

APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE



Martha Ponge
Director of Apprenticeship

MIAP Expands in the Capital District and Western New York: Meet the Newest Coordinators

MACNY's statewide expansion of registered apprenticeship through the New York State Manufacturers Alliance Intermediary Apprenticeship Program (MIAP) continues with the addition of two regions and two coordinators who you will meet below.

Amanda Vitullo is the Director of Economic Development Services at The Center for Economic Growth (CEG) in the Capital District. Amanda began her career as a communications assistant at Capitalize Albany Corporation. Amanda left her position to pursue a Masters Degree in Public Administration from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University. At SU she gained a well-rounded understanding of workforce development and the factors that influence the growth of local economies, such as the availability of a skilled workforce. Amanda continued to expand her resume as the Special Assistant for Briefing for Governor Cuomo. As a briefer for the governor, she became comfortable speaking to C-Suite personnel; a good skill to call on as she pitches apprenticeship to CEOs at local manufacturing companies.

While none of her past experiences perfectly prepared her for her current position as an apprenticeship expert, her work at CEG researching the local manufacturing workforce gave her an acute understanding of the Capital District's manufacturing community and their unique workforce challenges. Many of her manufacturers used in-house training programs in the past, but they have since ended them. Many are interested in learning about apprenticeship as one solution to retaining their company-specific workforce knowledge before their highly skilled employees retire. Amanda must often coach companies through the apprenticeship discussion since most companies have limited, if any, experience with the program. Amanda enjoys being able to offer her companies one solution to their workforce problems – it may not be a perfect solution but it's a good start.

Tim Piazza joined The Manufacturers Association of the Southern Tier (MAST) in March of 2018 as their Workforce Development and Apprenticeship Director. His previous 20 years spent in postsecondary education and manufacturing have given him a strong foundation to understand training curriculums and develop valuable on-the-job work experiences, which he will utilize to frame the MAST program. His plan is to identify commonalities between the local manufacturers and create a program that will address the workforce challenges for the greatest number of companies. MAST is co-located with Dream It Do It of Western NY, which uniquely positions them to concurrently develop a talent pipeline directly from high school to the workforce.

Tim is enjoying being able to work with a variety of manufacturers. He has the opportunity to see many different companies that few people in the area have ever seen. He sees a pathway for making a difference in the local economy. Companies need skilled employees and local residents need those jobs – Tim can make those connections. While working in industry, Tim personally experienced the “burn” of struggling to find qualified workers and understands the challenges that companies are going through. Although the program is new, there is a positive energy developing and companies are becoming engaged and Tim looks forward to being part of the expansion of apprenticeship in Western NY.

Join us in welcoming our two newest coordinators!