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Allegheny Outfitters, Warren, PA
Pennsylvania: The Key to Opportunity

Many companies are committing to adding jobs in the nation’s fifth most populous state, a hub of educated talent and innovation.
Levitt Pavilion SteelStacks is a nonprofit community organization presenting free concerts at the base of the iconic Bethlehem blast furnaces.

**Few places represent the American story like Pennsylvania.**
Steeped in history, the Keystone State is a modern example of how legacy industries can thrive alongside the most innovative technology companies. And this vibrant, diverse economy is just one of the state’s strengths.

From an ample, highly educated workforce to an infrastructure of world-class colleges and universities for research and development opportunities to a business-friendly climate, Pennsylvania offers a wealth of advantages to companies that launch and expand within its borders.

Pennsylvania has grown to be the fifth most populous state in the nation—and it’s no wonder. As the state’s economy thrives and has so much to offer companies and their employees, there has never been a better time to relocate to or expand in Pennsylvania.

**A perfect business ecosystem**
Located in the middle of the East Coast corridor, Pennsylvania’s own economy is the 19th largest in the world, with a GDP that is comparable to Turkey and larger than Saudi Arabia and Switzerland. It is located within a day’s drive nearly 40 percent of the U.S. population, 60 percent of Canada’s population, and four out of the 10 largest U.S. markets. Six international airports, three Class I railroads, eight free-trade zones (FTZs), and three ports providing access to the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and the Great Lakes compose the state’s unrivaled transportation infrastructure.

The state also offers a workforce characterized by a special combination of
education, experience, and curiosity—and is driven by Pennsylvania’s legendary “can-do” spirit. With access to nearly 250 globally-ranked post-secondary and higher education institutions, including seven of the top 100 U.S. universities, Pennsylvania is among the top five states with the most STEM graduates.

Amazon is just one of the companies taking notice of the state’s business-friendly climate. The retail giant is spending $150 million on expansion opportunities in the state, creating 5,000 full-time jobs at fulfillment and distribution centers to support its Amazon Prime program. In addition, economic development activity in 2017 led to a net gain of more than 78,000 jobs, outpacing neighboring states. Part of this growth is due to the success of the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) and the Governor’s Action Team, which helped create and retain 200,000 jobs in the state in 2016.

Other companies recognized the state’s promise a long time ago. Comcast relocated to the Philadelphia region in 1963. Since then, the entertainment company has grown into an industry titan, opening the doors to the Comcast Center, its global headquarters, in 2008. Later this year, the company will open the Comcast Technology Center, a $1.5 billion, 60-story, 1,121-foot tower that will become a dedicated home for the company’s growing workforce of technologists, engineers, and software architects.

Comcast Business, the company’s business-focused division, has been a strong contributor to the company’s growth in recent years. “It’s an exciting time for Comcast Business, and we are firmly grounded in our mission to help businesses perform better through technology. We are proud to serve businesses of all sizes in the Philadelphia area and across the country,” says Denice Hasty, chief marketing officer of Comcast Business.

“This is living

The Keystone State’s great quality of life and attractive housing options go a long way toward attracting and retaining that talent as well. Philadelphia ranked above New York and San Francisco when it came to the best quality of life for the money in a recent survey by Varo Money conducted by Propeller Research. Pittsburgh was recently named one of the most affordable metro areas in the country by Demographia International, while Harrisburg’s arts and cultural scene was one of six Pennsylvania cities that made it into U.S. News & World Report’s 100 Best Places to Live.

PPG, a global supplier of paints, coating, and specialty materials headquartered

“The best way for companies to hire well-trained, dedicated workers. They provide workers with high-quality, on-the-job, and classroom training tailored to their specific job, which not only helps provide the worker with crucial job skills but it ensures those skills directly line with the company’s needs.”

Dennis Davin, Secretary, PA Department of Community & Economic Development

Workforce development programs and investment in innovation contribute to Pennsylvania’s business-friendly climate.
in Pittsburgh, finds that once potential recruits visit Pittsburgh, they are pleasantly surprised by the amenities. PPG has six area locations and more than 2,500 employees who call the region home. An affordable cost of living and mix of urban, suburban, and rural options lets them design their lifestyles.

“You can pick whatever style of living you want,” says David Bem, vice president of science and technology, and chief technology officer at PPG. “You can have a completely city environment all the way to a complete country environment within 15 minutes.”

