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EDITION 12

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Association



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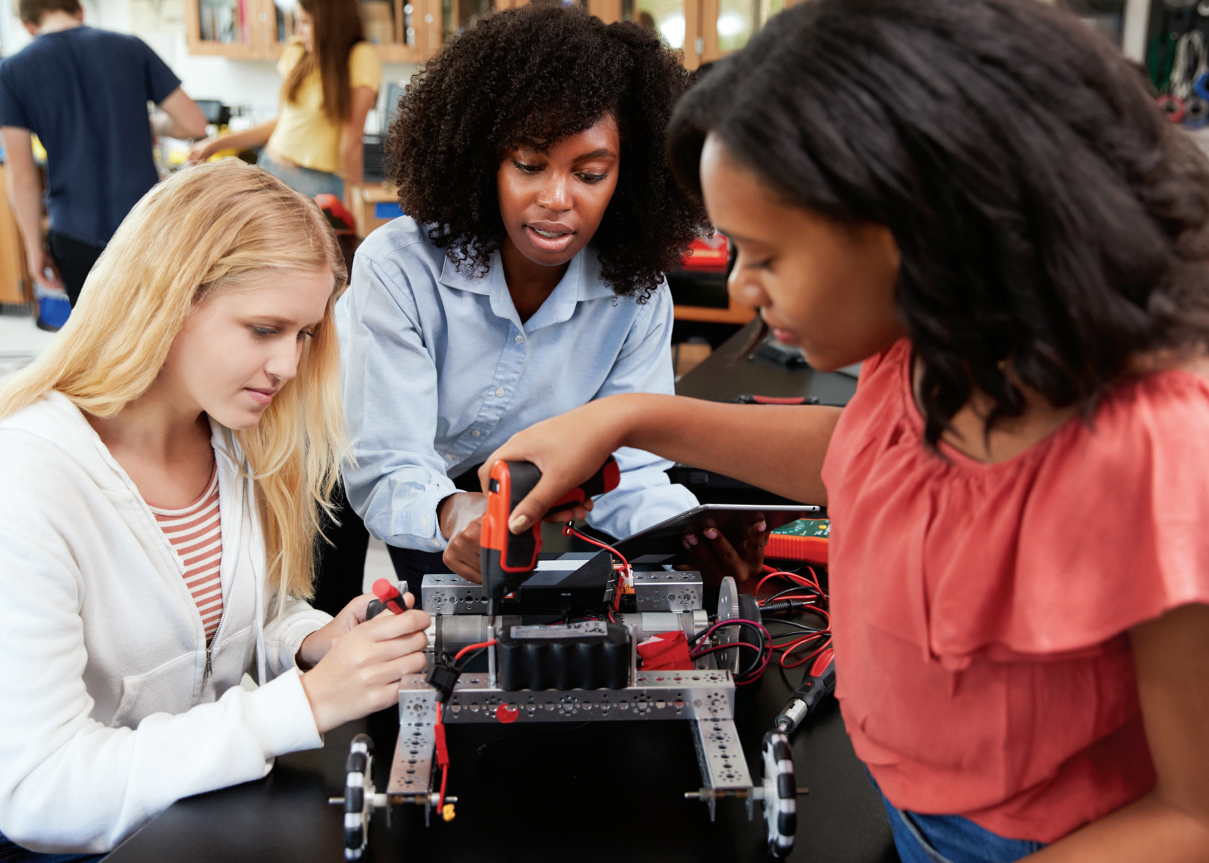
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On the cover: Mitch Koch, left, and Chris Smith at Schneider Packaging Equipment Co. *AMELIA BEAMISH*



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Welcome.

DISCUSSIONS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) and automation are dominating the news and business conversations.

Across Central and Upstate New York, MACNY members are considering if, when, and how to implement automation into their manufacturing processes. In this issue, we spoke to leaders at Bartell Machinery Systems LLC, Byrne Dairy, Inc., Gear Motions, Inc., Schneider Packaging Equipment, and Tessy Plastics to learn more about their use of this incredible technology. It was exciting to hear about the benefits these companies are experiencing, from employee safety and well-being to increased efficiency, quality, and innovation.

Leveraging AI, robots, cobots, and other automation requires significant investment and often a culture shift. While a conversation around this topic frequently concerns replacing employees, these featured leaders have shown us that human employees are essential to using these technologies. Workers are empowered by the new skills, opportunities, and increased job satisfaction they receive.

In other stories, we look at efforts to increase our skilled workforce, emphasizing empowering girls and women to pursue STEM studies and careers in manufacturing and implementing a Registered Apprenticeship Program, which Allen Tool Phoenix Inc. has done successfully. We also share some specific actions MACNY and its partner associations take to keep our members' legislative and regulatory concerns at the forefront of government officials' minds.

I hope you enjoy this issue as much as we have enjoyed producing it. And, as always, thank you for making Central and Upstate New York such a great place to live and work!

Randy Wolken

Randy Wolken, President & CEO

Allen Tool Phoenix's Registered Apprenticeship Program Helps Company Rise



BY EILEEN DONOVAN,
SENIOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

IN THE PAST year, the buzz has been on big manufacturers (one in particular) who have recognized our region as ideal for planned expansion. As Micron looks to break ground, we prepare for a complete transformation of Central New York over the next several years. The economic effect of this kind of investment can hardly be overstated.

While we continue to think about the transformation of manufacturing, it is important that we turn our sights to our legacy manufacturers and smaller companies that have navigated New York State's up-and-down years. These employers have weathered the exodus of manufacturing to foreign shores and disruptions due to 9/11 and COVID-19, retooled their operations, and utilized forward-thinking strategies to ensure sustainability.

One of these approaches is Registered Apprenticeship, an answer to the challenge of retiring expertise and the lack of skilled workers to replace it. Across New York State, we work with over 50 small, long-standing manufacturers — six of whom are in Central New York — to help them establish and expand Registered Apprenticeship Programs.

In 2016, MACNY began the process of obtaining New York State Department of Labor approval for group sponsorship of advanced manufacturing apprentices. Allen Tool Phoenix Inc., a precision machining operation in East Syracuse with fewer than 30 employees, supported our application as an employer



partner. With their letter of support, critical review of program specifications, and a commitment to participation in Apprenticeship Accelerator programs, MACNY garnered state approval and launched in 2017. Allen Tool Phoenix is an example to other small manufacturers who may mistakenly believe that a structured training program like Registered Apprenticeship is only for big companies.

To date, Allen Tool Phoenix Inc. has added apprentices to the program each year, including several youths under age 24. Two have graduated from their four-year programs to Journey Worker status; four more will complete the program by 2027. One of these Journey Workers has registered into a more advanced trade that will position him to manage Quality Assurance activities and might assist him in attaining his bachelor's degree.

