

# Manufacturers Digest

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## Q4 2025

### -Candice Pineau, QGM Grinding:

Candice Pineau – Chair of the Board



### Dear BNMA Members,

I hope this edition of the *Manufacturer's Digest* finds you well and energized as we prepare to close out another productive year. As we look ahead to 2026 and beyond, I'm pleased to share that the BNMA Board of Directors has been deeply engaged in building out a comprehensive five-year strategic plan. These discussions have been thoughtful, forward-looking, and focused on strengthening our value to members, expanding our regional impact, and positioning the Buffalo Niagara manufacturing community for long-term success.

I would like to extend a sincere thank-you to Katie Hurley of Moley Magnetics for her expert facilitation and guidance throughout these strategic planning sessions. Katie's leadership has helped our board develop a cohesive framework that will guide the BNMA through the next chapter of growth. We look forward to unveiling the full structure and priorities of this plan at our Annual Business Meeting in February, where we will invite your input and outline how members can become actively involved in its implementation.

As we plan for the coming year, please mark your calendars for an exciting milestone: the BNMA will host the MPower Manufacturing Conference & Tradeshow on October 8, 2026. Many of you have already seen the initial announcement, and we are thrilled to confirm that the event will be held at Buffalo RiverWorks. While this location is a departure from traditional venues, the board felt strongly that RiverWorks provides an energetic, engaging, and uniquely Buffalo setting that reflects the innovation and adaptability of our manufacturing community.

Before we finalize the conference agenda, we will be conducting interactive member surveys in February. These surveys will help us identify the topics, challenges, and opportunities that matter most to you, ensuring that MPower 2026 delivers relevant content, valuable insights, and meaningful conversations for leaders across the region.

This year also marked the conclusion of the first year of Dream It Do It under the BNMA–MAST partnership. I want to congratulate our two dedicated directors—Stephanie Morris, representing Erie County, and Allison Sharpe, representing Niagara County. Their efforts to engage school districts across Western New York resulted in more than 1,400 students enrolling on the Tallo career exploration platform, a tremendous achievement that directly supports the next generation of manufacturing talent.

Thanks to the growing demand from school districts and the expansion of our programming, we are pleased to share that **Stephanie Morris has been promoted to Director of Operations for Dream It Do It**. In addition, we are excited to welcome **Alycia Ivancie**, formerly of Junior Achievement, who will now lead Dream It Do It efforts in Erie County. Alycia brings years of experience in youth development and a strong network within the education community. Her leadership will strengthen our ability to support more schools, reach more students, and expand the pipeline of future manufacturing professionals.

As we move into the holiday season, I want to express my appreciation to each of you—our members, your employees, and your families—for your continued dedication to the manufacturing sector and to the BNMA community. Your work powers the economic vitality of Western New York, and we are proud to stand with you.

**Wishing you a safe, joyful, and restorative holiday season.**

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## A Message from your Executive Director—Peter Ahrens



### Dear Membership,

I'm not sure if you feel the same way, but I cannot believe how quickly this year has passed. As we wrap up 2025, I'd like to highlight a few accomplishments and updates from the past year—presented in no particular order.

At our Q1 board meeting, we discussed new ways to communicate what the BNMA is working on each month. From that conversation, our monthly video update was created. We hope you have found these short recaps helpful. Your feedback is important, and you'll have the chance to share it at our Annual Business Meeting, where we will use a survey app to gather your input. It will be interactive—and fun, I promise.

In May, we welcomed **BlueForge Alliance (BFA)** and the **Maritime Industrial Base (MIB)** for two regional sessions—one in the North, one in the South. These sessions helped manufacturers learn how to participate in the maritime supply chain. Our partnership with BFA/MIB will continue into the new year with additional events and grant opportunities designed to strengthen local capabilities and help manufacturers win new business.

In collaboration with the **Western New York Manufacturing and Technology Workforce Coalition**, Northland Workforce Training Center completed its second 12-week **Finishing & Deburring** cohort. Congratulations to the companies that hired skilled finishers from this class—**Keller Technology, Casey Machine, Palma Tool, Moog, and Willard Manufacturing**—and thank you for your continued commitment. We also appreciate **Workforce Buffalo** for supporting these placements through the On-the-Job Training program. This was another win-win for employers and new trainees.

