

# CATALYST™

SPRING 2019

Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry

## Earth-friendly Efficiency

*How PA Chamber companies are adopting a greener mission to help their operations and the environment*

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■ Enterprise Ventures Corporation: Company's Innovative System Saves Water — a Resource Too Precious to Use Only Once

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# DON'T LET THIS PEST BE A ROADBLOCK TO BUSINESS



## LEARN ABOUT PENNSYLVANIA'S REQUIRED SPOTTED LANTERNFLY PERMIT.

Businesses play an important role in helping to stop the spotted lanternfly. Commercial trucks and railcars are especially prone to spreading this invasive pest. If your business moves equipment or goods in and out of the current quarantined counties—Berks, Bucks, Carbon, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton, Philadelphia and Schuylkill—you must have a spotted lanternfly permit by May 1, 2019.

To learn more visit [extension.psu.edu/slf-permit](https://extension.psu.edu/slf-permit).

## Get your free Business Action Toolkit

Does your company do business within the quarantined area? Ask for your free Action Toolkit of printed materials to inform your employees about ways to stop the spotted lanternfly. To order, visit [extension.psu.edu/slf-toolkit](https://extension.psu.edu/slf-toolkit).



# President's message



With climate change a hot topic of political debate, discussions at the state and federal level are focused on how large a role the government should play in regulating businesses' carbon footprint. Here at the PA Chamber, we advocate for responsible regulatory policies that help companies succeed and grow while also ensuring environmental protection. To that end, I encourage you to read the "Federal Focus" and "RegWatch" sections of this issue of *Catalyst*; which provide the business community's response to the "Green New Deal" that was recently proposed by the

Congressional far-left, and our opposition to a petition that would have the state Department of Environmental Protection circumvent the legislature's authority and establish an economy-wide cap and trade program on all industrial sectors in the state — including power plants, gas and electric utilities and most large manufacturers. Both of these proposals would impose significant risk and costs to businesses. We are committed to working with our elected pro-growth allies and business advocacy groups to promote alternative energy-centric strategies that will keep Pennsylvania clean and green without harsh economic consequences.

As our organization fights back against excess regulation, we are also celebrating the ways in which the private sector is working on its own to become more energy efficient and environmentally friendly. The member-centric articles in this issue of *Catalyst* include a look at how the benefits of PSECU's LEED-certified headquarters have paid off for the state's largest credit union, five years after its opening. We examine an effort by Peoples Gas to cut its methane emissions by 50 percent within Pittsburgh by mapping, measuring and quickly fixing natural gas leaks from the city's network of underground pipes. This edition also explores GIANT Foods' national award for the grocery chain's food recovery and zero waste efforts; the success of Enterprise Ventures Corporations' innovative water recycling system; and much more.

It is through these stories that we impress upon our readership the numerous ways companies are moving toward a mission of sustainability and efficiency without the heavy hand of government forcing them to do so. It's no small coincidence that this issue mails out on Monday, April 22 — Earth Day. As we celebrate all that our members are doing to boost their bottom lines while reducing their environmental footprint, we encourage you to reach out with stories on how your businesses are building a greener tomorrow. ■

Gene Barr

## About The Pennsylvania Chamber

Founded in 1916, the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry is the largest broad-based business association in Pennsylvania, serving as the frontline advocate for business at the state Capitol. The PA Chamber is dedicated to helping its members understand and easily follow the complexities of state and federal workplace regulations. Educational services include conferences and guidebooks on a wide variety of issues important to the business community. Our mission is to be the "Statewide Voice of Business™", advocate for job creation and lead Pennsylvania to greater prosperity for its residents."

# CATALYST™

Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry

Managing editor, Lindsay Andrews

Contributing editor, Tricia Harris

Contributing editor, Clarke Slade

Graphic designer, John Shirey

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## U.S. “LAW FIRM OF THE YEAR” IN LITIGATION—ENVIRONMENTAL

We are proud to work with clients to build, maintain, and operate an array of infrastructure in Pennsylvania, and to vigorously defend their businesses against third-party opposition and government enforcement.

We are honored to be named as the “Law Firm of the Year” for Litigation—Environmental in the 2018 and 2019 *U.S. News-Best Lawyers*® “Best Law Firms” survey. For more information, contact Craig Wilson at 717.231.4509 or [craig.wilson@klgates.com](mailto:craig.wilson@klgates.com).

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### Up next

With its world-class educational institutions, strategic location, and hard work ethic, Pennsylvania is known to attract the world's innovators. The next issue of *Catalyst* delves into the Commonwealth's role as a "State of Innovation," and looks to how we can harness the spirit of innovation well into the future.

## Meet the PA Chamber's Government Affairs Team



**Gene Barr**  
President and CEO



**Sam Denisco**  
Vice President,  
Government Affairs  
Taxes, healthcare and tort



**Alex Halper**  
Director,  
Government Affairs  
Labor and employment,  
education, workforce and  
trade



**Kevin Sunday**  
Director,  
Government Affairs  
Energy, environment  
and transportation



**Jennifer Reis**  
Manager,  
Government Affairs  
Political Action Committee  
management, local  
chamber outreach,  
general business issues

## Bipartisan Efforts on Workforce Development Dominate First Few Months of 2019-20 Legislative Session

By **Sam Denisco**, vice president of Government Affairs

With the 2019-20 Legislative Session well underway, one issue that has received bipartisan support is workforce development. This has long been a cornerstone issue for the PA Chamber, as we continually hear from our broad-based membership that employers are struggling to find qualified workers. Our workforce initiative, “Start the Conversation HERE,” is a grassroots campaign aimed at addressing the skills gap in Pennsylvania.

The need to focus on building a stronger workforce was a major theme in Gov. Tom Wolf’s budget address — an aspect of his speech that was universally applauded by leaders of both political parties. During his budget address, the governor announced the formation of the Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center. The Command Center aims to bring together the various elements of state government that oversee workforce development programs with the private sector to identify ways to close the jobs skills gap; fill the many open positions that exist throughout the state and make Pennsylvania more competitive on a national and global scale. Helping to lead this effort is PA Chamber President Gene Barr, who was selected by the governor to serve as one of the Command Center’s co-chairs.

On the legislative front, the House recently passed a bipartisan workforce package that would improve and expand the Commonwealth’s current workforce programs, and would also help educate students about the training needed for the state’s in-demand jobs.

Over the coming months, the PA Chamber looks forward to working with elected officials from both sides of the aisle to develop innovative solutions to meet the Commonwealth’s workforce needs.

*(Editor’s Note: The status of all bills in this Legislative Update is based on their respective standing as of March 27.)*

### Labor

#### Follow-up to *Janus* Decision (H.B. 785):

This legislation would require regular notification to public employees that they are not required to join the union and repeal state laws providing for ‘fair share’ fees that are now moot as a result of the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Janus* decision. **Status:** The bill passed the House Judiciary Committee and is currently awaiting consideration by the full House.

**PA Chamber position:** Support



## Legal Reform

**Commerce Court (H.B. 332):** This legislation would allow the Pennsylvania Superior Court to create a Commerce Court program for the Superior Court. Specialized business courts with the authority to preside over various types of business disputes, similar to what currently exists in Delaware, facilitate more timely and expeditious resolutions. **Status:** The bill passed the House Judiciary Committee and is currently awaiting consideration by the full House.

**PA Chamber position:** Support

**Medical Malpractice Venue (S.R. 20):** Early this year, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania was considering a proposed rule change regarding venue in medical malpractice cases. The Court's Civil Procedural Rules Committee proposed taking Pennsylvania backwards by undoing medical malpractice venue reforms implemented in 2002 and allowing medical liability lawsuits to be filed in other jurisdictions beyond the county where the alleged malpractice occurred. This resolution directs the Legislative Budget and Finance Committee to conduct an analysis of the impact of the original change brought about by the recommendation of the Interbranch Commission in 2002. The LBFC will be required to hold at least one public hearing and to provide the General Assembly with its final report by January 1, 2020. **Status:** The resolution was adopted by the Senate; the Court has since decided to await the results of the LBFC report before considering the rule change.

**PA Chamber position:** Support

## Workforce Development

**Providing Important Workforce Information (H.B. 297):** This legislation would require the Pennsylvania Department of Education to develop materials outlining workforce needs, including training opportunities and future earning potential. The legislation also calls for school entities to allow for community colleges and other technical/trade schools to attend career and college fairs. **Status:** The bill passed the House and is currently awaiting consideration by the Senate Education Committee.

**PA Chamber position:** Support

**Classification of Instructional Programs (H.B. 334):** This legislation would codify into law an existing pilot program to expedite the classification of instructional programs. The legislation would also require the Pennsylvania Department of Education to establish a standard application for a public school entity to seek approval to establish or renew a CIP. PDE would also be tasked with issuing guidelines to identify the circumstances when a student who successfully completes a STEM related course, program or activity for credit may apply the credit toward completion of a course, program or activity offered by an area vocational-technical school, technical institution or vocational school or department. **Status:** The bill passed the House and is currently awaiting consideration by the Senate Education Committee.

**PA Chamber position:** Support

**Career Resources Center (H.B. 393):** This legislation would require the Departments of Education, Labor and Industry, and Agriculture to develop and maintain a comprehensive online career resource center for students, parents, educators and school officials. The resource center would provide information on the value and impact of career technical education, career pathways, data and statistics on employment opportunities and compensation, postsecondary options and statewide and regional articulation agreements. **Status:** The bill passed the House and is currently awaiting consideration by the Senate Education Committee.

**PA Chamber position:** Support

**Workforce Development Programs (H.B. 394):** This legislation would require the Department of Education and the Department of Labor and Industry to conduct a complete inventory of existing workforce development programs at both the secondary and postsecondary levels with particular emphasis on opportunities for business-education partnerships. The goal of this endeavor would be to share best practices learned with various entities to help improve the delivery of career focused opportunities. **Status:** The bill passed the House and is currently awaiting consideration by the Senate Education Committee.

**PA Chamber position:** Support

**Occupational Advisory Committees (H.B. 395):** This legislation would allow career technical education programs or a cluster of programs to establish occupational advisory committees at the Intermediate Unit level, which would serve multiple school districts or Career and Technical Centers. **Status:** The bill passed the House and is currently awaiting consideration by the Senate Education Committee.

**PA Chamber position:** Support

**Local WIBs (H.B. 396):** This legislation would require each local workforce development board to include in its membership as least one administrator of a career and technical center whose attendance area is covered by the service area of the WDB. **Status:** The bill passed the House and is currently awaiting consideration by the Senate Labor and Industry Committee.

**PA Chamber position:** Support

*continued on page 8*



## Legislative Update

continued from page 7

**CareerBound (H.B. 425):** This legislation would require the Department of Labor and Industry to create CareerBound — a program that aims to strengthen the connection between Pennsylvania’s students and the next generation of high-priority careers. **Status:** The bill passed the House and is currently awaiting consideration by the Senate Labor and Industry Committee.

**PA Chamber position:** Support

## General

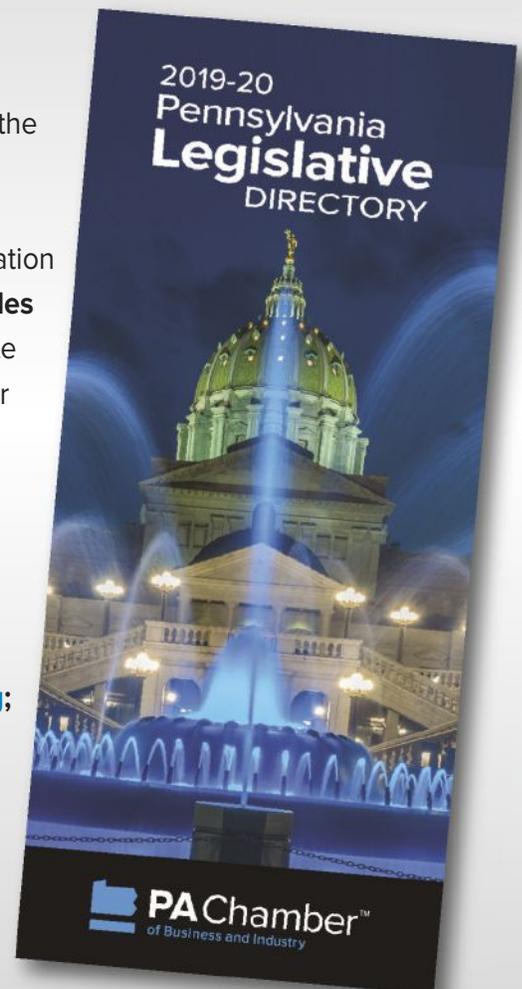
**Price Controls During Emergencies (S.B. 139):** This legislation would amend the Price Gouging Act to impose reasonable limits on pricing restrictions, to protect businesses from enforcement action by the state Attorney General’s office for raising prices during emergencies, and simplify compliance, among other reforms. **Status:** This bill passed the Senate Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness and is currently awaiting consideration by the full Senate. ■

**PA Chamber position:** Support

# Your complete guide to Pennsylvania’s General Assembly and the Wolf Administration!

The Pennsylvania Chamber’s *Legislative Directory* gives you the ability to quickly find the name, office, location, committee assignments, telephone number and email address of every member of Pennsylvania’s General Assembly, Wolf Administration officials, and the state’s Congressional delegation, and **includes every one of the new state legislators this session.** Complete with photos, this handy pocket guide is sure to be one of your most valuable resources. And, the *Directory* reflects the new Congressional districts map.

The *Legislative Directory* is \$17.00 plus tax, with quantity discounts available. To order your copy, visit [pachamber.org](http://pachamber.org); or call our toll-free Publication Hotline — 877.866.8965.



## Meet the PA Chamber's Membership Team



**Mary Oliveira**  
Director of Membership  
and Investor Relations



**Jessica Brown**  
Member Executive,  
Western PA Region



**Christ Gekas**  
Membership Development  
Associate



**Chris Sever**  
Member Executive,  
Eastern PA Region



**Debra Steffey**  
Member Relations  
Associate

## Membership on a Mission

By **Mary Oliveira**, Director of Membership



Greetings!

We are excited to kick off a new feature in *Catalyst* — **All Things Membership!** Please take a moment to “meet” your PA Chamber membership team and reach out to us so we may get to know you better.

My first message to our readership makes it a great time to recall our organization’s mission and vision statements, and underscore our commitment to working on behalf of our entire broad-based membership:

**MISSION:** To be the Statewide Voice of Business, advocate for job creation and lead Pennsylvania to greater prosperity for its residents.

**VISION:** To create a Pennsylvania where employers are attracted to invest and grow, families thrive and young people receive an education that prepares them to be productive and civically engaged members of the community.

As we work together to foster a member-centric culture here at the Chamber, you may notice and experience new ways in which we do business. Above all, our relationship with our members is of the foremost importance. We are looking to blend personal touch to our professional connections and invite you into a collaborative environment. Our team welcomes your feedback and input as we continue to improve your membership experience and, most certainly, ensure that you receive a meaningful return on your membership investment. Our goal is to guarantee a positive and productive moment with each and every interaction you have with our people, products and services.

Stay tuned to future editions of *Catalyst* as we celebrate and cultivate **All Things Membership!**

**WELCOME** to our newest PA Chamber members who have joined us in the first quarter of 2019:

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| AGES                                  | Livengood Safety Services  |
| Artistic Imprints                     | Lockheed Martin Space  |
| Bentley Systems Inc.                  | Military Veterans Partners   |
| Bernville Family Hair Salon           | On A Roll Grill  |
| Bio-Haz Solutions, Inc.               | Orion Strategies   |
| Bottom Line Concepts LLC              | Penoco Inc.  |
| Burk’s Roofing Company LLC            | PPC Lubricants Inc.  |
| Calpine Corporation                   | Tailgate Guys  |
| Caterpillar, Inc.                     | The Latino Connection  |
| Columbia County Conservation District | The Seltzer Insurance Group  |
| Fidelis Mortgage Corporation          | Sophy Jewelers   |
| Heck’s Diesel Tech LLC                | Stable Hollow Woodworking  |
| Integra Business Solutions            | TNA Fleet Services   |
| J & J Medical Inc.                    | Zeager & Sons Inc.  |
| Kohanski & Company PC                 |  |

# Protecting the Environment, Building a Stronger Energy Future a Key Focus in 2019-20 Session

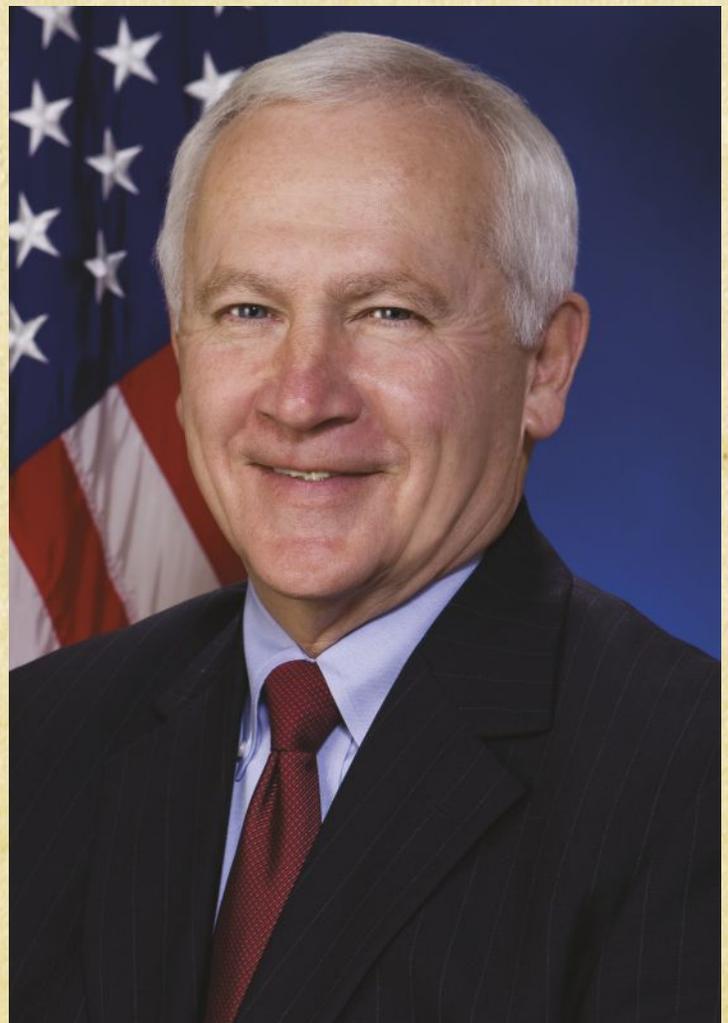
By Senator Gene Yaw

**W**ith the start of the 2019-2020 legislative session at hand, members of the Pennsylvania Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee will continue to work on issues that protect the environment, build a stronger, more affordable energy future for our residents and businesses and position our state as a global leader in energy production. While there may be philosophical differences that come before the committee, there are many ways we can find common ground.

Pennsylvania is gifted with extensive energy resources. Very few states have the natural resources that Pennsylvania does — coal, natural gas, geothermal, nuclear, wind, water, wood and solar — we have it all. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Pennsylvania's gross natural gas production, primarily from the Marcellus Shale, reached nearly 6.1 trillion cubic feet in 2018. The state was the nation's second-largest natural gas producer after Texas. Information provided by the U.S. Energy Information Administration noted that Pennsylvania was the third-largest coal-producing state in the nation in 2017, and the only state mining anthracite coal. Moreover, we have used our resources to become a net exporter of electricity.

Over the past several legislative sessions, the committee has been active in updating our laws and regulations to assure that energy development is done safely. We will continue this discussion and enhance state laws as needed. The number of DEP staff who are charged with inspecting natural gas wells has tripled. Laws governing how drilling occurs and ensuring that the environment and local communities are safe have been adopted. Although Pennsylvania's standards are among the highest in the nation, the discussion will always continue as to how we can better protect the environment and citizens. Representatives from many states and foreign countries have traveled to Pennsylvania to learn about our safety and environmental efforts so that they can replicate them back home.

