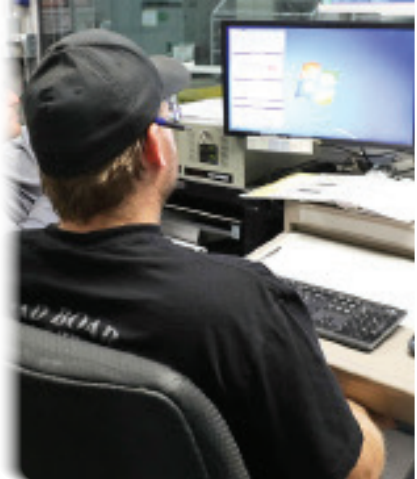




# MANUFACTURING IN THE NORTH COUNTRY

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JOE LOTEMPLIO/STAFF PHOTO

To help match employers with much needed staffers, ETS helped put together the recent 10th Annual North Country Manufacturing Day at Clinton Community College. The event drew nearly 700 students from area schools who had a chance to see about two dozen displays and interactive exhibits from local manufacturers participating in the event.

## ‘There’s so many pathways’ Manufacturing Day shows students local career opportunities

BY JOE LOTEMPLIO  
Press-Republican

**PLATTSBURGH** — For the past four decades ETS has been helping people find jobs, businesses fulfill needs and providing valuable consulting to area businesses. Filling the needs of the local manufacturing scene is a pleasure for them to work on.

“We’re a huge hub for manufacturing and it’s only growing,” Amber Douglass, vice president for strategic strategies at ETS, said.

“We alone at ETS have over 200 jobs open right now in the manufacturing field that I know, and every single one of these employers can speak to that as well. So it’s still growing and they are still looking for people.”

### 10TH ANNUAL MANUFACTURING DAY

To help match employers with much needed staffers, ETS helped put together the recent 10th Annual North Country Manufacturing Day at Clinton Community College. The event drew nearly 700 students from area schools who had a chance to see about two dozen displays and interactive exhibits from local manufacturers participating in the event.

With the event being opened to ninth and tenth graders as well as juniors and seniors for the first time, it was the largest crowd ever.

Douglass said such a showcase is the perfect way to bridge the gap between employers needing staff and those seeking jobs.

“This started because we wanted to give students the opportunity to explore the manufacturing careers in industries that are right here in their own backyard,” she said.

“We wanted to give them the ability to see that you can have a great career right here and there’s so many pathways to do it. You can graduate from high school and enter the workforce right away, you can go to college for two years and then go

into manufacturing or you can go to a four-year school.”

### SHOW OF COMMUNITY

The event allowed students to explore and get hands-on and interactive with the things that are being created in the area, Douglass explained.

“Not only that, it’s great to see all the manufacturers come out and support each other,” she said.

“Manufacturers come out and they like it, and it is just really is a good supportive show of community. They want the industry to prosper and grow, and this was one of the ways that we wanted to tell them.”

Douglass said the manufacturing sector of the North Country is seeing the highest periods of business they have ever seen, which means great opportunities for young people about to enter the workforce.

“You’re seeing the best benefits we have ever seen. They (students) can graduate high school and start out making \$20 an hour right now. So yes, it’s pretty incredible,” she said.

### STAFFING NEEDS

As the region, state, nation and world continue to rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic that has impacted everyone for the past two-plus years, filling staffing needs has been a challenge for so many.

ETS continues to work on meeting those needs.

“It’s definitely been very interesting the last year with everything that has gone on. I think the overall consensus is that it’s still very hard to find people,” Douglass said.

“We’ve definitely seen a shift where it’s getting a bit easier, and we’re starting to see more people back at work and maybe shifting their career for new jobs.”

Douglass said they hope to see the trend of filling jobs continue. The fact that most manufacturing jobs offer good pay and attractive benefits should be a good drawing card.



JOE LOTEMPLIO/STAFF PHOTO

With the 10th annual Manufacturing Day event being opened to ninth and tenth graders as well as juniors and seniors for the first time, it was the largest crowd ever.

“I still think it’s definitely a challenge right now to get enough people to continue to reach the goals that they all have set,” she said.

### HIDDEN GEMS

The Manufacturing Day event ETS helped host, along with other efforts they put forth and promotions by the North Country Chamber of Commerce and others, are critical in spreading the word of all

the bright opportunities that exist in the region.

“There are lot of kind of hidden gems that you don’t know about. Until you know, you’re kind of forced to learn about it,” Douglass said.

“So again, this is another reason why this event is so important.”

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# US employers are hiring briskly even in face of rate hikes

## Recent report from the federal government showed that hiring was brisk across industries

BY CHRISTOPHER RUGABER  
AP Economics Writer

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — America’s employers kept hiring vigorously in October, adding 261,000 positions, a sign that the economy remains a picture of solid job growth and painful inflation.

A recent report from the government showed that hiring was brisk across industries last month, though the overall gain declined from 315,000 in September. The unemployment rate rose from a five-decade low of 3.5% to a still-healthy 3.7%.

A strong job market is deepening the challenges the Federal Reserve faces as it raises interest rates at the fastest pace since the 1980s to try to bring inflation down from near a 40-year high. Steady hiring, solid pay growth and low unemployment have been good for workers. But they have also contributed to rising prices.

“Employers continue to be worried that it’s going to be harder to hire tomorrow than today, so that actually suggests they don’t see a recession on the horizon,” said Betsey Stevenson, an economist at the University of Michigan who was an economic adviser to President Barack Obama.

Stevenson noted that more than half of last month’s net hiring was in industries — health care, education, restaurants and hotels, for example — that still appear to be catching up from the sharp job losses they endured during the pandemic recession. Hiring in such sectors will likely continue, she suggested, even if the economy slows.

