



hvedc INSIGHTS

UPDATE ON BUSINESS DEVELOPMENTS IN NEW YORK'S HUDSON VALLEY



FALL 2017 • HVEDC.COM

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

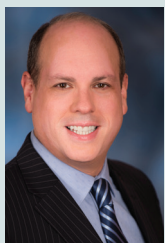
This year's Hudson Valley Beer, Wine, Spirits & Cider Summit proved – once again – that the craft brewing industry is booming in the Hudson Valley! With 152 percent growth in just five years, we have the stats to prove it.

However, the accolades should really go to the more than 500 members of the region's craft beverage industry that joined HVEDC at The Culinary Institute of America (CIA) for the fifth annual summit on Oct. 12. We could not be prouder to see the growth of so many businesses since the launch of this important initiative. HVEDC is honored to be making connections and serving the needs of people in the craft beverage industry, and to see so much positive change since we launched it back in 2012.

The Summit is truly the region's premier educational forum and networking opportunity for alcoholic beverage industry professionals.

We've helped grow the regional industry from 61 craft beverage producers in 2012 to now more than 150. That is a real testament to the teamwork between HVEDC, it's county economic partners and New York State.

As this year comes to a close, we are already planning something new and exciting to benefit both the food and beverage industry in 2018. Thank you to our board members and to our Food & Beverage Alliance members, for the ongoing support. On behalf of HVEDC, we wish you all a very happy and healthy Holiday Season!



Laurence P. Gottlieb
President and CEO
Hudson Valley Economic
Development Corp.

HVEDC's Beer, Wine, Spirits & Cider Summit: Celebrating 150 Percent Growth in Five Years



Five years may not sound like a long time, but since 2012, the Hudson Valley Economic Development Corp. has literally seen the burgeoning regional craft beverage industry mature before its eyes.

HVEDC is proud to be a strong supporter of the entrepreneurs who have created and sustained these successful businesses. One of the many ways HVEDC helps the craft beverage industry is by hosting its annual Beer, Wine, Spirits & Cider Summit.

Just five years ago, HVEDC held its inaugural craft beverage event – known then only as the Beer, Wine & Spirits Summit – at the Culinary Institute of America (CIA), but in a much smaller venue. The next year, based upon input from apple farmers, the organization added cider and the name was changed to reflect the addition. In that time, the Beer, Wine, Spirits & Cider Summit has become the premier educational forum and networking opportunity for alcoholic beverage industry professionals in New York State. The event features a unique combination of innovative programming, networking and sampling.

The event started simply with the idea to provide a craft beverage event that offered more than just tasting opportunities. HVEDC wanted to create something that would educate local producers, merchants, farmers and suppliers by providing deeply insightful information. The organization wanted to help businesses grow by showing them how their value would be found in the strength of working together – a united Hudson Valley of professionals in the craft beverage industry.

The expanded 2013 event brought together thought leaders at the state level and members of HVEDC's newly created Hudson Valley Food & Beverage Alliance. Those members discussed real growth opportunities, as well as the challenges facing the industry. Attendees brought their questions, and experts at the summit provided many answers that helped local businesses expand and grow.

Brian Facquet, co-owner of Prohibition Distillery and a member of HVEDC's Food and Beverage Alliance, has attended all five summits and has even served as a panelist at past events. In 2016, Facquet joined financial and legal executives for the summit's "Crafting Answers to Your Most Pressing Questions" panel, sharing industry insights, including the potential challenges of a crowded market and how to survive despite the competition.

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Independent Helicopters Soaring Into 2018

To get the company of her dreams off the ground in 2008, Heather Howley spent \$25 registering her DBA (doing business as) and threw caution to the wind. It turned out to be a tailwind, and Independent Helicopters has taken off in the nearly decade since.

"I didn't have any money or business experience," said Howley, CEO and Chief Pilot. "I had a leased helicopter and a few students, and I almost lost the business during the first two years."

Howley's brave, if unconventional, business model sustained Independent Helicopters.

"My first big purchase was a flight simulator," she said "A student financed the simulator for me, and we 'flew it off' with flight time."

To this day, 70 percent of the company's business comes from flight instruction.

The symbiotic relationships Howley enjoyed with her students, and her skill as an instructor, led to invaluable word of mouth that brought a steady stream of new clients and opened the financial space to develop new lines of business. Howley branched out into tours, events and charters, and picked up corporate contract gigs doing power and pipeline patrols.