Allen Tool Phoenix Inc. President Cheryl Maines founded the company in 1991 after the fall of Allen Tool Corp. (which had by then

Allen Tool Phoenix Inc. President Cheryl Maines and General Manager Hugh Menelly.

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merged with Mac-Law Tool & Aircraft Parts Corporation). She celebrated 30 years at the helm in June 2021 and says that the company's updated name was deliberate; like a phoenix, they've "risen from the ashes," she says.

Maines credits the establishment and honing of the company's infrastructure, focused on quality and safety, as a big reason for its success. The company has invested in state-of-the-art equipment, employee training, and a culture that takes pride in what they produce. Maines says, "Our employees can see where the parts they make end up." One example: In a visitors' meeting space at the factory, a poster depicts the United Launch Alliance's Vulcan Centaur rocket, sporting Allen Tool Phoenix-machined parts, which lifted off from Cape Canaveral on January 8, 2024.

Plant Manager Heath Severn, who represents Allen Tool Phoenix's second generation, maintains that the Registered Apprenticeship Program is another important part of their infrastructure. "What we do is technically

difficult; apprenticeship is a big help. The combination of education and practice is key," he says. Severn believes that another appeal of working at Allen Tool Phoenix is the "variety of machining. These workers are not doing the same thing every day."

The management team believes that the Registered Apprenticeship Program has assisted them in recruiting, training, and retaining workers. The opportunity to work on modern equipment that produces parts for such prestigious projects as the Vulcan rocket is obviously appealing. Knowing that not everyone wants to work at a big company, they promote the Allen Tool Phoenix culture, where the president takes her lunch in the breakroom, and where employees may qualify for the Registered Apprenticeship Program.

General Manager Hugh Meneilly joined Allen Tool Phoenix four years ago, moving from GE Aviation in Norwich. Under his management, the company has maintained its ISO9001/AS9100 certification with zero findings two

years in a row. "Apprenticeship is a positive for recruiting," he says. "It helps newer talent to know we're investing in them, even if we're making them more marketable. Our turnover is low; several workers have been here for 30-plus years."

Maines adds, "We know that apprenticeship is an investment for us and for the employee. They may leave us and take that training with them. We can't worry about 'what if' and not train them."

As we look ahead to big changes in NYS manufacturing, it's legacy manufacturers like Allen Tool Phoenix who are positioned to capitalize on exciting opportunities along the supply chain. We salute their achievements, including the Journey Workers who will train the next generation of machinists supporting American advanced manufacturing right here in Central New York and across the state.

To contact Eileen directly, email edonovan@macny.org.

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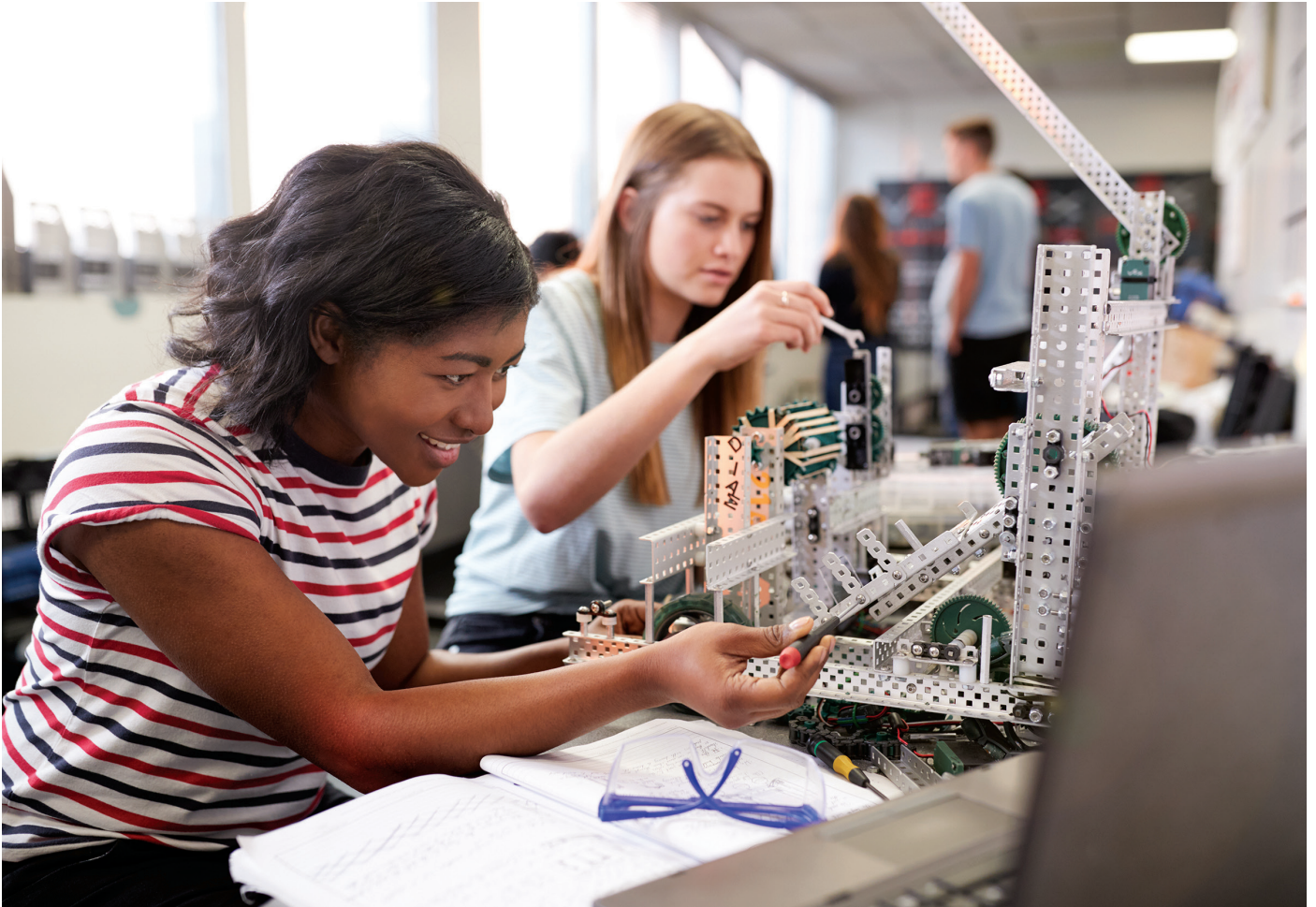
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Closing the STEM Gender Gap



BY TAYLOR HODGE,
DIRECTOR OF PARTNERS FOR EDUCATION & BUSINESS, INC.

AS THE NEED for a skilled workforce continues, dispelling stereotypes and closing the gender gap in STEM occupations will be essential to meet the complex technological challenges of tomorrow.