Significant time has been spent debating tax policies related to natural gas development. How can we encourage more capital investment to Pennsylvania, while at the same time generating new revenues to meet community and state needs? In 2012, Act 13 was passed which imposed a unique "Impact Fee" that is collected annually on every shale gas well drilled in the state. The Impact Fee has generated nearly \$1.7 billion in new revenue. Most of this money has been allocated to counties and municipalities where drilling occurs to address local needs and priorities. Act 13 has been a resounding success.



There is widespread support in seeing locally produced natural gas used to benefit our own homeowners and businesses. Unfortunately, only 51 percent of Pennsylvania households have access to natural gas as their primary home heating fuel. The Legislature had the foresight a few years back to create the Pipeline Investment Program, which has been providing grants to construct natural gas distribution lines to business parks, existing

manufacturing and industrial enterprises, while providing access to natural gas for residents. We need to continue this work.

In 2018, the Committee held a hearing to review and discuss foreign influences on Pennsylvania's energy sector. This is an issue we will continue to monitor. Across the nation, there have been many reports of foreign efforts to suppress U.S. energy development. The bottom line is that Pennsylvania is a major player in global energy production. As lawmakers, we have an obligation to be aware of the competing interests that involve our state and the nation. If only our state neighbors to the north understood this principle. Rather than permit expanding pipelines to import Pennsylvania natural gas, the political leaders of New York and New England support importing LNG from Russia.

On another front, we need to address our obligations as a member to the Chesapeake Bay Commission. A major challenge is improving our water quality and meeting U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Bay mandates by 2025. More than half of Pennsylvania lies within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which includes all or part of 43 counties. The Commonwealth contributes 43 percent of the Bay's nitrogen load, almost as much as Maryland and Virginia combined. One Pennsylvania county, Lancaster, has twice as many dairy cows as the state of Maryland. Within the Lancaster County watershed there are more layer chickens, beef cattle and hogs than in the combined watershed outside of Pennsylvania from Maryland,

Virginia, Delaware, New York and West Virginia. Under the Total Maximum Daily Load dictated by EPA, between 2009 and 2025, Maryland's total nitrogen reduction requirement is 10.78 million pounds. Between 2019 and 2025, Lancaster County alone needs to reduce nitrogen by 11.46 million pounds.

We in Pennsylvania understand our obligations. We understand there is much work to be done. We understand that decades of acceptable past practices must change. Our DEP, Department of Agriculture and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources are putting forth unprecedented efforts to address the water quality issues we face. We understand that like any other governmental undertaking, funding is, and will be, a hurdle.

Ensuring that Pennsylvania has a clean environment, affordable energy and remains a leader in energy production should be something that we, as lawmakers, strive to accomplish each and every day. Without question, we have major work to do, but with an effort that is reasonable, rational and responsible, we can and will accomplish much. ■

■ **State Sen. Gene Yaw, R-Lycoming** is chairman of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee.



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## Pennsylvania's Marketing Powerhouse

If you've experienced any of the PA Chamber's last 17 annual dinners in the Hershey Lodge's Great American Hall, you probably think of JPL as a premier event producer.

And you're right, but that's only the tip of the JPL iceberg. This Pennsylvania powerhouse offers an impressive range of cutting-edge capabilities.

Headquartered in Harrisburg, JPL is one of the Mid-Atlantic's largest full-service, integrated marketing communications companies. Its roster of clients includes The Hershey Company, Quest Diagnostics, Rite Aid and the American Chemistry Council.

JPL provides strategic thinking and creative execution across a full range of services, including brand and integrated marketing, content creation, digital, and employee engagement and internal communications, in addition to top-shelf event production.

Moreover, through subsidiaries d'Vinci Interactive and Paskill, Stapleton & Lord (PS&L), JPL also provides specialized custom learning solutions for corporate, educational and government markets, and enrollment marketing for higher education.

### Three decades of growth

Founded in 1989 as JPL Video Productions, the firm has grown inexorably by keeping its eye on the horizon, recognizing and seizing opportunities, and shaping and delivering each new service with the same relentless passion and attention to detail.

"JPL has grown and evolved our business in a highly-competitive and rapidly-changing marketplace for 30 years," says JPL President Luke Kempki. "We continue to drive growth by building on our extensive strategic, digital,

creative and production capabilities, thanks to a deep and talented staff of integrated communications strategists, innovative digital marketers and technologists, and inspirational creative leaders."

The firm's evolution has been especially noteworthy in its ability to stay several steps ahead of the digital tsunami.

### Evolving to meet client needs

Most recently, JPL expanded its paid media and analytics services with a new office on Madison Avenue in New York City. This Big Apple presence will enhance the Pennsylvania team's product by beefing up its digital media and analytics staff. The new office also gives JPL and PS&L greater access to top tech companies and





the latest digital solutions, which will also drive growth for clients.

JPL's New York office is led by Brian Aitken, who joined the company last year from New York City-based Assembly, Advertising Age's 2018 Media Agency of the Year. Aitken is serving as managing director of JPL's Manhattan

presence, while continuing to lead the company's paid media and analytics group.

This aggressive approach is in the company's DNA. In the '90s, the company moved into interactive CD ROMs, computer-based training and interactive kiosks. It dropped "Video" from its name and became an early provider of web



services, including development, strategy and marketing, paving the path to where it stands today.

In the 2000s, Kempfski recalls, "More and more clients were coming to us to construct their websites, but they didn't have a strategy. In 2008, we made a deliberate transition into a comprehensive marketing agency so we could better serve our client needs. We dropped 'Productions' from our name and launched JPL as a full-service firm."

### Powering up through partnerships

In 2013, JPL acquired d'Vinci Interactive, Inc., a Maryland-based company that uses learning technology to help clients improve quality and boost performance. These enhanced capabilities benefit a range of clients, including National Geographic, Constellation Brands and the National Park Service.

With the acquisition of York, PA-based Campbell, Harrington & Brear Advertising Agency in early 2017, JPL expanded its paid media capabilities.

Later that year, JPL formed a corporate partnership with PS&L, the Philadelphia-area college and university enrollment marketing agency. This endeavor, says Kempfski, makes JPL "one of the most comprehensive and resource-rich higher education marketing firms in the nation."

Fifteen Pennsylvania colleges are currently raising their profiles and increasing enrollment thanks in part to the experienced, disciplined counsel resulting from the partnership.

JPL's depth of creative, media production and digital marketing capabilities benefits the clients of all three companies.

### Pennsylvania continues to win

In the 30 years since its founding, JPL stands as a strategy-driven, tech-enabled, data analytics-fueled generator of measurable results.

In Harrisburg, JPL has 100 team members providing strategic and creative marketing, web development, and media production and placement services. Half of d'Vinci's 20-plus employees are also located in Harrisburg, with the remainder working in the company's Hagerstown office. PS&L is headquartered near Philadelphia in Glenside, PA.

The range of disciplines and number of locations provide growth opportunities for existing team members, while enabling the company to attract higher-level talent from a broader geographic footprint. The company fully embraces the idea that remote team members and partners boost creativity and capacity.

*continued on page 14*

## JPL Driving Growth in Pennsylvania by Enhancing its Digital Expertise

In today's digitized world, every aspect of marketing is influenced by data.

Yet, it's been difficult to find paid media and marketing data analytics expertise in Central Pennsylvania.

Not anymore. JPL is expanding its paid media and analytics practice to New York City — the digital marketing and analytics center of the world — a move that will drive growth in Pennsylvania for JPL, its subsidiary Paskill, Stapleton & Lord, and their clients.

"Our New York office will give us access to the world's best digital media and analytics talent and more opportunities to work directly with top ad tech companies to develop the latest solutions for our clients before they go to market," said Brian Aitken, managing director of the New York office and head of JPL's Digital Media and Analytics Group.

This move is part of JPL's strategic growth plan, which is focused on building business with existing clients and in pursuing new opportunities, especially in the healthcare and higher education verticals.

**“ JPL is expanding its paid media and analytics practice to New York City — the digital marketing and analytics center of the world — a move that will drive growth in Pennsylvania for JPL, its subsidiary Paskill, Stapleton & Lord, and their clients. ”**

### JPL: Pennsylvania's Marketing Powerhouse

*continued from page 13*

#### JPL keeps winning, too

Clearly, JPL's evolving construct seems to be working. How do we know for sure?

- It was named the 2018 Business of the Year by The Central Penn Business Journal in the mid-size company category.
- In September, JPL was named one of the Commonwealth's Best Places to Work for the 17th year in a row, one of only two companies to achieve that level of consistency.
- JPL was named to the 2018 Top 50 Fastest Growing Companies list by The Central Penn Business Journal. The program identifies the region's most dynamic companies that have made significant contributions to the strength of our local economy.
- The agency has been shortlisted by Digiday's Work Life Awards as one of the nation's "Most Dedicated to Employee Growth."

"To grow in our highly competitive market requires the company and each team member to constantly increase our knowledge, capabilities and skills," says Kempinski. "This is how we meet the client demand for new and effective strategies for engaging employees, customers and other target audiences." ■

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### **SW Pennsylvania Office**

Contact: Justin Lauterbach, Q.E.P.  
Vice President

2001 Waterdam Plaza Drive, Suite 205  
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Phone: (724) 206-0348  
Fax: (724) 206-0380  
Email: [jlauterbach@rtenv.com](mailto:jlauterbach@rtenv.com)

### **NJ Office**

Contact: Chris Ward, L.S.R.P.

Pureland Complex, Suite 306  
510 Heron Dr., PO Box 521  
Bridgeport, NJ 08014

Phone: (856) 467-2276  
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Made in PA



## Hydro Extrusions North America: One of Southeast Pennsylvania's Biggest Employers



**H**ydro, a global supplier of aluminum products, is Schuylkill County's largest manufacturing employer, operating a production facility in Cressona. A fixture in the community since the 1940s, the plant makes extruded products that serve a variety of industries, including construction, automotive, transportation and energy.

The Cressona location is the largest extrusion operation in the U.S. for Hydro Extrusions. Norsk Hydro, the extrusion division's parent company, owns operations for the entire aluminum value chain, from mining raw materials to manufacturing the finished products.

Hydro Extrusions is the market leader for aluminum extruded products. The extrusion process requires powerful presses to force aluminum through a die to create a desired shape, either solid or hollow. Visually, it compares to squeezing toothpaste from a tube or pushing Play-Doh through the outline of a shape.

Standard extrusion





### American Heritage

While Hydro itself is a Norwegian company, the plant in Cressona has American roots and a history of supporting the local economy.

Designed and built by Alcoa Corp., the \$39 million<sup>1</sup> plant was initially commissioned to support the wartime effort during World War II. Construction began in 1942 at the former Schuylkill County Fairgrounds and the 117-acre plant officially opened on Nov. 19, 1943. For its first two years, the plant made extruded aluminum shapes used principally in military aircraft. In 1944, after meeting the emergency needs for aluminum, the U.S. Army Ordinance moved into the plant to repair and salvage automotive parts damaged on the battlefields.

In 1946, the War Assets Administration sold the plant back to Alcoa for \$6.5 million.<sup>2</sup> In 1947, the first peacetime aluminum shapes were produced, and normal operations continued until 1950 when the plant returned to defense production to support the Korean War. Following the war, Alcoa resumed operations until closing the plant in 1977.

### Cressona's Revival

Two years later, the plant reopened under the ownership of the Cressona Aluminum Company. Over the next 40 years, ownership changed several times, starting with its purchase by Alumax Extrusions Inc. for \$430 million. Ownership of the Cressona facility returned to Alcoa in 1998 when the company purchased Alumax.

In 2007, the plant became a joint venture of both Sapa AB and Alcoa; eventually, Alcoa relinquished its stake in the joint venture and Sapa purchased all of the North American Extrusion operations. Cressona's operations then were officially consolidated under one brand, which transitioned from the Sapa to Hydro name in 2017.

Today, the company employs over 1,100 people, contributes an annual revenue of \$650 million and produces over 330 million pounds of

aluminum extrusions each year. The Cressona operations also include a cast house used to re-melt and produce aluminum ingot that creates Hydro's extrusion products.

### Hydro and Cressona Today

With over one million square feet of factory floor, nine aluminum presses and an ongoing expansion project, Cressona remains a vital piece of the Hydro organization. The plant primarily makes extruded components for the automotive industry, which uses aluminum to make vehicles lighter — known as “lightweighting” — in an effort to improve fuel efficiency and range. In 2017, the plant received Ford's Q1 supplier award for excellence in quality, service and on-time delivery. Hydro was the first company in the aluminum extrusion industry to receive the award.

In 2018, Hydro committed to a \$100 million expansion of the Cressona facility. This includes a 96,000 square foot addition adjacent to current operations and a state-of-the-art aluminum press to help meet increasing demand for extruded products. The project will add around 60 jobs and bring the plant's employment close to 1,200. Completion of the new addition is expected by yearend.

For more information on Hydro Extrusions North America, visit <https://www.hydroextrusions.com/en-US/profiles/aluminum-extrusions-north-america/>.

### References:

<sup>1</sup> “Production of Aluminum will Stop at Cresson” *The Call* 1 Sept. 1944. Print1

<sup>2</sup> “Alcoa Takes Over Cressona Plant as Army Leaves” *The Call* 1 Nov. 1946. Print2



### People



**The Pennsylvania State Employees Credit Union** Board of Directors recently appointed **George Rudolph** as the organization's new president. Rudolph joined

PSECU in April, succeeding retiring executive Greg Smith, who served as PSECU's president for the past 28 years.

Rudolph was selected by the PSECU Board of Directors after an extensive, national executive search that yielded a highly competitive candidate pool. He joins the credit union with more than 28 years of leadership experience at the \$11 billion Alliant Credit Union and United Airlines. In his most recent role as Senior Vice President of Operations and Technology, Rudolph led a division of more than 150 associates responsible for all technical and operational aspects of running the eighth largest credit union in the United States and responsible for executing on Alliant's short-term initiatives and long-term strategies. Under his direction, Alliant's technology teams were successfully executing on the long-term vision of becoming a fully-digital financial institution.

Rudolph holds a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing and Organizational Behavior and a Master's Degree in Business Administration.

At the start of the New Year, the **Harrisburg Regional Chamber and Capital Region Economic Development Corporation (CREDC)** shared that PSECU Vice President of Marketing and Membership Development **Barb Bowker** would serve as its new Chamber Board Chair for the year. Bowker leads the work of the organization, together with the Board Chair for its CREDC arm, Hamilton Health Center CEO Jeannine Peterson, throughout 2019. The Chamber Board of Directors is comprised of 43 voting members. "The Harrisburg Regional Chamber and CREDC energizes and engages regional companies and organizations to foster a vibrant business community," Bowker said. "The leadership provided by the Chamber helps deliver powerful results for our region by piloting economic development initiatives, advocacy change, and strategic business decisions. We as individual businesses need to come together in order to make change, and I find that the Chamber is at the center of it all."



**Schaedler Yesco Distribution Inc.**, a distributor of electrical, datacomm and industrial supplies, appointed **Farrah Mittel** president of the company, effective Jan. 1. She replaces Matt Brnik, president since 2004, who now serves as

executive vice president of sales on the executive management team. Mittel, who has been with the company for more than 12 years, most recently served as regional vice president of the company's east region and had been part of the executive management team for several years.

The company has experienced significant growth over the last 15 years, now boasting 21 locations statewide and expanding its services to include energy-focused lighting and controls design, industrial automation products and data communications systems. It is now one of the largest private companies in Central Pennsylvania.

**Glatfelter Insurance Group** recently announced the accomplishments of five associates who recently earned new insurance-related designations.

These associates have completed all tasks, courses and exams required for the following designations: Associate in Claims (AIC), Associate in General Insurance (AINS), Certified Insurance Service Representative (CISR and CISR - Elite) and

Accredited Advisor in Insurance (AAI):

- **Amy Chamberlin** — New Designation: AAI
- **Carissa Cheshire** — New Designation: CISR
- **Alexis Vakoutis, SCLA** — New Designation: AINS
- **Lisa Baile, AIS, AINS** — New Designation: AIC
- **Lorie Arnold, AIS, CISR, ACS, AAM, AIAA, FLMI** — New Designation: CISR — Elite

As an organization committed to growth and continued education, Glatfelter associates are encouraged to pursue insurance and specialized industry designations each year.



**Skelly and Loy**, an engineering-environmental consulting firm serving clients from six Mid-Atlantic offices, is pleased to announce the promotion of **Brent A. Sapen** to director of Civil

Engineering. Sapen joined Skelly and Loy in May 1987 after obtaining his Bachelor of Science degree in Structural Design and Construction Engineering Technology from The Pennsylvania State University. His experience with the company has been in the field of civil engineering and design, acid mine drainage passive treatment system site designs, various zoning

*continued on page 20*

**Wohlsen Construction Company** is pleased to announce the promotion of **Sarah Kneller** to project executive, **Rob Stauffer** to senior project manager and **Jake Evans** to project manager. These achievements recognize the continuous professional development and leadership in their careers at Wohlsen Construction.



Through her dedication, commitment, and exceptional management skills **Kneller** has earned her promotion to project executive. She has over a decade of experience serving many of Wohlsen's key clients and has played a vital role in the successful completion of numerous projects. Kneller has a Bachelor of Science degree in Architectural Engineering as well as a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering both from Drexel University, and a total of 21 years' experience in the construction industry.



**Rob Stauffer** has led a vital role in the successful completion of several major projects for Wohlsen. From the onset of his career 11 years ago, starting as an intern, Stauffer continues his professional growth. He has earned meritorious promotions to project engineer, project manager, and now moving into the senior project manager role. He received his Bachelor of Science in Civil and Construction Engineering Technology from Temple University.



**Jake Evans** holds a Bachelor of Science in Engineering and Mechanical Engineering/Sustainable Design from Elizabethtown College. He began his career as an intern in the HVAC field and has since worked for several years as a project engineer, where he has demonstrated significant professional development. His ability to successfully support project teams throughout the entire construction process has earned him the opportunity to further support Wohlsen projects as a project manager.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## MAY

### In the Footsteps of Leaders: Gettysburg Leadership Spring Training Program Wednesday, May 8 – Thursday, May 9 Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey, Harrisburg

Many of today's companies describe a shortage of employees ready to move into management positions. And with baby boomers retiring in increasing numbers—taking a lifetime of expertise and knowledge with them—some of the most critical issues facing today's businesses are the development of leaders and the need for business succession planning. Using powerful and dramatic real life examples of leadership lessons learned from one of the most important battles ever fought on American soil, the Pennsylvania Chamber Educational Foundation and the Gettysburg Foundation are pleased to present this dynamic program.

- Thirty-five business executives will experience two days on the Gettysburg Battlefield.
- Learn from Gettysburg's most famous leaders and gain insight and inspiration from the courageous actions and decisions of soldiers at every level.
- Gain a deeper understanding of the decisions made during the Battle of Gettysburg, their important consequences and their immediate relationship to team management, communication and cohesiveness.
- Debriefing session with a professional facilitator so you can apply what you've learned at your business.
- Participants will focus on the challenges and opportunities facing their own organizations through a structured and comprehensive curriculum.



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### Best Practices to Manage Your Harassment Claims Webinar

11 a.m. to Noon  
Wednesday, May 22

## JUNE

### Unemployment Compensation Roundtable

8:30 a.m. to Noon  
Thursday, June 6  
Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey

### Next Leader Now Executive Leadership Training Thursday, June 13, 2019 – Thursday, June 14, 2020

Various Locations in Harrisburg, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh\*

Every day 10,000 experienced Baby Boomers leave the workforce, creating a "silver tsunami" that will result in a shortage of executive talent, less-experienced workers transitioning into decision-making roles and high rates of millennial turnover. The organizations that properly invest in their next generation of talent will be industry leaders and preserve their business legacy while outperforming their competition.