Since 2013, the business has doubled to six helicopters and four pilots at two locations: Stewart Airport in Newburgh and Saratoga Airport in Ballston Spa.

"A lot of what I'm doing is creative investment and financing," she said. "Now, I want to help my business grow, and help those who get involved with us to grow as well."

For 2018, Howley plans to tap further into the tremendous potential of the surging Hudson Valley tourism industry to increase her company's leading revenue sources, and also create more of the symbioses that have served her so well.

"Think Hawaii," she said. "You book a hotel package, it includes a helicopter ride. Let's do that in the Hudson Valley! Partner with the hotels and tourism businesses here, and create partnerships that have great mutual benefits."



There are new revenue streams on her horizon, too. Howley is building her own hangar on land adjacent to Stewart Airport, which will serve as a maintenance and housing facility for the Independent Helicopters fleet. With few options in the region for such services, it will also serve other pilots who would otherwise take their business outside the Hudson Valley. Initial designs for the hangar also include an event space.

"Wouldn't it be amazing to overlook the airport while you're eating dinner?" she said. "We hope to break ground in January 2018 and have it done by this

time next year. Ambitious, I know; probably crazy. But, I've found that if I can think it, I can do it."

With an adaptive business model that has led to such success, one can't disagree. It looks like clear skies for Howley and Independent Helicopters, and any partners willing to go along for the ride.

www.independenthelicopters.com

2017

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
EXCELLENCE
IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AWARDS

GOLD

HVEDC EARNS IEDC GOLD AWARD FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP EXCELLENCE FOR BIOINC@NYMC

In September, HVEDC earned its third international award from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC). The award, which was presented at the organization's "Going Global" annual conference in Toronto, recognized HVEDC's leadership in developing BioInc@NYMC, the Hudson Valley's first-ever biotechnology incubator located on the campus of New York Medical College.

"This award reflects the Hudson Valley's role as a key international economic development center in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical sector, and recognizes HVEDC's ability to create long-lasting economic benefits by creating critical partnerships throughout the region," said HVEDC Board President Robert Levine.

Since 2014, BioInc@NYMC has become the most successful incubator of its kind between New York and Cambridge, Massachusetts. Currently, it hosts clinical trials, with several members having already received more than \$23 million in funding for firms. At its full capacity, the incubator generates 140 full-time and 75 part-time jobs and is responsible for bringing in more than \$1 million of activity with Regeneron Pharmaceuticals (another HVEDC board member) when considering grants, contracts and projects.

"The shared resources, turnkey wet lab space and sponsored professional services that BioInc@NYMC offers to promising, high-potential entrepreneurs and start-ups are second to none," said HVEDC Board Member Robert W. Amler, M.D., New York Medical College Dean, School of Health Sciences and Practice, and Vice President for Government Affairs. "This award is a monumental recognition of our work and we congratulate HVEDC."



Building a Bridge of Opportunity

One side of the new dual-span Mario M. Cuomo Bridge has begun accommodating westbound and eastbound traffic, in August 2017 and October 2017 respectively, bringing the long-awaited replacement for the aging and deteriorating Tappan Zee Bridge closer to full capacity.

By June 15, 2018, it is estimated that the fully operational cable-stay style bridge will accommodate 140,000 cars daily. It will be the most efficient fixed crossing along the river; a gateway to the Hudson Valley designed to meet and exceed the mobility needs of the region well into the future.

Besides being widely viewed as long overdue, the project is one that many feel will unify the Hudson Valley by cutting back on the congestion and safety concerns of the old Tappan Zee Bridge that have been mounting for more than five decades. Further, the design of the new bridge, and the materials used to build it, have been carefully planned to ensure that no structural repairs will be needed to the new spans for at least 100 years from completion. That will minimize lane closures and have a tremendous impact on a traffic flow that had slowed to a crawl.

HVEDC Board Member Advance Testing Company, Inc. has been involved with the project for more than three years, providing vital oversight inspection on welds and concrete used in the structure's footings, its massive concrete decks, as well as the asphalt used for paving them.

"We placed an actual accredited laboratory right at the build site," said Jimmy Smith, Founder and CEO of Advance Testing. "Our results get reported to HNTB (the Thruway Authority's project manager), and they compare those to quality control and assurance information to be sure everything is falling into line."

