



STATE OF THE REGION:
MOHAWK VALLEY
2023 STRATEGIC PLAN



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President, SUNY Cobleskill

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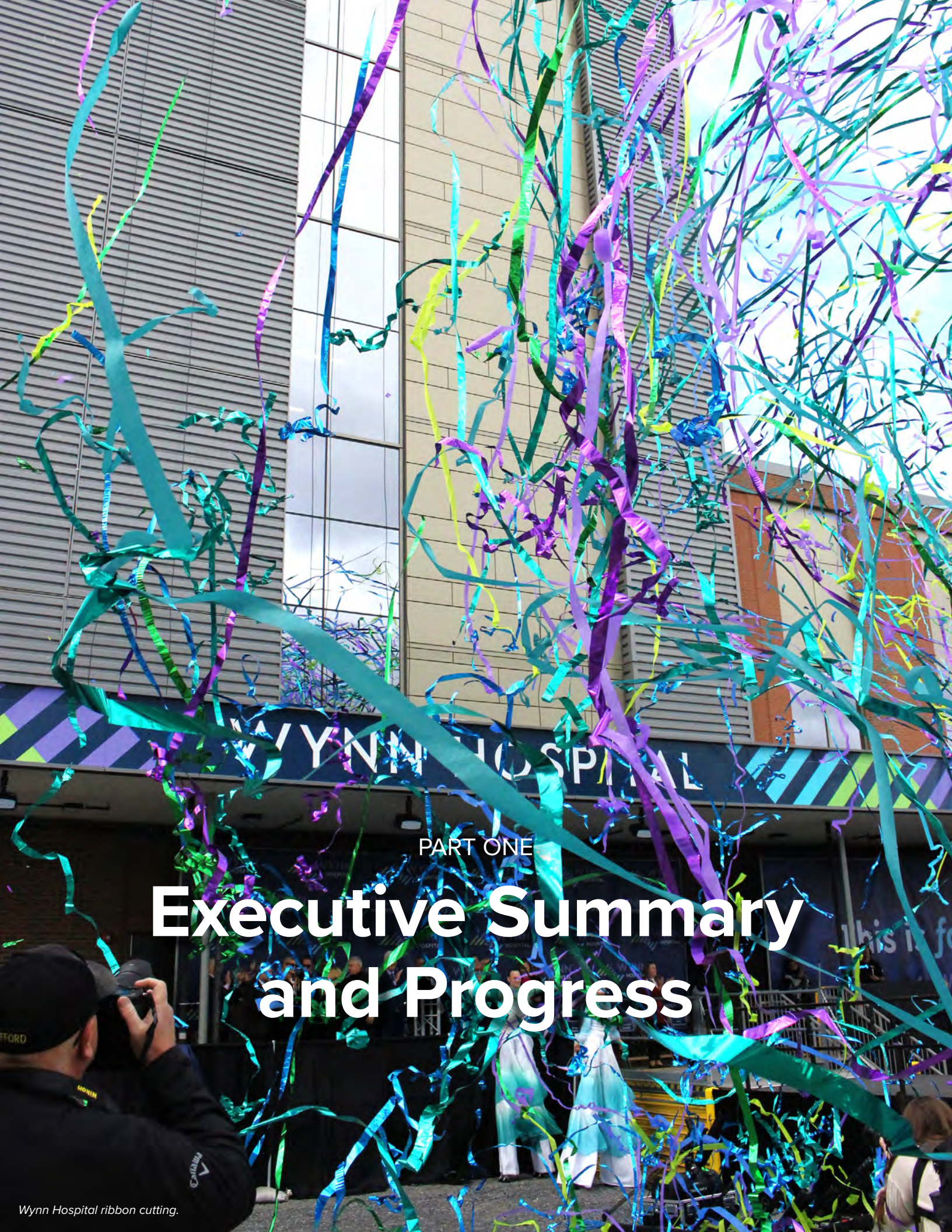
Anthony J. Picente, Jr.
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Michael Cinquanti
Mayor, City of Amsterdam

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PART ONE

Executive Summary and Progress

MESSAGE FROM CO-CHAIRS

We write to you this year with a plan that will build upon our burgeoning region's community vibrancy with an increased clarity of purpose.

Call it audacity or call it tenacity; likely a little bit of both. Our Valley is emerging as a global leader in semiconductor innovation.

Agricultural entrepreneurship is blooming. Tourism spending is record-breaking. Some of the nation's top cyber technology is born right here, launching the future of autonomous air mobility.

When it comes to momentum, we have often played on a historic theme of building great success through the waves of immigration that built the region since the early 1900s and has reemerged as we have embraced the refugee population. Hard work and innovation, a better life for our children got us here and is now part of our rebirth that is driving the momentum.

With positive employment growth projected, particularly across the region's priority industries, this year's strategy focuses on creating synergy between industry and a skilled workforce, both contributing to their vibrant communities. We have the talent. It's been here all along. All the pieces are in place, but our entire economic future depends on three guiding principles:

- **EMPOWER PEOPLE TO WORK:** create a workforce development model for all who aspire to work, that invigorates the entire talent pool through providing human scale supports and empowering individuals to have independence and contribute to a vibrant community.
- **CREATE A WELCOMING COMMUNITY:** continue to rebuild our communities to be lifestyle destinations, unapologetically welcoming, vibrant places for families and visitors, alike. Places that need no advertising. Places that radiate and enchant. Places that we're proud to call home.
- **CULTIVATE INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE:** innovate across all strategic industries by cultivating entrepreneurship and excellence, backing sustainability in agribusiness, creating global destinations for sports and adventure tourism, and staying on the leading edge of science & technology.



Dr. Marion Terenzio

Lawrence Gilroy, III

This year's Challenge Prospectus is all about empowering people, according to their unique abilities, to participate in our communities. Innovative in approach, yet elemental to the very core. It's so elemental, in fact, that it should have its own atomic weight. It's about really seeing people, understanding their struggles, drawing upon their passions, and illuminating their path.

Our educational community, industry partners, and government and non-profit leaders have demonstrated capacity, positive results, and the ability to scale key catalyst initiatives across the region to address these elemental needs. There is only one path forward. Because of our geographic and strategic position in New York's economic future, there's not really a choice. \$10 million breaks the dam, liberates our potential energy, and begins the cascade.

As ever, we are excited to present our strategic plan update and another bold vision – an implementation plan that will strengthen families, neighborhoods, and industry in the Mohawk Valley and the Empire State. Though global uncertainty conspires against hope, we are making our **Stand. Together.**

MVREDC Co-Chairs,

Dr. Marion Terenzio

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marion Terenzio".

Lawrence Gilroy, III

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lawrence Gilroy".



Ioxus, Inc. - Clean Tech Manufacturing Facility, Oneonta

State of the Region

Historic STEM job growth. Massive investment. Contagious revitalization.

The Mohawk Valley has advanced as a major exporter of metals and industrial machinery, a leader in cyber technology, an emerging center for UAS research and development, a global leader in silicon carbide semiconductors, an essential link in the nation's food systems, and an exciting destination for sports and adventure tourism.

STAND TOGETHER

Whether talking semiconductors, tourism, or agribusiness – we are bringing it back home. Now is not the time to let up. More than ever, it's time to lock arms together. It's 2023, here's where we stand:

- The Mohawk Valley has seen **a significant decline in poverty rates** – falling nearly 24% since 2011.
- **Total wages across all sectors have risen by 49.8% since 2011**, largely driven by wage growth, in Tourism and Advanced Manufacturing. Advanced Manufacturing continues to expand – especially in STEM-intensive industries. Growth in Advanced Manufacturing, alone, has exploded compared to 2011, as Wolfspeed, Indium Corporation, Corning Inc., Ixus, and Semikron Danfoss continue to expand their footprints, penetrate new markets, and exceed hiring projections. SUNY Cobleskill has churned out new farm-and-food-based entrepreneurs and products. To date, the SUNY Cobleskill Institute for Rural Vitality has served more than **620 farms and food businesses and helped launch more than 70 new products** to the local and regional food market.
- Across the region, our leaders have teamed up, leveraging **RESTORE NY, DEC, and USEPA** funding to assess, remediate, and revitalize more than 49 brownfield sites totaling 140+ acres, resulting in planned **investment of more than**

\$360 million in affordable housing, manufacturing, market-rate lofts, and mixed-use development in downtowns and distressed neighborhoods.

While the sun shines on the Mohawk Valley, in the shadows and just below the surface lurk sinister threats. The Mohawk Valley's total population is shrinking, while workforce participation continues to stagnate. Meanwhile, across-the-board industrial expansion is battling record-low unemployment, threatening future growth and potentially creating a vicious cycle of cannibalization of existing skilled workers.

- Since 2011, **we've lost nearly 17,000 residents.**
- **More than 12,000 residents commute to work outside our region**, resulting in a net-negative migration pattern.
- Labor force participation is marginally better than 2011, but still a drag on our employers, with **more than 165,000 working-age individuals still on the outside, looking in.**
- Our **14.2% poverty rate**, while dropping, is still among the highest in the state, placing crushing cost burdens on families living in poverty and inherently limiting their childcare, housing, healthcare, and transportation options.
- Educational attainment, across the board, is lower than state and national averages, but trending better, with a **steadily rising 87% high school graduation rate.**

Live music at Ommegang Brewery.



We share these statistics not to paint a grim picture; rather, to illustrate our core weaknesses so that you may understand our recipe for revitalization. We've had to crack more than a few eggs. The oven is pre-heated, and this farm-to-table frittata is going in.

- We will reverse the migration trends through **DRI, NY Forward, and HOME RUN** – a bold housing initiative, modeled after FAST NY, intended to help communities prepare potential housing sites with civic infrastructure.
- We will continue to eradicate Environmental Justice issues such as blight, contamination, and pollution through **RESTORE NY** and cooperative DEC remedial programs, while accelerating growth in carbon-free energy, transportation, and manufacturing.
- We will acquire, engineer, and develop more than a thousand acres of new, pad-ready industrial property with a **FAST NY** pipeline stretching from east to west, to complete New York's emerging technology corridor. This will focus on smart-growth oriented site planning proximal to existing infrastructure and, most importantly, where the people are, including the regional population centers of Rome, Gloversville-Johnstown, Schoharie, Amsterdam, Utica, Oneonta, and Herkimer.
- Finally, we will redefine workforce development in our region with **\$10 million in Challenge funding** with programs that focus on individual needs, fundamental skills, and wraparound supports. Deploying a catalytic accelerator and ecosystem multiplier model, we will break workforce development down to the most elemental form and build stronger individuals, neighborhoods, and communities.

DEVELOPING BUSINESS PARK SITES

Growth and development in Herkimer County, as spearheaded by Herkimer County Industrial Development Agency (HCIDA), has exploded over the past five years. Working with the Herkimer County Legislature and Mohawk Valley EDGE, HCIDA has met millions of square feet of industrial demand in the region. Since Tractor Supply located in Herkimer County, Schuyler Business Park has been the focus of several expansion and attraction projects.

Governor Hochul announced in October that the HCIDA received \$4,372,000 through the FAST NY Program for the Schuyler Business Park. Coming on the heels of a \$14,000,000 announcement at the Marcy Nanocenter, the Mohawk Valley is developing business park sites for emerging and existing industry clusters.

At Schuyler, there will be infrastructure improvements by installing a 500,000-gallon water storage tank to ensure adequate water pressure and fire suppression capabilities. This will allow for more improvements to the park's entrance, addressing traffic concerns which pose a risk to drivers. This project will allow for development on more than 80 acres, with a total project cost of \$5.1 million.



WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION in the MOHAWK VALLEY is 58.2% COMPARED with 63% in NEW YORK STATE & 63.4% in the U.S.



ADVENTURE TOURISM HITTING NEW HEIGHTS

Visitor spending in the Mohawk Valley has reached record levels, largely owing to growth in adventure tourism and sports entertainment. A perfect example is the Wheelerville Caroga Connector Trails in Fulton County. Integral to the adjacent business park project, the system is pivotal for adventure tourism in Fulton County. Linking an existing 9-mile trail network and connecting to the neighboring business district, it initiates future trail expansion, enabling a diverse range of trails catering to various skill levels. This expansion, inclusive of planned trails in adjacent lands, such as the 20-mile Peck Hill Trail system and Adirondack Forest Preserve areas, promises an extensive adventure landscape. This connectivity not only attracts outdoor enthusiasts seeking varied experiences but also foresees economic growth by fostering tourism and potentially benefiting local businesses, creating a symbiotic relationship between recreational activities and commerce.



TOURISM SPENDING LAST YEAR
DIDN'T SIMPLY JUMP
IT KICKFLIPPED
185% OVER
PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS IN OUR REGION

Top: Mountain biker at Wheelerville Caroga Connector Trail
Bottom: Kayak-a-Thon on the Erie Canal









Concert at Riverlink Park in Amsterdam







Status of Past CFA Projects

Since the inception of the REDC initiative, New York State has invested more than \$7.7 billion in 9,500+ projects through a competitive process to spur job creation and community revitalization based on regional priorities. The Mohawk Valley has made these state investments soar to the tune of 396 completed projects and 10,434 permanent jobs.

Overview of Previously Funded Priority Projects

SUMMARY STATUS OF PAST PRIORITY PROJECTS BY ROUND

Status	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV	Round V	Round VI	Round VII	Round VIII	Round IX	Round XI	Round XII	Total
	10	13	18	11	13	10	8	5	1	-	-	89
	-	1	5	2	4	12	17	11	18	11	16	97
	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	1	1	3	-	9
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
	4	28	20	1	19	9	14	5	5	1	-	106
Total	14	42	44	15	38	33	39	22	25	15	16	303

-  Project is complete
-  Project is on schedule
-  Project is progressing more slowly than anticipated
-  Project concerns need to be resolved
-  Project contract not yet executed
-  Project canceled or funding declined

LEVERAGE OF STATE INVESTMENT IN ALL PAST PRIORITY PROJECTS

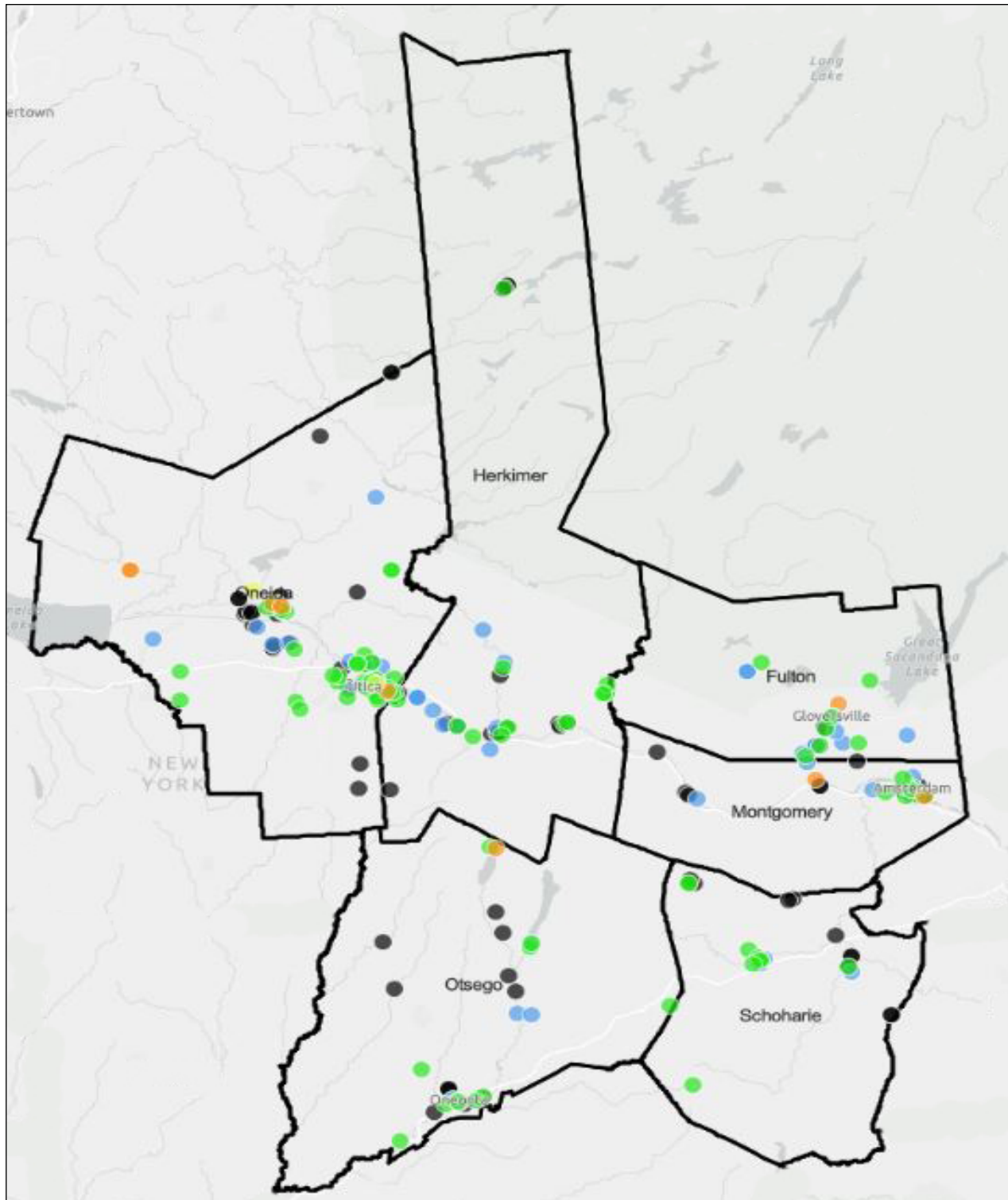
The table below lists the ratio of the state investment in past priority projects to the total project cost for Rounds I through XII.

Round	Total Number of Priority Projects	Total Amount of Priority Project Awards	Total Project Cost	Ratio of Award Amounts to Total Project Cost
Round I	10	\$34,176,000	\$325,287,474	1:9.52
Round II	14	\$5,627,000	\$53,474,277	1:9.5
Round III	24	\$18,684,852	\$192,073,643	1:10.28
Round IV	14	\$7,157,710	\$50,319,100	1:7.03
Round V	19	\$10,482,468	\$64,068,761	1:6.11
Round VI	24	\$15,965,000	\$72,784,544	1:4.56
Round VII	25	\$10,527,000	\$63,017,999	1:5.99
Round VIII	17	\$14,033,967	\$149,216,261	1:10.63
Round IX	20	\$10,509,980	\$118,473,042	1:11.27
Round XI	14	\$7,812,874	\$99,108,386	1:12.69
Round XII	16	\$9,352,891	\$76,805,869	1:8.21
Total	197	\$144,329,742	\$1,264,629,356	1:8.76

Project data is updated through October 2023. For additional analysis and full appendix of all projects, please visit <https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/mohawk-valley> to view the Project Tracking Dashboard.

GEORGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF PAST PRIORITY PROJECTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| ● Project is complete | ● Project concerns need to be resolved |
| ● Project is on schedule | ● Project contract not yet executed |
| ● Project is progressing more slowly than anticipated | ● Project canceled or funding declined |















Overview of All Previously Funded CFA Projects

With nearly 400 projects completed to date, New York State investments in the Mohawk Valley have shifted the paradigm. Our region is experiencing a renaissance, with blighted structures transforming into multi-use centers of civic engagement, job seekers finding meaningful employment, and families finding a sense of place.

SUMMARY STATUS OF ALL PAST PROJECTS

The NYS Consolidated Funding Application (CFA), which is now host to a multitude of programs and initiatives, has been instrumental to economic growth in the Mohawk Valley. Through Round XII, the State has delivered \$301.7 million in funding, creating thousands of permanent jobs. Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Oneida, Otsego, and Schoharie counties are experiencing a surge in new site development and revitalization initiatives. Tourism investments are attracting visitors from around the world. Housing projects to reinvent spaces at the heart of each community are strengthening the connection between people and the places they share.