That's why the Pennsylvania Chamber Educational Foundation has partnered with Solutions 21 and their Next Leader Now program—a personalized, researched-based development approach that is tailored for your business, your development objectives and your future leader.

Developed by generational, leadership, and military experts, Next Leader Now incorporates strategies that have been successful in leading teams in the boardroom, on the battlefield, and on the gridiron to create a holistic experience that has lasting impact. This year-long developmental approach is designed to ensure your succession candidate is prepared to fill their leadership role.

\*Visit the Events & Resources page for location and additional event details

### DEP Quarterly

10 a.m.  
Wednesday, May 15  
PA Chamber of Business and Industry,  
417 Walnut Street, Harrisburg

**Free, PA Chamber Member-Exclusive Event!**

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### Pennsylvania Innovation Summit

10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
Monday, May 20

Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey, Harrisburg



With abundant and sustainable energy, an educated workforce, and an ideal location for safe movement of people and goods, Pennsylvania is a state with exciting new innovations across a variety of industries.

In today's world, innovation, flexibility and creativity are in high demand. Having employees feel energized to solve problems, save money and invent the next new product or process is a huge advantage for companies – and these workers need to feel empowered to do so. But freeing them up to have the time for these endeavors can be difficult.

The Pennsylvania Innovation Summit will teach business leaders how to jump start the creative process for their employees; help them learn what

companies are doing to innovative successfully; and how to allocate the employees and resources to ensure the innovative spirit is never lost. This event will showcase Pennsylvania's profile as a leader in innovation, and educate about the latest innovation techniques and practices that presidents, CEOs, top officers, business leaders, environmental and human resources directors in Pennsylvania and surrounding states can take back and begin to use for their companies and communities.



For information on sponsorships and exhibit space, contact Ashley Mostek, 717.720.5557 | amostek@pachamber.org.



For additional events, and to register online, visit [pachamber.org](http://pachamber.org)

## High-fives

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applications, site surveying, core drilling and sampling, erosion and sedimentation control designs, foundation and retaining wall designs, bituminous and cement concrete pavement designs, and the designs of wetland habitat mitigation projects.

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**K&L Gates** Harrisburg partner **R. Timothy Weston** was honored with the 2019 Pennsylvania Bar Association's Environmental and Energy Law Section Lifetime Achievement Award during the Environmental Law Forum that was held April 3 and 4 at the Harrisburg Hilton & Towers.

The award honors contributions made to the section and general efforts that enhance the development, improvement and furtherance of the practice of environmental law that benefit the community or represent outstanding personal achievement.

Weston has a practice focused on environmental counseling and litigation, energy development, natural resources management, and related administrative and legislative issues. He is a member of the environmental and energy, infrastructure and resources practice groups. With more than 46 years of experience, Weston has handled a broad spectrum of complex project development, transactional, infrastructure privatization and public-private partnership projects; along with regulatory and environmental permitting and litigation matters.

Prior to entering private practice, Weston served for eight years as assistant attorney general for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, providing counsel for a wide range of natural resource and environmental protection programs, including the Pennsylvania State Water Plan and water resource management activities. From 1979 to 1987, he served as associate deputy secretary for Resources Management in the DER, and as commissioner on the Delaware and Susquehanna River Basin Commissions. During his tenure with DER, Weston was actively involved in the development of significant environmental legislation.

He is a past member of the PA Chamber's Board of Directors.

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**Barley Snyder** is pleased to announce it has hired **Erica R. Townes** as an attorney in its York office. Townes is a member of the firm's Business and Real Estate practice groups. She assists clients in residential and commercial development, property acquisition, lease negotiation and land use concerns. She also assists start-up business owners in forming business entities and governing documents. Townes

is a *cum laude* graduate of the Widener University Commonwealth School of Law. She also holds an undergraduate degree from Old Dominion University in Virginia. Barley Snyder is a law firm based in central Pennsylvania with more than 90 attorneys practicing from offices located in Lancaster, York, Reading, Harrisburg, Malvern, Hanover and Gettysburg, PA; and Hunt Valley and Columbia, MD.

The firm also recently announced that partner **David J. Freedman** was named vice president of the board of the directors at the Lancaster Bar Association. This is his second time as vice president of the association; he previously served in the position in 2015. Freedman is a member of the Barley Snyder Employment Practice Group, as well as the Employment Litigation, Immigration and Education groups. He also is part of the firm's Hospitality and Food & Agribusiness industry groups. In his community, Freedman also is a member of the advisory board at Church World Service Lancaster, a refugee resettlement and advocacy agency.

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Lebanon, PA-based CPA firm **Garcia Garman and Shea** has added **Nicholas Grassley** to its full time staff. One of Grassley's duties with the firm involves working as a tax preparer in the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program. He prepares income tax returns for low income and elderly clients. Grassley holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Bloomsburg University, with a major in Accounting. Garcia Garman and Shea serve a large client base in the Lebanon and Lancaster markets. The firm provides tax, accounting, advisory, auditing and payroll services to individuals, businesses and municipalities.

## Noteworthy

**APPI Energy** recently announced an expansion of the range of services available for clients with the creation of a new Energy Solutions division. This division, led by company Vice President of Energy Solutions Margo Madden, focuses primarily on facility audits, lighting retrofits, solar energy procurement and HVAC upgrades. APPI Energy is rolling out the launch of the Energy Solutions division in phases, beginning in the Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania service territories.

## Recognition

For the fourth consecutive year, **PSECU**, Pennsylvania's largest credit union, was named one of the Top 100 Organizations by *Pennsylvania Business Central*, a business-to-business publication serving Central Pennsylvania. Additionally, recently

retired PSECU President Greg Smith was named as one of the publication's Top 100 People for the fourth year running.

Both the Top 100 Organizations and the Top 100 People rankings are selected by PBC from reader nominations across its 23-county coverage area. Selection of the Top 100 Organizations list is based on leadership in a chosen field; promotion of new ideas, technologies, and services; and community impact. Similarly, the Top 100 People list aims to celebrate individuals in business and economic development who have excelled in supporting their organizations and communities.

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**RKL LLP** is one of the nation's fastest-growing firms, according to industry publication *Accounting Today*. Fueled by its innovative and collaborative approach to helping organizations tackle emerging challenges, RKL achieved 21.46 percent growth in 2018, which earned it the 18th spot on *Accounting Today's* 20 Fastest-Growing Firms list. RKL's 2018 revenue of \$82.51 million also placed it 61st on the publication's 2019 Top 100 Firms ranking and 15th among the Mid-Atlantic region's largest firms.

RKL has continued to empower its team to collaborate around new ways to help clients tackle challenges like a competitive labor market, increasing automation and an unprecedented generational shift in business ownership. In 2018, the firm expanded specialized expertise in key areas like Human Resources Consulting and Transaction Advisory Services; introduced new capabilities like cloud-based financial and management reporting; added three new locations; merged in Mechanicsburg-based CPA firm Padden, Guerrini & Associates; and acquired Arxis technology, Inc. to expand its portfolio of market-leading solutions.

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**Central Penn College** recently earned the 2019–2020 Military Friendly® School designation for the fifth consecutive year. In addition, the college achieved Gold status, the second highest recognition given by *Victory*, a media entity for military personnel transitioning into civilian life. Currently, Central Penn College has 69 students who are either veterans or who are serving with the U.S. military or the National Guard. Institutions earning the Military Friendly School designation were evaluated using both public data sources and responses from a proprietary survey. For the first time, student survey data was taken into consideration for the designation. Nearly 1,700 schools participated in the survey with 766 earning the designation. For more information about Central Penn College programs for veterans and military personnel, visit [www.centralpenn.edu/military](http://www.centralpenn.edu/military). ■

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## Finance/Tax



**Christine Hanhausen**  
ReedSmith LLP

### What “digital products” are subject to Pennsylvania sales tax?

As the economy and technology rapidly evolve, Pennsylvania struggles to fit the new digital world into existing tax regimes to maintain (or increase) revenues. The end result is confusion surrounding what is taxable, leading to increased scrutiny on audit. This column briefly explains what is taxable under Pennsylvania law; what the Department of Revenue *asserts* is taxable under the law; and offers practical advice to mitigate potential exposure.

#### 1. Digital products are taxable whether electronically delivered, streamed, or accessed.

Pennsylvania imposes taxes on “tangible personal property”—things we can touch, like a CD-ROM, a book, a DVD or a music record. But with an economy rapidly moving away from selling physical products, the range of transactions subject to tax inevitably narrows. To

*continued on page 23*

## HR



**Jeff Pasek**  
Cozen O'Connor

### What do companies need to do to ensure they are in compliance with the expanded Americans with Disabilities Act?

The simple answer is to take this issue seriously — not only because the law requires it, but also because disability discrimination cases can be expensive to defend, and the risk of a large jury award is always present.

Once an individual with a disability requests accommodation or if the need for an accommodation is obvious, an employer must engage in an interactive process to determine if a reasonable accommodation can be made without creating an undue hardship or posing a direct threat to the health or safety of the individual or others.

Normally, this entails five steps, and we have seen employers make rookie mistakes at each of them.

#### Recognize a Disability When it Exists

The first step in any preventive approach is to understand that a

*continued on page 24*

## Communications/Marketing



**Troy Dean**  
Graphcom

### What Is Thought Leadership?

A thought leader is a go-to source, an authority on ideas, an industry expert and a respected presence. Thought leadership is an active pursuit of defining authority in an industry space. The goal? To create content that covers important topics both innovatively and with a depth of knowledge.

As an organization, utilizing thought leadership in marketing efforts involves asking the right questions and giving the right answers.

*The Golden Rule: Don't sell anything except ideas.*

#### How to Become a Thought Leader

##### Identify the Questions

First, determine what questions the target audience needs answers to. Look at what challenges they're facing, what holes they need filled or what topics they're talking about most. This step involves a considerable amount of research, including interviewing clients, managers or employees, keeping

*continued on page 25*

## Energy/Environmental



**George Bibikos**  
GA Bibikos LLC

### How does the Environmental Rights Amendment impact Pennsylvania business interests

Many members of the business community in Pennsylvania probably don't know a lot about Article I, § 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution. That's a provision that deals with environmental rights of Pennsylvania citizens and places obligations on the state to preserve Pennsylvania's public natural resources for the future. If your business operation has any potential effect on the “environment” — whether it involves moving dirt, installing pools, building homes, developing energy resources, landscaping, farming etc. — and requires some state or local authorization before commencing operations, you should read further.

The Environmental Rights Amendment provides that “[t]he people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and esthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania's public natural

*continued on page 25*

Although some of the experts are attorneys, nothing in this article should be construed as legal advice or as pertaining to specific factual situations.

## Christine Hanhausen

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respond to the evolving economy and its narrowing of the tax base, the Pennsylvania Legislature amended the definition of “Tangible Personal Property” to include digital products. This change in law became effective August 1, 2016.

What are digital products? They are online versions of the things we previously touched: software hosted on the “cloud”; e-books downloaded to your tablet; movies rented from Amazon Prime; music albums purchased from iTunes.

Most issues arise out of Pennsylvania’s inclusion of services in its new definition of TPP. That is, in addition to digital downloads, taxes are now imposed on streaming services, satellite radio subscriptions, maintenance services, as well as on “any other taxable [TPP] electronically or digitally delivered, streamed or accessed.”

### 2. What about digital services?

The Department applies the tax on digital products more broadly: taxes are imposed on any service that utilizes software. For example, the Department recently issued a letter asserting that digital products include a subscription service that allows purchasers to log onto a website and search statutes, court decisions, regulations and a variety of secondary sources. The letter ruling found the mere access to the information constituted the equivalent of electronically accessing a book or “otherwise taxable [TPP]” and, thus, is taxable.

Pennsylvania’s tax only addresses electronically delivered, streamed or accessed TPP. It does not resurrect the tax on computer-related services (which was repealed in 1997). Nevertheless, Pennsylvania is attempting to tax computer services by deeming them TPP. This directly contradicts case law and administrative guidance. The use of software to perform a service does not automatically make the service taxable.

### 3. What can you do?

Documentation is key. Work with your vendors to make sure the agreements and invoices reflect the reality of the purchase. If a sale includes nontaxable and taxable components, see if your vendor can separately state the items. Make sure all the information you will need on audit in a few years will be available.

Consider whether any exemptions or exclusions apply to your digital goods and services — such as manufacturing or research and development.

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## Making the Most of Your Membership

### Announcing Three New Money-Saving Programs for PA Chamber Members!

As a member of the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry, you have access to many great products and services through our Money-Saving Programs. And we are happy to offer you these three new exciting programs to benefit your business:

#### Close Quarters Defense

With companies traveling more, putting employees in the field and with continued concerns about active threats to their organizations, the Pennsylvania Chamber has partnered with Close Quarters Defense® (CQD®) to underscore the importance of being prepared for critical active threats that impact your business and employees.

CQD provides companies with the necessary knowledge and skills to respond appropriately to active threat situations. From assessments and crisis planning to hands-on response training, these programs provide comprehensive solutions to enhance the overall safety and security of your organization.

Services include:

- Threat Management programs that identify and mitigate risk
- Comprehensive training and preparedness solutions
- Facility audits, asset protection
- High-performance team building

To take advantage of this membership benefit program, contact Margo Madden at Close Quarters Defense, 410.749.9017.

#### Bottom Line Concepts

Most vendor bills that organizations receive have errors in them, are difficult to decipher or are not transparent. Whether finding the mistakes, or showing where hidden vendor profit margins are, Bottom Line Concepts gets to the bottom of where money can be uncovered and makes sure that your business is receiving the highest quality product or service for the least amount of cost.

Bottom Line Concepts is a no risk, contingency-based cost savings company. They will negotiate on your behalf to get the best prices possible from your existing vendors. They will also audit old invoices for

errors, and obtain refunds and credits. Bottom Line Concepts also works to increase the profitability and overall valuation of your organization.

Contact Josh Fox at Bottom Line Savings  
212.668.1111 | info@bottomlinesavings.

#### Reclamere Data Security Systems

Reclamere provides managed information lifecycle and security compliance, risk and audit solutions to organizations of all sizes that help them achieve, maintain and demonstrate security compliance while significantly improving their security posture. By acting as a strategic partner, they provide a critical human component that sets them apart. PA Chamber members receive a members-only 10 percent price reduction.

Services include:

- Risk Assessments
- Data Security Consulting
- Managed Security Services Plans

Reclamere accomplishes its mission to help customers be proactive in protecting their data by working with clients in all stages of the information lifecycle. The 2017 Ponemon Cost of a Data Breach Study sponsored by IBM reports “The average size of the data breaches... increased 1.8 percent to more than 24,000 records.” Reclamere’s 17 years of service estimates that a reactive spend in your data security posture may cost 10 times as much as a proactive investment.

Reclamere is pleased to offer qualified PA Chamber members a No-Cost Network evaluation.

Contact Joe Harford, 814.684.5505 ext. 101 | joseph@reclamere.com.

Make the most of your membership! Check out these and our other Preferred Providers at [https://www.pachamber.org/membership/member\\_benefits/money\\_saving\\_programs/](https://www.pachamber.org/membership/member_benefits/money_saving_programs/) to take advantage of PA Chamber’s Money-Saving Programs. 📄

## Christine Hanhausen

*continued from page 23*

Determine if the product is delivered outside of Pennsylvania. The Commonwealth allows taxpayers to divvy-up a single sale of a digital product (like electronically delivered software) based on the number of users accessing that product. For example, if a company buys

software for use by employees in several states, taxes are only owed to Pennsylvania based on the number of employees using the software in the state.

Don't assume the Department's position is the law. See if the Department has issued favorable guidance regarding a similar transaction. Lastly, while the dust is still

settling on digital products and the taxability of digital services, continue to challenge these issues during your audit and through the appeals process. ■

■ **Christine Hanhausen** is a partner with *ReedSmith LLP*.

## Jeff Pasek

*continued from page 22*

person is considered to have a disability if that individual either:

- has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of that person's major life activities;
- has a record of such an impairment; or
- is regarded as having such an impairment.

The expanded Americans with Disabilities Act broadly defines the term "major life activity" to include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working as well as the operation of major bodily functions.

It is not the name of an impairment or a condition that determines whether a person is protected by the ADA, but rather the effect of that impairment or condition on the life of a particular person. The inability to perform a specific job is not a disability, and a short duration impairment such as a broken leg or the flu will not qualify; but the expansive scope of the law means that many employees will be able to claim disability status.

### Evaluate the Employee Against the Essential Functions of the Job

Essential functions generally include duties that are fundamental to the performance of the job. This is decided on a case-by-case basis. A job function may be essential even if it does not take up much of the workday, such as the ability of a pilot to land the plane. Examine and update your job descriptions before a case arises. If the function is listed in the job description, there is a likelihood the EEOC or the courts will consider it essential. Be realistic. Not every duty is essential and being over inclusive will not help. The experience of those who have actually performed the job in question will highlight the essential job functions of that position.

### Never Skip the Interactive Process

It is remarkable how frequently employers ignore this requirement or just assume that no accommodation is possible. Unless the employer can later prove that no form of reasonable accommodation was possible, skipping the interactive process will result in a finding of liability.

Engaging in the interactive process is not rocket science. It is basically a back and forth conversation with relevant stakeholders to determine what accommodations are required to enable the employee to perform the essential functions of the job and what hardship would be created by providing those accommodations.

### Make Reasonable Accommodations if No Undue Hardship Exists

Common forms of reasonable accommodation may include:

- Part-time or modified work scheduling
- Job restructuring of non-essential job functions
- Reassignment of a disabled individual to a vacant position
- Modification or acquisition of equipment or devices, which may include making existing facilities readily accessible to individuals with disabilities
- Modification of examinations, training materials, or policies
- Providing qualified readers or interpreters, but not including personal items such as eyeglasses and hearing aids
- Providing a leave of absence.

In deciding whether undue hardship exists, employers should consider the cost. Larger companies are expected to incur greater costs. Don't overlook the potential disruption that an accommodation may cause or the risk that the individual might post a direct threat to the health and safety of others.

An employer is not required to provide the best accommodation or the one requested or preferred by the employee. Rather, the accommodation

need only be sufficient to meet the job-related needs of the employee. Before concluding that no accommodation can be implemented, consult with the Job Accommodation Network, a free service of the Department of Labor, at 800-526.7324.

### Have a Process in Place to Document Compliance Efforts

It is beneficial to have in place a clearly defined procedure so that employees can request accommodations and managers can respond to those requests in an appropriate manner.

Helpful provisions to include in such a procedure are:

- Providing for a careful review of the job description to ensure that the employee is being evaluated against the real essential functions for the position
- Establishing a documented record of all steps in the interactive process, including all meetings with the employee, medical/rehabilitation personnel, or human resources staff
- Obtaining independent medical advice when the extent of a disability or the scope of a requested accommodation is in question
- Documenting all alternative accommodations considered by the company
- Establishing backup data on the hardships each proposed accommodation would impose
- Creating a contemporaneous record of the rationale for rejecting any requested accommodation
- Communicating the company's decision to the affected employee.

Documenting good faith efforts to try to find an accommodation can be the best defense to a claim. ■

■ **Jeff Pasek** is a member with *Cozen O'Connor's Labor and Employment Department*.



Follow the PA Chamber.



## Troy Dean

*continued from page 22*

up with discussions on social media, looking at what other industry players are discussing and staying up-to-date with current events. Make a list of all the selected topics and then prioritize them based on relevancy or urgency.

### Answer the Questions

Once the Qs are identified, it's time to provide the As. When creating content, be sure to include relevant facts and quotes to bolster the credibility and reliability of the content. Answering and asking important industry questions should happen on multiple formats and channels — blog posts, social media pages, newsletters, white papers, etc. Create an abundance of places for people to go to find this content. Make sure that the content is created in an engaging way. Remember, the goal is to promote reflective and innovative thought, not to bore viewers.