By providing easy travel for both business and pleasure, the new bridge represents huge potential for business development and tourism. In addition to opening up the natural commuting pattern, south and west, these expanded and more durable lanes will make the "reverse commute" a more attractive option as well. It will open the way for companies in Rockland and beyond to more easily draw talent from Westchester and the city north. The bridge is also an important connector

between the mid and lower Hudson Valley to the Catskills and Adirondacks, and is expected to help grow tourism traffic, especially to Stewart International Airport.

The size and scope of this 3.1-mile bridge has required a variety of technical innovation, collaboration and coordination between contractors across the region. It has been the result of thousands of hours of planning, staging and execution, to rigorous safety and quality standards.

Tilcon New York Inc., an Oldcastle Materials Inc. company and another HVEDC Board Member, put this scope in perspective. Tilcon provided 430,000 tons of aggregates that went into the construction of the bridge's concrete foundation supports for both bridge spans. Tilcon's paving crews provided additional support, and have installed 15,000 tons of asphalt mixed with a concentrated thermoplastic additive developed specifically for high-performance applications. The materials provide benefits of increased longevity and the ability to more effectively withstand the temperatures and forces of a bridge that serves hundreds of thousands of drivers.

Both regional companies agree that it has been a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for them, as organizations and individual workers, to be involved with such a historic infrastructure project, and one that will stand for well longer more than a century.

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo has held the project up as a herald of things to come, saying, "What the new Tappan Zee says is we can still do great things."

Indeed, there are currently more than \$100 million in infrastructure projects planned for New York.

"We're not only building a new state, we're also building a new economy," Cuomo said.

"At HVEDC, we are celebrating the Mario M. Cuomo Bridge project and the momentum it has created," said Laurence P. Gottlieb, president and CEO of HVEDC. "We're proud of our local companies' contributions, and excited for the economic opportunities on the horizon for our region and all of New York State."

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Larry Gottlieb with Keynote Speaker Tom Potter, Co-Founder and President of New York Distilling Company and Co-Founder of Brooklyn Brewery in 1987

“One of the biggest advantages to attending these summits is the opportunity to interact with the New York State Liquor Authority,” Facquet noted. “Having leaders from SLA available to speak about (and answer questions regarding) changes to laws affecting distilleries in the region is really a tremendous opportunity.”

Five years after the first summit, thousands have passed through the doors of the CIA, HVEDC’s partner for the annual event, which has brought incredible exposure to the campus and the school’s academic and culinary offerings.

This year’s topics included the growth of the craft beverage industry in the Hudson Valley, how to break into the industry and growing a successful business in the industry. More than 500 people registered for the event.

“This is the fifth anniversary of the Beer, Wine, Spirits and Cider Summit, and we could not be prouder to see the growth of so many businesses we’ve seen start and expand since the launch of this important initiative,” said Laurence P. Gottlieb, president and CEO of HVEDC. “HVEDC is honored to be making connections and serving the needs of people in the craft beverage industry. This is what true, grassroots economic development is all about.”

Gottlieb told the crowd that the number of craft beverage producers in the Hudson Valley has grown to 154 this year, up dramatically from 61 in 2012. “These entrepreneurs have created anchor businesses that are revitalizing many local economies and spawning related ventures in a variety of areas – manufacturing, marketing, tourism, agriculture, etc. – so the real economic impact is far, far greater than most people realize.” he said.

This year’s keynote speaker, Tom Potter, co-founder and president of New York Distilling Company and co-founder of Brooklyn Brewery in 1987, said that after years of growth in the beer industry, the last couple of years have seen a slow-down. This represents a maturing industry and not necessarily diminishing opportunity.

He told the audience there is no perfect time to get into the craft industry. Potter said when he was starting Brooklyn Brewery, his founding group’s biggest concern was whether there was enough room in the New York State market for four craft breweries. He admitted, with hindsight, it was a silly question, but at the time it was a serious, legitimate concern. Times have changed.

“There’s never a great time,” Potter said of getting into the business. “But there’s never a bad time either. There’s only you.” He urged the audience to do two things if they plan to get into the industry.

First, determine a plan. One of the facets of the plan needs to be marketing; communicating what makes your business unique. “If you have something unique, you’re doing yourself a disservice if you don’t connect with others,” he said. Second, connect regularly with other people in the industry to learn, grow and evolve as the industry changes.