As of this writing, the BNMA has welcomed **24 new members in 2025**. To support this growth, the board and marketing committee approved additional hours for Hunter to expand her work on social media engagement and member prospecting. Her efforts are already paying dividends, and we welcome any referrals you may have—we're always happy to reach out and start a conversation.

Looking ahead to 2026, I'm excited to share that the BNMA will be integrating **AI into our website**. This tool is designed to increase “at-bats” for our members by connecting purchasing agents with manufacturers who can meet their needs. The AI will draw from both your BNMA profiles and relevant public information online. Only BNMA members will appear in these opportunities. In addition, we will begin marketing this tool outside our region—to Ohio, Michigan, and Northern Pennsylvania—to help expand your reach and grow your revenue. We look forward to unveiling the platform at our February Business Meeting.

I want to extend special thanks to board members **Dominic Myers** and **Rick Howe** for lending their expertise to this project. Their knowledge and guidance have been instrumental in moving this initiative forward.

As we close out the year, I wish you, your teams, and your families a healthy and restorative holiday season. I hope you all find a moment to relax and enjoy time with those who matter most.

# Performance by Design

## How Architects Shape Modern Manufacturing Facilities

By Travis Gruszka, AIA, NCARB

Q4 2025

Often when people think of architects and their role in society, they associate them with designing skyscrapers, high end residential structures or anything in between that they have seen on television or in magazines. However there are a select group of architectural firms that specialize in manufacturing architecture that have the knowledge, skills and abilities to add value to every manufacturing company. Below are the top five ways hiring the proper architect can add value to a manufacturing company through the built environment:

### 1. Strengthened Corporate Image

An architect can assist a manufacturing company strengthen its brand by translating precision and quality into the built environment. Through thoughtful use of materials, form, and detail, the facility itself becomes a reflection of the company's values, showcasing craftsmanship, innovation, and reliability. A well branded facility not only enhances public perception and builds client confidence but also attracts top talent by creating a workplace that employees are proud to be part of.

### 2. Balanced Cost & Value

A knowledgeable architect has the ability to balance initial project costs with long term value while keeping the project budget in mind. By identifying durable, cost effective materials and systems appropriate for the unique application, they reduce maintenance and replacement expenses over time. The result is a smart design that balances upfront investment with lasting value.

### 3. Enhanced Employee Experience

Attracting and retaining top talent is one of the greatest challenges employers face across all industries. A well designed facility can make a lasting first impression, boost employee morale, and foster a positive, productive work culture. Climate controlled spaces with comfortable lighting and acoustics creates an environment where employees can thrive. Enhancing amenities such as locker rooms, break areas, and training spaces further elevates the employee experience leading to higher satisfaction, improved retention and increased productivity.