Status	Round I	Round II	Round III	Round IV	Round V	Round VI	Round VII	Round VIII	Round IX	Round XI	Round XII	Total
	45	40	54	55	53	50	44	33	17	5	-	396
	1	3	10	3	10	19	38	37	53	61	32	267
	1	1	1	4	2	1		1	2	2	-	15
	1	-	-	-	2	2	1	1	2	4	6	19
	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	13	39	22	4	26	16	19	7	9	2	-	157
Total	61	83	87	66	94	88	102	79	83	74	38	855

-  Project is complete
-  Project is on schedule
-  Project is progressing more slowly than anticipated
-  Project concerns need to be resolved
-  Project contract not yet executed
-  Project canceled or funding declined

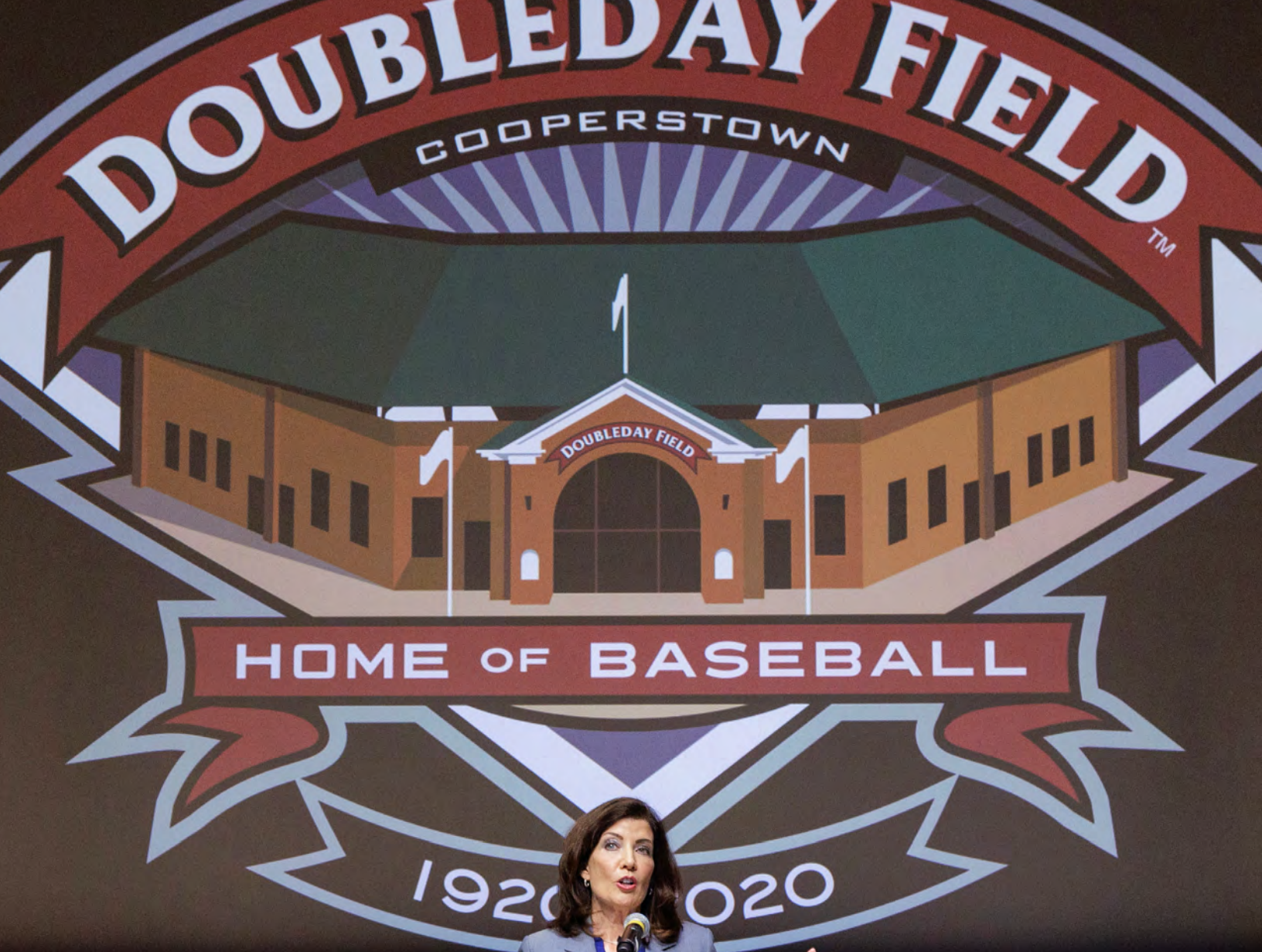
LEVERAGE OF STATE INVESTMENT IN ALL CFA PROJECTS

Round	Total # of Awards	Total Amount of All CFA Awards	Total Project Cost	Ratio of Award Amount to Total Project Cost
Round I	48	\$48,888,527	\$519,983,590	1:10.64
Round II	44	\$12,174,844	\$85,910,781	1:7.06
Round III	65	\$25,970,357	\$228,348,460	1:8.79
Round IV	62	\$20,070,943	\$82,334,231	1:4.1
Round V	68	\$22,592,658	\$157,771,671	1:6.98
Round VI	72	\$31,829,920	\$113,150,882	1:3.55
Round VII	83	\$31,500,863	\$127,958,439	1:4.06
Round VIII	72	\$34,764,923	\$228,116,971	1:6.56
Round IX	74	\$26,122,923	\$232,800,330	1:8.91
Round XI	72	\$29,366,041	\$210,442,526	1:7.17
Round XII	38	\$18,484,761	\$115,777,669	1:6.26
Total	698	\$301,766,760	\$2,102,595,550	1:6.97

JOB CREATION IN ALL CFA PROJECTS

The table below lists the total number of permanent jobs retained and created through the CFA.

Round	Projected Jobs Created	Projected Jobs Retained	Total
Round I	573	629	1202
Round II	232	1801	2033
Round III	302	848	1150
Round IV	95	516	611
Round V	136	1107	1243
Round VI	169	392	561
Round VII	123	831	954
Round VIII	146	571	717
Round IX	58	556	614
Round XI	121	453	574
Round XII	132	643	775
Total	2087	8347	10434



NATIONAL BASEBALL
HALL OF FAME

PART TWO

Regional Strategic Plan Update and Participation



Employee at Indium Corporation's advanced manufacturing site.

Regional Strategic Plan Update

The Mohawk Valley REDC exemplifies the community-based and performance-driven approach intended for the REDCs through the sourcing of statewide development programs to feed growth and vitality into our region. With a groundbreaking \$1 billion commitment from the State in FY2024, the Mohawk Valley has set to work leveraging grant programs like the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, NY Forward, Market NY, RESTORE New York, and others.



We all win when NYS and Mohawk Valley priorities align. Our core strategies – Agribusiness, Tourism, and STEM-Intensive Industries and Advanced Manufacturing – continue to guide our priorities and investments. And the data suggests that we should double down.

The data also suggests that we take a stronger stance when it comes to retaining, attracting, and growing our workforce – our PEOPLE.

We've invested in our people by sticking to the plan, maximizing NYS investments, and rebuilding our communities in the process. Fundamental to our strategies, since day one, has been an ecosystem approach. Our cities, towns, and villages comprise the habitat – vibrant places where people, industry, and investment can flourish. We strive to realize greater inclusivity, accessibility, and equity across the board in order for our governments, the business community, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions to work together to improve the business climate, govern effectively, and lead more meaningful and fulfilling lives.

Through the strategic planning process, the MVREDC has succeeded in creating jobs, driving investment, bolstering workforce development, and revitalizing long-neglected cities, towns, and neighborhoods. Over the last twelve years, despite significant challenges, Mohawk Valley leaders have been methodically piecing together the essential elements for growing vibrant communities. The region has advanced significantly as a major exporter of metals and industrial machinery, a leader in cyber technology, an emerging center for research and testing on unmanned aerial systems, and a top contender for the next big thing in semiconductors, all thanks to MVREDC investments.

Vibrant communities - places that are engaging and equitable – drive each of our core strategies. A major goal of economic development is ensuring that communities offer an environment that draws new residents to the area and offers quality of life amenities and opportunities that encourage them to establish roots in the region. Recognizing barriers that may prevent the attraction and retention of talent, the State's built environment must emphasize creating accessible job centers, sustainable infrastructure, and vibrant, livable communities.

Strategic placemaking can serve as a tool for long-term economic growth in making investments that focus on improving the quality of life in communities to make them uniquely attractive to talented workers.

OUR REGIONAL PRIORITY IS OUR PEOPLE



DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION
INITIATIVE



NEW YORK FORWARD



CONNECT ALL (DIGITAL EQUITY)



HOUSING



ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

In the upcoming pages, you will read about how each of these regional priorities strengthens our most precious resource: **OUR PEOPLE!**

REGIONAL PRIORITY: DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

This year, the MVREDC jointly awarded \$10 million to the Town of Kirkland and the Village of Clinton – two areas known for their cultural and historic significance. The two communities aim to modernize infrastructure and reinforce their commitment to ongoing environmental, climate, and economic initiatives, through enhancement of the Village Center, increasing local housing options, and repurposing under-utilized properties.

REGIONAL PRIORITY: NEW YORK FORWARD

New York Forward funding aims to balance the development of larger cities through revitalization efforts in smaller communities, like this year's NY Forward awardees, Cooperstown, Dolgeville, and Sharon Springs. These villages will leverage funding to connect main street corridors with natural attractions, restore historic structures, improve residential and commercial spaces, and revitalize cultural venues.

REGIONAL PRIORITY: CONNECT ALL

In 2023, Empire State Development led the creation of a Statewide Digital Equity Plan which states that “access to high-speed, reliable, and affordable broadband is essential for education, economic growth, and full participation in civic life...and the benefits of broadband access should be available to all.” The MVREDC and partner organization, MVEDD, recognize the significance of this effort and pose two key factors for broadband access in the Mohawk Valley:

- Public-private partnerships and collaboration with tech companies to expand broadband coverage, especially in remote areas.
- Wi-Fi hotspots at community centers, with free Wi-Fi access to serve areas with limited connectivity.



REGIONAL PRIORITY: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Workforce development is both a state and regional top priority, central to the health and vitality of our communities. A dynamic workforce ecosystem is the constant theme threaded throughout our plan, which aims to empower people through culturally relevant, sustainable approaches that meet the demands of our growing Tourism, Agribusiness, and STEM-intensive industries, while lifting families out of poverty. The strategy seeks to simultaneously build viable career pathways for incumbent workers who vacate entry-level positions as they advance, providing room for a continuum of workforce opportunities.



Above: Summer STEM camp at Griffiss Institute in Rome
Left: Rendering of Glove City Lofts in Gloversville

REGIONAL PRIORITY: HOUSING

Housing is as fundamental to our ecosystem as food, water, and oxygen. Housing supply plays a vital role in job growth, wage growth, talent attraction, workforce retention, and wealth-building. In all these ways and more, housing is economic development. The current housing stalemate in the Mohawk Valley is the product of a combination of high interest rates, cost of new construction, lack of affordable units, and limited modern housing supply. This contributes to a lack of churn, immobility, and inability to attract new talent and young families to the region. We are left with an aging housing stock and lack of new product.

The data shows that 40% of Mohawk Valley residents are cost-burdened, meaning more than 30% of household income is being spent just to keep a roof over their heads. This leaves very little for food, transportation, childcare, and fun – those factors directly impacting their ability to fully participate in the workforce. For those that are not cost-burdened and those seeking to move to the Mohawk Valley for jobs in advanced manufacturing and STEM industries, supply is extremely low, driving up the costs of the few homes on the market. With the cost of new construction exceeding \$250 per square foot, we are at a stalemate.

At a recent meeting of the MVREDC stakeholders, economic developers from all six counties lamented the dearth of housing to meet the needs of the existing and growing workforce. The entire region has a number of transformative projects in the pipeline including workforce development, hi-tech manufacturing, agribusiness and cannabis operations, and ecotourism. The region's ability to maximize the transformative potential of these projects is entirely dependent on diverse, affordable, attainable housing options for employees across all of these industries.

Per the National Association of Counties, “When the local workforce can’t find housing they can afford, the entire community suffers...having a sufficient supply of housing affordable to households all along the income spectrum is also critical to supporting vibrant and sustainable local economies.” The path is clear: we must increase new housing construction across the board for affordable, “missing middle”, and market rate (including single-family). The few things that municipalities can control are zoning, infrastructure, and site readiness. There is much we are unable to control, but certain costs we can mitigate. If municipalities can take time and cost out of the process, it could defray up to 20% of up-front cost and enormous risk. Perhaps even more important, it empowers small municipalities while instilling

confidence in builders that the community is a true partner in development. This could tip the scales.

So, the MVREDC proposes the HOME RUN program to catalyze high-caliber, right-sized, smart growth housing projects by:

- Connecting water, sewer, electric, and fiber to development sites.
- Site grading and civic infrastructure such as sidewalks, LED lighting, and trail connections.
- Environmental assessments and preliminary engineering.

In the Mohawk Valley, a robust housing supply means drawing new residents and keeping communities intact. It means revitalizing and repurposing blighted properties to build affordable homes and creating a sense of place for families and young professionals seeking to contribute to the local economy.

“If we are going to attract companies and get people to move here, we are going to have to find more housing options that are attractive but also affordable.”

-Nick Matt,
MVREDC Council Member



STIMULATING NEW HOUSING: Ken Kearney, owner of Kearney Realty Group, speaks about the Glove City Lofts project, set to be constructed at the former Frontier call center in Gloversville.

REGIONAL PRIORITY: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Many Mohawk Valley communities suffer from blighted properties and face logistical and financial barriers to redevelopment. Aspects of the problem may vary between cities and villages; some may struggle with empty storefronts in downtown areas, while others have unused surface parking areas, or abandoned industrial properties known as brownfields.

Our multi-faceted approach brings a cohesive and equitable solution, through development that addresses blight while also solving housing, childcare, and functional space needs. In Round XIII of CFA funding, MVREDC awarded \$270,000 to the Herkimer County IDA for Brownfield Opportunity Area pre-planning activities, such as the identification and mapping of underutilized, vacant, and abandoned parcels throughout the County. Herkimer County intends to remediate and redevelop brownfield-affected sites into new commercial, residential, and industrial spaces. Nelliston and Fort Plain, in Montgomery County, also received \$100,000 for a similar project, anticipated to provide housing, create jobs, and beautify neighborhoods.



ON BRAND FOR THE MOHAWK VALLEY: The revitalization of the former Duofold Plant, pictured above, in Ilion exemplifies our strategy to address environmental justice issues in distressed communities by eliminating blight, remediating contamination, and providing new opportunities for housing, childcare, and innovation.

RECENT ESD PRIORITY PROJECT AWARDS

Just this Fall, four ESD capital priority projects were awarded funding to advance our strategic priorities, building out the ecosystem with essential support services while redeveloping underutilized and blighted properties.

REIMAGINING THE MIDTOWN UTICA COMMUNITY CENTER



MUCC primarily serves residents in Utica's oldest neighborhoods, where exposure to environmental hazards like lead paint is common. To provide a clean and safe community space, MUCC aims to remediate, rehabilitate, and address issues such as mold, lead, and asbestos in their historic Faxon Street building. The project's objective is to modernize this essential public facility that primarily serves refugees, recent immigrants, and under-served residents.

ICAN CHILDCARE & WELLNESS CENTER

Without childcare, many parents in our region have dropped out of the workforce to provide essential care to their children. ICAN is proposing to literally build upon their successful Elevate CNY Sports Complex to house classrooms, a kitchen, nursing station, restrooms, offices, multi-purpose room and spaces for therapy (such as speech therapy). The 14,000 square foot addition will connect to existing indoor playing fields and 23 acres of outdoor space.

RIVER LOFTS AT THE FORMER DUNLOP BUILDING

The River Lofts project aims to create a sustainable mixed-use community by constructing 100 modern condominium units designed as live and work lofts with home offices. These units will occupy the second floor, offering a unique blend of residential and office space, catering to the needs of modern professionals, entrepreneurs, and those desiring a live-work lifestyle. On the first floor, there will be several retail spaces, including a Korean barbecue restaurant, an international market, and a bakery/coffee shop. These retail options will enhance the development's appeal and provide convenient amenities for residents and the surrounding community.

HERKIMER COUNTY CHILDREN'S CENTER



In Herkimer County the demand for quality childcare far exceeds availability with utilization already at 99%-100%, leaving approximately 8,000 children without access to childcare. Less than 20% of childcare offerings are center-based care programs. Herkimer County hopes to fill that gap by building a new Children's Center which will bridge the gap between families and community resources by providing general childcare, developmental pediatrics, a mental health clinic, early literacy support, and health services, with support from Herkimer College, BOCES, and other partners. Once completed, the center will have 13 full-time employees and provide childcare services for up to 2,300 children annually.

"MUCC transformed my life with its programs."
-Nan Zar





Wayward Lane Brewing, Schoharie

Mohawk Valley Strategic Priorities

Since the beginning, the MVREDC has supported comprehensive, community-based, and performance-driven economic development. By doubling down on three economic strategies that harness our region's assets: **STEM-Intensive Industries and Advanced Manufacturing, Agribusiness and Food Systems, and Tourism**, we are poised to build on the historic progress we've made over the past twelve years.

Regional Strategic Plan

STEM-Intensive Industries (STEM) and Advanced Manufacturing

STRATEGY: STEM AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Word on the street is when it comes to STEM industries and cutting-edge technologies, the Mohawk Valley punches above its weight. This should come as no surprise; we've been training for this since the wedding of the waters. We've emerged as a global leader in advanced electronics, semiconductors, quantum computing, artificial intelligence/machine learning, and unmanned aerial systems.

Advanced electronics is a key component of this growth and innovation; spurring state and local investment in employers such as Wolfspeed, Semikron Danfoss, Indium Corporation, Corning Inc., and Iloxus. Together, these employers have created well over 700 jobs in the last five years. These new jobs are estimated to have added over \$42 million in annual wages to the local economy, not to mention a resurgence in optimism and greater collaboration between industry and workforce partners.

Our entire advanced ecosystem is founded on well-established manufacturers along the Erie Canal corridor, having built complex and valuable supply chains in primary metals, machined components, innovation, and skilled trades over the past century.

You might ask, “What’s your STEM got to do with me?”

- There are projected to be **6,115 job openings** within this cluster over the next 10 years and an estimated labor force decrease of 387 workers, resulting in a gap of 6,503 workers (650 on average per year).
- The nine occupations with the largest projected workforce gaps account for 36.4% of the total gaps anticipated in this cluster, and all of them overlap with cybersecurity and/or technology and electronics.
- More than half of the top gap occupations require only a high school diploma.

- There are 91 industries within this cluster, with 303 businesses accounting for over 5,800 jobs.
- Nearly 27% of the jobs within this cluster are within production occupations, while 17% are in computer and mathematical occupations, and 12% are within architecture and engineering occupations.

Recent events have exposed the fragility of our global supply chain, forcing massive corrections in global markets. The Mohawk Valley is uniquely poised to capitalize on re-shoring and near-shoring initiatives such as the **CHIPS & Science Act**. Top-class sites, agile worker training programs, and a reserve of untapped talent prime us for success. Our region is now the nexus of New York’s nascent semiconductor corridor.

STEM and Advanced Manufacturing Major Employers

Wolfspeed
Air Force Research Laboratory
Iloxus, Inc.
Semikron Danfoss
Assured Information Security
HMI
Rockwell Collins
Riverhawk
BAE Systems
NYSTEC
Booz Allen Hamilton
Bartell Machinery
Fiber Instrument Sales
Indium Corporation
PAR Technology
Masonic Medical Research Laboratories

STEM-INTENSIVE INDUSTRIES AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING STRATEGY

Build new regional wealth in our technological and STEM-intensive industries in the areas of nanotechnology, cyber technology, and autonomous systems to increase overall employment, grow population, and dramatically increase the region's per capita income.