### Pose New Ideas

Thought leadership shouldn't be limited to just the question and answer process. In fact, the best

way to really stand out as a thought leader is to pose the questions and ideas first. So push the boundaries of thought and be the one to start the conversation. Conduct case studies or surveys, give presentations or simply create original, organic content based on unique industry experience.

### Interact Publicly

Getting out from behind the computer screen is the real key to thought leadership. Organizations need to be seen at industry events to let others know that they are major players. Attend conferences, host panels, lead societies, join standards bodies, and, most of all, be a thoughtful presence. These actions display effort to be a leader within the industry and also expand internal knowledge overall. By being present, there is a physical tie to thought leadership that can't happen online.

In all, what thought leaders choose to do with their platform defines how their audience views them. So, lead thoughtfully, be patient, and make an impact.

## Who Is Graphcom?

Graphcom is an unconventional marketing firm: equal parts creative studio and production powerhouse. We specialize in strategic content marketing that positions our clients as thought leaders within their industries. Our teams work with focus, care, and strategic execution to make your message innovative and ahead of trend.

Your success is our priority. By working with us, you gain a partner in your thought leadership journey, so you don't have to navigate alone. We want to help you focus on bigger plans, bigger projects, and the bigger picture for your company — and we do it all with your unique vision in mind.

As we like to say, “thought leaders should be thoughtful leaders.” Let us be a thoughtful leader with you. ■

■ **Troy Dean** is vice president of creative at Graphcom.

## George Bibikos

*continued from page 22*

resources are the common property of all the people, including generations yet to come. As trustee of these resources, the Commonwealth shall conserve and maintain them for the benefit of all the people.” Beginning in the 1970s, courts in Pennsylvania, in most cases, held that permits issued pursuant to state or local laws or regulations did not infringe on the rights protected by Article I, § 27. *Payne v. Kassab*, 312 A.2d 86 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1973). As a result, Article I, § 27 challenges to permit decisions were relatively rare.

In *Pennsylvania Environmental Defense Foundation v. Commonwealth*, 161 A.3d 911 (Pa. 2017) (“PEDF”), the Pennsylvania Supreme Court held that the state's use of revenues from the Oil and Gas Lease Fund to fill budget gaps for non-environmental programs violated the trustee provisions of Article I, § 27. In deciding the case, the court overruled the old analysis and concluded that Article I, § 27 creates a trust in favor of the people. It also stated that Article I, § 27 prohibits state laws that “unreasonably impair” the rights that it protects.

So, what does this mean? Although the court's decision involved a narrow question of proper

government spending, the statements in the court's opinion are very broad and suggest the ERA applies in many contexts, including, potentially, situations in which a local or state agency issues a permit that authorizes activities on private property.

This may be the main concern for the business community. If a permit applicant meets all the local and state requirements to get a permit for activities on private property, does the government agency have an obligation to conduct some additional constitutional analysis before issuing the permit to assure additional environmental compliance? If so, what are those standards?

Until the courts say otherwise, some government agencies that receive permit applications may believe that the PEDF decision and the ERA require additional “constitutional” considerations that go beyond statutory and regulatory provisions. Consequently, companies may now face a number of practical challenges when applying for government approvals, such as:

- Possible delays in permit application approvals;
- Possible increase in denials of permit applications for lack of compliance with unknown “constitutional” standards;

- Possible difficulty complying with permit conditions imposed on applicants in an effort to comply with constitutional standards;
- Possible increased costs in “doing more” to account for local/state agencies accounting for additional “environmental impacts” beyond statutory and regulatory requirements.
- Possible increase in litigation to defend local and state permits issued to companies.

In light of the renewed significance of the ERA in the permitting context in Pennsylvania, it's worthwhile for businesses in many market sectors to work with their legal counsel on a risk analysis and compliance plan and take proactive measures, such as (a) monitoring cases to see how the courts treat the ERA in the permitting context; (b) engaging with local and state regulators before filing local and state permit applications; and (c) engaging in a dialogue with local and state lawmakers to identify solutions to address decisions by courts and agencies that have negative consequences from the standpoint of permitting and business operations. ■

■ **George Bibikos** is the owner and managing member of GA Bibikos LLC.

# SBA, Trump Administration Delivering on Policies that are Helping Small Businesses Thrive

By U.S. SBA Administrator Linda McMahon\*

**A**s President Trump noted in this year's State of the Union address, America is "at a moment of unlimited potential." Since his election, America has created 5.3 million new jobs. Wages are rising, unemployment is dropping. And our economy is the envy of the world.

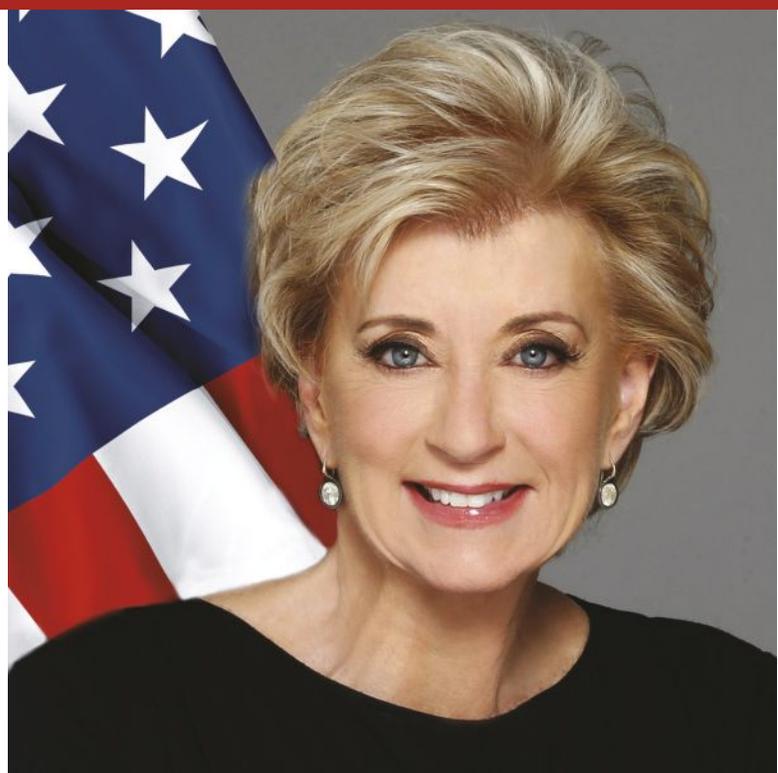
America's 30 million small businesses are drivers of that economic growth. They create two out of three net new jobs in the private sector. Half the U.S. workforce either owns or works for a small business. Pennsylvania alone has 1 million small businesses, employing 2.5 million workers. This Administration is working hard to ensure they continue to succeed through five main initiatives – tax cuts, regulatory rollbacks, workforce development, healthcare coverage and modernized trade agreements.

Thanks to the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, most small businesses can now deduct 20 percent from their taxable income even before they get into the savings from the lower rates. For the first five years, they can also fully write off any investment in new equipment the year it's made. Last spring, I toured the Harrisburg's Appalachian Brewing Company, which produces specialty beers and craft sodas. At the time, the facility was operating at only 15 percent capacity. Co-owner Artie Tafoya told me that the tax cuts had allowed him to look to the future and decide he's ready to grow again. He wanted to add a huge new piece of equipment for the bottling process and said the tax cuts would allow him to write off that investment right away. The added capacity would enable him to create up to 30 more jobs. And he's not alone. As I have traveled across the country visiting small businesses in all 50 states, entrepreneurs tell me they are responding to the tax cuts by investing in their companies and their employees – raising wages, providing bonuses and benefits and creating more jobs.

Under President Trump, costly, job-killing federal regulations are being cut. Often entrepreneurs tell me it's not a specific regulation that puts a chokehold on their businesses, but the sheer volume of rules and mandates they must keep up with. Most small businesses don't have teams of lawyers and compliance officers on staff. The CEO is often the receptionist, accountant and janitor, too, so regulations eat up a lot of time they just don't have. For every new regulation created under this Administration, 12



U.S. Small Business  
Administration



have been eliminated. So far this has saved businesses \$33 billion in compliance costs.

A third pillar is, in some ways, a consequence of our booming economy – workforce development. The unemployment rate nationally and in Pennsylvania is about 4 percent. The Bureau of Labor Statistics recently reported a record high of 7.3 million job openings. Many small business owners tell me they'd like to grow but they can't find enough workers with the skills they need. President Trump has signed an executive order aimed at bringing employers, unions and schools together to develop apprenticeship programs and curricula. And he's encouraging public-private partnerships to train students and workers with the skills employers need now and in the future.

Fourth, the President is working to make it easier for small businesses to offer health care benefits that until now have been largely unaffordable. Of the 44 million Americans who lack health insurance, 15 million of them work for small businesses or operate a sole proprietorship. The President has signed an executive order that would allow more employers to form

Association Health Plans. Small businesses and the self-employed could unite through trade groups or chambers of commerce to purchase insurance in the large group market. They could leverage that economy of scale to access the same plans and lower rates larger employers have.

Finally, a major focus this year is on international trade. President Trump has signed the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, which offers three key benefits for small businesses. For the first time ever, the USMCA includes a chapter that specifically promotes small businesses and helps them understand the benefits of exporting. It includes the strongest intellectual property protections ever negotiated in a trade agreement, and it cuts the red tape and costs associated with getting IP protection. This is critical for companies needing to secure innovation and trade secrets. And the USMCA also includes a new chapter on digital trade that prohibits customs on things like e-books, videos, music, games and software that are distributed electronically. As of this writing, the USMCA still must be ratified by Congress, but simply put, it will encourage more goods to be produced in the United States and make it easier for small businesses to tap into foreign markets. The possibilities for entrepreneurship are endless.

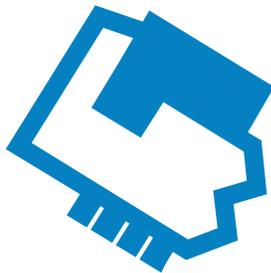
We at the SBA like to say we power the American Dream. And nowhere is that dream more apparent than seeing entrepreneurs start or grow a small business of their own. The SBA gives entrepreneurs access to funding that can finance their launch or expansion; counseling or mentorship that help them chart their success; assistance in securing government contracting to

expand their customer base; and help recovering from a declared disaster. The outlook for small businesses in America is bright, and the SBA is proud to be their ally and advocate. 

■ **\*Administrator McMahon** resigned from her role as SBA Administrator effective April 12. She will be returning to the private sector.



**Administrator McMahon enjoyed meeting with Appalachian Brewing Company owner, Artie Tafoya, during a visit of his facility.**



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# PSECU Reaffirms Commitment to Environmental Sustainability, Encourages Others to Join the Cause Through Membership

Imagine if everyone made environmental sustainability a priority. Small changes in daily consumption and disposal practices can make a big difference. Compounded over weeks, months and years, the benefits become even more significant and can make vast changes to the ecological health of the communities we all share.

“That was exactly the vision PSECU fulfilled in 2014 when, following five years of discussion and planning, the state’s largest credit union opened its new Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Gold Certified headquarters facility,” said PSECU Board Chair Jodi Lynne Blanch.

Constructed of 20 percent recycled materials, the building occupies 47 acres in Susquehanna Township, Dauphin County. The location also includes large spaces of natural habitat that require no irrigation systems and that foster local biodiversity. A walking path around the site encourages employees to enjoy nature and their outdoor surroundings, as does a



rooftop garden, which also provides the building with natural insulation to lower heating and cooling needs.

“The innerworkings of the building are designed to be just as efficient as what’s seen from the modern and iconic outside,” Blanch added. “An on-site natural gas-powered cogeneration heating and

cooling plant reduces energy costs by 38 percent, eco-friendly plumbing features conserve water, a storm water capture-and-treatment system processes 90 percent of runoff, and natural sunlight accounts for 75 percent of the building’s lighting needs, to name a few.”

As planned, the savings have compounded. Over five years, the benefits of green design at PSECU’s central location, as well as the credit union’s environmentally friendly mindset, have really added up:

- Recycled waste materials total approximately 225 tons. To give perspective, that’s about the weight of 115 average-sized cars.



- Smart controls that adjust lighting levels with the availability of natural sunlight and room occupancy saved 4,500MWh of electricity, which is roughly equivalent to what's needed to light over 1,000, 100-watt lightbulbs continuously for five years.
- Cogeneration energy/fuel savings vs. conventional electricity production and delivery methods via the electric utility grid comes out to approximately 148,135MMBtu. That surpasses the amount of fuel needed to power 1,355 homes for a full year.
- Reduction of CO2 emissions from the building's cogeneration system as compared to conventional power plant electric tallies in at 18,500 tons – the annual greenhouse emissions of about 3,600 passenger vehicles.

“As we move forward, we hope to continue strengthening PSECU’s efforts to stay at the forefront of environmentally friendly practices and technologies for the betterment of our more than 900-person workforce, our over 450,000 valued members, and everyone in the communities we serve,” said Blanch.

The decision of the \$5.3 billion credit union to incorporate green enhancements into the construction of its central office reflects its forward-thinking business model, which favors electronic delivery of high-quality products and services over more standard branched banking, explained the credit union’s Vice President of Marketing and Membership Development Barb Bowker.

“By offering a full array of electronically delivered services, we give our members account access when and where it is most convenient for them. Our digital-first model also supports our environmental efforts. Fewer branches means less construction materials and developed space, fewer papers that need to be printed, and less transportation between physical locations, which lowers fuel use and reduces pollution from vehicles.”

With such significant conservation results, it begs the question: What does PSECU do with the money saved by being environmentally conscious? The answer is simple - it reinvests in those it serves.

“As a credit union, we’re a financial cooperative. That means that our members are our owners, and as such we aim to serve their best interests in all we do,” Bowker said. “The money that we save through the green aspects of our headquarters and business operations are shared with our

members in many ways – through free and low-fee products, competitive loan rates, and innovative new service offerings. We also take great pride in supporting local nonprofit organizations and charitable initiatives that serve causes across Pennsylvania, including several focused on environmental issues, and benefit PSECU members and nonmembers alike.”

So, while change isn’t always easy, and it may not happen overnight, we don’t have to think of environmental conservation as an imaginary priority anymore. Everyone can make difference through small alterations to their lifestyle and by choosing to support businesses with strong green initiatives, business practices and goals that will further the sustainability movement.

“We encourage anyone interested in becoming part of PSECU’s digital-first banking model and thereby in contributing to our environmental stewardship efforts to join us,” added Bowker. “A vast majority of Pennsylvanians are likely eligible for membership - even if they don’t think they are - and by joining and working with us, together, we can make a big impact.”

An individual’s contribution to the environment doesn’t have to stop when they join PSECU either, Bowker continued.

“We’re always looking for new ways to reduce our environmental footprint, and we encourage our members to do the same. For example, something as



simple as a member’s decision to change from printed to online statements can result in significant paper savings, and according to our calculations, switching to e-Statements saves an average of 48 sheets of paper per account per year, not to mention envelopes or any of the environmental impacts of mailing,” she said.

To learn more about PSECU membership, visit [www.psecu.com/join](http://www.psecu.com/join). 



# GIANT Food Stores Gain National Recognition for Minimizing Environmental Impact, Maximizing Food Donations



In December 2018, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency recognized GIANT Food Stores, LLC of Carlisle, PA for its food recovery achievements that include donating more than 3.9 million pounds of food to food banks in 2017. This is equal to 3,268,333 meals served.

GIANT Food Stores received the EPA Mid-Atlantic Regional award in the Data Driven category for grocery store chains.

“As a food retailer, we are committed to reducing waste and minimizing our environmental impact, while at the same time maximizing food donations to our regional food banks,” said Nicholas Bertram, president of GIANT Food Stores. “Our ‘Meat the Needs’ program has been a game changer for our company and our food bank partners, diverting food from landfills and onto the plates of those in need. We are honored to have these ongoing efforts recognized by the EPA.”



The GIANT Food Stores in Cleona, PA was recently recognized as a zero waste facility — meaning that 90 percent or more of the store’s total waste is being diverted from a landfill or incineration.

GIANT’s food recovery efforts date back to 2008, when the company teamed up with the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank to create the innovative charitable meat rescue program called “Meat the Needs.” Considered a huge success and a “game changer” for Central Pennsylvania’s regional food banks, now all of the company’s 172 stores safely freeze and donate meat that is pulled from sale, a day before its sell-by date.

“EPA is proud of the way GIANT Food Stores has developed a program to reduce food waste that is having a tremendous impact on those in need,” said EPA Mid-Atlantic Regional Administrator Cosmo Servidio. “Through EPA’s Food Recovery Challenge, EPA partners with municipalities, businesses, nonprofits and other entities to reduce the amount of food in landfills and help them save money on waste disposal.”

GIANT’s efforts to reduce food waste are one of the many ways GIANT is doing its part to leave

a happier, healthier world for generations to come. This includes using energy efficient technology, reducing waste in our stores and reducing carbon emissions in our stores and supply chain.

In 2017, GIANT saved over 930,000 trees by recycling cardboard. Every ton of recycled cardboard saves 17 trees, 380 gallons of oil, 3 cubic yards of landfill space, 4,000 kilowatts of energy and 7,000 gallons of water. Currently, 77 percent of all waste generated by GIANT's stores is diverted through recycling and composting.

Since 2011, GIANT Food Stores and its parent company have worked to reduce the use of plastic bags in stores. Through more efficient bagging on the part of associates, as well as programs like our "Better Bagging" campaign—which distribute reusable tote-bags to customers—over 1 billion plastic bags have been removed from the waste-stream. Additionally, through its "Bags to Benches" program, which forms park benches out of recycled plastic bags, the company has donated 1,500 park benches.

In April 2018, GIANT's Reduced Emissions Program was announced as part of the company's ongoing



**GIANT's "Meat the Needs" program across the company's 172 stores safely freeze and donate meat that is pulled from sale, a day before its sell-by date.**

sustainability efforts. For every qualifying gallon of fuel purchased at a GIANT or MARTIN'S Food Markets fuel station, GreenPrint will invest in carbon projects across the globe, like creating local green spaces or tree plantings. These efforts will offset up to 30 percent of the customer's tailpipe carbon emissions. In 2018, more than 11,000 trees were planted through GIANT's Reduced Emissions Program. That is equal to 31,489 metric tons of CO2 offset, equivalent to 4,720 homes' electricity use for one year.

Last September, GIANT announced its Cleona, PA store located at 481 West Penn Ave., as the first in the chain to reach zero waste. A recognized definition by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, zero waste means 90 percent or more of a store's total waste is being diverted from a landfill or incineration. **■**

Visit the [www.giantfoodstores.com](http://www.giantfoodstores.com) to learn more about the company's sustainability programs.

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# Up Close With...

*Allison Davenport* CEO  
UnitedHealthcare Community  
Plan of Pennsylvania



Allison Davenport is CEO of UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Pennsylvania, a health plan serving the needs of over 260,000 Medicaid, CHIP and Dual Special Needs members across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. UnitedHealthcare's community plans proudly serve 6.7 million Medicaid members in 28 states, plus Washington D.C. UnitedHealthcare is a division of UnitedHealth Group, which is a diversified health and well-being company with a mission to help people live healthier lives and help make the health system work better for everyone. Allison joined UnitedHealthcare in 2006. During her career with UnitedHealthcare, Allison has served in multiple capacities including CEO of the Delaware Community Plan, and as chief of staff for the community plans in the Northeast and Southeast regions. She

## **What role does UnitedHealthcare play in the UnitedHealth Group, and what is your organization's mission?**

UnitedHealthcare is one of the businesses of UnitedHealth Group, a diversified Fortune 50 health and well-being company. We leverage our national capabilities to deliver them at a local market level.

UnitedHealthcare Community & State serves more than six million members in 30 states, plus Washington, D.C., through our UnitedHealthcare Community Plans with innovative Medicaid managed-care solutions.

