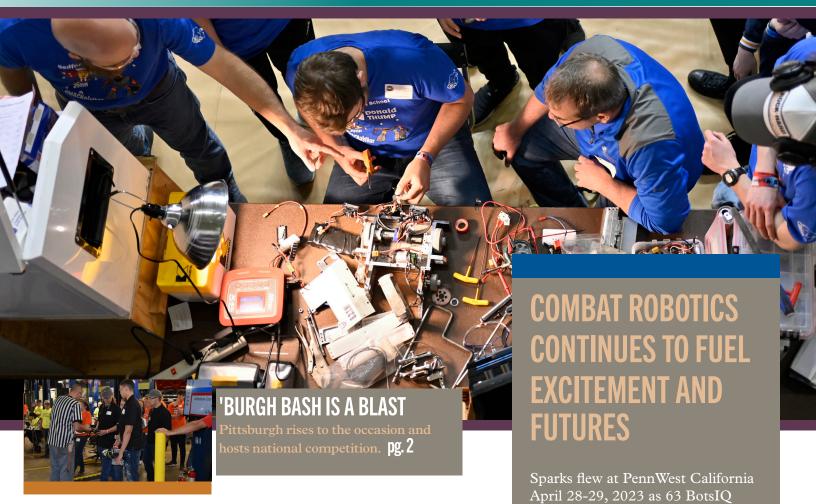


SHAPING THE FUTURE OF SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA MANUFACTURING WITH CUTTING-EDGE PRECISION.

JUNE 23





THERE'S STILL TIME Play or sponsor this month. pg. 3



APPRENTICE NEWS Competition

register your program. pg. 4&5, 10

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

teams faced off with their combat robots in gladiator-style competition.

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'BURGH BASH

by Kevin Hartford, president, PGH NTMA/NTMF

The Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA takes great pride in being the most dynamic chapter in the country. Over the past few years we've accomplished a great deal and have helped to advance the precision manufacturing industry— particularly here in southwestern Pennsylvania. Whether it's our workforce development initiatives or our other high value programs, we have raised the level and knowledge of our industry.

Earlier this year, the National Robotics League (NRL), a program of the NTMA, announced it would not be hosting a national combat robotics competition this year as the organization restructured under new leadership. Chapter Executive Ed Sikora suggested that we host the event and discussed it with the board of directors and Michel Conklin, director of BotsIQ.

Initially, pulling off a large scale event like this on short notice seemed challenging. It required funding, a venue and the buy-in of other combat robotics teams that may or may not be able to make a trip with little lead time.

Conklin spoke with the other combat robotics program managers and the consensus was that a national event for students to bring the best of the bots



together to battle would be great, but no one had the resources to put on an event in short order.

I'm proud to say that our BotsIQ team and Pittsburgh Chapter leaders did what we do best— we got to yes— we made it happen.

The group of program managers decided that it made sense to host the competition the same weekend it had originally been planned for, May 19-20. It was agreed that Pittsburgh would be a good location since it's central to most of the programs. Since it was being hosted here in Pittsburgh,



we decided to call it 'Burgh Bash.

After looking at several locations, we decided to host the competition at Rosedale Technical College in Crafton. Its close proximity to the airport and highways seemed ideal for our out-of-town friends. Rosedale was thrilled to host the event and did not charge for part the space.

Kudos to our staff and volunteers for designing and hosting a national competition in less than three months. Teams from across the country battled it out and built friendships. It was a great opportunity to share Pittsburgh ingenuity with the precision manufacturing community. We illustrated once again how we "get things done" in southwestern PA.



We also want to extend a big thank you to Rosedale Technical College and our sponsors who made this event possible.

HATS OFF TO THE WINNERS OF THE FIRST EVER 'BURGH BASH:

GRAND CHAMPION:

Knockback

Fox Chapel Area HS

DOCUMENTATION:

RoboSpartans

Hempfield Area HS

Space Whale

Punxsutawney Area HS

COMPETITION:

John D. SMACKafellar

Bedford Area HS



Teams from across the country battled it out and built friendships. It was a great opportunity to share Pittsburgh ingenuity with the precision manufacturing community.

