

# Ohio

## BUSINESS

**58** COMPANIES  
THAT PROVE  
THEY HAVE WHAT  
IT TAKES

Ohio  
BUSINESS

2021 BEST WORKPLACES IN

• OHIO •



PLUS:  
**MANUFACTURING 4.0  
COMES TO OHIO**



**YOURS TRULY NEVER  
MAILS IT IN**



**OSU AND AD AGENCY TEAM  
UP ON DIVERSITY**



**MEET JYG INNOVATIONS  
CEO JACQUELINE GAMBLIN**



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# Help Your Attorney Help You



**Tell us the whole story – the good and the bad!** Your attorney cannot fix what they do not know is broken. Small facts can change an attorney's opinion and recommendation. Other times, things can be handled better than you fear. However, we cannot do that without a complete picture. Additionally, there are situations where not disclosing something can get you in legal trouble. Your attorney is best suited to help you navigate how the law applies to your unique set of facts.



**Update those policies!** Has it been a while since you had an attorney look at your Employee Handbook? What about your company's document retention policy, anti-harassment/anti-discrimination policy, and technology policy? Are you reading this and averting your eyes because you do not have these policies? It is vital to make sure your company policies are in writing and comply with relevant law. Every industry is subject to unique legal and regulatory frameworks. Working with your lawyer to develop robust policies helps you stay in compliance with the law and can help avoid future legal issues.



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**Don't forget that the law is our area of expertise!** You know your business better than anyone. The law is our business. Your attorney can serve you best when you remember that we know our business like you know yours. If you do not understand something or have questions on the law, turn to your attorney. They should be your trusted advisor. Your conversations seeking legal advice from a lawyer are generally privileged and not discoverable by others.



## *About the Author*

**Elise McQuain** is a Managing Associate in FBT's Product Liability & Tort Litigation Practice Group and dedicates most of her practice guiding clients through litigation involving allegations of insurance bad faith, product defects, and personal injuries. Elise is dual-licensed in West Virginia and Kentucky and is awaiting her licensure for Ohio.

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**Ohio**  
BUSINESS

## 2021 BEST WORKPLACES IN OHIO



### BEST WORKPLACES IN OHIO

Meet the 2021 Best Workplaces in Ohio and learn more about why Ohio is a great place to work.

BY THE EDITORS

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# Fall Ahead

**T**he Best Workplaces in Ohio feature is always a great opportunity to showcase some amazing companies here in Ohio. Business leaders carry a mission to create profit. However, many companies featured here have figured out how to accomplish this while carrying the torch of growth and giving all in their organizations a place at the table.

This issue should be hitting you just as school starts for the fall. The state is full of lots of fun activities during what is my favorite season of the year. However, there is no doubt that challenges will also continue to be presented because of COVID-19. While we all would prefer things subsided, those leading businesses—with memories of 2020 fresh—will once again be called to deal with the unexpected.

Here are some assumptions that I have pertaining to COVID-19:

1. Things won't ever be the same.
2. The presence of COVID-19 and its variants will likely be here for the foreseeable future.
3. We within Ohio can make many of our decisions for what happens in our state. (Thomas Jefferson would be proud.)

And with these assumptions, I have some requests:

1. I ask all lawmakers that if changes to our business operations be necessary for the good of all, that the implementation be fair.
2. I ask that we all continue to press on and learn from our efforts and improve on those things that are working and, frankly, throw out the things that don't.

This request for fairness is fueled from last year when small, locally owned, businesses were forced to shutter while many big-box publicly traded companies were allowed to remain open here in Ohio. Not only was this not fair, it offered undue competitive advantage then, and thereafter, to the companies that evidently have much stronger ability to shoulder the financial burden.

Our state demonstrated to the country in a myriad ways what it means to have strong leaders from government, business and the nonprofit community working together. And that worked well.

Here is to your continued success, well-being and a bountiful fall season.



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# Breaking Bread

ORLANDO BAKING COMPANY  
BRINGS OLD WORLD CLASSICS  
TO MARKET

BY TERRY TROY

**M**embers of the Orlando family sometimes speculate why Nicola Orlando in 1904 moved the family's baking business away from its roots in Castel di Sangro, Italy, to its current home in Cleveland.

"Maybe it was because of the weather," quips John Anthony Orlando, current president and CEO, who represents the fifth generation of family ownership of the company. "It actually made sense to come to Cleveland. When you think about it, Cleveland back then was one of the largest cities in America."

Rivalling the likes of Chicago or St. Louis, which that same year was hosting the World's Fair.

Regardless of whether or not you believe Orlando's weather joke, the Orlando Baking Company found a home in Cleveland and for the last 117 years has been bringing Old World ways of baking fine European classics and bread to Northeast Ohio. Indeed, the company's roots go even further back, having been founded in Italy in 1872.

With nine production lines and six



The Orlando Baking Company has been baking bread in Cleveland since 1904.

hearth tunnel ovens, Orlando produces well over 250 different styles of fresh and frozen hearth-baked breads rolls and specialty items—in Italian, French, rye and wheat bread varieties. It also produces an extensive variety of subs, hoagies, Kaisers, hamburger buns and dinner rolls. Its signature Ciabatta bread is a staple of menus in restaurants across America.

"We produce over 1 million pounds of product a week," says Orlando, who literally grew up in the bakery, helping out his father, Sonny, and his many cousins who worked at the plant.

Even with that kind of volume, nothing is sacrificed in quality, Orlando says.

"Where a typical white bread bakery

might produce 10,000 loaves an hour, we are usually shooting for 2,500 to 3,000 loaves," he says. "That's because our process is different. It imparts a lot more quality to the finished product."

Today, the Orlando name can be found on shelves of finer grocers and food retailers across Northeast Ohio. But the scope of this family bakery is actually nationwide.

"While Northeast Ohio is our biggest

market in terms of brand presence in retail stores, we serve restaurants across the country," Orlando says. "That's not something you would know, unless you popped your head in the kitchen of a restaurant and saw our name on a package."

Indeed, the restaurant and frozen markets actually make up the lion's share of Orlando Baking Company's business, Orlando admits, with its smallest concentration in the Northwest and a much larger share in the Southeast. However, the restaurant business is very helpful from a product development standpoint.

"If we see something do well on the restaurant side, we'll try it on the retail side," Orlando says.

Through its decades of business in Cleveland at its 200,000-square-foot bakery, Orlando is still very much a family business—even though it employs more than 330 people and is currently looking to grow.

"To take a guess, I'd say that we have at least 20 family members and cousins who work here," says Orlando. "We are only at a production capacity of 55% and we have 45% available to grow."

