

# MANUFACTURING MATTERS

## In-Person and Hybrid Events and Trainings are Back!


Back in March, MACNY transitioned to a fully remote operation and found new virtual ways to serve our members. While we will continue to offer virtual events and meetings, we're excited to announce that we are introducing more in-person and hybrid events that will safely bring our staff, members, trainers, and partners back together.

We've already started offering more hybrid trainings. Allowing up to a dozen participants to join us in person with an unlimited number of participants able to join virtually. This has been going very well and we've received very positive feedback from our members and facilitators alike. Transitioning back into this format has also allowed us to bring back some of our popular classes that are best facilitated in-person.

We are also excited to announce that once again, we will be hosting our Annual Legislative Breakfast on December 11, 2020 at The Cavalry Club in Manlius, NY! Each year, this event serves as a regional opportunity for manufacturers and business owners to interact with their state and federal representatives to discuss issues that are pertinent to the manufacturing community. Space will be very limited for this event, so please keep an eye on your inbox for an invitation with registration information.

Throughout all of our events, our commitment to keeping members safe will be our top priority. For all of our in-person and hybrid events, we will follow COVID-19 protocol and comply with all requirements.

If you have any questions about our upcoming events or how we're transitioning to more in-person and hybrid events, please email [info@macny.org](mailto:info@macny.org). We look forward to seeing you soon!



Visit  
[macny.org/events](https://macny.org/events)  
for the most up-to-date event details!

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IT'S TIME TO GET NERVOUS!

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Randy Wolken  
President & CEO

## The Post-COVID Economy Requires Us To Address Skills Gaps

U.S. workers are emerging from the pandemic differently. People who have higher-skilled jobs can work from home, can work in businesses that serve them, and are more likely to work in regions or industries that are charging ahead. In contrast, lower-wage workers with fewer credentials, and those working in regions tied to tourism and public gatherings are being left behind. These trends are likely to continue. However, these trends existed before COVID-19 and offer lessons to us all.

The stock market and household wealth are reaching near record highs while lines stretch at food banks and applications for jobless benefits continue to grow. These are just a few of the trends that demonstrate the impact of the types of jobs workers have today. High and medium-skilled positions have seen a quick recovery. And, available jobs in technology and manufacturing are in abundance, as evidenced by many MACNY members who have significant job openings with few available candidates. This speaks to the urgent need to change the way we value jobs and prepare the current and future workforce. The future of sustainable work is tied to rapid skill learning and sustainable skills growth throughout a person's career. Each of us, as employers and employees, is responsible for meeting this challenge. Now is the time to begin.

Education, job preparation, and up-skilling are in urgent need of change to meet this emerging challenge. The worker of tomorrow will need to learn an array of ever-evolving technology. Soft skills and hard skills will both be required. Career pathways are necessary for workers to navigate into these mid-to-high skilled jobs. Employers are on the frontlines of this transformation. Employers who do this well will win the race to employ and maintain the talent necessary.

MACNY and Partners for Education and Business (PEB), along with our partners, the Central New York School Boards Association, are laser-focused on creating pathways to careers beginning in elementary school and beyond. We need to prepare the community, specifically the present and future employees, for this journey to a higher skilled economy. As demonstrated by the current recovery, there will be plenty of work for those who have elevated skill levels. This is where we need to put our focus. We ask you to join us in this effort.

If you would like to learn more about our efforts to close the skills gap, please contact me or any MACNY/PEB staff member. The skills gap and skilled worker shortage is one our top priority here at MACNY and PEB. Although we provide a host of information and services, these two areas are holding back many of our members' rapid recovery and growth. We could use your support and help. Thanks for all you are doing already – and for what you will do in the months ahead.



**David Freund**  
Chief Leadership Officer

## **An Unexpected Side Effect**

About nine months ago, we began hearing more and more about a virus that was spreading across the world. We were encouraged to wash our hands frequently and stay six feet away from others. Each day brought more and more uncertainty, and before long, we were told we needed to wear masks when in public. As leaders, we wrestled with keeping our people safe and our businesses running. MACNY member companies did an amazing job with this. With each passing day, they reacted well, talked with team members to ease their fears, and embraced the new world of virtual meetings. It all seemed to be working so well. I even had one person tell me it was better than being in person. There was less drama and more work getting done. But underneath all of this was a side effect we didn't prepare for. You may also not even know that you have it until someone points it out because it slowly creeps into your subconscious.