-- Kevin Hartford, president, PGH NTMA/NTMF



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CONGRATULATIONS APPRENTICES

66

"This year's
apprenticeship
program graduates
are ready for what the
future holds."

—Liz Blashock

PGH NTMA/PGH NTMF Program and Events Coordinator June 7, 2023, at Stratigos Banquet Center in North Huntingdon, our newly named graduates celebrated their accomplishment with families, employers, peers and friends.

Brandon Schoonmaker acting manager, Mechanical and Fluid Systems at Astrobotic, delivered keynote remarks. Astrobotic specializes in making space missions feasible and more affordable for science, exploration and commerce. As a lunar logistics company, the company offers end-toend delivery services for payloads to the Moon. Their 47,000 square-foot Pittsburgh complex is the largest private facility in the world dedicated to lunar logistics.

Schoonmaker's responsibilities include oversight for design, structures, thermal, propulsion, and mechanism aspects for the landers and spacecraft division.

He is a mechanical engineer

He is a mechanical engineer with a background in dynamics and vibrations analysis of mechanical, civil-structures and electrical components for both nuclear and aerospace applications.

Upon joining Astrobotic, he developed the Peregrine lander finite element analysis model through qualification and environmental testing. He also serves as the technical lead of the structures team. Brandon has developed/ analyzed nearly all metal-based Peregrine components, of which 95



percent are machined here in Pittsburgh, primarily using NTMA member shops.

His experience and vision for innovation inspired the new graduates.

Chapter Executive Ed Sikora served as master of ceremonies. The Pittsburgh Chapter awarded certificates of completion to 20 graduates and recognized the winners of the annual Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA/MSC Apprentice Competition.

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CONTEST WINNER NAMED

February's contest boasted a field of exemplary up-and-coming talented machinists. Congratulations to Jacob Koelsch of Penn State Tool & Die Corporation (pictured left) for being named the PGH NTMA/MSC Apprentice Competition winner. He was awarded an H. Gerstner & Sons toolbox for his performance.

Second place went to Timothy Sheffler of Kiski Precision Industries and Shane Feher of Hamill Manufacturing Company placed third. This annual competition tests hands-on performance in setting up and operating machine tools, including a manual milled part and a manual turned part produced to specifications. A written examination assesses content knowledge.

Participation is open to ALL apprentices—both those who attend classes through the Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA Apprenticeship Program and also any apprentice employed at a NTMA Member company being trained through an employer sponsored program.

Contestants were scored by a point system based on knowledge, skill and efficiency. Thank you to our panel of judges for their time and expertise.





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Bots Q Mini-Classes FOR FUTURE BOT BUILDERS

by Molly West, PGH NTMA

Tt's called BotsIQ in the Classroom. audience would broaden the ▲The goal: to expose younger students to STEM activities and encourage them to consider all the possibilities that manufacturing holds. have already decided which clubs

Fifteen years ago, BotsIQ set out to show southwestern Pennsylvania high school students that manufacturing careers are high-tech, interesting and offer a competitive salary. The program met with unparalleled success—expanding every year to serv more students and offer even greater challenges.

As the BotsIQ team considered new opportunities for growth, it became apparent that the students who joined BotsIQ teams already had an interest in STEM activities. During elementary school, they showed an interest in science and technology. They were naturally math students. It raised the question—how can we reach a larger audience?

The answer came from BotsIO Director Michel Conklin. She suggested that reaching a younger



pool of interested students. The team recognized that by the time students are in high school they to join and what careers interest them. If students learned more about innovative STEM possibilities while they are forming their sense of self and exploring their strengths, they would be more likely to pursue those programs throughout their education. The hypothesis: by targeting a younger audience, BotsIQ can drive more students to participate in their high school programs and expose more young people to manufacturing careers and opportunities.

"I would love to reach more teachers and schools. Since any of my classes can be adapted to fit any subject and standard, I can go to all classrooms."

--- Oula Ghani BotsIQ Teaching Fellow

Oula Ghani, the BotsIQ teaching fellow, began reaching out to teachers in elementary and middle schools with a list of available classes. The BotsIQ



team visits classrooms to share handson lessons about 3D design, circuits and precision. The list is expanding all the time. Not only does the BotsIO team work to make these lessons interesting—they're fun.