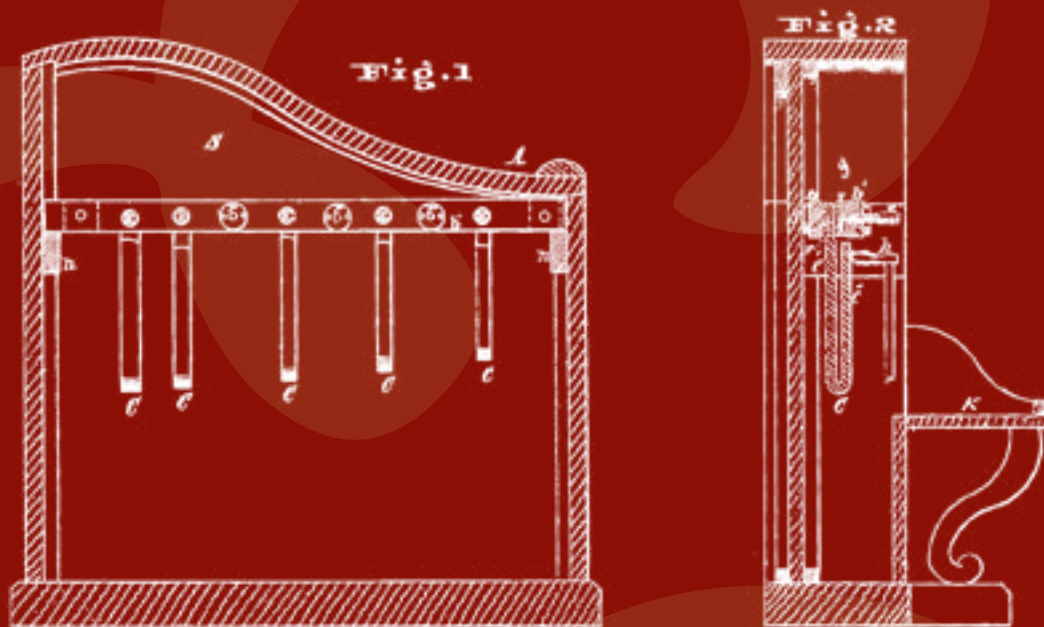
"Right now, the challenge is staffing," Orlando adds. "We have a current need for about 40 people, and we could probably add another 50 on top of that."

Despite of how much it may grow in the future, you can be sure that the Orlando family will take the same pride in baking as Nicola did when he first moved the company to Cleveland from Italy. ■



From left: Chris Orlando, Nick Orlando, Sonny Orlando, Danny Holan (upfront), John C. Orlando, John C. Orlando Jr. and John Anthony Orlando

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**SUPERIOR DENTAL CARE AND ITS PARENT COMPANY, MEDICAL MUTUAL, FOUND SUCCESS IN 2020 BY WORKING TOGETHER**  
BY CORINNE MINARD

Some things are just better together. While true of beloved comfort food like peanut butter and jelly, the same can be said of many business partnerships. In 2018, Medical Mutual purchased Centerville-based Superior Dental Care (SDC) to add dental to its health care offerings. Joining together has enabled both companies to grow, but it's also proven to be advantageous in other ways, particularly during COVID-19.

### COMING TOGETHER

SDC began in 1986 as a dentist-owned company, with practicing dentists as its shareholders. "We were really created to assist with the cost of preventive care and encourage members or patients to get out and take advantage of preventive care for their dental needs," says Shannon Ford, director of Client Services for SDC.

The company was focused on high-quality customer service—much of its staff were previously dental assistants or dental hygienists, enabling them to best serve members' needs. SDC had grown

over the years, servicing clients in Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky, but was still a relatively small company.

Enter Medical Mutual. Medical Mutual is the oldest and one of the largest health insurance companies in Ohio and, in 2018, it was looking to expand its market reach. It turned to SDC to add dental care to its line of services, purchasing the company in August 2018.

"We have grown exponentially with the people and the resources at Superior Dental with their expertise," says Jeanne Fuelling, director of Specialty Product Sales at Medical Mutual. "It's given us the ability to truly have a focus on dental, truly have an expertise, with their leading-edge capabilities that we just didn't have."

Fuelling says acquiring SDC enabled Medical Mutual to merge the two com-

### Medical Mutual's FC Cincinnati sponsorship

pany's products, giving current and future clients access to dental care alongside their medical.

### UNEXPECTED HELP

SDC has also benefited from the acquisition, though not necessarily in ways it expected. Ford points to the company's response to COVID-19 as an example.

"The acquisition happening when it did—no one had ever planned on this COVID pandemic—really allowed us, as a small regional carrier, we had IT resources with a larger company that allowed us to pivot very quickly to put all of our employees in a position where they could still service our employer groups,







**Medical Mutual's Rose Building in downtown Cleveland**

our members, our dentists, everybody, with the same service reputation that we've always had," she says.

The company was able to stay fully operational while a majority of SDC's employees worked from home. In addition, the company provided members with a mobile app and ID card, offered 24/7 access to plan and enrollment information for employers and brokers, and provided secure claim upload and auto deposit for dentists.

"As a smaller company that would have been more of a challenge for us during this time period," adds Ford.

"If you were to ask any of our customers, I think they would say they didn't see a blip. We pivoted quickly last year, and we had a successful year," says Fuelling. "It was almost a surprise to all of us how good of a year it ended up being and how well it went."

## THE FUTURE

While many things have changed for SDC, some aspects of its business remain the same. "We still have a lot of the same values

of what we had when we were a dentist-owned company," says Ford. "We like to feel that we are keeping up on the dental trends. We have dental directors that still review all of our claims and our practices. We're really holding on to where we started from, even through the acquisition."

SDC has expanded its network over the last couple years, adding more dentists and giving members more options. It's not uncommon for an employer to give SDC a list of dentists to invite into the network. It's this personal touch that Ford says has led to the companies' continued growth.

"I believe that we were able to grow based on our network strength, as well as our service for our members, service for our clients and service for our brokers and Medical Mutual supports that 100%," says Ford. "I know that we knew when we were being purchased by Medical Mutual that they had a very similar service mindset. It's really a perfect marriage, being part of a company that has the same values and focusing on those values as we continue to grow." ■

## KEEPING IT LOCAL

Medical Mutual and Superior Dental Care (SDC) are always looking for ways to support local communities. One way they are able to do so is the Mutual Appreciation Program. Medical Mutual and SDC employees have access to a list of company customers. If an employee chooses to make a purchase with one of these companies, they earn points, which they can then spend on prizes offered in the program.

"We typically spend about, it averages out to about \$2 million a month, which is spent with our customers. And we recently had a huge celebration at the end of May when we reached the \$200 million mark," says Jeanne Fuelling, director of Specialty Product Sales at Medical Mutual.

During COVID-19, Medical Mutual and SDC remained committed to its communities. SDC held a social media campaign encouraging its followers to support small businesses.

"We would say, 'Shop local, dine local,' different things that we could tag a few of our clients out there and put it on our social media and just say, 'Please support these businesses,'" says Shannon Ford, director of Client Services for SDC.

SDC and Medical Mutual also sent toothpaste to charitable groups in the Cincinnati area to assist those in need.

"We had an excess because we weren't able to get out in front of our clients this past 2020 enrollment period. So instead of wasting that material, we wanted to make sure it was put to good use. We reached out to a lot of our nonprofit organizations, and we sent out some toothpaste in particular to make sure that they could share that with those who were in need," says Ford. "It was very well received, and we touched base with every nonprofit that we could through our SDC client list."

# Making The Leap



CEO Jacqueline Gamblin says she prioritizes cultural fit over skill set when hiring.

## TECH COMPANY CEO TALKS 'GAMBLIN' ON HERSELF

BY VAL HUNT BEERBOWER

**T**aking risks isn't always rewarded behavior, particularly in the tail end of a pandemic. But it's precisely this type of audacity to dare that drives innovation, according to the founder and CEO of specialized tech company JYG Innovations. She should know—it's exactly this type of "leap of faith" that led Jacqueline Gamblin to create her own business.