“It’s been great working with HVEDC,” said Alejandro Javier Lopez, founder and president of Toma Artisanal Bloody Mary Mix. “They are the ones who connected me with the Hudson Valley Start-Up Fund, who I’m working with now on promising opportunities to keep growing my business.”

Gottlieb also conducted a unique “one-on-two” interview with the power couple behind Carolla Drinks, producers of Mangria and other adult beverages. Lynette Carolla, the company’s CEO, joined Gottlieb live at the event while popular comedian, television and podcast host and founder of Carolla Drinks, Adam Carolla, joined the conversation from his state-of-the-art digital studio in California via video remote. They discussed how they got into the craft beverage business and the mechanics of operating it, among other topics.

Additionally, breakout panel discussions with beverage industry-specific and regional business experts were part of the event again this year.



Hudson Valley Food & Beverage Alliance Member Prohibition Distillery offers samples at the Thirst and Vine tasting area

The “Update on Everything Craft – New York State Roundtable,” was led by Vincent Bradley, Chairman, New York State Liquor Authority. The interactive discussion with New York State liquor, agriculture and Taste NY officials and representatives brought participants up-to-date on key changes with state laws, rules, regulations and grant programs. Topics included how the state’s One Stop Shop works for businesses; and introduction to new regulations and laws pertaining to craft beverage licensing, tastings and sales; and the state’s role in growing the craft beverage business.

Panelists focused on how changes in legislation and the active involvement of state officials have led to phenomenal industry growth by helping reduce red tape in securing licenses and creating the current positive environment for entrepreneurial success in the industry. There are currently more 154 craft beverage manufacturers located in the Hudson Valley: 58 craft breweries; 26 craft distilleries; 56 wineries and farm wineries; four hard cideries and 10 farm cideries.

The “Quenching Your Thirst for Business Knowledge” panel session was moderated by Brian Powers, vice president of Marketing and Business Development for Judelson, Giordano & Siegel CPA PC. The panel discussed the operational aspects of a business within the craft beverage sector. The panel covered topics such as getting a product into a restaurant or bar, how to sell a product, building relationships, selling your brand, telling your story, marketing a business and understanding how to work with the Internal Revenue Service.

“We were among the first sponsors when the summit started and I have been a board member (for HVEDC) ever since,” Frank Giordano III, a partner with Judelson, Giordano & Siegel. Giordano provides management advisory services and other accounting services for beverage distributors as part of his work. “It is a great networking opportunity and it’s great being a sponsor because this event has incredible name recognition.”

Dr. Russell Zwanka, professor of Food Marketing at SUNY New Paltz and CEO and partner at Triple Eight Marketing, returned this year to share his insights for navigating the craft beverage marketplace. In his presentation, “Spirited Success: Building Your Roadmap,” Zwanka outlined intelligent strategies for building a brand and its sales. His tips and tactics for entrepreneurs were based on understanding the market and identifying where a business wants to market. He also included insights into economic and generational trends.

“HVEDC introduced us to Russell Zwanka,” said Jonathan Hull, founder of Applewood Winery in Warwick. “He gave us the guidance to branch out with our cider production to make seasonal flavors and event-specific ciders. We’re just starting to implement that now, and we think it’s going to be a great way to grow.”

“Larry and Brian (Gates, senior vice president, HVEDC) help everyone involved with the Bet on My Business Academy,” said Kestutis Katinas of KAS Spirits. Developed by HVEDC for existing Hudson Valley specialty food and craft beverage entrepreneurs, and unlike any other program of its kind in New York,



Attendees network and enjoy tastings at the Thirst and Vine area

the Bet on my Business Academy combines education and job shadowing for the learning experience of a lifetime. “They embraced us, gave us direction and have helped us meet so many people in the industry.”

Visitors concluded the day at the Thirst & Vine tasting area with more than 15 regional craft beverage samplers.

“I often tell people it’s a privilege to be working in the Hudson Valley,” said Stephen Osborn, co-owner of Stoutridge Winery & Distillery in Marlboro. “I can’t think of a better local market for a craft product. There is such a huge population that is extremely well-informed. In my taste room, when we are sampling wines and spirits it doesn’t matter how deep I go into a subject, they’re always informed. They understand the subject, which is a testament to the Hudson Valley.”

