



**MAEA MAY HAPPENINGS**

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**2024 Events**

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**MAEA Excellence Awards Winners**  
**Congratulations!**

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#### **2024 Excellence Awards Winners**

The Northeast PA Manufacturers & Employers Association (MAEA) proudly announced the 2024 Manufacturers & Employers Excellence Awards Winners! During an event held at the Mt. Valley Clubhouse, attended by over 100 individuals, attendees celebrated the 2023 accomplishments of winning companies.

Congratulations to the 2024 MAEA Excellence Awards Winners, Benton Foundry, Inc., Diaz Manufacturing, LLC., Downtown Shenandoah, Inc., EMD Electronics, Hydro Extrusion North America, LLC, InterMetro Industries Corp., Masser Family of Companies, Mrs. T's Pierogies, Penn State Schuylkill, PPL Electric Utilities, and Zimmerman Machine, Inc.!

Congratulations to the MAEA member companies receiving an Honorable Mention, EAM-Mosca, Industrial Construction Services & Design, and UFP Industries, Gordon!

Congratulations UFP Industries, Gordon for winning the 2024 MAEA Commitment Award!

Thank you attendees and sponsors for helping to make the evening memorable for the MAEA Excellence Awards winners!

## MAEA Summer Golf Outing

### NEPA MAEA Annual Summer Golf Outing 4 PERSON SCRAMBLE

**Date: June 14, 2024**

**Time: 1:00 p.m. Shotgun Start**

**Location: Mt. Valley Golf Course**

#### 3 Ways You Can Still Participate

- Dinner Only
- Sponsorship Opportunities
- Donate Door Prizes



*To register and for additional information on MAEA Events,  
please email Joani at [jtrosterud@nepameae.com](mailto:jtrosterud@nepameae.com) or call 570.622.0992.  
Sponsorship Opportunities are available for all events.*

### Join MAEA at Upcoming Events

- Annual Fall Golf Outing,  
September 13th
- Annual Labor & Employment Law  
Summit, September 26th
- Legislative Roundtable Celebrating  
National Manufacturing Day,  
October 4th
- Discovery Breakfast, December 6th
- Congressional Luncheon, TBA



**[CLICK HERE](#) to view the MAEA Events Calendar**

[CLICK HERE](#) for the MAEA 2024 Sponsorship Opportunities



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**Heritage Sign and Display, Inc. is a full-service Point-of-Purchase (POP) supplier serving high-profile retail brands across the U.S. and around the world.** They leverage a complete range of in-house display design, development, and production capabilities to support and grow their clients' brand strategy and merchandising efforts.

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[Click here to visit their website today!](#)

## MAEA Legislative Updates

### **Senate panel approves bills aimed at enticing college students to remain in PA after graduation.**

The Senate Education Committee on Tuesday May 1st approved a series of bills that essentially serve as the Senate Republican's counter-proposal to Gov. Josh Shapiro's proposed higher education revamp.

The bills moved out of the committee include measures that would give scholarships to college students seeking degrees in high-demand fields if those students agree to remain in the state after graduation, as well as a measure that would offer similar scholarships to out-of-state students and offer those out-of-state students in-state tuition rates to come to Pennsylvania.

Sen. Scott Martin, R-Lancaster, told lawmakers that the proposals are needed to try to reverse demographic trends – with the state's population rapidly aging, the number of working age adults isn't keeping pace with the demand for workers.

The state has had record low unemployment for months, but at the same time, the state also saw the smallest kindergarten class in almost 40 years.

Senate Bill 1150 would create the Grow PA Scholarship Grant Program, which would offer grants of up to \$5,000 per year for in-state students who attend college in Pennsylvania, pursue a degree in a high-demand industry, and agree to live and work in that industry in Pennsylvania after graduation.

Grant recipients would be required to live and work in Pennsylvania for at least 15 months for each year they accept the grant. Failure to meet this requirement would result in the grants being converted to a loan that must be repaid.

Senate Bill 1151 would create the Grow PA Merit Scholarship Program, which would help attract high-performing out-of-state students to Pennsylvania educational programs in Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) schools. The merit scholarships would allow students pursuing in-demand occupations to pay tuition at in-state rates, rather than out-of-state rates.

