

Governor Wolf Affirms Commitment to Pennsylvania's Tech Sector, Approves Funding for 255 Technology Businesses and Entrepreneurs

written by Lauri Moon | January 7, 2019

Governor Tom Wolf announced the approval of Keystone Innovation Zone (KIZ) tax credits for 255 early-stage technology companies to encourage entrepreneurship in and around Pennsylvania's colleges and universities.

"Every day, Pennsylvania's tech sector is growing stronger," Governor Wolf said. "Our role at the state level is to help foster that growth. By supporting our tech entrepreneurs, we're creating jobs, enabling business growth, and making Pennsylvania a national and global leader in innovation."

The KIZ program provides young Pennsylvania companies with vital working capital to meet critical needs, including covering capital expenditures, workforce expansion, operational expenses, and making companies more attractive to venture investment.

The program provides tax credits for companies that have been in operation for less than eight years, whose gross revenues have increased over the previous year, are located in a Keystone Innovation Zone, and are operating within a targeted industry sector such as information technology or advanced manufacturing/diversified materials. When combined with other tools for entrepreneurs like Governor Wolf's PA Business One-Stop Shop and the Ben Franklin Technology Partners, KIZs are one component of a broad spectrum of resources available for small and emerging technology companies.

An example of a company that has benefitted from the KIZ program is Soltech Solutions, a producer of the world's first LED grow light made for interior design.

The KIZ program enabled the founders of the company to purchase crucial equipment, speed up their operations, and form strong partnerships with local colleges and universities.

A full list of approved Keystone Innovation Zone companies totaling just under \$15 million in tax credits, as well as more information about the Keystone Innovation Zone Program, a map of the zones, and highlights of past awardees' success stories, can be found on the DCED website.

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Sustainable Success in a Fast-Changing Marketplace - Comments from a Local Manufacturer

written by admin | January 7, 2019

Below is a real story with multiple timely and important messages from one of our area manufacturing leaders who has chosen to remain anonymous.



One of the important messages... Yes, it's important to be as efficient as possible in how we do things (continual process improvement). But if we want sustainable success, we also have to continually innovate what we bring to the marketplace. As in creating new and differentiated products and services that are meaningful to

customers. Because the competitive landscape is a more rapidly evolving place than ever. Check it out.

Today's lunch learning is more personal. A few months ago, I got news that a plant I once managed (20+ years ago), a super plant it was called in its day, a model for operations around the globe was closing and it was moving to Mexico. It reminded me in the days of super competition in electronics where our plant was competing, not just for business for its overall corporate needs, but our individual plant was competing too within the organization and globally. The livelihood of our people had to do also with its competitiveness within the organization. I used to say, we want to have the best bike! The bike everyone wants to have. When customers come to the US and are going to visit a plant, and there are 10 of them, we want ours to be the one chosen. We needed the best, the most enthusiastic people. The best the most cutting edge and performing assembly lines. Not just that perform, but that were "marketable." We needed to provide for the community in a visible way too. And we did! And we were very successful. We were on all the college tours, excellence tours and even written about in top improvement books having to do with World Class Manufacturing.

Now after 20 years, its going to be gone, and the people there were told that there aren't jobs for them at other plants. The best performing plant in the past, no longer a star. Its not to be looked at as a model of what to do and how to do it, but maybe what not to do. The employees once leading the culture change, now gobbled up by another. What is the lesson? Hard to say and its likely many contributors, but maybe, it got complacent. Maybe in its glory it lost sight. I know, some of you might feel how can you compete south of the boarder, I know we can as we did successfully for some time. Maybe it forgot it was competing.

I learned early about competition starting my career in Boston. Simplifying, we were told once to embrace in-process manufacturing and eliminate departments. I remember being a bit on the side lines and very observant noting that the company gave corporate every excuse why we couldn't do what they wanted. We didn't know another plant, not as experienced, was given the same directive. They were

successful, we weren't. One day I came in, every manager and most senior level types we gone. Of course, then all the support types reported that they could do as desired, but the wheels of motion were already in play. It was the start of my career and success, I think because I learned from this. I never forgot that experience. It was a scary hard truth. I literally let hundreds of people go as the plant closed and moved. The hollow look in their eyes would later be a motivator to me to prevent similar. I still have contact with those very first employees too, how lucky a guy!

I think about how many great companies we remember and who would ever think that they could collapse, vanish....They were the best of the best! Weren't they? I think this helps to point to the need to be constantly innovative. To be humble and competitive in all times. To use innovation and break paradigms. History is knowledge, if we choose to pay attention. At least, that is what I think! Remember these folks next time one thinks they are too big to fall. I point to business, but we can also point to people.