The October jobs figures were the last major economic report before Election Day, with voters keenly focused on the state of the economy. Chronic inflation is hammering the budgets of many households and had shot to the top of voter concerns in the midterm congressional elections. Republican candidates have attacked Democrats over inflation in their drive to regain control of Congress.

The latest data offered hints that the job market might be cooling, if only gradually, as the Fed is hoping to see. Over the past three months, hiring gains have averaged 289,000, down from a sizzling monthly rate of 539,000 a year ago. Average hourly pay, on average, rose 4.7% from a year ago, a smaller



**A help wanted sign is displayed in a storefront, Tuesday, Nov. 1, 2022, in Bedford, N.Y. Employers have added a healthy average of 407,000 jobs a month, and the unemployment rate is just 3.7%, close to a half-century low.**

AP FILE PHOTO

year-over-year gain than in September and down from a 16-year peak of 5.6% in March.

The tick-up in the jobless rate occurred because about 300,000 Americans said they were no longer employed. The unemployment rate is calculated from a separate survey from the jobs figure and can sometimes move in a different direction in the short term.

Still, last month’s wage increase will likely continue to fuel inflation pressures.

“This report was definitely strong enough to keep the Fed on track raising rates,” said Jonathan Pingle, an economist at UBS.

President Joe Biden and congressional Democrats have

pointed to the vigorous resurgence in hiring as evidence that their policies have helped get Americans back to work faster than the nation managed to do after previous downturns. But that message has been overtaken in the midterm political campaigns by the crushing surge of inflation, which has soured many Americans on the economy under Democratic leadership in Congress and the White House.

The October jobs report showed that job gains were widespread. Health care added 53,000, with hospitals and doctors’ offices continuing to re-staff after having lost many workers at the height of the pandemic. Manufacturing added 32,000. A

category that includes engineers, accountants and lawyers added 39,000.

Still, some corners of the economy have begun to flag under the weight of rising prices and much higher borrowing costs engineered by the Fed’s aggressive rate hikes. Especially in industries like housing and technology, hiring has waned. Many tech companies, such as the ride-hailing firm Lyft and the payment company Stripe, have announced plans to lay off workers. Amazon says it will suspend its corporate hiring.

More broadly across the economy, though, the pace of layoffs remains unusually low. And companies in travel, restaurants, manufacturing and health care

are still hiring steadily. Southwest Airlines told investors last week that it was on track to hire 10,000 employees this year, including 1,200 pilots. Laboratory Corporation of America said it plans significant hiring.

Jerry Flanagan, CEO of JDog Brands, says his company’s sales are still growing and its franchisees are still hiring even after the company raised prices to cover higher fuel costs. The company employs mostly veterans to do junk hauling and carpet and floor cleaning and has about 300 outlets nationwide.

“They need laborers,” Flanagan said of the company’s branches. “They need people hauling the junk. They need drivers, they need carpet clean-

ing technicians.”

Flanagan said his company would try to avoid layoffs even if the economy slows. If sales decline, workers can shift to distributing door hanger advertisements, lawn signs and other marketing.

“They’re going to hold onto these people as long as they can,” Flanagan said. “There’s so much work out there.”

Some employers are finally finding all the staff they need.

This week, the Rainbow Blossom Natural Foods Markets in Louisville, Kentucky, finally filled all the jobs it had been advertising after more than a year of struggling with short staffing.

“It’s a great feeling,” said Summer Auerbach, co-owner of the family-owned five-store chain.

Auerbach said the economic environment appears to be shifting back toward the pre-pandemic economy. For the first time in months, for example, applicants are following up via email to check on their applications.

At a news conference Wednesday, Fed Chair Jerome Powell noted that the strong job market is feeding inflationary pressures as businesses continue to raise pay. In September, average wages rose more than 6% from 12 months earlier, according to the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. Pay raises can feed inflation if companies pass on at least part of their higher labor costs to their customers in the form of higher prices.

Powell spoke after the Fed announced a fourth straight three-quarter-point increase in its benchmark rate. It was the latest in a series of unusually large hikes that have heightened the risk of a recession.

Housing has absorbed the worst damage from higher borrowing costs. The Fed’s rate hikes have sent average long-term mortgage rates surging to around 7%. Home sales have cratered, and once-soaring home prices have started to slow.

For now, the economy is still growing. It expanded at a 2.6% annual rate in the July-September quarter after having contracted in the first six months of the year. With inflation still painfully high and the Fed making borrowing increasingly expensive for consumers and businesses, most economists expect a recession by early next year.

# Key Fed official says he's open to slowing hikes

## Waller open to raising the Fed's key rate by a half-point next month in light of evidence that inflation may be cooling

BY CHRISTOPHER RUGABER  
AP Economics Writer

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Christopher Waller, a key Federal Reserve official, added his voice Wednesday to a rising number of Fed officials who have suggested that the central bank will likely slow the pace of its interest rate hikes beginning in December.

Waller, a member of the Fed’s Board of Governors, said he was open to raising the Fed’s key rate by a half-point next month in light of evidence that inflation may be cooling.

At each of its four most recent policy meetings, the central bank has raised its benchmark rate by an aggressive three-quarters of a point. The cumulative effect has been to make many consumer and business loans costlier and to raise the risk of a recession.

At the same time, Waller stressed that inflation remains painfully high. And he cautioned that there have been occasions in the past when economists thought inflation was falling only to see prices reverse course and accelerate again.

“The data of the past few weeks have made me more

comfortable considering stepping down to a (half-point) hike,” Waller said in a speech in Phoenix. “It is important to remember that this would still be a very significant tightening action.”

The Fed has raised its key short-term rate this year at its fastest pace since the early 1980s — to a range between 3.75% and 4%, the highest level in about 15 years.

Those hikes have increased borrowing costs for mortgages, auto loans and credit cards, among other loans. Fed officials intend the higher rates to slow borrowing and spending and cool inflation pressures.