To date, Ghani has taught 45 classes and reached approximately 735 students at schools in Beaver, Westmoreland, Greene, Allegheny, Fayette, Washington and Indiana counties.

"Every teacher I reach out to is





concerned about the fee associated with this. Once they know it is free, they book a class right away and discuss future opportunities and more programs with us," Ghani explained.

"I would love to reach more teachers and schools. Since any of my classes can be adapted to fit any subject and standard, I can go to all classrooms.

So far, I have reached math, science, gifted, and STEM classrooms, but I would love to get in non-traditional classrooms like ELA or art classrooms."

If you know a teacher who would like to learn more about BotsIQ in the Classroom, please email:

ghani@botsiqpa.com.

Today's students are tomorrow's bot builders and your future workforce.





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NTMA CONNECT

FROM THE NATIONAL NTMA OFFICE

YOUR NTMA MEMBERSHIP MAKES YOU ELIGIBLE FOR THIS VALUABLE EXPERIENCE.

ralier this year, the National Tooling & Machining Association launched the all-new, members-only, online community: NTMA Connect. You're invited to participate in forums, network with industry peers and ask the questions only your fellow machine shop leaders can answer.

Year after year, at the ENGAGE conference, roundtable discussions are acclaimed as the event's most enriching experience. NTMA Connect aims to bring the roundtable format to NTMA members every day of the

NTMA Connect benefits members with 24/7 access to ongoing roundtable discussions, accessible from work or home.

Are you a new owner with questions about how to run a machine shop? An experienced manufacturer seeking tips for growing your business? A shop floor supervisor

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be investing in automation. It's easier (and more affordable) than you think.

looking to improve manufacturing processes?

Sure, you can search Google and sort through thousands of results. But NTMA Connect links you directly to your NTMA peers. On NTMA Connect, you'll find real-life



manufacturing professionals who can speak directly to your questions and offer trustworthy advice.

You no longer need to be in the same time zone let alone the same room—to learn and grow alongside other NTMA members. Whether you're a night owl, an early bird, or a bit of both, you'll always find someone ready to talk shop.

Follow your preferred forum topics and stay updated on the threads you've participated in with your choice of a daily or weekly email digest. You won't miss a question or comment.

Our broad base of individual and company memberships means more than 5,000 manufacturing professionals are automatic members of NTMA Connect.

Through an introductory open forum, you'll learn the platform and get to know fellow NTMA members. As the platform grows, NTMA Connect will expand with topic-specific forums, themed groups, and engaging "microsites" to help you build your network.

NTMA has always been THE modern machine shop's resource for learning, training, networking, and belonging. Now, NTMA is bringing the community to you.

Join in to compare challenges and share success stories. You'll never be alone with NTMA Connect at your fingertips.





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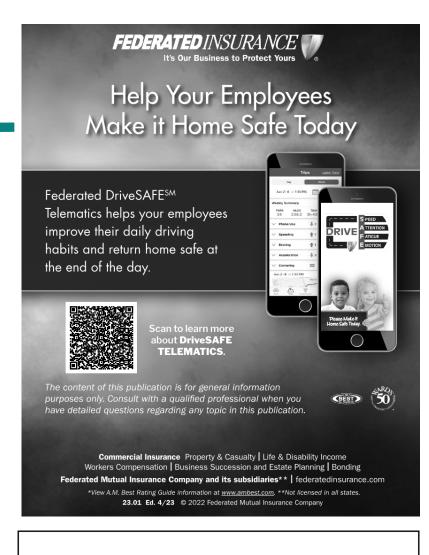
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WHAT'S THE COST OF BUSINESS?

by John Mackay, Mackay Reserach Group

It's a benefit of your membership.
The NTMA Operating Costs
Report is a financial analysis of
the custom tooling & machining
industry. It can help you improve
your financial results by establishing
typical financial performance targets

service needs.

and by analyzing how high-profit companies in the industry achieve their success.

The NTMA Operating Costs
Dashboard is a profitability analysis
of NTMA members designed

INDUSTRIES

to analyze and understand best practices of precision machining companies.