In addition, Senate Bill 1152, sponsored by Sen. Devlin Robinson, R-Allegheny, would expand the popular Ready to Succeed Scholarship Program, which provides scholarships to good students to cover the cost of post-secondary education. The bill would increase household income limits from \$126,000 to \$175,000 and allow students with at least a 2.5 GPA to qualify, making more students eligible for assistance.

"I am thrilled to prime sponsor legislation to expand the popular Ready to Succeed Scholarship Program, which helps students be able to better afford higher education opportunities," Robinson said in a statement released after the committee vote. "I hear from my constituents constantly about the struggle of student loans and juggling debt just because they want to further their education. Senate Bill 1152 will be a breath of fresh air for these individuals, their families, and our entire

communities.”

Senate Bill 1153, sponsored by Senator Tracy Pennycuick, R-Montgomery, would expand the Fostering Independence Tuition Waiver Program nationwide for children to attend PASSHE schools. Under current law, children in the foster care system and children who were adopted in Pennsylvania qualify for financial aid and tuition waivers.

The legislation will waive tuition and mandatory fees after the application of federal and state grants available to the student. Expanding the program nationwide would allow adopted and foster children from other states to benefit from these programs in Pennsylvania.

Senate Bill 1154, sponsored by Senate Majority Whip Ryan P. Aument (R-Lancaster), would add performance-based metrics to funding for state-related universities, including the University of Pittsburgh, the Pennsylvania State University, and Temple University. Under the legislation, standards would be developed by a new Performance-based Funding Council that will consider factors like graduation rates, retention rates, employment rates and salaries, and other key indicators.

Capitolwire

### **Senate moves to cut benefits for unemployed workers who decline job interviews.**

The state House on Wednesday May 1<sup>st</sup> approved legislation that would establish an Independent Energy Office, as well as a bill that would implement stricter rules for unemployed workers who decline job offers.

The House approved [House Bill 847](#)

House Bill 847 on a party-line vote of 102-99.

Democrats who supported the legislation said that the pre-canvassing change has been the one request that county officials have insisted needs to be made to make the task of counting mail-in ballots more manageable. Republicans said that under current law, to get a share of the Election Integrity Grants, county election workers begin pre-canvassing the morning of Election Day and must continue pre-canvassing until the process is completed. While HB 847 allows counties to begin pre-canvassing early, it includes no requirement that they do so, and it eliminates the requirement that election workers must continue pre-canvassing until they are done. Republicans said that, as a result, the legislation would open the door to the possibility that county officials may decide to postpone pre-canvassing, which would delay the election results.

The Senate approved Senate Bill 832, which would establish the Independent Energy Office and a new Pennsylvania’s Opportunity With Energy Reliability (POWER) Board, also on a party-line 28-22 vote. The Senate approved Senate Bill 1109 by a 31-19 vote with three Democrats – Sen. Lisa Boscola, D-Northampton; Sen. Nick Miller, D-Lehigh; and Sen. Anthony Williams, D-Philadelphia -- joining

Republicans in support of the legislation.

Under Senate Bill 1109, unemployed workers would be ineligible for unemployment benefits if they decline job offers without going through an employment interview.

Sen. Lindsey Williams, D-Allegheny, called it an “aggressively anti-worker” piece of legislation. Before the final vote, the Senate had rejected Williams’ effort to amend the bill to include language that would allow workers to collect unemployment while on strike.

Nobody spoke in favor of the legislation before the Senate voted on it. However, in a committee meeting, Senate Labor and Industry Committee majority chairman Devlin Robinson, R-Allegheny, said that the bill was inspired by complaints from business officials that job applicants are ghosting employers when job interviews are scheduled.

Democrats said the legislation makes no distinction between jobs that would be suitable based on the workers’ training and career histories and those that would be poor fits for the worker.

Republican proponents said that the Independent Energy Office established under Senate Bill 832 would provide objective data to help lawmakers determine how to respond to the state’s energy demands.

The POWER Board will be a public clearinghouse for energy development in Pennsylvania and allow residents to see public accountability on decisions that impact energy prices in Pennsylvania.

House Bill 847 now goes to the Senate for consideration. Senate Bill 1109 and Senate Bill 832 now go to the House for consideration.

Capitolwire

### **NAM and Allies: PM2.5 Standard Will Hurt Manufacturers, Economy**

The EPA’s overly stringent final rule on particulate matter puts continued U.S. innovation and economic growth in jeopardy, the NAM and allied groups told congressional leaders Monday.