Waller’s remarks followed comments earlier Wednesday from Mary Daly, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. Daly said in an interview with CNBC that the Fed will likely raise its short-term rate at least a full percentage point above its current level.

She also said there has so far been no discussion among Fed officials about whether to pause their rate hikes if inflation continued to moderate.

“Pausing,” Daly said, “is off the table right now — it’s not even part of the discussion.”

Both Waller and Daly took pains, like Chair Jerome Powell at a news conference this month, to emphasize that rates will ultimately go higher even as the Fed raises them in smaller increments.

Waller also underscored his view that the inflation report for October, which showed slower price increases, was just one data point and not necessarily solid evidence that inflation is declining.

“I cannot emphasize enough that one report does not make a trend,” he said. “It is way too early to conclude that inflation is headed sustainably down.”

Waller noted that inflation had shown signs of slowing late last year before heading higher again.

“I will not be head-faked by one report and will continue to watch the data between now and the December (Fed) meeting,” he said.

On Monday, Lael Brainard, the Fed’s vice chair, said a smaller rate increase “will probably be appropriate, soon.”

Market traders now foresee an 85% likelihood of a half-point rate increase at the Fed’s mid-December meeting, according to the CME Group’s tracking of investor expectations.

Some of Waller’s comments about rate hikes Wednesday were harder-line than Brainard’s were. In response to a question, for example, Waller said that the current unemployment rate — at 3.7%, it is near a 53-year low — means the Fed can focus primarily on fighting inflation.



AP FILE PHOTO

**Federal Reserve Board of Governors member Christopher Waller poses for a photo on May 23, 2022, in Washington. Waller, a key Federal Reserve official, added his voice Wednesday, Nov. 16, to a rising number of Fed officials who have suggested that the central bank will likely slow the pace of its interest rate hikes beginning in December.**

“We are not seeing the typical trade-off between ... driving down inflation and causing all these job losses and high unemployment,” he said.

Waller noted that even while the Fed has sharply raised its key short-term rate, employers

are still hiring at a healthy clip.

As a result, he said, the Fed should “tackle inflation ... the job market is giving this to you. Don’t be cautious, don’t be afraid.”

In her remarks, though,

Brainard suggested that the Fed’s key rate is already high enough to restrain the economy. As it moves higher, the central bank should increasingly consider the risk that the economy might tumble into a recession, she said.



# One year since spin-off, Sylvamo going strong

## Former International Paper mill looks to educate, attract students into paper-making business

BY JOE LOTEMPLIO  
Press-Republican

**TICONDEROGA** — For decades, Sylvamo has been producing high-quality paper at its Ticonderoga mill, and business continues to shine.

“We have a great, great business model and there’s a lot of investment in the company, and we are promoting and growing the business,” Lucia Boatman of the company’s Human Resources Department said.

“Right now, we can’t keep up with customer demand.”

### TICONDEROGA MILL

Sylvamo, formerly known as International Paper, makes uncoated free-sheet paper at its Ticonderoga Mill. It is a fully integrated mill, with about 600 employees taking 100 truckloads of wood a day, processing it, and shipping paper out in rolls or rings to be distributed across the country.

Boatman staffed a booth at the recent Manufacturing Day at Clinton Community College in Plattsburgh to educate students about the world of paper-making and manufacturing.

She hopes the information and possibilities of a career resonate.

“Maybe not today, maybe not when they graduate high school, but at some point in time, they’ll remember, ‘oh, I remember thinking about the mill, learning about the mill.’”

### HOW THE PAPER IS MADE

Sylvamo also has a YouTube channel to show the paper-making process, which she said is amazing.

“People might not know about it, but it’s just a fascinating process,” she said.

Mill jobs offer good pay and other benefits.

“Our starting pay right now is \$23.46 an hour, and we’re a company that still provides a pension, so there’s a pension plan in addition to a 401K and employer match for 401K. So it’s a good match,” she said.

### SINCE 1971

The mill produces colored and premium white copy and printer paper under Hammermill, Accent and Springhill brands. The facility opened on the shores of Lake Champlain in 1971, replacing an older mill located in downtown Ticonderoga.

IP spun off its printing papers unit as Sylvamo in 2021, keeping its cardboard and cellulose fiber division. International Paper retained a 19.9 percent stake in Sylvamo, but plans to sell that off.

### SYLVAMO SPOINOFF

The spinoff came with a \$1.4 billion payment from Sylvamo to IP. Tax exempt bonds that were used by IP to finance improvements at the Ticonderoga Mill were transferred to Sylvamo, according to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

The divestiture gave Sylvamo paper mills in the U.S., Europe and Latin America.

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PHOTO PROVIDED

Jean-Michel Ribieras, chairman and chief executive officer of the new paper company, helped unveil the Sylvamo sign at the Ticonderoga Mill in October 2021. The new sign replaced the International Paper sign that's been in front of the mill in some form since its construction in 1971. Before that, the mill was downtown after IP acquired it in 1925.



P-R FILE PHOTO

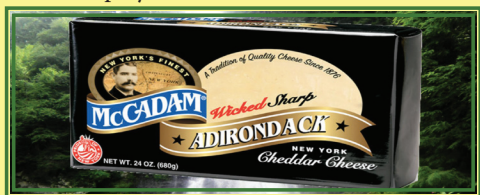
Sylvamo, formerly known as International Paper, makes uncoated free-sheet paper at its Ticonderoga Mill. It is a fully integrated mill, with about 600 employees taking 100 truckloads of wood a day, processing it, and shipping paper out in rolls or rings to be distributed across the country.



**Agri-Mark, Inc.**, is a farmer-owned dairy cooperative with more than 600 members, including numerous from New York State. The co-op merged with the Chateaugay Cooperative in 2003 and purchased the cheese-making plant in Chateaugay. The merger and purchase gave the dairy farmers of the North Country an excellent local market for their milk and a chance to resurrect the McCadam cheese brand.