That's what happened to me. I don't know when it occurred, but my wife noticed it first. I wasn't myself. I lacked energy and was, well, miserable—and I didn't even know why. All my energy and excitement were gone. Work was such a challenge, and I found myself faking my attitude much of the time. Little by little, I was losing who I am. I would bounce back after a few days, but then it would return. And every time it came back, it lasted longer and longer. I was suffering from being isolated from other human beings. Don't get me wrong, my office at home is very nice. I actually enjoy working in it, but I spent almost every day alone. When I would go out in public, I just saw masked people. No smiles, no happiness, no humanity. Of course I was meeting with people virtually, but it's not the same for me. I needed to see people. Who knew that I would need special glasses to see my "virtual" co-workers, but it's true. Special glasses so my eyes wouldn't be destroyed

by hours of staring at computer screens. All joking aside, social isolation is very serious and is resulting in a number of growing health concerns, including loneliness.

Connection with others is part of who we are as living beings. We are programmed to desire contact with people. This human contact helps us cope with stress and anxiety. When we are stressed, our brains tell our bodies to release cortisol. This is very helpful if we need to flee a dangerous situation, but most of the time, the stressful situation is more emotional than physical. One of the best ways to reduce cortisol in our system is human touch. When we have human physical contact, our immune system begins to work the way it was designed. Chemicals like oxytocin and the natural antidepressant serotonin are released into our bodies. Human touch can also help us control blood pressure and heart rates. No wonder I felt so lousy. Not only might we feel lousy when suffering from isolation, but our work may suffer. Author and speaker Simon Sinek warns that collaboration requires being together. Really together, not virtually together. According to Sinek, unless we find ways to get our teams back together, we may be in trouble.

So what is a leader to do? Work on getting your people back together as much as possible. I know we have restrictions on gatherings but put a plan in place that gets small teams together on a regular basis. Maybe not daily but a couple of times a week. Look for solutions such as smaller groups in larger rooms. Encourage your teams to spend time with their families. Far too often, our work hours get extended when we are working from home, and family time gets reduced. When you are out and about wearing your masks, look people in the eye. Our eyes are windows into our souls. We need to learn to look through the windows and connect on a human level. The goal is to increase human contact while not increasing the risk of exposure to that virus I refuse to mention by name.

Don't worry if you haven't completely figured it out. I haven't either; but I'm not giving up, and neither should you. Our health depends on it.

JOHN C. MAXWELL

NOVEMBER 13, 2020

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Eileen Donovan  
Workforce Development Specialist

## Why Apprenticeship?

In my capacity as Workforce Development Specialist at MACNY, I'm afforded daily opportunities to speak with employers about a single issue: the worker shortage. They talk about lying awake at night, worrying about the urgency of replacing the technical expertise that is exiting in huge numbers, as Baby Boomers arrive at retirement's door. These employers describe scores of unfilled positions and good-paying jobs - if they could only find the workers on which their companies' sustainability and growth depends.

MACNY recognized that we needed to leverage our capacity as solutions-provider; in 2017, we became the first manufacturers trade association in New York State to attain NYSDOL approval to sponsor registered apprenticeships. Our research on the subject led us to believe that the time-tested, learn-while-you-earn approach would be a valuable avenue for employers needing skilled workers for 21st century technologies. Since 2017, our roster of approved trades has exceeded 16; our sponsorship agreements are active with over 50 companies across New York State.

Apprenticeship is a commitment for both parties; we understand the challenges and opportunities for the employer through countless conversations with MACNY members and others. With National Apprenticeship Week (Nov. 8-14, 2020) on the horizon, we agreed it would be helpful to consider the apprentice's point of view. What motivates a person to seek out this unique method of skills training?



Julius Floyd, left, and Brandan McLellan, right, in front of the B+L 2020 calendar.

I recently spoke with Julius Floyd, who joined Bausch + Lomb (B+L) in Rochester, NY, as an Electro-Mechanical Technician Apprentice in June 2020. It didn't take long for me to understand exactly why B+L would value this hire and to want to invest in his future. Mr. Floyd exemplifies the type of eager-to-learn, technically oriented employee they need to ensure the company's future, a perfect fit.