According to the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, women make up a third of the United States STEM workforce. The gender gaps are high in some of the fastest-growing and highest-paid

occupations, such as computer science and engineering. Additionally, research from the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) supports that women represent only 29% of the manufacturing workforce. We don't deny that progress has been made in the past 10 years to increase the number of women and underrepresented populations in the STEM workforce. However, the disparity is still significant and there is more work to do.

Stereotypes and biases about gender roles have contributed significantly to girls and young women not pursuing STEM careers, creating the “leaky pipeline.” These beliefs start at home, at school, and in pop culture from the time girls are young. Many girls decide as early as middle school that they are not as good at math as they are at other subjects. Even with similar achievement levels between boys and girls, girls have a more negative perception about their competence in math. Teachers and parents may underestimate girls’ math abilities based on their own biases and experiences. According to a 2016 study reported on by The Washington Post, math anxiety plagues girls more than boys worldwide, but especially in economically developed nations that promote equality between sexes. The article also cited how math anxiety could affect women’s lifelong earning potential and career prospects.

To make larger strides in closing the gender gap, it is critical that young girls have female role models from industries that are highly visible and who hold positions of leadership. Without visible female STEM professionals, it can be difficult for girls and young women to see themselves pursuing careers in these fields. Having representation and interactions with role models who look like them can inspire girls to consider pursuing a STEM career.

Paramount to this effort is early and equal access to STEM programming, regardless of socioeconomic status or geographic location. Disproportionate access to STEM opportunities can limit the number of women who are prepared to pursue STEM careers. Ahead of the 2022-23 school year, PEB received a Central New York Community Foundation Women’s Fund Grant which enabled our team to pilot a program titled Future Women in STEM. The program, aimed at middle school girls and their families, features a hands-on STEM activity hosted by a female professional from a different local company each month. We partnered with the Milton J. Rubenstein Museum of Science and Technology (the MOST) to hold the program at the museum; its central location is a bonus. In our second

year of the program, we are witnessing the social belonging and confidence building happening among participants. The program is free to sixth through eighth grade girls and their families from any school district across Central New York.

Parents also play a vital role in a child’s decision-making process surrounding their educational and career choices. A 2021 study conducted by Joblist examined the extent to which parental influence shaped career choices for Gen X, millennials, and Gen Z. A striking 65% of respondents reported that they work in the field their parents wanted for them. Parents having these conversations want what’s best for their child but may unintentionally impose their own biases. For example, a message many of my millennial counterparts and I received was that college is necessary to have a successful and well-paying career. Albeit true for specific occupations, a traditional college education is not required

for many of the manufacturing roles that are currently unfilled nationwide.

There is a tendency to pursue what we see around us. Take a moment to think about the careers made popular by television (lawyer, detective, business executive) or the ones represented in your household. I’ll offer personal context here as well: I grew up in a small, rural area where tourism, hospitality, and education were the industries I experienced. My career aspirations never wavered from being a teacher and coach. I enjoyed school and was a multi-sport athlete, so it was all I knew. My college experience and early professional years paved a path of personal career exploration. Now, I teach and coach daily, but not in a school. It is a beautiful realization to find that your passions and talents can be impactful in places you never imagined. For this reason, I am personally connected to our mission at PEB and deeply passionate about the important career exploration opportunities our team

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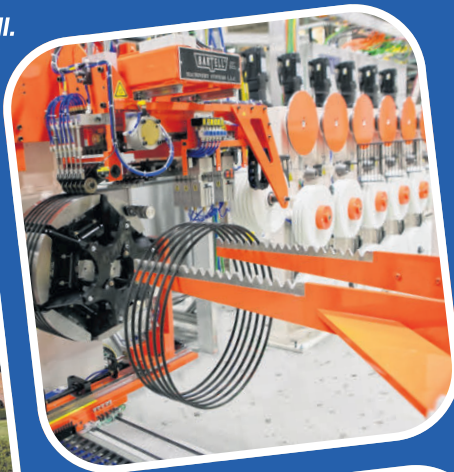


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Diversity supports innovation: Having people with different backgrounds working together allows for new perspectives, increased creativity, and stronger collaborations. Even while underrepresented, women have played a significant role in many scientific discoveries, including the discovery of DNA's double-helix structure. Women are the fastest-growing segment of the workforce and are projected to make up nearly half of all workers by 2028, reports Her Culture, a blog covering women's issues. Women account for the majority of college attendees and graduates currently, according to a Brookings Institution article. Companies can play a pivotal role in this space through participation in work-based learning experiences with educational partners, intentionally building relationships with diverse communities, and by offering internship, co-op, or apprenticeship opportunities.

We must encourage curiosity in STEM early to ensure we have a workforce that is representative of our society. Supporting women in STEM will determine the future and solve some of society's most pressing problems. From groundbreaking discoveries in healthcare to the newest technological advancements, women will continue to play a key role in innovation.

To contact Taylor directly, email thodge@macny.org.

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Keeping Manufacturing Priorities at the Forefront



BY RANDY WOLKEN,
PRESIDENT & CEO

EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY of the legislative and regulatory issues impacting manufacturing are on-going efforts. The topics are complex and nuanced — taxes, workforce development, energy, the environment — and require study, surveys, and conversations with multiple interests to determine the best path forward that supports manufacturers and business.

Each October, MACNY's Annual Legislative Breakfast offers an opportunity for manufacturers and elected officials to come together to share insights, ideas, and concerns about proposed legislation and pending regulations, along with economic and market conditions. And in late winter, manufacturers from across the state travel

to Albany for Manufacturing Advocacy Day where they meet with elected officials. At these meetings, company leaders discuss how the New York State government can assist manufacturing. We share the legislative priorities of MACNY and the Manufacturers Alliance of New York (The Alliance) with these officials.

Two policy issue areas remain central to our advocacy efforts: energy and workforce development. Energy must be available, affordable, and reliable. A skilled workforce needs to be created through pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship Programs. MACNY is involved in advocating for these essential elements of a strong manufacturing sector.

The Energy Panel at the 2023 Annual Legislative Breakfast provided an overview of the ongoing regulatory process known as New York Cap-and-Invest (NYCI), initiated by passage of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act of 2019 (CLCPA). NYCI seeks to establish a cap on total emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) and require entities to obtain and retire emissions allowances in an amount equal to their GHG emissions.

MACNY, along with several statewide business associations and groups, is working with manufacturers to help them transition their energy usage to comply with NYS regulatory requirements. Manufacturing contributes less than 10% of the GHG emissions in NYS while contributing to the state's economy by employing well over 400,000 workers at an average annual salary of nearly \$90,000 each. Manufacturing is crucial to New York's economic vitality and additional growth is all but certain due to historic U.S. and NYS investments in manufacturing.