Our employees help the plant receive between 1 million to 1.5 million pounds of milk per day from more than 200 local dairy farmers or about 365 million pounds per year, which equals more than 42 million gallons. From this high-quality milk, we produce more than 40 million pounds of award-winning cheese per year.

In June 2021 Agri-Mark started a \$16 million expansion at its plant in Chateaugay, NY. Our vision is to revitalize the Chateaugay facility to better support the growing needs of our local farmers, meet the appetites of our customers and consumers, and provide an improved facility for our employees.



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### DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR FEATURES?

If you have a story idea or information you would like to see reported in the feature pages of the Press-Republican, please call Editor-in-Chief Joe LoTempio at 518-565-4148, or email news@pressrepublican.com. The feature schedule is as follows:

- Monday: Home and Garden
- Tuesday: Health and Fitness
- Wednesday: After 50
- Thursday: Out & About
- Friday: Faith and Spirituality
- Saturday: Family



# ‘If you want to succeed in business, you either be better or you be faster’

## Norsk Titanium expanding manufacturing capability at Plattsburgh plant

BY JOE LOTEMPLIO  
Press-Republican

**PLATTSBURGH** — When Norsk Titanium arrived on the local manufacturing scene in 2016, it was all the rage. Everyone wanted to know about the cool new technology the company would be bringing to the area and whether it would succeed.

Well, half a decade later, it’s still cool and Norsk is doing quite well and loving the North Country.

“It’s fantastic for us,” Craig DeBoos, operations manager for Norsk said.

“We have access to renewable power resources, which is very important to the company. There is an environmental awareness package that goes along with being a European-based company, but at the same time, we’ve also got a bunch of really genuine people who want to work hard... it’s a feature of the North Country so we really enjoy it.”



Craig DeBoos

### PRINTS AIRCRAFT

Norsk is a company that literally 3D prints aircraft. They take a computer model and use the 3D print technology to actually make parts for aircraft. The company has been at the forefront of such technology and their arrival in the North Country was much anticipated.

“If you want to succeed in business, you either be better or you be faster,” DeBoos said.

“So we want to be better and we want to be faster. Rather than taking 12 months to build a part for an aircraft, we want to be able to do it in 12 weeks. If we can do it in 12 weeks, we want to do it in 12 days.”

**RAPID MANUFACTURING**

DeBoos said the fastest part they’ve ever created took just over four hours from the time it was a model on a computer to the time that that was in his hands.

“Being able to bring those ideas forth and to generate that kind of rapid manufacturing environment... we don’t know how we’re going to do it in five years time. So we want to bring people in who can help us grow, bring those ideas to us, and help us realize that vision for what our company wants to be in.”

DeBoos said Norsk has a staff of about 40 workers in Plattsburgh right now and is looking to hire at a minimum another 20 operators next year. Those operator positions will also need support positions that the company will be looking for.

### TO THE NEXT GENERATION

With more new contracts in tow, DeBoos said Norsk is looking to double or even triple their capacity in the next year.

“We’re expanding our manufacturing in Plattsburgh so this is outreach to the next generation of talent that’s coming through Plattsburgh,” DeBoos said at the recent North Country Manufacturing Day at Clinton Community College.

“We’d like to be able to recruit from the local area into as



RYAN BENT PHOTOGRAPHY/PHOTO

The Norsk facility at 123 Industrial Blvd. in the Town of Plattsburgh. Operations Manager Craig DeBoos said Norsk has a staff of about 40 workers in Plattsburgh right now and is looking to hire at a minimum another 20 operators next year. Those operator positions will also need support positions that the company will be looking for.