THIS FINANCIAL BENCHMARKING TOOL ADDRESSES CRITICAL BUSINESS QUESTIONS LIKE:

- What is the profitability gap between high profit shops from the rest of the pack?
- What is a competitive gross margin in the precision machining industry?
- What type of productivity should I expect out of my employees?
- Are my payroll expenses in line with industry benchmarks?

What's in it for you? In addition to the full report, survey participants also receive an Individual Financial Performance Report analyzing your company. This report compares your financial performance to industry standards. In order to protect your confidential data, Mackay Research Group sends this report directly to you.

Deadline for participation:

June 30, 2023

You'll find the survey at:

https://pghntma.

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Please note the report is FREE to participants only.

NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR TRAINING YOUR APPRENTICES

We have great news for Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA member companies interested in establishing an apprentice training program.

The Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA is finalizing approval to become a Group Sponsor of Apprenticeship through the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Apprenticeship & Training Office.

Once this program is finalized, Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA employers will not need to register their individual apprenticeship programs with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Apprenticeship & Training Office. They can be registered through the chapter. The chapter will handle all registered apprentice tracking and reporting with the state.

Now you can avoid the cost and time of managing self-run apprenticeship and let the Pittsburgh Chapter handle the details while you focus on moving your entry level workers to advanced level jobs.

Final approval of the Pittsburgh Chapter's Group Sponsor Program is expected in June. Watch email and future newsletters for additional details.

You may also reach out to

Liz Blashock, events and program coordinantor at:

blashock@pghntmf.org



Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA Apprenticeship Program

Enrollment opens in July!

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COMBAT ROBOTICS CONTINUES TO FUEL **EXCITEMENT AND FUTURES**

(Continued from page 1)

The annual BotsIQ Finals brought **■** together forty-five schools from across the region, including rookie schools, City Charter High School, Cornerstone Prep, North Allegheny Intermediate High School, Marion Center Area Junior/Senior High School and River Valley High School. While the battles are over, BotsIQ's mission continues. As the workforce development program of the

Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA, BotsIQ was created to provide a pathway for youth to explore rewarding careers in manufacturing. The program has been effective year after year in developing students' technical skills and knowledge. More than 90 percent of students reported gaining at least one technical skill this year from their BotsIQ participation. However, the most valuable experience came



from their connections with local manufacturers. More than twothirds of students had an opportunity to tour a local company and nearly all reported that it increased their understanding of manufacturing

by Michel Conklin, executive director, BotsIQ

Last October, Cornerstone Prep had the opportunity to tour Kurt J. Lesker Company. When asked what he liked most about BotsIQ, senior team member Daniel commented, "I liked

careers.

touring our industry partner the most because it gave me the opportunity to see a variety of types of engineering that I wasn't aware of." Daniel is pursuing a future in electrical engineering following graduation. Congratulations to all the students and schools who participated this year. Check out our list of 2023 winners below.



2023 BotsIQ Winners

GRAND CHAMPION:

1st PLACE COMPETITION WINNER:

Plum High School - Team 1 - R.A.M.; Innovative Controls

Bedford Area High School - Team 2 - Donald Thump: Kennametal. Rockland, Cell-Con

1st PLACE ENGINEERING DOCUMENTATION:

HEMPFIELD AREA HIGH SCHOOL - CAPO; COMPOSIDIE EDM, PES TESTING

2ND PLACE ENGINEERING DOCUMENTATION:

ENGINEERING DOCUMENTATION HONORABLE MENTIONS:

3rd - Southmoreland High School - Shake 'N Bake; Penn State Tool & Die, Reynolds Machine Shop, TECH MET Chemical Milling, KAF-TECH, Quality Trucking

4th - Penns Valley Jr/Sr High School - Butterfingers; Xact Metal

5th - Cornerstone Christian Preparatory Academy - Ramboni; Kurt J. Lesker

6th - The Gow School - Team 1 - Munch; MOOG, Steel and O'Brien Manufacturing

7th - Plum Senior High School - Team 1 - R.A.M., Innovative Controls

8th - Charleroi Area High School - Team 1 - CHAD 8. DMI Companies

9th - Pine-Richland High School - Team 2 - Franky, JV Manufacturing

10th - The Gow School - Team 2 - Duckie-Poblocki; Moog, Steel and O'Brien Manufacturing