SPECIFIC GOALS:

- Develop strategic sites for semiconductor and advanced electronics supply chain by leveraging \$45 million in FAST NY funding across six counties by 2025
- Build a 21st century workforce aligned with the region's advanced manufacturing future by strengthening K-12, community college, and university partnerships to support more than 6,000 STEM and Advanced Manufacturing industry jobs over the next 10 years
- Incentivize the modernization of our legacy manufacturing facilities to amplify the growth of our region's industrial base and critical supply chain components
- Facilitate the re-shoring and near-shoring of semiconductors and advanced manufacturing by attracting, leveraging, and maximizing CHIPS & SCIENCE Act funding along the Upstate NY innovation corridor
- Expand investments in cyber and UAS to strengthen national security, commercialize cutting-edge technologies, and grow a culture of innovation in the Mohawk Valley

STEM AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

The Mohawk Valley has seen immense growth in various STEM-intensive industries, like cybersecurity, healthcare and biotechnology, and renewable energy. There is cross-over with the advanced manufacturing industry, as several companies in the region support the manufacturing of components related to science and technology, such as aerospace, defense systems, and advanced electronics.

WORKFORCE

The region's STEM-intensive industries include more than twenty-five identified occupations with current opportunities available. The region's STEM-intensive industries include more than twenty-five identified occupations.

- The median wage for these occupations is \$64,640.
- That's 60% higher than the state median wage \$40,450.
- Professional, Scientific, and Technical services (PS&T) sector jobs are projected to increase 7% by 2028.
- There are currently 5,920 PS&T jobs with an average annual wage of \$71,174.
- Other STEM-intensive industries across the region feature occupations like civil engineering, network and computer systems administrators, and environmental sciences.
- Today, the heavy and civil engineering construction sector provides 673 jobs across the Mohawk Valley with an average annual wage of \$80,577.
- Occupations related to the administration of environmental quality programs contribute 324 jobs with an average annual wage of \$72,207.

STEM JOBS
IN THE MOHAWK VALLEY
PAY A MEDIAN WAGE
60% HIGHER
THAN THE NYS AVERAGE

“If you aren't advanced, you aren't manufacturing. This is the true state of the industry.”
- ANDREW RATCHFORD, SITE SELECTION GROUP

BUILDING A STEM WORKFORCE

Wolfspeed's investment in the Marcy Nanocenter at SUNY Polytechnic Institute marks a pivotal development for the Mohawk Valley Region. The creation of the world's largest silicon carbide wafer fabrication facility is set to realize a cascade of impacts.

This state-of-the-art facility is not just a manufacturing powerhouse; it symbolizes an economic catalyst for the region. The project is expected to generate significant employment opportunities, attracting skilled workers, and fostering job creation, thereby bolstering the local economy. The presence of such a cutting-edge technological hub also positions the Mohawk Valley as an innovation center, likely attracting further research initiatives and tech companies.



Beyond economic growth, the facility's role in producing silicon carbide wafers aligns with the global surge in electric vehicles. This positions the Mohawk Valley at the forefront of the automotive industry's sustainable future. Moreover, the collaborative efforts with educational institutions and community agencies reflect Wolfspeed's commitment to supporting STEM education, fostering local talent, and contributing to the holistic development of the community.

Wolfspeed's investment in education, talent development, and community agencies indicates a broader dedication to the Mohawk Valley's socio-economic progress. This venture is set to have far-reaching impacts, transforming the region into a tech and innovation hub while bolstering the community's economic and social fabric.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Advanced Manufacturing is a major sector in the Mohawk Valley, with proximity to important markers, renowned research and development resources, and incentive programs to assist start-up and expanding enterprises. The region continues to make strides in semiconductor manufacturing. Companies like GlobalFoundries have a presence in the area, contributing to the semiconductor industry's growth. Wolfspeed, Inc., in Marcy is a top American developer and manufacturer of wide-bandgap semiconductors, focused on silicon carbide and gallium nitride materials and devices for power and radio frequency applications such as transportation, power supplies, power inverters, and wireless systems.

- Average wages in the Advanced Manufacturing industry have increased by 30%, from \$43,900 in 2011 to \$57,203 in 2021.
- Total wages for this industry increased by 22% between 2011 and 2021 going from \$759,543,525 to \$927,640,834.
- Job projections for Advanced Manufacturing in 2023 are anticipated to reach 17,903 jobs, with 5-year projected growth of 13%, totaling 20,235 jobs in the manufacturing sector by 2028.
- Over the same period, there has been a steady 14% increase in jobs in both the Advanced Manufacturing and Materials Processing cluster, with a rise in distinct jobs from 3,011 up to 3,446.
- The number of establishments also increased over this time span from 50 in 2011 to 59 in 2021.
- Average wages within both the Advanced Manufacturing and Materials Processing sectors increased across the region, showing 16% growth from \$55,233 in 2011 to \$64,134 in 2021.

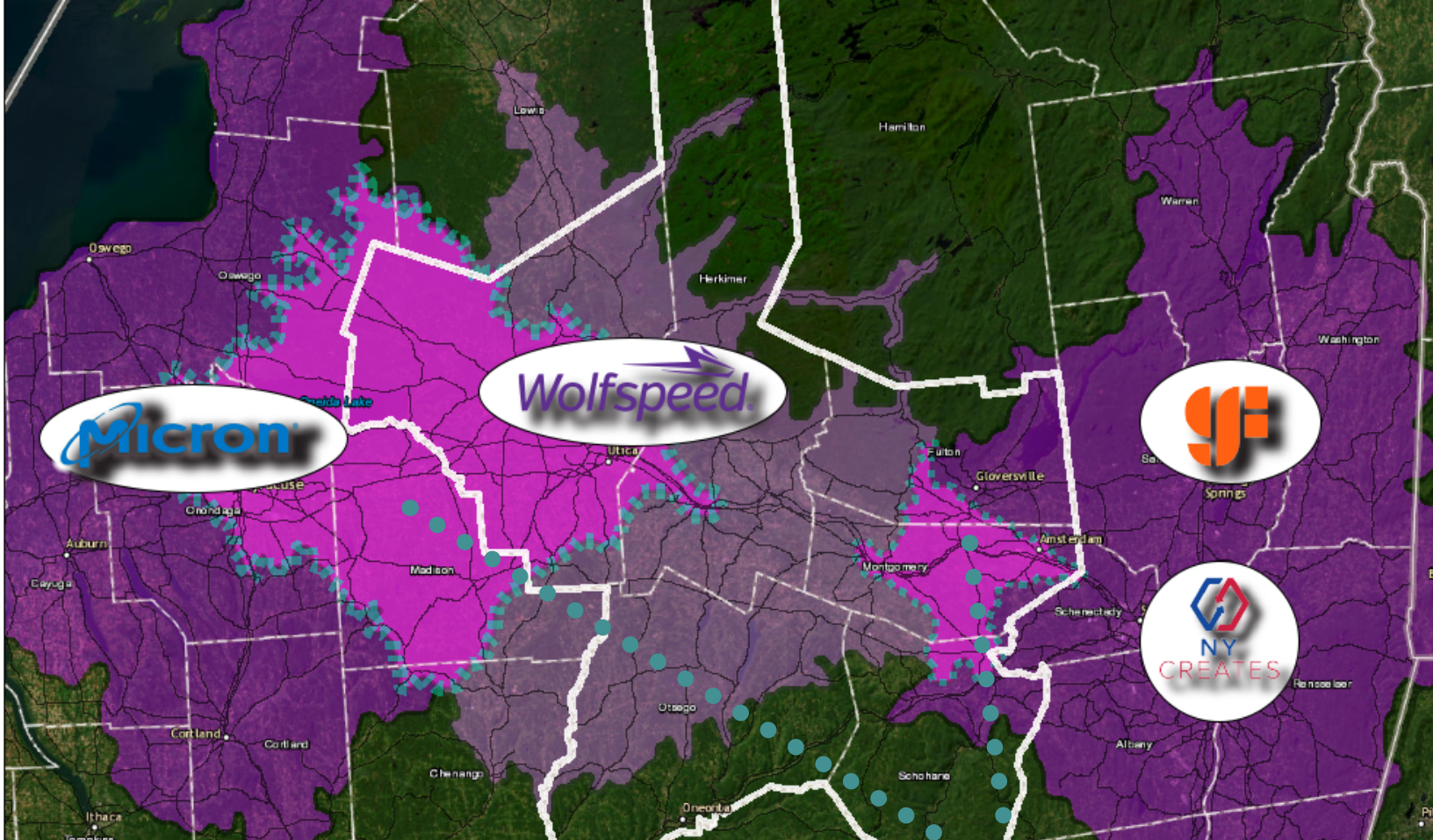
MANUFACTURING DAY AT MVCC ADVANCED INSTITUTE FOR MANUFACTURING (AIM)

Manufacturing Day is held annually in October with events that continue throughout the month. Nationally, manufacturers seek to fill four million high-skill, high-tech, and high-paying jobs over the next decade. Manufacturing Day empowers manufacturers to come together to address their collective challenges and build excitement about manufacturing careers so they can help their communities and future generations thrive.

“Manufacturing Day is about creating awareness for the future workforce regarding the industry and shining a light on the many local companies that make globally recognized products.”
- Cory Albrecht, AIM Director

This year, AIM selected the Rome Free Academy (RFA) in Oneida County and Central Valley Academy (CVA) in Herkimer County for site tours. Worthington Industries in Rome hosted RFA and Tractor Supply Distribution Center in Frankfort hosted CVA. The goal of these tours is to educate students on the importance of manufacturing and to create an interest for working in the manufacturing industry.





DROPPING THE NEW SCIENCE

The map illustrates 60-minute commute times for the largest semiconductor investments in New York State including Micron, Wolfspeed, and GlobalFoundries, emphasizing the Mohawk Valley's critical position in this innovation corridor. Regional education and workforce partners recognize the demand for electrical workers and fabricators, actively targeting attraction and retention efforts for these key occupations. Highlighting the importance of early career development, initiatives start in K-12 schools to raise awareness and provide authentic job training opportunities for students.

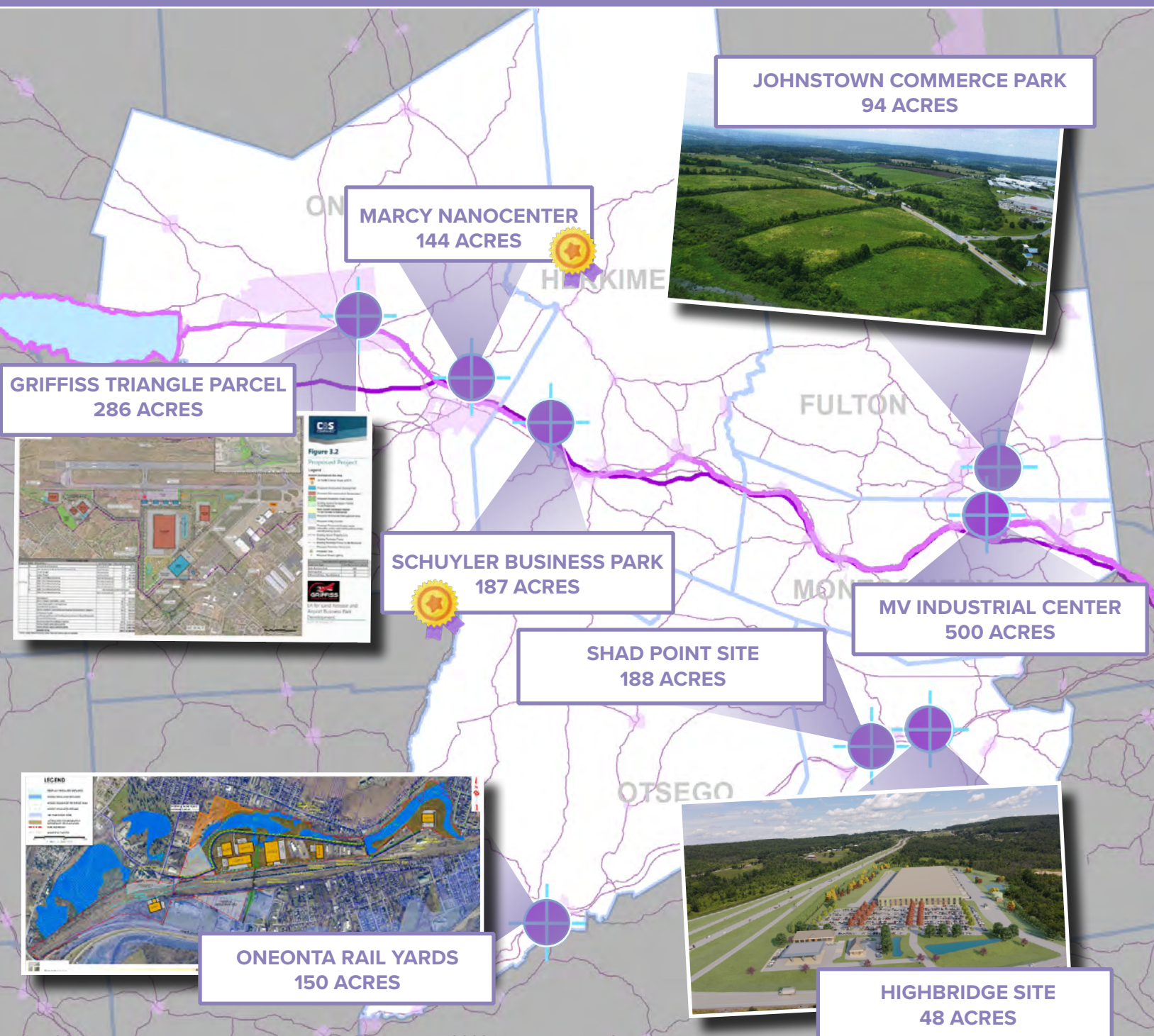
New York State's commitment to the semiconductor industry is evident through strategic initiatives, solidifying its role as a key player in technology advancement and economic growth. Federal legislative support, particularly through the **CHIPS and Science Act**, reinforces the region's semiconductor supply chain, emphasizing New York State's significance in global manufacturing. The momentum strongly favors Upstate New York, with the Mohawk Valley poised to capitalize on this momentum.

These areas - spanning parts of Oneida, Herkimer, Fulton, Montgomery and Schoharie counties - represent the communities with the highest potential for employment, training opportunities and semiconductor supply chain industry growth. This is where the MVREDC is focusing efforts on STEM training programs and developing new FAST NY sites to support advanced industries.



FAST NY - SHOVEL READY PROGRAM

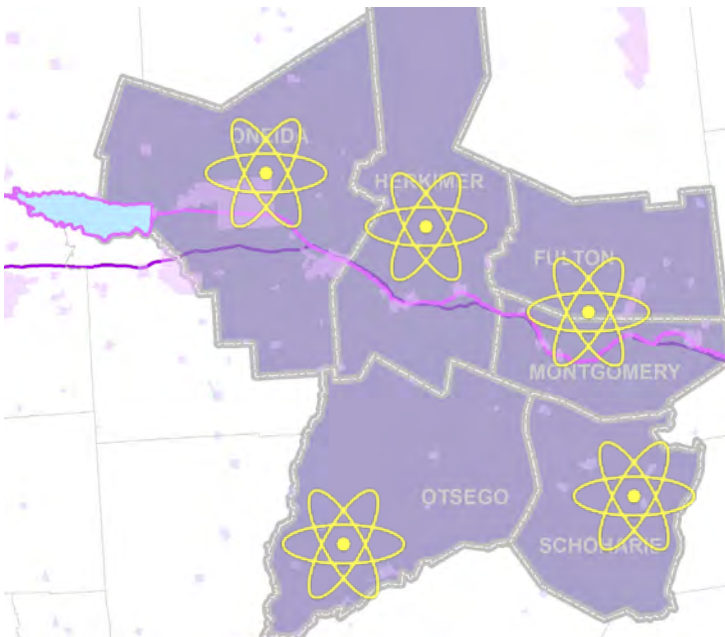
The Mohawk Valley Region is taking full advantage of Empire State Development's FAST NY - Shovel Ready Grant Program. **With over 1,400 acres of development-ready sites**, our region aims to play a vital role in the Empire State's advanced manufacturing ecosystem and semiconductor supply chain. Marcy Nanocenter and Schuyler Business Park have already **secured over \$18 million in funding**, attracting next-gen advanced manufacturing and clean-tech companies, with six more sites currently in the pipeline either awaiting funding or completed applications. New York is making the necessary investments early on, which enhances the competitiveness of developable sites and is critical to securing new businesses and more jobs in the long-run.



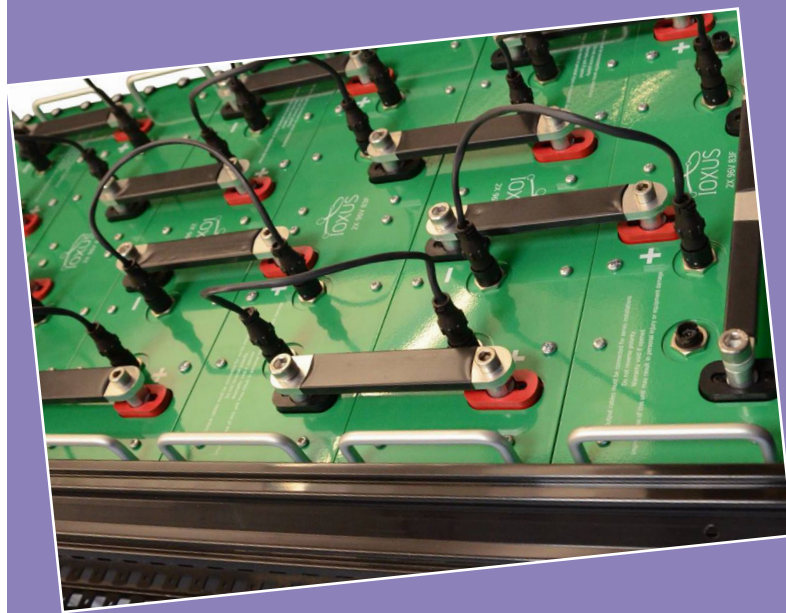
CLEAN TECH AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

The region is exploring opportunities in renewable energy, particularly in the development of wind and solar energy projects. These initiatives aim to harness the region's natural resources for sustainable power generation.

Each of the six counties across the Mohawk Valley hosts a variety of clean energy-related occupations, which typically falls under five sub-technology categories: Energy Efficiency, Renewable Electric Power Generation, Alternative Transportation, Grid Modernization and Storage, and Renewable Fuels. Employment in these occupations typically fall under energy sectors such as Transmission, Distribution and Storage, and Motor Vehicle Technology. Some energy sector jobs experienced impressive job growth through 2020, with 22% growth in Renewable Fuels, and 20% growth in Renewable Electric Power Generation.



Kris-Tech Wire is investing \$12M+ in alternative energy supply chain.



CLEAN TECH SPOTLIGHT: IOXUS

The looming global energy crisis is calling for renewable and lasting energy sources, which will eventually replace fossil fuels. Ultracapacitors are an important part of the solution to store and recycle energy. Our systems have the unique ability to temporarily store a large amount of energy and power provided by the cyclical nature of solar, wind, and wave type systems.

Otsego Now is working with IOXUS on their continued expansion, which will energize their lithium battery and ultracapacitor production, resulting in the creation of 31 new clean tech jobs in the Mohawk Valley, with the assistance of CDBG Economic Development and Microenterprise funding.