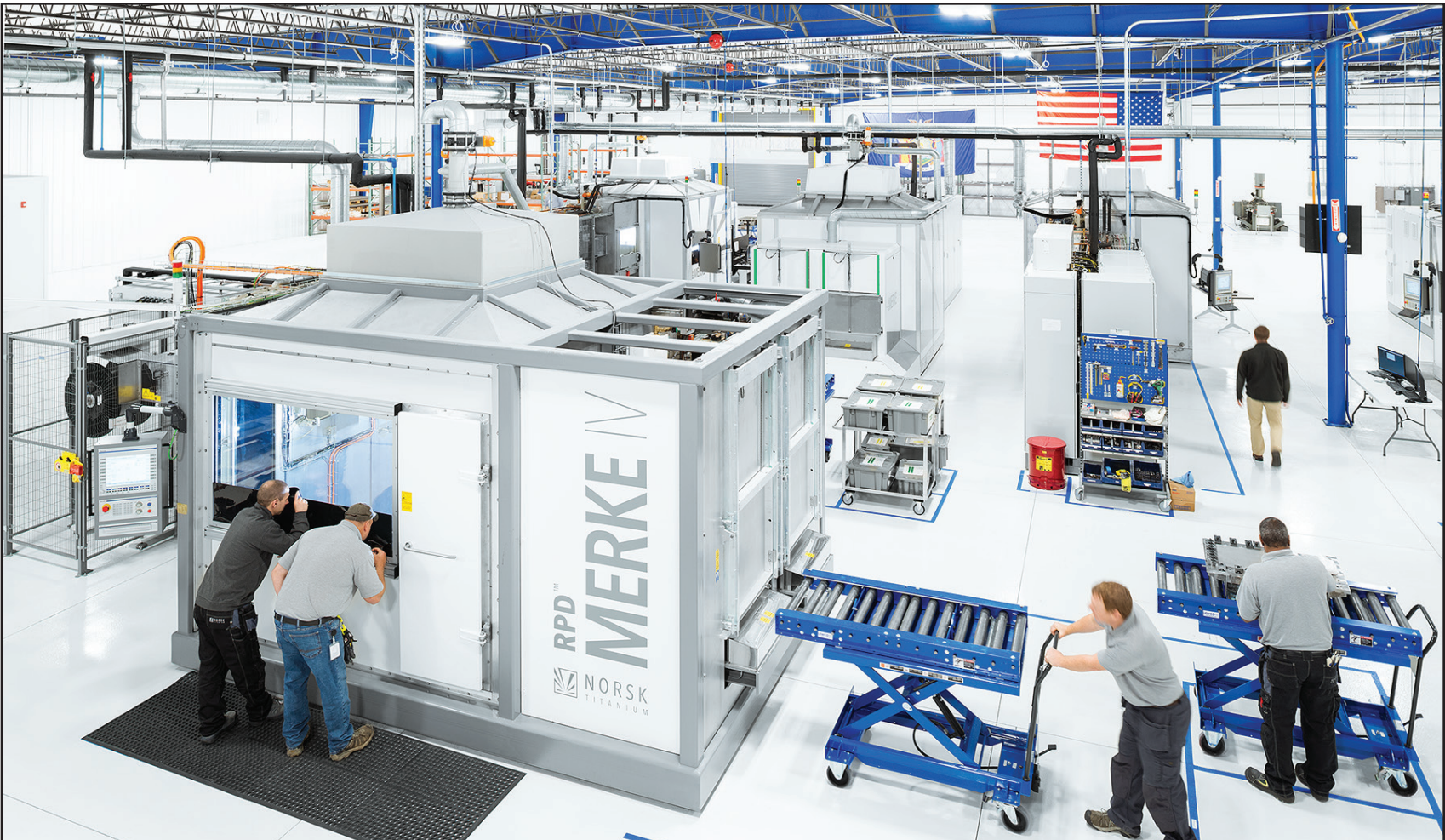


PHOTO PROVIDED

Norsk is a company that literally 3D prints aircraft. They take a computer model and use the 3D print technology to actually make parts for aircraft. The company has been at the forefront of such technology and their arrival in the North Country was much anticipated.

many of the jobs as possible because people in the North Country know what they’re getting into. We want to make sure we have good relationships with local schools and local colleges so that we have candidates. So this is part of our effort to reach out into the community and make sure that people understand who we are, what we’re looking for so that when we do advertise for those jobs, we have people who are attracted and want to come to work rather than thinking I have to go to Albany or New

York City for work.”

The jobs Norsk is looking to fill offer competitive wages and benefits.

“I like to think so,” DeBoos said.

“Every machine needs one operator to run and operators require high school and a little bit of knowledge and experience about the manufacturing environment. Then, then they can start with us at \$22 an hour.”

### HIGH TECHNOLOGY COMPANY

DeBoos said in addition to looking for local high school

graduates, they also recruit heavily at Clarkson, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy and at SUNY schools.

“We’re all about making sure that building a high technology company in the North Country is something that’s also going to give back to the community as well,” he said.

Norsk is also looking to partner with other local companies.

“If we can bring partner organizations in so they can do that workforce locally, rather than having to send it to Pennsylvania

or Montreal or something like that, that opens up a big use of force so you guys could maybe grow and expand,” DeBoos said.

Norsk is figuring on more work developing in the aerospace industry, which will bode well for the company and the region.

“There’s still a lot of work as you develop into commercial aerospace,” he said.

“We’re doing basic structural components at the moment. Eventually, we want to get the flight critical and fracture critical components. But there’s a

lot of work between a lot of steps that we have to go through.”

Norsk is the leading additive manufacturing company in the world, DeBoos said, and they want that to continue.

“We were the first to have structural components flying on aircraft and we want to keep building on that,” he said.

“We made a commitment to New York state and we made a commitment to the area.”

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Since Nova Bus set up shop on Banker Road in the Town of Plattsburgh in 2009, it has generated a high profile among local manufacturers and businesses. Just recently, in March, Nova Bus was recognized by the North Country Chamber of Commerce as the "2022 Business of the Year."

## Cashman: Nova Bus workers take pride in job

Every day from my office window on the Banker Road I see Nova Bus buses rolling by. It brings a smile to my face seeing each one wrapped with where it is off to while knowing it is coming from our town and the North Country.

Over the years, I have had numerous occasions to visit the plant just down the road from the town hall for a tour for state or international guests visiting the region or for celebrating the completion of a new contract as the keys are being handed off to customers.



Michael  
Cashman

Among the consistent observations I have made is how this talented workforce takes pride in what they are producing. It was never more evident than when the recent historic occasion of their first LFSe+ all-electric bus built right here in Plattsburgh was completed.

A product is only as good as who built it and this Plattsburgh team is simply phenomenal.

Beyond seeing the Nova buses roll past my window, I am witness to their hundreds of employees coming and going each day.

Nova continues to be a large employer in the region, and is well known for producing a premier product and being an innovator in the industry. They continue to lead the North American market, securing contracts both near and far.

With the addition of LFSe+ bus line being built here in Plattsburgh, their products and our community will continue to be at the forefront of the green economy.

We have numerous businesses like Nova Bus that contribute to the Town of Plattsburgh being Globally Significant-Regionally Exceptional.

Collectively our manufacturing industry is thriving and recognized as an economic engine of the North Country.

While writing this, a bus just went by. I can say with no exaggeration, Plattsburgh manufacturing is on the move!

— Michael Cashman is supervisor of the Town of Plattsburgh

NOVA BUS/PHOTO

# Nova Bus talks value of Plattsburgh-Quebec corridor

## Manufacturer named North Country Chamber '2022 Business of the Year'

BY JOE LOTEMPLIO  
Editor-in-Chief

**PLATTSBURGH** — Since Nova Bus set up shop on Banker Road in the Town of Plattsburgh in 2009, it has generated a high profile among local manufacturers and businesses. Just recently, in March, Nova Bus was recognized by the North Country Chamber of Commerce as the "2022 Business of the Year."