The Workforce Panel at the Breakfast covered ongoing pre-apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship Programs offered by MACNY, including those funded in partnership with U.S. Department of Labor, NYS Department of Labor, NYS Empire State Development, the State University of New York system, and the NYS Senate Majority. MACNY workforce development efforts are widely recognized and roundly applauded by federal and state funding agencies, as is evident with ongoing recognition of the Real Life Rosies™ program, which assists women transitioning to manufacturing jobs. MACNY remains fully committed to attracting new, young, and diverse workers into manufacturing.

Annually, Manufacturing Advocacy Day strengthens and deepens relationships, facilitates conversations, and heightens government officials' understanding of NYS manufacturing ahead of the adoption of the state budget and conclusion of the legislative session. Prior to the event, we connect with our members to prepare and plan for Manufacturing Advocacy Days. This includes:

- Listening to manufacturers and sharing

their ideas and concerns with legislators and regulators.

- Monitoring legislators and regulators and reporting on their activities and proposals.
- Meeting with legislators and regulators to communicate support for proposals promoting economic development and job growth.
- Hosting legislators and regulators at manufacturing facilities.

MACNY and its members perform these foundational advocacy activities throughout the year, laying the groundwork for a fruitful Manufacturing Advocacy Day. Our 2024 Advocacy Day included nearly two dozen meetings with state legislators who represent participating manufacturers and lead legislative committees on taxes, workforce development, energy, and the environment.

During these meetings, the manufacturing industry's voice is amplified by the participation of The Alliance members: MACNY, Buffalo

Niagara Manufacturing Alliance, Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, Center for Economic Growth, The Council of Industry, Rochester Technology and Manufacturing Association, IGNITE Long Island, and Manufacturers Association of the Southern Tier.

Throughout the year, webinars, meetings, and facility tours with elected and appointed officials highlight just how vital manufacturing is to communities and the entire state. MACNY members and elected officials alike benefit from these tours, which typically include a company overview followed by walking the facility floor and watching the manufacturing process. Issues being discussed by policy makers and regulators are brought to life and discussed during post-tour sit-down conversations.

It is imperative for MACNY members and staff to inform elected officials of the issues impacting the manufacturing industry.

Advocacy is truly a year-round pursuit.



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From Wagon Trains to Wind Generators



BY CINDY OEHMIGEN,
ENERGY & CORPORATE SERVICES CONSULTANT

WYOMING IS A vast landscape of ranches and small towns with a population of about 580,000 people — and probably more cattle than that. People visit for impressive national parks, big game hunting, fishing, and the Oregon Trail, to name a few attractions.

Notably, Wyoming has many millionaires, and its residents do not pay income tax. I suspect those two things represent a strong correlation. Residents do not pay income tax because the government owns the mineral rights for millions of acres across Wyoming, which contribute billions of dollars to the state and local economies. Wyoming has lower housing, utility, food,

and clothing costs than the national average, making it a cheaper place to live. That does not mean it is a cushy lifestyle. You can tell how populated an area is by whether the distance to some place is expressed in miles or minutes. In a densely populated area, it may take 30 minutes to get to a lumber yard that is only 10 miles away because of traffic, but in Wyoming, it could be 1.5 hours because the local lumber yard went out of business. Wyoming is one of the least dense places in the U.S.

Given the stark realities of life there, Wyoming either attracts or breeds an independent sort of person. To thrive there successfully, a resourceful, creative approach to

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problems is almost a requirement. Consider the wagon trains that crossed the Continental Divide following the Oregon Trail. Wyomingites have had to be resourceful to survive.

It is this foundation that has set the stage for Wyoming to become a leader in using renewable sources of energy. The irony of this leadership role is that “Wyoming is both the nation’s largest coal producer and a Republican stronghold where the clean energy transition has at times faced stark opposition. Its entire congressional delegation voted against the Inflation Reduction Act. But the state is unusually well suited to benefit from some of the green incentives the government is offering,” according to a September 2023 New York Times article, “Want to Spur Green Energy in Wyoming? Aim for the Billionaires.”

Given that Wyoming is not inclined to give up on their coal industry, focusing on carbon capture technologies makes sense. “The Biden administration’s climate law works by attracting private capital to clean energy.

While the plan includes targeted grants, many of its potentially most significant provisions aim to transition the nation’s energy supply — and its energy work force — by luring people with capital to invest. Tax breaks and other incentives mean it’s more attractive to make financial bets on risky, but possibly transformational, green technologies,” wrote the New York Times.

Nathan Wendt, President of the Jackson Hole Center for Global Affairs, is looking to leverage the passage of the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act. In April 2023, Wendt co-wrote an opinion essay in The Jackson Hole News & Guide, extolling the “flush tax credits” the law provided. Wendt suggests that investment in net-zero projects in energy communities, such as brownfields and mineral-rich regions, is the great money-making opportunity of our time.

Teton County, in northwest Wyoming, is the highest-income county in the United States, according to the Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse, a data gathering, research,

and distribution organization at Syracuse University. Wendt is hoping that the many millionaires and billionaires there — who have made their money in finance and investments and came from larger cities because they loved Wyoming’s natural beauty — have both the interest and ability to invest in local clean energy projects.

In December 2023, CBS News’ “60 Minutes Overtime” aired a story on Wyoming’s plans to combat climate change as part of Governor Mark Gordon’s “all-of-the-above” energy policy. Gordon’s policies include efforts on wind and nuclear technologies. Large wind farms already generate energy across Wyoming’s landscape, especially in the southeastern counties. A new farm with 600 planned turbines and an 800-mile transmission line will supply energy to California and will generate enough electricity to power more than a million homes, Power Company of Wyoming President Bill Miller told CBS News.

In order to keep coal a viable resource but



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minimize the impact on the environment, Holly Krutka, Executive Director of the School of Energy Resources at the University of Wyoming, is focused on removing carbon dioxide from fossil fuels before the gas reaches the atmosphere. She and her colleagues are exploring carbon capture and storage, which involves using chemicals to capture carbon dioxide emissions and store them underground.

In 2018, Wyoming invited Crusoe Energy Systems to tackle the problem of flaring, which happens when gas produced through oil production is burned into the atmosphere. "Flaring releases harmful emissions and wastes energy that could be harnessed," Crusoe's cofounder Cully Cavness said in the CBS News story. "If you could capture it all, it would power about two-thirds of Europe's electricity."

Crusoe came up with the unconventional idea of putting a small, electricity-generating power plant right where that gas was being flared and wasted. The energy captured is used to power the company's infrastructure which supports high-performance computing and artificial intelligence.

There is more to these stories from Wyoming, but I am personally encouraged by these efforts. I have said often, if something is worth doing, there is a way to make it happen. As Wyoming Governor Gordon said to CBS News, "We want to be part of the solution."