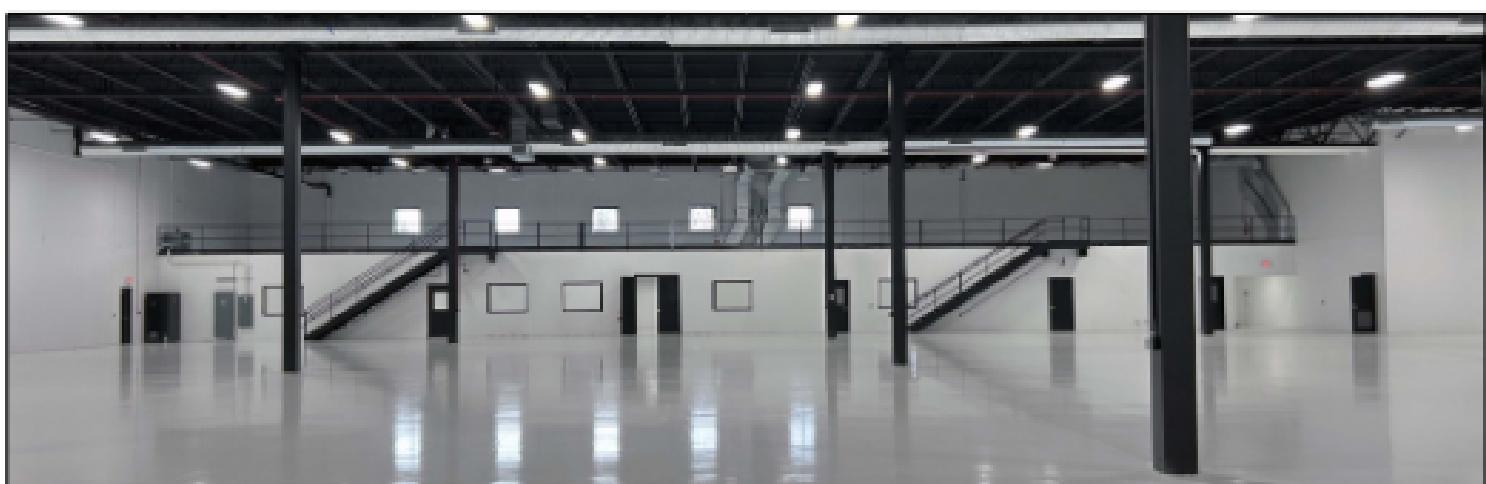
### 4. Improved Energy Efficiency

An energy efficient facility not only enhances a company's public image but also delivers long term savings through reduced operating costs. Energy efficiency can be achieved through thoughtful design choices such as incorporating skylights for natural daylight, improving insulation to minimize HVAC demand and selecting durable materials that extend the building's lifespan while reducing maintenance needs.

### 5. Optimized Manufacturing Design

An architect who understands manufacturing has the ability to design facilities that optimize product flow, allow for future expansion and prioritize occupant safety. This strategic approach not only enhances productivity and reduces operational costs, but also creates a workspace that reflects innovation and efficiency. By aligning design decisions with business objectives, the architect transforms the facility into a long term asset that drives performance, growth and safety.

In today's competitive manufacturing landscape, the right architect does far more than design buildings. They design opportunities for efficiency, growth, and long term success. By combining technical expertise with an understanding of manufacturing operations, an experienced architectural partner can assist manufacturers create facilities that embody their brand, support their people and perform at the highest level.





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Garbage is a cost that every company copes with. Parts are shipped in boxes and the cost of those boxes are worked into the price; just to be thrown out. The metal shavings or wood chips from shaping your finished goods have to be collected and removed. Your production process creates byproducts that you can't just dump in a ditch; someone has to come haul those byproducts off, and you have to pay for it. Trash, it's the cost of doing business. Worse yet, you have to pay tax every time that trash is picked up... *or do you?*

New York officially considers garbage disposal as maintenance on buildings and grounds, which is understandable. You're not paying to have something incinerated or buried, you're paying to have it removed. The state expects that what is done with your garbage after it's picked up is inconsequential to you, and they'd be right most of the time. Except, maybe, when it comes to materials that they use in manufacturing. So, is recycling taxable?

Currently, there is nothing written in any NYS policy indicating that transportation services for recycling should be tax exempt. There is a piece of legislation sitting in the state assembly that would make recycling exempt, but auditors just use this to justify the taxability of recycled material right now.

“There’s a bill being discussed... but until that bill becomes law recycling is taxable as far as I’m concerned.” said one state auditor. “You’re paying a separate company to haul away something you don’t want. Things would be different if the disposal company was *buying* the material, but they’re not... It’s the same as trash pickup”

Well, that seems pretty cut and dry right? Well, it would be if it weren’t for a 1995 case between the state and Seneca Foods. In this case a NY court ruled that transportation for food byproduct that would be used as pig feed was tax exempt. It didn’t matter that the company using the recycled material wasn’t buying said material. The only thing that mattered was if the material was being used at all. The material had economic value and so is tax exempt.

Pretty confusing right? At least there’s some hope that the state will settle this issue formally soon...or maybe not.

Remember that bill mentioned earlier? Well, this isn’t the first time it’s has been introduced. No, it also made an appearance in 2022, and 2021, 2020, and many years prior. In fact, some version of this same legislation has been stuck in the Assembly Ways and Means committee since 2009!

