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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAPTER EXECUTIVE



Dear NTMA Members,

This fall, I was able to join several BotsIQ student teams as they toured Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA member companies throughout Southwestern Pennsylvania. These visits introduce students to modern manufacturing and showcase career opportunities. However, I have found that I am learning just as much as the students!

One message has stood out from every shop I have visited: manufacturing is growing in Southwestern Pennsylvania!

At every tour, I have heard encouraging stories about increased business activity and investments in the future. Companies are securing new customers and orders, investing in advanced machinery and technologies, expanding their facilities and capabilities, and hiring employees.

What makes these visits especially exciting is that I have toured many of these companies before. Returning to familiar facilities and seeing their growth firsthand is remarkable! And this progress isn't limited to one company or sector. Across our membership, manufacturers of all sizes and specialties are growing, innovating, and finding new opportunities. It's a testament to the strength and resilience of Southwestern Pennsylvania's manufacturing community.

Of course, growth also brings challenges. As companies expand operations and invest in new technologies, the need for a skilled workforce becomes even more critical. Finding, developing, and retaining talented employees remains a significant challenge, reinforcing the importance of our work through the Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA, our apprenticeship programs, and BotsIQ.

As we look toward 2027, I am encouraged by what I am seeing and hearing from our members. There is tremendous opportunity ahead, and the Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA has an important role in helping our companies capitalize on that momentum. Through workforce development, industry connections, partnerships, and advocacy, our strength comes from working together.

Manufacturing is alive, innovative, and growing in Southwestern Pennsylvania—and our members are leading the way!

Thank you to every company who has welcomed a BotsIQ team into your facility, and to all who continue investing in your companies, employees, and the future of manufacturing. Your success is worth celebrating, not just in October, but every month of the year.

Michel Conklin
Chapter Executive, Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT



Melissa Monarko, Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA Board President

As we approach the end of 2026, I want to take a moment to recognize someone who has helped shape the Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA for nearly two decades: **Kevin Hartford**.

Although Kevin shared his farewell letter last November, this year marks his final official year of service on our board. It feels only fitting to offer one more thank-you as he closes this chapter.

During his tenure, our chapter expanded its workforce development efforts, strengthened its apprenticeship program, and opened a headquarters and new training center in Bellevue. These accomplishments reflect the work of many dedicated people, and Kevin's leadership helped bring them together around a common purpose.

He helped build a community where manufacturers share ideas, support one another, and work together to strengthen our industry. Throughout his leadership, he consistently recognized the people behind our chapter's success—our members, board, staff, and workforce partners. I always appreciated how he championed many local shops - always wanting the best for our industry and region.

On a personal level, Kevin and I have developed a great friendship. I have truly enjoyed our conversations, especially the opportunity to "talk shop," share experiences, and discuss the challenges and rewards of running a manufacturing business. I look forward to continuing those conversations for many years to come.

To me, this is what the NTMA is all about: forming relationships that extend beyond board meetings and chapter events. Having someone who understands your business, whose perspective you value, and whom you can call for an honest conversation is one of the greatest benefits of being part of this association. My friendship with Kevin is a meaningful example of that.

As chapter president, I am grateful for the foundation Kevin helped build. His commitment to this association has given those of us following him both an example to learn from and a responsibility to keep moving forward.

Kevin, on behalf of the Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA, thank you for your time, leadership, friendship, and belief in our manufacturing community. We wish you all the best in the years ahead, and we hope you will continue to join us often.

One tradition Kevin started provides the perfect opportunity to come together: our annual holiday party. What began as a small thank-you gathering for the board grew into a celebration for the entire association. It is a chance to step away from our daily responsibilities and enjoy the relationships that make this chapter special.

I encourage you to join us this December at the Fox Chapel Golf Club to celebrate the hard work of the past year. Whether your year brought growth, challenges, or a little of both, there is value in taking time to recognize what you and your teams have accomplished.



Pictured (left to right): Bob Geer, Melissa Monarko, Dan Monarko, Kevin Hartford at the 2026 Pgh NTMF Manufacturing Open

Those of us running manufacturing businesses know how easy it is to move from one deadline to the next without pausing. Behind every finished part, trained employee, and resolved problem are people putting in the effort each day. That work deserves to be celebrated!