What’s going on: In March, the EPA lowered the standard for particulate matter, or PM2.5, in its National Ambient Air Quality Standards rule by 25%, down from 12 micrograms per cubic meter of air to nine.

- This week, the NAM, along with 58 allied organizations, urged key House and Senate members to act soon to “stop this harmful rule before it takes effect.”

Why it’s important: The probable negative effects of allowing the change include “making it more difficult to create jobs, build cutting-edge factories and lead the world in the development of products that will shape modern life in the decades ahead,” the groups said.

- Compliance costs could exceed \$1.8 billion, according to the agency’s own estimates.
- The lowered limit also puts the U.S. at a great disadvantage to global

competitors, which “have adopted standards that are less stringent than the EPA rule and are phased in over a much longer time frame.”

What needs to happen: Congress should pass a resolution of disapproval regarding the new standard immediately.

NAM

### **Noncompete Ban Would Disrupt Manufacturing in the U.S.**

The Federal Trade Commission’s vote this week to prohibit noncompete agreements between employers and their employees threatens manufacturing in the U.S.

In a 3–2 vote Tuesday April 30<sup>th</sup>, commissioners finalized a rule that, like a draft version circulated last year, “would deem practically any noncompete clauses for paid staff, independent contractors and unpaid workers to be an unfair method of competition rendered unenforceable, and [would require] employers to tell current and former employees they’ve stopped enforcing them”.

- The final rule is set to go into effect 120 days after it is published in the Federal Register, but lawsuits have been filed against it already, and additional legal action is expected.

One change made to the final rule following the receipt of more than 26,000 comments on it allows existing noncompete agreements with senior-level executives to remain in effect.

- Another difference between the rule’s prior iteration and the final is the ban’s sole exception. The draft “permitted noncompetes for individuals selling their business or a substantial stake of at least 25%.” That threshold is not in the final version.

The rule “is unprecedented and threatens manufacturers’ ability to attract and retain talent,” said NAM Managing Vice President of Policy Chris Netram.

- “In addition, [it] puts at risk the security of intellectual property and trade secrets—anathema to an industry that accounts for 53% of all private-sector R&D.”
- A noncompete ban would disrupt the majority of U.S. manufacturing operations.

### **New Overtime Rule Will Cost Employers and Workers**

A new final overtime rule from the U.S. Department of Labor will reduce flexibility for employees and could force manufacturers to make difficult choices about their workforces.

The new regulation “changes the salary threshold used to determine whether a worker is exempt from overtime pay” so that, beginning Jan. 1, 2025, most employees earning less than \$58,656 will be owed time-and-a-half wages for hours worked over 40 in a single workweek.

• The change promises to present significant challenges to employers and employees alike.

- “Quarter after quarter, manufacturers cite workforce issues, such as

attracting and retaining skilled employees, as their biggest business challenge,” said NAM Managing Vice President of Policy Chris Netram. The “rule places new constraints on employers, reduces flexibility for the workers who will be reclassified and may force companies to make painful choices that limit both job creation and growth opportunities available to employees.”

NAM

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## MAEA Group Programs

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**MAEA offers a variety of group programs for their member companies.**

Would you like to learn more about:

- Lehigh Valley Business Coalition on Healthcare
- Energy - EnerConnex an SJI Company
- Shipping - DM Transportation
- Predictive Index

To learn more about the exclusive member MAEA Group Programs, please contact Darlene J. Robbins at (570) 622-0992 or email at [d Robbins@nepamaea.com](mailto:d Robbins@nepamaea.com)

*Click above for information about MAEA's group program providers.*

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## **MAEA Training Opportunities**

***CUSTOMIZED TRAINING - Did you know that MAEA develops customized training and delivers the course on-site, zoom, or hybrid based upon the geographic territory for the company?***

MAEA worked with Mrs. T's Pierogis recently to provide Customize Leadership Training at the headquarters in Shenandoah.

“MAEA worked closely with our company to develop a purposeful and relevant leadership enhancement training, state Angela Kelley, Senior Human Resources Manager. “They made it easy and convenient, bringing the training sessions to our location, across both day and night shifts. The instructor, Nate Andrews, was great! He was knowledgeable, engaging and made the learning process interactive. We would highly recommend customized trainings through MAEA”!