Read the Digestible Hudson Valley Newsletter at <http://bit.ly/2yHBXvP>

REGIONAL FOOD & BEVERAGE NEWS FROM THE HUDSON VALLEY FOOD & BEVERAGE ALLIANCE



NEW PROJECTS TO CHANGE THE ROUTE 17 CORRIDOR FOR THE BETTER

Over the next two years, the mid-Hudson Valley is set to boom, thanks to several key projects taking shape along the Route 17 corridor, stretching from the Town of Woodbury in Orange County to Monticello in Sullivan County.



Market Hall at Woodbury Common Premium Outlets

Woodbury Common Premium Outlets, the shopping mecca just an hour north of Manhattan, recently completed a multimillion dollar redevelopment that added 60,000 square feet of space, and upgraded the property to offer shoppers experiential retail at its best. Woodbury Common currently employs more than 4,000 people and draws 13 million visitors per year. More are likely to come, drawn not just by the improvements but also because several tourist attractions are being developed along Route 17.

LEGOLAND New York recently received approval for a \$500 million theme park off Harriman Drive in Goshen. To be built on a 523-acre property, Legoland is expected to draw 2 million visitors annually and create 500 full-time, 300 part-time and 500 seasonal positions, in addition to 800 construction jobs. It expects to open in 2020.

In Monticello, construction of Resorts World Catskills, the \$1.2 billion four-season casino resort complex, is nearing completion. It includes an 18-story casino, hotel and entertainment complex, an entertainment village providing additional entertainment, food and accommodations, a Rees Jones-redesigned

Woodbury Common Premium Outlets, the shopping mecca just an hour north of Manhattan, recently completed a multimillion dollar redevelopment that added 60,000 square feet of space, and

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AMAZON PRIMES THE PUMP FOR ITS HQ2 SEARCH

On September 7, Amazon ignited an economic development feeding frenzy across the US by announcing an open search to establish a second company headquarters in North America, known as Amazon HQ2. That morning, HVEDC executives were on the phone with state officials requesting an opportunity to include the Hudson Valley in what would eventually become New York State's official answer to the company's request for proposal (RFP).

According to the RFP overview, Amazon would invest over \$5 billion in construction in order to accommodate as many as 50,000 high-paying jobs, as well as tens of thousands in additional jobs as part of the site's ongoing operation and billions of dollars in additional investment. Amazon equally provided a list of requirements for the new site – ranging from close access to mass transit options and airports, to a seemingly endless supply of highly skilled workers, to a massive amount of space for building out millions of square feet for the proposed campus.

There was one similarity between this Amazon search and all the other projects HVEDC conducts throughout the year – teamwork between the organization and its county economic development partners.

"We were contacted by the HVEDC team with the site requirements and insights into how this process should work," said Jeremy Schulman, President of Rockland Economic Development Corporation and HVEDC Board Member. "HVEDC kept us informed day after day, acting as our liaison to New York State and the other entities involved. The teamwork was fantastic."

"Getting the information we needed to help Amazon make an informed decision was made easier because of the relationships we already have in place," said Brian Gates, HVEDC Senior Vice President and the lead contact for the Amazon RFP. "I give our county partners a lot of credit, because they, too, have quick access to a network of information and all of them helped us with a rapid response given the short deadline."

Though the Amazon decision is not expected until sometime in 2018, HVEDC will be more than primed and ready if the New York City region makes it to the next round of discussions.

FEATURED PROPERTY

54 TURNER DRIVE, TOWN OF WALLKILL, NY 10940 (ORANGE COUNTY)

For Lease: Nestled in the Frassetto Companies' pristine industrial park in the Town of Wallkill, this 54,000-square foot property is the ideal space for high-tech industrial, pharmaceutical, manufacturing or distribution centers.

PROPERTY FEATURES:

Built using the latest state-of-the-art construction, this property boasts 54,000 square feet of industrial space and offers 63 parking spaces and 8 loading docks. The building is equipped with a sprinkler system and can handle up to 2,200 amps of electric power.

Located one hour from New York City, this site is located in New York State's fastest growing region, with excellent access to Routes 17, 211 & I-84 and is only 30 minutes from Stewart International Airport.