"I believe that there are so many reasons why JYG Innovations is here today," Gamblin says. "My father is one of my heroes, but my mother was an inspiration who instilled a high standard for integrity, hard work and discipline in me and my sister

growing up. As I sought to continue to live out those principles, I found myself still looking to balance priorities as a single mother while dealing with quality-of-life issues that escalated after the death of my mother. Eventually, I reached a breaking point where I wanted to control my own destiny. In that moment, JYG Innovations became the answer."

Headquartered in Dayton, JYG Innovations employs about 150 people. Gamblin's company specializes in systems engineering, cybersecurity and IT operations for the Department of Defense as well as federal and commercial industries. Gamblin sees her company as offering more than just the stated services, however. "I've found it to be a place where good people become their best selves as we aim to impact our local community through principles based on integrity and intentionality," she says.

Born in Selma, Alabama, Gamblin moved around the country, a self-proclaimed "Air Force brat." Her father served in the military, and her family eventually found their way to Dayton. Like most enlisted folks who arrive in the Gem City under the premise they're simply "passing through," Gamblin found herself putting down roots instead. "Dayton has been 'home' for some time now, and I love the pace of the city, the affordable cost of living and the opportunities to engage in various community activities," she says.

She began her professional path at a defense company that is now Northrup Grumman. Discovering roles outside of software engineering or programming provided Gamblin with her spark that fueled her drive to launch her own business. "I never saw myself as an entrepreneur," she says. "I loved the technology career field



and wanted to learn as much as I could so I asked a ton of questions. Anytime there was an opportunity to learn a new skill or work in a new area such as systems programming, project management, pricing or proposal development I jumped on it because I wanted to understand the big picture. I had no idea all of this was actually preparing me to be a business owner."

Ultimately, she decided to take the leap to start her own company. "JYG Innovations exists partly because of the opportunities and risks I decided to take over the years," she says. "However, it has continued to thrive because of the people who chose to take some of those risks with me."

Taking the plunge not only meant stretching her own skills as the jack-of-all-trades in her CEO position, but also hiring and nurturing new team members along the way.

"I think I dealt with some of the standard challenges when I first started JYG Innovations," Gamblin says. "I faced the difficulty of needing to develop a business strategy, generate revenue to pay the bills, build a portfolio of services and identify new customers; however, I also faced the challenge of wanting to have the right people on board."

Gamblin's motto is "hire character, train skill." She says finding the right cultural fit will trump a hire who has the correct skill set but doesn't mesh with her company's culture. Bringing in team members who are eager and willing to learn new skills, but also have enough humility to be held accountable, make the best human capital at JYG Innovations. "The most valuable assets often not found on a candidate's resume

are their work ethic, collaborative spirit and the source of their motivation," she says.

Staying nimble is always the name of the game for entrepreneurs, and COVID-19 certainly tested the limits of many businesses. One challenge the past year wrought was attacking Gamblin's ability to personally connect with her staff, a differential factor she took pride in lavishing on her company. "I have always loved being hands-on with the employees of JYG. Prior to the pandemic, I would visit each of our sites around the country and would check-in with employees to see if there was any way that we could support them better," Gamblin says. "Since the pandemic, we have had to find creative ways to check in with our employees and make sure that they feel valued and supported, even from a distance."

However, Gamblin says she's keeping the lemonade she made from 2020's lemons. "One positive outcome is that JYG Innovations was already using an established telework policy for a remote project on the East Coast," she says. "We were able to implement this policy for other remote project teams on a case-by-case basis. Going forward, we will continue to use a hybrid version of this policy."

With service locations in 10 different states, Gamblin could choose any number of locations for her headquarters. But Gamblin is dedicated to the Dayton area.

"Dayton is a good place to grow because of our close proximity to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base... We are committed to investing in emerging technology trends directly related to the Department of Defense," she says. "Dayton also has great



Jacqueline Gamblin

opportunities for us to continue in our commitment to elevate the standard of corporate citizenship. We encourage each of our employees to invest their time, talent and treasure into the communities we serve."

Gamblin recognizes the importance of "paying it forward." She participates in programs that support local entrepreneurs because it wasn't so long ago that she was in their shoes. "As a new entrepreneur, I consulted mentors, other business owners and any industry resource that could be helpful," she says. "I also believe it is imperative that new entrepreneurs identify business banking, accounting and legal resources. These resources should be vetted and will hopefully lead to long-term relationships."

This can be particularly true for underrepresented people. As a Black woman, Gamblin says she was subjected to personal biases with peers in her industry. "I have lost count of the number of times when I entered a room with a white, male member of my team and the assumption was made that he must be the CEO or at a minimum a co-owner," she says. "It can be daunting to pursue a career in a field where there are few people who look like you, but the key is to remember you are hopefully creating opportunities for others."

That's why, in addition to landing multi-million-dollar contracts, Gamblin still sets aside time to help uplift other aspiring business owners. "I sincerely hope to see more Black women pursuing business ownership in STEM fields, and I would encourage them to stay the course despite the challenges," she says. ■



JYG Innovations provides engineering, cybersecurity and IT solutions for clients like the Department of Defense.

# Always Accommodating

YOURS TRULY PROVES  
HOSPITALITY NEVER GOES OUT  
OF STYLE

BY TERRY TROY

**I**t was a year of change in America. Ronald Reagan was the new president. The media was fascinated with Lady Diana Spencer. And *Raiders of the Lost Ark* captured people's imaginations.

It was 1981 and four siblings of the Shibley family—Art, Jeffrey, Darlene and Larry—decided to bring a new dining concept to Northeast Ohio, specifically to a small 31-seat restaurant in the Cleveland suburb of Beachwood. Using the same business principles used in that small restaurant's formation, 40 years later this nine-unit restaurant chain employs more than 400 folks across Northeastern Ohio.

"The driving force behind the foundation was the feeling that we could do something quickly and efficiently—but more importantly that it met the needs of our customers rather than delivering food for our own business convenience," says Larry Shibley, who, along with his three siblings, is still involved in the day-to-day operations. "Back in the late '70s and early '80s, it was uncommon that restaurants were able to accommodate guests and make special substitutions. But that was contrary to our beliefs—we weren't brought up that way."

So, the name Yours Truly has a double meaning. While it can be taken as a salutation where the Shibley siblings are putting their name on the restaurant as if signing a letter, it can also mean that the restaurant and its menu offerings belong to the restaurants' many patrons.

"We had actually toyed with the idea of building up around a postal theme, and you can still see that on our menu with items like the Envelope," says Shibley. "The problem was that the initial restaurant was in a more Victorian-style building, so the post office colors and theme really didn't fit."

However, the creation of a large, almost



**ABOVE:** The Patty Melt (above) and the Envelope are two menu items at divergent ends of the chain's menu spectrum.

**RIGHT:** Larry Shibley

encyclopedic, menu was crucial to the restaurant's operational strategy.

"If you go into one of our restaurants, you'll find plenty of multi-millionaires as well as people who have to economize just to pay their bill," says Shibley.

While the menu can be described as classic diner food with a hint of Mediterranean influence, it's the homemade recipes and healthy choices that keep its customers coming back.

"Our mission is to satisfy the appetites of the indulgent customer or guest, while also satisfying the needs of a more healthy lifestyle," says Shibley, whose family is Lebanese. "While I'm very familiar with Mediterranean menu preparations, the reason those items are on the menu has more to do with catering to a healthy lifestyle and using fresh ingredients."

Which is common knowledge among Yours Truly insiders.