As we look toward 2027 and beyond, I hope we will continue to build on the spirit of participation and collaboration that Kevin championed. Attend an event, connect with another member, share a challenge or an idea, and help shape what comes next for our chapter. Our association is strongest when its members are involved.

I look forward to celebrating with you in December, thanking Kevin for his many years of service, and welcoming the opportunities ahead.

Melissa Monarko
President, Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA

Save the Date: Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA's Annual Holiday Party

Friday, December 4th | 6PM-10PM
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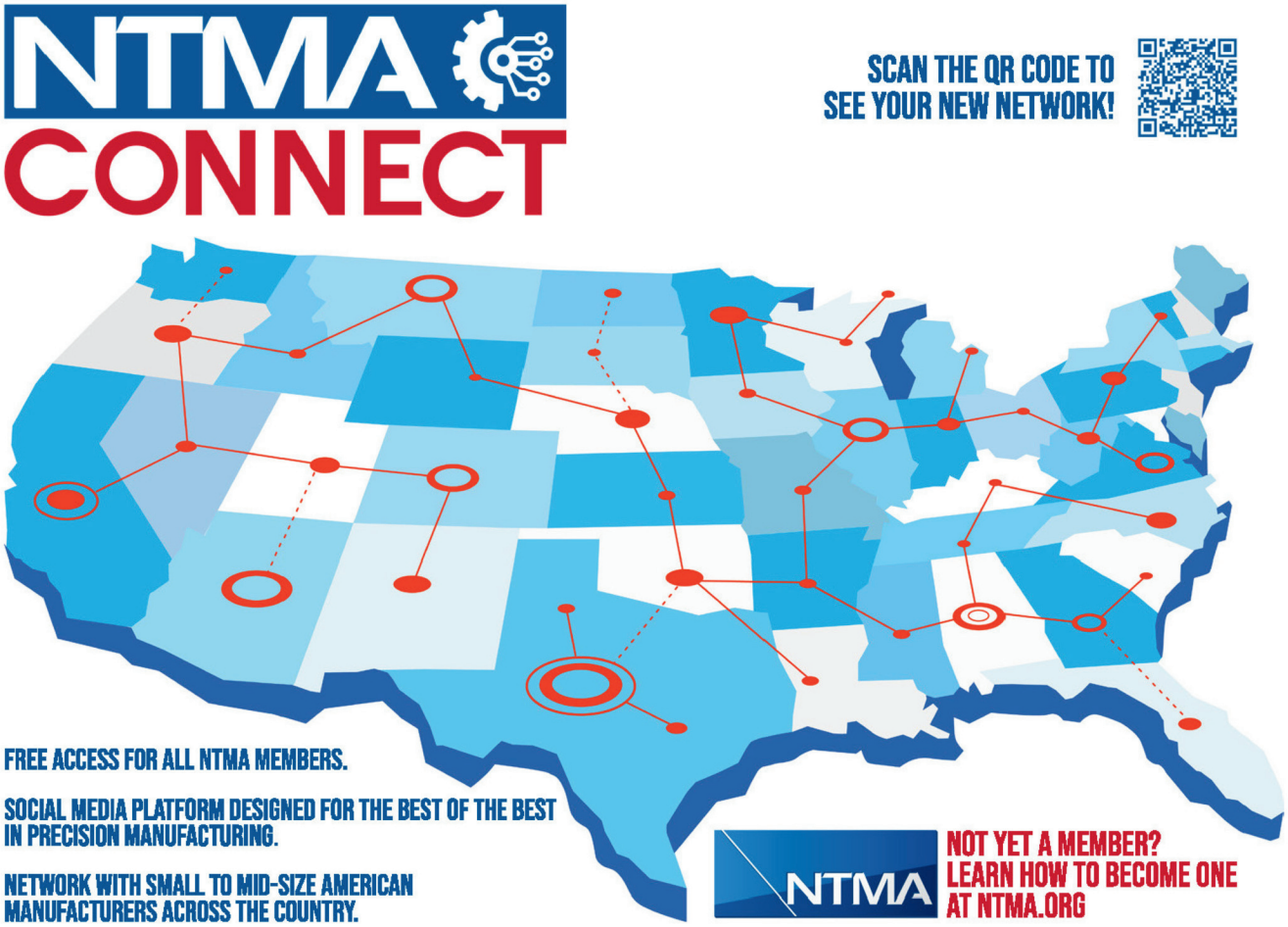
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THE PITTSBURGH CHAPTER NTMA WELCOMES NEW HIRE - ROSA HOFFMAN!