Me, too!

To reach Cindy directly, email coehmigen@macny.org.



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THE FUTURE IS NOW. Increasingly, automation and robotics are transforming the landscape of manufacturing. Companies can utilize cobots, advanced analytics, machinery that makes decisions without human intervention, and devices that enhance connectivity to pursue business goals, but they can't be truly successful without the ingenuity and talents of a skilled workforce. Manufacturers have the opportunity to optimize collaboration between humans and technology to combine the best of both worlds.



Collaborative Intelligence

AS WE'RE LIVING through the fourth industrial revolution (often referred to as Industry 4.0), smart manufacturing has become mainstream and, for many manufacturers, a necessary adoption. More than ever before, manufacturers are embracing automation, pairing humans and machines, to transform the landscape of the industry. Automation has many benefits, including increased output, stronger agility, safer working conditions, and the upskilling of talent. Words like "automation," "cobots," and "AI" are increasingly buzzworthy, but what do these

revolutionary technologies really do for manufacturers? We spoke to five New York manufacturers, each with their own unique story to tell. Our thanks to Patrick Morocco, President of Bartell Machinery Systems LLC; Director of Engineering Derek Moon and Director of IT Tom Conklin at Byrne Dairy, Inc.; Dean Burrows, President and CEO at Gear Motions, Inc.; Schneider Packaging Equipment's leadership team; and Tessy Plastics' Director of Sales Eric Yando and Senior Director of Automation and R&D Josh Scott for their insights.

A tensile armoring machine at Bartell Machinery Systems. *SUBMITTED PHOTO*

TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR COMPANY, ITS HISTORY, AND WHAT YOU MAKE.

BARTELL: Founded in 1940 and headquartered in Rome, NY, Bartell Machinery engineers, designs, and manufactures advanced industrial machinery systems used in the wire and cable, tire and rubber, and oil and gas industries. Bartell is recognized within the tire industry as the world leader in manufacturing tire bead machinery systems, and for bringing innovative and creative solutions to the marketplace.

BYRNE: In 1933, Byrne Dairy began selling high-quality milk in glass bottles and delivering it to Central New York homes in horse-drawn wagons. What set Byrne apart from competitors was the commitment to exceptional quality and the strong desire to deliver the finest products every day to its customers. Today, Byrne is a fourth-generation, family-owned producer and distributor of milk, cream, and ice cream with multiple manufacturing facilities and warehouse facilities in Central New York.

GEAR MOTIONS: The company was formed as a combination of multiple gear manufacturers and assemblers with origins dating back to 1892. Syracuse Operations include Nixon Gear and AutoGear, while Buffalo Operations include Oliver Gear, Pro-Gear, and Niagara Gear. Gear Motions is an industry leader in full-service custom gear manufacturing and assembly serving a broad range of industries.

SCHNEIDER: Schneider Packaging Equipment, headquartered in Brewerton, NY, was founded in 1970 by the Schneider family. In 2018, it was acquired by the executive team and the following year became part of the Pacteon Group. Schneider has a core focus of providing end-of-line packaging automation equipment such as case packers and robotic palletizers. What differentiates Schneider is the ability to incorporate wrapping and labeling into palletization, providing a seamlessly integrated end-of-line solution to customers.

TESSY: Founded by Henry Beck in 1973, Tessy is a privately owned and -operated high-volume contract manufacturer for plastic injection molded products for the medical, consumer, and pharmaceutical & diagnostic markets. With over three million square feet of facilities in New York, Pennsylvania, and China, Tessy offers full-service end-to-end solutions for some of the most prominent Fortune 500 companies in the world.



An aseptic filling machine at Byrne Dairy, Inc. *CHUCK WAINWRIGHT*



A high-speed automated assembly line for a medical product at Tessy Plastics in Elbridge, NY. SUBMITTED PHOTO

HOW IS YOUR COMPANY LEVERAGING AUTOMATION AND OTHER REVOLUTIONARY TECHNOLOGIES?

BARTELL: Embracing automation and new technologies has been an essential and ongoing strategic focus for our company, allowing us to improve our internal business processes, increase operational efficiencies, lower costs, and improve our ability to service our customers. We also recognize the strategic importance to continually innovate and integrate new technologies in the machinery we produce for our customers in order to advance their production capability and to continually stay ahead of evolving competition.

Internally, we recently transitioned over to Microsoft Dynamics 365 ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) to leverage its powerful business intelligence and analytics capabilities.

We can now visualize, trend, and manage data through charts, graphs, maps, and reports like never before. The data is real-time, accessible to our employees, and is used to further enhance just about all our other business processes. Overall, Microsoft Dynamics 365 ERP has offered us a powerful and flexible solution to modernize our operations, drive digital transformation, and achieve sustainable growth.

From an external perspective, the machinery systems we supply to our customers have begun a transformation over to Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT)-enabled hardware and software. The system includes hardware that supports historical trend logging, preventative maintenance features, and remote assist capabilities (when enabled). In time, this system could support automated machine

learning and analytics, cloud management, and full integration into our ERP system for automatic parts management and aftermarket support. Our advancements in material handling technologies, as well as our IIoT-enabled software, ultimately give our customers the tools and historical data needed to manufacture their products more efficiently, safely, and cost-effectively with greater reliability, quality, and throughput. The data now available to Bartell also allows us to pinpoint areas where the machines can be further engineered to offer greater benefits to our customers. The trending and reporting capability available through our IIoT-enabled products also helps our engineers use their skills and time more effectively by focusing on opportunities that improve our machinery designs.



An aseptic milk pasteurizer at Byrne. *CHUCK WAINWRIGHT*

BYRNE: We leverage automated control systems and equipment across all our production facilities to ensure accuracy and repeatability, while also gathering large amounts of data on our process. In turn, this supports increased throughput and decreased costs. Most importantly, our employees are much safer, both from hazard and ergonomic perspectives.

Our Extended Shelf Life (ESL) facility in East Syracuse is a flagship of modern automation in the industry and region, with systems coordinating the operation of thousands of actuators, motors, pumps, and valves using a sea of instrumentation. Business process and technical automation are central to our decision-making process when it comes to increasing efficiency in every sense. Almost every area of the

business has opportunities for some kind of automation to assist our employees and drive the bottom line.

Automation has shifted significant parts of some workloads to a more advanced skill set — more analytical tasks than manual labor — which is empowering for employees. Overall, we can operate more efficiently without losing the agility to change direction smoothly and reliably when needed.

GEAR MOTIONS: Gear Motions has employed automation since the early 2000s when it began automating gear grinding processes. Any new equipment we purchase has automation capabilities included so as we continue to introduce more robots and cobots, the machines are ready for the integration. The use of automation is a major

factor in improving efficiencies and machine uptime, reducing variability in our processes, improving quality, and increasing safety for our employee owners.