CONTACT:

Bill Fioravanti

Director of Business Attraction, Orange County Partnership
(845) 294-7215 or
info@ocpartnership.org

Q & A

Solving Mother-Baby Needs through 3D Printing

Priska Diaz is CEO of Bittylab and creator of Bare® Air-free bottles. The “Bare with Perfe-latch Nipple” helps moms start, continue and extend the breastfeeding relationship. As part of its product development, Bittylab used 3D printing technology provided by HVEDC’s Hudson Valley Advanced Manufacturing Center. HVEDC Insights asked Diaz to discuss the importance of 3D printing in her product’s development and success.



Priska Diaz

Q: How and why did Bittylab become involved with using 3D printing for product development?

A: Bittylab designs and manufactures innovative, technologically advanced products that address the needs of moms and their babies. We are in a continuous state of research and development, constantly designing, testing and refining new ideas – hence, the need for rapid prototyping. In the past, machining parts was a common step for our prototype needs, but technology has made it possible to 3D print some initial concepts. We reached out to HVEDC and were connected with the Hudson Valley Advanced Manufacturing Center. Dan Freedman (HVAMC director and dean of the School of Science and Engineering at SUNY New Paltz) and the team did an exceptional job of designing and modeling a concept we had for our Bare Air-free feeding system. They were able to accomplish the task in a timely manner and deliver several 3D-printed pieces meeting the approximated material specifications, allowing us to have proof of concept and move to the next step in engineering.

Q: How do you think the use of 3D printing aided in expediting delivery of Bare Air-free to the marketplace?

A: Bare Air-free introduces a new technology to the pediatric feeding category. There’s a learning curve for us, as well as for our customers. Our innovative technology has led to breakthrough clinical findings that exceed even the wildest dreams of feeding professionals and the pediatric community: 75 percent of infants no longer met clinical criteria for GERD after feeding with Bare Air-free for two weeks. It is rare for clinical findings to produce such dramatic improvement in a chronic health condition affecting two-thirds of the infant population. Bittylab is on a mission to provide exceptional products to the pediatric and neonatal industry. Every time we produce a new component, the timing, quality and presentation are critical. 3D printing dramatically expedites the process of

optimizing every design without guessing or skipping any important steps in the design and development process.

Q: How is the spirit of entrepreneurship represented in the use of 3D printing, and why would you encourage others to consider its usage, when appropriate?

A: Entrepreneurs should consider the use of 3D printing for several reasons. First, it’s the measure twice, cut once concept. Second, it’s a very economical way to prototype plastic components compared to machined or CNC plastic. Third, any innovative design needs prototyping more than once, in our case more than a dozen times. Fourth, there are rapid prototyping materials to approximate virtually any plastic or elastomer behavior. Fifth, 3D printing gives you plastic parts that approximate production quality parts without the expense and time to create molds. Lastly, 3D printing allows you to develop several designs simultaneously, test and quickly determine which design, if any, is worth developing further.

Q: What else is important to know?

A: While there are still limitations with 3D printing, as far as materials used, the use of 3D printing can help optimize your design, as far as ergonomics, forms and functionality. Bare Air-free feeding system requires specific FDA approved materials to be used, and no 3D printing method or machined prototypes could achieve that. But 3D printing helped us understand what durometer of silicone we needed to use, as well as optimal latches and closures for air-tight environments. Our proof of concept, market test and initial launch has performed according to plan, and we are still redesigning and enhancing the experience. All of our concepts and designs are 3D printed multiple times before we go to pre-production prototypes with approved materials and mass production.

www.bittylab.com

THE HUDSON VALLEY STARTUP FUND PROVIDES SUPPORT TO LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS

Looking for seed funding, mentorship and connections to other entrepreneurs? Consider the Hudson Valley Startup Fund.

This member-managed seed capital fund – comprised of successful business and community leaders – invests time and resources to support the region’s entrepreneurial ecosystem.

The fund provides financial support for local companies with high growth potential. It collaborates with local players, including academic institutions, local economic development groups and other organizations to provide access to additional capital and resources for growing companies.

Three Hudson Valley companies recently received support from the Hudson Valley Startup Fund:

- Eco Shrimp Garden, the Newburgh-based indoor sustainable shrimp producer, and originator of the “fresh, never frozen” shrimp movement. Learn more at ecoshrimpgarden.com.

