

# What's So Cool About Manufacturing Video Contest Announces 2025 Central Susquehanna Awards

written by Lauri Moon | April 29, 2025



IMC is excited to announce the award recipients for the “What’s So Cool About Manufacturing?” (WSCM) Central Susquehanna student video contest awards. The annual awards ceremony was held April 23<sup>rd</sup> at The Venue at Liberty Valley in Danville, PA.

The WSCM contest partners students from middle schools in Central PA with regional manufacturers. Each student team scripted, shot, edited and promoted a short video that documents their experience highlighting what is “cool” about manufacturing and manufacturing careers. Two videos in the region will be moving on to represent Central Susquehanna at the annual statewide competition being held in Harrisburg on May 14<sup>th</sup> at the Whitaker Center.

The video with the most votes, during three days of online voting in March, received

the “Viewers’ Choice Award.” A panel of judges reviewed the videos for awards in three other categories including Outstanding Overall Program, Outstanding Team Spirit and Outstanding Brand Placement.

“We had a really great contest this year with students and their manufacturing partners working together to highlight what’s so cool about manufacturing in Central PA. In our fifth year of this contest, we had a record number of votes for the Viewers’ Choice award of over 104,000 votes,” said Lauri Moon, Manager of Outreach & Special Projects with IMC and Co-manager of the Central Susquehanna contest. “The students, teachers and manufacturers put in so much hard work, and it definitely showed in their final videos.”

This year’s awards and their winners are:

1. Outstanding Overall Program: Mount Carmel Area Middle School & Dyco, Inc.
2. Viewers’ Choice Award: Central Columbia Middle School & Strong Industries
3. Outstanding Team Spirit: Huntingdon Area Middle School & Gardners Candies, Inc.
4. Outstanding Brand Placement: Bloomsburg Area Middle School & GAF

Congratulations to the Mount Carmel Area Middle School/Dyco, Inc. and Huntingdon Area Middle School & Gardners Candies, Inc. teams who were nominated to move on to the statewide competition in Harrisburg next month. Central Columbia Middle School/Strong Industries will also be attending by special invitation.



Figure 1. Outstanding Overall Program & Outstanding Brand Placement: Mount Carmel Area Middle School



Figure 2. Outstanding Team Spirit: Huntingdon Area Middle School



Figure 3. Viewers' Choice Award: Central Columbia Middle School & Strong Industries

Partnering on this regional contest is the Innovative Manufacturers' Center, Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit, Advance Central PA and The Foundation of the Columbia Montour Chamber of Commerce. Funding for the 2025 Central Susquehanna program was made possible by these organizations and EITC, PA Department of Labor & Industry Business & Education and ARC/Degenstein Foundation grants. Awards were generously created and donated by SUN Area Technical Institute.



To check out this year's Central Susquehanna What's So Cool About Manufacturing? videos, visit <https://www.whatssocool.org/contests/central-susquehanna/>.

Visit [WhatsSoCool.org](https://www.whatssocool.org) for more information and follow on [Facebook.com/WSCMCenSusq](https://www.facebook.com/WSCMCenSusq).

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# IMC Announces the Release of its

# Central Pennsylvania Manufacturing Tariff Poll Results

written by Lauri Moon | April 29, 2025



We are pleased to announce the results of our Central Pennsylvania Manufacturing Tariff Poll. This initiative aimed to gather insights from regional manufacturers regarding the potential impact of proposed tariffs on the region’s manufacturing sector. We extend our sincere gratitude to all participants for their valuable contributions.



## Key Takeaways:

- **Mixed Revenue Impact:** While nearly half of respondents foresee no change in revenue, **31% expect a decline**, indicating that some manufacturers anticipate financial challenges, while **23% expect an increase** in revenue.
- **Pricing Adjustments Are Likely:** The majority of respondents **plan to increase prices** for customers in response to tariffs, while a smaller portion intends to absorb the added costs, reflecting varied pricing strategies.
- **Supplier Diversification is a Common Strategy:** With **72% of respondents diversifying suppliers**, many manufacturers are exploring new sourcing strategies to adapt to potential supply chain disruptions. Twenty-nine percent foresee no significant impact.
- **Limited Workforce Impact Anticipated:** Despite potential cost pressures, most respondents do not expect to change their workforce size, suggesting **stable employment levels** across the region.
- **Few Formal Response Plans in Place:** Only **26% of respondents have created** or plan to create response teams, while the majority are either undecided or not pursuing formal strategies at this time.

Visit Central PA Manufacturing Tariff Survey Report for the full report.