Rosa Hoffman is the Apprenticeship Program Coordinator for the Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA Apprenticeship Program. And what better way to learn the ropes than to have her jump right in during our busiest months of summer recruiting and enrolling apprentices! Rosa has embraced the challenge! Drawing on her background as an elementary school teacher, she brings exceptional organization, educational insight, and a strong commitment to student success. She works closely with apprentices, instructors, and employers to keep our programs running smoothly and ensure apprentices have the guidance and support they need to thrive. Her dedication and contributions are already making a meaningful impact as we expand our apprenticeship programs to create more opportunities to develop the next generation of skilled manufacturing professionals.

To connect with Rosa, email her at: hoffman@pghntma.org



FRAUD INSIGHTS: AI & THE NEW FACE OF FRAUD

AI is helping businesses work smarter, but it is also giving fraudsters new ways to exploit trust, urgency, and identity.

Traditional red flags are becoming less reliable as scams become more polished, personalized, and convincing.

Fraud by the Numbers

62%	$893M	77%
of organizations experienced a deepfake-related attack in the past year	in AI-enabled fraud losses reported to the FBI in 2025	of anti-fraud professionals report rising deepfake social engineering
Gartner, 2025	*FBI IC3*	*ACFE/SAS, 2026*

4 AI Fraud Trends to Watch

VOICE CLONING & EXECUTIVE IMPERSONATION

Publicly available audio can be used to imitate executives or vendors and make urgent payment requests sound legitimate.

AI-POWERED BUSINESS EMAIL COMPROMISE

Generative AI can create highly personalized phishing messages that mimic a trusted sender's tone and writing style.

FAKE DOCUMENTS & INVOICES

AI-generated invoices and payment instructions can closely resemble legitimate business records, supporting payment-diversion schemes.

REMOTE ACCESS & DEVICE TAKEOVER

AI-generated emails, texts, and pop-ups can be used to convince victims to install remote-access software, exposing banking activity and credentials.

What Could This Look Like for Your Company?

1. **"The CFO Just Called"**

An employee receives an urgent wire request that appears to come from the CFO. A convincing voicemail follows, reinforcing the request.

RED FLAG Urgency + an unusual payment request + pressure to bypass normal verification.

CONVERSATION Verify urgent payment requests through a separate, trusted communication channel. Before sending funds, clients can also use the Account Validation tool in the Universal Portal to confirm account status and ownership.

2. **The Flawless Fake Invoice**

An accounts-payable employee receives a professional-looking invoice and email thread that appear to come from a trusted vendor.

RED FLAG A change in payment instructions, even when supporting documentation appears authentic.

CONVERSATION Independently verify changes using a phone number already on file, not contact information in the request. Account Validation can provide another check before funds are sent.

3. **Compromised Online Banking Credentials**

Credentials are compromised through an AI-crafted phishing message, followed by attempts to rapidly move funds through multiple smaller transactions.

RED FLAG Multiple back-to-back transactions, particularly those just below normal review thresholds.

CONVERSATION Discuss dual administration, dual payment authorization, daily account monitoring, and payment and maintenance alerts so one compromised credential cannot independently move money or change access.

Dual Controls: A Strong Defense Against AI-Enabled Fraud

A convincing email, phone call, or video should not automatically be treated as proof of identity. Dual administration adds a second authorized user to approve changes involving access, entitlements, or payment limits. Dual payment authentication adds another approver before a wire, ACH, or RTP transaction is released. Together, they create an independent checkpoint when fraudsters attempt to exploit trust or urgency.