In Pennsylvania, we employ more than 6,000 people and provide health care coverage to more than 1.1 million people.

We operate nationally, but we know that health care is locally delivered and personally experienced.

We collaborate with physicians, hospitals and other local partners to provide personal service for the economically disadvantaged, the medically underserved and those without the benefit of employer-funded health care coverage. From clinical care and prevention initiatives, to food delivery, transportation and educational programs, we are making a meaningful contribution to solving key challenges for the people we serve.

## **How has your prior experience in health care uniquely prepared you to handle the role of CEO?**

I began my health care career many years ago in Harrisburg at the state Department of Human Services, which was a key driver in what ultimately became my passion to work with the people we serve. Over the past 13 years at UHC, I've had the privilege of working with many different leaders in different parts of the organization. This has given me exposure to the many facets of our business, and to a wide and diverse range of leadership styles. Our Pennsylvania-based leadership team, spread out between offices in Pittsburgh, Harrisburg and Philadelphia, also bring a diverse set of skills and perspectives

began her career in health care with the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.

Allison graduated summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa from Muhlenberg College and received her Masters of Public Administration from the University of Pennsylvania's Fels Institute of Government. Allison is a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Volunteer, advocating on behalf of children in Philadelphia's child welfare system.

Allison and her family reside in the Mount Airy section of Philadelphia.

to the work. In every aspect of today's dynamic health care continuum, the ability to lead with listening has become increasingly important. Our team's different experiences and orientations drive our ability to be informed by our consumers and communities, and are always at the forefront of my mind as I think about how best to lead our team.

I volunteer as a Court Appointed Special Advocate in the Philadelphia foster care system, and while it can be difficult, it helps me to better understand how complex the situations and systems are for the people we serve. On a lighter note, I'm a mom. I have two little girls, and as many of your readers know, being a parent is a privilege...and a challenge. Being a mom helps to keep me in touch with the fact that every decision that we make at UHC, from programs to products, impacts individuals, families and the people who take care of them.

## **What are some of the best practices that organizations can adopt to promote wellness among their employees, and in their communities?**

We have learned that it's important to view healthcare from a "whole person" approach.

This means understanding how someone's circumstances impacts their health and well-being. Living a healthy life is not just about the treatment of disease, or getting a regular checkup. It includes things like access to healthy foods, safe and stable housing and a support system of friends or family members.

It is essential to take an integrated view of a person's needs, ensuring that medical, social and mental health work hand-in-hand. Through coordinated care and working in partnerships, we can better help others access the resources that can be so critical to changing the health trajectory of a person's life.

Also, it's important to create an environment where health at every level is possible for people. Have we provided a truly inclusive workplace that promotes confidence and mental well-being? Do we give each other the space to make mistakes, learn from them, and move forward in an emotionally

healthy way? Do we make healthy choices available to our employees and communities in a way that is culturally relevant and enjoyable? This can be something as simple as offering standing desks for employees, or something as complex as changing our benefit design to address the fact that food insecurity and diabetes are linked.

**Please share some of United Healthcare's signature achievements and explain how you're working to guide the health plan into the future.**

There's a shift in how we approach healthcare. We like to say that we're moving from health **coverage** to health **care**. It has truly transformed the way we work to become a partner in our members' care.

Our call center teams treat each phone call as an opportunity not only to answer the immediate question, but to understand that member's needs and pre-empt the questions they may not have even asked yet – for example, by encouraging an annual wellness visit or scheduling an appointment on their behalf while they are on the phone with us.

Our work with Med Express urgent care centers also take advantage of a point in time visit to check on any outstanding care needs, not just the issue that the individual came in for.

Our partnership with the Penn Medicine Innovation Accelerator has opened the doors of both UnitedHealthcare and Penn Medicine to create value for patients and physicians in creative and progressive ways.

We drive quality improvement through inventive programs that help engage and empower people to become more active participants in their own health, and by collaborating with physicians and other health care professionals to close gaps in care.

The future of healthcare in the Commonwealth is dynamic, and full of possibilities to improve the way that people experience care in their communities. Part of my job is to ensure that everything we do ties directly back to two goals, helping people live healthier lives and making the health care system work better for everyone. Those goals will carry the organization into the future in creative, inclusive, and exciting ways.

**Do you have any chief leadership tenets that you'd like to share with the broad-based business community?**

The business community has always been a proud proponent of the promise of this Commonwealth. I've lived most of my professional life in this community, and I constantly learn from my colleagues in business, education, medicine and not-for-profit. Today, more

than ever, Pennsylvania's business and community leaders are collaborating and committing across sectors and above private interests in order to improve the opportunities of Pennsylvania's people. The Pennsylvania Chamber itself is out ahead in ways that we have not been before, which is exciting. There is always more we can be doing to promote the health and success of our communities... let's keep working together. ■

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# Peoples Gas and Environmental Work Together to Cut M

**T**his year, Peoples Gas is working to cut its methane emissions by 50 percent within the city limits of Pittsburgh. The utility hopes to accomplish this by using advanced leak detection instrumentation and a new methodology developed by the Environmental Defense Fund and Google Earth Outreach to map and measure natural gas leaks issuing from underground pipes.

Peoples will use the data to prioritize its upgrade schedule, first targeting the 20 percent most serious leaks. By repairing those leaks, the utility hopes to first reduce 50 percent of its overall emissions. If successful, this strategy will reduce leakage more efficiently, achieving the greatest climate benefits at a faster pace.

Methane is a greenhouse gas with roughly 80 times the warming power of carbon dioxide during the first 20 years it is in the atmosphere. It is also the main component of natural gas. Reducing methane leaks has been a priority for Governor Tom Wolf, in his effort to ensure that Pennsylvania's oil and gas sector is safer, cleaner and more competitive. These environmental goals are mirrored by Pittsburgh Mayor William Peduto and the city's ambitious goals, which are outlined in Pittsburgh's Climate Action Plan 3.0 that was adopted in May 2018.

According to EDF President Fred Krupp, "Peoples Gas, the City of Pittsburgh, and the state of Pennsylvania's embrace of new technologies





# Defense Fund Methane Emissions



and smarter strategies to tackle the climate challenge is a bold example for others to follow.”

Under this new commitment, “the first of its kind by a utility,” Peoples and EDF will use highly sensitive leak detection sensors and advanced data analytics developed in partnership with Google and scientists at Colorado State University. The majority of methane detection systems can only detect in parts per million. The new equipment can measure in parts per billion. Leaks will be mapped throughout 2019 using a laser-based methane analyzer installed on a Peoples survey vehicle. The vehicle will survey the approximate 950 miles of pipes in Pittsburgh. Depending upon the program’s success, this technology could then be used in the future, assessing methane releases across Peoples’s full 15,000 mile Pennsylvania pipeline system. Roughly 46 percent of the pipes operated by Peoples are more than 50 years old.

This program is in addition to the utility’s ongoing and continuous pipeline integrity program for methane detection and line repair. Peoples has reached out into its community to work with other partners on these efforts, including Carnegie Mellon University.

Its leak reduction programs also run in tandem with the company’s Long Term Infrastructure Improvement Plan. The LTIIIP is a strategic initiative aimed at replacing all the company’s aging pipeline that could pose a future risk. In 2018 alone, Peoples replaced 146 miles of pipe. One way to grasp the scale of this

*continued on page 36*

## Peoples Gas

continued from page 35

effort is to visualize all this mileage laid end to end. If this were done, the single pipe would stretch roughly from Pittsburgh to Harrisburg. In 2019, the company plans on investing over \$200 million in its pipelines and related facilities.

The great majority of new pipes will be constructed of plastic. During the past 30 years, plastic pipe has predominated in gas utility distribution systems operating at less than 100 pounds of pressure. Plastic pipe is corrosion-resistant, easy to transport and costs less to install. It can also often be inserted into existing lines or through soil without traditional trenching along its entire route. Perhaps its greatest advantage though, is its flexibility. It's easy for the general public to see and understand how infrastructure like roads and bridges are degraded by the weather. But pipelines are as well, particularly by the freeze and thaw cycle. Every season when the earth freezes and thaws, the ground flexes. The pipes within the earth flex with it. If metal pipes have been scraped by any type of digging, water damage or land shifting from either overhead construction or natural causes, they may be marred and therefore prone to corrosion. Over the years and even decades, pipes may greatly weaken at those points. Flexible plastic piping is the best long-term solution to leaks.

Peoples has also had the advantage of discontinuing many aging pipelines. When the utility acquired Pittsburgh's Equitable Gas Company in 2013, it began to study the redundancy of pipelines beneath the city's streets. It systematically discontinued the most aging pipes, thus not paying for needless construction and restoration costs to the benefit of its ratepayers.

This new, methane reduction initiative with the EDF was launched



**“Peoples Gas, the City of Pittsburgh, and the state of Pennsylvania’s embrace of new technologies and smarter strategies to tackle the climate challenge is a bold example for others to follow”**

– Environmental Defense Fund President Fred Krupp

in January of this year in Pittsburgh. At that event, Gov. Wolf signed an executive order that Pennsylvania will work to reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions 26 percent by 2025 and 80 percent by 2050. He noted that the partnership between Peoples and the Environmental Defense Fund exemplifies how industries, environmental agencies and governments can constructively collaborate to address issues. He further stated that “protecting

our environment and growing our economy are not conflicting goals and that doing one actually makes the other possible.”

Local officials in Pittsburgh cite this same philosophy as one of the foundation pillars upon which Pittsburgh built its new economy following the collapse of its steel industry decades earlier.



EDF's engagement with Peoples is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies through the America's Pledge Initiative. Acting on the 10 high-impact opportunity areas identified in its America's Pledge report, including methane leak detection and repair, Bloomberg Philanthropies is investing in pilot efforts such as EDF's work in Pittsburgh, along with programs to curb super-polluting gases known as hydrofluorocarbons, and initiatives to spur the market for electric vehicles. ■

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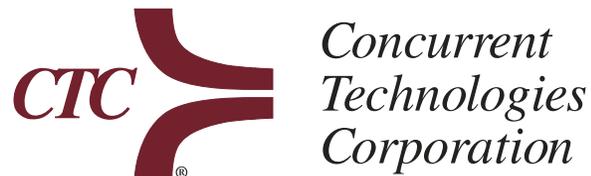




# Enterprise Ventures Corporation: Company's Innovative System Saves Water — a Resource Too Precious to Use Only Once



*Innovative Solutions for a Complex World*



**T**he need to conserve water is becoming more critical. The Environmental Protection Agency reports that at least 40 states anticipate water shortages by 2024. One of the EPA's tactics to counter the increasing water scarcity is to recycle water so that it can be reused.

Technical experts at the nonprofit, Concurrent Technologies Corporation, and its affiliate, Enterprise Ventures Corporation, have been developing innovative water recycling technology that extends the usability of water — a resource too precious to use just once.

## Water Technology Springs from Military Needs

CTC's work with water technology began many years ago. Originally developed for the U.S. Air Force, CTC's Expeditionary Wastewater Reuse System efficiently processes and recycles 90 percent of greywater generated at forward operating bases. It was a first-of-its-kind technology that performed well in the field. In 2015, CTC was awarded a patent for a magnesium-powered water purification system, which was also developed for military field applications, where access to purified and potable water can be a challenge. That work led to the development of CTC's filtration methodology for purifying greywater (the relatively clean waste water from baths, sinks, washing machines and other appliances). That filtration technology, along with its proprietary control software, is at the heart of the company's system to recycle laundry and/or shower greywater.

CTC and EVC have an extensive team of engineers and technicians that can integrate expertise at any stage of a project. CTC specializes in research, development, testing and evaluation that are common with initial prototype and proof-of-concept development. Meanwhile, EVC focuses on taking existing prototypes and fast-tracking them into commercial products. Their work with water recycling and filtration illustrates the companies' unique



**CTC's Expeditionary Wastewater Reuse System, developed for the military, recovers water from shower and laundry operations, while providing energy efficiency and low maintenance.**

ability to provide full lifecycle solutions — from concept to production to maintenance and repair.

Building on the success of the technology developed for the Department of Defense, EVC was able to simplify the design of the system for laundry and shower greywater recycling, and optimize the system specifically for laundry greywater recycling in commercial scale laundry facilities and other industrial applications.

## Twin Ultra™ Greywater Recycling System

EVC is currently marketing an innovative water recycling system that saves costs and resources in industries with significant water use. The Twin Ultra Greywater Recycling System can recycle 70 to 90 percent of greywater used in commercial and industrial laundry operations and other applications not requiring potable (drinkable) water. The Twin Ultra is especially beneficial in commercial laundry facilities where water is scarce and/or expensive; or where the facility must adhere to permits that require water recycling.

The Twin Ultra system is a skid-mounted, modular system that uses membrane filtration as opposed to media filtration (e.g., sand, activated carbon, etc.), or biological filtration used in many existing water recycling systems. The membrane filtration technology offers many process benefits including instant system startup, filtration path stability and reduced maintenance and operator time. The system is computer controlled and continuously monitors the water quality at various points through the filtration process, making real-time adjustments to ensure consistent quality in the produced water output.

“EVC is building on an impressive background in innovative water recycling systems,” said Brian Ott, EVC Water Technologies Product Manager. “EVC’s Twin Ultra system evolved from a base of technology created by CTC. Our engineers are optimizing that expertise to bring to market customized water solutions where they are needed and/or mandated. We are currently working with a Fortune 100 company on water recycling concepts for large-scale, fixed-base and portable laundry operations. We are also in talks with an international company that provides portable water solutions for large events worldwide.”

Twin Ultra is useful in many markets, including federal and local governments, industrial, commercial, mining, hospitality, multi-family residences, higher education, oil and gas and manufacturing industries. EVC’s system also lowers water and wastewater hauling costs and risks for military and temporary installations, including disaster relief operations across the U.S. and abroad.

EVC currently offers a 5,000 gallon per day (gpd) and a 10,000 gpd greywater recycling system, as well as a host of supporting products including heat exchangers, clean-in-place membrane deep clean modules, and remote data sensing/troubleshooting. In addition to the base model, which is designed for most low to moderate detergent laundry applications, EVC’s Twin Ultra Plus can be used in laundries processing heavily soiled fabrics where high detergent and chemical use is required.

## Green Laundry Concept

In 2016, in a move designed to expand the reach of the company’s water recycling technology, CTC entered into a partnership with Water Energy of Houston, Texas, to create a first-of-its kind green laundry system.

Water Energy has a proprietary laundry technology that uses a patented system to inject ozone (ionized oxygen) into the feed water in laundry facilities. Ozone is nature’s most powerful cleaner and disinfectant, eliminating the need for much of the hot water and chemicals used in commercial laundry operations. Heating water is the most energy-intensive process in a commercial laundry, and the ozone process allows 90 percent of laundry to be washed in cold water. Therefore, when water is recycled, the need for hot water is mostly eliminated and the use of chemicals is



EVC’s Twin Ultra Greywater Recycling System was developed by a team of engineers including (left to right) Jorge Dias, Mark Pitterle, Brian Ott, Brian Gaston and Jeff Yanuck.

greatly reduced. The result is a marriage of saving money and environmental stewardship. Commercial laundry facilities report their sheets and other linens feel like new when washed in ozonated water, and that their linens last three to four times as long because of the removal of hot water (typically 165° F) and harsh chemicals.

## Water Evaluation Test System

In addition to EVC’s standard greywater recycling product line, EVC also offers the ability to develop customized water reuse and filtration systems that can remove the most challenging water contaminants. For these applications, EVC has an in-house Water Evaluation Test system to test and optimize water treatment processes before designing and building full-scale solutions. This approach ensures delivery of individualized solutions to clients that save them time and money while ensuring performance. The WET system is a fully functional test bed, where system elements can be tested and evaluated to ensure process performance prior to the system build.

To learn more about EVC’s water technology, go to [evc.ctc.com/water-recycling](http://evc.ctc.com/water-recycling) or contact Water Technologies Product Manager Brian Ott at [water@evc.ctc.com](mailto:water@evc.ctc.com) or 814 269.6835. 📧

## Industry Recognized CTC’s Innovative Water Recycling Technology

Concurrent Technologies Corporation’s alternative water treatment technology won an internationally renowned Silver Edison Award in the energy and sustainability category. The 2016 Edison Award was given for CTC’s System for Laundry and Shower Recycling/Reuse which was designed to significantly reduce water usage. The system demonstrated the ability to efficiently recycle up to 90 percent of greywater generated by large commercial, governmental or institutional users. It was developed originally to solve a real-world problem for the Department of Defense — namely, reducing water resupply needs at forward operating bases.





# Ace Wire Spring & Form Co.: Celebrating 80 Years in McKees Rocks, Pa.



By John Higgins

**F**or 80 years, Ace Wire Spring & Form Co., Inc. has worked in the custom spring manufacturing industry. Since its beginning, Ace Wire Spring has been a family owned and operated business, always staying close to its roots in the community of McKees Rocks, right outside of Pittsburgh, PA.

The company was started by Joseph Vodvarka with a small coiling machine. Vodvarka worked hands-on in the upstairs room of his house, which was converted into a small office / shop to produce the garter springs needed at the time. This gave Vodvarka the opportunity to educate his family about all aspects of the spring manufacturing industry, while at the same time teaching them a valuable trade.

After some time, and slight expansions into other rooms of the house, the company had outgrown its first location. In 1955, Ace Wire Spring built its own facility right down the road from the Vodvarka home. Vodvarka and his children, Joey and Linda, continued to work and be involved with the family business while it grew by increasing customers and staff.

In 1976, Vodvarka's daughter, Linda, and her husband Rich Froehlich, bought the company and kept Ace Wire Spring as a family owned and operated business. The Froehlichs have a strong belief in family and



**Ace Wire Spring & Form Co. got its start in McKees Rocks, PA and remains there today.**

community and carry over that value into the Ace Wire Spring culture when doing business.

This mindset helped the company outgrow its location again, and in 1986, Ace Wire Spring built a new 55,000 sq. ft. facility. The new location was less than five minutes from the old office, still within the McKees Rocks area. Staying in the local community, where they and a large majority of Ace employees were based and had connections, was paramount in the decision making process of where to build. With this community feel and local ties, Ace Wire Spring employees were able to stay with the company for the long haul.

Family and community go hand in hand at Ace Wire Spring & Form. By hiring local, the company helps the community grow and experience prosperity. Another way community plays a role in the culture at Ace is through its interaction with the next generation of manufacturers. Helping high school and college students see firsthand what manufacturing is about and the numerous career opportunities there are is something of great importance to Ace Wire Spring.

Another connection the company has to the community is with MFG DAY, a celebration within manufacturing that occurs annually on the first Friday of October. Ace Wire Spring has been a part of this celebration for six years, every time hosting between two and three groups of students from various local high schools and colleges to tour the company's shop and see how springs and wire forms are made. Also, the students have the opportunity to talk to our craftsmen and shop foremen, asking questions about their career paths and what opportunities the manufacturing industry offers.

An additional way Ace Wire Spring helps the community is by



**The Ace Wire Spring & Form Co. team on MFG Day.**

sponsoring a local BotsIQ high school team. BotsIQ is more than a robot building and battle competition, it is a program that provides high school students with the hands-on experience of using their imagination and engineering skills to build and develop a working robot to compete in an annual competition. Ace Wire Spring is proud to have been a sponsor of the Clairton BotsIQ teams for seven years. Every year, members of the Clairton teams visit Ace to learn more about the manufacturing process, see the spring and wire form machines in action, talk with craftsmen for engineering advice and show off the robots they are in the process of building. Ace is happy to offer guidance to the students on building options and ideas, having their design engineers look over the robot building process and help out any way that they can. The BotsIQ program helps with building local leaders in the

**“ Another way community plays a role in the culture at Ace is through its interaction with the next generation of manufacturers. Helping high school and college students see firsthand what manufacturing is about and the numerous career opportunities there are is something of great importance to Ace Wire Spring. ”**



Ace Wire Spring has been family owned and operated for 80 years.

manufacturing industry by starting at the high school level, and Ace Wire Spring will always be there participating.