IMC remains committed to supporting Central Pennsylvania manufacturers by providing resources and support based on these insights. We encourage industry stakeholders to stay engaged through our e-news and social media channels for ongoing updates and initiatives.

For further information or to discuss the report's implications, please contact IMC at (570) 329-3200 or email [info@imcpa.com](mailto:info@imcpa.com).

**This report was produced by the IMC (Innovative Manufacturers' Center), a non-partisan, public-private 501(c)(3) organization, dedicated solely to advancing the manufacturing sector in our 12-county region of Central Pennsylvania, USA. This report does not reflect or endorse any political opinions, positions, or affiliations.**

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# Success Story: Northway Industries Partners with IMC to Enhance Its Lean Manufacturing Culture

written by Lauri Moon | April 29, 2025



Northway Industries, Inc., located in Middleburg, Snyder County, is a privately held company that manufactures plastic laminated panels, tops, parts and kits. Northway's operation consists of CNC controlled cutting, milling, routing and banding operations. The market served is OEM suppliers, retailers, schools and institutions. They are FSC certified and conform with LEED specifications as required. The company has engaged in several small projects focused on sustainability including LED lighting with occupancy sensors, monitoring compressed air systems for leakage and an eco-gate system on their dust containment unit that monitors the RPM of unit motors.

Over the past several years, Northway has been working to instill a corporate culture based on Lean manufacturing concepts. While business has been steady, Northway's leadership recognized potential areas of improvement and decided to start with its order process, from intake to floor. To develop a more effective system in the order process activities, they reached out to the Innovative Manufacturers' Center (IMC) to assist them in further developing this initiative.

After meeting with the Northway team, it was determined that a continuous improvement program based on Lean manufacturing principles called *Winning Teams* would be the basis for making the desired improvements. This project empowered employees with the skills and tools needed to identify inefficiencies, streamline workflows and enhance overall operational performance. By focusing on critical areas, such as initial order processing, customer demand interpretation, estimating and materials management, the company would significantly improve its ability to execute and deliver high-quality products with greater speed and precision. In addition, the IMC was able to assist Northway in obtaining a grant through the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Energy & Manufacturing in Appalachia program that reduced their final costs for the project.

The Winning Teams program combined hands-on training with real-world application to develop a stronger culture of continuous improvement. Employees participated in structured problem-solving exercises, gaining both technical expertise and a deeper understanding of the human side of change management. As a result, Northway Industries has seen measurable gains in productivity, reduced waste and optimized resource utilization, further strengthening its ability to meet customer expectations efficiently and sustainably.

The success of this collaboration with the IMC has reinforced Northway's reputation as a forward-thinking manufacturer dedicated to Lean principles and operational excellence. With a more agile and efficient production process, the company is well-positioned for long-term growth and enhanced customer satisfaction. Moving forward, Northway remains committed to sustaining its lean culture, continuously refining its processes and fostering innovation across all levels of the organization.

“ Through the Winning Teams program, we increased throughput in our laminate cleaning/inspection area by 18%, which also shortened the time for us to respond to vendors about defective products and to reorder replacements for those products by an average of 1 day. We also reduced the number of orders going from Sales to Order Entry with missing information by 25%. This reduced the processing time for order entry and throughput of an order through Sales and Order Entry by an average of 2.5 days. In partnering with IMC on the Winning Teams project, we equipped our team members with the skills needed to identify and drive waste out of

our process and increase efficiency. By working with IMC, we bridge the gap between industry expertise and workforce readiness, creating a seamless integration of innovation and practical application. This collaboration strengthens our impact, driving efficiency, quality, and long-term success.”

Steve Wagner, Director of Training & Development

Northway Industries, Inc.

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# Central PA Manufacturing Tariff Poll

written by Lauri Moon | April 29, 2025



**This poll is now closed. Thank you to**

**everyone who participated. Please watch our e-news and socials for follow-up information regarding the results.**



Central PA manufacturers, your participation is crucial in helping us understand how the proposed tariffs could impact the region. By sharing your insights, you contribute to shaping services that could support your industry.

This poll will take just a few minutes, and your input will remain anonymous.

