

DECEMBER 2018 — FEBRUARY 2019

chamber

north central massachusetts report

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WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE



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north central massachusetts report

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NorthCentralMass.com (USPS 773-650) is published quarterly by the North Central Mass. Chamber of Commerce, 860 South Street, Fitchburg, MA, for \$5 per year which is withheld from annual membership dues. Periodicals postage paid at Fitchburg, MA.

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About the Cover: The "Workforce of the Future" theme on this edition of the newsletter was selected in recognition of our efforts to tackle the workforce issues faced by many of our members. The Chamber has been mobilizing the business community to be more engaged partners and to move workforce initiatives forward to fuel the region's economic advancement. The featured image highlights a career exploration tour of AIS that was organized recently by the Chamber for local students. See pages 4 and 5 for more information.

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SCHOOLS

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82 Orchard Hill Park Drive
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(978) 990-2005
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Richard Duncan
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Westminster, MA 01473
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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CHAMBER HOSTS STUDENT MANUFACTURING TOURS

In the fall, the Chamber hosted manufacturing tours for nearly 100 students from throughout the region as part of its efforts to promote careers in advanced manufacturing.

Attendees on the tours visited Nypromold in Clinton; AIS, Inc in Leominster; Mount Wachusett Community College's Advanced Manufacturing Center; and WestRock in Devens, where they were able to get an insider's look at how these manufacturers operate as well as learn about the growing employment opportunities in manufacturing and the necessary skill-sets needed.

"We are committed to



Pictured here are students from Monty Tech High School touring Nypromold in Clinton.

advocating and supporting these types of career exploration and experiential learning programs that give our students a leg up," said Roy Nascimento, president & CEO of the Chamber. "The

backbone of any successful economy are strong schools. We believe that aligning and integrating our educational system with the needs of employers must be a priority for us to compete and

prepare the workforce of tomorrow."

For more information on the Chamber's efforts or hosting a manufacturing tour, please contact us at 978.353.7600. ♦



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CHAMBER HOSTS REGIONAL BUS TOUR TO PROMOTE MANUFACTURING

The Chamber and the North Central Massachusetts Development Corp. hosted a special manufacturing bus tour in the Fall for education and community leaders as part of efforts to improve the workforce pipeline and highlight the importance of manufacturing to North Central Massachusetts.

Attendees on the tour, which also included school superintendents, legislators, economic development officials and members of the media, visited several manufacturers where they were able to learn about the workforce needs of today's manufacturing industry.

The bus tour, part of the Chamber's "Amp It Up!" initiative, included stops at AIS, Inc., a furniture manufacturer based in Leominster that specializes in high-end office systems; Burkhart-Phelan, Inc., a company founded in 1982 that specializes in the precision manufacturing of high quality



Above: Brian Payson, Vice President and General Manager of SMC Ltd. in Devens leads a tour for education and community leaders.

Top: Dr. James Vander Hooven, President of Mount Wachusett Community College welcomes attendees to their Advanced Manufacturing Center.

flutes and piccolos; SMC Ltd., a worldwide contract manufacturer of various medical devices and medical equipment; and Mount Wachusett Community College's Devens Campus, which offers technical training in a number of different areas including advanced manufacturing. The tour also included a lunch presentation

and discussion with Dr. James Vander Hooven, president of the College and Roy Nascimento, president & CEO of the Chamber on ways that schools and communities can collaborate with employers.

With over 440 firms, North Central Massachusetts boasts the largest concentration of manufacturing in the state. Fully one-third of all private

wages paid in the region are from manufacturing jobs. The Chamber and its affiliates remain committed to supporting and growing this critical sector of the region's economy. The organizations are working with partners to address the skills gap, retain the region's young talent, and introduce them to the high-tech, high-skilled, and high-paying careers of the modern manufacturing industry. The Chamber believes that building successful education partnerships between businesses and the region's schools is critical to collective, on-going efforts. Efforts to promote manufacturing careers have also included engaging the schools and offering career exploration activities to students, hosting student tours, participating in career day activities and promoting manufacturing via a targeted social media campaign. ♦

For more information, please visit www.NorthCentralMass.com.