- *Sears - ????*
 - *Panam*
 - *Compaq*
 - *MCI - WorldCom*
 - *Enron*
 - *Arthur Anderson*
 - *TWA*
 - *Woolworth's*
 - *Eastern Airlines*
 - *Kodak*
 - *Block Buster*
 - *Radio Shack*
 - *Polaroid"*
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“The True Origin of Value Creation”

written by Lauri Moon | January 7, 2019

This is a good, short article ultimately about sales and marketing. Easily transferrable in terms of segmenting customers and identifying the kinds of touches that drive interactions and opportunities.

The True Origin of Value Creation

by Dan Blacharski

IMC and Congressman Marino Visit Videon Central, Inc.

written by Lauri Moon | January 7, 2019

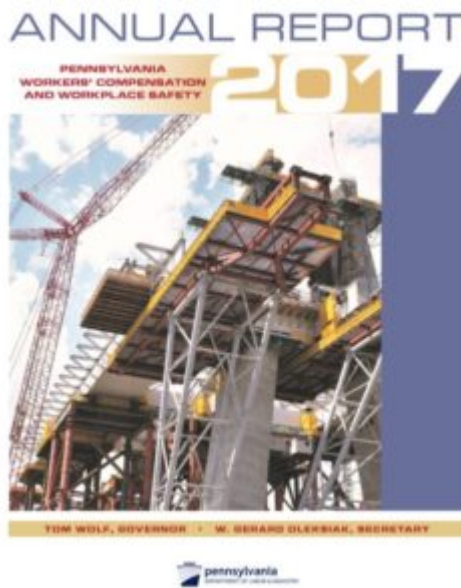
Thanks to Rob Bargo and Videon Central for hosting IMC and Congressman Tom Marino for Manufacturing Day 2018. Videon, located in State College, PA, develops software and designs hardware for AV products worldwide. Through relationships with companies like Intel, Sony, Samsung and Lufthansa Technik, Videon works with a broad range of industries, from aviation and broadcast to sports and consumer electronics. #MFGDay18



Workers' Compensation and Workplace Safety 2017 Annual Report

written by Lauri Moon | January 7, 2019

The Pennsylvania Workers' Compensation and Workplace Safety 2017 Annual Report is available now at the link below. "The report demonstrates our program's commitment to workplace safety, superior customer service, innovation, and excellence in carrying out the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act." PA Department of Labor & Industry



Healthy Partners by UPMC Susquehanna

written by Lauri Moon | January 7, 2019

I recently met with Sam Sawyer, Employer Relations Specialist at UPMC Susquehanna to learn more about their *Healthy Partners* Program.

UPMC Susquehanna is the primary healthcare provider in the communities they serve. So they know it is in their best interest to provide wellness programs to raise awareness of the services they provide to improve the overall health of the community's population by maximizing healthcare utilization.

As we all know, healthcare costs continue to rise and are a burden on many employers and employees. Wellness programs reduce these costs and present a unique opportunity for UPMC and local employers to work together to improve health and save money. The goal of Healthy Partners by UPMC Susquehanna is to be an extension of your company, to give you everything you need in implementing a wellness program, and to assist in improving your company's employee and fiscal health.

The program takes an objective approach to helping your employees manage their health. Employees receive onsite screenings, personalized health reports and follow up educational opportunities. As an employer, you'll receive a de-identified aggregate group health report and potential solutions to help manage the top health risks of your workforce. Together with UPMC, you'll implement education and additional screenings to tackle those top needs that are relevant to your employees. For most employers, the entire program is performed at no charge!

To learn more about Healthy Partners by UPMC Susquehanna or to signup for our free monthly newsletter, contact Sam Sawyer at sawyersl@upmc.edu or 570-321-2289.

Healthy Partners Program

Study Releases Manufacturers Impacts in 2017

written by Lauri Moon | January 7, 2019

The Innovative Manufacturers Center (IMC), which is part of a public-private partnership that provides U.S. manufacturers with access to resources they need to succeed, today announced findings from its 2017 program impact survey. Each year, clients are surveyed using an independent third-party to document the economic impact of the services provided by Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Centers across the country and the partnership's return on investment for U.S. manufacturers.

During one-on-one projects and/or training in 2017, IMC interacted with more than 120 small and medium-size manufacturing clients. Of those manufacturers conducting one-on-one projects and reporting impact, IMC:

- Helped to create or retain more than 324 jobs
- Produced \$18,140,000 in new and retained sales
- Achieved \$4,498,500 in cost savings
- Facilitated \$8,055,700 in new client investments

IMC works directly with Central PA manufacturers to provide expertise and services tailored to meet critical needs ranging from process improvements, workforce training, innovation strategies, and new product development. These services help small and medium-size manufacturers accelerate and strengthen growth and competitiveness in the global marketplace.