## **Take the Poll**

**This poll is intended for Central PA manufacturers, but all manufacturers are welcome to participate.**

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# IMC's 2024 Regional Impact: Strengthening Manufacturing, Driving Growth

written by Lauri Moon | April 29, 2025



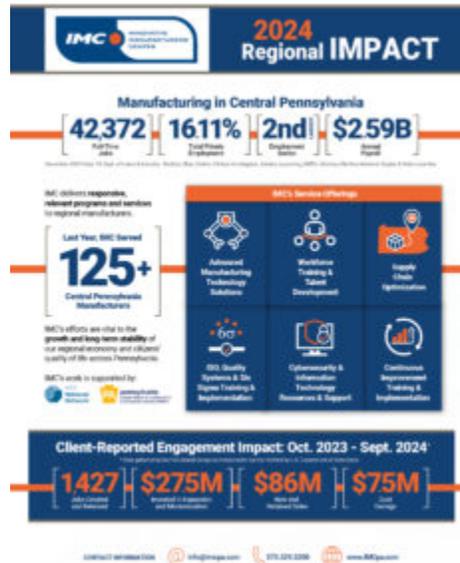
At IMC, we take pride in empowering manufacturers with the tools, resources, and expertise they need to thrive. As we reflect on 2024, we are thrilled to share the significant impact our efforts have had on manufacturers across the region.

This past year, IMC partnered with **125+ manufacturers**, helping them drive measurable success and achieve outstanding business outcomes. Together, we realized:

- **1,427 jobs** created and retained
- **\$27.5 million** invested in expansion and modernization
- **\$86 million** in new and retained sales
- **\$7.5 million** in cost savings

These numbers tell a powerful story of growth, resilience, and innovation in Central

PA's manufacturing sector. IMC remains committed to supporting businesses as they navigate challenges, embrace new technologies, and seize opportunities for the future.



We extend our gratitude to our manufacturing partners, stakeholders, and community supporters who make this impact possible. Here's to another year of building a stronger, more competitive manufacturing industry!

**Are you ready to elevate your manufacturing business?** Contact IMC today to see how we can help you achieve similar results!

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# IMC Announces Lean Manufacturing Practitioner Certification

written by Lauri Moon | April 29, 2025



IMC is excited to announce the evolution of our Lean Manufacturing Level One Certification into the ***Lean Manufacturing Practitioner Certification***. This enhanced program is designed to provide participants with practical, hands-on experience in implementing Lean principles to drive significant improvements in manufacturing processes.

### **Key Features of the Updated Certification:**

- **Comprehensive Curriculum:** Our former 8-day program over several months is now 5 consecutive days, where participants will delve into essential Lean tools and methodologies, including value stream mapping, 5S, process flow design, and total productive maintenance.
- **Practical Application:** Participants will continue having the benefit of interactive workshops and simulations that allow you to apply Lean concepts directly to real-world scenarios, fostering a culture of continuous improvement within your organization.
- **Expert Instruction:** Our instructor is an experienced professional who will guide you through collaborative problem-solving techniques and effective change management strategies to enhance productivity and employee engagement.

### **Upcoming Session Details:**

- **Dates:** May 12 - May 16, 2025
- **Location:** Williamsport, PA
- **Investment:** \$1,795.00

By completing the Lean Manufacturing Practitioner Certification, you will acquire the skills to identify and eliminate wasteful practices, leading to reduced expenses

and improved profitability for your organization. Don't miss this opportunity to advance your expertise and contribute to your company's success.

For more information and to register, please visit our event page: [Lean Manufacturing Practitioner Certification - Innovative Manufacturers Center](#)

Join us in embracing this updated certification to drive operational excellence and achieve sustainable growth.

For specific questions about the program content, contact IMC Business Advisor Rick Terry at [rickt@imcpa.com](mailto:rickt@imcpa.com). If you need support with registration, contact Lauri Moon at [laurim@imcpa.com](mailto:laurim@imcpa.com).

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# CMMC 2025 Webinar Series Announced

written by Lauri Moon | April 29, 2025



IMC is excited to announce our continued partnership with Core Business Solutions to deliver CMMC webinars to Central PA manufacturers.

The long-awaited CMMC 2.0 is officially here, and key milestones are just around the corner. Here's what you need to know:

- December 16, 2024: 32 CFR rule is live. CMMC Certification is now available from accredited C3PAOs. This allows your customers to be prepared for upcoming contractual requirements in defense contracts.
- Early 2025: 48 CFR is finalized. CMMC requirements will appear in DoD contract solicitations, making compliance non-negotiable.
- 2025-2028: CMMC will phase into all new and renewed contracts.

These changes mean self-attestation is no longer enough. Visit the IMC Events page to register for each of the CMMC webinars and be sure to mention IMC when asked which MEP you are associated with!

**Co-Sponsor Webinar Schedule 2025**  
Free Co-Sponsored Webinars

**Mastering CMMC Assessments: What You Need to Know**  
August 27, 2025 | 2-3PM EST

The CMMC assessment process can be confusing, but understanding the different assessment types—self-attestation, pre-assessment, and third-party certification (C3PAO)—is key to successful compliance. This session will break down how to prepare for each stage, including how to improve your DFPS score, what assessors look for, and common pitfalls to avoid.