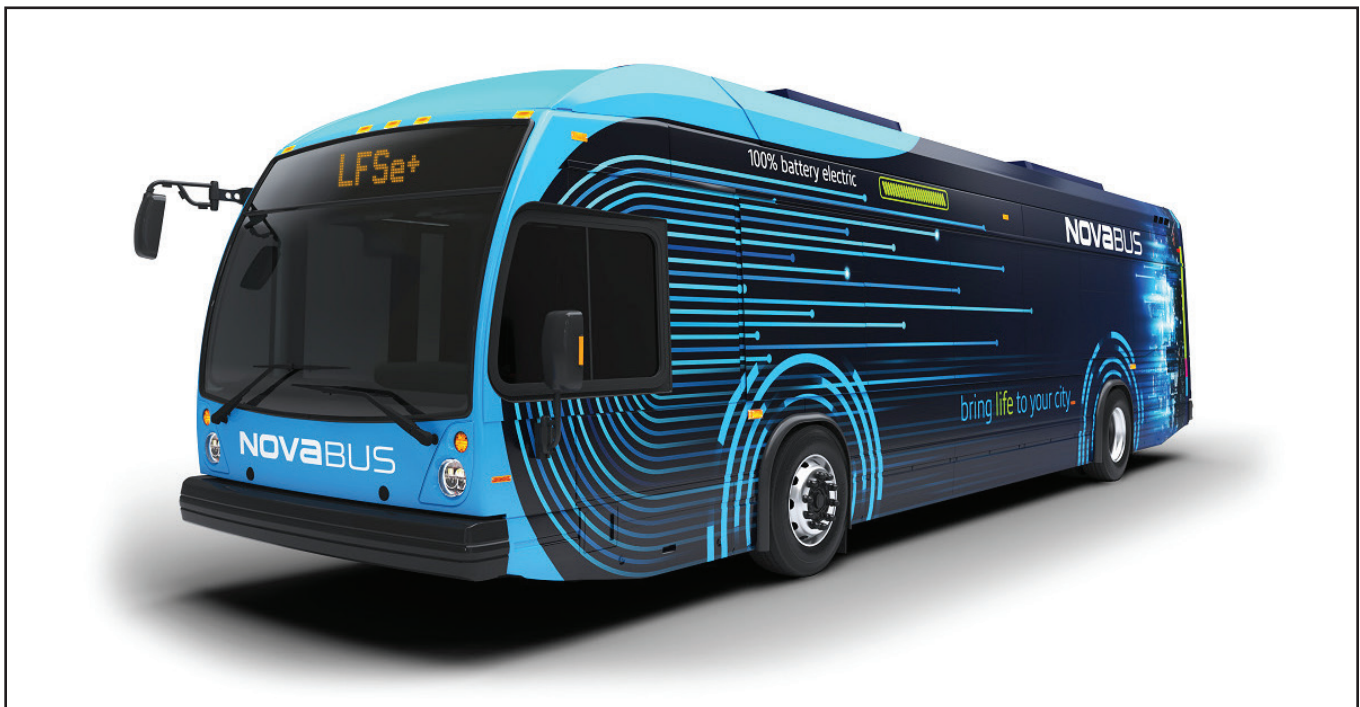
"One of our distinctive features is our pride in being a contributor in the Plattsburgh region," Head of Public Affairs and External Communications at Nova Bus, Christos Kritsidimas, told the Press-Republican at the time.

"That Plattsburgh and Quebec corridor is one that we value. We want to be in Plattsburgh, and we want to contribute to the economic and social advantages — we offer good paying jobs. Every time I go to Plattsburgh, you feel that pride and recognition of our staff."

### LFSe+ CONTRACT

Their local profile and influence on the region is not waning as the company is poised to enter the next phase of the marketplace in full throttle.

Nova Bus, a member of the Volvo Group and a leading North American transit bus manufacturer, was recently awarded a contract for five



NOVA BUS/PHOTO

Nova Bus, a member of the Volvo Group and a leading North American transit bus manufacturer, was recently awarded a contract for five LFSe+, the 40' long-range 100% battery electric bus model, by the New York State Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

LFSe+, the 40' long-range 100% battery electric bus model, by the New York State Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Over the years, the company has made buses for large metropolitan areas like San Francisco, Chicago and Houston as well as New York City.

It is not uncommon to see those brand new shiny buses

cruising around the local area on test runs before they head out to large destinations.

The company employs over 300 workers at its Banker Road plant.

### OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW

Mechanical Technician Kyle Lapan said the work is rewarding.

"We opened in 2009 and we

are doing well," Lapan said.

Lapan and his colleagues met with dozens of local students at the recent North Country Manufacturing Day informing them about a possible future in manufacturing.

"The kids are interested," he said.

"There's so much more opportunity today to grow in a manufacturing environment

than there was when I was in high school 15 years ago."

Lapan said young people coming right out of high school that choose not to go to college can certainly make a good living in manufacturing.

"Absolutely," he said.

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Twitter: @jlotemplio



In 2020, Monaghan Medical moved to a new 65,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility in Plattsburgh, New York, doubling our operational size, inventory capacity and production facilities. We are proud to manufacture and source materials from North American suppliers and find this allows us to be more agile, adapting quickly to changes in market demand.

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# Alstom seeking welders for major contract

## Company formerly known as Bombardier looking to build 999 train cars for NJ transit

BY JOE LOTEMPLIO  
Editor-in-Chief

**PLATTSBURGH** — Alstom has been making train cars in Plattsburgh since 1995 and the train figures to continue rolling down the tracks.

The company, formerly known in Plattsburgh as Bombardier, is working to fulfill a major contract of 999 cars for the New Jersey Transit system.

For such a big job, they need welders. A lot of welders.



Tyler Seabrook

### LONG WAY TO GO

Tyler Seabrook, head of industrial quality for the Plattsburgh and Concord sites for Alstom, said they need about 150 welders soon.

“We’re currently at 17 or 18 so we have a long way to go,” Seabrook said.