The company is a good neighbor in these communities, too. Last year alone, PPG donated more than $1.4 million to support educational and community sustainability programs throughout the Greater Pittsburgh area.

Many job applicants fall in love with the quality of life and vibrant arts culture as soon as they visit the city, he notes. “If we can get them to come to visit, they say, ‘Wow; I didn’t know how great it is,’” he says. An added plus is that the state’s abundance of high-quality jobs in fields such as education and healthcare has also made it easy for the spouses of relocating hires to find jobs, Bem says.

Air Products, a global company operating in more than 50 countries and based in Pennsylvania since 1946, finds that being able to attract the right talent has given it an edge in a tight labor market. It is planning the construction of a new world headquarters to be located in Pennsylvania’s Lehigh Valley. Chairman, President and CEO Seifi Ghasemi, announced the plans for the new facility, to be completed in 2021. One thing that has helped the Allentown-based company move forward on its vision is Pennsylvania’s higher education system, as have collaborations with groups such as the Pennsylvania Chamber Policy Roundtable and Team Pennsylvania Foundation to support economic development, the company says.

In 2016, the state launched a new brand called “Pennsylvania. Work Smart. Live Happy.” to highlight the link between strong communities and thriving businesses, and the integral connection and impact each has on the other. The brand campaign reflects the quality of work and quality of life found in Pennsylvania and embedded in the state’s business resources, cultural and recreational assets, diversity, and inspirational leaders who call the Keystone State home.

In its recent publication, “Work Smart. Live Happy. A PA Story,” the state tells the story of how three of its post-industrial cities have created collaborative initiatives to bring together private industry, non-profit organizations, community leaders, and academia to reimagine their communities through revitalizing their local industries and neighborhoods with support from state investment and technical assistance.

One city that has seen the benefits of these efforts is Bethlehem, once home to Bethlehem Steel. It has now built a thriving arts community that has added to the quality of life in the city. Erie, whose former claim to fame was being the boiler and engine capital of the world, is now focusing on expanding other types of private sector jobs and turning its Lake Erie waterfront into a tourist destination. Meanwhile, Johnstown, once heavily dependent on steel manufacturing, is now moving into advanced manufacturing in new areas, such as making billets and slabs.

**Betting on innovation**

To make sure it holds onto its edge in creating the jobs of the future, Pennsylvania is investing heavily in innovation. DCED has advanced Pennsylvania’s technology scene through the Keystone Innovation Zone (KIZ) program, fostering development in 28 KIZs in both rural areas and cities slated for economic development. Through the program, businesses less than
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eight years old in the fields of advanced materials/diversified manufacturing, life sciences, business service, and high technology that opt to operate in qualifying zones can apply for tax credits. The program has resulted in the creation of 1,052 jobs, according to its annual report.

Meanwhile, the Ben Franklin Technology Partners, one of the longest-running tech-based economic development programs in the U.S., provides support including funding, business and technical expertise, and access to both early-stage technology firms and established manufacturers. The latest round of its BIG IDEAS contest offers $50,000 to an entrepreneur to get his or her startup up and running, business mentoring and networking opportunities, and a six-month free membership to the BF TechCelerator@TheCandyFactory. The recently named finalists include James Cosentino with Craft Biotech, which provides easy-to-use analysis tools for the fermentation industry; Henry Yaeger with Integrated Platform Services, which is creating a tech-enabled concierge subscription service for families to manage the care of aging adults; and Carolyn Martin with Rival 5 Game, who is developing a “number strategy” game for both children and adults.

At the same time, the statewide program Invent Penn State offers resources to entrepreneurs such as a venture and intellectual property conference showcasing startups seeking capital and emerging technologies developed in the state; no-cost workspaces such as coworking facilities and accelerators; the Summer Founders program, where teams can win $10,000 to work on their startup, social good, or a nonprofit idea; the Fund for Innovation, which is focused on commercializing promising research done at the university; and the National Science Foundation I-Corps Site program, which provides micro-grants and entrepreneurship training for university-related startups.

The state is also advancing economic development by embracing digital technology to enhance operations and reduce costs. PA Compute Services (PACS), a hybrid-cloud, on-demand environment for data services which launched in 2014, is now used by 16 agencies and is open to all Pennsylvania state agencies, counties, and educational institutions through a partnership with the IT firm Unisys, a provider of cybersecurity services, digital transformation and workplace services, industry applications, and other services.