"They realize that when you get a bowl of chili, it doesn't come out of a commercial commissary in Nevada," says Shibley. "The same is true of all our soups, sauces and dressings. Our customers know that they



were all made that day or the day before. They are all our own recipes. They are not copied. And we are making them as healthy as possible."

Of course, there are some great American menu items as well, like the patty melt, which appeal more to a healthy appetite than a healthy lifestyle.

Naturally, being everything to everyone presents some operational challenges. Shibley credits the chain's many long-term employees for Yours Truly's ongoing success.

"In today's marketplace, an encyclopedic menu is very difficult to orchestrate," says Shibley. "But in our situation, because we have been doing this so long and have so many trained professionals, replicating what we have been doing at new locations is not as hard because we have a system, and we have hundreds of people oriented to it." ■



# Ohio BUSINESS

The Buckeye State's only all-business magazine, developed by the creators of Cincy and Dayton Magazine



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# Braille Ale Wins Big

THREE CINCINNATI COMPANIES  
COLLABORATE TO CREATE  
ACCESSIBLE BEER

BY NATALIE HAMREN





**B**eer is becoming more accessible in Cincinnati thanks to a collaboration among West Side Brewing, the Cincinnati Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired (CABVI) and Brick Solid Brands.

The “Braille Ale,” a raspberry gose in a can that features braille for people who are blind and visually impaired, from West Side Brewing won the Best Can Design for the 2021 Craft Beer Marketing Awards in Ohio and is relaunching this summer in stores and tap rooms near you.

West Side Brewing started over four years ago when Joe Mumper, Jim Rimmel, Kurtis Rimmel and Brian Willett decided that the West Side of Cincinnati needed craft beer and a place of community that gives back.

Since its inception, West Side Brewery has created a number of beers that Cincinnatians love—including the Braille Ale.

“Some of the things that make us unique are we primarily focus on relatively traditional style. We focus on doing those very well,” Mumper says. “We’re not known as doing the most exotic beers in town, but we have a reputation for creating exceptional beers.”

### CREATING THE BRAILLE ALE

West Side Brewery Sales Representative Ben Metz was familiar with Aaron Bley, CABVI vice president of Community Relations and chief development officer, and Bley had the idea of putting braille on a beer can many years ago, but he says it never really went anywhere.

Once Metz started working for West Side Brewing, Bley asked him if they would be interested in collaborating with CABVI on the project. During a meeting in October 2019, West Side Brewing and CABVI met and discussed the potential to create a braille ale.

“I pitched the idea, ‘Wouldn’t it be great if we could work together as a fundraising project and create a Braille ale or a beer can that has actual raised Braille on it?’” Bley says.

“It’s sort of been on my wish list for years as something that I thought would just be not only advantageous for those with disabilities such as visual impairment but also just as a great thing to do for the community to bring awareness to accessibility challenges, to our agency and to West Side Brewing.”

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic halting many businesses in March 2020, West Side Brewing and CABVI kept working on their plan. Mumper says the most difficult aspect of the project was getting the actual braille on a beer can. West Side Brewing works with a printing agency in Newport, Kentucky, that had to order custom plates from Europe to print the braille on the cans.

Andrew Curtis, owner of Brick Solid Brands, says CABVI assisted in making sure the braille was the correct size, legible and easy for a person to use. CABVI provided the braille files to Curtis who then placed the design on the cans.

“It’s unique because there’s braille on the can but also the design works. It’s visually appealing. You can definitely tell that it matches the rest of our branding,” Curtis says. “It’s not too frilly and over the top. People know exactly what type of beer that is when they go to the shelf.”

### OVERWHELMING FEEDBACK

Once the Braille Ale debuted, people all across the United States were trying to get their hands on the beer.

“It was an overwhelming amount of feedback from all over the country; there was way more interest than I ever imagined,” Mumper says.

Mumper says he knew the beer would be popular in the Greater Cincinnati area but was surprised how much attention the Braille Ale got outside of the local region—ranging from New York to California.

“Last year, we had requests that came into our office, from all over the country. People got wind of it,” Bley says. “It wasn’t a lot yet because it was new, but there were a few that were calling from other cities, trying to get their hands on the product and really kind of asking how it came about.”

Mumper says there was two goals with creating the Braille Ale: create awareness for CABVI and its mission and to give blind and visually impaired people a shopping experience that is more similar to someone who is sighted.

“All of us who are sighted can obviously read labels,” Mumper says. “People who are visually impaired, they can’t do that.”

### GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

Moving forward, Hanna Firestone, community relations and development special-



**The Braille Ale is a raspberry gose that has braille on the can for people who are blind and visually impaired.**

ist for CABVI, says she hopes companies will start creating more inclusive designs for their products.

“I think the sky’s the limit when it comes to accessibility and we’re just starting to reach—we’re just starting to really uncover the little nuggets of what we can do,” Firestone says. “I’m excited for those innovators in the product design field to come up with better ways to be more inclusive as a whole to everybody in the world.”

Bley says he is excited to continue to watch the Braille Ale grow and future collaborations with West Side Brewing.

“I do feel a sense of ownership around this project because it was so near and dear to my heart—from the beginning when it was just an idea written on our idea board here at the agency. For me to be able to watch this come to life and have legs of its own, and know that it’s going to continue to grow,” Bley says.

West Side Brewing, Mumper says, will continue to expose people to traditional beers that they may not know about.

“I think we, first and foremost, want to continue producing exceptional beer. That’s always been one of our top priorities. We want to just continue to brew interesting and unique beers, while primarily relying on traditional style,” Mumper says. “There are so many great beer styles across the world and some of those are traditional, but they’re not brewed very regularly. I think one of our niches in the market is taking a style that might not be as common and expose people to it.” ■

# Manufacturing

A worker wearing an orange hard hat and safety glasses is seen from the side, looking at a large digital display. The display shows various charts, graphs, and a robotic arm. The background is dark and industrial.

## THE NEXT INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION COMES TO OHIO

BY TERRY TROY

**W**hen Thomas Malthus predicted back in 1798, that people would eventually starve from a lack of food production, he never foresaw the advances in farming, husbandry and early technology that would quash his ominous prediction.

Fast forward 200 years later and many industrialists, economists and business executives predicted that cheap overseas labor would displace American manufacturing workers, who just couldn't compete against cheap foreign labor.

While offshoring did occur in the 1980s through the end of the 20th century, those

predictions today seem as preposterous as those made over 222 years ago. America will reshore and become more competitive through advanced automation. And Ohio may once again be at the forefront of manufacturing worldwide.

This time around, it's about the coming of advanced technologies that combine hardware, software, cyber-physical systems, communications and emerging technologies, such as robotics, artificial intelligence, quantum computing, biotechnology, machine learning, fifth generation wireless technologies, 3D printing, autonomous vehicles, the internet of

things (IoT) and the Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT).

While that might seem like a daunting list, the purview of advanced manufacturing engineers and computer scientists, the concept is not all that complicated. It's not exactly new either, being introduced at the end of 2016 by Klaus Schwab, executive chairman of the World Economic Forum. It also goes by several different names.

### A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

Whether you call it Industry 4.0 (I4.0) or Manufacturing 4.0 (M4.0), it is coming to



# 4.0



**Jamie Karl, Ohio Manufacturers' Association**

our state, which should be good news for Ohio as well as our nation.

So what exactly is this fourth iteration of manufacturing?