[Register Here](#)

**CMMC Employee Training: How to Build a Security First Culture**  
September 18, 2025 | 2-3PM EST

CMMC compliance isn't just about technology, and public sector employees play a critical role in protecting sensitive information. This session will cover mandatory training requirements, subscription best practices, and real-world scenarios where employee mistakes can impact compliance. Strategies to train your workforce effectively while meeting CMMC requirements.

[Register Here](#)

**CMMC & Cyber Insurance: Protecting Your Business from Cyber Risks**  
October 16, 2025 | 2-3PM EST

As CMMC requirements become mandatory, many businesses are struggling to understand how compliance impacts cyber insurance policies, premiums, and liability coverage. This session will explore how CMMC affects cyber insurance eligibility, what insurers are looking for, and how to reduce costs while ensuring your business is fully protected.

[Register Here](#)

**CMMC Legal Implications: Avoiding Liability Risks**  
November 20, 2025 | 2-3PM EST

With CMMC now a contractual requirement, businesses must navigate legal risks head-on. This session will feature legal experts discussing how to stay compliant, avoid Data Claims Act (DCA) violations, and manage contractual obligations to mitigate legal exposure when working with DoD contracts.

[Register Here](#)



**Co-Sponsor Webinar Schedule 2025**  
Free Co-Sponsored Webinars

**CMMC 2.0 in 2025: What You Need to Know Now**  
March 20, 2025 | 2-3PM EST

With CMMC 2.0 implementation officially underway, defense contractors need to stay ahead of the existing compliance landscape. This session will provide the latest updates on the timeline, certification levels, and key requirements to help business owners prepare for upcoming contract obligations.

[Register Here](#)

**CMMC Compliance Roadmap: Getting Ready for Certification**  
April 17, 2025 | 2-3PM EST

Achieving CMMC compliance can seem overwhelming, but a structured roadmap can simplify the process. This session will provide a clear, step-by-step approach to preparing for certification, including gap assessments, documentation, security controls, and key deadlines. All your business is ready when CMMC requirements become mandatory.

[Register Here](#)

**CMMC Compliance Made Affordable: Budgeting & Invoicing Tips**  
May 16, 2025 | 2-3PM EST

Many small businesses worry about the costs of CMMC compliance, but smart budgeting and effective invoicing strategies can help overcome expenses. This session will break down what the real costs for certification and subscription levels, how to optimize billing and payments, and the invoicing practices that can significantly reduce compliance burdens.

[Register Here](#)

**CMMC in the Cloud: Navigating Cloud Provider Options for Compliance**  
June 19, 2025 | 2-3PM EST

Choosing the right cloud provider is one of the most complex decisions in CMMC compliance. With options like AWS, Azure, and commercial cloud environments, understanding how to assess Certified Cloud Provider Information (CCPI) technical criteria is critical. This session will break down what the compliance challenges, provider options, and best practices for simplifying your CMMC process.

[Register Here](#)

**CMMC is Now Law: What the 48 CFR Rule Means for Your Contracts**  
July 17, 2025 | 2-3PM EST

With the 48 CFR rule officially published, CMMC requirements are now embedded in DoD contracts, making compliance no longer optional. This session will break down what the rule means for contractors and subcontractors, how it impacts bidding and awards, and the steps businesses must take to remain eligible for government contracts.

[Register Here](#)



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# IMC Secures DOE SMART Grant to Advance Manufacturing Technology in Central PA

written by Lauri Moon | April 29, 2025



The Innovative Manufacturers Center (IMC), a public-private partnership dedicated

to supporting small- and medium-sized manufacturers (SMMs) in Central Pennsylvania, has been awarded a grant through the Department of Energy's (DOE) Smart Manufacturing Assistance and Training Program (SMART). This funding will enable IMC to assist manufacturers in the region with adopting advanced manufacturing technologies to enhance productivity and remain competitive.

### **Driving Innovation with SMART Manufacturing**

The SMART-PA program is designed to help SMMs invest in SMART manufacturing technologies to address critical challenges, such as:

- **Lower Production Rates:** Caused by workforce shortages.
- **Data Delays:** Resulting from manual or paper-based processes.
- **High Scrap Rates:** Due to unnoticed out-of-spec processes.
- **Excessive Downtime:** Caused by inefficient machine operations.

By leveraging SMART-PA resources, manufacturers can improve operational efficiency, attract skilled talent, and reduce costs, ensuring long-term competitiveness in the market.