ADVERTISE IN THE 2019 MANUFACTURERS DIRECTORY



Plans are underway to publish the 2019 edition of the Manufacturers Directory and Industrial Parks Guide for North Central Massachusetts. This directory is the region's most comprehensive collection of this specialized information, outlining available industrial

sites and local manufacturing related businesses, describing their products, contact information and more.

The publication is designed to promote and connect manufacturers with suppliers as well as serve as a resource for companies looking to relocate or expand

throughout the region.

A limited number of advertising opportunities are available in this publication. Ad rates start at just \$350.

To reserve your spot, please contact David Ginisi at 978.353.7600 ext. 240 or email dginisi@northcentralmass.com. ♦

Did you know The Chamber offers health insurance for you and your employees.

Contact Lauren Goulet at 978-353-7600, ext 222.

FIDELITY BANK SUPPORTS NEW MICRO-LOAN FUND

Fidelity Bank has committed to earmark \$300,000 for the establishment of a micro loan fund, to be called The Colonial Bank Loan Fund- a Fidelity Bank Endowment. "We want to honor Colonial Co-operative Bank's prior

commitments to the people of Gardner and Winchendon," said Fidelity Bank Chairman & CEO Edward F. Manzi Jr. "It aligns well with our LifeDesign promise of being a team of caring people, who take a caring approach, to

provide caring solutions."

The fund will be managed by the North Central Massachusetts Development Corporation (NCMDC), an affiliate of the North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce, to provide the loans

to small businesses in the city of Gardner and the towns of Winchendon and Templeton.

The Greater Gardner Chamber of Commerce will partner with NCMDC to promote the loan fund to businesses in the area. ♦

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GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

The Chamber recently unveiled its Public Policy Agenda for the new fiscal year--outlining the Chamber's legislative priorities on issues important to businesses and the advancement of North Central Massachusetts. The agenda was developed to serve as a blueprint for the Chamber's government affairs efforts and was reviewed and approved by the Government Affairs Committee and Board of Directors. The agenda can be found online at www.NorthCentralMass.com.

The Chamber continues to be active on the local level, monitoring legislation and advocating on behalf of members. In Fitchburg, the Chamber testified at the annual tax classification hearing and successfully



The Chamber's Annual Congressional Luncheon provided business and community leaders with an opportunity to engage with the Congressional Delegation on federal issues.

secured an unprecedented eight point reduction to the property tax shift. This move towards a single rate reduces the impact on commercial and industrial property owners and makes the city and region more competitive. The Chamber will also advocate in Leominster for the city to

maintain its single tax rate and in the Town of Clinton for a reduction in their dual tax rate.

Fitchburg's license commission also recently held a public hearing in regards to proposed regulations on BYOB (Bring Your Own Bottle) establishments. The Chamber submitted a letter opposing the current proposal and articulating the concerns of many local businesses. Energy costs, the EMAC assessment and Ballot Question 1 were also issues that Chamber staff were involved with over the Fall.

In other news, the Chamber plans to reconvene

its Manufacturing Taskforce to continue its efforts to improve the workforce pipeline and improve the business climate for this important industry for the region. The Chamber will be compiling the recommendations from the taskforce and issuing a final report after the first of the year. The report is intended to help the Chamber and private sector work more effectively with government at all levels to ensure that the region has a competitive workforce and can support our local manufacturers.

In the coming months, we look forward to turning back towards the state as we convene our annual Legislative Briefing to organize efforts on Beacon Hill to address a number of crucial issues for businesses in the region.

If you run a business in North Central Massachusetts and wish to make your voice heard on any of these issues, please reach out to Christopher McDermott at 978.353.7600 ext. 224 or cmcdermott@northcentralmass.com. We want to hear what's important to you! ♦



fitchburgstate.edu/visit



The Chamber led an effort to host a debate at Fitchburg State University featuring all three candidates for the 3rd congressional district. The debate focused on issues facing the communities of North Central Massachusetts.

