

State Senators and Assembly Members, concluding the day with a luncheon at the Fort Orange Club, featuring keynote speaker SUNY Chancellor John B. King, Jr.

A highlight of this year's event was the participation of Registered Apprentices and graduates from the Real Life Rosies® program — the first direct-entry pre-apprenticeship initiative for manufacturing recognized by the New York State Department of Labor. Launched as a pilot in the Mohawk Valley with funding from Empire State Development's Office of Strategic Workforce Development, Real Life Rosies is dedicated to training and upskilling women entering the manufacturing industry. Over the next two years, the program will expand to five additional regions across New York State. Launched in 2023 in the Mohawk Valley by MACNY, in partnership with Mohawk Valley Community College, the program has rapidly expanded due to its success and growing demand from local employers. The Real Life Rosies® program serves as a direct pipeline into employment by equipping participants with the knowledge, skills, and certifications required to enter a Registered Apprenticeship upon graduation. By providing hands-on training, industry-relevant education, and certification opportunities, the program ensures that graduates are job-ready and poised to meet the needs of local manufacturing employers. This pathway supports immediate employment opportunities and fosters long-term career growth in the manufacturing sector, as well as wrap around services like childcare and transportation. To date, the program has served more than 125 women, with an 80% graduation rate and a 78% employment rate. Their participation in Manufacturing Advocacy Day underscored the importance of initiatives that close the skills gap and foster diversity in manufacturing. While meeting with legislators and staff, these graduates shared their personal success stories and advocated for policies that further support women pursuing careers in the manufacturing industry.

The 2025 Manufacturing Advocacy Day underscored the importance of ongoing efforts to address key challenges facing the state's manufacturing sector. The day's discussions reinforced the need for policies that support the growth and sustainability of manufacturing, ensuring that the industry remains competitive, diverse, and positioned for future success.

[View the press kit to download photos from Manufacturing Advocacy Day.](#)

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ABOUT MACNY: [MACNY, The Manufacturers Association](#), is a 111-year-old non-profit organization representing manufacturers and other non-industrial service providers throughout Central New York. With a commitment to enhancing economic development and workforce opportunities, MACNY serves as an advocate for manufacturers, offering a wide array of programs and services to help businesses grow and thrive in a competitive global market.

ABOUT THE MANUFACTURERS ALLIANCE OF NEW YORK: The Manufacturers Alliance of New York is a statewide organization comprised of nine manufacturing associations, united to advocate for the manufacturing community in Albany and Washington.

ABOUT REAL LIFE ROSIES: The [Real Life Rosies®](#) program was funded through the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) Direct Entry Pre-Apprenticeship grant and was the first NYSDOL-approved direct entry pre-apprenticeship program in advanced manufacturing. Developed in partnership with Mohawk Valley Community College, and with the support of other educational providers and community organizations, the program is designed to create pathways for women and underrepresented groups to access careers in manufacturing. This no-cost program offers participants a pathway into Registered Apprenticeship, along with comprehensive support services to address common challenges such as childcare, transportation, clothing, and work-related supplies.