### **Program Benefits for Central PA Manufacturers**

Through the SMART-PA program, IMC will provide manufacturers with:

- **Technology Assessments:** Identify opportunities for improvement. [Click here](#) to take the assessment.
- **Technical Assistance:** Support for implementing advanced manufacturing technologies.
- **Mini-Grants:** Financial assistance for technology adoption projects.
- **Educational Events and Networking:** Access to training sessions and industry connections.

IMC is committed to empowering manufacturers in Central Pennsylvania with the tools and knowledge needed to thrive in today's competitive environment. Connect with IMC at [info@imcpa.com](mailto:info@imcpa.com), 570-329-3200 for support and resources.

IMC Smart PA Program Flyer

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# IMC Announces Using AI in HR Webinar Series

written by Lauri Moon | April 29, 2025



## Using Artificial Intelligence to Support Human Resources in Manufacturing

### Four 90-minute Modules

In the rapidly evolving landscape of human resources, artificial intelligence (AI) is emerging as a transformative force. HR practitioners must be aware of how AI can enhance HR practices to stay competitive, improve efficiency, and create a more engaged and satisfied workforce. This 4-session program explores the significance of AI in HR. AI can increase efficiency and productivity of HR operations to improve candidate experience and provide data-driven insights into decision-making and personalize employee development.

### **In this webinar series you will learn to:**

- Analyze job roles effectively using AI tools and explore how AI enhances recruitment processes, improving communication and candidate experience in talent acquisition.

- Identify best practices in onboarding and employee engagement, utilizing AI technologies to automate processes and foster a more engaging workplace environment.
- Examine the role of AI in supporting employee relations and learning & development initiatives, focusing on strategies to improve retention and training outcomes.
- Assess the importance of HR analytics and compliance, exploring how AI can enhance data-driven decision-making and ensure adherence to regulatory standards within HR functions.

## **Schedule:**

- No-cost Introductory webinar: December 5, 2024 - Using Artificial Intelligence to Support Human Resources
- January 16, 2025 - Using Artificial Intelligence to Support Job Descriptions, Recruiting, and Workforce Planning
- February 13, 2025 - Using Artificial Intelligence to Enhance Onboarding, Engagement, and Performance Management
- March 6, 2025 - AI-Driven Employee Relations, Development, and Retention: Building a Future-Ready Workforce
- April 3, 2025 - AI-Powered Analytics, Compliance, and Employee Assistance: Driving Data-Driven Success

**Don't miss this opportunity to learn from one of the top thought leaders in the field. Register now to unlock the power of AI in HR.**

You are welcome to register for each webinar individually but register for all four for only \$309!



IMC is recognized by SHRM to offer Professional Development Credits (PDCs) for SHRM-CP® or SHRM-SCP® recertification activities.

## Presenter:



**William J. Rothwell, PhD.** is President of Rothwell & Associates, Inc., Rothwell & Associates, LLC, and Rothwell & Associates Korea. He has worked full-time in human resources, training, and organizational development in both government and in a multinational company. He has been a consultant for over 50 multinational companies. He has served many manufacturing clients in both the U.S. and abroad. Some of his clients include Ford Motor Company, General Motors, Siemens, Sony, Phillips, Erickson, and HP. Dr. Rothwell is a prolific author and has published more than 130 books and authored numerous training packages, guides, technical reports, and scholarly articles. He is a Distinguished Professor in the Workforce Education and Development program in the College of Education at The Pennsylvania State University. He holds top-level certifications and credentials with National SHRM and ATD.



This program is WEDnetPA eligible.

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# **Thank You for Joining Us in Celebrating Central Pennsylvania's Manufacturing Community!**

written by Lauri Moon | April 29, 2025



We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who joined us for this incredible event celebrating the vibrant manufacturing community of Central Pennsylvania. Your presence made the event truly memorable, and it was inspiring

to see so many professionals, community leaders, and innovators come together in support of local industry.

The event was held at the historic Axemann Brewery, a former metal factory now repurposed as a unique and fitting space to celebrate our region's resilience and rich industrial heritage. Thank you to those who arrived early to take part in the exclusive tours of the manufacturing space—your enthusiasm added to the event's energy and sense of community.

This gathering was a wonderful opportunity to connect, learn, and inspire. We hope you enjoyed the networking opportunities, discovering valuable resources offered by regional economic development partners, and engaging in important discussions about of manufacturing in our region.

Together, we're building a stronger, more innovative community. We're excited for what lies ahead and look forward to supporting your continued growth and success.

Thank you again for being part of this special day and for all that you contribute to Central Pennsylvania's manufacturing landscape.