"It's essential for manufacturers to be equipped with the tools and training necessary to be competitive in today's rapidly changing marketplace," said Daniel T. Manetta, IMC Executive Director/CEO. "Manufacturing accounts for nearly 12 percent of the total U.S. gross domestic product, it's the 6th largest employer, and it accounts for

almost 60 percent of all U.S. exports.”

Collectively in 2017, the MEP National Network interacted with more than 26,000 small and medium-size U.S. manufacturing clients and:

- Helped to create or retain more than 100,000 jobs
- Produced \$12.6 billion in new and retained sales
- Achieved \$1.7 billion in cost savings

About Innovative Manufacturers Center (IMC)

Founded in 1988, the Innovative Manufacturers’ Center has worked with over 600 Central PA manufacturers to help them innovate, grow and prosper. Supported through the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology’s Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development’s Manufacturing PA program, IMC serves manufacturers in Lycoming, Montour, Northumberland, Union, Snyder, Clinton, Centre, Mifflin, Juniata, Huntington, Blair, and Bedford Counties. Visit IMC at www.IMCpa.com for more information.

About the MEP National Network

The MEP National Network™ is a unique public-private partnership that delivers comprehensive, proven solutions to U.S. manufacturers, fueling growth and advancing U.S. manufacturing.

Focused on helping small and medium-sized manufacturers generate business results and thrive in today’s technology-driven economy, the MEP National Network comprises the National Institute of Standards and Technology’s Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NIST MEP), the 51 MEP Centers located in all 50 states and Puerto Rico, and over 1,300 trusted advisors and experts at more than 400 MEP service locations, providing any U.S. manufacturer with access to resources they need to succeed. Each MEP Center is a partnership between the federal government and a variety of public or private entities, including state, university, and nonprofit organizations.

About the Survey

Fors Marsh Group, LLC conducts the NIST MEP client survey. Fors Marsh Group, LLC is an Arlington, VA-based applied research firm. The company has experience both in market research and surveying with a specialization in working with small manufacturers. Fors Marsh Group, LLC conducts the survey quarterly and MEP Center clients are interviewed annually. The survey asks clients to consider the entire set of projects or services provided by a center and to report on how their company's performance and processes have been affected in the last 12 months. The survey asks clients to report on the impact of MEP Center services on bottom-line client outcomes and bottom-line impacts such as sales, jobs created/retained, capital investment and cost savings. The survey has 16 questions and takes an average of 10 minutes to complete.

What's So Cool About Manufacturing? Video Contest

written by Lauri Moon | January 7, 2019



Voting is underway for the What's So Cool About Manufacturing? project.

Check out the videos by clicking [here](#) and cast your vote today!

Support for IMC and the National Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Program

written by Lauri Moon | January 7, 2019

For almost 30 years, IMC has been helping Central Pennsylvania manufacturers become more innovative, productive and profitable. We have been able to do this, in part, due to support from the U.S. Department of Commerce, NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership program.

A recent study by the W.E. Upjohn Institute found that the **MEP Program generates a substantial economic and financial return of nearly 9:1**. Yes, a federal investment that works!

Please take 5 minutes to e-mail your federal elected officials asking them to support a \$142.4 million appropriation for MEP, **which helps support IMC's operations**.

To e-mail your federal elected officials

1. Click on this link
2. Click **Send E-mail**.
3. **Complete** the demographic information in the blue box and click **Submit**. This will take you to the **Compose Message** page where you will see the text of the e-mail and the names of the officials you will be e-mailing.
4. **Review the letter and customize** as appropriate - paragraphs 1 and 4 REQUIRE customization inside the brackets [].
5. Click **Submit** at the bottom of the page
6. Please **consider forwarding this request** to employees or others at your discretion.

Thank you for your support of IMC and Central PA Manufacturers!

Fueling Growth and Advancing U.S. Manufacturing Through Tangible Results

written by Lauri Moon | January 7, 2019

IMC's federal sponsor, NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership, releases national network impact results for 2017.

By Carroll Thomas 2/05/18

I am proud to announce the MEP National Network impact results for 2017. These results are truly impressive. Last year, this streamlined program with 51 MEP Centers located in all 50 states and Puerto Rico, interacted directly or through their partners with over 26,000 manufacturers. Based on results from a third-party survey, clients from across the country reported that the assistance they received helped to create and retain more than 100,000 manufacturing jobs in 2017 alone. Read on...