"The current transformation of industry is called Manufacturing 4.0 (or Industry 4.0) because it's the fourth major wave—or fourth revolution—in manufacturing, dating back to the beginning of humankind," says Jamie Karl, managing director of Communication Services for the Ohio Manufacturers' Association (OMA). "Each revolution has been the result of new technology. The first industrial revolution, which began in earnest in the late 1700s,

was driven by steam-powered mechanization."

Or water, or wind power.

The second manufacturing or industrial revolution, which started in the late 1800s, was a period of rapid industrial development that brought us the assembly line and mass production thanks to technologies like the internal combustion engine, new alloys and chemicals, the use of electricity and emerging communication technologies like the telegraph, telephone and radio, says Karl.

"If you want a good example of Manufacturing 2.0, think of what the Model T

meant to mass production," says Dr. Ethan Karp, president and CEO of MAGNET (the Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network) an organization in Northeast Ohio that helps small and mid-sized manufacturers grow. "The third revolution is all about automating jobs, which really came in the heyday of manufacturing in the '70s."

"Which many of us lived through," adds Karl from the OMA. "It is often referred to as the digital revolution. It was driven by the spread of automation and digitalization by the use of electronics and computers."

Over the past 40 years, manufacturing 3.0 has allowed us to maintain a high level of production while actually reducing the number of people needed to manufacture products.

"When you think of an auto plant today, you can't help but think of those large yellow arms doing robotic tasks," adds Karp. "The fourth industrial revolution is about the technologies cropping up around that basic automation."

In many ways M4.0 is an advanced stage of the third industrial revolution—integrating internet technology to allow for large-scale machine-to-machine communication (M2M) and the internet of things (IoT) to build "smart factories" that lead to increased automation.

"In short, this network of digitally connected machines allows for more efficient



Dr. Ethan Karp, MAGNET

production, as well as higher quality goods for consumers,” says Karl. “Keep in mind we are in the early chapters of this wave. It could take another two or three decades to fully appreciate its importance.”

Which, of course, is critical to our state’s manufacturing competitiveness on the world stage by all accounts.

“The fourth manufacturing revolution is essential to Ohio manufacturing because it will redefine industry worldwide as new technologies take hold,” says Kimm Lauterbach, president and CEO of REDI Cincinnati, the economic development organization serving the 16 counties of the Greater Cincinnati region. “Ohio is one of the most globally connected states in the country. For example, Ohio is the seventh largest state in the U.S. for exports and boasts the third largest manufacturing workforce. Adapting to the impacts of manufacturing 4.0 is crucial to ensuring Ohio’s global economic importance in the future.”

Manufacturing continues to be a driving force in Ohio’s economy, making up more than 19% of its total economic activity and

employing more than 700,000 people, Lauterbach points out. Ohio also is in a solid position to lead the way in adoption of M4.0, thanks to public and private efforts.

“Two examples at the statewide level are TechCred and DriveOhio,” says Lauterbach. “DriveOhio is an initiative advancing smart and connected transportation solutions in Ohio. In addition, the TechCred program is helping companies upskill their existing workforce, giving them a boost in their talent development goals.”

In Northeast Ohio, organizations like MAGNET are also leading the way in helping manufacturers adopt M4.0. Indeed, MAGNET along with over 150 partners in business, academia and nonprofits recently launched its new blueprint for manufacturing in Northeast Ohio.

Entitled “Make It Better: A Blueprint for Manufacturing in Northeast Ohio,” this new vision brings together the insights of hundreds of manufacturing CEOs, community leaders, business leaders, academics, workers and nonprofit leaders to address the future of manufacturing in the region. The goal is to revitalize

Northeast Ohio as a global leader in smart manufacturing, creating thousands of new jobs and transforming the industry.


According to Karp, MAGNET created the blueprint from hundreds of hours of interviews with stakeholders, manufacturers, educators and nonprofit leaders to identify four initiatives.

“So that in 10 years, we could lead the world in advanced manufacturing,” Karp says.

According to Karp, those four areas are: talent, building the workforce of tomorrow; technology transformation, as there are a lot of companies that are adopting smart technologies but a lot of companies are not there yet; innovating new products and processes, new ideas that companies can either spin out or re-shore; and lastly leadership, having companies step up to make the investments they need for talent, technology and innovation.

The adoption of M4.0 has distinct advantages not just for manufacturers, but employees as well. Increasing the productivity of a plant, while maintaining the same level of employees raises profits and improves





working conditions. The sensors used in M4.0 provide feedback and help with issues like preventative machine maintenance and assessing supply chain needs.

"It can also make your manufacturing process more efficient, by eliminating repetitive tasks, like taking a piece out of a machine and putting it in a box," says Karp. "So, let's say that makes you 20% more efficient in your process while you're making jobs better and less repetitive. So, there is a real pot of gold at the end of a rainbow."

And that's just on the production side. Now think about preventative maintenance and supply chain issues, whether you're drawing from or filling a supply chain pipeline.

"We are seeing more companies design a supply mesh as opposed to a supply chain," says Mark Thackeray, director of the global supply chain management program at Northern Kentucky University. "In this manner they are building flexibility and resiliency into their operations by expanding their supplier networks and incorporating multiple channels of distribution to customers."

"Data analytics and AI (artificial intelligence) allow for immediate pivots on decision making regarding the flow of goods and services across the more complex supply chain mesh."

Traceability and transparency are new requirements of effective supply chains, says Thackeray. As the pandemic surfaced, immense and once hidden supply chain risks emerged that companies now want to see and manage more proactively.

"IoT technologies are being embraced to optimize logistics patterns for the movement of goods across the globe," adds Thackeray. "Much like the Waze app optimizes our driving routes based on current traffic conditions, IoT devices can tell us where shipping lanes, ports, intermodal yards, rail lines, terminals and all other forms of transportation are impeding the flow of goods."

"We are also seeing renewed interest in

Hyperloop technology as an infrastructure investment to create unimpeded flows in areas of congestion such as around the CVG freight operations."

## THE RESISTANCE

If M4.0 holds such promise, why aren't all manufacturers rushing to adopt these new technologies?

"We find that there is a level of resistance among both smaller and larger companies, and it shows up in different ways," says Bill Koehler, CEO of Team NEO, an economic development organization in Northeast Ohio. "In smaller companies, it can be a question of access to capital, leadership bandwidth, or a lack of it. Smaller companies might not feel as comfortable with adopting new technologies because they are doing so many other different things."

In addition, the implementation process might not go as well in a smaller organization because it can be seen as disruptive.

"It's one of the reasons we encourage smaller companies not to think of adoption as one big process, but rather as a journey," Koehler adds. "Take small steps first. Look at your equipment and look at the data. See what it means and how it might change the processes you are working with, and then grow from there. The idea is to embrace the journey and make improvements every day."

On the other hand, larger companies will often have the capital and leadership bandwidth. The challenge those companies have, says Koehler, is how to implement the new technology across an organization.

"For instance, you have to decide if you are going to implement the technology at the business unit level, or do it across the entire enterprise," says Koehler. "What does that mean for the capital required? How does that capital then compete with other uses of capital that can help drive your overall business strategy?"

"If it is a complex implementation, do you have the right leader to build it every day?

And how do you build your organization's change management team to help implement and then make sure you are getting the returns you need? These are just a few of the questions that need to be asked. So with a larger company it is a more complex leadership equation."

Elizabeth Barry is CEO of Delta Systems of Streetsboro, a mid-sized company that designs and manufactures electrical components and switches among other products. She is also on the board of the OMA.