It almost didn't happen. Floyd describes a high school experience during which he awoke every day, looked out his window and witnessed a degree of aimlessness around his neighborhood that he hoped to avoid. He became a Recreation Assistant for the City of Rochester, managing children's activities, while attending Monroe Community College after graduating high school. Floyd's parents supported his work ethic and encouraged him to continue his education.

As City budgets tightened, he became less satisfied with his job and began to consider other options. The luck part of the story happened when he met Brandan McLellan, a B+L apprentice, during a class in Program Logic Control (PLC) at Monroe Community College. "I wouldn't be here if it weren't for Brandan," Floyd posits.

The two students were lab partners at MCC; it was during one of these sessions that McLellan mentioned the apprenticeship program at B+L, that PLC was what he was doing in his full-time job. Without really intending to, McLellan recruited Floyd to apply at B+L.

A brief aside – This random recruiting story got me thinking about some really promising programs, such as the Finger Lakes Youth Apprenticeship Program. Clearly, we could all be doing a better job of identifying and steering students toward careers that play to their strengths, although we appreciate the Brandon McLellans of the world!

B+L Apprenticeship Program Manager, Paul Wiesner, agrees that Julius Floyd has been a fortuitous hire for them. “Julius comes in with a great attitude every day, always with a smile, does what’s asked of him, eager to learn more. I can’t wait to watch him grow from a very green apprentice to an Electro/Mechanical Technician,” says Wiesner. Maintenance Manager and Co-Manager of Apprenticeship, John Scharr, concurs. “Julius expressed his interest in the Electro-Mechanical field, that he would like to develop his career here at B+L using the apprenticeship program as his foundation. That spoke volumes about Julius. He’s the type of individual we like to hire as we invest significant resources into each candidate to ensure well-developed, successful Electro-Mechanical technicians.”

Floyd told me that his parents support this direction for him; they appreciate that apprenticeship doesn’t compete with schooling, that it includes education. “B+L is great about training,” Floyd told me; he talks about the team atmosphere that makes work enjoyable at B+L. At present, he is on track to attain his associate degree in Applied Integrated Technology in December of 2020.

When asked how he would advise someone who currently walks in the shoes he so recently occupied, those of a high school student, Floyd recalls some of his early challenges; he was always the youngest among his peers. He always felt he needed to try harder...so he did. “Believe in yourself! Don’t try to be like everyone else. It’s all within you!” declares Floyd.

As we were on the phone, I had to imagine him smiling the way that his managers describe as he shares these thoughts.

Visit <https://www.macny.org/skilled-workforce/apprenticeship-program/> for information on MACNY’s Registered Apprenticeship Program.



Cindy Oehmigen  
Director of Energy & Corporate Services

## **“When you come to a fork in the road, take it...”**

*often credited to Yogi Berra*

Most times, a ‘detour’ is thought of as a negative situation. We have all had to navigate detours at some time in our career. Typically, not planned for and therefore requiring a shift in our mental process. Often a surprise and something for which we are not prepared. It may delay our goal, cause additional work, or even derail us for a period of time. It creates frustration and can cause us to question our own judgement. Seldom do we look at it as a door opener. However, once the initial surprise has passed, our response to that unexpected detour makes all the difference in future results.

What if we could learn how to quickly assess what caused this ‘detour’? What could we have done different? What was/is within our control? What are the options for our response? So much of the ultimate results are impacted by how we think about these questions.

**Something has happened and we need to make the best of it.**

As I learn about how we are addressing the challenges in front of us today, I can’t help but think about how experiences can serve as a valuable teacher. Somewhere along the way I have picked up some useful self-talk that I use to manage detours. Most are from my Lean/Six Sigma toolbox. “There are no failures, only lessons learned.” This is the foundation for Six Sigma methodology. If you are not familiar with Six Sigma, the basic idea is to approach a problem that is not totally understood, by considering what could be the potential causes of an unwanted condition. Using a specific set of tools, challenge those theories one by one. Gather data utilizing these tools and rule out/confirm the causes one by one. The results will lead to solutions

in a much more efficient way than just guessing. Sounds simple enough, right? I am quite sure this methodology is behind much of the research that is being conducted today in search of therapeutics and vaccines. Some very smart scientists are looking at past research, including drugs that turned out to be ‘not successful’ for the intended targeted disease. Some of these unsuccessful tries were meant to address Ebola, HIV, and other recent afflictions. They didn’t work, but that research has given a place to start in this latest pandemic. Back to the statement, “no failures, only lessons learned.” I think about Six Sigma as a tool that looks back at some problem that has already occurred and studying the data to determine a path going forward. Curative, if you will.

