

## Lehigh Valley Manufacturing & Supply Chain Industry Partnership - Meeting Minutes

Meeting 5 | Monday, February 23, 2026 | 2:00PM-3:30PM

### Participants:

Organization	First Name	Last Name
B. Braun Medical Inc.	Vincent	Beller
Bracalente Manufacturing Group	Michelle	Laughlin
Bradley Pulverizer Enterprises	Felipe	Arango
C.F. Martin & Company	Steve	Hess
Century Promise	Yusuf	Dahl
Da Vinci Science Center	Abby	Wertman
Dynalene	Jennifer	Pearage
Evonik	Todd	McEvoy
Freshpet Kitchens	Mindy	Deeds
Gemini (KB Systems)	Portia	Watkins
German American Chamber of Commerce	Matthew	Allen
Ledvance	Nancy	Williams
Lehigh Carbon Community College	Mike	Brody
Lehigh Career and Technical Institute	Dr. Dipal	Kapadia
Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation	Trisha	Nardone
Lehigh Valley Planning Commission / WBLV	Minsoo	Park
LINC	Katelyn	Mack
Lutron Electronics Company	Ken	Borger
Manufacturer's Resource Center	Karen	Buck
Manufacturer's Resource Center	Diane	Lewis
Northampton Community College	Shelly	Mule
Northampton Community College	Michele	Salkin
Northampton Community College	Ken	Nasatka
PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley	Ryan	Knepp
PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley	Susan	Griffith
Penn College of Technology	Angelo	Fattore
Penn State Lehigh Valley	Jamie	Merida
Penn State Lehigh Valley	Mark	Capofari
Polymer Contours	Tyson	Daniels
Sharp Packaging Services	Kristine	Chimics
Sharp Packaging Services	Brad	Kreibel
SkillsUSA	Andrew	Hammer
Workforce Board Lehigh Valley	Sarah	Lutz
Workforce Board Lehigh Valley	Alex	Miller
Workforce Board Lehigh Valley	Cathy	Rychalsky

**Location:**

Virtual Meeting due to inclement weather  
(scheduled location – Bracalente Manufacturing)

**Summary:**

**1. Welcome & Introductions**

**Matthew Allen**, Director of Careers & Education for the German American Chamber of Commerce and iTEC representative, welcomed attendees to the virtual meeting of the Industry Partnership, thanking everyone for joining despite the inclement weather. He announced that the meeting would be recorded, confirmed consent, and then began the recording.

**Sarah Lutz**, Assistant Executive Director of the Workforce Board Lehigh Valley (WBLV), then welcomed attendees to the fifth Industry Partnership meeting, thanking the meeting hosts from Bracalente Manufacturing for offering their space for a second time after not being able to host the January meeting due to weather.

**2. Announcements & Partner Updates**

**Sarah Lutz** shared the following updates regarding resources for Industry Partners:

1. Workforce Board Lehigh Valley and PA CareerLink will be holding their 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Lehigh Valley High School Seniors Only Job Fair on April 28<sup>th</sup> at ArtsQuest. The employer interest survey is open now. Contact Dr. Andrea Grannum Mosley for details: [mosalconsulting@outlook.com](mailto:mosalconsulting@outlook.com)
2. The Presidents' Leadership Institute (partnership among LCCC, RACC, NCC) is administering survey on AI in manufacturing. They are asking for industry input by February 27<sup>th</sup>. The brief survey can be completed at this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YSJQX3F>
3. LCCC announced new industry training programs, including a Fiber Optics Installer course and an electrician course.
4. NCC announced their new Precision Machining program will begin in the Fall Semester 2026.

5. LINC announced their Summer Early Career Series. Three cross-industry events will expose young professionals to career opportunities. Employers interested in taking part should contact Katelyn Mack at [kmack@linc-lv.com](mailto:kmack@linc-lv.com).
6. LVEDC's Annual Meeting will be held on March 17<sup>th</sup> and will include a behind-the-scenes look at how the Lilly project came about.
7. Workforce Board Lehigh Valley emphasized PA CareerLink's talent resources and support for workforce needs, especially considering the need for Eli Lilly's to bring on staff while continuing to support established employers' talent needs.

### **3. Presentation: Train the Trainer Mentorship Seminar**

**Matthew Allen** of the German American Chamber of Commerce shared a preview of the Train the Trainer Mentorship seminar, which is being provided for Industry Partner employers as part of the funded industry support. Two classes of 12 participants will be offered, with sessions available on April 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> and May 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> at the Workforce Board Lehigh Valley. The seminar is a 15-hour training with a written and practical exam. Participants should be administrators, HR representatives, supervisors, or skilled workers. Interest forms are being shared with Industry Partners. For more information on the program, contact Matthew Allen at [mallen@gaccny.com](mailto:mallen@gaccny.com).

### **4. Discussion: Mechanisms for training the future workforce - K-12 lens**

The following questions were posed to the group:

#### 1. Defining "Workforce Ready"

When a student graduates high school in the Lehigh Valley, what specific skills, competencies, and workplace behaviors should they already possess to be considered truly "workforce ready" for modern manufacturing or supply chain/logistics careers? Is there a truly a 'skills gap' or rather a 'culture gap' between the current workforce and incoming generations?

2. If we agree that today's K-12 students are tomorrow's workforce, what responsibility should employers and community partners take in helping shape early skill development — and where should the education system lead? Where do parents and guardians fall into the conversation?

Responses included:

- Students need more exposure to working in a less structured environment. Training for how to problem-solve, ask questions, etc.
- Young employees need to respect that it takes time to build a career and learn skills. This would be beneficial to include in student preparation for industry.
- There's a gap from high school to college, and employers should recognize that this gap will exist from high school to industry.
- Note that some companies are still considering how to integrate millennials, when there are two later generations entering the workforce that need to be in focus.
- Educators in the discussion noted that input from industry on what training is needed will help move students forward. NCC noted that a college readiness course has been integrated into pre-Apprenticeship to support soft-skills and critical thinking. Da Vinci Science Center noted their Career Pathways Program connects students to employers.
- Potential for new models of teaching using digital tools that meet students where they are could be beneficial.
- Recommendation of shadowing at local industry for active students is recommended, especially highlighting how coworkers interact and cooperate.
- Recommendation of successful young skilled workers visiting schools and speaking with students. For example the MRC Dream Team.
- Recommendation of potentially inviting students to join the next Industry Partnership meeting (in partnership with SkillsUSA)
- Sharing next steps in a guide for career-seeking students can make the pathway more real and prepare them for success.
- Example from B.Braun Apprenticeship: Young Apprentice expressed that they had the initial concern that the supervisors will be harsh, and that they were glad they overcame that fear and found the program to be inclusive and supportive.
- Example sustainable model - Century Promise - A targeted program providing career readiness and career pathway tracks to high school juniors and seniors.

## 5. Closing

**Sarah Lutz** announced that the next meeting would take place at C. F. Martin & Company on March 16<sup>th</sup>. The following meeting on April 20<sup>th</sup> would be held at Amrize, and the final meeting on May 18<sup>th</sup> would be at Heidelberg Materials. The goal will be to continue building on this network after the grant period. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30PM.

**Next Meeting:**

**DATE:** Monday March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**TIME:** 2:00PM – 3:15PM

*Optional Tour: 3:15PM – 4:00PM*

**LOCATION:**

**C. F. Martin & Company**

510 Sycamore St

Nazareth, PA 18064