I suppose we’ll have to remain patient for the time being. Until that bill passes, we’ll all have to do our due diligence; weighing the benefits and risks of not paying sales tax on recycling. Or, hire an outside firm to do it for you.



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For more information contact Peter Ahrens, Executive Director.

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## Case Study: Frederick Machine & Manufacturing – AS9100D Certification

Frederick Machine & Manufacturing is a contract manufacturer of precision-machined components for customers in defense, oil & gas, automotive, chemical, food, and pharmaceutical industries. The company, founded in 1945, started out as a machine repair business. Today, the third generation of the Frederick family are operating the company, which is registered as a woman-owned business enterprise. Their capabilities include large part machining, fabricating, water jet cutting and welding. The company has consistently invested in facilities and equipment upgrades, expanding their capacity and meeting the needs of their growing customer base.

### SITUATION

The Company decided to upgrade their Quality Management System (QMS) from ISO9001:2015. This offered the company a unique opportunity to improve internal quality systems. Frederick Machine was determined to attain AS9100D certification in order to better serve their customers and expand into new markets.

### SOLUTION

Utilizing Insyte Consulting's trained and certified quality systems resources to support the upgrade, the company began their pursuit of AS9100D QMS certification in June of 2024. The project began with a review of the existing ISO 9001:2015 QMS and then determining the processes and documents that needed to be upgraded to meet the AS9100D requirements. Procedures and work instructions and the quality manual were revised accordingly. The new system and changes were reviewed with all personnel, and they began to use the new QMS and perform internal audits. The audit findings were reviewed on a regular basis, and corrective actions were implemented.

### RESULTS

The AS9100D certification audit was conducted in February of 2025. With only one minor finding identified, Frederick Machine was recommended for certification. This recommendation, along with the export controls ITAR registration, which is required in order for a company to handle defense-related products, has brought in dozens of new quote opportunities and new orders from an array of customers. As a result of certification to AS9100D, Frederick experienced a financial impact of approximately \$100,000.



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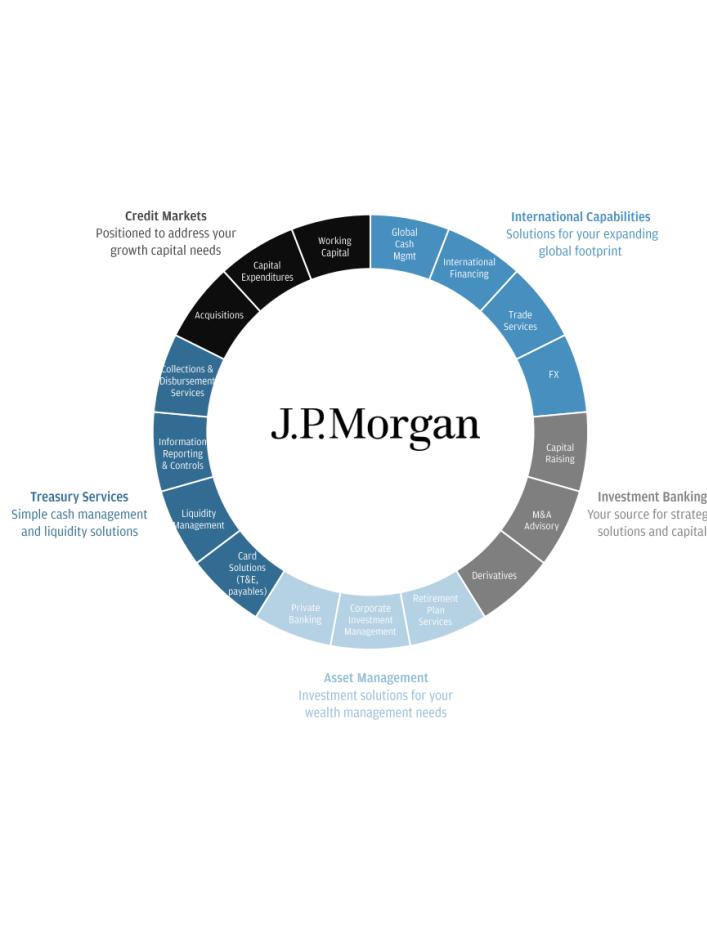
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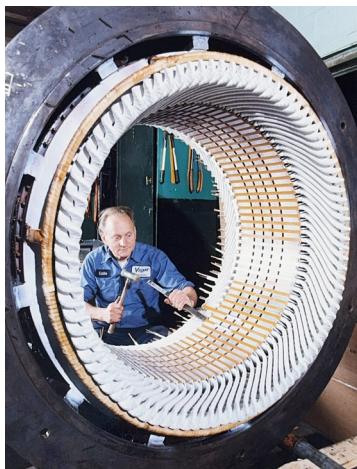
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These are transformative times for Volland, marked by significant facility renovations, upgrades, and expansions designed to support growing demand in the industrial and high-tech sectors. Just last week, Volland completed a thorough office renovation and broke ground on a 5,000-square-foot storage facility at its Cheektowaga headquarters—an investment aimed at enhancing efficiency, production capacity, and safety. Volland's UL-certified control panel division has more than doubled its production capacity and workforce to meet rising demand, supported by modernization of both the facility and equipment. Meanwhile, the crane and hoist department is utilizing and upgrading the former main facility on Niagara Street in the City of Buffalo, highlighted by the successful design and fabrication of a custom 75-ton dual-girder overhead crane system in 2025.