Continued on page 19.

OPENING DOORS TO THE NEXT GENERATION OF MANUFACTURERS

Todd Landree, BotsIQ

October is Manufacturing Month, and by the time you read this, over 400 BotsIQ students will have visited a local manufacturing company to see the industry firsthand. For some, these tours reinforce an existing interest. For others, they introduce a career path they had never even considered.

This year, those opportunities are reaching more students than ever. For the first time in BotsIQ's 22 years of operation, we have introduced a new combat robotics weight class: the 3-pound Beetleweight division, joining our traditional 15-pound division.

The goal is to give younger students an accessible entry point into combat robotics, build their confidence and technical skills, and encourage them to continue into the 15-pound division. Along the way, we hope they discover an interest in manufacturing that extends beyond the competition arena.

Without any additional advertising, BotsIQ reached capacity this season with more than 55 schools and 110 teams: 70 in the 15-pound division and 40 in Beetleweight. That growth means more students designing, building, troubleshooting, and discovering what they can accomplish.

Our industry partners help students connect those experiences to the workplace. At the time of writing, BotsIQ had over 30 manufacturing tours scheduled at companies throughout Southwestern Pennsylvania, with additional visits planned into the spring.

Pictured: City Charter High School students learn how Ace Wire Spring & Form forms metal by hand.



These tours show students what manufacturing looks like today: skilled people using technology, solving problems, and producing things that matter. They also introduce students to apprenticeships, technical training, and opportunities to build a career close to home. For a student weighing their next steps after high school, seeing those possibilities in person can make a lasting difference.

We kicked off the season at **Range Resources** during its Safety Day event, and the visits have continued from there. Students have explored defense manufacturing at **JWF Industries**, plastic preform production at **RETAL PA**, vacuum technology at **Kurt J. Lesker Company**, and stamping at **Jennison Corporation**, among many other processes and companies.

Each visit brings something different, but the most valuable moments often come from conversations with employees. Students hear how someone entered the industry, what they enjoy about their work, and which skills helped them succeed. Suddenly, manufacturing becomes more than a career title—it becomes a future they can picture for themselves.

To every company that has welcomed our students, thank you. Your willingness to open your doors and share your experience strengthens the connection between our schools and our regional manufacturing community.

If your company would like to host a tour or become involved with BotsIQ, I would love to hear from you (**landree@botsiqpa.com**). Our students are eager to learn, and together, we can help them turn that curiosity into a career.

Pictured:
(Left) Students from Seneca Valley High School learned about Cygnus Manufacturing's cusotm fabrication.

(Right) South Fayette High School learned about a variety of manufacturing processes at Jennison Corporation.





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PITTSBURGH CHAPTER NTMA APPRENTICESHIP

Michel Conklin, Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA

After celebrating its 50th anniversary last year, the Pittsburgh Chapter National Tooling & Machining Association (NTMA) is beginning its 51st year of apprenticeship training with significant growth, including expanded training locations and the launch of a new one-year CNC Operator Registered Apprenticeship.

This year, **Greater Johnstown Career & Technology Center** (GJCTC) became the newest location to offer Year 1 of the Chapter's four-year Machinist Apprenticeship. The partnership is designed to grow progressively, with plans to add an additional year of instruction each calendar year until all four years are available at the Johnstown location.

The expansion is supported in part through the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry's Scaling Apprenticeship Opportunities Across Southwestern Pennsylvania grant, which has helped the Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA grow its registered apprenticeship training and bring instruction closer to manufacturers and their employees.

The Pittsburgh NTMA also launched its new one-year CNC Operator Registered Apprenticeship, expanding instruction at longtime training partner **Northern Westmoreland Career & Technology Center** in New Kensington and establishing a new partnership at **Eastern Westmoreland Career & Technology Center** in Latrobe.