TOURISM update

Johnny Appleseed Visitors' Center Undergoes Renovations



The Johnny Appleseed Visitors' Center recently underwent renovations, which included new signage inside the center, updated signage on Route 2, new doors, paint, an upgraded sprinkler system, and renovations to the

bathrooms. The primary goal of the renovations was to improve the visitor experience for the 165,000-plus people who come through the door there every year.

The center, considered by many the gateway to North Central Massachusetts, opened in 1996 as a way to welcome visitors and give them a place to stop, stretch their legs, and learn more about the twenty-six communities in the region and what they have to offer for visitors and families.

The center is named after

American pioneer and folk hero John Chapman (AKA Johnny Appleseed) who was born in Leominster. Visitors can find hand-painted murals of the four seasons, historical items that showcase the region's heritage and a gift shop that carries many local products including jams, jellies, honey, maple syrup, fudge, chocolates, sparkling cider and that local icon of American kitsch – the plastic flamingo!

The center is open 360 days a year from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and is located on Rte. 2 in Lancaster. ♦

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New Website Launched to Promote Region to Visitors

Visit North Central Massachusetts, the tourism affiliate of the Chamber, recently launched a new website to serve as a resource for visitors from all over the world who are interested in exploring our scenic and dynamic New England region. The new website address is www.VisitNorthCentral.com.

The new site promotes North Central Massachusetts as a desirable place to visit

by highlighting what to do; where to stay; where to eat; and events happening throughout the year. The new site focuses on the region's unique attractions; accessibility from Boston and other major markets; family friendly activities; and the benefits of not only visiting but holding a sporting tournament or corporate event in the region.

The new site features an attractive look and



feel, and an intuitive, easy to use menu to help users easily access the information they are looking for. The new site is also responsive so it will adapt to the screen size of whatever device is being used for easy viewing and navigation.

"We believe that we have a great story to tell. North Central Massachusetts is a terrific

place to visit, live and grow a business," said Roy M. Nascimento, President & CEO of the Chamber and Visit North Central Massachusetts. "This new website will be a great tool to help us highlight the region's many strengths and assets and motivate visitors and local businesses to help us continue to grow as a destination." ♦

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Research Results

FITCHBURG — President & CEO, Mr. John Zarrella, celebrates the grand opening of his new headquarters on South Street with Mayor DiNatale; Senator Dean Tran; Representative Stephen Hay; City Councilors: Beth Walsh; Marcus DiNatale; Marisa Flemming; & Sam Squailia; David Ginisi of the Chamber; Chamber Ambassadors: Paulie Chlebeczek & Amanda Curtis; and other friends, family and employees.



Kumon Math & Reading Center

LEOMINSTER — Center Instructor, Issumael Nzamutuma, is joined alongside Mayor Dean Mazzarella; Roy Nascimento, Chamber President; Chamber Ambassadors: Amanda Curtis & Melissa Tasca; and many friends and family members to help celebrate the grand opening of the Math & Reading Center of Leominster.

OrangeTheory Fitness

LEOMINSTER — Owner Melanie Walsh, celebrates the grand opening of OrangeTheory Leominster with Mayor Dean Mazzarella; Chamber Ambassadors: Dottie Markham, Tim Johnson & Melissa Tasca; friends, family & co-workers.



Monty Tech Veterinary Clinic

FITCHBURG — Superintendant, Dr. Sheila Harrity, cuts the ribbon at the grand opening ceremony of Monty Tech's new vet clinic facility. Dr. Harrity is joined alongside members of the Monty Tech School Committee.

Check Presentations...