This map illuminates the clean tech and clean energy ecosystem in the Mohawk Valley and how they strengthen the future of our strategic industries. Known as the Copper City, Rome companies such as Revere Copper, Kris-Tech Wire, International Wire Group, and others are supplying the renewable energy, transportation, and commercial building sectors (or basically the copper infrastructure that supplies EVERYTHING). In Marcy, Wolfspeed and Semikron Danfoss are enabling the electrification of the automotive industry. In Canajoharie, E29 Labs is committed to renewable energy systems to power their state-of-the-art cannabis production and research and development campus. In Schoharie, farmers, producers and agritourism entrepreneurs are adopting clean energy and sustainable agricultural practices to modernize their operations. And in Otsego County, IOXUS is producing the ultracapacitors, lithium batteries, and system components that will secure our region's – and nation's – clean energy future.



“

I get to break barriers as a woman and minority in engineering.”

Christiana Atuboyedia PROGRAM MANAGER

INNOVARE ASPIRE

INNOVARE ASPIRE SERIES

The Air Force Research Laboratory's Information Directorate partners with industry, academic, and other public and private organizations for the Innovare Aspire Series. The Information Directorate (RI) is the Air Force's and nation's premier research organization for Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence (C4I) and Cyber technologies. The directorate develops technologies from the ground up that transform data into information and knowledge for key decision makers.

The Innovare Aspire Series seeks to bring together diverse organizations and skillsets to address specific United States Air Force and United States Space Force in these strategic areas:

- Quantum Information Science
- AI and Machine Learning
- Cybersecurity and Cyber Operations
- Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)

Their goal is to organize and motivate these diverse teams to address technical challenges and deliver solutions that enhance American competitiveness.

CYBERSECURITY

With the increasing importance of cybersecurity, some companies in the Mohawk Valley are focused on providing cybersecurity solutions and services to protect critical infrastructure and sensitive data.

Assured Information Security, Inc. (AIS) will invest in the AIS headquarter facility in Rome to increase operations and technical capabilities in support of future growth. Additional cybersecurity jobs will be created.

Air Structures American Technologies Inc. manufactures air-supported structures for both industrial and recreational applications. The company has outgrown its existing manufacturing facilities and requires additional space to produce larger size and greater volumes of structures. This expansion will increase production enabling them to keep up with increasing industry demand and hire new employees.

UAS

The Mohawk Valley is a hub for unmanned aerial systems (UAS) testing and development. One of the key facilities in the region is the New York UAS Test Site at Griffiss International Airport in Rome. This site is part of the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) UAS Integration Pilot Program and has been instrumental in advancing UAS technology and applications.

The Griffiss Test Site offers a controlled and secure environment for testing various aspects of UAS, including drone traffic management, beyond visual line of sight (BVLOS) operations, and UAS integration into the national airspace. It collaborates with industry partners, government agencies, and academic institutions to conduct research and development in UAS technology.

UAS testing in the Mohawk Valley has contributed to the growth of the UAS industry, with applications ranging from agriculture and transportation to emergency response and surveillance. These developments have paved the way for the safe and efficient integration of drones into various sectors.

Regional Strategic Plan

Agribusiness and Food Systems

STRATEGY: AGRIBUSINESS AND FOOD SYSTEMS

Boasting some of the nation's richest and most fertile soil, agriculture stands as a significant industry with a longstanding history in the Mohawk Valley and is the cornerstone of NY's Food Ecosystem. Ninety-two industries are represented in the Food Ecosystem with 429 businesses accounting for more than 7,201 jobs. Therefore, the Mohawk Valley is well positioned to meet the growing interest of investment in America's Food Ecosystem.

Farming and its support services are big business in the Mohawk Valley with the annual market value of all agricultural products sold by farmers topping \$350 million. There are nearly 3,760 individual farms and more than 702,000 acres of farmland. 80 farms are family owned and operated with almost 100 farms selling food directly to consumers. Together, these farms have added \$20.5 million in annual wages to the local economy and continue to draw visitors and businesses to the region. Additionally, agriculture also uniquely and positively affects not only the economy, but is vital to the region's rural landscape, community character, natural environment, and health.

FOOD PROCESSING

Agribusiness and food processing are key regional concentrations for opportunity in the Mohawk Valley. Currently, clusters within the Food Ecosystem such as Food Manufacturing have 2,346 jobs and average annual wage of \$56,165. Another cluster which highlights the industry's contribution to the Mohawk Valley Region's economy is the Beverage and Tobacco product manufacturing sector. This sector as of Q1 2023 contributes 420 jobs with an average annual wage of \$45,066 across the region.

FOOD ECOSYSTEM AT A GLANCE



92 INDUSTRIES



429 BUSINESSES



EXISTING SUPPORT NETWORK



7200+ JOBS



9% PROJECTED JOB GROWTH

AGRIBUSINESS AND FOOD SYSTEMS STRATEGY

The Mohawk Valley will play a pivotal role in propelling Upstate New York as the food basket of America. As global and domestic food systems are faced with drought, natural disasters, and supply chain disruptions, we are well positioned to serve a burgeoning demand for sustainably produced craft foods and beverages to domestic and international markets. Our proximity to major global consumer markets heralds a remarkable expansion that will grow jobs, preserve farmland, improve food security, and stimulate agribusiness entrepreneurialism.

SPECIFIC GOALS:

- Optimize agribusiness production and distribution systems in order to ensure more of the food consumed in the region is locally produced, and increase the region's prominence as a food supply hub for the Northeast to retain a larger share of revenue in local communities and agribusinesses, sustaining the economic health of the Mohawk Valley
- Invest in next-generation farmers and close the skills gap between hard-to-place workers and agricultural, craft brewing, and food processing opportunities
- Create an environment for innovation and entrepreneurship in agribusiness and agrisciences by expanding microcredential programs, sustainable farming practices, and alternative energy deployment
- Increase regional food and dairy processing capacity by incentivizing construction of distributed modern facilities and logistics operations across the region

FARM AND FOOD TRENDS

As New York State's biggest economic sector, dairy farming is a prominent aspect of agriculture throughout the state and the Mohawk Valley, ranking first in the nation in the production of yogurt, cottage cheese, and sour cream. Despite these accolades, small dairy farms continue to struggle to compete in a "get big or get out" competitive landscape; some have turned to self-processing, co-packers, and value-added product creation. In addition, the region also cultivates a variety of crops, including corn, wheat, soybeans, apples, and vegetables.

In response to evolving economic and environmental factors, farms in the Mohawk Valley have embraced diversification as a strategic approach. The Mohawk Valley has witnessed a shift in farming practices with many farmers expanding into niche markets such as value-added products, organic or specialty crops, artisanal products, or direct to consumer sales. Some farms have also incorporated agritourism initiatives by opening their doors to the public for activities like farm tours, festivals, and on-site experiences. These diversification efforts not only contribute to the sustainability of individual farms, but also add to the community character while enhancing the resilience of the Mohawk Valley's agricultural sector.

Food System businesses, such as major harvesting and distribution centers, contribute to the local economy, providing employment opportunities and supporting farmers.

Each county hosts various farmer's markets and agricultural fairs, where local producers can sell their goods directly to consumers. These events promote the "farm-to-table" movement and encourage community engagement with local growers and producers.

WORKFORCE

Agribusiness and Food Systems are key industry sectors for the region. The Mohawk Valley cultivates food and beverage enterprises, distribution, and sustainable practices.

There is a projected 9% increase in the labor force employed in the top Agribusiness vocations by 2032. Nearly 20% of the Food Ecosystem jobs are in production, while 14% are in transportation and material moving occupations, and 14% are in management.

Only two of the top gap occupations require post-secondary education. Therefore, Agribusiness and Food Systems is a great opportunity for new Americans, youth, and other job seekers to gain entry-level roles and career advancement in the Mohawk Valley.

INSTITUTE FOR RURAL VITALITY SERVING ENTREPRENEURIAL NEEDS

The Institute for Rural Vitality at SUNY Cobleskill will continue to serve farm and food businesses as a part of meeting the entrepreneurial needs of startup and existing companies in Fulton, Herkimer, Montgomery, Oneida, Otsego, and Schoharie counties and beyond. We will continue to organize and manage the following business support services: Business Planning; Marketing Planning; Financial Planning; Access to Capital; Product Development, Food Safety & Regulations; Process Development; Scale Assistance; Wholesale Planning; Quality Control; Online Marketing & Social Media; Branding; Advertising; Packaging; Land Access; and Legal Support.

BELOW: High school students take part in the IRV Summer Camp at SUNY Cobleskill.



CHALLENGES

- The Agriculture industry is facing challenges managing greenhouse emissions due to factors such as livestock methane production, fertilizer use, and land-use changes requiring sustainable practices to address environmental concerns.
- Farmers need on-going assistance in the market driven transformation of agriculture.
- Aging labor force,

OPPORTUNITIES

- The food processing industry offers diverse employment opportunities from production and quality control to research and development.
- Agritourism provides an opportunity for community engagement and economic growth through agricultural activities. Significant opportunities exist in agritourism to leverage agriculture's rich heritage and scenic views to provide unique farm experiences.
- Carbon neutral or carbon negative agriculture provides opportunities to not only reduce carbon emissions but also actively sequestering carbon in the soil, offering a sustainable pathway to address climate change, enhance soil health, and create resilient farming practices.

FOOD ECOSYSTEM SUPPORT

There is an extensive Food Ecosystem network in the Mohawk Valley for future Investors. A plethora of services are provided by the Center for Agricultural Development and Entrepreneurship (CADE), Cornell Cooperative Extension, Hartwick Center for Craft Food and Beverage, Hartwick Grain Innovation Center, the Innovation Acceleration Center, The Institute for Rural Vitality, and SUNY Cobleskill. The support includes: business mentoring; product development; access to invaluable services and resources such as a creamery, meat and fish processing facilities, commercial kitchens, brewing/distilling labs, and a food packaging lab; individualized support and mentoring; instructional programming; micro-credentials; networking services; and support aimed at strengthening the resilience and sustainability provide farm and food entrepreneurs with priceless knowledge and resources for expanding and improving their enterprises.

In the Agribusiness space, partnerships between community centers, educational institutions, and employers foster a continuous labor force. Immersive summer

camp experiences for high school students at SUNY Cobleskill introduce Agribusiness concepts through education, exploration, and community-building.

CADE provides services and resources to small and mid-sized farms, including education on climate smart and sustainable farming. In a region with some of the most rich, fertile soil in the nation, farming is a major industry, with a long history; however smaller farms are struggling to compete in a “get big or get out” landscape. Dairy farms are vying for local processors, or subsidies, to counter growing transportation costs that eat up their entire profit.

Industrial farming systems produce abundant food for the global market, yet often cause significant soil erosion, biodiversity losses, and pollution of freshwater. Agriculture contributes 23% of human sourced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, of which the livestock sector represents 14.5% (UN). Yet climate smart agriculture and forestry practices can store vast amounts of carbon in soil and plants and improve soil and plant health—making them the most powerful solution to the climate crisis, and the only proven method of removing carbon from the atmosphere.

In 2022, CADE launched a pilot mentoring program on climate smart farming practices based in Otsego, Schoharie, and Delaware counties in partnership with the Young Farmer's Coalition and the USDA. The goal is to empower the next generation of farmers with the tools, skills, market connections, and relationships necessary to achieve sustainability, profitability, and culture change in this strategic industry for the Mohawk Valley.

“New York happens to be strategically located on a little corner of the globe that will continue to be water abundant. New York has a history of agricultural production with the potential for scaling up, so in sum, New York State CAN be America's food shed to feed the Northeast corridor by 2050.”

-Phoebe Schreiner,
Executive Director, CADE Farms



E29 LABS SUBMITS APPLICATION FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL CANNABIS PROCESSING FACILITY IN CANAJOHARIE

After years of both state and county investment to prep the former Beech-Nut Foods site in Canajoharie for its redevelopment as a modern economic engine for our area, E29 Labs, a transformational cannabis cultivation and processing company co-founded by Shelley and Sheldon Roberts and industry veteran Michael Dundas, was among the first to file its application with New York State's Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) upon the opening of the application portal.

The application for the new industry is the next step in a multi-year process for the company, which entered into a Purchase-and-Sale Agreement (PSA) with the Montgomery County Business Development Center in 2021, with the goal of building a state-of-the-art cultivation facility on the eastern portion of the former Beech-Nut property. E29 Labs' proposal would create 110 jobs and inject over \$15 million in improvements into the long vacant property.

"E29 Labs is well positioned to be a market leader in New York's new commercial cannabis growth and processing industry, bringing years of knowledge, best practices, and commercial success to this operation. This project has the potential to create hundreds of jobs and reinvigorate the economy of one of our historic river towns. We are excited about its potential and appreciate the widespread community support we've received throughout the planning and design process,"

said Sheldon Roberts, President of E29 Labs, one of the nation's leading African American entrepreneurs in the growing industry.

Redevelopment of the NYS Thruway Exit 29 site, with a focus on creating good-paying manufacturing jobs and new tax revenue, has been a priority for the County and the Business Development Center. New York State has already deployed over \$6 million into the redevelopment of the former Beech-Nut property through the Restore New York program.

"This is a big moment for Montgomery County that is a long time in coming. E29 Labs' project has the potential to create good-paying jobs in a community that is ready for those new opportunities. It would reinvigorate the community in Canajoharie and maximize the State's existing investment in the site in a way that sets it up for sustained success. E29's team of professionals have quickly become a part of this community, working closely with stakeholders to prepare for this opportunity. We are enthusiastic about their proposal and application," said Ken Rose, CEO of the Montgomery County Business Development Center.



SHELLEY ROBERTS
Chief Executive Officer



SHELDON ROBERTS
President



DAKOTA PIPPINS
Director



MICHAEL DUNDAS
Vice President



Regulated cannabis production is a sophisticated industrial use that employs varying levels of labor skill. The company expects to employ up to 125 individuals in well-paying positions including: agricultural experts, laboratory technicians, inventory & logistics specialists, supply chain experts, product formulation and manufacturing specialists, business managers, human resource leaders, salespeople, accountants, and marketing professionals, among others. Expansion could see an additional 150 employees. To create a qualified, local workforce, E29 Labs has engaged with Fulton-Montgomery Community College (FMCC), signing an education opportunity agreement with the college that will build on existing Individual Studies certificates and micro-credential within the cannabis field.

Regional Strategic Plan

Tourism

STRATEGY: TOURISM

The Mohawk Valley boasts a thriving Tourism industry, blending natural beauty, historical sites, recreation, and cuisine. Regional tourism has seen a huge resurgence in the last two years, with counties in the Mohawk Valley yielding the highest visitor spending in Upstate New York, at approximately \$4.3 billion for 2022. This represents 23.6% growth over 2021, and an astounding 153% in growth over challenging 2019 numbers.

Lodging, Food and Beverage, and Retail subsectors comprise nearly 80% of annual visitor spending and numbers are anticipated to increase with state and local investments in key attractions, such as Doubleday Field, (awarded \$3M by MVREDC), and the new, state-of-the-art Nexus Center (awarded \$22M by MVREDC), which combined attract nearly 3.8 million visitors annually.

Industry establishments employ nearly 30,000 residents, including top employer, the Oneida Indian Nation, with over 4,500 employees. In 2022, the Leisure and Hospitality sector gained 500 new jobs, illustrating the upward trajectory for Mohawk Valley tourism. In the same year, each household in the region saved an average of \$1,341 due to the tax revenue generated by Tourism, meaningful savings in a time of economic recovery.

Impact of Tourism in the Mohawk Valley:

- Tourism accounts for 14.4% of jobs in the region.
- These jobs are estimated to add \$1.7 million in annual wages to the local economy.
- Most tourism jobs have a low barrier to entry with 35% of job postings requiring a high school diploma and 70% requiring no previous experience.
- Commonly listed skills in job postings include housekeeping, restaurant operation, and customer service skills.
- Industry employers expressed the need for upskilling through certificate and associate degree programs.



Ribbon cutting at Doubleday Field

Visitor spending and tourism-related employment hit nearly \$5 billion last year, resulting in 37,000 jobs and 118% growth over two years.

Service economy jobs tend to be seasonal and lower-paying than manufacturing, professional, or technical positions. However, they are still a crucial step on the career path and vital to the region. Entry-level tourism workers face fewer traditional barriers to entry into the workforce and the experience earned provides people with the opportunity to participate in the economy, while gaining valuable life and employment skills. Our workforce strategy, integrated throughout this Plan, ensures that opportunities continue beyond entry-level, and into middle-skills jobs.

TOURISM STRATEGY

The Mohawk Valley is among the fastest-growing tourism destinations in NY. Our diverse tourism ecosystem accounts for greater than \$5 billion in direct spending in the Mohawk Valley and continues to attract visitors from across America and around the globe. Massive investments in adventure tourism, sports entertainment, and international resorts have fueled unprecedented growth and job creation. Our strategy will build on these assets to expand external revenue and wealth transfer to our region.

SPECIFIC GOALS:

- Incentivize craft food and beverage expansion and tourism promotion initiatives to strengthen these industry concentrations and create new job opportunities by leveraging NYS programs
- Create a path to prosperity for sidelined workers, refugees, and new immigrants by providing flexible, innovative, individualized educational and training opportunities with wraparound services
- Enable an entrepreneurial ecosystem doubling the number of agribusiness-based microcredential programs offered at regional colleges and universities
- Double down on international destination marketing, adventure tourism landscapes, and sports tourism facilities to establish a true four-season family tourism ecosystem



Find inspiration in nature. Situated in the Mohawk River Valley, nestled in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains, our region boasts numerous state parks and hiking trails. Outdoor enthusiasts enjoy opportunities to boat, fish, hike, and camp amid the region's tranquil landscape. Meander through enchanting, wooded trails leading to magnificent waterfalls, and embark on scenic journeys along the Erie Canal or the Adirondack Railroad.



Herkimer Diamond Mines KOA Resort is a 163-site campground located on 265 acres in Herkimer County. The resort is undergoing a multiphase expansion project with 98 new camping sites offering themed, high-end “glamping” lodges and tents, fully equipped RV sites, and additional family-friendly recreational activities.

According to the 2022 American Camping Report, 40% of all leisure trips in 2021 were camping. Increased tourism generates significant regional sales tax revenue, spurs additional business, and adds to the quality of life for year-round residents. This project would expand on an already existing international destination for tourists.

SUCCESS OF NEXUS

Sports and Adventure Tourism are driving our record-breaking growth in Tourism – particularly in terms of visitor spending. Our international, family-oriented attractions work in harmony across the six counties – from Howe Caverns to Cooperstown to the Turning Stone, and now to the NEXUS Center in downtown Utica, which attracts nearly 150,000 sports enthusiasts annually– all connected to the historic Adirondack Bank Center at the Utica Memorial Auditorium. The facilities host American Hockey League, Major Arena Soccer League, lacrosse, professional women's hockey, collegiate teams, and countless indoor tournaments on a year-round basis, attracting more than 510,400 visitors, combined, to the Mohawk Valley. No matter the tournament outcome, everyone wins: local businesses, families, tax coffers, and surrounding attractions across the region.



LIGHTEN UP

"Market New York" is designed to stimulate tourism and economic development in the state by providing funding for marketing, facility improvements, special events, and the promotion of agritourism and craft beverage tourism.

"Perfect Pairing": BREWERY OMMEGANG & FARMERS MUSEUM GLIMMER NIGHTS

Ommegang will develop a marketing plan to increase awareness and drive traffic to the Tap House through a comprehensive and targeted approach to social media and marketing. Their overall approach for promoting the Taphouse will be to create a strong brand presence and engage potential customers through a combination of social media, content marketing, and event promotion. They will focus on creating a unique and immersive experience for customers, highlighting the Taphouse's unique offerings and atmosphere. CFA #131264 Market NY

The Farmers' Museum (TFM) will execute a major promotional campaign to publicize and grow Glimmer Nights, an electrifying six-week holiday light show that will bring tens of thousands of visitors to Cooperstown every season. Set to debut in December of 2023, this annual attraction is expected to extend the tourism season in Otsego County and the Mohawk Valley Region well beyond the typical tourist season. CFA #127222 Market NY

Pairing: Filling the glass on the total Cooperstown experience to attract a global audience, boost visitor spending in the region, and capitalize on some of the Mohawk Valley's most unique assets and extend the season to year-round family enjoyment.

