more opportunity to get good colleagues here at Rome Health," Thompson says.

Rome Health has been busy reaching out to those employees who left due to the mandate and inviting them to return, he notes. "In health care, every staff member counts." The organization currently has about 70 job titles open, with some titles offering multiple job

openings.

Along with the new medical center and women's surgical suite, Rome Health also added a community pharmacy in the 31,000-square-foot medical center.

A nonprofit health-care organization, Rome Health serves the greater Rome community with services ranging from primary care to specialty care. It's an affiliate of St. Joseph's Health and an affiliated clinical site of New York Medical College. ■

IT'S A UTICA THING

continued from page 8

in total. The project allowed the restaurant to expand back into space it had used before the pandemic, bringing the square footage from 2,400 square feet to nearly 4,000. The restaurant now seats 100 with space for 20 at the bar and employs between 30 and 40 people.

With old pictures of Utica on the walls and a menu that combines Utica favorites with new dishes created by Vincenzo Digristina, the restaurant has an old-school look with a new vibe, Charles

Digristina says.

Vincenzo is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and spent time training and working in Tuscany. From pizza made from dough kneaded by hand to fresh-made pasta, Vincenzo says he wanted to share those flavors with Utica.

Charles Digristina's two sons manage the day-to-day running of the restaurant. He has hopes that his third son, Rosario, might eventually join the family business as well.

While his sons run the restaurant, Digristina stays busy running the food truck and catering side of things. The fam-

ily also bottles and sells a line of sauces under the "It's a Utica Thing" brand that are available at grocery stores including Hannaford's, Wegman's, Tops, and several independent grocers.

After the busy summer food truck and catering season winds down, Digristina hopes to expand hours at the restaurant. Right now it's open only for dinners, but he hopes to add lunch hours as well.

"I do feel reborn," Digristina says. "Although I've been in the business for over 30 years, this is absolutely a fresh start. The big question is where we are going to go next." ■

KRIS-TECH

continued from page 16

facility expansion is so important to us," VIP CEO Meg Tidd said when the project broke ground in July. "Supporting manufacturing in Central New York is what we do, and working together with a local family company to achieve continued growth here in our community is the best part of

what we do."

"This project represents a significant milestone for Kris-Tech as well as our community and highlights the growth and development we are experiencing," Rome Area Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Kristen Skobla said. "The expansion of Kris-Tech's facilities demonstrates their commitment to our region and their confidence in our local

economy. It showcases the potential and opportunities available here, both for businesses and the workforce."

Twin brothers Gerry and Glenn Brodock founded Kris-Tech Wire in 1984. Now in its third generation of family ownership, the business provides a full range of wire solutions for the building, commercial, and utility industries. Products are manufactured in the Rome facility. ■

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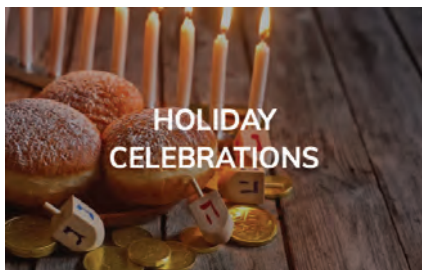
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