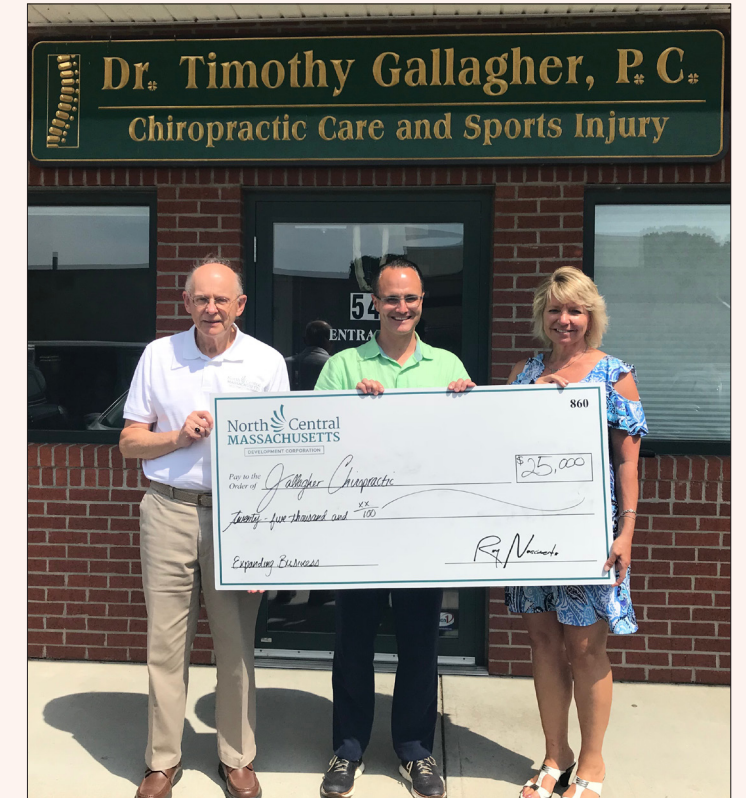
Barrington's Autumn

FITCHBURG — Sandie Cataldo & Norman Vigeant of the North Central MA Development Corporation present Mr. Winston Burrell with an express loan of \$5,000 for his new business.



Native Joe's Farmstand

WESTMINSTER — North Central MA Development Corporation Team: Sandie Cataldo & Norman Vigeant present a check to Mr. Joseph Serio of Westminster Pharmacy for his new business, Native Joe's Farmstand in the amount of \$75,000.



Dr. Timothy Gallagher, P.C.

LEOMINSTER — North Central MA Development Corporation Team: Sandie Cataldo & Norman Vigeant present a check for \$25,000 to Dr. Timothy Gallagher for an expansion of his business.



Medical Arts Hearing Instruments Celebrates 40 Years

LEOMINSTER — Last month we celebrated Medical Arts Hearing Instruments on their 40 years of service. We were thrilled to honor Anthony & Darrylin Wasiuk on this milestone accomplishment! Pictured: Owners Anthony & Darrylin Wasiuk; Roy Nascimento, Chamber President; Kat Deal, Chamber Events & Programs Manager; and Dottie Markham, Chamber Ambassador.

North Central Calendar **EVENTS**

To register or for a complete list of events visit us at www.northcentralmass.com.

December 5

Women's Leadership Connection: Women Leaders in Non-Profits: The Season of Giving

Double Tree by Hilton, 8 a.m.

December 6

Winter Reception

The Groton Inn, 5 p.m.

December 12

Human Resource Council: How to Deal with Claims of Sexual Harassment in the Me Too Era

Chamber Office, 12 p.m.

December 28

Connect North Central

DoubleTree by Hilton, 8 a.m.

January 10

Business After Hours

ideaLab, 5 p.m.

January 11

Good Morning North Central

DoubleTree by Hilton, 6:45 a.m.

January 15

Small Business Roundtable: Presenting Your Business in the Best Light for 2019

Chamber Office, 8 a.m.

January 16

Human Resource Council: Workforce Update & Recruiting Quality Employees

Chamber Office, 12 p.m.

January 25

Connect North Central

DoubleTree by Hilton, 8 a.m.

February 12

Small Business Roundtable: Workforce Training Fund Program

Chamber Office, 8 a.m.

February 20

Human Resource Council: Popular Benefits Packages, Corporate Culture & Retaining Employees

Chamber Office, 12 p.m.

February 22

Connect North Central

DoubleTree by Hilton, 8 a.m.