Strategic Alignment: Tourism.



\$74M
MOHAWK VALLEY
CRAFT BREWING INDUSTRY
TOTAL WAGES



Tap house at Ommegang Brewing, Cooperstown

CRAFT BEVERAGE

Alcoholic beverage manufacturing has changed, especially in New York State — in fact, no state has done more to assist and promote the craft beverage industry. To benefit the growing number of independent brewers, vintners, and distillers, we've worked collaboratively with the industry to transform our laws and add business-friendly legislation, including farm-based manufacturing licenses and tax incentives. The result is a renaissance in craft production throughout the state. Wineries, breweries, distilleries and cideries abound, their numbers keep climbing, and the trend is expected to continue thanks to the State's focus on this industry.

New York State is home to more than 535 breweries, a national leader according to the New York State Brewers Association. Its 2018 study reports that breweries in New York generate an economic impact of \$5.4 billion and support more than 20,000 jobs, making the craft beverage industry a pillar of the state's economy. New York also ranks in the top five in the U.S. for its number of craft beverage producers in every category, second in craft distillers and breweries, and fourth in the country for the total number of wineries.

ADVENTURE AND SPORTS TOURISM

Sports tourism in the Mohawk Valley is hitting it out of the park. State investments of more than \$5 million at Doubleday Field are making way for the first major repairs and renovations since 1939. Across the way, at the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum, fans from across the globe will flock to see the newly announced Japanese baseball exhibit that coincides with Ichiro Suzuki's first year of eligibility for election into the Hall of Fame. Known simply as "Ichiro" by baseball fans around the world, his induction will celebrate the legacy of Japanese American baseball and drive sports tourism to the region from both domestic and international markets. CFA # 130021 Market NY

CULTURE AND HERITAGE TOURISM

In recent years, culture and heritage tourism in the Mohawk Valley has experienced a vibrant resurgence, with numerous exciting developments that celebrate the region's rich history and cultural diversity. The local museums have taken center stage, expanding their exhibits and offerings to provide visitors with more interactive and engaging experiences. Notably, the Mohawk Valley History Center and the Erie Canal Museum in Utica have upgraded their displays, shedding light on the historical significance of the Erie Canal and the region as a whole.

The Mohawk Valley has also become a hub for cultural festivals that showcase its diverse heritage, including

Italian, Irish, and Native American traditions. These events bring the community together with traditional food, music, and art, offering a deep dive into the cultural tapestry of the area. Historical reenactments, guided heritage tours, and cultural workshops have gained popularity, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in the region's history and traditions. Public art installations, a growing focus on collaborating with Indigenous communities, and the development of historical trails have further enriched the cultural and heritage tourism landscape. These recent initiatives invite visitors to explore and engage with the Mohawk Valley's heritage in fresh and captivating ways, fostering a deeper connection to its history and culture.



Top :Visitors at Fort Stanwix National Monument in Rome
Middle: Snowmobilers in Herkimer County
Bottom: Youth baseball tournament in Otsego County



ONEIDA INDIAN NATION ENTERTAINMENT ENDEAVORS

The Oneida Indian Nation has revealed a monumental \$370 million investment plan for Turning Stone Resort Casino, marking the most substantial transformation in two decades. This ambitious project goes beyond expansion, envisioning a complete evolution of the premier resort destination in the region. Teaming up with renowned architects at Gensler, the Nation is set to commence this extensive two-year project early next year. Alongside the \$370 million reinvestment, this Turning Stone evolution is projected to generate a staggering \$616 million one-time economic impact, create 3,600 one-time jobs, and contribute \$22.1 million in state and local tax revenues.

An analysis by Oxford Economics reported that in 2022 alone, Turning Stone and the Oneida Indian Nation's other enterprises generated a remarkable \$1 billion economic impact in the region, annually supporting over 7,000 jobs, including 4,500 Nation employees.

The core of this transformation centers around the construction of a cutting-edge 77,000-square-foot conference center, effectively doubling the existing conference space. This expansion introduces eight new meeting rooms, two ballrooms (including a 30,000-square-foot Grand Ballroom with a terrace overlooking the Shenandoah Golf Course and The Lodge's Great Lawn), an outdoor courtyard with three event spaces, and a new indoor parking garage with 2,000 parking spaces, offering seamless access to the conference center. When completed, these new facilities will establish Turning Stone as Upstate New York's largest convention center, one of just three in the state of similar size and caliber. This addition is expected to extend the resort's reach, broaden its marketing influence, and attract larger and more prestigious organizations and events from the Mid-Atlantic region and New England.



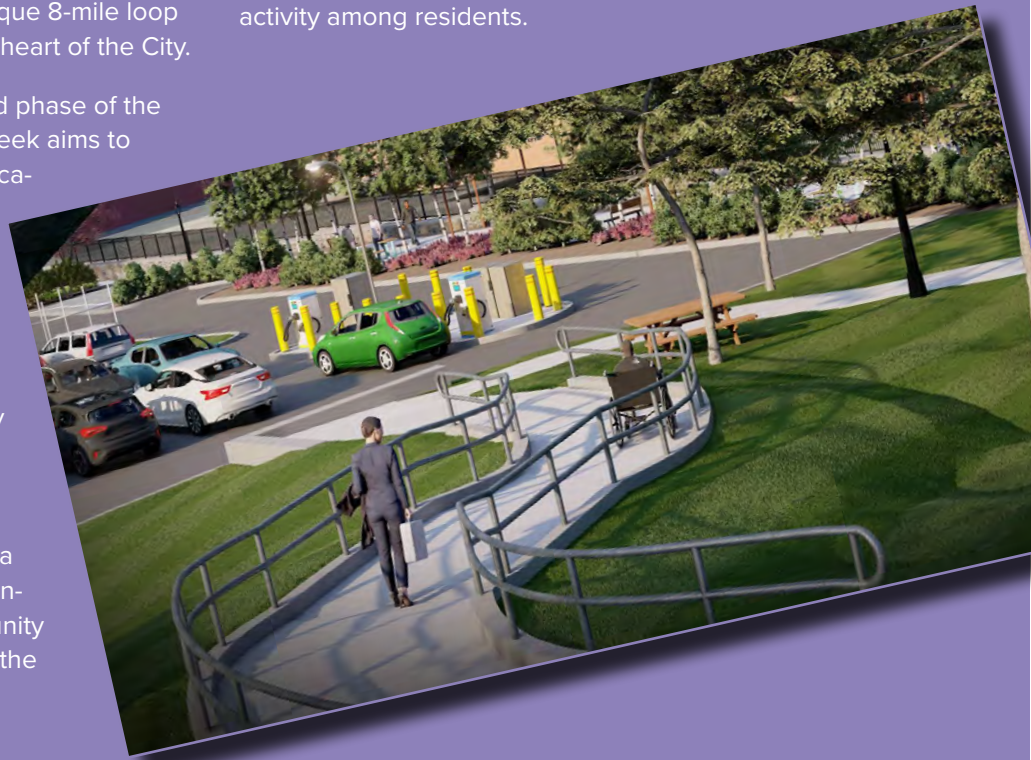
The Villages at Stoney Creek, Verona

CHUCTANUNDA CREEK TRAIL

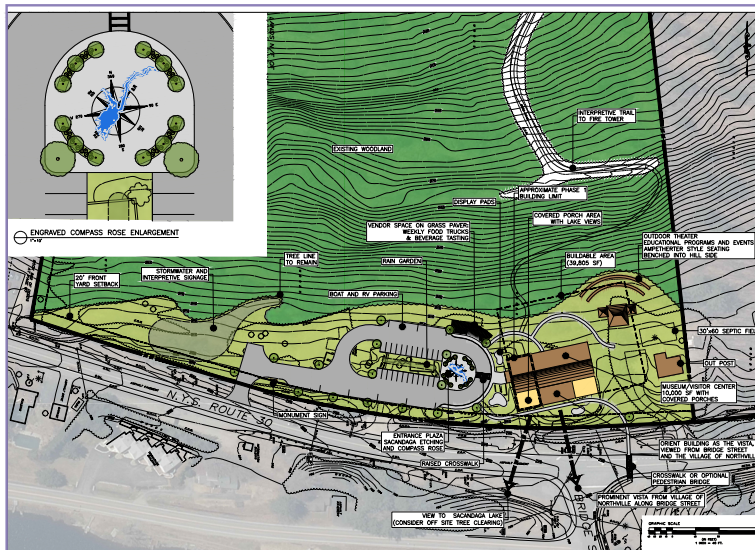
The Chuctanunda Creek Trail is a bicycle and pedestrian-friendly trail in Amsterdam that meanders past waterfalls, bridges, and dams. Nature combined with the City's urban setting makes for a unique 8-mile loop from the Mohawk River up through the heart of the City.

The proposed investment in the second phase of the interpretive trail along Chuctanunda Creek aims to create an attractive recreation and educational experience along the path. It will connect the downtown area to important historic destinations and a well-established recreation area to the north, boosting tourism and making the downtown more accessible. As the trail's popularity grows, private property owners are expected to invest in their properties to cater to trailgoers, which could include building rehabilitation or redevelopment. The trail also provides a rare green recreational area in the downtown, enhancing the residential community and promoting physical activity among the City's residents.

The Chuctanunda Trail project's significance lies in its dual role as a recreational and educational asset for the City of Amsterdam, revitalizing the area's appeal and connectivity. The trail's presence as a green space in the downtown area will contribute to community growth and promote physical activity among residents.



GREAT SACANDAGA LAKE MUSEUM



proposal to construct a state-of-the-art museum that brings the documentary to life. Leveraging both state and federal investments, museum concepts include a rotunda, featuring a true-to-scale replica of the Sacandaga Valley prior to flooding, “Ghosts of the Hamlets” exhibits and videos, “Coney Island of the North” (former Sport Island and Sacandaga Park), Conkingville Dam – an engineering marvel, natural resources habitat, outdoor recreation, theatre, conference room, and administrative spaces.

The complete Great Sacandaga Lake History Museum promises to be a premier destination, attracting visitors to the Fulton County area. In its 2026 Development Strategy, the county identified a priority goal of revitalizing the economy through tourism. To achieve this goal, the

Fulton County is undertaking a project to feature the incredible history of the Great Sacandaga Lake. Created in 1930, the lake is a manmade body of water built to mitigate flooding that occurred along Hudson River communities. A 2017 feature documentary “Harnessing Nature: Building the Great Sacandaga” inspired a

plan seeks to develop additional historic, cultural and entertainment venues; and to leverage the Great Sacandaga Lake’s attractiveness. The Great Sacandaga Lake History Museum will be a major step to meeting these objectives, while highlighting the amazing history of the 29-mile engineering marvel.

TIME FOR LIVING: THE EMPIRE SKATE

Human Technologies will construct a \$105M+ project to provide 250 units of affordable housing for residents from formerly homeless to 80% Area Median Income (AMI), inclusive of veterans. A new commercial district will be created with public waterfront plaza access, including a 4,000 SF childcare facility. The project is 100% electric with 412 kw of solar.

Just a few feet down the Empire Trail is a special project that eclipsed all participation records in MVREDC CFA history, garnering more than 1,300 support letters and raising more than \$150,000 from 1,100 individual donors. The City of Rome, in partnership with the SFM Skatepark Project and Rome Community Foundation, will construct a destination-class, modern, concrete skatepark on the former General Cable Rod Mill site on the Canal in downtown Rome.

Pairing Notes: Both projects are situated within a few hundred feet, in the Downtown Rome Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA), straddling Rome's two most impoverished, disadvantaged neighborhoods. Together, they provide affordable, accessible, safe, healthy, high-quality places for families to live and play. Together, these projects will redevelop vacant brownfields on the banks of the canal, and activate the blighted waterfront with youth, vibrancy, and life.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

Workforce Housing, Childcare, Brownfields, Waterfront, Tourism, Clean Energy, and Veterans and Individuals with Disabilities.





Participation

Conversations. Council Meetings. Summits. Zooms. Road trips. Conferences.

Each year since 2011, the institutional lines separating our counties become less visible, and our collaborative relationships with NY State agencies continue to bear fruit. This year, we stuck to a successful blend of in-person and virtual meetings, summits, and site visits to gain a deeper understanding of industry and community needs. The REDC process and state agency support has given us new tools to tackle the issues facing our communities and industries. And we're going to need all of them as we face some of our most daunting challenges to date.



PUBLIC OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

WORKGROUPS

Workgroups, from the beginning, have been the fundamental, core groups that advise the MVREDC strategic planning process, ensure successful project implementation, and bring to light the ever-changing issues in our region. Our workgroups provide continuity in strategy, resources for our many partner agencies, and a sounding board for new ideas.

In 2023, our MVREDC workgroups were:

- Project Development
- Agribusiness and Food Systems
- Tourism
- STEM-Intensive Industries and Advanced Manufacturing
- Access to Child Care
- Environmental Justice and Vibrant Communities
- Workforce Development
- Higher Education

INDUSTRY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

This year, a host of MVREDC-supported, uniquely Mohawk Valley events took place across the region, including summits, fairs, presentations, and virtual conversations. Here is a sampling of what we've been up to in 2023:

- Manufacturing Fair
- Department of State Small Communities Webinars
- MVEDGE interviews with business owners
- 2023 Brownfield Developers Summit
- Workforce Development Summit
- Community Convening
- DOS Webinar: How to Attract Business & Investment in your Downtown
- ANCA Webinar: Brownfields Basics Workshop
- Mohawk Valley Economic Development Leaders Six-County Summit
- Joint EDO Upstate Road Trip



PROJECT DEVELOPMENT WORKGROUP

The Project Development Committee is the nerve center of the MVREDC. Represented by the six major EDOs in the region, this is where engagement meets strategy: each member transforming ideas into viable projects and, ultimately, CFA applications.

This committee meets the most regularly, and most recently as a six-county summit; whereby economic development organizations (EDOs) and county officials convened to discuss issues and solutions facing their constituents. Prior to the formation of the REDCs, this never would have happened. But today, this is becoming more and more regular – and eagerly anticipated. As one might expect, common struggles related to workforce, housing, shovel-ready sites, child care, and inflation dominated the discussion.

But do not mistake this summit as some perfunctory exercise or collective airing of grievances; this was a solutions-based summit, and after two hours, the group emerged with targeted strategies to improve the overall business climate and a shared optimism for the future of our region. Faced with so many forces beyond our control, the group eventually settled on a fundamental, unified list of strategies and initiatives to bring forward in this strategic plan update.

KEY FINDINGS: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- Overwhelming support for the FAST NY program and a commitment to advancing a regional portfolio of strategic sites for the current and future rounds.
- Support for a regional (if not statewide) housing site readiness initiative, conceived in the same vein as FAST NY.
- As new industries emerge and new companies are re-shored and attracted to the Mohawk Valley, our EDOs and industry leaders must commit to finding solutions to cannibalization of employees in order that we avoid the erosion of the very foundation upon which the new economy will be built – our existing and legacy manufacturers.



Strengths

- Partnering private industry with government leadership in REDC planning is an essential component to success. Acting as the voice of their constituency, the REDC can elevate priorities of each county/municipality



Weaknesses

- Many letters of intent for Fast NY program but not a lot of applications submitted
- Housing is in crisis and made worse by having AirBnB and short-term housing
- 800 homes in Schoharie County without broadband access



Opportunities

- Industries to consider are clean technology, information technology, artificial intelligence, food processing with an emphasis on distribution and logistics, and redevelopment of brownfield sites
- MVREDC can help navigate the tough application process for FAST NY
- Address issues regionally instead of working in isolation across municipalities
- Aggregate findings from county housing studies to create a regional strategy to mitigate housing crisis



Threats

- National Grid has warned that there will not be sufficient power for the state in the coming years which may cause projects to be stopped or slowed

MEMBERSHIP

Steve Wilson - *Schoharie County*
 Ken Rose - *Montgomery County Business Development Center*
 Ronald Peters - *Fulton County Center for Regional Growth*
 Jody Zakrevsky - *Otsego Now*
 John Piseck - *Herkimer County IDA*
 Dr. David Ziskin - *HFM BOCES*
 Steve Dimeo - *MV EDGE*
 Tim Fitzgerald - *MV EDGE*
 Christian Mercurio - *MV EDGE*

AGRIBUSINESS AND FOOD SYSTEMS WORKGROUP

Members met virtually to gain perspective on current challenges facing the Food Ecosystem including agriculture, food processing, and agritourism industries in the Mohawk Valley and Upstate NY. A hearty discussion covered the areas of the survival of small family farms, headwinds facing the dairy industry, processing, packaging, value-added agribusiness, farm-to-table, and expanded opportunities in agritourism.

By far, the most daunting challenge is the unforeseen ramifications of utility-scale photovoltaics and the threat it could pose to the already-shrinking landscape of viable agricultural land in the Mohawk Valley.

KEY FINDINGS: AGRIBUSINESS

- 8,859 Mohawk Valley job openings are projected in Agribusiness over the next 10 years.
- High growth opportunities exist for the Agritourism and Beverage production sectors of Agribusiness.
- Utility-scale solar development poses an existential threat to agricultural production in the region.
- Rising fuel costs are prohibitive in bringing product to nearest processing facilities and markets.
- While the small farm infrastructure is still strong, the continued decline in family farm succession has forced farmers to consider alternatives to farming in the future.
- Small dairy farms with less than 500 cows are operating in the red.
- Incentives to help producers achieve energy efficiency and reduce energy consumption are in place.
- Continued support for regenerative and sustainable agricultural practices, and ecosystem services is needed.



Strengths

- Regional programs offering skills in demand by employers include SUNY Cobleskill's Institute for Rural Vitality, P-TECH, Hartwick College's Center for Craft Food & Beverage, and Vireo Health's medical cannabis facility
- There are projected to be 8,859 job openings in agribusiness over the next 10 years
- 64% of job openings in agriculture do not require previous experience



Weaknesses

- Consumers may respect local farms but intentional purchasing of local food is still not the norm
- Small- and mid-size farms struggle to compete in 'get big or get out' economy. Study by Cornell University found that dairy farms with less than 500 cows are operating in the red and to be truly profitable a dairy farm requires more than 1,000 cows. Only a handful of dairy farms in the region have over 1,000 cows



Opportunities

- Potential to lead in NYS in the number of farms that transition to climate-smart farming practices. Could achieve by providing incentives and scale CADE climate-smart mentoring program for farms looking to transition from traditional to regenerative approaches
- Mohawk Valley is at a strategic crossroads for food hubs, processors, and distributors to aggregate product which is the key to thriving small farm businesses
- Leverage dual purpose land use within agriculture for photovoltaic and farming simultaneously.



Threats

- Cost of logistics and cost of fuel is impacting profitability of farms
- Farmers are incentivized to transition to solar panel farming over other types of farming because it is guaranteed income
- Statewide reluctance to invest tax dollars directly into farm/food enterprises
- Impacts of climate change due to increased flooding, heat events, and drought

MEMBERSHIP

Phoebe Schreiner - CADE Farms
Melissa Struckle - SUNY Cobleskill Institute for Rural Vitality
Carolyn Lewis - Bassett Healthcare
Steve Wilson - Otsego County
Amanda Kaier, Stephen Smith, Amy Wyant - Mohawk Valley Economic Development District
Sarah Goodrich - SALT
Peter Zawko, Tim Fitzgerald,
Christian Mercurio - MV EDGE

STEM-INTENSIVE INDUSTRIES AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

WORKGROUP

This workgroup features an honest and eye-opening discussion between captains of industry, economic development professionals, and the ESD regional office to:

- Address the stigma and stereotypes around manufacturing
- Build a pipeline between prospective employees of all ages and businesses
- Develop solutions for regional labor shortage and mitigate cannibalization.
- Expand wraparound services to eliminate barriers to employment, such as, childcare and transportation
- Emphasize the value of certificate programs and continuing education

Workgroup members continue to collaborate and advocate for stronger connections between our public, private and non-profit partners.