SCHNEIDER: We see it as our responsibility to stay up to date on the latest technology and provide our customers with the most cutting-edge end-of-line packaging solutions. Internally we evaluate the latest robotics, vision, and AI technologies to implement and enhance our machines. Utilizing robots and cobots, we are able to help our customers automate areas within their facilities to improve safety and reduce human injuries from heavy or repetitive jobs. We are also evaluating AI solutions as an assistant to increase efficiencies such as quoting and technical knowledgebase.

It all comes down to the needs of our customers. Our solutions enable them to increase capacity and uptime, reduce costs, and improve worker safety.

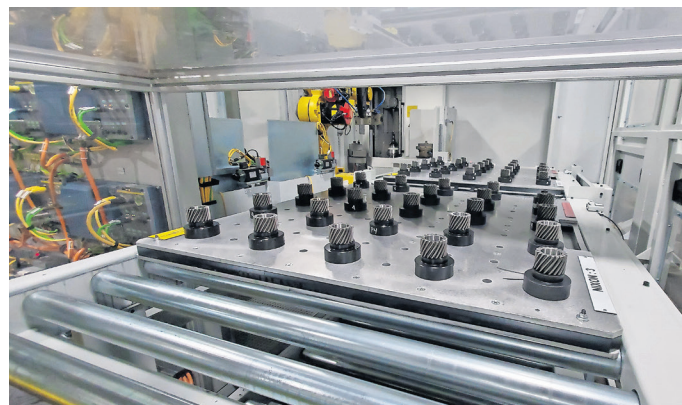
From an employee perspective, Schneider automation equipment allows an employee that may have been doing manual packaging to now be retrained and redeployed as a machine operator or technician, learning a higher-skilled and higher-paying job as a robot or cobot assists them in improving quality, efficiency, and speed of the manual job they once did.

TESSY: With many of our products being used in the medical field, quality is a priority and crucially important. Each piece of automation is a custom solution dedicated to our customer's specific product. Leveraging automation and AI into our business operations has allowed us to scale our business, improve quality and production efficiencies, and upskill employee talent into other areas. Because of this, the majority of our applications have some level of automation integrated into them. The more automation and AI that is integrated into production, the greater opportunity there is for advancement and technical training among our existing workforce through development programs and apprenticeship programs.

Additionally, employee safety is of the utmost importance to TESSY, and we design these systems with that in mind. Highly complex automation and advanced technology fosters a safer work environment, more efficient production, and new projects for our workforce.

HOW DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION REASSURE EMPLOYEES THAT THEY AREN'T BEING REPLACED BY AUTOMATION, ROBOTS, OR NEW TECHNOLOGY?

BARTELL: It's simple. The technologies we've incorporated allow our employees to work smarter, not harder. Whether it's new quality inspections systems we've added to our manufacturing process, the addition of new GD&T (Geometric Dimensioning and Tolerancing) software we now use in our engineering designs and drawings, or



Fully automated gear grinding department at Gear Motions. SUBMITTED PHOTO

A Reishauer RZ260 with integrated Felsomat robotic loader at Gear Motions. SUBMITTED PHOTO

machine software we've added to facilitate the final commissioning (test) of a machine, these technologies have enhanced Bartell's operational efficiency and competitive positioning to improve our market share and grow our business overall. None of the technologies we've taken on have resulted in job losses. In fact, we're seeing the opposite given the growth opportunities that are now available to us. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, it's the employees who are deciding what technologies are needed to improve their overall effectiveness. Involving employees in the process of change and improvement increases their engagement, morale, and job

satisfaction. When employees feel empowered to contribute ideas, provide feedback, and participate in decision making, they are more likely to embrace change positively and support its implementation.

BYRNE: Rigorous management of change and a thoughtful communication plan are key, along with candid town hall meetings and real, visible opportunities for growth. When directly affected employees are given options and resources to prepare for the change, we find success.

Reduction in force has never been our goal with automation; our employees are our greatest resource.

GEAR MOTIONS: During any implementation of our automation, we have never replaced an employee. Instead, we have increased our efficiency and productivity, which has led to growth in the business — a win for our employee owners.

SCHNEIDER: Schneider takes pride in utilizing new technology and robotic solutions, and our employees are essential in the research and development of new technologies.

TESSY: Continuous improvement is a core value of our business. By implementing automation into our production operations, more time is available for training and technical advancement opportunities for our employees. Automation isn't taking jobs away from people; it's shifting the talent pool, strengthening skill sets, and increasing output.

GIVEN THE TYPES OF SKILLS NEEDED TO WORK ALONGSIDE SMART TECHNOLOGY AND AUTOMATION, HOW DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION APPROACH RECRUITMENT, TRAINING, UPSKILLING, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT?

BARTELL : Bartell's commitment to acquiring skilled workers in the trades is evident through its diversified hiring approach. Our recruitment efforts are further bolstered by participation in job and recruitment fairs varying from high school to college level, and from that, we showcase Bartell's opportunities to prospective candidates. We also prioritize nurturing talent through Co-Op and Internship programs, as well as apprenticeship initiatives. These initiatives not only attract new talent but also enhance training opportunities for existing employees.

Bartell is dedicated to fostering career progression and succession planning. We allocate resources to support employee development, including investment in independent learning paths tailored to an individual's aspirations. This investment in our employees and their career journeys underscores our commitment to nurturing talent and promoting growth within the company.

BYRNE: Byrne Dairy is highly proactive, engaging with community career days and job fairs, providing ample advancement and training opportunities internally, and outsourcing in-class and hands-on training for specialized technical skill sets. Employee development overall is a strategic focus for us, ensuring our workforce is empowered and aligned with great succession planning.

GEAR MOTIONS: We have addressed our workforce needs by upskilling our current employee owners. As we bring on new employee owners, we look for those skills that can support the current and future technologies.

SCHNEIDER: We send our employees to trainings and conferences in order to be aware of the advancements in the industry and be prepped to bring that knowledge back to the team to continue to develop new products and solutions.

Schneider always looks to promote from within, first and foremost. Schneider has a long-standing commitment to training whether it be on-the-job, classroom-style Schneider-developed programs and labs, or vendor, supplier, and external training. Over the course of the past two years, Schneider leadership has taken recruiting and skill development a step further by working alongside local high schools, BOCES programs, P-Tech, community colleges, and four-year colleges to partner in developing specific curriculums together to ensure students are graduating with skills that transfer to the workforce. This provides us with a pipeline of prepared, skilled talent.

TESSY: Tessa approaches recruitment and retention by fostering a great culture and valuing ideas across all departments and levels within the company. As automation has increased in our facilities, new career pathways have been created, providing new opportunities for our existing team members and new hires. We've also leveraged apprenticeship programs. Our focus has been on giving existing team members exposure to multiple facets of the organization and

developing them organically based on their skills and interests.