To meet the need, the company started a joint venture with CV-Tec, Clinton Community College and Lincoln Electric to run a three-week program in the early spring to train welders.

It will be a 120-hour program over three weeks that will teach theoretical and practical knowledge of welding, which will make them potential new hires.

### THE NEED IS THERE

Seabrook said new collaborative training programs like this are probably going to be ingrained in the industry in the future.

“The need obviously is there. There is a large demand for welding at our site and at other sites as well,” he said, adding that the need will probably be here for several years.

“We’re both kind of simultaneously wrapping up big large building projects. So over the next three years, we could ac-



PHOTO PROVIDED

Alstom has been making train cars in Plattsburgh since 1995 and the train figures to continue rolling down the tracks. The company, formerly known in Plattsburgh as Bombardier, is working to fulfill a major contract of 999 cars for the New Jersey Transit system.

tually see upwards of 100 welders in our Plattsburgh facility. Hopefully all local people, but we’re also looking across the United States for people to relocate and come in.”

### ‘THEY’RE GOOD JOBS’

Seabrook said those interested in a welding career can earn

good pay and benefits.

“They’re good jobs,” he said.

“An entry position for a welder starts at \$25 an hour with full benefits, 401K investments, 40 hours a week, overtime after 40. So very good stable positions.”

### LEGACY OF TRADESPEOPLE

Seabrook said they are seeing a gap in generations of workers like welders.

“I think that’s just the legacy of tradespeople,” he said.

“There’s a large gap between the age, so onboarding new people and getting them kind of interested in trades and what the opportunities could lead to,

are is what we’re kind of focusing on.”

The recent Manufacturing Day held at CCC drew a lot of interest, Seabrook said.

“Events like these help because the students are able to come and see a lot, and they didn’t even know what Alstom was,” he said.

“So they wanted to know what we built, what kind of welding we do, what kind of nondisruptive testing that we do. It’s kind of getting that advertisement out there.”

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# US consumer inflation eased to 7.7% over past 12 months

Latest sign that inflation pressures that have gripped the nation might be easing

BY PAUL WISEMAN  
AND CHRISTOPHER RUGABER  
AP Economic Writers

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — Price increases moderated in the United States last month in the latest sign that the inflation pressures that have gripped the nation might be easing as the economy slows.

Consumer inflation reached 7.7% in October from a year earlier and 0.4% from September, the government said. The year-over-year increase, down from 8.2% in September, was the smallest rise since January. Stripping out volatile food and energy prices, “core” inflation rose 6.3% in the past 12 months and 0.3% from September.

The numbers were all lower than economists had expected.

Helping to ease inflation from September to October were used car prices, which dropped for a fourth straight month. Clothing and medical care also fell. Food price increases slowed. By contrast, energy prices rebounded in October after declines in August and September.

Even amid a tentative easing of inflation, the Federal Reserve is likely to continue raising interest rates to cool the economy and stem inflation. Yet data released recently raises the possibility that the Fed could at least slow its rate hikes — a prospect that sent U.S. markets soaring.

“We expect this to mark the start of a much longer disinflationary trend that we think will convince the Fed to halt its (hikes) early next year,” said Paul Ashworth, chief North American economist at Capital Economics, a consulting firm. “With supply shortages normalizing, deflationary pressure is now finally showing up.”

Many economists fear that the central bank’s maneuvers could spark a recession by next year. The Fed has raised its benchmark interest rate six times in sizable increments this year, heightening the risk that the cost of borrowing money for homes, autos and other big-ticket items, will tip the world’s largest economy into recession.

Lorie Logan, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, said the figures “were a welcome relief,” but added “there is still a long way to go.”

Acknowledging that rate hikes can lead to layoffs and falling home prices, Logan said the Fed “must do everything we can to restore price stability.” Yet she also opened the door to a more modest pace of rate increases, saying “we should also try, if we can, to avoid incurring costs that are higher than necessary.”

The data and reaction by officials like Logan make it more likely that the Fed will lift rates by a half-percentage point at its next meeting in December, economists said, a step down from the string of three-quarter point hikes this year.

In the midterm elections, roughly half of voters cited inflation as the top factor, according to VoteCast, an extensive survey of more than 94,000 voters nationwide conducted for The Associated Press by NORC at the University of Chicago. About eight in 10 said the economy was in bad shape, and a slim majority blamed President Joe Biden for worsening inflation. Just under half said factors beyond Biden’s control were to blame.

Economic anxieties may have contributed to the loss of Democratic seats in the House of Representatives, though Republicans failed to score the huge political gains that many had expected. And a sizable chunk of voters — 44%, according to VoteCast — said their top concern was the future of democracy, an issue emphasized by Biden and Democratic congressional candidates in an era of unfounded election denial.

Even before the release of the figures, inflation by some measures had begun to ease and could continue to do so in coming months. There is evidence



Work is performed on the roof of a home under construction in Folsom, Calif. Wednesday, Oct. 12, 2022. Home prices are slowing sharply compared with a year ago and have begun to fall on a monthly basis.



A used 2020 Jeep is on display on a lot in Pittsburgh, Thursday, Sept. 29, 2022. Price increases moderated in the United States last month, Thursday, Nov. 10, in the latest sign that the inflation pressures that have gripped the nation might be easing as the economy slows and consumers grow more cautious.

**Helping to ease inflation from September to October were used car prices, which dropped for a fourth straight month. Clothing and medical care also fell. Food price increases slowed. By contrast, energy prices rebounded in October after declines in August and September.**

that the robust pay increases of the past 18 months have leveled off and begun to fall. Though worker pay is not a primary driver of higher prices, it can compound inflationary pressures if companies offset higher labor costs by raising prices.

Except for automakers, which are still struggling to acquire the computer chips they need, supply chain disruptions have largely unwound.

Malcolm Wilson, CEO of logistics firm GXO, said there has been significant improvement in supply chains.