KEY FINDINGS: STEM-INTENSIVE INDUSTRIES AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

- Regional labor shortage is manifesting now in the cannibalization of skilled employees, outweighing the influx of new employees. While it is good to have pathways to career advancement, this could weaken existing manufacturers and, in turn, the foundation of our industrial ecosystem
- Apprenticeship programs have proven extremely valuable in workforce development, particularly in the STEM industries
- We need to reach deeper into our neighborhoods, inner cities, and school districts to expose a more diverse demographic to potential careers in manufacturing.



Strengths

- Recruitment focuses on identifying candidates with appropriate soft skills & technical skills
- Manufacturing jobs teach LEAN concepts and principles to employees which allows them to contribute ideas to improve the process
- Strong alignment and relationships between industry and education/workforce system



Weaknesses

- Lack of access to transportation, childcare, and safety net resources for diverse cultures and women
- While population has stabilized, overall demographic trends across the MV & Upstate is not optimistic
- Low labor force participation rate in region



Opportunities

- Implement holistic approach to eliminate barriers to employment
- Continue to attract new talent to the region & prepare refugees to enter for the workforce
- Recruitment for participation in lesser-known education & certificate programs in the region



Threats

- Stigma and stereotypes around manufacturing jobs being “dirty” jobs
- New companies and existing companies competing for the same employees in region
- Legislation that makes growth challenging, such as prevailing wage requirements on NYS supported projects

MEMBERSHIP

Charles Green - Assured Information Security
Cory Albrecht - Advanced Institute for
Manufacturing - MVCC
Jeff Grimshaw - Advanced Institute for
Manufacturing - MVCC
Dr. David Ziskin - HFM BOCES
Ron Peters - Fulton County Center for Regional Growth
Dr. Nancy Pattarini - The Paige Group
Shaun Kaleta - Oneida County Economic Development
Tim Beckett - Townsend Leather
Rick Short - Indium Corporation
Ken Rose - Montgomery County Business
Development Center
Nick O. Matt - Matt Brewing Company
Steve Dimeo - MV EDGE
Tim Fitzgerald - MV EDGE
Christian Mercurio - MV EDGE
Laura Cohen - MV EDGE

TOURISM WORKGROUP

Tourism is booming in the Mohawk Valley and investments continue to leverage our natural assets including the brand new Wheelerville Trails in Fulton County, an additional disc golf course planned for 2024 in Shuttleworth Park in Amsterdam, and the Kayak-a-thon in Montgomery County. The Mohawk Valley's wilderness and state lands hold myriad benefits for visitors and residents alike allowing for continued growth in tourism employment opportunities.

Chronic understaffing continues to plague this industry. Wages are low and not rising in tandem with other entry-level jobs that start at \$17/hour or more.

There is cognitive dissonance when discussing housing and the hospitality industry. Existing housing is non-existent or unaffordable for an employee in regional tourism making on average \$15/hour, and employers complain of limited staffing. Simultaneously, communities turn out to protest affordable housing developments. Many of our tourism assets are not proximal to population centers, especially population centers with a large potential workforce that may be looking for entry-level positions and have transportation issues.

KEY FINDINGS: TOURISM

- Environmental and recreational tourism continue to be the backbone of our industry.
- There is a lack of hotels/hospitality outside of the major metro areas. Airbnb rentals that were once an option are now overpriced and cannot accommodate different markets.
- Replicate SUNY Oneonta's program across the region which houses paid interns for the Baseball Hall of Fame over the summer.
- Workforce housing is a huge need. Prospective employees are declining job offers because of a lack of varied and adequate housing.
- Adventure Tourism and Sports Entertainment represent expansive growth opportunities in the Mohawk Valley.



Strengths

- Counties in Mohawk Valley have highest visitor spending in Upstate New York
- Most tourism jobs have low barrier to entry with 35% of job postings requiring HS diploma and 70% requiring no previous experience
- Oneida County Tourism received an EDA grant for \$750K through 2025 with major focus on outdoor promotion



Weaknesses

- Understaffing is major concern with population and employment outpacing housing development
- Many tourism destinations not proximal to population centers with transportation options requiring employees to have reliable transportation, limiting access to people seeking entry-level jobs
- Insufficient hotel options for visitors with some areas in region reliant on vacation rentals



Opportunities

- Replicate housing projects at Turning Stone Resort Casino, Bassett Health, and Baseball Hall of Fame throughout region for service industry employees
- Leverage Oneida County Tourism EDA funding and other grant opportunities
- Immersing high school and college students in local community to encourage them to stay and work in the region



Threats

- Development of affordable housing is often fought by locals and people who have second homes in the area
- Lack of resources to invest in infrastructure development in rural areas such as Otsego and Schoharie Counties; difficult to build in rural areas because of cost of getting utilities to available sites
- Decreased matching funds every year for tourism promotion

MEMBERSHIP

Sarah Calero - Oneida County Tourism
 Julie Pacatte - Schoharie Economic Enterprise Corporation
 Sam Forehand - Schoharie Economic Enterprise Corporation
 Jody Zakrevsky - Otsego Now
 Cassandra Harrington - Otsego County Tourism
 Ellen Tillapaugh - Cooperstown
 Dr. Renee Shevat - Herkimer Diamond Mines
 Ken Meifert - National Baseball Hall of Fame
 Dr. Nancy Pattarini - The Paige Group
 Doug Plummer - Sharon Springs
 Melissa Struckle - SUNY Cobleskill Institute for Rural Vitality
 Tim Fitzgerald - MV EDGE
 Christian Mercurio - MV EDGE

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND VIBRANT COMMUNITIES WORKGROUP

The negative feedback loop presented by brownfield properties and their devastating impact on community health, property values, public safety, and aesthetics continued to rise to the top of the priority list. Focus areas are eliminating blight, reversing the trend of disinvestment, advocating on behalf of vulnerable populations, environmental equity, and sustainable design.

The past year has borne fruit for the region's brownfields, with four out of the six counties and MVEDD receiving EPA funding to investigate and remediate brownfield properties. This has led to more than \$12.1 million in Restore NY awards for demolition and adaptive reuse of strategic properties in the past year.

KEY FINDINGS: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

- Smaller communities need technical assistance to identify and apply for Brownfield Opportunity Areas (BOA) funding. This will serve as a springboard to leverage more state and federal dollars and jumpstart their remedial planning efforts.
- BOAs have a proven record of success when leveraged with the state's DRI/NY Forward program.
- The annual Brownfield Developer Summit is growing momentum from across New York State and EPA Region 2, giving remediated brownfield properties the shine and attention they deserve.
- Dwindling developable sites in the region has forced us to cast our gaze to former brownfield sites for growth.



Grissom Solar near Johnstown, NY



Strengths

- Partnership with Vibrant Communities work-group to address brownfield sites through the Brownfields Developer Summit led by MVEDD & sponsored by National Grid
- Town of Richmondville in Schoharie Co. awarded \$2.7 million to establish sewer in an area with failing septic systems & documented pollutants
- Regan & Grissom Solar in Montgomery Co. built solar facilities in December and March



Weaknesses

- Sewer and water treatment issues abound throughout the region
- Mohawk River overflow into each county can contribute to contaminated water supply
- Lack of regional cohesion
- Aging population
- Difficulties attracting people to the region



Opportunities

- Restore New York funds out in early November offers opportunity to address blighted spaces
- Participate in statewide clean energy initiatives
- Explore putting a kiosk at the Nexus Center to promote tourist sites, available jobs & what it is like living in the Mohawk Valley,



Threats

- Municipal infrastructure upgrades needed but resources from state and federal grants not enough to cover costs of water and wastewater projects

MEMBERSHIP

Jody Zakrevsky - Otsego Now
 Ken Rose - Montgomery County Business Development Center
 John Piseck - Herkimer County IDA
 Ron Peters - Fulton County Center for Regional Growth
 Heather Devitt - Mohawk Valley Economic Development District
 Paul Romano - Ramboll Engineering
 Scott Henze - Fulton County
 Meaghan Marino - Otsego Now
 Sarah Goodrich - SALT
 Matt Andrews - City of Rome
 Caroline Williams - Community Foundation
 Christopher M. Lawrence - City of Utica
 Joseph Batchelder - SUNY Cobleskill
 Karina Benninger - SUNY Cobleskill
 Gina DaBiere-Gibbs - Amsterdam
 Shelly Callahan - The Center
 Kari Puleo - Greater Utica Chamber of Commerce
 Kristen Skobla - Rome Chamber of Commerce
 Georgia Van Dyke - Schoharie County Chamber of Commerce
 Michele Hummel - Herkimer County Chamber of Commerce
 Alicia Dicks - Community Foundation: HOC
 Joseph Wicks - Community Foundation: HOC
 Steve Wilson - Otsego County
 Stephen Smith - Mohawk Valley Economic Development District
 Dr. Nancy Pattarini - The Paige Group
 Steve Dimeo - MV EDGE
 Laura Cohen - MV EDGE
 Tim Fitzgerald - MV EDGE
 Christian Mercurio - MV EDGE
 Chris Lawrence - MV EDGE

ACCESS TO CHILDCARE WORKGROUP

The Childcare Workgroup will be the first to announce there is a crisis in our region, amplified by the last few years of the pandemic. Many childcare facilities shut down, or ran at a loss. There are not enough qualified candidates applying to work in childcare centers; micro-credentialing programs are not in alignment with the Office of Children and Family Services; low wages disincentivize potential childcare staff from entering the workforce. As anthropologist David Graeber wrote, “In our society, there seems a general rule that, the more obviously one’s work benefits other people, the less one is likely to be paid for it.” This is appropriately applied to childcare in our region.

Collaborative partnerships are the best path forward for success. Many childcare organizations have availed themselves of workforce development grants and wraparound service funding. Home-based childcare is generally successful long-term, although the licensing can be complex. Family and group family childcare are the fastest programs to get off the ground and can potentially make a big impact on the dearth of open childcare slots, especially for children under two. The region’s industry leaders are beginning to recognize that robust and flexible childcare is an integral part of a successful workforce.

KEY FINDINGS: CHILDCARE

- Develop a grant program for home-based childcare start-up costs, training, supplies, and business expenses for one year.
- Employers should begin to subsidize childcare spots for employees.
- Wage and benefit hikes should be prioritized for childcare workers.
- Advocate for a 24-hour or extended shift daycare. Academics First is an encouraging model.
- Build a pipeline for qualified childcare employees. Herkimer County’s childcare program has an arrangement with BOCES which could be used as a model.
- Lobby NYS OCFS to expand credentialing programs and allow a greater number of qualified people to apply to a childcare facility.



Strengths

- Access to childcare included in regional strategic plan since 2018
- Other regions do not have childcare workgroup to work collaboratively to solve childcare obstacles.
- Many regional childcare organizations using workforce development grants—can apply for up to 40% of capital project costs for childcare facilities/focus area



Weaknesses

- Childcare salaries are low - competition for workers with retail and fast-food chains
- Workers who deserve a promotion may not have access to required credentials.
- Need upgrades for aging facilities to accommodate children and staff appropriately
- 60% of working parents/guardians expressed difficulty finding services/support and 16% had unreliable arrangements



Opportunities

- Startup funds for family and group family childcare are fastest programs to launch
- Creating comprehensive catalogue of childcare resources in the region
- Expanding childcare micro-credentialing programs at colleges and BOCES
- Developing robust childcare workforce pipeline through paid internships and apprenticeships



Threats

- Child development micro-credentials not currently accepted by NYS OCFS
- 32% of working parents/guardians have trouble affording childcare
- Avg annual childcare cost is \$10,000 per child
- Cost is more than 10% of the median income of a married couple, & more than 35% of the median income of a single parent - US Dept of Health & Human Services recommends no more than 7%

MEMBERSHIP

Alice Savino – Workforce Development Board
 Kimberly Ahearn – Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego, Schoharie Counties
 Christy Houck – Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego, Schoharie Counties
 Abbe Kovacik, Brightside Up, Inc. of Albany
 Dawn Garvey – Schoharie County
 Irene Loucks – SUNY Cobleskill
 Jennifer VanWagoner – The Center
 Delores Caruso – NYS DOL
 Sarah Metott – Information Directorate: AFRL
 Cpt. Matthew Walls – Information Directorate: AFRL
 Meaghan Marino – Otsego Now
 Dietra Harvey – United Way of the Mohawk Valley
 Courtney Jones, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Oneida County
 Jim Wallace - Herkimer County
 Sandy Soroka - The Neighborhood Center of Utica
 Christina Cain - Herkimer County Public Health Nursing Service
 Richelle Singer - Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oneida County
 Jan Squadrito - Community Foundation
 Mary Kate Mycek - Mohawk Valley Economic Development District
 Tim Fitzgerald, Christian Mercurio - MV EDGE

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION WORKGROUP

The Workforce Development Workgroup has met regularly since 2019 to enhance pathways for career success and align training and educational programs with NYS priorities and funding opportunities.

KEY FINDINGS: WORKFORCE

- We are at peak employment, necessitating a creative, holistic, and agile approach to developing the next generations of workers while reaching non-traditional and disenfranchised populations
- Ecosystem-based, wrap-around services are fundamental to creating pathways for job retention, workforce entry and career advancement
- Fast-Track and Micro-Credential programs are working; meeting people where they are in terms of ability, geography, mobility, and schedule
- Multiple programs that focus on empowering individuals – such as those with disabilities or justice-impacted individuals – are working
- Immigrants, refugees, and New Americans are contributing in big ways to our communities, our economy; a ray of hope in a tight labor market



Strengths

- SUNY Cobleskill has a number of micro-credentialing programs
- OHM BOCES implemented a tool to give info about employers & occupations within various career fields & identify existing post-secondary programming to help students realize the path towards those careers



Weaknesses

- Early college opportunities may inadvertently create barriers to completing an associate degree because students are prepared for the workforce and hired before completion
- There is a disconnect between BOCES and the local school districts



Opportunities

- Opportunities from NYS may be coming similar to the P-TECH program but with more flexibility for students to attend in their home district & gain college credit before completing HS
- Expand STEM programs to areas where opportunities are limited for inclusion in workforce development programs
- Expand BOCES and Real Life Rosies programs across region and share wraparound services to eliminate barriers to participation



Threats

- Limited affordable housing and access to transportation creates obstacles to participating in workforce development programs

MEMBERSHIP

Charles Green - Assured Information Security (AIS)
 Alice Savino - Workforce Development Board
 Dr. David Ziskin - HFM BOCES
 Dietra Harvey - United Way of the Mohawk Valley
 David Mathis - Oneida County
 Irene Loucks - SUNY Cobleskill
 Dr. Laura Casamento - Utica University
 Melissa Struckle - SUNY Cobleskill Institute for Rural Vitality
 Dr. Scott Ferguson - SUNY Cobleskill Institute for Rural Vitality
 Darcy Medica - SUNY Cobleskill
 Christian Mercurio - MV EDGE
 Tim Fitzgerald - MV EDGE

HIGHER EDUCATION WORKGROUP

Collaboration is key in our Higher Education Workgroup. The region has shown time and again that we capitalize on well-funded programs with a proven track record that are replicable. MVCC instituted its “Fast Track” program, enabling existing students to hone in their attention on potential career opportunities, from machining to welding, teaching to phlebotomy, at no cost to them. We recognize that it’s essential to make wraparound programs a key feature of any higher education initiative. Without the necessary supports, higher education will fail to affect the region’s workforce in a meaningful way.

Higher education is a breeding ground for creative solutions to help everyone recognize their aspirations and potential. At SUNY Cobleskill, Project Search does just that. Differently-abled individuals are able to intern on campus and shadow an employee, exploring different career paths previously closed to them. We are committed to an ecosystem model of higher education, encouraging folks from across our region to participate according to their talents, dreams, and desires.

KEY FINDINGS: HIGHER EDUCATION

- MVCC’s Fast Track program is a model we would like to replicate throughout the region in order to align with our workforce priorities. We believe we can get six-county buy-in on this.
- The Advanced Institute of Manufacturing housed at MVCC serves the entire REDC region and is a key resource in our efforts to implement programs at scale.
- Wraparound services are necessary for individuals accessing higher education. These include childcare and transportation.
- The most important effort we can make is to have a holistic approach where we meet – physically and otherwise – the student where they are in order to enable their successes.



Strengths

- SUNY Oneonta offers many entry-level programs in the healthcare field through the Extended Community Learning (ExCL) Center
- SUNY Oneonta offers childcare and temporary housing, especially over the summer
- Utica University has crime scene laboratory to provide additional training to support their daily work



Weaknesses

- There is still a disconnect between the needs of our strategic industries versus the career paths to which students are exposed to.



Opportunities

- Nine academic institutions can partner together to share wraparound services
- Expand programs similar to MVCC Fast Track program throughout region
- Collaborate with industry partners & non-education institutions to create workforce solutions



Threats

- Limited funding available to expand wrap-around services such as childcare, housing, transportation and soft skills training.

MEMBERSHIP

Dr. Marion Terenzio - SUNY Cobleskill & MVREDC Co-Chair
 Augustus McGiver - SUNY Cobleskill
 Dr. Todd Pfannestiel - Utica University
 Dr. Todd Laurson - SUNY Polytechnic Institute
 Dr. Greg Truckenmiller - Fulton Montgomery Community College
 David Wippman - Hamilton College
 Dr. Cathleen McColgin - SUNY Herkimer College
 Nicholas Laino - SUNY Herkimer College
 Dr. Margaret Drugovich - Hartwick College
 Dr. Alberto Cardelle - SUNY Oneonta
 Dr. Randall Vanwagoner - Mohawk Valley Community College
 Timothy Thomas - Mohawk Valley Community College
 Christian Mercurio - MV EDGE
 Laura Cohen - MV EDGE



Presidents of SUNY Oneonta and Hartwick College partnering with Bassett Cares Initiative

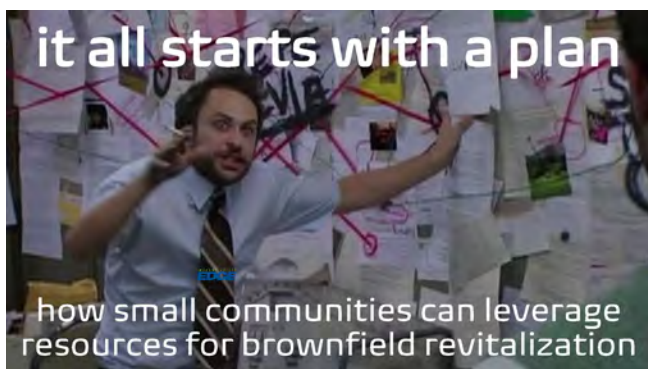
COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS, CROSS-REGIONAL COLLAB, AND ROAD TRIPS

In addition to REDC workgroup meetings, the REDC was on the ground, on the webs, and on the road; working with citizens, businesses, educators, EDOs, and municipal officials to better understand priorities and navigate the challenges and prospects ahead.



DEPT. OF STATE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND ANCA/NORTHERN FORESTS WEBINARS

REDC experts teamed up with the DOS, ANCA, and others to deliver multiple free webinars aimed at helping smaller communities with best practices for planning, engaging the public, and funding opportunities for main street, waterfront, and downtown revitalization.