Even after 80+ years, all divisions of Volland Electric are gaining momentum and poised to support local industry now and into the future.





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# A Legacy of Industrial Excellence: A Brief History of the Manufacturers Association

*By Todd Tranum, Executive Director of the Manufacturers Association of the Southern Tier and President of Dream It Do It Western New York*

For more than a century, the Manufacturers Association of the Southern Tier (MAST) has anchored Western New York's industrial community. Founded in 1900 as the Manufacturers Association of the Jamestown Area (MAJA), it evolved from a coalition of Jamestown based manufacturers into a regional force for innovation, workforce development, and advocacy. Its mission remains constant: support, promote, and connect manufacturers through collaboration that strengthens the regional economy.

## Origins: Cooperative Spirit (1900–1950)

Jamestown's turn-of-the-century manufacturing boom demanded a unified voice. Under first president George V. Blackstone, MAJA combined practical problem-solving with community building: launching Jamestown Mutual Insurance to tame rising premiums; creating Jamestown Industries, Inc. for group purchasing; and operating a shared employment bureau that screened roughly 1,000 applicants per year. Early transport savings came from a pool-car freight service that later ran until 1970. By the 1920s, MAJA even operated an automobile repair facility, while coal and gas purchasing cooperatives lowered energy costs for employers and their workers. At the time, members and their employees accounted for about half of Jamestown's population—underscoring manufacturing's civic footprint.

## Association Roots in America

Trade associations trace their lineage to medieval guilds—bodies that set business codes, defined quality standards, supported the sick and needy, and pursued fair prices. In the United States, association life deepened through the 19th century: the New York Stock Exchange's origins date to 1792, and national groups soon followed—the National Association of Cotton Manufacturers (1854), American Iron and Steel Institute (1855), U.S. Brewers Association (1865), American Bankers Association (1876), American Pulp & Paper Association (1882), National Association of Retail Grocers (1896), and American Hotel Association (1910). MAJA's 1900 founding placed Jamestown at the vanguard of this movement.

Long before many peer groups, MAJA adopted formal bylaws in 1901 and was founded three decades before the New Deal spurred a national wave of association formation. The 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) triggered a surge of sector groups charged with drafting fair-competition codes and stabilizing prices and production; although NIRA was struck down in 1935, associations remained central. During World War II, they coordinated standards, allocations, specifications, and communication between government and industry—roles MAJA helped fulfill locally.