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Think Dutchess Hosts Inaugural Innovation Challenge

The Think Dutchess Alliance for Business hosted its inaugural Innovation Challenge, a pitch competition for local businesses, featuring two categories: Pre-Venture Start-Ups and Existing Businesses.

Hudson Valley residents ages 18 and older with businesses less than three years old were eligible to enter by submitting summaries of their business plans and completing web-based applications. Four semi-finalists were selected to pitch their businesses to a panel of highly-respected local and regional judges on Sept. 14 at Marist College in Poughkeepsie.

At the event, the semi-finalists competed for services, visibility and prizes to further develop and launch their respective businesses. Guests were invited to attend the event and enjoy light fare and beverages, while networking with Dutchess County's leading business minds and entrepreneurs.

"Given our unique 'one-stop shop' ability to provide access to a network of experts, we're thrilled to be able to host this event," said Sarah Lee, Think Dutchess CEO and HVEDC Board Member. "This competition helps increase awareness in the investor community for the businesses that are creating an impact and disrupting industry standards right here in Dutchess County."

After leading a passionate presentation on its thorough marketing strategy and impressive footholds, Screamin' Onionz founder Richard Romano was named Young Business Winner. Romano, a 2017 HVEDC Bet on My Business Academy Graduate, received a \$1,500 check, as well as services from the event's sponsors, to help Screamin' Onionz as it continues to grow.

Danny Gonzalez of Facticiti was named Pre-Venture Business Winner and received a \$1,000 check and business services from Innovation Challenge sponsors. Gonzalez presented a strong argument of how Facticiti's unique algorithm could change the way employees and employers search for jobs and candidates.

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- StateBook International, the first online marketplace to facilitate corporate location decisions for companies expanding, relocating and reshoring and to level the playing field for economic development organizations (EDOs) seeking to competitively market their communities. Learn more about Kingston-based StateBook at statebook.com.
- uSTADIUM, by NextGen Social Sports, Inc. in White Plains, is a sports hub, streamlining all fan connections in communities on smartphones. Users can get their "football fixes on" and chat with fans all over the world at ustadium.com.

Want to find out how your entrepreneurial company could develop a relationship with the Hudson Start Up Fund? Visit www.hvstartupfund.com.

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A rendering of Resorts World Catskills, opening in early 2018

golf course, and an indoor waterpark lodge. The casino and entertainment village portion of the campus will open to the public in March 2018. The entire campus will employ 2,200 people.

These projects have been years in the

making, but their completion in a short period of time will be a shot of adrenaline into the area's economy, said Laurence Gottlieb, HVEDC president and CEO.

"What's being created is a giant magnet that will generate enormous economic activity," said Gottlieb. "It's not only that tourists will be coming to the area in greater numbers. Folks that would have previously only gone to one location can now spend several days here."

The three major attractions – Woodbury Common, LEGOLAND and Resorts World Catskills, together are expected to draw 20 million visitors, creating a major tourism hub in the Mid-Hudson Valley. This will boost existing synergy and help all businesses thrive.

Already, a ripple effect is apparent. Several hotels are being built to accommodate the anticipated influx of tourists and capture their dollars. Stewart International Airport has expanded the number of flights it offers. Local businesses are looking to expand their operations and hiring in anticipation of enhanced economic activity.

With growth comes traffic, and that can have a dampening effect on economic development. Therefore, traffic mitigation is a part of smart growth planning. State, county, local and business leaders have anticipated the problem and are already planning ahead.

The New York State Department of Transportation has recommended adding capacity along the Route 17 corridor, as well as providing additional park-and-ride facilities. To that end, the Orange County Partnership, the Orange County Citizens Foundation and the Sullivan County Partnership have teamed up to push for an implementation plan for improving Route 17.

New York State has agreed to fast-track the long-awaited upgrade to Exit 131 on Route 17. The improvements, along with the upgrades that Woodbury Common has made to its property for improved traffic flow, will tremendously mitigate traffic congestion.

The long-planned widening of Route 17 is getting some dollars from Merlin Entertainments, the developer and operator of LEGOLAND. The company has committed to contributing up to \$40 million toward widening Route 17 near Goshen. New York State has promised to pitch in another \$10 million for traffic improvements.

"Ultimately, challenges are mitigated by smart growth planning," said Gottlieb. "The increased economic growth will certainly pay for the investments in infrastructure, which will help unlock a tremendous upside for the entire region."