REGIONAL SUMMIT

In September, Oneida County Executive Anthony Picente, Jr. hosted a regional summit of Economic Development Organizations from across the six-county region. The group identified the key barriers to growth and potential solutions to our region's most challenging issues – including childcare, housing, site readiness, and the project pipeline. It was in this room that the group developed the framework for the HOME RUN initiative and solidified support for the Workforce Challenge prospectus.



MANUFACTURING DAY

Together with the Manufacturers Association of Central NY (MACNY) and Advanced Institute for Manufacturing (AIM) REDC members participated in Manufacturing Day, where students from around the region met with and visited manufacturers – achieving much-needed exposure to a multiverse of career paths in manufacturing, engineering, and more.



NETWORK. EXPLORE. INVEST.
2ND ANNUAL MOHAWK VALLEY BROWNFIELDS DEVELOPER SUMMIT.
THE FIRST AND ONLY OF ITS KIND IN NEW YORK STATE.

A brownfield is a property in which the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. More simply, a brownfield is real estate with baggage.

The MVREDC Environmental Justice and Vibrant Communities workgroup is laying down the gauntlet and taking action. For the second consecutive year, we've held the Brownfields Developer Summit – bringing together economic developers, planners, real estate professionals, and municipalities with private developers and environmental experts. This year, more than 250 attendees came together in Herkimer to tackle blight, contamination, housing, downtown revitalization, and funding opportunities for brownfields. The result? Dozens of municipalities engaged and excited about eliminating the legacy of blight and environmental injustice on strategic sites in cities, towns, and villages across the six-county region.





PART THREE

CHALLENGES COMPETITION PROPOSAL

We envision an ecosystem in which thriving communities support, and are supported by, strategic industries. Economic growth demands an empowered, diverse workforce; and in turn, people require fundamental supports to fully participate. Childcare, transportation, educational, cultural, and language barriers are denying people's right to participate in the economy and lead more fulfilling and meaningful lives. Industry and community are interdependent; one cannot thrive without the other. The culture must reflect this. This prospectus is how we disrupt the paradigm and break down those barriers.

PROPOSAL VISION

“ If we do not make poverty, neglect, inequality, and the need for opportunity a fundamental priority, all other investments will only favor the fortunate and will not address the systemic types of problems that hold back progress and the building of a healthy, sustainable, and resilient economy.”

– Dr. Nancy Pattarini, MVREDC Council Member

Coming correct. We’ve all seen the data. We’ve seen what works, and what doesn’t. We’ve dug down to the roots. Driven by comprehensive engagement across six counties, nine colleges and BOCES, 22 non-profit partners, and more than a dozen workgroup sessions, we present a proven, tactical approach to effect structural change in workforce development.

Spoiler alert: it’s all about our people.

LOW WORKFORCE PARTICIPATION RATE:
HAS NOT YET RECOVERED TO PRE-PANDEMIC RATES

57.5% vs. **56.8%**
PRE-PANDEMIC TODAY

MISSING CAREER READINESS:

**STRONGER K-12 PIPELINE
MUST BE DEVELOPED** TO
PREPARE GRADUATES FOR
LIFE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL



LIMITED WRAPAROUND SERVICES:

**CHILD & ELDER CARE
TRANSPORTATION**

ESL (ENGLISH AS A 2ND LANGUAGE)

& OTHER SERVICES ARE
LIMITING THE ABILITY
OF RESIDENTS TO
PARTICIPATE IN
THE WORKFORCE

Our \$10 million proposal will fund catalyst projects that scale successful programs across the region to:

- Ignite workforce participation and broaden the talent pool to include rural populations, individuals with disabilities, immigrants, and refugees.
- Facilitate wraparound services like childcare, transportation, and ESL by improving accessibility, affordability in schools, non-profit centers, and at the workplace.
- Redefine career readiness in schools by strengthening the bond between K-12 education and industry and exposing more students to a wider spectrum of career paths in Agribusiness, Tourism, and STEM.

Fundamentally, we aim to change the culture by empowering individuals through culturally relevant, community-sustaining approaches to meet the demands of our growing Tourism, Agribusiness, and STEM-intensive industries while lifting families out of poverty.



Frances, a single mother at 18, faced numerous challenges since age 16. Despite working in a low-wage retail job to make ends meet, she was determined to secure a better future for herself and her child.

She enrolled in the MVCC certified nursing assistant Fast Track program. On the third day, transportation failed her, requiring a nine-mile walk to MVCC's Rome campus, causing her to arrive three hours late. Despite this setback, the Fast Track program instructors recognized her dedication and potential, allowing her to excel.

Frances completed the challenging CNA program, passed her certification exam, and now works in the healthcare field, offering care and compassion. Her journey continues with MVCC's support as she advances in her healthcare career.

WORKFORCE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

A three-year, \$10 million plan to increase workforce participation, open doors to an increasingly diverse working-age population, and engage students at a younger age. We focus on fundamental barriers to employment, soft skills, empowerment, and dignity. These programs are tailored to meet people where they are while addressing structural inequities in our workforce pipeline. We selected these projects based on ☒ **proven track records**, ☒ **ability to scale**, ☒ **leveraged resources**, ☒ **strong partnerships** and ☒ **regionally focused**.

MVCC FAST TRACK: RAPID RE-TRAINING FOR CAREER READINESS

MVCC's Fast Track program offers free, short-term training to students. It is an efficient mechanism to propel participants toward living-wage careers within 14 weeks or less.

MVCC understands a primary barrier to employment is the opportunity cost and time commitment of pursuing higher education. This program is acclaimed for its well-designed structure, offering individuals multiple opportunities for credentialing in diverse career paths such as advanced manufacturing, education, and information technology. With 700 graduates since November 2022, this successful model can be replicated across the region.



SUNY COBLESKILL IRV: EXPANDING AGRIBUSINESS MICRO-CREDENTIALING

The Institute for Rural Vitality (IRV) will amplify their farm, food business, and entrepreneur micro-credential program in key industry areas to reach more individuals. The Institute has provided support services to 620 farms and food businesses since 2018.

The micro-credential program meets individuals where they are by compressing course schedules and making credentialing affordable, accessible, and fast. The program will credential 200 new individuals at no cost, affordable, accessible and fast. The program will credential 240 new individuals at no cost.



THE CENTER: NEW AMERICAN CAREER BUILDER

The Center will serve and support new Americans entering the workforce through linguistically and culturally appropriate wraparound services to complement MVCC's Fast Track program.

This program will assist with translation, childcare support, housing assistance, individual case management, citizenship screenings, job placement and career advancement. The Center will guide 100 refugees and new Americans through MVCC's Fast Track program.



WORKFORCE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

MVREDC proposes funding and support for **catalyst projects that intuitively consider the whole person and their unique needs**. The projects share a proven track record, strong partnerships, leveraged resources, scalability across the region, and strategic alignment across multiple priority sectors. **We will address workforce planning for everyone:** K-12, traditional learners, English as second-language learners, unemployed, underemployed, and adult learners.

SUNY POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE: SILICON CARBIDE CHIP PROCESSING AND PACKAGING TRAINING LAB

SUNY Polytech is launching a new Processing to Packaging Center to serve as an epicenter for semiconductor research, education and training, with a goal to increase graduates across advanced manufacturing disciplines by 10 percent in the next four years. With a recent state investment of \$18.5 million, the Center will be a one stop shop for semiconductor manufacturing. Partners include: Wolfspeed, Danfoss, Menlo Micro, Indium, Micron, Marquardt Switches, Fulton Montgomery Community College, Mohawk Valley Community College, Onondaga Community College.

EXPERTISE PROJECT: MANUFACTURING COMES TO RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Fulton County Center for Regional Growth (FCCRG) will expand their Expertise Project, a two-pronged approach where students visit manufacturing companies to conduct interviews with staff and take video of the factory floor using 360-degree cameras. The interviews are edited by the students and shared through VR headsets with other students in rural districts.

Students create connections to local employers and better understand what opportunities await them in their own backyard. The program expansion will reach 2,000 students.

HILLSIDE WORK SCHOLARSHIP CONNECTION: WRAPAROUND SERVICES FOR AT-RISK YOUTH

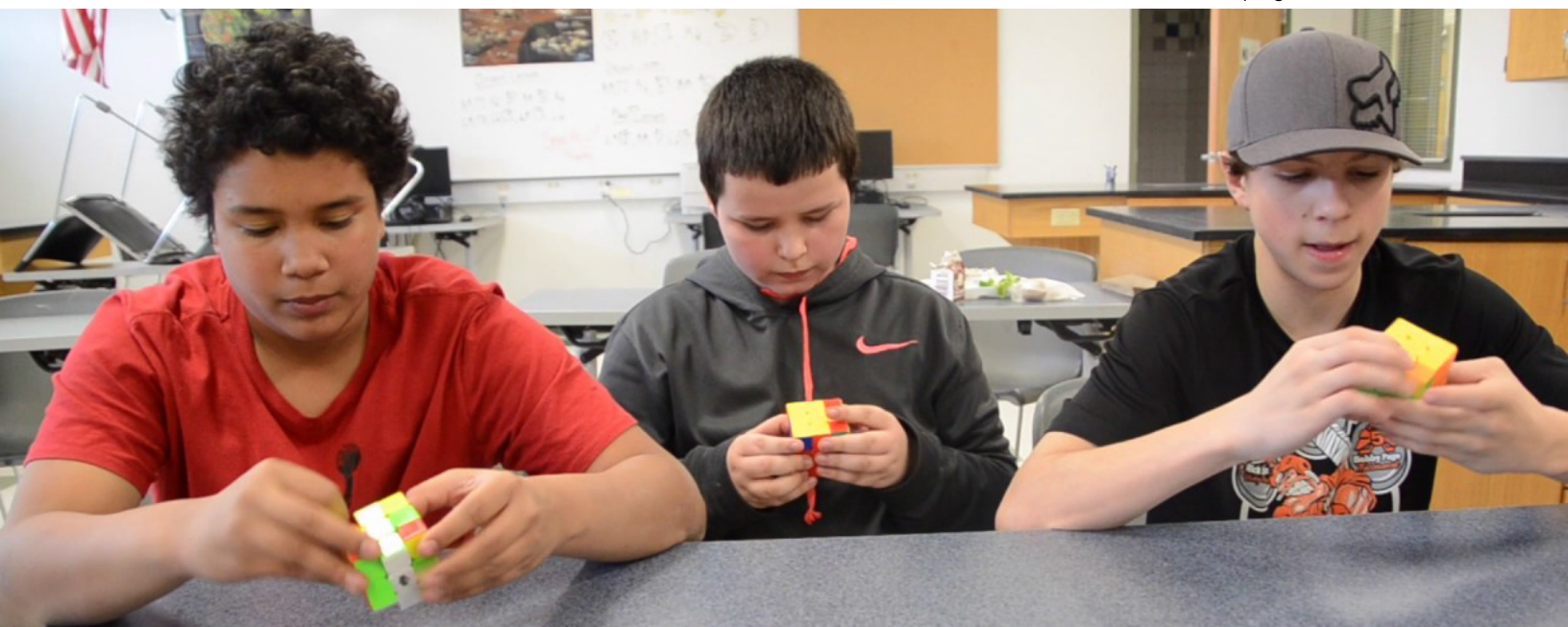
Hillside Work Scholarship Connection is a nationally-recognized youth development program for high school students that are at risk of failing or dropping out. Highly trained youth advocates provide mentoring, tutoring, after-school enrichment activities, employment training, job placement, and post-secondary preparation.

RURAL TRANSPORTATION GRANT: EXPANDING PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Transportation repeatedly ranks in the top three barriers to workforce entry. MVEDD will sponsor an application to the U.S. DOT to conduct a thorough transportation study of the region. MVEDD will leverage award funds to identify solutions to transportation barriers and workforce participation.

This study will address a major gap in public infrastructure and will facilitate workforce opportunities in long neglected rural communities. This study will impact over 100,000 individuals.

Students at summer STEM program at the Griffiss Institute



WORKFORCE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Inequality is pervasive in our region. **Creating communities where everyone can access opportunity and prosper will ultimately benefit the regional economy.** Focusing on equity and inclusion in workforce development is the only way to meaningfully affect low participation, disinvestment, and widespread ennui.

RURAL HEALTHCARE GRANT: ADDRESSING HEALTHCARE IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) is focused on training the next generation of rural healthcare workers. Regional healthcare providers are facing a critical shortage of employees, compromising the quality of care for rural citizens. The WDB will offer a variety of programs including CNAs, LPNs, and RNs in coordination with community colleges, universities, EDOs, BOCES, and healthcare training providers to train 250 new healthcare professionals.

MOHAWK VALLEY HOME RUN: WITHOUT HOUSING THERE IS NO WORKFORCE

A pot of strategic funding will be administered by MVREDC that is modeled after the Mid-Hudson Momentum Fund, an initiative that invests in mixed-use housing and infrastructure projects to meet housing demands. The application and award process will be similar to ESD Capital grants and the FAST NY program with an emphasis on using targeted investments to steer the regional housing crisis toward recovery.

CHILDCARE STRATEGIC FUND: ELIMINATING CHILDCARE BARRIERS

To address limited childcare options, a general childcare strategic fund will be developed to provide catalyst investments to childcare organizations and programs to expand childcare services throughout the region. The childcare strategic fund will target projects that provide extended childcare service hours, increase wages to retain childcare workers, decrease childcare deserts, and provide wraparound services in addition to childcare. The intention is to eliminate barriers to workforce participation.

PROPEL: DEGREE PROGRAMS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Madison-Oneida BOCES and MVCC will expand the PROPEL program which allows junior and seniors in high school to take college classes and work toward micro-credentials or associate degrees. The program offers four career-focused programs to eligible students: Childhood Education, Cybersecurity & Computer Science, Engineering, and Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems. The expansion will reach 90 students over two years.

PROJECT SEARCH AND TRANSITIONS: JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIFFERENTLY-ABLED PEOPLE

Lexington Arc has a proven track record in serving people with disabilities in the region. In partnership with area colleges, Lexington launched two successful programs: (1) Transitions (FMCC and SUNY Cobleskill) is an evidence-based curriculum that prepares teens and young adults with autism and learning differences for college, careers, and life and (2) Project Search (Herkimer CC and SUNY Cobleskill) is a program that had 10K participants nation-wide over the past 5 years with a 92% completion rate and 75% job placement rate. Lexington Arc and its 2 education partners, with the assistance of Project Search USA, plan to upscale the program to 7 other higher education institutions and also to other industry partners.

THE BASSETT CHILDREN'S DAY CARE CENTER

The Bassett Childcare project provides a unique opportunity to expand childcare access to attract and retain employees who provide critical healthcare services, while also providing a fair wage, training, and support for the daycare workforce themselves. This integrated model will provide much needed childcare resources for employees by removing a significant barrier for inclusion in the labor force. The project will provide 68 much needed day care infant, toddler, and pre-school slots for children of working families, while directly creating 25 jobs in Otsego County. Onsite child day care can be an effective solution to the extraordinary challenges of workforce retention and recruitment, while removing barriers for inclusion in the labor



Rendering of the Bassett Children's Day Care Center

CATALYST PROJECTS

We are proposing 12 catalyst projects totaling \$10+ million to scale established programs and leverage key partnerships across the region.

CATALYST PROJECT	GRANT AMOUNT	% TPC	LEVERAGE	TPC
FAST TRACK CAREER PROGRAM EXPANSION	\$1,200,000	30%	\$1.88M ESD OSWD GRANT (SECURED) \$398,000 OPWDD (SECURED) \$375,000 SUNY TRANSFORMATION FUND (SECURED) \$150,000 MVCC (SECURED)	\$4,003,000
SILICON CARBIDE CHIP PROCESSING AND PACKAGING TRAINING LAB	\$3,500,000	15%	\$18.0M GOVERNOR'S OFFICE APPROPRIATION (SECURED) \$1.85M WOLFSPEED (SECURED)	\$23,350,000
SUNY COBLESKILL IRV - MICROCREDENTIAL ACCELERATOR EXPANSION	\$2,700,000	48%	\$1.52M SUNY COBLESKILL (SECURED) \$784,900 ESD PROGRAMS AND INCENTIVES (SECURED) \$477,042 DONORS (SECURED) \$100,000 SUNY CHANCELLOR (SECURED)	\$5,580,184
HILLSIDE WORK SCHOLARSHIP CONNECTION	\$1,900,000	17%	\$9.6M UTICA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT (SECURED)	\$11,500,000
CHILDCARE STRATEGIC FUNDING	\$1,000,000	66%	\$500,000 UPSTATE REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE FUNDS (SECURED)	\$1,500,000
NEW AMERICAN CAREER BUILDER	\$402,000	30%	\$624,000 DRI ROUND IV (SECURED) \$250,000 ONEIDA COUNTY ARPA FUNDS (SECURED) \$50,000 THE CENTER STAFF SUPPORT (SECURED) \$25,000 JRM FUND (ANTICIPATED) \$13,000 STATE FARM FOUNDATION (ANTICIPATED)	\$1,364,000
PROPEL	\$626,000	37%	\$946,000 OHM BOCES (SECURED) \$100,000 MVCC (SECURED)	\$1,672,000
THRIVING COMMUNITIES GRANT FOR RURAL TRANSPORTATION	\$1,000,000	16%	\$4.0M US DOT THRIVING COMMUNITIES NATIONAL CAPACITY BUILDER PROGRAM (ANTICIPATED) \$1.0M NORTHERN BORDER REGIONAL COMMISSION GRANT (SECURED) \$173,033 USDA RURAL PLACEMAKING INNOVATION CHALLENGE (SECURED) \$100,350 BROWNFIELD OPPORTUNITY AREA GRANT (SECURED) \$50,000 USDA ENGINEERING STUDY (SECURED)	\$6,323,383
RURAL HEALTHCARE WORKER TRAINING	\$700,000	66%	\$350,000 US DOL RURAL HEALTHCARE GRANT (SECURED)	\$1,050,000
EXPERTISE PROJECT	\$600,000	100%	TBD	\$600,000
PROJECT SEARCH AND TRANSITIONS	\$500,000	40%	TBD LEXINGTON ARC STAFFING AND DONATIONS (COMMITTED) TBD FULTON-MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE (COMMITTED) TBD SUNY COBLESKILL (COMMITTED) TBD HERKIMER COMMUNITY COLLEGE (COMMITTED) TBD PROJECT SEARCH USA (COMMITTED)	\$1,250,000
MOHAWK VALLEY HOME RUN	\$2,500,000	50%	EFC, ESD, DEC, HCR (ANTICIPATED)	\$5,000,000
TOTAL	\$16,628,000	32%	\$43,316,325 TOTAL LEVERAGE (NOT INCLUDING TBD AMOUNTS)	\$63,192,567

WORKFORCE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

PIPELINE PROJECTS:

MVREDC will support pipeline projects that reinforce our catalyst project strategy. These pipeline projects will address barriers to workforce development for individuals, families, businesses, and prospective talent. The pipeline will tackle broader regional issues critical to meeting material needs like affordable housing, broadband access, after school programs, and childcare services.

- WHAT'S UPSTATE
- MVCC WHOLE FAMILY EDUCATION PILOT
- REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY
- DIGITAL EQUITY BROADBAND COALITION
- INNOVARE
- CREATIVE CONNECTIONS

WHAT'S UPSTATE: ATTRACTING TALENT WITH DIGITAL MARKETING

What's Upstate is a talent attraction platform for anyone looking to relocate to the Mohawk Valley to pursue their career. It's a critical tool that contributes to the region's growth in strategic industries. The platform offers a concierge service that can tailor make a profile of community life for anyone interested in relocating.

Below: Five Kids Bakehouse in Otsego County.



MVCC WHOLE FAMILY EDUCATION PILOT: EDUCATING ENTIRE FAMILIES SIMULTANEOUSLY

The Whole Family Education pilot program will provide upskilling opportunities to adults and academic enrichment activities for children, at the same time. Each evening begins with a family dinner, followed by adult workforce training programs for parents/caregivers, and academic tutoring for children.