Ace Wire Spring & Form Co., Inc. continues to this day to be an industry leader in the manufacturing of compression, extension, torsion springs and wire forms. The company's 80 years of experience is expanding into new machinery and the most up to date technology, allowing them to offer the widest variety of

custom precision springs. Ace Wire Spring also continues to be a community leader, growing awareness of manufacturing career opportunities and reaching out to help grow the next generation of manufacturing. ■

■ **John Higgins** is marketing manager for Ace Wire Spring & Form Company, Inc.

## Strengthening **your** business

# Fighting Back Against Calls for an Aggressive Mandated Wage Hike

**S**mall businesses often operate on a thin profit margins, and there isn't a lot of wiggle room in their budgets for unexpected costs. That's why the PA Chamber is fighting back against an aggressive minimum wage proposal being pushed by some elected officials that would impose an almost immediate 65 percent increase in labor costs to employers by moving the minimum wage to \$12 in July, with additional incremental increases to \$15 in future years. Additionally, the plan calls for the elimination of the tipped wage – which means many restaurants would have only a few months to comply with an immediate 235 percent increase in labor costs and an increase of over 500 percent in just a few years.

A recent analysis by the state's Independent Fiscal Office, which was released in March, found that a \$12 hourly rate would result in the loss of 34,000 jobs statewide. Additionally, the report concludes that this proposal will result in 'more difficult entry into the labor market for inexperienced workers, especially part-time high school and college students.' The study also found that some employees would see a reduction in hours; consumers would see some price increases on the costs of goods and businesses would have less money to reinvest into their operations.

A Congressional Budget Office report also found that mandated wage hikes would lead to job loss. That study concluded that an increase to \$10.10 an hour – far lower than the current proposed mandate at the

state level – would result in the loss of 500,000 to 1 million jobs nationwide. Studies from other states have also found that mandated wage hikes have negative impacts on employment. In Seattle – where the minimum wage was increased to \$13 an hour -- a report from the University of Washington found that there has been a reduction in average take-home pay for low wage workers. These negative consequences would only be exacerbated by moving to \$15 an hour, which the proposal aims to have in place by 2025.

No one disputes that some individuals benefit from mandated wage increases; but the fact is, others end up being hurt – including the very people advocates claim they want to help. Instead of relying on “feel good,” ineffective policies to help low wage workers, the PA Chamber is advocating elected officials take a more direct, targeted approach. Strengthening workforce development programs will help individuals obtain the necessary skills-training to advance through the Commonwealth's evolving workforce. Additionally, some states have implemented an Earned Income Tax Credit – which better directs assistance to low-wage workers, especially those raising families. These more thoughtful efforts will better help low-wage earners support their families and move upward through the workforce, offering long-term career opportunities at family-sustaining wages. ■



# The Dramatic Unreality of the Green New Deal



By Dan Byers

**O**n March 26, after a brief, combative floor debate, the U.S. Senate rejected a legislative proposal by a most unusual vote tally: 57 to 0, with 43 members voting “present.” The resolution in question? S.J.Res. 8, “A joint resolution recognizing the duty of the Federal Government to create a Green New Deal.”

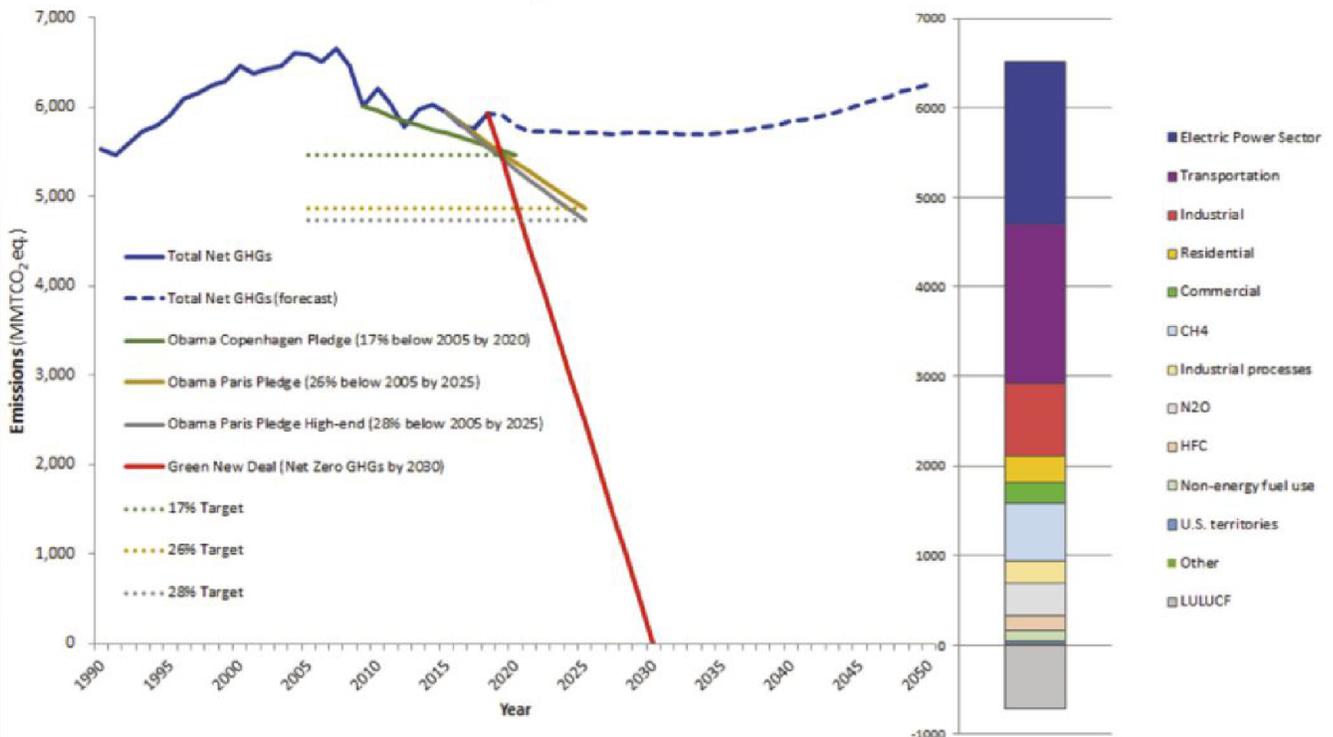
Virtually unheard of just 3 months ago, the Green New Deal has burst into the national debate faster and more furiously than any issue in recent memory. As controversial as the ideas in the GND are, advocates on both sides seem to agree that the proposal would entail a radical and unprecedented transformation of America’s economic and energy systems.

As U.S. Chamber Executive Vice President Neil Bradley stated, this approach stands in stark contrast to the free enterprise system that has helped make America the world’s most advanced and vibrant economy:

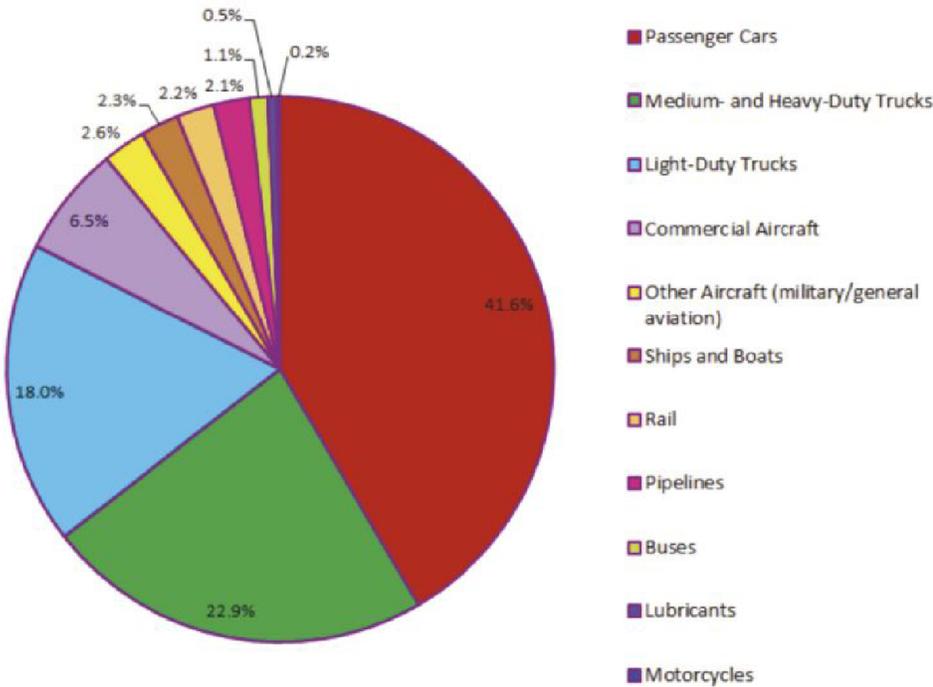
*“There are two competing approaches to addressing our country’s challenges such as climate change, healthcare and income inequality. In one approach, as exemplified by the “Green New Deal,” government asserts control over most of our economy, passing along the enormous costs and bureaucratic inefficiencies to everyday Americans. In the other, our robust system of free enterprise rises to the challenge, tapping into our deep well of ingenuity and creativity. This is the approach that built our nation and made us a land of opportunity for all, in stark contrast to failed socialist policies that have plagued many other countries over time.”*

While the GND is ultimately an all-encompassing economic policy that would institute major changes on issues from education and labor to healthcare, finance, housing, agriculture, and more, we will focus on what we know best: energy.

**Economy-wide GHG Emissions Sources and Projections Under Various Scenarios**



## Greenhouse Gas Emissions From Transportation, 2016



When it comes to energy, the Green New Deal calls for the U.S. to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions through a 10-year “national mobilization effort” to eliminate GHGs from all economic sectors—electricity generation, transportation, agriculture, buildings, manufacturing, industry—you name it. This focus on economy-wide GHGs is important, as the chatter associated with the GND has focused primarily on its call for the United States to generate 100 percent of its electricity from renewable sources by 2030 (non-hydro renewables currently account for only about 10 percent).

The notion of a 100 percent renewable electric grid by 2030 is, to put it gently, wildly unrealistic.

But the GND doesn't stop with the power sector; it targets the entire economy. While Americans tend to associate emissions with activities such as electricity generation and vehicles, the breadth of activities that contribute to GHG emissions is as diverse as our economy itself. The graphic on page 42 displays the major source categories of GHGs, and illustrates the incredibly extreme goals of the GND. The blue line shows historical, economy-wide GHG emissions from 1990 as well as projections through 2050. As you can see, the GND (red line) would entail a sudden and dramatic downward cliff on its way to zero.

Consider: even if the aforementioned effort to transition to a 100 percent renewable electricity system were successful, it would only address about 30 percent of economy-wide emissions. We would still have to eliminate emissions from the other 70 percent of sources—transportation, industry, residential and commercial sources, as well as non-CO2 sources such as methane (think cow “emissions”) and HFCs (air conditioning and refrigeration).

Moreover, each of these sector categories are comprised of numerous subsector sources, each with their own unique circumstances and challenges when it comes to emissions. Consider transportation, for example. We would not only have to electrify or otherwise eliminate all

passenger cars and trucks, but also heavy-duty trucks such as tractor-trailers, railroads, ships and boats, and even airplanes. In most of these cases, practical technological solutions have not even been conceived - let alone researched, developed and implemented.

Remember, transportation is just one key sector. Emissions from manufacturing and agriculture would also have to be eliminated. The categories of impacted activities is seemingly endless—from landfills to the manufacture of asphalt for roads to rubber for car tires to synthetic fibers and plastics for countless uses, to glass manufacturing, fertilizer production, food processing, cement and fertilizer, and on and on. In short, energy is everywhere. It is not just necessary to power vehicles and help keep the lights on; it is essential to producing and delivering the modern conveniences and necessities that we take for granted.

The point of all of this is not to throw cold water on actions to address climate change. Rather, it is to remind that we cannot effectively do so if the public policy debate is unmoored from any semblance of reality. The GND fails this simple test, and the

sooner all sides can agree to this, the sooner we can work to advance realistic, practical and effective solutions. ■

■ **Dan Byers** is vice president for policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Global Energy Institute.



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# Promoting Literacy and Volunteerism in the Central PA Region

In addition to participating in the United Way of the Capital Region’s Annual Day of Caring — which takes place each year in the fall — the PA Chamber staff is proud to donate their time to other UWCR volunteer opportunities throughout the year.

One such event that has quickly become an annual favorite for the PA Chamber is the UWCR’s “Literacy for Life” event. This year, the UWCR sponsored several sessions throughout the month of February at the Barnes & Noble in Camp Hill, PA. At each of the sessions, volunteers — which included PA Chamber employees Ashley Mostek and Lori Renne — were partnered with a third grade student from Downey Elementary School. The morning activities included a scavenger hunt throughout the store and the opportunity for each student to select a new book to take home.



**PA Chamber Director of Marketing Lori Renne helps a new friend select a book at the United Way of the Capital Region’s recent “Literacy for Life” event.**

“It was wonderful to see the children get so excited about books and reading,” said Renne, director of marketing for the PA Chamber. “Their eyes lit up as they searched for the perfect book to take with them. The

whole experience really underlined the importance of literacy education and setting the foundation for literacy at an early age.”

At the end of March, two PA Chamber staffers who are members of the UWCR’s Bridges Society also had the opportunity to work with local youth



**PA Chamber staff members Mary Oliveira and Kris Nieves worked with area youth to prepare for City Island’s busy spring season at Youth Day of Caring.**

at a springtime clean-up event. PA Chamber Corporate Project Manager Kris Nieves and Director of Membership Mary Oliveira participated in the UWCR’s “17th Annual Youth Day of Caring Project” and spent the day working with local high school students to complete beautification projects on City Island and Front Street in Harrisburg. The day’s activities included painting as well as landscaping and clean-up projects. Approximately 200 area youth representing 10 local high schools participated in the event.

“It was wonderful to see so many high school juniors and seniors performing a service to the community,” said Nieves. “They were so engaged and wanted to go above and beyond to get the area ready for the public to enjoy.”

“The students jumped right in and were ready to make a difference,” echoed Oliveira. “This wasn’t a ‘goof-off’ day for the kids — they were busy from start to finish doing a lot of manual work. It was so refreshing to see the large turnout, knowing that these individuals are going to be our future leaders.”

# Action Spotlight



*PA Chamber Vice President of Government Affairs Sam Denisco provides the business community's response to Gov. Tom Wolf's 2019-20 budget proposal on a recent episode of Comcast Newsmakers.*



*State House Majority Leader Bryan Cutler, R-Lancaster, was among the dynamic speakers at the PA Chamber and PA Bankers Association's Annual Economic Forecast and Business Leadership Summit in February.*



*The PA Chamber was pleased to welcome U.S. Small Business Administration Administrator Linda McMahon to speak at our Annual Economic Forecast and Business Leadership Summit and attend a workforce-focused roundtable discussion at Commonwealth Charter Academy.*



*PA Chamber Government Affairs Director Kevin Sunday paid a visit to PA Chamber member company SUEZ Water Pennsylvania for a tour of their new facility and a discussion on how water infrastructure is helping spur economic development and improving PA's quality of life.*



*PA Chamber President Gene Barr was on hand as Gov. Tom Wolf signed an Executive Order creating the Keystone Economic Development and Workforce Command Center, on which Barr serves as co-chair.*



*PA Chamber Vice President of Government Affairs Sam Denisco recently sat down for a TV interview with Fox 43 to discuss the unintended negative consequences of a proposal to sharply increase the state's minimum wage.*



*PA Chamber President Gene Barr greeted Cong. May Gay Scanlon, who was sworn in early this year to represent PA's 5th Congressional District, at a recent event at the Delaware County Chamber of Commerce.*



*The PA Chamber's All Business Podcast offers a great opportunity for member companies to showcase their business! The latest podcast featured Stacy Kyle of AHEDD, who shared her organization's efforts to fill open jobs and help Pennsylvanians with disabilities.*



*DEP Secretary Patrick McDonnell kicked off the first DEP Quarterly meeting of 2019, describing agency goals for the year to the PA Chamber member audience.*





HERE FOR  
GOOD



Cabot Oil & Gas Corporation

# Energy Education Bringing Science and Technology to Life

**C**abot Oil & Gas Corporation is expanding its partnership with the Oilfield Energy Center to enhance STEM education for middle-school age students via the Mobile Oilfield Learning Unit.

“Cabot is dedicated to providing educational opportunities to students and teachers to grow a future workforce and interest in STEM fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics related to the energy industry. The MOLU accomplishes this and so much more,” noted George Stark, external affairs director for Cabot.

The traveling exhibit provides hands-on activities for students and challenges them to apply the knowledge they gather at 24 workstations to solve a series of problems.

“We really try to get the kids engaged in the sciences,” said Matt Austin, MOLU facilitator, who noted that the traveling exhibit was designed to motivate and empower students who may one day be interested in pursuing a career in the energy industry, ranging from opportunities in geology to petroleum engineering. By getting the kids to look at the energy industry from a variety of perspectives, he explained, “We show them that there are an abundance of jobs in the energy industry and that you can align these fantastic careers with subjects they find interesting.”

“As the energy industry continues to transform itself in a time of widespread technological advances, we need to make sure the next generation of workers have the imagination and skills necessary to thrive in a world of new challenges and opportunities,” says Stark.





Tara Craig, STEM coach and computer program teacher at Pittston High School, is passionate about focusing on STEM principles and sees the MOLU as a valuable teaching aid. “Not only will we help our students develop the skills necessary to pursue a career in the ever-growing STEM fields, but we will also give them the tools to think critically,” she stated.

“Any time we can do anything that is hands-on, they get a little more knowledge than we can give them in the classroom,” said Laura Harder, a fifth-grade math, science and social studies teacher at Elk Lake Elementary School in Springville, PA. Her students have just begun exploring the basics of geology – rocks and the layers of the earth – but she is confident that her pupils found relevance in the MOLU activities. Harder explained that the MOLU facilitator patiently worked with students who raised their hands and helped them think through each activity until they found the answer to the corresponding question.

Facilitators leave workbooks with the teachers so they can follow-up the MOLU visit in the classroom with post-trip testing. For the more than 30 schools in the Appalachian Basin that the exhibit has visited, student test scores improved by more than 50 percent, providing proof of the success of MOLU’s hands-on approach.

“We like to see if they just had fun or if they actually learned something,” Austin remarked.



**MOLU:  
MOBILE  
OILFIELD  
LEARNING  
UNIT**

**36  
APPALACHIAN  
SCHOOLS VISITED**

**50%  
PERCENT IMPROVEMENT  
IN STUDENT TEST SCORES  
POST-MOLU**

**5,500+  
LOCAL STUDENTS  
ENGAGED**

**INFINITE CAREER  
OPPORTUNITIES**

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**Cabot Oil & Gas Corporation**

The MOLU will feature many of the same lessons as its predecessors but include some updates to reflect advancements in the industry and elements specific to the Appalachian

“Our students told me that the MOLU is amazing,”

— Elk Lake School District Superintendent Ken Cuomo

Basin. According to the MOLU manager Donna Wheeler, earlier versions of the MOLU focused on offshore drilling. “We have now updated our mission and programs to include onshore components,” she explained. “With this new direction, we are developing

increasing awareness on how onshore production is vital to the oil and gas industry.”

The new MOLU has already been to more than a dozen schools in Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

“The students all enjoyed the ‘hands-on’ learning experience involved,” remarked Reanna Ponzo, Leona Middle School teacher in Shadyside, Ohio. “And the criteria fit the Ohio Learning Standards for sixth grade.”

“Many of the activities the MOLU includes are transferable to countless careers,” said Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School teacher Johnnie Hicks. “The experience is a unique opportunity to show our young people how the material they read in a textbook is applied to the everyday world.”