BEST SPORTSMANSHIP:

PUNXSUTAWNEY AREA HIGH SCHOOL; MILLER FABRICATION, JEFFERSON MACHINE COMPANY

KING OF THE RING:

PUNXSUTAWNEY AREA HIGH SCHOOL - TEAM 1 - DARK STAR (WEATHER CAPITAL ROBOTICS); MILLER FABRICATION, JEFFERSON MACHINE COMPANY

CORNERSTONE PREP - RAMBONI; KURT J. LESKER

COOLEST BOT:

Plum High School - Team 1 - R.A.M.; Innovative Controls

2ND PLACE COMPETITION WINNER:

BEST ENGINEERED BOT:

HEMPFIELD AREA HIGH SCHOOL - CAPO; COMPOSIDIE EDM, PES TESTING

FOX CHAPEL AREA HIGH SCHOOL - KNOCKBACK; AEROTECH, INC.

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR:

CHARLEROI AREA HIGH SCHOOL - TEAM 1 - CHAD 8, DMI COMPANIES













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For more information about supporting BotsIQ, visit www.botsiqpa.org

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Welcome True Position, Inc.



Established on Pittsburgh's North Side in 1985 by John Z. Spudic, True Position, Inc. (TPI) is a family-run business now under its third generation of leadership. TPI is a flexible, precision contract manufacturing facility, specializing in custom parts for the Department of Defense and power generation industries.

The company is a growing supplier to the steel manufacturing industry by reverse engineering outdated equipment, providing repairs and collaborating with engineers to improve on existing designs. TPI also works with various local companies to repair and replace heavy equipment parts.

Now located in Gibsona, their 11,000 sq ft facility includes seven CNC Mills and Lathes, a Ø60" VTL with live tooling, manual machining and grinding, welding, sandblasting, CMM inspection equipment, painting capabilities and a 7 ton overhead crane. In addition to precision CNC turning and milling, TPI offers welding, painting and fabrication services. TPI has US Navy approved procedures for welding carbon, stainless and aluminum and experience with machining a variety of materials, from nylon to nickel.

True Position, Inc. is thankful for the past 35 years and the countless customers that have relied on the company to meet their needs, and they look forward to continuing to provide excellent service to new customers.



WELCOME XCELICUT

Established in 2019, Xcelicut is a contract machine shop focused on medium volume production turning. They are located in Latrobe, PA and serve customers in a variety of industries including defense, heavy equipment, electrical infrastructure and more. Xcelicut specializes in utilizing simple automation to manufacture complex turned parts. Their lathes feature subspindles, live tooling, bar feeders and cobot machine tending systems to maximize efficiency by completing parts in a single operation with minimal manual effort.

The Xcelicut team is made up of highly skilled machinists who are bound by a shared passion for continuous improvement and process optimization. Everyday before the machines are turned on the team is given time to focus on organizing and improving their workspace. This culture of improvement drives everything Xcelicut does from how the shop is laid out to how they program their parts. It allows Xcelicut to provide customers with high quality parts at a great value.

JIM BOYLE SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

The Pittsburgh Chapter National Tooling & ▲ Machining Foundation awards an annual scholarship to a graduating senior who participates in BotsIQ. This year, for the first time, the scholarship was given in memory of the late Jim Boyle, long-time NTMA member, precision manufacturer and friend to many.

The recipient may use the \$1,000 scholarship toward educational training or purchasing of tools for a career in manufacturing, the trades or engineering.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2023 WINNER:

> LAYNE RICHARDSON **Bedford Area High School**



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PARTNER WITH BOTSIQ TO HOST YOUR MFG EVENT



Open your doors & engage with local students!

Email Maria Campieri to begin planning your MFG DAY Event in October 2023 campieri@botsiqpa.com



PGH NTMA CALENDAR:

06/26 PGH NTMA/Kurt J Lesker Manufacturing Open

07/15 Apprentice Program Registration Opens

08/03 PGH NTMA/NTMF Board Meeting

10/01 MFG Month Begins

10/18 NTMA Engage 2023

11/02 PGH NTMA/NTMF Board Meeting

For times, locations and details, please visit:

www.PGHNTMA.org