When it comes to the reluctance of adoption of smaller and larger manufacturers, "I really think it does go both ways," she says. "Smaller companies have the ability to see things in a different light and can move faster if we need to because we don't have as many gates to go through."

"On the flip side, the bigger corporations do have deeper pockets, with more experts, an educated crowd that can make suggestions on why a company should automate."

And while those bigger companies have an advantage of an access to capital, it can be offset by a smaller company, especially if that smaller company has a visionary who looks into the future and sees why it should be automating.

Regardless of who has the upper hand, there are few who would argue that the adoption of M4.0 adoption by smaller and mid-sized companies isn't crucial to our state's manufacturing future.

"While many big manufacturers are already well on the journey, many small and medium manufacturers are not," says Karp. "Our economy is very dependent on both, but the small and medium-sized manufacturers make up around 98% of manufacturing. They also make up a tremendously diverse supply chain that makes pieces and parts for nearly everything in the world."

"If our smaller and mid-sized manufacturers don't get on board, they will be left behind by both bigger companies and by other countries that are more rapidly adopting this new technology—let alone

another state or city. However, if we get in on the front end there is an opportunity to make products better, faster and cheaper than anywhere else in the world—and reshore.”

Which is music to Barry’s ears, citing the reshoring initiative at the OMA.

“One of our biggest benefits is that we didn’t get rid of manufacturing altogether,” she says. “If we had gotten rid of manufacturing, we would now have to re-invent the wheel to get back up to speed. Right now, we just have to tweak. We just have to take what we have and improve. It’s not like we have to greenfield anything.”

We do, however, have to deal with workforce training and an overall shortage of workers.

While one of the benefits of M4.0 is that working conditions and wages will improve, there is still a hesitancy on the part of the younger generations to enter what is viewed as a blue-collar position. With M4.0 nothing could be further from the truth. So what is being done to change that perception?

## ADDRESSING SHORTAGES

“We’re seeing overwhelming need for both entry-level and advanced workers across the industry, so we’re trying to address several different aspects of the labor/skill gap at once,” says Sara Tracey, director of workforce services at the OMA.

“This includes working with the Ohio Department of Education and K-12 educators to expose young people to Industry 4.0 technologies through events like MFG Day and robotics competitions.”

Ohio to Work, spearheaded by Jobs Ohio, is bringing manufacturing experts in touch with career coaches and school counselors to help them understand the industry and manufacturing career pathways. Industry Sector Partnerships (ISP) across the state are working together—in partnership with Ohio TechNet, a consortium of colleges, universities and Ohio Technical Centers—to design earn-and-learn programs and

curriculum aligned to credentials that can prepare students for M4.0 careers.

“Lorain County Community College recently launched a statewide instructor training program to ensure that college and technical center educators have the skills and qualifications to teach robotics and automation,” adds Tracey. “The OMA has convened a group of industry experts and workforce practitioners to develop an Automation and Robotics Career Pathway toolkit, which will include, among other tools, guidance for ISPs and their regional partners to implement a series of stackable programs that prepare students, job seekers and existing manufacturing employees for [M4.0] jobs. And we anticipate that additional toolkits will follow for other [M4.0] technologies.”

“The state is seeing a greater need for workers who have the skill set in robotics and automation, data analysis, additive manufacturing, machine learning and digital twins,” adds Kathryn Kelley, executive director of the Ohio Manufacturing Institute (OMI) at The Ohio State University. “Nationally, the National Association of Manufacturers and the Manufacturing Institute have launched Creators Wanted to address the shortage.”

Even the casual observer can readily see the acceleration in the development of new technologies and the profound impact they have had on our personal lives. The same is happening in manufacturing, not just in our state but around the world.

Take a moment to look back at our previous Manufacturing Revolutions. It



Kathryn Kelley, Ohio Manufacturing Institute

took perhaps 3,000 years or more to move from the advent of basic civilization and a yak powering an Archimedes screw to the water, wind and steam power that started the first Industrial Revolution in the late 1700s.

The second revolution with its assembly lines and automated processes came 100 years later, the third embracing robotic and computerized automation just 70 years after that. Now M4.0 is making that the third industrial revolution obsolete in a scant 40 years.

If it takes 20 or 30 years to make the M4.0 transition to all tiers of manufacturers complete, what will manufacturing 5.0 be?

No one can hazard to guess—at least not yet. But when it does come, it will create an even Braver New World—one that will open up new horizons for all of mankind, not just manufacturing and business. ■





# The Shipyard Partnership

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY AND AN  
ADVERTISING AGENCY CHART A NEW  
COURSE THROUGH STORMY WATERS

BY TERRY TROY

**W**hile there were plenty of tragic business stories following the civil unrest last year, The Ohio State University School of Communication and The Shipyard, an independent advertising agency headquartered in Columbus, are navigating a new way forward.

The murder of George Floyd last year heightened awareness of the societal and racial issues Americans must face. But the resulting violence caused at the hands of a few also created unbelievable hardship in many small business communities across the nation. Like any voyage of hardship, hopefully there are better days ahead. And these two partners from Columbus are leading a way forward.

In June, The Shipyard hired Jelani Gibson as an associate strategist and Mwesi Stokes as an associate performance media analyst. Both Gibson and Stokes had previously held internships with the agency during their recent spring semester. In

addition, The Shipyard hired two new incoming student interns for the summer, Averi Allison and Richard Dixon.

The new hires are the direct result of a partnership between The Shipyard and the Black Advertising and Strategic Communication Association (BASCA), which is the brainchild of OSU School of Communication Professor Dr. Osei Appiah.

The hires also mark The Shipyard's one-year anniversary of launching its partnership with the BASCA internship and advocacy program. Through the program, OSU students and graduates are acquiring necessary skills and experience while creating a pipeline of diverse talent from which local and national agencies can recruit.

"I'm excited about the commitment The Shipyard has made to mentor, develop and hire BASCA members," says Appiah. "The Shipyard has demonstrated a genuine interest in diversifying the industry and

**Students involved with The Ohio State University's Black Advertising and Strategic Communication Association are given opportunities to network with large companies, like Coca-Cola.**

have distinguished themselves as industry leaders in this area."

"After the George Floyd murder, I asked myself, 'What can I do to advocate for social and economic change?'" says Rick Milenthal, CEO of The Shipyard, who previously had worked with Appiah on the creation of the internship program more than a decade earlier. But more immediate business needs took precedence over actually implementing the program, Milenthal admits, until last year.

"So I called Dr. Appiah and said, 'I remember this program, but I don't think we ever used it. I can't fix the past, but starting today, I intend to take action,'" Milenthal recalls.

Within weeks, and working with Appiah, The Shipyard built an internship

program. It committed to bringing on at least two interns each trimester, with the goal of bringing them on board for full employment—which just happened at the beginning of this summer.

“And now our second group of interns looks terrific,” says Milenthal. “But I also want to stress that this is not a social program. This is a business program that is designed to improve how effective we can be as marketers.

“Without diversity, we are not as effective as we can be at reaching all consumers and being as effective as we can for our clients. This isn’t about appointing one or two executives so we look better.”

But it is an example that The Shipyard is setting for other agencies around the country. Indeed, Milenthal wants to grow the internship program beyond Ohio into educational institutions near the agency’s California offices in San Diego, Sacramento and Newport Beach.