Between February and May, students at another dozen schools are scheduled for a MOLU visit. The average cost for the experience is \$2,200, and a growing number of

*continued on page 48*

**Energy Education Bringing Science and Technology to Life**

*continued from page 47*

companies whose executives appreciate the value of STEM education in fostering a skilled workforce have stepped up to sponsor the traveling classroom. They include Cabot Oil & Gas Corporation, CNX, Equitrans Midstream Corporation, Marathon Petroleum, Range Resources, Southwestern Energy and Williams.

While Cabot’s generosity and commitment to preparing a skilled workforce have enabled the MOLU to visit schools in Lackawanna, Susquehanna and Wyoming counties, additional sponsorships are needed by other business leaders to get the MOLU and its hands-on STEM training tools into more schools throughout the Appalachian Basin.



**“ Many of the activities the MOLU includes are transferable to countless careers. The experience is a unique opportunity to show our young people how the material they read in a textbook is applied to the everyday world. ”**

— Harrisburg Catholic Elementary School Teacher Johnnie Hicks

“We are grateful to the energy companies who help to make this fantastic learning experience possible,” said Justin Zimmerman, headmaster of the Linsly School in Wheeling, West Virginia. “Our teachers strive to make interdisciplinary connections for our students, and its experiences like this that might help a student discover a new interest or passion.”

Educators and industry representatives interested in scheduling or sponsoring a MOLU visit to a school may contact the OEC at 713.840.1753 or [ocemolu@oceanstaroec.com](mailto:ocemolu@oceanstaroec.com).

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High celebrates the completion of the new Statue of Liberty Museum on Liberty Island, N.Y. Scheduled to open this spring, the Museum will allow millions more visitors to enjoy the Statue of Liberty experience and be inspired by the statue’s history and message of freedom and opportunity.

High Concrete Group LLC produced the architectural precast concrete facade for the new Statue of Liberty Museum and screening facility in its Denver, Pa. headquarters plant.  
*Rendering: The Statue of Liberty - Ellis Island Foundation, Inc.*



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# Getting Health Care Right: Driving Better Health Care through Partnerships

By Deborah L. Rice-Johnson

**A**cross America, people are looking for solutions to address the ongoing challenges that our health care system faces. Everyone is looking for ways to solve the ultimate health care question: How do you get the highest quality care, the best outcomes, through the most convenient location and at an affordable cost?

In the quest to solve this dilemma, it's becoming evident that there's not a one-size fits all solution. At Highmark, we firmly believe — and are fervently pursuing — solutions that are based on our collaborations with doctors, hospitals and consumers.

When employers look to the health insurance industry for answers, many health plans talk about partnerships with doctors and hospitals as being an important part of the answer to their problem. But, few in the industry are actually

partnering effectively and fewer are focusing on the most important piece of the puzzle — the customer.

Since the 1930s, the companies that created Highmark Health have lived by a customer-focused philosophy. We design our models of care, medical policies and insurance solutions to ensure that our members receive the highest-quality, safest and most clinically-focused care possible in timely and convenient settings.

When we talk about hospital and health system partnerships, we are focused on a multi-faceted approach with like-minded organizations. These are hospitals and health systems that are driven to offer high-quality, affordable care in the community and close to home — approaches that drive the best outcomes for our members.

Think about it. If you need to see a physician, you don't want to have to travel far or disrupt your normal schedule. You would prefer to access care that is convenient and close to where you live or work. That's the premise of our partnerships. It's about keeping high-quality, affordable care local, convenient and in the community.



Health care truly is local. To meet patient needs, we've developed a continuum of provider partnerships to address local desires. These partnerships range from traditional contracted relationships to those that are moving quickly towards value-based care and risk sharing. We also have a number of clinical joint ventures and full integration opportunities.

In Western Pennsylvania, Highmark Health owns the Allegheny Health Network, a health system of eight hospitals and more than 1,200 physicians and clinicians. We are investing more than \$1 billion throughout the next several years. Our goal is to enhance community access and continue providing the affordable, high-quality health care services that our members have come to expect.

This includes investments in our eight current hospitals and clinics, along with the build out of five new community hospitals in areas where they are needed the most. For personalized cancer care, AHN has an extensive network of



academic and community oncology centers, where we are also investing in enhanced and expanded access to offer exceptional, expert care close to home. AHN Cancer Institute's experts also work closely with Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center to give patients with rare and complex cancers more options for treatment.

Continuing with our focus on the patient, AHN has introduced Same Day Appointments. This gives our customers the opportunity to make a physician appointment the very same day they call. AHN has provided over 400,000 Same Day Appointments to date.

In Central Pennsylvania, we are collaborating with Penn State Health and are committed to growing a community network for our customers. Our partnership with Penn State Health includes a collective investment of more than \$1 billion toward the development of a high-value, community-based health care network designed to keep care local and enhance collaboration with independent community physicians. We are also investing in existing facilities and physician practices to improve quality and care delivery in the region.

Our efforts extend to Northeastern Pennsylvania too. We have aligned with Geisinger Health System on a clinical joint venture that is focused on developing an innovative, high-quality and affordable model of care featuring a network of community-based sites, including a comprehensive health campus in the Montoursville area. This ensures our customers in this region will have choice and access to needed primary care, specialty care and appropriate acute inpatient care that is local.

We've also been working with the Lehigh Valley Health Network to create long-term health improvements in the community that will lower future health care cost trends for both employers and individuals. Together, we launched a new health insurance product — Lehigh Valley Flex Blue — in Lehigh, Northampton and Schuylkill counties, enabling Lehigh Valley Health Network and other aligned physicians and clinicians to better manage the care our customers receive, ultimately leading to lower costs and better outcomes.

Since 2016, our claims data shows that members in Lehigh Valley Flex Blue are more likely to get preventive services such as immunizations and physical exams than members in other products. This keeps these members healthier and is another benefit of the coordinated care efforts that this partnership creates. Our claims data also shows that members in Lehigh Valley Flex Blue have had 39 percent fewer emergency room visits and 20 percent fewer surgeries than members in standard PPO products. These results tell us that these members are more

engaged and are healthier. Employers that have purchased the Lehigh Valley Flex Blue product have also seen a 6 percent savings on overall medical and prescription costs.

Those results are important, because a majority of Americans get their health insurance coverage through their job, and the majority of our membership in Pennsylvania is employer-based. That's why it makes sense for us to partner with employers to lower costs and improve the health and wellbeing of employees.

We also have a team-based approach to helping our members navigate the health care system and improve their health status. That can include doctors, nurses, pharmacists and others that help people with chronic conditions get the care and support they need. The care teams proactively reach out at multiple touchpoints in the person's journey making it easier for the patient to be an active partner in managing their care, which improves quality and achieves better outcomes. Our Highmark Case Management incorporates a comprehensive integrated solution that encompasses all aspects of engagement and self-management by providing information, support and interventions across the continuum of care. This includes wellness and health promotion, risk management, condition management, complex case management and advanced illness/end of life care. This multi-faceted team approach puts the member at the center of what we do.

We've also introduced a diabetes management program for self-funded employers last year. Managing diabetes is critical for employers because individuals with diabetes have health care costs that are more than twice that of people without diabetes. And, estimates show that employers could see \$400 to \$1,300 per year in savings per member when a participating employee reaches the weight loss goals through our program.

More than 1,000 members have enrolled in our diabetes initiative, and we've seen fewer inpatient admissions, fewer trips to the ER, lower HbA1c levels and improved medication compliance. To help prevent the onset of type 2 diabetes in individuals who are pre-diabetic, we also introduced a preventive benefit with no cost-sharing to cover diabetes prevention programs for members with employer coverage.

But even before diabetes is a threat to a member's health, we work with employers to proactively address overall wellness. Through our partnership with Sharecare, we are offering employers one of the most personalized wellness programs available. Sharecare is a big part of our overall health management strategy called Well360. When employers offer Sharecare, employees have access on their mobile device to

personalized information, actionable plans and programs, and multimedia content from leading health experts and organizations to support their health goals, whether that is to quit tobacco, exercise more, lose weight, eat healthier — or to stay healthy.

We take pride in driving better health care through our partnerships with doctors, hospitals and customers. Some industry watchers have even said that the future of health care in our nation will be written by our work in Pennsylvania. While we find that gratifying, our attention is keenly focused on the customer and patient, as we strive to create solutions to getting health care right. ■

■ **Deborah L. Rice-Johnson** is president of Highmark Inc.

## Teaming with Primary Care Providers for Better Care

Highmark is partnering with primary care providers across Pennsylvania, Delaware and West Virginia with its True Performance program. This endeavor is second only to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services Medicare Shared Savings program in terms of the number of people in the program. This collaboration, with almost 7,000 PCPs, is lowering emergency department utilization and yielding fewer hospital admissions — leading to an estimated \$415 million in avoided medical costs for Highmark's individual and group customers.

Approximately 85 percent of all eligible PCPs in Highmark's service areas participate in True Performance. Through the program, Highmark is teaming up with PCPs to address the affordability and quality of health for its members. True Performance evaluates a PCP's ability to deliver optimal, effective care; and rewards them for their performance on quality and cost measures, as well as preventive care. The program has helped PCPs streamline processes, share ideas and implement best practices. Participating PCPs are now even more engaged with their patients in helping them meet expectations of care and manage their health better throughout the year.

To date, PCPs in True Performance have 11 percent lower emergency department utilization and 16 percent fewer hospital admissions, as compared to physicians not in the program.

# Understanding Health Care Costs and Provider Engagement

By Joe Martin

**+Medical BILLING STATEMENT**

**Admission Date :** August 14, 2016  
**Discharge date :** August 17, 2016

Description	Code	Amount
	851000095	87.00
m	172001525	174.00
	225647700	37.6
	751004102	9
	225000641	1
	919566450	1

# R

ecently, I addressed the Central PA Business Group on Health at the invitation of their Executive Director, Diane Hess. The CPBGH was founded in 1984 by a group of employers concerned about the cost and quality of healthcare benefits. The organization operates as an independent, non-profit affiliate of the Lancaster Chamber of Commerce, with a focus on serving employers based in Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon and York Counties.

Although the increases in the cost of healthcare have slowed in recent years, the cost trend is still going in the wrong direction — up! Employers continue to be frustrated by the trends and continue to search for solutions by accessing and understanding health care data and then understanding the options for change. I was asked to give my perspective on cost and quality trends in the central PA area, and how those fit statewide. The meeting, attended by a sold out audience of 97 participants, also featured a panel of area providers who discussed the role they play in helping employers address cost and quality issues.

I began my remarks with an overview of PHC4, highlighting the founding role in 1986 of the PA Chamber of Business and Industry and the leadership roles played today by PA Chamber President Gene Barr, Vice President Sam Denisco and other business representatives on the PHC4 board of directors. I also noted, with appreciation, the long-standing support for PHC4's mission by regional healthcare business coalitions around PA.

Next, I presented a bird's eye view of health care trends in central PA, also measured against statewide benchmarks. Here are some of the highlights:

PHC4's recently published "Hospital Performance Report" showed a significant decrease in patient mortality rates in central PA-based hospitals for six medical/surgical conditions from 2012-2017. The most significant decline was in respiratory failure, where the rates dropped from 17.4 percent to 7.4 percent. The other areas of note were stroke, kidney failure, heart failure, pneumonia and sepsis (blood poisoning). We estimate that these decreases resulted in 786 lives saved. We also know that an in-hospital death is very expensive, so there was also a significant cost savings.

We see a similar trend for patients who were re-admitted to central PA hospitals during the same time period, with respiratory failure again leading the way. The other conditions were heart attack, acute kidney failure, heart failure, stroke, sepsis and abnormal heart beat. This resulted in an estimated 629 fewer hospital readmissions and \$6.6 million in avoided hospital payments by Medicare, Medicaid or commercial insurers.

We also see reductions in the area of "super-utilizers." These are patients who are hospitalized very frequently, typically people with a chronic illnesses like diabetes, at great expense. But central PA residents were hospitalized at a much lower rate (15/10,000 residents) than their statewide counterparts (21.6). Central PA hospitals are also clearly having a positive effect on the opioid epidemic. So we can observe that central PA residents are receiving excellent care from their local providers, especially across these highlighted medical categories.

Orthopedic procedures presented another picture. This is an area of great concern for employers. Recent PHC4 reports have shown significant upward

spikes in the rates of hip and knee replacements, as well as spinal fusion. This is especially noteworthy in the dramatic increases for those in the middle-age working population.

In carving out the central PA rates for these procedures, we can see that residents had a higher rate of hip replacements per 10,000 residents (23.4) than statewide (22.6). This variation was more pronounced for knee replacements: 42.1 per 10,000 central PA residents, compared to 36.7 statewide. With an average hospital payment of \$12,500 for both hips and knees, these cost differences quickly mount up. I questioned, for the audience, why these rates would be so different, especially since they are adjusted to account for age factors. I noted that the group of business leaders could be an excellent catalyst for discussions with local providers about these trends.

My discussion was followed by a panel of local executives from Penn Medicine/Lancaster General Health, Penn State Hershey, UPMC Pinnacle and Wellspan Health. All good presentations but in my opinion, the most insightful comments were made by Jan Bergen, CEO of Penn Medicine/Lancaster General Health. Ms. Bergen referred positively to the data I presented about super-utilizers, which has been a big focus of Lancaster General, and segued to remarks about what are called "Social Determinants of Health."

For several years now, PHC4 has included several SDOH factors in its assessment models. For example, we adjust for age and sex. We report on geographic variations, racial and ethnic disparities, education levels and socioeconomic status. This relatively new area is driving a change in the way health care stakeholders think about, measure and pay for health care — a focus on population health. This involves increasing prevention and wellness efforts to help people become healthier and avoid costly hospital stays. It involves evaluating areas like housing, transportation, nutrition, drug and alcohol addiction and so on — all of which can be potential contributors to poor health outcomes. We also need to develop different payment systems that reward providers for keeping people healthier in the first place. Ms. Bergen noted that this is a critically important effort for her health system going forward and stated that: "Poor socioeconomic conditions equal poor health outcomes equal significantly higher costs — something we all care about."

As PHC4's Technical Advisory Group Chairman (and founding dean of the Thomas Jefferson University School of Population Health) Dr. David Nash often remarks: "Addiction thrives in communities that don't." We could expand or paraphrase that to say: "High health care costs thrive in populations that don't." And we all pay for those costs one way or another.

The Central PA Business Group will be holding a health summit focused on social determinants of health on May 30th in Lancaster. For more information go to <https://www.cpbgh.org>. ■

■ **Joe Martin** is executive director for the PA Health Care Cost Containment Council.



## THE HR CORNER

# A JESTER UNEMPLOYED IS NOBODY'S FOOL



## Why “holidays” like April Fools’ Day have no business in the workplace

By **Dee A. Yingst**

I have a pretty good sense of humor and I like a good laugh. (This month’s blog title is actually a line from one of my favorite movies – “The Court Jester” with Danny Kaye. Very silly movie.) I have a big laugh – no sweet little giggles here - it’s not at all unusual to hear my great big belly laugh emanating from my office on any given day.

### **One of the things I don’t find funny is laughing at someone else’s expense.**

Which brings me to April Fools’ Day. The whole premise behind this so-called holiday is to laugh at someone else’s expense. There is absolutely nothing funny about that.

I have little doubt that someone is right now rolling their eyes and saying ‘I guess she can’t take a joke.’ The whole point of April Fools’ Day is to make fun of someone and then laugh at them. Not with them. At them. As an HR professional and as a human being, that is just wrong on so many levels.

Maybe there’s someone in your office that you believe is particularly gullible and likely to fool easily so you figure they’re a pretty easy mark for a prank. That doesn’t make it right. It’s the message I send when I speak to groups about harassment: you are in control of you and nothing that individual does

or doesn’t do changes that. It doesn’t matter what someone is wearing, how they walk, how they talk or anything else. Nothing gives you the right to engage in harassing behavior, whether it rises to the level of legally defined harassment or not isn’t the point. It’s still wrong.

It’s important to remember that the object of the joke or prank is the one that gets to decide whether it’s funny or not – not the prankster. That’s a lesson lost on many people. Organizations need to be vigilant in reminding staff of this important lesson. It’s not unlike the cautionary tale I share about Valentine’s Day: don’t let a holiday be the “cover” someone uses to harass another employee. The shortest way to a hostile work environment claim is to not address behavior even if it’s done under the guise of a so-called holiday.

Laughter in the workplace is not only a great idea, but I would argue it’s absolutely essential. Just as long as it’s not at anyone else’s expense. 

■ **Dee A. Yingst, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, CEBS** is the PA Chamber’s chief HR and compliance officer.



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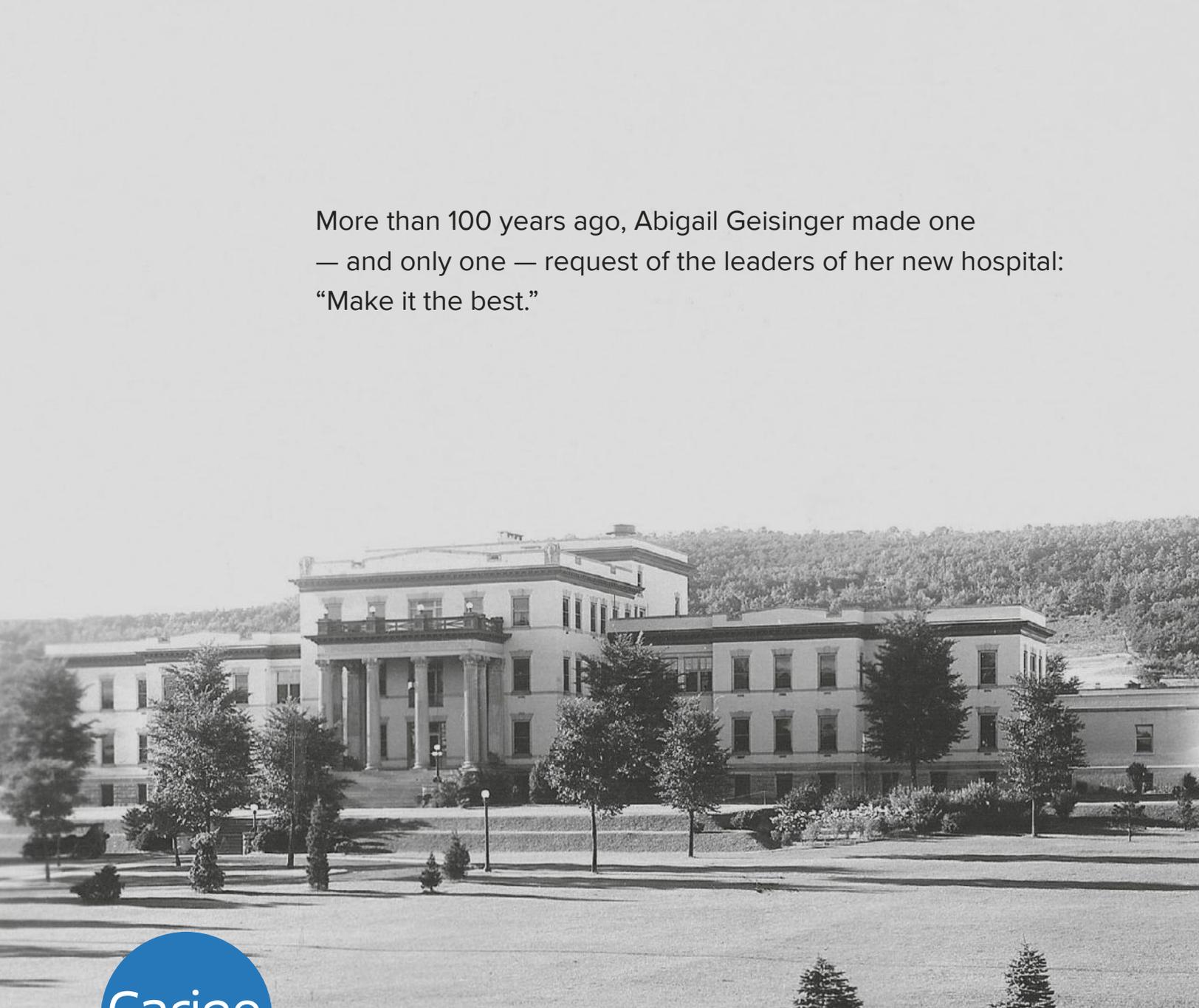
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In the past two years, thanks to generous donations from the Pennsylvania business community, the PA Chamber Educational Foundation has provided more than \$200,000 in Work Ethic Scholarships for 70 Pennsylvania students who are entering into the skilled trades.