## Expansion, Services, and Advocacy (1950–2000)

As Jamestown diversified its manufacturing base, MAJA expanded accordingly. It established a Medical Bureau to reduce time lost to injuries (operating until 1979), backed a Jamestown Area Safety Council (still active), and kept talent pipelines healthy through supervisory, maintenance, and community education initiatives (including early Occupational Awareness for Teachers). The Association's employment bureau served industry until 1960.

MAJA also championed infrastructure, advocating for the Chautauqua Lake Bridge and what became Route 17, and helped establish the Chadakoin Industrial Revitalization Program, bringing more than \$6 million into the community. In 1943, MAJA merged with the Jamestown Area Furniture Manufacturers Association, formalizing collaboration across the region's signature industry.

## Modern Era: MAST, Partnerships, and People

Reflecting its broader footprint, the group became the Manufacturers Association of the Southern Tier (MAST) in 2005. Partnerships deepened with Jamestown Community College (JCC) and others. With JCC, MAST helped create the Manufacturing Technology Institute (2003), a hands-on training hub for welding, machining, and general manufacturing. MAST collaborated with Erie 2 Chautauqua-Cattaraugus BOCES and Dunkirk City School District to form PTECH (2016). MAST helped launch the Manufacturers Intermediary Apprenticeship Program (MIAP) in Western New York, simplifying access to registered apprenticeships statewide. MAST was a core partner and supporter in the development of the Western New York Manufacturing and Technology Workforce Development Coalition (2024).

Leaders across the region credit MAST with tangible value—practical training, fast problem-solving, and invaluable networking. Members frequently cite strong returns on investment through shared services and programs.

## Policy Voice and the Road Ahead

Working alongside the Buffalo Niagara Manufacturing Alliance, the Business Council of New York State, and the Manufacturers Alliance of New York State MAST advances a shared policy agenda: expanding apprenticeships and CTE programs (including Dream It Do It WNY), balancing climate and energy reliability, improving tax and regulatory competitiveness, and investing in roads, broadband, and utilities.

From shared freight cars in 1910 to robotics labs in 2025, MAST's strength is its ability to adapt—rooted in a tradition of quality, collaboration, and service. At 125 years, it remains both steward and catalyst, ensuring the Southern Tier stays a place where manufacturers—and their communities—don't just endure, but thrive.

## RICH PRODUCTS

Rich Products Corporation is a \$5 billion privately held food company headquartered in Buffalo, NY. The majority of its transportation volume consists of full truckload shipments — ambient inbound materials and frozen outbound finished goods. A small fraction of its freight involves miscellaneous items ordered in less-than-truckload (LTL) quantities.



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Introduction of standardized procedures across all plant locations



Implementation of ongoing performance metrics and reporting to ensure accountability

## THE CHALLENGE

With more than 20 plants independently managing their inbound less-than-truckload (LTL) shipments, Rich Products lacked central oversight, cost visibility, and standardized best practices. This fragmented approach made it difficult to track total spend, leverage volume, or implement consistent transportation strategies.

## OUR RESULTS

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- ✓ Improved cost transparency, control across 20+ plants
- ✓ Consistent execution of best practices
- ✓ A sustainable model built for continuous improvement



Straight-Forward Consulting brought a level of structure, visibility, and cost control that exceeded expectations. John Hogg customized the program to track progress, centralized for greater oversight, and streamlined what had been a fragmented process. In just over two years, their competitive rates and disciplined approach have helped us drive meaningful savings.



**MICHAEL DRISCOLL**  
VICE PRESIDENT, RICH PRODUCTS

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# 10-Step Launch to Building Your Bench With a Registered Apprenticeship Program

A registered apprenticeship program is a proven process for growing your own skilled talent while offering your team members a pathway for growing their talent and career. Apprenticeship is expanding among advanced manufacturers as companies recognize its effectiveness for transferring skills from experienced team members to the next generation filling their roles.

The Manufacturing Association of Central New York have emerged as leading experts in New York State's Registered Apprenticeship Programs. And it's why the BNMA and MAST have teamed up with MACNY, our Manufacturing Alliance partner, to help WNY manufacturers build their talent bench with registered apprenticeship in ten steps.

## Step 1: Schedule a meeting with us – Explore & Plan

First, learn what a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) involves and how it fits your business by scheduling a meeting with us. We'll walk you through:

The requirements and expectations of a Registered Apprenticeship Program.