**Nothing has happened yet, but could and will.**

It is much more difficult to convince decision makers to allocate resources for this effort. The pain has not occurred, yet, however I am confident in saying that no one wants to go through what we have been through in the past several months....and will continue for some time into the future. Now is a perfect time to be thinking about lessons learned. Data gives us a picture of the past, but not necessarily what could happen in the future. That requires a different approach. Often, risk management takes on a financial theme. True that all the related topics will impact the bottom line, but that blurs the picture. If the challenge a company is facing is related to losing their prime, single source supplier, it is obvious that has ramifications for the bottom line. The goal in this case is not to understand why it happened, but to have a plan in place just in case! Reality is, there are things that will happen that we cannot foresee or prevent. There will be detours. Our response to that detour can make all the difference. The good news is, there are methodologies and tools available to help develop a risk management plan. Enterprise Risk Management is becoming even more important. Consider the kinds of events that could bring your company to its knees and have a plan for what to do in case that happens. You may not be able to avoid the detour, but you can minimize the impact.

Neither of these before/after components is more important than the other. Both are critical to the success of the company. And success is what we are all looking for.





**Marianne Ferris**  
Associate Director, PEB

## Careers in Manufacturing

Manufacturing Day is celebrated annually on the first Friday in October. This year, a virtual presentation kicked off PEB's 11th Annual Manufacturing Day celebration on Friday, October 2.

The world has been turned on its side by the pandemic and has required re-thinking much of what we do in both business and education. Thus, the theme for this year's Manufacturing Day event was "Resilience in Manufacturing." The event featured some of the great resilience shown by regional manufacturing and technology companies who embraced the need to re-tool to keep their companies open and their people safe while working. The first company featured, and overall event sponsor, was SRC, Inc. Tony Stewart, General Manager at SRCtec, offered his welcome on behalf of the manufacturing companies in our region. Joining Tony was Gary Stevens, VP of Manufacturing.

We shared two stories from companies in our region. The first was Armoured One, perhaps best known for their bullet-proof glass. In the spring, they switched to manufacturing face shields for front-line health workers—a great example of a company that re-tooled to make a much-needed product and was able to keep their employees working. The second company featured was Novelis in Oswego. The video described the many careers and opportunities available, their commitment to employee safety and their strong partnerships in the region such as the Oswego P-TECH program, which provides opportunities for interns.

The ability to attract, develop, and retain a job ready workforce was the focus of this year's project. Continued education and awareness within the school districts about manufacturing careers, apprenticeships, and other workforce development programs are critical components to maintaining Central New York's economic vitality and creating tomorrow's workforce today.

In its 28th year, Partners for Education and Business, Inc. (PEB) has led the effort to recognize and celebrate school/business partnerships; and leaders from education and business who lead the way to be sure programs are successful in preparing youth for success in their career journey. But mostly, the event was about helping students open their eyes to the many great careers in manufacturing and technology. With the tremendous need for technicians and engineers at many companies in Central New York, the event was a prime example of the urgency required to promote careers in manufacturing, especially during these challenging times.

That urgency led to the second phase of PEB's manufacturing celebration. October is also Manufacturing Month in New York State. After the celebration on the 2nd, we knew we needed to continue to reach students to help them realize the many amazing opportunities in Manufacturing, so we also re-tooled. We made our annual printed program a PDF that was sent out to all school counselors in 55 CNY school districts. That program contained "ads" from local manufacturing companies showcasing the types of jobs that are readily available for students. This new world of manufacturing is filled with artificial intelligence, advanced robotics, automation, and analytics. These careers are rewarding and lucrative and these companies are willing to take in eager and enthusiastic workers. The program also contained a list of local companies offering apprenticeships. Additionally, throughout the entire month of October we continued to share virtual events and videos with students, educators, and administrators that featured different careers and employers in our area.