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## How Military Veteran Partners is Generating More Veteran Employment Opportunities

**A**round 60 percent of veteran-owned businesses have experienced at least one financial shortfall, according to a recent report on veteran entrepreneurs. Beyond that, 75 percent of veteran entrepreneurs who were surveyed said that a lack of social capital — networks, mentors and other experts — was their biggest challenge to starting and growing their business.

Veterans' access to traditional and social capital is the main issue the team at Malvern-based Military Veteran Partners set out to address a year and a half ago.



MVP works with organizations in Pennsylvania and across the country to change the conversation around veteran entrepreneurship and employment opportunities. It challenges private and public companies to rethink, and even prioritize veteran hiring practices — both for the benefit of the veterans looking for long-term jobs in the civilian workforce and for the bottom lines of those businesses.

“Veterans are some of the most qualified business owners and employees. They’ve endured rigorous training and have had to consistently perform at the highest levels, often in the most adverse conditions, but they also have inherent qualities like endurance, resiliency, the ability to think critically and dedication to their work and team,” said Steve Cloetingh, CEO of Military Veteran Partners. “More than that, veterans have the desire to serve

beyond their military careers with the same values of respect, integrity and trust. They show up on time, execute tasks with military precision, and seek out ways to give back to their community, colleagues, and other veterans. MVP is tapping into that powerful mindset to improve the livelihoods of veterans and simultaneously benefit companies’ bottom lines and the American economy.”

So how do you change the conversation to help businesses focus on hiring veterans?

“It’s an awareness issue. Employers may not understand the skills and character veterans bring to any organization, or their potential to positively disrupt industries, particularly those that are service-based,” said Cloetingh. “Beyond changing the perspective of business owners, we’re leading by example and working to shift the dynamic so that veterans are seen as vital contributors to a skilled workforce, rather than just a quota to hit.”

To achieve these goals, MVP focuses on a combination of four distinct pillars: capital, people, mentoring and networking.

Starting with capital, MVP is investing \$20 million in organizations committed to veteran values and veteran hiring — organizations looking to start businesses as well as those looking to grow and expand.

The people pillar is geared toward investing in skills and training beyond just traditional capital investments. MVP



Three of MVP's executive leaders are pictured (left to right): Kevin Traynor, president and chief operating officer; Suzanne Harris, chief marketing officer; and Steve Cloetingh, chief executive officer.

supports its partners by developing and applying their talents in ways that positively impact the economy, such as social selling, money management, entrepreneurship, how to look for partnerships and forge relationships with community organizations, and more.

MVP also provides opportunities for its partners to connect with world-class advisors who not only have business expertise but who also have connections to the military. They include Ralph Galati, an Air Force veteran and former Prisoner of War; Matt Eversmann, the Army veteran who was portrayed in the film *Black Hawk Down*; Mark Dambly, president of Pennrose and chairman of the Pennsylvania State University Board of Trustees; Larry Liss, an Army veteran and director of Veterans Business Services at Gap International; Tom Lynch, former Rear Admiral of the Navy and current chairman of the Board for NewDay USA; Michael Purcell, a finance expert with extensive experience in financial reporting, mergers and acquisitions, and capital sourcing; Bill Yoh, staffing industry expert and chairman of Yoh and co-owner of Day & Zimmermann; and Walter Buckley, prominent business expert and chairman of Actua Corporation.

These advisors guide MVP's partners to make strategic decisions, and actively generate new business opportunities that make it possible to hire more veterans across the country. This effectively helps the partners advance their business goals and grow their organizations.

MVP's final pillar, networking, represents its commitment to fostering relationships with people and organizations that are passionate about empowering veterans and their family members. This support goes beyond connecting partners with mentors and advisors, and takes the form of creating strategic partnerships with Pennsylvania-based and national organizations — like Veterans Advantage — and encouraging alliances with local businesses.

Putting these four pillars into practice, one of MVP's first ventures is JDog Junk Removal & Hauling (JDog), a Berwyn-based junk removal franchise that awards franchise agreements to veterans and their family members. In Pennsylvania alone, there are almost 30 JDog franchises stretching from Harrisburg to Hanover to Berwick, and all are owned by veterans and military family members.

Take the JDog Atlantic team, for example. Of the owners, one is a veteran and two are family members of veterans. Their crew of veterans and family members is spread throughout the Philadelphia region, including West Philadelphia, the Main Line, Bucks County, Chester County and Bensalem.



**Marine Corps veteran Chad Allen and Sean McNulty of JDog Junk Removal & Hauling Atlantic remove an appliance from a customer's home. JDog keeps 70 percent of the items they haul away from the landfill through recycling, reusing and repurposing strategies.**

MVP is not only collaborating with JDog Atlantic (and all of its 11 entrepreneurial partners) to invest in advancing technology and operational systems, but it's also training the leadership and sales teams. MVP's team

of advisors is also lending its varied experience to help JDog Atlantic adapt to, and overcome, marketplace challenges.

"We've always believed the skills, habits and ideals acquired through military training are transferable, valuable and disruptive in the best way, particularly in a services business," said Mike McNulty, president of JDog Atlantic. "With MVP as a partner, we're able to create a successful business rooted in veteran values that serves our customers, the community, and each other while achieving profitable results. Our foundation in

Philadelphia has allowed us to expand throughout the region — including nine territories between Pennsylvania and Maryland — and support the 17 veterans and six military family members on staff, and MVP will help us make an even bigger impact."

Both MVP and JDog have strong roots in Pennsylvania, which they hope will serve as a model for other states across the country to prioritize veteran employment and business ownership opportunities for our heroes and their families.

A stronger workforce creates stable businesses, which makes for a healthier economy and a better commonwealth.

MVP is planning to expand into other business lines and is always looking for partners to support its mission. For more information about Military Veteran Partners and how to get involved, visit [www.militaryveteranpartners.com](http://www.militaryveteranpartners.com). ■



**JDog's signature camo trucks exemplify the veteran and military family owned concept and are emblazoned with the company's creed to serve the community as they served their country - with respect, integrity and trust.**

# RETTEW Celebrates 50 Years of Change with Move to 100 Percent Employee Ownership

**F**ifty years ago, Neil Armstrong took man's first step on the moon, the Beatles recorded Abbey Road, Sesame Street premiered on PBS and a Lancaster County-based engineering and surveying firm opened its doors for business.

In 1969, J. C. Engineering/Surveying Inc., now known as RETTEW, was incorporated with a few surveyors and civil engineers. Five decades later, the firm has more than 350 employees in 11 offices and provides more than 600 services across the U.S. In January 2019, RETTEW announced an ownership transition to be 100 percent employee-owned via an Employee Stock Ownership Plan, beginning a new chapter for the firm.

The company was originally owned and run by John Cibula, a licensed professional engineer and surveyor. In 1973, George Rettew, Sr. bought the company from Cibula, and the firm remained family-owned for many years. The company began diversifying and adding new services in the 1970s, consistently expanding with new groups, technical expertise and service lines. Today, the firm's list of disciplines includes civil, transportation, environmental, electrical and subsurface utility engineering, geophysics, land planning, surveying, safety consulting and design-build services.

As the business continued to add skills and grow relationships, it saturated the Lancaster County marketplace. Over time, the firm expanded to central Pennsylvania, then to the whole state, and today RETTEW completes projects across the entire U.S.

In 1976, George "Hank" Rettew, Jr., son of the owner, took over leadership of the business. And in 1987, the company officially changed its name to RETTEW to reflect the family ownership.

**50<sup>th</sup>**  
**RETTEW**<sup>SM</sup>

ESTABLISHED 1969

Over time, the ownership structure began to shift. While the Rettew family maintained a majority stake, company leaders recognized potential in many of its staff and began a program to groom owners in the firm. Following a designated time in the mentoring program, selected employees could buy into the firm as shareholders.





Hank Rettew led the firm for several decades, and in 2004 he was named chairman and CEO, while Mark Lauriello became president and COO. A few years later, in 2011, RETTEW began another ownership transition as Hank approached retirement.

That transition involved creating an Employee Stock Ownership Plan. In this structure, the Plan maintains shares in the company that are distributed to employees on an annual basis.

Leadership considered the ESOP as a way give employees an added benefit and a hand in setting their own future at the firm – their productivity and dedication directly affect RETTEW’s share value.

After the initial ESOP formation, RETTEW continued the ownership transition by increasing the ESOP to 30 percent of the company’s shares in 2014.

Following Hank Rettew’s retirement in 2015, company leadership began discussing how to fully transition the firm’s ownership. Several options were on the table, such as repurchasing Hank’s shares and retiring them, increasing the ESOP holdings or a combination of the two.

At the same time, RETTEW was undergoing a shift in its corporate culture, introducing more employee-centric programs and practices, revitalizing its core values and building a more cohesive internal atmosphere. In light of those changes, RETTEW leadership decided to transition Hank’s shares fully into the ESOP, creating a company that is 100 percent owned via the

plan. Shares will continue to be distributed to employees over time, and with the new structure, more shares will be available and will grow in value over time. All other employee shareholders also transitioned their ownership shares into the ESOP, creating an equalized company ownership structure. RETTEW will realize financial benefits from the transaction as well, including the change from a C-Corporation to an S-Corporation, exempting it from federal and state taxes.

“One thing we kept in mind at all times,” Lauriello said, “is that during this ownership transition, we needed to constantly communicate and explain what was going on, what was happening when, and what it meant to our employees.”

This transaction and ownership change continues to position RETTEW for the future as the firm looks to expand into ever-evolving markets. One thing remains the same though, “RETTEW has great people. It’s our people that make the difference,” says Lauriello. The ESOP will continue to reinforce that mantra, guiding RETTEW’s practices and policies as the company continues to build its reputation as a national engineering and environmental consulting firm.

Throughout all the years of change, growth, improvements and expansions, the fundamentals at RETTEW have not changed. The core values of integrity, relationships, excellence, safety and stewardship remain the essence of the business, forging a culture of teamwork and reliability. ■



# Proposed Greenhouse Gas Changes at State, Federal Level Threaten Business Vitality

By Kevin Sunday



**O**f immediate debate within the state capital is the subject of a massive

expansion to the state's Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards to include all of Pennsylvania's nuclear power plants. But whether that legislation succeeds or fails, businesses must be cognizant that at the state, regional and national level there are various greenhouse gas regulatory policies being put into play.

**“The PA Chamber has questioned how the collection and distribution of carbon allowances could be done without legislative involvement .... Thus, the PA Chamber is leading a coalition effort of more than a dozen trade associations in identifying both the legal flaws of the petition and the various policy considerations the Board ought to consider prior to voting.”**

First, at the state level, a group of more than 100 environmental groups and pro bono attorneys has filed a rulemaking petition with the Environmental Quality Board. The EQB is a hybrid legislative and regulatory body that votes to establish regulations that are then implemented by the Department of Environmental Protection. A creature of statute, its 20 members represent 11 state

agencies, each of the four legislative caucuses and five seats from the general public and industry. The Board will vote this spring on whether or not to direct DEP to further study the petition, which argues DEP has both the authority and obligation to establish an economy-wide cap and trade program on all industrial sectors in the state, including power plants, gas and electric utilities, and most large manufacturers.

The petition, as drafted, would have DEP cap greenhouse gas emissions from these sources at 2016 levels and reduce them 3 percent per year through 2052. The petition seeks to circumvent legislative involvement and argues DEP has the authority under general purposes of the Air Pollution Control Act. The PA Chamber has questioned how the collection and distribution of carbon allowances could be done without legislative involvement. Further, it is quite likely that the costs of implementing this petition would be massively higher than the expansion of the AEPS law to include nuclear. Thus, the PA Chamber is leading a coalition effort of more than a dozen trade associations in identifying both the legal flaws of the petition and the various policy considerations the Board ought to consider prior to voting.

These considerations include, for example, that PennDOT, which sits on the Board, contemplate what the costs to its capital budgets for roads and bridges would be should the cost of asphalt, cement and steel increase considerably. As another example, the Public Utility Commission might consult with its staff on what cost increases low-income ratepayers might be expected to see. The PA Chamber will remain engaged as the Board deliberates on the petition.

At the regional level, stakeholders at PJM, the regional grid operator which includes 13 states (including Pennsylvania, the largest power producer in that grid), are moving forward with an evaluation of how to accommodate carbon pricing in its various electricity auctions. While PJM cannot impose a carbon price on its own accord, per the tariff granted to it by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, it can include such prices should individual states move to enact them. Such is becoming the case with New

Jersey and Virginia, two large power producing states themselves, moving forward with joining the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. RGGI is a carbon trading program established by New England States.

The question for PJM’s committees (which govern the market structures of the auction) is how to include carbon pricing by the states and address “leakage,” or the shifting of power generation from states with carbon pricing to those without it. It is unclear if stakeholders can come to consensus, but they will work on the issue for likely the next two years.

Additionally, at the regional level, Gov. Wolf has joined with other New England states to explore establishing a cap-and-trade program on the transportation sector. Throughout 2019 and likely into 2020, state energy and environmental policy staff will construct a model. Questions for the group include who will be capped (e.g., individual drivers or wholesale distributors of liquid fuels) and who will benefit. It is likely the Governor will need legislative approval to collect and distribute revenue from the program.

Finally, at the national level, while there has been much ado about the “Green New Deal,” environmental advocates are at work outlining a pathway for the next Democratic administration, whether it comes in 2020, 2024 or later, to more forcefully secure sweeping greenhouse gas reductions. John Dernbach, professor of law at Widener University, has co-written a book outlining 1,000 legal pathways for states and the federal government to take. Other think tanks, including the Center for American Progress and the Institute for Policy Integrity, are focusing on the interplay between the Paris Accords and Section 115 of the Clean Air Act, arguing that the Act’s language authorizes EPA to implement economy-wide reductions of any pollutant subject to an international agreement.

It is quite unlikely the Trump administration will use such an argument, though litigation may be started by third parties arguing the Trump administration must act under Section 115 so long as the United States remains party to the Paris Accords. The Trump administration has indicated it intends to exit the Paris Accords, but

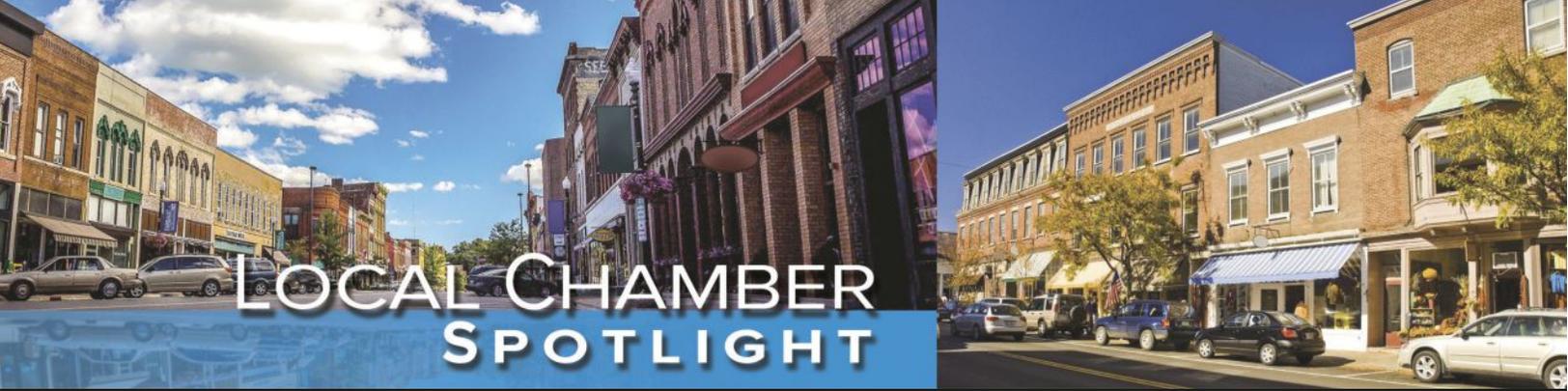
a future administration may reverse that decision and sign the United States back on, paving the way for a sweeping regulatory program under Section 115.

In summary, each of these regulatory programs can pose significant risk and cost to businesses, and management should be aware of them. The PA Chamber will remain engaged and keep its membership apprised as these issues develop. ■

■ **Kevin Sunday** is director of government affairs for the PA Chamber.

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# LOCAL CHAMBER SPOTLIGHT

## Blair County Chamber of Commerce



**When was the Blair County Chamber of Commerce founded and how have you grown in size and prominence since that time?**

We were incorporated as the Altoona Board of Trade in 1887. Our current membership of 1,064 members is the largest in our organization's history.

**Blair County plays an active role in Pennsylvania's natural gas industry. How important is this industry to your regional economy and what are you doing to ensure that energy continues to be an economic driver in Blair County?**

Our county has long been a key player in the natural gas industry. Our economy has benefitted dramatically from that industry. Although we had only a small segment of our county where Marcellus Shale drilling took place, we had businesses that located here that were tied to that industry.



Blair County Chamber President and CEO Joe Hurd.

**What are some of your chamber's crowning achievements and what goals are you working to achieve in the future?**

Our Chamber has been highly regarded for its willingness to expand programs into areas which other chambers have avoided. We've got active



The Blair County Chamber's Young Entrepreneurs Academy class learns the intricacies of building and operating a business. The Chamber has participated in the YEA! program for the past three years.



The Chamber's Young Professionals of Blair County program provides numerous opportunities for YP's to develop personally and professionally.



The Blair County Chamber's Leadership Youth program helps twenty-four high school sophomores to understand and demonstrate "servant leadership."



Donald Delozier, (left) a Blair County businessman, saved considerable dollars at one of his restaurants through a Chamber program called "Sustainable Blair County."

committees that deal with topics like Workplace Wellness and Sustainability. We've got an effective Committee of Non-Profit Businesses. Our largest committee, known as BASICS (Businesses And Schools Investing in Cooperative Solutions), has events and programs that advance the career aspirations of our young people – all the way from early childhood to higher education. We are also proud of our publications, such as the Blair Business Mirror, which goes to 35,000 people in our community as a tabloid insert into the local newspaper.

**Can you tell us about a few of the leading issues on which your members regularly communicate to you?**

Since nearly 85 percent of our members are small businesses, we get considerable input on ways that we can effectively represent those businesses and help address their issues. We also hear from our larger businesses who have become more engaged in our advocacy efforts and who have been willing to attend events like Chamber Day [an annual day-long advocacy day that the PA Chamber partners with the PA Association of Chamber Professionals on hosting each

June]. Like most chambers, minimum wage is important, healthcare insurance is important, workforce development is important. With many willing volunteers on our board and on our 28 committees, we have a lot of interested people at the table. We treasure their enthusiasm and participation.



Dr. Judy Cameron, an internationally respected Brain Scientist, has been a presenter at three Early Childhood Summits presented by the Blair County Chamber's Early Childhood Subcommittee.

**What would you suggest that visitors to your region experience?**

Our region is incredibly scenic. We have so many great opportunities for people to relax and enjoy the many amenities associated with the outdoors. We have great retail and hospitality businesses and a number of historical attractions like the Horseshoe Curve and the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art. Our transportation arteries into and out of our region are top notch. We have two outstanding amusement parks. We are just a fabulous place to visit and an even better place to live and do business! 🏡



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