How MACNY will support your apprenticeship program as a group sponsor and the benefits this offers for your organization.

This conversation helps you understand the time frame, paperwork, and support available so you can make an informed decision about moving forward.

## Step 2: Identify a Program Manager

A successful apprenticeship program needs a clear point person inside your company. Designate a staff member who will:

Serve as the primary contact for your program maintenance and communication with MACNY, who, as your group sponsor, will manage your program.

Coordinate communication with mentors, supervisors, and apprentices.

Choosing someone organized, trusted, and committed to talent development will make every other step simpler.

## Step 3: Set a Wage Progression Schedule

Apprenticeship is “earn while you learn,” so wages matter. You’ll need a structured wage progression that rewards skill growth over time.

Define:

**Entry-level hourly wage** for a new apprentice with little or no experience.

**Journey-level wage** for a fully trained worker in that occupation.

Any increases tied to milestones such as hours completed, competencies achieved, or related instruction passed.

Whether you will pay apprentices for classroom instruction time.

Once your schedule is set, it will be filed with the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) as part of the apprenticeship registration process.

## Step 4: Select Your Trade(s) – Establish the Program

Next you'll choose which occupation(s) you want to register. Review and compare state-approved trade outlines to find the one that best matches your workforce needs.

Questions to consider:

Which roles are hardest to recruit for?

Where are you facing retirements or skill gaps?

Which occupations offer a clear, long-term career path in your company?

Selecting the right trade ensures your apprenticeship program directly supports your business strategy.

## Step 5: Sign the Agreement

To formally join MACNY's group sponsorship, your company will sign an agreement.

This step:

Enrolls your organization as a participating employer under MACNY's sponsorship.

Allows MACNY to handle much of the compliance and paperwork with NYSDOL on your behalf.

Leads to your program being officially filed with the New York State Department of Labor.

Once the agreement is signed and filed, your apprenticeship program is formally established.

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## **Step 6: Develop a Recruitment Strategy – Prepare & Launch**

With the framework in place, it's time to think about who will become your apprentices. Identify your talent pipeline, which may include:

- Incumbent workers** ready to upskill and advance.
- Pre-apprenticeship graduates** from local schools or training providers.
- New hires** who show potential but lack experience.

A clear recruitment plan ensures you can fill apprenticeship slots quickly and with strong candidates.

## **Step 7: Confirm Mentor Availability**

High-quality mentorship is at the heart of apprenticeship. Before you begin recruiting, make sure you have enough experienced workers to guide your apprentices.

### **You'll need:**

- Qualified mentors who model best practices and safety.
- Coverage to maintain the required 1:1 apprentice-to-mentor ratio.
- Supervisors who understand the program structure and expectations.

## **Step 8: Announce the Program**

Introduce your apprenticeship program to your team, and, if desired, to community partners, schools, and local workforce organizations. Doing so communicates how your organization invest in your people, which helps attract and retain talent. In your announcement, be sure to highlight:

- The purpose and benefits of the program for both employees and the company.
- How current workers can apply or refer candidates.
- The long-term career opportunities created by apprenticeship.
- A strong internal rollout builds excitement and support across the organization.

## **Step 9: Review & Select Apprentices – Recruit & Select**

As applications come in, focus on commitment and readiness, in addition to prior experience.

In your selection process:

- Screen for reliability, curiosity, problem-solving, and willingness to learn.
- Look for candidates who can balance full-time work with part-time schooling.
- Consider both incumbent workers and new talent.

The right apprentices may not always be the most experienced but the ones most motivated to grow.

## **Step 10: Celebrate Signing Day**

Once your candidates are chosen and paperwork is complete, mark the launch with a Signing Day.

This is your opportunity to:

- Officially welcome your apprentices into the program.
- Recognize mentors and leaders who helped build it.
- Share your commitment to workforce development with employees, partners, and the community.

Celebrating this milestone reinforces that apprenticeship is not just a program—it's a long-term investment in people.