We cannot forget to thank our event sponsors SRC, Inc, Novelis, and Huhtamaki for making this event possible. For more information on careers in manufacturing, contact Martha Ponge at [mponge@macny.org](mailto:mponge@macny.org).



Martha Ponge  
Director of Apprenticeship, MACNY & COO, PEB

## What Shall I Be?

The more I delve into apprenticeship program development, the more I wonder what would have been my own career trajectory if I'd had the opportunity to take part in Youth Apprenticeship (YA) while I was in high school. Would I have babysat (probably – I love kids)...spent even a second as fry girl at Burger King, a job that left me with a scent I'll never forget...patrolled the grounds of The Dwight D. Eisenhower Lock in Massena, NY, as a security guard tasked with stopping potential stowaways with dreams of exotic Great Lakes destinations, in the dead of winter?

I may still have gone to Clarkson for a degree in Mechanical Engineering, returned to school 20 years later for a master's in Education, become an Engineering and Computer teacher. Director of Apprenticeship at MACNY and Chief Operating Officer at Partners for Education and Business (PEB) might still have become my current job titles. But what would have happened had I benefitted from a work-based learning program, like YA or Pre-Apprenticeship (PA)? These programs, on the rise nationally, are designed for high school students, and incorporate the key elements of the standard apprenticeship model: paid workplace experience and related technical instruction. Participants experience jobs and gain industry-specific skills in a real work environment. The trend would accelerate if we could resolve the challenge of access to quality programs; there's also a lack of understanding about what constitutes a quality youth apprenticeship program.

In workforce terms, a program is deemed a quality program when it demonstrates the following:

- Structured training and measurable competencies that result in careers with potential salaries above the ALICE (Assets Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) threshold, (currently 40% in Central NY);

- Equitable access allowing learners of all levels to participate;
- Results in a portable credential, such as college credit or an industry recognized certification;
- Skills and competencies that are transferable to multiple industry sectors; and
- Transparent program metrics that are available to all stakeholders.

These defining principles guide the partners in industry, education, and communities as they create high-level programs that utilize the metrics, data, and participant feedback to continuously improve the program.

As we explore the development of Youth Apprenticeship programs for MACNY and for our membership, we turn to programs with well-defined best practices as our model, such as the Finger Lakes Youth Apprenticeship Program (FLYAP), a partnership between Rochester Technology and Manufacturing Association and Monroe Community College. On a national level, we are working with Jobs for the Future (JFF), who provides technical assistance and incentive funding to companies to help shoulder the burden of limited resources, especially after COVID, and useful information about quality youth programs.

The journey to robust youth apprenticeship is one in which we should all participate, as recruiting for future employees can start in high school. Had I been approached before I ventured into fast food, I'm sure that I would have jumped at the opportunity.

For more information about registered apprenticeship, contact Laury Ferguson at [lferguson@macny.org](mailto:lferguson@macny.org).

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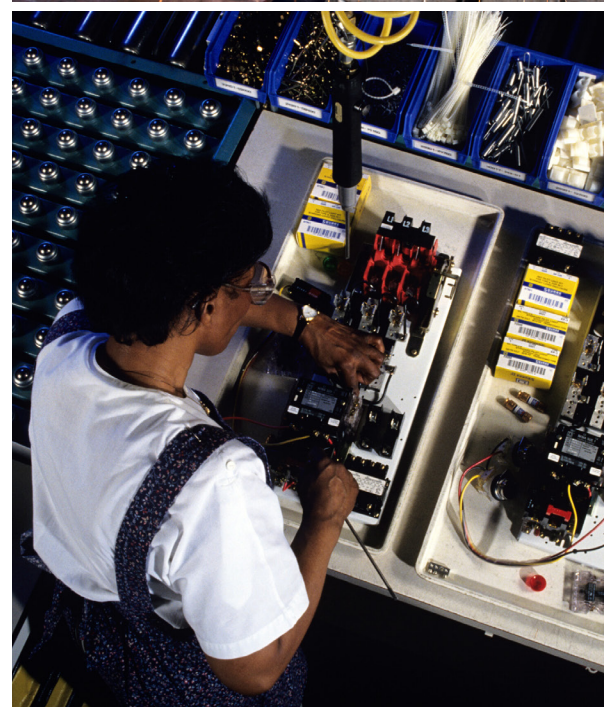


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