This comprehensive approach will broaden educational opportunities for entire families and reinforcing the human social network. The program will reach 20 families in its first year.

REGIONAL HOUSING STRATEGY: ATTAINABLE HOUSING FOR ALL INCOME LEVELS

MVREDC will compile all recent housing market studies to identify key findings and develop a strategy to increase affordable, mid-market, and market-rate housing supply to meet the demands of the region's existing and future workforce.

Lack of supply and diversity in our regional housing stock is a severely limiting factor to attracting new talent. This initiative will assist small communities with little-to-no capacity to modernize zoning and incentivize smart growth housing projects.

DIGITAL EQUITY BROADBAND COALITION: EXTENDING BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

MVREDC will establish a coalition of regional partners to focus on extending affordable, reliable, redundant, high-speed broadband access to every Mohawk Valley resident.

A 2021 State Comptroller's report found over 18,000 people in the Mohawk Valley lacked reliable, high-speed internet. We will significantly advance New York State's CONNECT ALL initiative and endeavor to create an equitable broadband network region-wide.

INNOVARE: STEM FOR UNDERSERVED STUDENTS

Griffiss Institute and Innovare Advancement Center will offer a STEM summer camp to students K-12 to provide hands-on experience in science, math, and engineering.

Elementary-aged students will engage with leading-edge technologies that could lead to career pathways in hacking, advanced engineering, and quantum physics.

CREATIVE CONNECTIONS: ADDRESSING YOUTH SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Creative Connections Clubhouse provides a safe, nurturing, and sober environment to children ages 12-21 who have or are at risk of developing addiction by offering afterschool programming, daily meals, and counseling.

Staff and peer-led programs focus on building and maintaining relationships, developing life skills, and creating an equitable community. This program will expand access for an additional 30 children.

OPPORTUNITY

Let's get real. Our participation rate has remained relatively flat – at less than 60% – since 2011. This means that, for nearly a generation, far too many of our neighbors have lived on the edge of poverty – limiting their access to education, training, health care, and social mobility. But even if they can overcome this and enter the workforce, their contributions are restricted and their potential not fully realized. Others may not enter the workforce at all. With more than 40% of our working-aged people willing but unable to participate – for whatever reason – we've got to do better. The structural change that we seek in workforce development requires that we create a new culture of human potential, meet individual needs on the most fundamental levels, and dismantle systemic barriers to participation in the economy.

MEETING PEOPLE “WHERE THEY'RE AT”

Record-low unemployment has exposed long-under-served populations and revealed untapped potential in terms of human energy and talent. Education is not the limiting factor; as almost 58% of job openings require no more than a high school diploma or GED. Rather, it is a combination of socioeconomic, physical, cultural, discriminatory, or other barriers to entry. Viewing it through this lens, there are 100,000+ individuals – mothers, fathers, young adults, and young at heart – who desire to work but haven't figured out how.

With \$10 million in Challenge funding, we intend to meet the Challenge Competition criteria by extending existing, innovative, and actionable programs that have proven success, reach underserved individuals, are easily scaled across the region, have strong partnerships, and leverage additional resources.

- Scaling the MVCC Fast Track program to tailor training and meet people where they are throughout our six county region.
- Boosting the SUNY Cobleskill Institute for Rural Vitality, with more than 60 micro-credential programs across all industries.
- Funding The Center to expand industry partnerships and provide ESL and cultural supports for new Americans.
- Expanding the Expertise Project to expose K-12 students to careers in STEM and advanced manufacturing.
- Gap-funding childcare projects from capacity building to capital investments to bring care closer to neighborhoods and employers.
- Leveraging resources for differently-abled individuals to share their unique talents with the world.
- Cost-sharing successful STEM programs in schools and camps to strengthen the bond between youth and advanced industries.
- Doubling down on a national model to train rural health care workers to close the healthcare gap in our region.

WHO ARE OUR PEOPLE ON THE SIDELINES?



Total Population	INDIVIDUALS FACING BARRIERS 484,645	% POVERTY IN MOHAWK VALLEY 14.2%	% POVERTY IN NEW YORK STATE 14.3%
HS Diploma or Less	139,196	18.9%	20.8%
Language Other Than English at Home	43,968	23.0%	18.3%
Disabled (18-64)	36,872	33.0%	29.9%
Foreign Born	25,750	19.6%	15.6%
Single Parent	21,701	39.7%	33.9%
Veteran	28,236	08.0%	08.7%

OPPORTUNITY

CLOSING THE GAPS

Our strategic industries – Agribusiness & Food Systems, Advanced Industries, and Tourism – are projected to create more than 8,000 job openings in the next decade. Certainly, we'll attract new talent from the outside to fill some of the highest-level positions. But the majority of advertised positions can be obtained by a massive talent pool right here in our own neighborhoods.

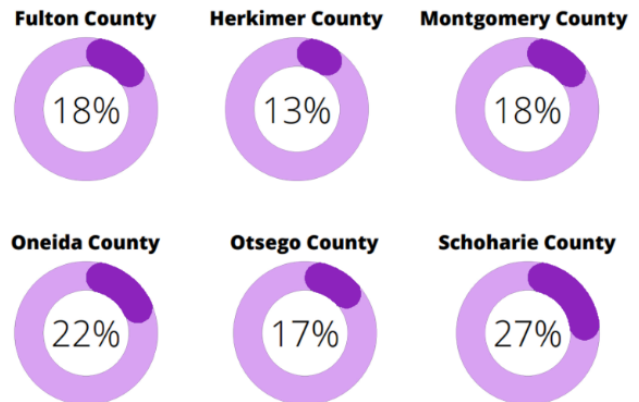
FILLING JOBS IN OUR STRATEGIC INDUSTRIES

For real though. The overwhelming majority (74%) of our region's current working-aged population do not have bachelor's degrees. Well, neither did Steve Jobs or Albert Einstein. We can work with that.

- Slightly more than 50% of the projected STEM & Advanced Industry Jobs being created require Associate Degrees, Technical Certificates, Microcredentials, or GED's.
- More than 60% of careers in agribusiness, food processing, and craft beverage production require an associate's degree or less.
- Greater than 75% of tourism openings can be filled with GED, certificate, and associate degree graduates.

THE EXISTING SUPPLY OF CHILDCARE COVERS

LESS THAN 20%
OF CHILDREN AGE 0-9
IN THE **MOHAWK VALLEY**



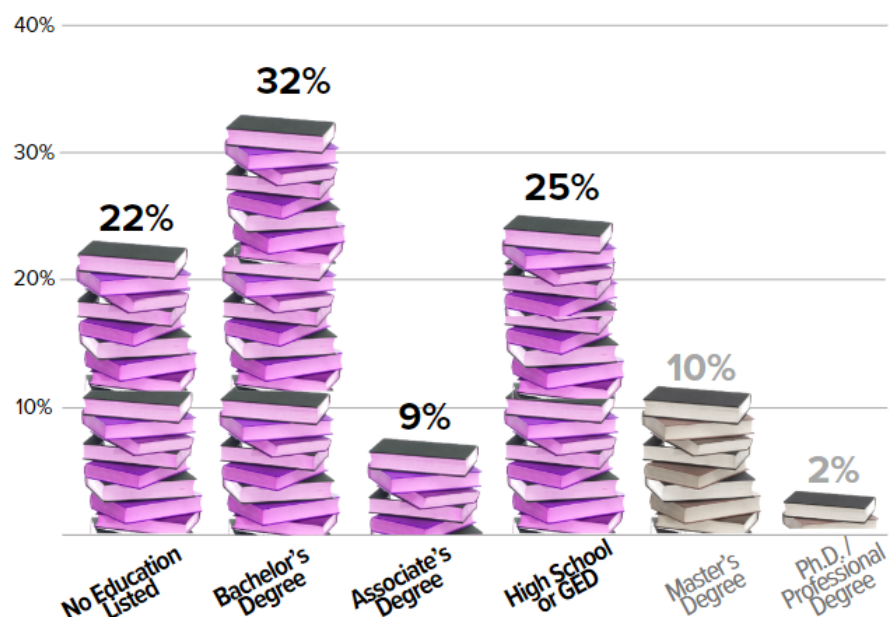
EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS for PRIORITY INDUSTRY JOBS

STEM-INTENSIVE INDUSTRIES AND ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

AGRIBUSINESS

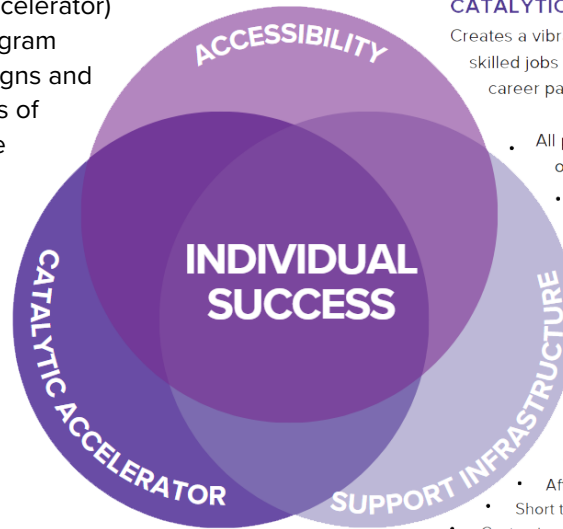
TOURISM

AVERAGED ACROSS INDUSTRIES*



PRINCIPLES

The **FIRST PRINCIPLE** (catalytic accelerator) shifts workforce development program design away from prescribed designs and offerings to attending to the needs of individuals who aspire to enter the labor force. The Mohawk Valley REDC workforce development plan focuses directly on individuals' basic needs through creating flexible times and delivery formats and providing wraparound services that remove attendance and attainment barriers.



CATALYTIC ACCELERATOR

Creates a vibrant ecosystem approach for individuals & leads to skilled jobs with clear advancement opportunities in extended career pathway.

- All projects are designed to get people off the sidelines or out of a dead-end unskilled job into a skilled job.
- A catalyst to keep going for further economic mobility
- Has an impact on the greater ecosystems of the community

SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Coalition of provider and community supports, customized to the needs of the industry and its workforce.

ACCESSIBILITY

Designed to incorporate the user-experience, not what is designed to meet the needs of the program.

- Affordable (free) relevant training and education
- Short term, convenient, stackable & continuous learning
- Customized to meet the user capacity

CATALYTIC ACCELERATOR

Creates a vibrant ecosystem approach for industry. Leads to a productive, skilled workforce with clear advancement opportunities within the organization. Opportunities are co-designed with providers to create entry and advanced skilled workforce.

- A catalyst to keep going for further economic mobility
- Has an impact on the greater ecosystems of the community

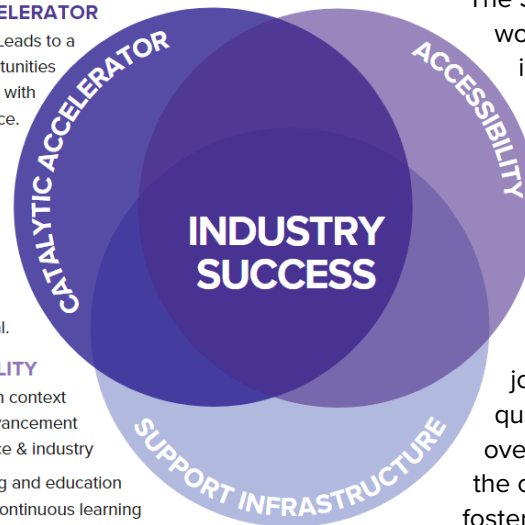
SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Wraparound, holistic supports, customized to meet the needs of the individual.

ACCESSIBILITY

Designed to incorporate the user-experience within context of the industry partner creating opportunities for advancement that benefits both workforce & industry

- Affordable (free) relevant training and education
- Short term, convenient, stackable & continuous learning
- Customized to meet the user capacity



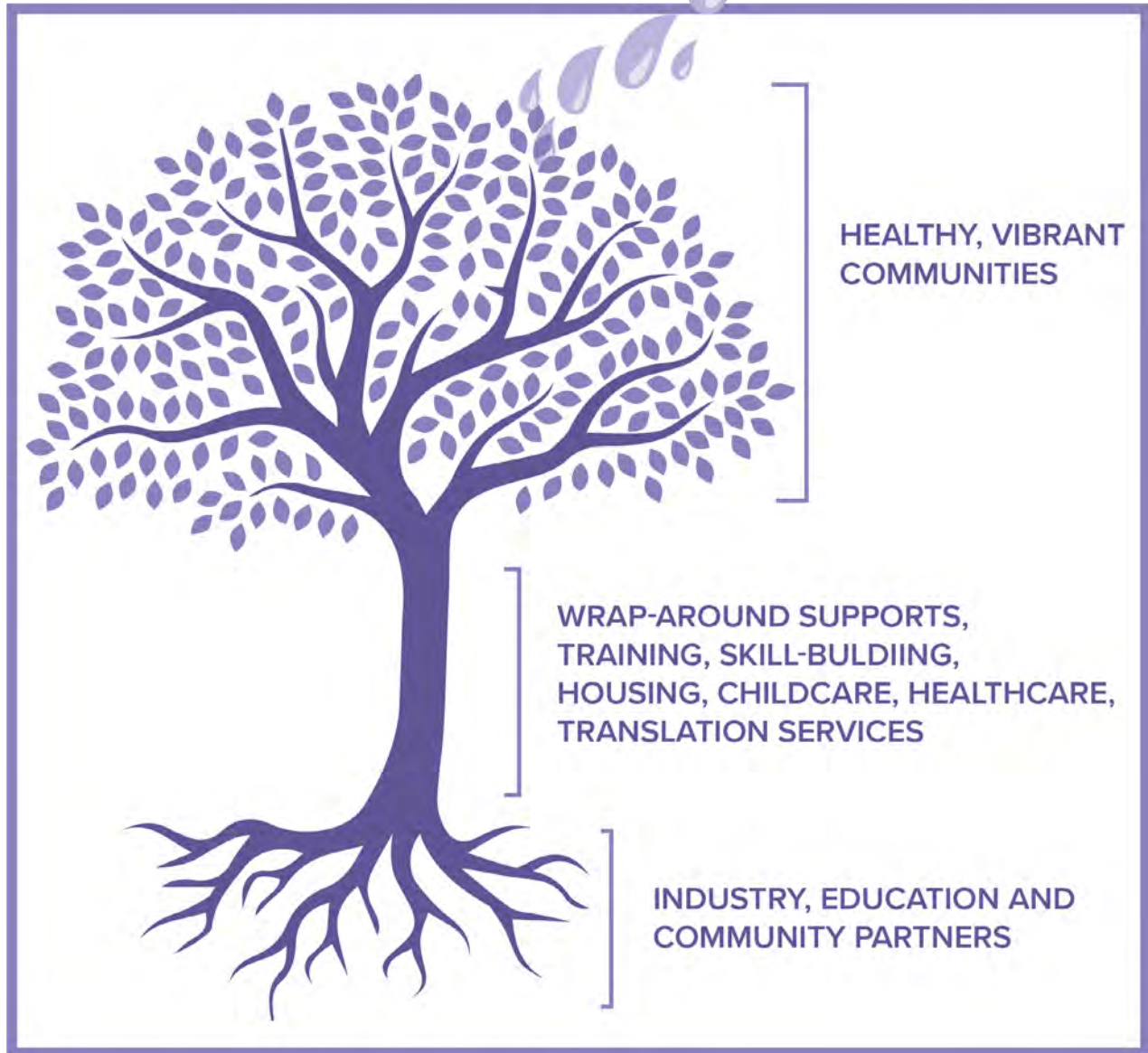
The **SECOND PRINCIPLE** recognizes workforce development as a key feature in a vibrant community ecosystem.

The main point is a strong workforce has a ripple effect that significantly influences the overall well-being of the community. More members of the community have increased access to either gain employable skills or upskill, leading to more employment opportunities. Having job stability leads to enhanced quality of life and contributes to the overall sustainability and vibrancy of the community. This vibrancy, in turn, fosters the growth and stability of social, political, and educational infrastructures.

The Catalytic Accelerator Model for individual and industry success both feeds and feeds on the ecosystem multiplier concept – which is premised upon building a sustainable system focused on the interplay between humans, industries, communities, organizations, and social and economic health. Underpinning the ecosystem approach, the network will include educators, industry experts, community leaders, service providers, and government agencies, working together to provide meaningful career paths through a well-articulated plan that builds on local assets. Following this logic, our catalyst projects are both individual and community centric; creating opportunities for meaningful employment will have an impact on the greater community good. Thus, feeding a multiplier effect that will induce a positive impact on neighborhoods, industry, and education.



YOU HAVE INVESTED IN THE MOHAWK VALLEY REGION AND WE HAVE DELIVERED. BY CONTINUING TO REINVEST, YOU WILL **STRENGTHEN THE ROOTS** AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO **BEAR FRUITS** FOR YEARS TO COME.



TARGETED



SCALABLE



PROVEN TRACK RECORD

PARTNERS: USDA, MEAT PROCESSORS, DAIRY PROCESSORS, YOUTHBUILD, RURAL HEALTHCARE, GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION, PATHWAYS HOME, PROJECT EXCITE, RADAR, FCCRG, EXPER-TISE PROJECT, FMCC, MVCC, FMS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD, NYATEP, FULTON MONTGOMERY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, FULTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS, UTICA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, ON-POINT FOR COLLEGE, SUNY POLYTECHNIC, COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF HERKIMER AND ONEIDA COUNTIES, JUNIOR FRONTIERS OF MOHAWK VALLEY, MOHAWK VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE, MOHAWK VALLEY EDGE, KINNEY DRUGSTORE, CAROLS CORPORATION, GREATER UTICA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, M&T BANK, MOHAWK VALLEY LATINO ASSOCIATION INC., SUNY COBLESKILL, SUNY ALBANY, BASSETT HEALTH CARE, MOHAWK VALLEY HEALTH SYSTEM, ROME HEALTH, MVEDD, MVREDC, KANATSIOHAREKE, INC (MOHAWK TRIBAL NON-PROFIT), LIVING ADK, TOWN OF RICHFIELD, VILLAGE OF NELLISTON, VILLAGE OF CANAJOHARIE, IROQUOIS HEALTH NETWORK, CDTA, MONTGOMERY COUNTY SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER, MONTGOMERY COUNTY IDA, HERKIMER COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, GREATER UTICA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, SCHOHARIE COUNTY IDA, THE CENTER (FORMERLY THE MOHAWK VALLEY RESOURCE CENTER FOR REFUGEES), SCHOHARIE ECONOMIC ENTERPRISE CORP (SEEC), SCHOHARIE COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM (SCCAP), SCHOHARIE COUNTY, SCHOHARIE COUNTY RURAL PRESERVATION CORPORATION, CITY OF AMSTERDAM, CITY OF LITTLE FALLS, ONC BOCES, UTICA/ONEIDA COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE NAACP, THE LEVITT PUBLIC AFFAIRS CENTER AT HAMILTON COLLEGE, HERKIMER-HAMILTON-OTSEGO-FULTON BOCES, CONNECTED COMMUNITY SCHOOLS, MOHAWK VALLEY DIAPER BANK/HEALTH FOUNDATION OF CENTRAL AND WESTERN NY, CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION, CATHOLIC CHARITIES, HERKIMER COLLEGE, UPSTATE CARING PARTNERS, HERKIMER HEALTHNET, THE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER, SENATOR SCHUMER, CHOBANI, NEW BEGINNINGS ACADEMY, INC., MOHAWK VALLEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, MONTGOMERY COUNTY BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER, SUNY COBLESKILL EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDIES, NYS OFFICE OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES, COBLESKILL-RICHMONDVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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**Mohawk Valley
Regional Economic
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