By following these 10 steps—exploring and planning, establishing the program, preparing to launch, and then recruiting and selecting apprentices—you can build a robust registered apprenticeship program that grows talent from within and strengthens your company for the future.

Ready to schedule your meeting to learn more? Contact Cindy Aronson, Director of Apprenticeships for BNMA and MAST at [caronson@didilwny.com](mailto:caronson@didilwny.com) | 716.969.6016

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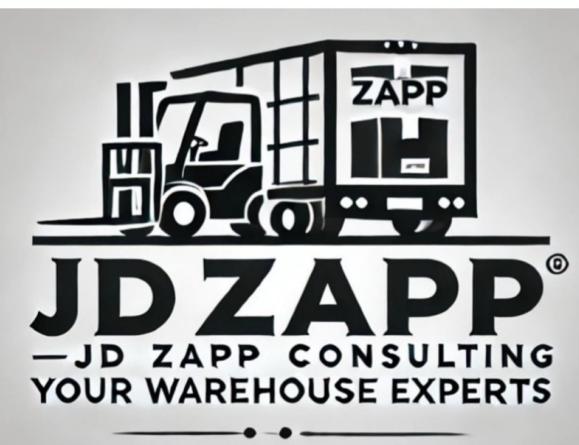


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## Why Dream It Do It Western New York Matters

By Rachel Curtin, Principal, Chautauqua Lake Central School

At Chautauqua Lake Central, I see students who are curious, eager, and talented—but not always sure how their classroom learning connects to real careers. Just as often, they *do* see the connection but have no idea what the next steps should be after they cross the graduation stage. That’s why I’m proud to **support Dream It Do It Western New York (DIDIWNY)**—an initiative that bridges school and career, showing students that meaningful futures in modern manufacturing, right here in Western New York, are both accessible and attainable.

Manufacturing today is high-tech, precise, and collaborative. Through DIDIWNY, students experience this firsthand. They tour local facilities, tackle design challenges at **STEMWARS**, attend technology-intensive summer camps, and earn digital badges through the **Dream It Do It Advanced Manufacturing Program (DIDIAMP)**.

When a student designs a part in CAD and then watches it come to life on the factory floor, math and science suddenly have purpose. Artistic students who love design or gaming see those same skills used in robotics and automation—learning becomes real.

My favorite aspect of our advanced manufacturing program is the conversations I have with students about what they are making. Every project reflects personal meaning. From Father’s Day gifts to a machined replacement part for our Ice Castle construction equipment, students choose to design and manufacture something that matters to them.

That sense of relevance changes everything. Students who learn best by doing find confidence and identity in these hands-on pathways. Engagement rises, behavior improves, and students begin to see themselves as part of the future workforce.

Manufacturing remains one of Western New York’s strongest economic engines, offering skilled careers with solid wages and advancement opportunities. Yet many families still picture it as “old-fashioned” work. DIDIWNY changes that perception by showcasing modern, technology-driven manufacturing—where innovation, teamwork, and creativity drive success.

Through this program, students see that they don’t have to leave the region to build rewarding, respected careers. They can stay, grow, and thrive right here at home.

At Chautauqua Lake Central School, manufacturing education has become a hands-on, career-focused experience. Our partnership with DIDIWNY has expanded opportunities for students to connect classroom learning to the modern world of work through plant tours, design challenges, and real-world demonstrations.

Students gain exposure to advanced robotics, precision tools, and local industry professionals who model the innovation and teamwork that define today’s manufacturing sector.

Through **DIDIAMP** and **DIDIWNY’s technology partner, Tallo**, students build digital portfolios that track achievements and earn verified badges for technical skills, teamwork, and engagement. These profiles connect students directly with local employers, training centers, and postsecondary opportunities.

This partnership has sparked a culture of curiosity and confidence in our classrooms—where students see that the skills they’re developing today can build real careers in Western New York tomorrow.

DIDIWNY is also leading the way in inclusion. Programs like **Girls in Manufacturing** introduce female role models and encourage young women to explore technical fields once considered off-limits. When students of every background can see themselves as engineers, technicians, or designers, our community becomes stronger, smarter, and more diverse.