“Supply and manufacture has been a little easier,” he said. “I wouldn’t say all the disruptions have gone away, but it’s been easier.”

GXO, which operates warehouses on behalf of large companies, including manufacturers such as Boeing and large

retail chains, has also found it easier to staff up for the holidays. Last year, the company had to pay additional bonuses to find the workers it needed, on top of pay raises the implemented over the past two years. This year it hasn’t needed to pay the extra incentives to find people with more people looking for work.

“We are probably at the top of the inflation curve,” Wilson said. Shipping costs for both overseas carriers and road transport have come down significantly since the height of the pandemic, he said.

The nation’s job market remains resilient, however. Employers have added an average of 407,000 jobs a month, and the unemployment rate is 3.7%, close to a half-century low. Job

openings remain at historically high levels.

But the Fed’s rate hikes have inflicted severe damage on the American housing market. The average rate on a 30-year fixed mortgage has more than doubled over the past year and topped 7% this week. As a result, investment in housing collapsed in the July-September quarter, falling at a 26% annual rate.

Rents, according to outlets like ApartmentList and Zillow, have also begun to fall and that should begin to show up in government data soon, signaling weaker inflation.

The U.S. has managed to dodge inflation levels that have seeped into other national economies after a global pandemic. Inflation is squeezing people

around the world, with Russia’s invasion disrupting food and fuel supplies to countries in Africa, Asia and the Middle East, while their currencies have weakened against a strong U.S. dollar, further pushing up costs.

Higher prices are taking a higher toll in Europe, which is feeling the acute effects of an energy crisis triggered by Russia’s war in Ukraine. Rising prices, especially for food and energy, have unleashed a wave of protests and strikes as the cost of living soars.

Inflation hit a record 10.7% in the 19-country euro area last month, largely driven by energy prices, and though European leaders have approved relief packages to help with energy bills, the discontent threatens political turmoil.

AP FILE PHOTO

AP FILE PHOTO



# Chamber: Local industry shows no signs of slowing

## Say manufacturers weathered pandemic, continuing to grow and employ locally

BY JOE LOTEMPLIO  
Editor-in-Chief

**PLATTSBURGH** — The manufacturing sector of the North Country continues to remain as a key economic engine for the region and shows no signs of slowing down.

The manufacturing scene exploded in the region about two decades ago and now accounts for about 9,000 jobs at about 150 facilities in transportation equipment and aerospace fields alone in the North Country.

All told, there are about 150 manufacturers of all kinds in the Clinton, Essex and Franklin County region.

Jobs in advanced manufacturing careers are, on average, 68% higher than the average private sector wage, says Joel Wood, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives and Director of Namtrans at the North Country Chamber of Commerce.

The statewide economic impact of the transportation equipment industry, the most highly concentrated industry in the North Country, is estimated to be \$3.6 billion.

### BRIGHT FUTURE

The COVID-19 pandemic the past two years produced a slight speed bump, but most have been able to power through, says Chamber President Garry Douglas, with some experiencing record sales.

“Going forward, most of our manufacturers are in some degree of growth mode and all are hiring, reflecting unemployment which remains in the 3-4 percent range,” Douglas said.

“The largest element of manufacturing in our region, of course, is transportation equipment and thanks to last year’s massive federal infrastructure bill and the accelerating transition to greener forms of transport including electrification, we find ourselves in the right manufacturing sector at the right time. Other sectors we host continue to see growth as well including building materials, medical products and packaging.”



**North Country Chamber of Commerce President Garry Douglas (right); Steve Eaton, Chamber Government Affairs chair (center) and Chamber Vice Chair Alex Barie present the results of the 2022 Business Confidence Index at a press conference. The COVID-19 pandemic the past two years produced a slight speed bump for local manufacturers, but most have been able to power through, says Douglas, with some experiencing record sales.**

ing.”

Douglas said they anticipate welcoming some new companies in the coming year, particularly adding to the transportation equipment cluster, and the key focus will be on supporting growth at existing companies. This includes several new initiatives related to workforce recruitment and training which will be launched in the new year.

Wood said there are many exciting plans unfolding in the industry locally.

“Alstom is currently ramping up for their New Jersey Transit contract which will require them to hire at least 50 welders. To

help them, and other local manufacturers with this, we have secured a \$285,600 grant from the NBRC to offer no cost welding training at Clinton Community College in partnership with Lincoln Electric,” Wood said.

“This training will kick off in the spring.”

Nova Bus also recently delivered their first electric bus produced at their Plattsburgh facility, which will be the first of many that will be produced in the coming years, Wood said.

Also, many transit agencies are ordering small orders of electric buses to test/pilot them in their communities. More and larger

orders for electric buses are expected to follow.

“These positive benefits will flow down to all local suppliers,” Wood said.

### AEROSPACE GROWTH

There has also been significant growth in the aerospace sector of manufacturing, Wood said.

“Beta Technologies is partnering with CV-TEC to create a first of its kind composite painting program at the school. This will help train students to be able to help paint their aircraft that will be, in the not too distant future, finished here in Plattsburgh,” he said.

“Norsk Titanium is diving into the industrial market, producing parts for semi conductors, and because of this contract — paired with their existing aerospace work — will keep them very busy for the foreseeable future.”

Wood said they do not have a firm handle on just how many manufacturing jobs will be in need of filling, but it figures to be a high number.

“Almost all of our manufacturers are in growth mode and are actively hiring,” he said.

“From October 2021 to 2022 the number of manufacturing jobs statewide increased by 9,000. The 50-plus welders needed by

Alstom alone is a good example that most manufacturers have a strong need for employees.”

Wood said that estimates by the National Association of Manufacturers show that nationwide, 2.1 million manufacturing jobs could go unfilled by 2030.

“We, and our partners locally, are working to make sure that does not happen in our region by offering low to no-cost training programs and trying to help change the perception around careers in manufacturing,” he said.

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