“We also sponsored and paid for a BASCA membership to the Association of National Advertisers (ANA), which gives them access to brand managers and marketers across the nation,” adds Milenthal.

Which is one of the primary goals of BASCA, says Appiah, who officially founded the student group back in 2012.

“I remember reading a survey of advertising, marketing and public relations professionals on issues of diversity and employment in the industry,” recalls Ap-



**Rick Milenthal, The Shipyard**

piah. “What it found was that there were very few people of color who worked on Madison Avenue. One of the reasons was that companies had trouble finding people of color who wanted to work in advertising.

“Maybe they weren’t looking hard enough, but I also realized that maybe we should be doing more to fill the pipeline.”

The first step was making sure that people of color and African Americans in particular were aware of the opportunities in the advertising industry.

“The second was giving BASCA members knowledge about the foundations and principles associated with those industries,” says Appiah. “Next we had to introduce them to people in the field to not only learn more about the industry, but to help them develop professional networks.”

The ultimate goal is to create internships for BASCA students and steadily build a pipeline of potential candidates for executives in marketing and advertising, “so we don’t come back to the point where we are hearing that there are not enough people of color because we can’t find them,” says Appiah.

In addition to making sure its students are knowledgeable, developing relationships with business partners is key, he adds. Before the pandemic, BASCA invited professionals from the marketing and advertising industry to come in and speak to students so they could get better acquainted with the talent available at OSU, while the students gained key industry insights.

“While that had to be curtailed a bit during COVID, it did open up some new doors to us through virtual meetings,” says Appiah. “It also allowed us to have speakers come in virtually from across the country, whether it was with Disney, ESPN or the advertising agency Leo Burnett.

“Sometimes it would be a key person from HR, while other times it be upper-level management,” adds Appiah. “They would soon realize that we had knowledgeable, talented and hungry students.”

## MEET THE MARKETING PIONEERS OF COLOR

As with any student-based intern or professional development program, it’s really all about the students. Here are the first two that have secured positions at The Shipyard:

### JELANI GIBSON, ASSOCIATE STRATEGIST

Gibson is a spring 2021 graduate of The Ohio State University, where he majored in Strategic Communication. Throughout his college years he has been heavily involved in clubs and organizations such as Business Builders Club, BASCA, NAACP and various other mentorship programs. He has experience interning for the sports, entertainment and restaurant industry. Gibson has traveled to five different countries and loves to learn about culture and society.

### MWESI STOKES, ASSOCIATE PERFORMANCE MEDIA ANALYST

Stokes has a passion for innovation and analytics, which led him to pursue a career in marketing and strategy. Before The Shipyard, Stokes’ previous work experience includes being a marketing intern for Open Doors Academy, a nonprofit afterschool/out-of-school time enrichment program. He also interned for The Ohio State University’s Department of Athletics as a Fan Experience and Promotions intern. Stokes graduated from The Ohio State University with a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in Communication with a minor in Consumer Science. While attending OSU, Stokes served as the social media chair and vice president of BASCA.





**The Ohio State University School of Communication Professor Dr. Osei Appiah created the Black Advertising and Strategic Communication Association at the school, and worked with The Shipyard to create its internship program.**

Prior to the pandemic BASCA would also schedule personal development trips to allow students to actually meet and see marketing and advertising executives at their own headquarters, something that was obviously curtailed during COVID but is opening back up once again.

"The personal development trips would give us the opportunity to be seen by companies, but it also allowed students to get their names out while they learned more about the individual companies," says Appiah.

Now companies like The Shipyard are starting to reach out.

"And many really want to do more to diversify their business," says Appiah. "We are also reaching out to other companies to get BASCA internships at companies. So it has been a great opportunity both for our students and those companies."

Today BASCA has between 20 and 25 active student members every year, 70% of which come from the OSU School of Communication, while another 30% or so come from the Max M. Fisher College of Business, says Appiah.

"We also have one or two that come from other areas such as psychology," Appiah adds.

"And our membership is not limited to just people of color or Black students. It's open to anyone regardless of their background. We have people who are white or Hispanic, whatever their background—we'll accept anyone who is interested in learning about strategic communications, advertising or public relations."

"We are continuing to make a big investment in finding new people to comprise our agency culture," says Milenthal. "We are honored to be part of BASCA's program in nurturing the next generation of diverse talent and remain dedicated to building a stronger bridge between industry and academia." ■

# 2021 BEST WORKPLACES IN OHIO



BY THE EDITORS

Many things have changed last year, including what even constitutes a workplace. Many companies had to reduce the number of in-office staff or move their entire workforce to working remotely. And several factors that contribute to a great workplace—in-person team events, welcoming offices and fun amenities—had to be reimaged.

However, many companies in the state are still Best Workplaces in Ohio. The sixth annual *Ohio Business Magazine's Best Workplaces in Ohio* reminds us that Ohio is still a great place to work. Read on to learn about some of the best workplaces in the state.

## Companies with less than 50 employees

Company Name	Location	Employee #	Type	Year Founded
Baker Creative	Graveport	1	Private	2003
Ty Huynh State Farm	Dayton	2	Public	2016
The Dent Schoolhouse	Cincinnati	3	Private	2004
Barney's True Value	Beavercreek	4	Private	1985
Ernst & Associates	Cincinnati	4	Partnership/Private	1996
Clinton County Port Authority	Wilmington	5	Government	2004
Jessup Wealth Management	Dayton	10	Public	2009
M Genio Inc.	Cleveland	10	Private	2012
Alliance Integrative Medicine	Cincinnati	12	Partnership	1999
Total Wealth Planning, LLC	Cincinnati	12	Public	1989
Black Bull Capital Partners, LLC	Cincinnati	13	Private	2019
Tri State Heating & Cooling	Fairfield	15	Public	1983
SmartFinancial Insurance	Columbus	18	Private	2012
MRS Electronic, Inc.	Dayton	19	Private	2015
Hive Networks	Cincinnati	20	Private	2019
Knickerbocker Pools	Xenia	20	Private	1976
Phalanx Logistics Solutions	Lakewood	20	Private	2005
ZLINE Kitchen and Bath Operations Team	Marysville	20	Private	2005
Ohio Insurance Agents	Columbus	22	Nonprofit	1897
Hunter International Recruiting	Avon	25	Private	2006
Miamisburg Parks and Recreation	Miamisburg	25	Government	1977
Visiting Angels Homecare/ CincinnatiWest	Cincinnati	25	Private	2009
Sapphire Creek Winery	Chagrin Falls	30	Private	2018
One Energy Enterprises	Findlay	32	Private	2009
AtNetPlus	Stow	35	Private	1998
Adept Marketing	Columbus	40	Private	2018
Elite Biomedical Solutions, LLC	Cincinnati	42	Private	2012



## Companies with 50-200 employees

Company Name	Location	Employee #	Type	Year Founded
Buffalo Wings & Rings	Cincinnati	50	Private	1984
E4:28 Staffing LLC	Cincinnati	51	Private	2020
Superior Dental Care	Centerville	53	Private	1986
ERPA Group Inc	Dublin	70	Public	1999
Miller's Rental and Sales	Akron	85	Private	1949
CMC Properties	Blue Ash	95	Partnership	1967
The Woodhouse Day Spa	Cincinnati, Dayton, Liberty Township	100	Private	2007
ODW LTS, LLC	Hamilton	102	Public	2009
HW&Co.	Cleveland	120	Private	1990
The Basement Doctor	Reynoldsburg	120	Private	1987
Lifebanc	Cleveland	135	Nonprofit	1986
North Community Counseling Centers	Columbus	140	Nonprofit	1986
Fahlgren Mortine	Columbus	150	Private	1962
City of Sharonville	Sharonville	155	Government	1911
KDM	Cincinnati	160	Private	1970
Main Street Gourmet	Cuyahoga Falls	160	Public	1987
Hollywood Gaming at Dayton Raceway	Dayton	162	Public	2014
Fleet Response	Independence	175	Private	1986
GBQ Partners LLC	Columbus	191	Public	1953
F&M Mafco	Harrison	200	Private	1945