***Did you know that MAEA provides an overview of services on-site or zoom meeting?***

This is an opportunity for new and existing team members to learn about the training, events, roundtables, and all our services.

***Did you know that MAEA offers training in Hazleton?***

Back by popular demand! The conference room at our office in the CANBE Innovation Center is located at 103 Rotary Drive in West Hazleton. In addition, we continue to host training at our Pottsville office and on-site as requested.

***UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES – REGISTER NOW!***

2024 TRAINING CATALOG is available on the MAEA website:

[www.nepamaea.com](http://www.nepamaea.com)

Our website is updated, user-friendly, and growing with additional resources.

***LEARN MORE*** - please contact Eileen Kuperavage at 570-622-0992 or [ekuperavage@nepamaea.com](mailto:ekuperavage@nepamaea.com).

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## Memorial Day Survey Sale!

### 20% off ALL Surveys for Member Companies

#### Regional Wage & Salary Survey

Provides regional wage data with information from local companies. Data includes wage and salary information for 189 job titles with job descriptions as a reference. Beneficial for employers who want their wage structure to attract, motivates, and retain the best employees. Last published February, 2022.

**Member (participants) - FREE**

**Member (non-participants) - \$400; regularly \$500**

**Non-members - \$1000**

#### National Wage & Salary Survey

Provides data submitted by 19 members of the Employers Associations of America (including MAEA). Represents over 150,000 employees in 46 metropolitan and regional areas. Contains wage and salary information for 151 job titles, including the following categories: Managerial, supervisory, and professional; Non-exempt hourly and technical; and Industrial and production. Last Published December, 2022.

**Member (participants of Regional) - \$160; regularly \$200**

**Member (non-participants) - \$320; regularly \$400**

**Non-members - \$800**

### **Personnel Practices and Benefits Survey**

Conducted biennially. Provides answers to 296 questions divided into 10 major categories. Covers the following topics: Compensation; working conditions; health and welfare benefits; retirement benefits; part-time benefits; recruitment, training, and development; Human Resources; employee/community relations; general information and metrics. Last published July 2022. Next publication is Summer of 2024

**Member (participants) - FREE**

**Member (non-participants) - \$260; regularly \$325**

**Non-members - \$650**

### **Regional Pay Trends Survey**

Provides actual salary adjustments (7/1/21-6/30/22) and projected salary adjustments (7/1/22-6/30/23) across multiple employee groups. Last published August 2022.

**Member (participants) - FREE**

**Member (non-participants) - \$20; regularly \$25**

**Non-members - \$50**

## **MAEA Upcoming Roundtables**

### **Save the Date!**

#### **Human Resource Luzerne**

**Date:** May 21, 2024

**Topic:** How will the Law intersect with AI in employment practices?

**Presenter:** Jenn Betts Attorney with Ogletree Deakins

**Virtual**

**Time:** 11:00am-12:30pm

#### **Manufacturing Plant Operations**

**Date:** June 6, 2024

**Tour of EMD Electronics, Tamaqua**

**Time:** 11:00am – 1:00pm

*For registration or additional information, please email Darlene at [drobbins@nepamaea.com](mailto:d Robbins@nepamaea.com) or call (570) 622-0992.*

## Schuylkill County Career Fair



We're thrilled about the turnout at this year's 14th Annual Schuylkill County Career Fair. With over 900 students from 11 districts gathering at Martz Hall in Pottsville, it was an incredible opportunity for them to explore post-graduation prospects. Our event showcased representation from various industries, including our 'Quality of Life' section on the second level, which provided insights not only into careers but also into the array of services and volunteer opportunities available across the county.

A special shoutout goes to the Pottsville Area School District for graciously allowing us to use Martz Hall, and to their custodial/security team for their outstanding support throughout the day. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our sponsors: the Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association for being our event sponsor, the Northeast PA Manufacturers & Employers Association for their platinum sponsorship, the Luzerne/Schuylkill Workforce Development Board for their gold sponsorship, and Hayden Power Group for their bronze sponsorship. Additionally, we appreciate Wegmans Food Markets and Centre Street Subway for providing food and beverages.

Lastly, a huge thank you to all the vendors, teachers, guidance counselors, and everyone else who contributed to making the day a resounding success.



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