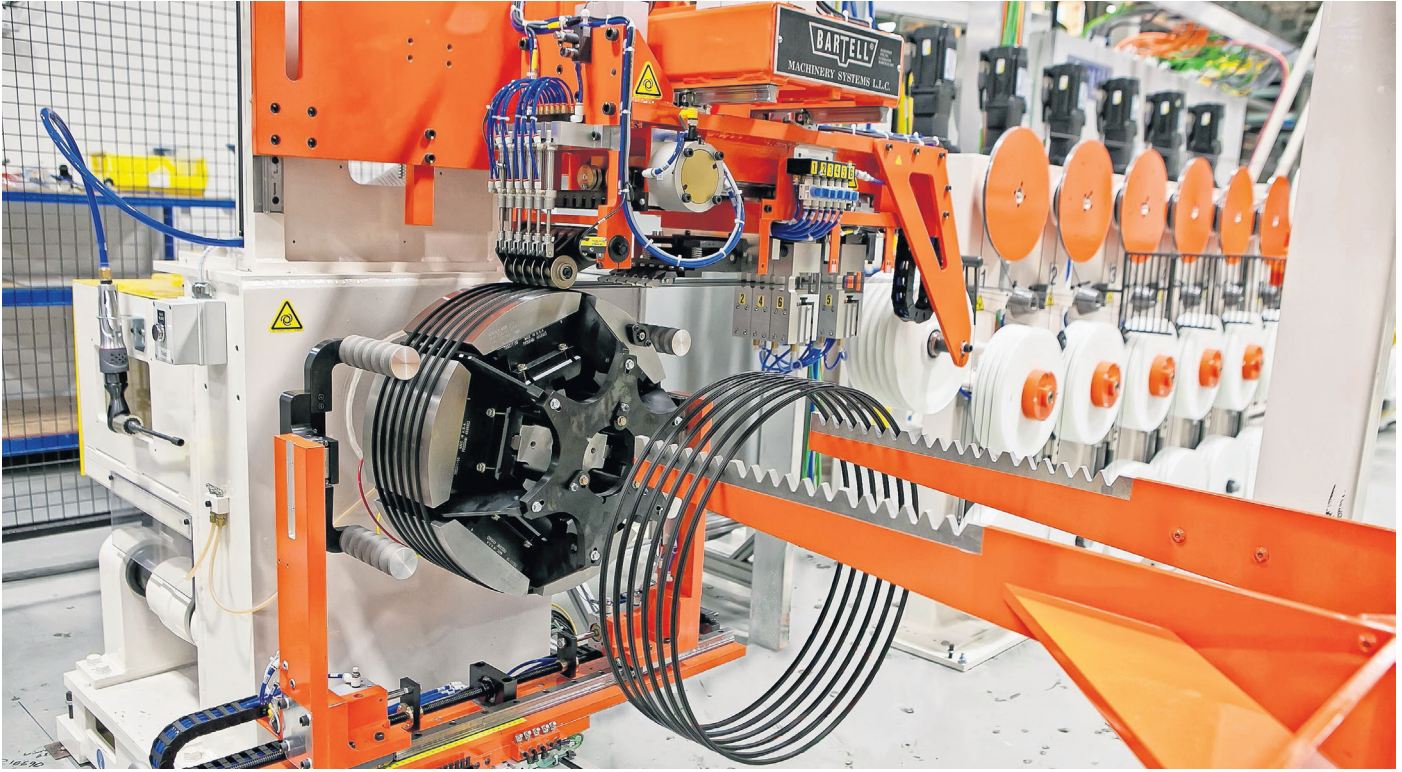
WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE YOU THINK YOUR COMPANY OR SECTOR FACES GOING FORWARD?

BARTELL: Our challenge will always be to provide innovative solutions that enable our customers to excel in any high-volume manufacturing environment. Industry trends demand systems that are more reliable, more efficient, safer, and consistently produce higher-quality products as a means to advance their own production capabilities. We must continue to focus on innovation and embrace new technologies to meet this demand.

BYRNE: Dairy has always been a tough business to be in and will continue to be tough moving forward. Our biggest challenge will be to stay highly competitive in this environment of constant change. Automation and discipline are keys to finding and keeping competitive advantage.

GEAR MOTIONS: I do not think our challenges are different than other companies in our industry or in the Central New York area. In order to grow our business, we will need skilled workers. We anticipate growing the business with higher-skilled workers that we develop within and hire from outside.

SCHNEIDER: Our customers are always going to want to go faster within a smaller footprint for less money, and to do that, Schneider will need to continue to push the boundaries of our equipment. One of the best ways to ensure we are ahead of the curve in terms of speed and capability is to ensure that we have the most up-to-date technology. Even though the market often wants to go faster, many customers are not comfortable being the first to try out new, unproven concepts. Schneider will need to continue to execute our R&D projects and supplement that with simulations and engineered 3D models to build that trust.



A bead winder machine at Bartell Machinery. *SUBMITTED PHOTO*

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES DO YOU SEE AHEAD? HOW DO YOU EXPECT TECHNOLOGY TO DEVELOP IN YOUR INDUSTRY AND FOR USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO DEVELOP IN YOUR ORGANIZATION?

BARTELL: AI will continue to shape and revolutionize the manufacturing industry and the products and services that are provided. We're exploring technologies that enable machine learning; embedded predictive and preventative analytics; digital connectivity advancements that allow greater access to vital machine performance data; and systems integrations that enable us to seamlessly service a customer anytime and anywhere around the globe. Picture a complex machinery system installed at any customer factory. Today, we have the ability to digitally remote connect with that machine, trend its performance, and physically control the machine for troubleshooting purposes, all in effort to minimize extended maintenance

or unexpected downtime. But what if we can predict the performance of the machine, alert the customer if the machine is suboptimized, or inform the customer of a pending failure (i.e. bearing wear) before the failure even occurs? Or [have] a machine that can automatically identify worn parts that need replacement, and an integrated system that automatically places demand for those parts directly through our ERP system? What if we have machine learning capability that can alert Bartell of specific design improvements based on data trends, and allows the manufacturer to implement new product designs to increase the reliability and longevity of future equipment designs? We believe that technology is available to us today. We intend to leverage our resources and incorporate such technologies to better service our customers and remain cutting edge above any competition.

BYRNE: There are never-ending opportunities

for continual integration of technology into our business and manufacturing processes. While the basic mechanics of dairy processing are unlikely to change, the way we connect to and interact with our physical and business processes will continue to rapidly change for the foreseeable future. Technology will continue to make our experiences data-rich, bringing complexity, insight, and sophistication to our operations.