"Entering our 51st year with this level of growth is an exciting milestone for our apprenticeship program," said **Liz Blashock**, Apprenticeship Program Manager for the Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA. "For more than 50 years, manufacturers have trusted us to help develop the skilled workforce they need to grow and remain competitive. Today, we are serving 158 apprentices from 57 employers, expanding advanced manufacturing training into new communities, and creating new pathways that help companies build both their current and future workforce."

The Pittsburgh NTMA Apprenticeship Program provides manufacturers with a structured pathway to develop highly skilled employees by providing 144 hours of related technical instruction each year, complemented by 2,000 hours of employer-provided on-the-job training.

CELEBRATES ITS 51ST YEAR WITH EXPANSION & GROWTH

The Pittsburgh NTMA's four-year Machinist Apprenticeship develops apprentices' knowledge and technical skills through coursework in machining mathematics, blueprint reading, metrology, manual machining, CNC technology, geometric dimensioning and tolerancing, jigs and fixtures, and other core machining competencies.

"Today, we are serving 158 apprentices from 57 employers..."

The new CNC Operator Apprenticeship provides a shorter, one-year pathway focused on foundational manufacturing and CNC skills. This program also creates an opportunity for continued advancement. Apprentices who successfully complete the program can receive advanced placement into the Pittsburgh NTMA's four-year Machinist Apprenticeship, allowing employers to build training as employees strengthen their skills and take on more advanced responsibilities.

"As we begin our next 50 years, apprenticeship must continue to evolve with the needs of our industry," Blashock added. "Our manufacturers have jobs that need to be filled today, and we need to make sure we are training people for those jobs. Expanding apprenticeship opportunities throughout the region helps employers develop the skilled workforce they need to remain competitive, grow their businesses, and keep manufacturing jobs right here in southwestern Pennsylvania."

The Pittsburgh NTMA works in partnership with manufacturers, career and technical centers, workforce development organizations, and other regional partners to expand access to registered apprenticeship and strengthen the region's manufacturing workforce.

Enrollment is currently closed for the fall semester, but registration for the Pittsburgh NTMA's Fast Track classes will open in December. The Chapter also plans to continue its regional expansion in the Spring by bringing apprenticeship training to **Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School**.

Manufacturers interested in enrolling employees in future apprenticeship cohorts or learning more about the Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA Apprenticeship Program can visit **www.pghntma.org**.

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*Courses are open to those not formally enrolled in an apprenticeship program.

MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON!

Starts: Late January
Ends: May

Schedule: Classes meet two evenings a week

Eligibility: Year 1 Apprentices or Entry-level Employees

Dates, times, and locations will be announced soon!

NTMA APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

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For more information about the Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA Apprenticeship, visit: pghntma.org/programs/apprentice-program/

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NTMA APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM
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Please have someone familiar with your company's hiring needs and wage practices complete the survey which takes approximately 7 minutes to complete. Responses will remain confidential and Catalyst Connection will share the results in early 2027.

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5. **Back Up Important Data** Maintain secure, reliable backups to reduce the impact of data loss or disruption.

KEY TAKEAWAY

AI can make fraud more convincing. Strong processes make it harder to succeed.

Employee awareness, independent verification, and layered controls such as dual payment authentification can reduce risk.

Sources

FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) 2025 Report; Gartner 2025 Deepfake Survey; ACFE/SAS 2026 Anti-Fraud Technology Benchmarking Report; Microsoft Security Blog; BioCatch; Aura.

Article shared by Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA Associate Member, **Citizens Bank**



ONEVOICE FOR MANUFACTURING: WASHINGTON WIRE

White House Revises Canada Tariff List as Legal Challenge Begins

President Donald Trump signed a proclamation on October 23, 2026, changing the list of Canadian products subject to additional duties under Section 338 of the Tariff Act of 1930. The additions and removals take effect October 30, providing relief for certain imports while expanding the action to other products.

The administration is removing duties on certain specified machinery, refrigeration equipment, plywood, and packaging products and is imposing duties on other goods, including certain valves. Coverage is subject to the tariff classifications set out in the proclamation. Goods that are covered will continue to be subject to Section 338 duties even if they qualify under the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), and those duties may be imposed in addition to Section 232 duties if the imports appear on both lists.