Inclement Weather Policy

As the Chamber is a business to business association, we strive to keep to regular business as usual even during inclement weather to better serve our members and communities. We do not often cancel or reschedule events or close the NCMCC office, but should the need arise, then we will attempt to notify members as quickly as possible. To help you plan your arrival, we will evaluate an event up to two hours before the event's start time and notify all registered attendees of changes via email. We also post to our social media platforms and update our calendar items for those not registered. To read more about the weather policy, please visit: www.northcentralmass.com/programs. ◇

Chamber's Annual Legislative and Candidates Reception



More than 165 attendees including federal, state, and local elected officials attended the Chamber's Annual Legislative and Candidates Reception, held at the Chockset Inn in Sterling. The reception is one of the Chamber's premier events of the fall season and provided members an opportunity to engage with their lawmakers in a relaxed, social setting. Visit our Facebook page to view more photos from the event.



September Breakfast

Secretary Matthew A. Beaton of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs was the featured speaker at the September Good Morning North Central breakfast program.

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Pictured: David Ginisi, Marketing and Outreach Manager for the Chamber; Bruce Platzman, President & CEO of AIS, Inc.; Courtney Piroso, Vice President of AIS, Inc.; and Roy Nascimento, President & CEO of the Chamber.

AIS INC. JOINS AS NEWEST LEADERSHIP LEVEL MEMBER

The Chamber is pleased to announce the addition of AIS Inc., the largest office furniture manufacturing firm in the Northeast, as its newest Leadership Level member.

AIS, Inc. based in Leominster, is one of an elite group of prominent businesses and organizations to hold the prestigious position of Leadership Level member. Leadership level members make a vital commitment to the economic development of the region through their enhanced investment in the Chamber. They also serve as key advisors and maintain a close relationship to the organization. Their support helps shape the future of North Central Massachusetts by providing resources and the benefits of their advice and wisdom.

Bruce Platzman, President and CEO of AIS, Inc., explained, "The North Central Massachusetts Chamber is an outstanding organization with a clear record of advancing economic opportunity in the region. We like their consistent advocacy for all businesses in North Central Massachusetts. And, in particular, the Chamber's recognition of the key role manufacturing plays in our local economy is very appealing. AIS is pleased to partner with them and help further their mission." ♦

Chamber Welcomes Deal and Hannen to Professional Staff

The Chamber is pleased to announce the addition of Kathleen Deal as Events and Programs Manager and Brendan Hannen as Micro-Loan Program Manager.

Ms. Deal will be responsible for planning and executing the many events and programs of the Chamber and its affiliate organizations. These include signature programs such as Good Morning North Central, Community Leadership Institute, Legislative Reception, and numerous other events geared towards supporting our members and/or advancing the region.

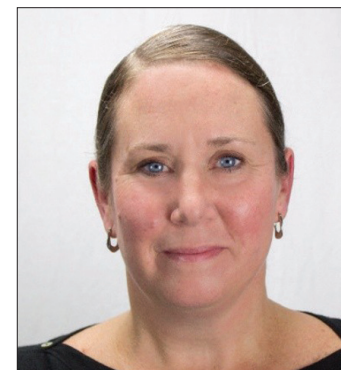
She joins the Chamber from Wachusett Mountain Ski Area, where she most recently worked in the marketing department and assisted with the coordination of their many festivals. Prior to working at Wachusett, she worked for accesso Technology Group where she was responsible for their training seminars and events. She holds a Bachelor's degree from West Virginia University and is a resident of Gardner.

Mr. Hannen will be responsible for helping to manage the micro-loan program offered through



the Chamber's economic development arm, the North Central Massachusetts Development Corporation.

He joins the Chamber from the Ives Group, Inc. where he worked



as a Product Manager for the Audit Analytics service. In this role he helped to develop and deliver datasets to major accounting firms and financial institutions

for compliance with SEC requirements. Prior to that role he was a Research Analyst where he participated in the research and presentation of published reports on topics including IPOs, Auditor Changes and Going Concern Opinions. He holds a Master's Degree in Accounting from Clark University and a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Worcester State University. ♦



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