SCHNEIDER: In our R&D engineering initiatives we see AI as a way to improve the serviceability and quality of our equipment, as it could give real-time analytics of machine health and maintenance needs. Virtual and augmented reality technologies could also create new and improved ways to use technology to do training, service more efficiently, and maintain uptime. We see AI as an assistant to continue finding areas where we can automate our processes to speed up customer interactions, consistency, and quality of work.



Can AI Help Your Leadership?



BY DAVID FREUND,
CHIEF LEADERSHIP OFFICER

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS everywhere. Even if you are scared of it, don't want to use it, or don't even use a smartphone, AI is already impacting your life. AI is being used in the development of new medications, to diagnose illnesses, to improve the reliability of our manufactured goods, and to make sure your Amazon products are available. AI is even helping the Amazon driver deliver your order at the time promised. AI isn't bad; in fact, it can be very good. AI is critical for managers who rely on it for forecasting, scheduling, preventative maintenance, and a myriad of other support functions. That said, in my opinion, AI won't be much help in the area of leadership.

I was facilitating a session of my High Impact Leadership

program and I asked my class if AI fits into leadership. Very quickly one of the participants said, "No, leadership is personal." I couldn't agree more. To lead a person, you need to know them. You need to know their hopes, dreams, and beliefs. Now, perhaps we can enter that information into a database so AI can draw from it, but when to use the information and how to use it requires a leader. Leading people can't be relegated to an algorithm or a decision table, it is deeply personal.

I recently listened to an interview Ed Mylett conducted with Mo Gawdat, former Chief Business Officer at Google X. Mo spoke about developing virtual relationships with an AI-created person, virtually creating the person of

their dreams. He was greatly concerned because this relationship would be void of human connection. In John Maxwell's "The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership," we find law number 10, the Law of Connection, which states that leaders touch a heart before they ask for a hand. Human connection and human relationships are key to leading and motivating people. We need human interaction.

During the COVID lockdowns, I needed to run into the office for something and as I rounded the corner, I bumped into Mary Rowland, our CFO. It was so great to see her in person. Sure, I had seen her during countless Zoom and Webex meetings but seeing her in person was different. Didn't it feel amazing to go out in public again? We missed the human connection. As a trainer, I am happy that I can accommodate hybrid classes and have people in the room and some joining virtually, but if I had my preference, everyone would be in person. It's just easier

to connect with them. They can connect with each other and feel the energy that human beings bring to the class.

Human beings! Isn't that a wonderful term? Notice that it isn't human doings. People are so much more than what they do and need to be connected with on the being level. As leaders, when we work to connect with our team, we build relationships with them. The stronger the relationship, the greater the opportunity that the team member and the leader will reach their fullest potential. Let me say that again: The stronger the relationship, the greater the opportunity for both the team member and the leader to be able to reach their fullest potential. If we as leaders want to reach our fullest potential, our team members each need to reach theirs.

Several years ago at Live2Lead, Chris Hogan, formerly of Ramsey Solutions, shared this great advice. Twice a week, ask each team member these three questions:

1. How are you? He went on to clarify, "Look them in the eye when you ask this question. They may say they are fine, but their eyes may tell you something else."
2. What are you working on?
3. How can I help you?

Chris went on to add, "If you sincerely ask your team members these three questions twice a week, they won't ever leave you, because they will know you care."

AI in the right hands and right application is great. AI in the wrong hands can create tremendous harm. For managers, AI is a wonderful tool, but as the participant in my class said, leadership is personal. People are human beings, and they deserve to be led well.

David Freund is MACNY's Chief Leadership Officer and a certified speaker, trainer, and executive coach with the John Maxwell Team. Contact him directly at dfreund@macny.org.



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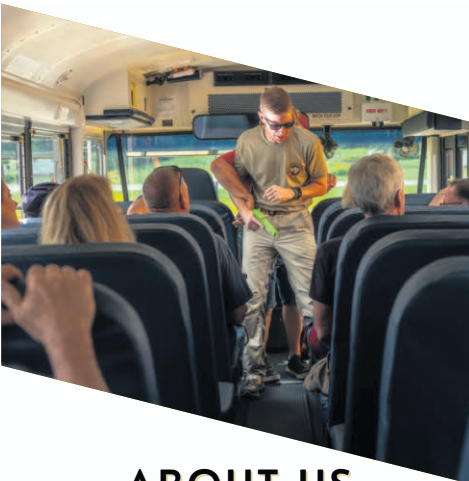
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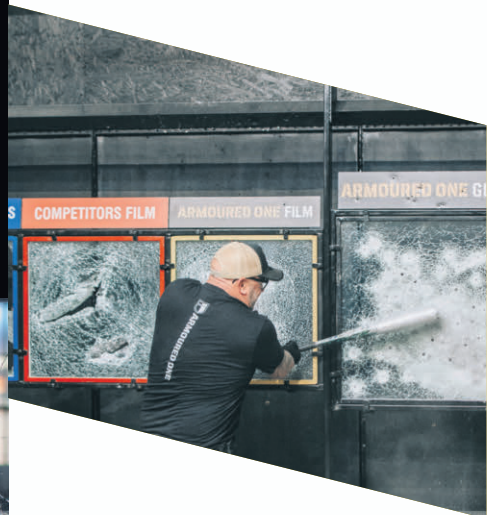
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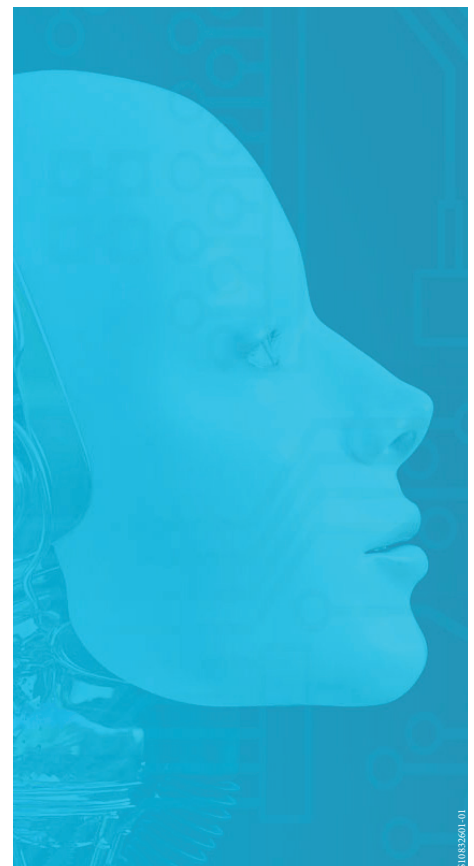
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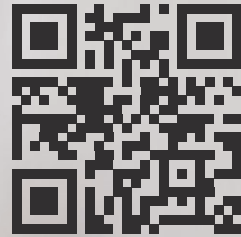


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