Separately, Gellert Global Group filed a lawsuit on October 20 in the U.S. Court of International Trade challenging the administration's use of Section 338. The importer, represented by the Liberty Justice Center, contends the action exceeds the President's authority and seeks relief for itself and a putative class of other importers.

The suit opens another front in the litigation over the administration's tariff authorities. Filing the suit does not suspend collection. The court's consideration of the requested relief will proceed alongside implementation of the revised product list and continuing negotiations between Washington and Ottawa.

U.S.-Mexico Tariff Talks Slow Over Autos and Metal Derivatives

Efforts to reach a U.S.-Mexico tariff arrangement have slowed amid disagreements over relief for automobiles, steel, aluminum and derivative products (goods primarily made of steel, aluminum, or copper). October reporting described resistance within the administration to significant reductions in the national security tariffs, while officials on both sides said discussions were continuing.

ONE VOICE FOR MANUFACTURING
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Washington Wire is brought to you by "One Voice", the advocacy group created by the Precision Metalforming Association (PMA) and the National Tooling and Machining Association (NTMA).

The negotiations concern potential tariff relief and Mexican concessions intended to address U.S. trade concerns. The derivative tariffs extend beyond primary metals to specified manufactured goods, broadening the range of products affected by negotiations over tariff relief. Mexico is seeking a reduction or elimination of the Section 232 tariffs in particular.

An interim arrangement would be separate from completing the broader USMCA review, which remains in force while the parties discuss changes. Rules of origin and other contentious provisions will likely require negotiations beyond any near-term tariff deal.

USTR is also collecting public input before the 2027 USMCA review, with written comments and hearing requests due January 12, 2027. The initiation of that process indicates that the U.S. expects to continue substantive discussions with Mexico and Canada well into 2027.

USTR Seeks Comments on EU Carbon Border Requirements

The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) published a request for comments on the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) on October 8, 2026. Comments are due November 9.

CBAM applies to selected imports into the EU from sectors including iron and steel, aluminum, cement, fertilizer, electricity, and hydrogen. Its definitive phase began January 1, 2026. The system links covered imports to their embedded greenhouse gas emissions through reporting and carbon certificate requirements intended to reflect the carbon costs faced by EU producers. Companies exporting to the EU from countries without a similar emissions program must pay a tariff, or fee, based on the carbon footprint within their supply chain, requiring extensive reporting.

USTR is seeking evidence of costs, administrative burdens, and effects on market access, including for small and medium-sized producers. The consultation also covers a potential expansion to additional downstream steel- and aluminum-intensive products. Potential compliance burdens would include obtaining emissions data from material suppliers and maintaining production data.

Comments will inform the U.S. government's engagement with the EU. The request in itself does not alter the EU's requirements or impose any new U.S. tariffs. Businesses and associations can use the consultation to explain current burdens they face and the potential impact of the proposed expansion on indirect exports and their customer supply chains. The EU's CBAM replaced the Emissions Trading System and may expand to covering additional sectors and goods in the coming years.

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MAR 3	Leadership Competency: *Practices and Styles*
APR 14	Human Resources Management for Competitive Advantage FULL DAY SESSION
MAY 12	Designing Collaborative Organizations NEW COURSE
JUN 16	Strategic Financial Insight for Business Leaders NEW INSTRUCTOR FULL DAY SESSION
SEP 15	Understanding Technical Business Decision Making
OCT 13	Developing the Ultimate Sales Machine FULL DAY SESSION
NOV 10	Legal Business Overview: *What You Must Know to Keep Your Business Running Smoothly*
DEC 8	Marketing Strategies for Your Business *+ Graduation Dinner & Ceremony*

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PGH NTMA CALENDAR

11/5	Pitt IEE Member Happy Hour with Baird
11/10-11/13	NTMA ENGAGE Conference
11/12	Pitt IEE: From Status Quo to Status Grow
12/4	Pittsburgh Chapter NTMA Holiday Party
12/4	Catalyst Connection: Beyond Onboarding: Building Mission-Critical Skills

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