Unisys believes that PACS opens opportunities for “Safe Cities” programs, which track where resources are needed in an “internet of city things” made up of both citizens’ personal technologies and elements of public infrastructure, such as crime statistics, relying on sophisticated data analytics. The program could collect up-to-the-moment data on the opioid crisis so the state can prioritize assistance in the hardest-hit areas. Eric Hutto, senior vice president and president, enterprise solutions at Unisys, likens it to fighting a
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You can pick whatever style of living you want. You can have a completely city environment all the way to a complete country environment within 15 minutes." Many job applicants fall in love with the quality of life and vibrant arts culture as soon as they visit the city.

David Bem, VP of science and technology and chief technology officer, PPG
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PA Smart, a new $30 million workforce development initiative Governor Tom Wolf recently launched, has helped connect Pennsylvanians with the training they need to play an active role in the workforce of the future. PA Smart is aimed at bolstering computer science and STEM education and expanding apprenticeship and job training. It includes programs for veterans and their spouses, people with disabilities, and low-income, unemployed seniors. The program is designed to break down barriers between state agencies and to close gaps in job training.

“I am investing in the people of Pennsylvania by launching the PA Smart Initiative, which will help Pennsylvanians get good middle-class jobs,” Wolf said when the program was rolled out in March.

With some experts predicting that more than 70 percent of new jobs created over the next decade will require STEM and computer science skills, that $30 million budget includes $20 million to support investments in computer science and STEM education, and $10 million for apprenticeships and industry partnerships. Of course, STEM careers aren’t a fit for every worker. With an eye on creating a career path for those interested in the skilled trades, the Apprenticeship and Training Office of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry provides services to employers, training programs, and community-based organizations that are starting or running apprenticeship programs.

In November 2017, Wolf launched a new apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship training program, housed at the Department of Community and Economic Development, to enable more employers to develop the specialized training needed by their workers to bridge skills gaps and find rewarding careers. To create a pipeline of ready talent, pre-apprenticeship programs prep future apprentices for full apprenticeships by providing both classroom and hands-on learning so they can then transition into an existing apprenticeship program.

The apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship training program, which started out with a $2.3 million budget for grants, now provides funding to employers to develop classroom-based training suited to their future hiring needs. Funding came from money returned from companies and organizations that received state funds for economic development but failed to deliver the results promised in the contract, such as the creation of a certain number of jobs. Wolf is doubling down on this commitment to apprenticeships. His 2018-2019 budget includes $7 million for apprentice-
ships, with a goal of doubling the number of registered apprenticeships by 2025. There were 15,208 apprenticeships in 2016, and with more added since then, the total is now 15,476. The budget also includes a $3 million increase to foster industry partnerships, which bring together multiple workers and employers in public-private partnerships to provide training. Wolf established the Apprenticeship Training Office in 2016 to support and expand apprenticeships statewide.

“Apprenticeships are one of the best ways for companies to hire well-trained, dedicated workers,” says DCED Secretary Dennis Davin. “They provide workers with high-quality, on-the-job and classroom training tailored to their specific job, which not only helps provide the worker with crucial job skills but it ensures those skills directly align with the company’s needs.”

In 2017, Wolf introduced the Manufacturing PA Initiative, run with partners including the National Institutes of Standards and Technology Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NIST-MEP), state-based colleges, universities and technical schools, and nonprofit organizations. It provides essential training and workforce development opportunities in manufacturing. Curricula are based on feedback from manufacturers across the state.

The Manufacturing PA Initiative includes three new programs. One component—the $12 million Pennsylvania Manufacturing Training-to-Career Grant, designed to help companies identify and train skilled workers who will help them compete in a global economy—offers grant funds for professional services and consultants, internships, equipment purchases, shop modifications, domestic travel, salary and benefits, and audit fees.

Another key peg consists of the state’s seven Industrial Resource Centers, which provide support to the manufacturing community. They offer technical assistance, including strategies to improve the bottom line, productivity enhancement, and elimination of waste, as well as those to improve revenue growth, such as product development, market differentiation, and workforce development strategies. In addition, the Pennsylvania Manufacturing Innovation Program taps into internationally recognized science and engineering talent and the research capabilities of the state’s higher education institutions to make sure the state remains a manufacturing leader and can create middle-class jobs.

Regardless of industry, Pennsylvania is full of myriad opportunities to create or expand thriving companies. With a time-tested business infrastructure infused with innovation, the Keystone State is a business haven, ready for more companies to make their mark.

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