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## Companies with more than 200 employees

Company Name	Location	Employee #	Type	Year Founded
<b>The Urology Group</b>	Cincinnati	250	Private	1996
<b>Oswald Companies</b>	Cleveland	286	Private	1893
<b>Danis Building Construction Company</b>	Miamisburg	347	Private	1916
<b>Cincinnati Inc</b>	Harrison	350	Private	1898
<b>London Computer Systems</b>	Cincinnati	374	Private	1987
<b>South Community</b>	Dayton	375	Nonprofit	1947
<b>Scene75 Entertainment Center</b>	Dayton	425+	Private	2011
<b>Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries</b>	Cincinnati	495	Nonprofit	1916
<b>Deceuninck North America</b>	Monroe	628	Public	1969
<b>UC Health - West Chester Hospital</b>	West Chester	1,200	Nonprofit	2009
<b>Ohio's Hospice</b>	Dayton	1,355	Nonprofit	2013

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## NOMINATION PROCESS

For the sixth annual Best Workplaces in Ohio feature, a nomination form was emailed to businesses throughout the state, inviting them to self-nominate. The nomination form was also posted on the magazine's website and social media accounts for companies not on our email list. For-profit, nonprofit and government institutions were invited to participate. Nominees were asked to provide information on topics such as their company size, engagement with employees, benefit structure and past awards. The winners were then selected by committee. If you are interested in nominating your company next year, subscribe to the *Ohio Business* magazine and newsletter (both of which are complimentary) at **OhioBusinessMag.com**.



GBQ is honored to be a 2021 **Best Workplaces in Ohio**. Our sincerest thanks to the best and brightest associates who make our firm a great place to work.

A green outline of the state of Ohio is centered on a dark blue background. A blue ribbon banner with a white border is draped across the map, featuring the text "THANK YOU!" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

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## CITY OF SHARONVILLE

155 employees

[sharonville.org](http://sharonville.org)

For the city of Sharonville, being a Best Workplace is not just about attracting and retaining talent. “It’s about ensuring a workplace that allows our employees to balance their lives while accomplishing our 24/7 obligation to safeguard and advance our community,” says Noah Powers, human resources director for the city. “Without those two ideals, life balance and mission focus, our organization could never successfully accomplish the vital roles expected by our residents.”

One way the city of Sharonville creates this environment is through its employee programs, such as Sharonville Gives.

“This program allows employees paid leave to volunteer for charitable organizations that operate in the city,” says Powers. “Through this program, employees are able to strengthen the community in which they work, build meaningful relationships and do so while promoting work/life balance.”

Other programs include wellness activities (the city sponsored weekly fitness challenges last year, with those who participated earning points toward their HSA payments or prizes), a weekly newsletter that spotlights a Sharonville employee and department head, and investments in employee infrastructure, such as a new police station and a remodeled fire station.

Despite its pride in being named a Best Workplace in Ohio, Powers says that the city doesn’t plan to rest on its laurels.

“Being named a best employer for the fourth year in a row is an incredible honor. It is a recognition of past success, and an inspiration to remember that what has allowed us to achieve it is our continuous desire for improvement,” he says.

- CORINNE MINARD



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# HW&CO.

Cleveland  
120 employees  
[hwco.com](http://hwco.com)

According to the president and CEO of HW&Co., Brandon Miller, the accounting firm was named a Best Workplace in Ohio this year because it recognizes the importance of employee engagement.

"We're a people driven business," Miller says. "We wouldn't be able to do all this if the people didn't love working here and all the different things we do."

To help employees feel connected to HW&Co., the firm has several initiatives in place including creating and maintaining what it calls a FUN Committee. This committee is made up of employees from various departments, levels and locations who are responsible for planning fun events for the company's 100-plus workers. Despite its simplicity, Miller says he believes this committee is one of the things the employees appreciate most about working at HW&Co.

"[When] we rolled out this fun events committee, that spearheaded a lot of camaraderie and connection," Miller says.

Even when employees couldn't be in the office because of the dangers of COVID-19, HW&Co. worked hard to keep the community connected through monthly touchpoints, virtual department meetings and surprise packages.

Every Friday, Miller also sent an email to everyone in the firm that included everything from any awards it had won to lighthearted content. Miller says it means a tremendous amount for HW&Co. to win this award.

"It goes to show you that all the hard work that everyone's doing here to keep such a good culture is ultimately paying off," Miller says.

— SKYLER PERRY



## OHIO INSURANCE AGENTS

Columbus

22 employees

[ohioinsuranceagents.com](http://ohioinsuranceagents.com)

Jeff Smith, CEO of Ohio Insurance Agents (OIA), says that weaving the association's core values into the workplace has helped it to win a Best Workplace in Ohio award. Through passion, fun, positive relationships, focus and competitiveness, OIA has created a collaborative environment where employees work hard while still enjoying their time.

Smith says one of the ways OIA fosters collaboration and care in the workplace is through team-building activities at the start of meetings.

"We really try to get to know each team member in an intimate way and really understand their personal circumstances and what drives them," Smith says.

In the 22-person team, Smith says there is shared responsibility for the planning of activities and events. Anyone is allowed to have ideas and bring them forward.

"Everyone has a little bit of ownership of creating the fun and vibrant and inspiring workplace that week that we have," Smith says. "We work really hard to meet everyone's needs and to meet the team's needs."

One philosophy that OIA has to keep its employees happy is through what it has coined "responsible urgency." Smith says that this philosophy allows employees to have flexible schedules and avoid burnout while still being a competitive and growing group.

"We want to have people who are happy, who love the work that they're doing and love the team that they're doing it with," Smith says. "That's the most important thing."

- SKYLER PERRY





# ONE ENERGY ENTERPRISES

Findlay  
32 employees  
[oneenergy.com](http://oneenergy.com)



One Energy, an industrial power company and the largest installer of on-site wind energy in North America, believes it's building a team of experts today to face the unknown problems of tomorrow. And to make sure those employees can work on these problems, One Energy has focused much of its energy on creating a great workplace.

The company offers an on-site gym, showers, a library where employees are encouraged (and compensated) to read from a list of 20 books, and free, healthy kitchen meals and snacks prepared by Executive Chef Mike Rosendaul.

The company also goes above and beyond when it comes to the comfort and safety of its employees. Besides the basic personal pro-

ductive equipment (PPE) employers in its field must provide (hard hats, gloves, masks, etc.), One Energy also provides everyday field clothing (lined pants, high visibility rain jackets, long-sleeve tees, etc.) as well as trials of new gear with individuals to determine whether it would benefit the entire group (hand warmers, heated clothing, ice shoes, etc.).

On top of that, One Energy pays the entire premium for its medical, dental and vision insurance and offers a 401k with 5% employer match.

Besides the additional perks, One Energy has an unstructured vacation policy, where employees are expected to make the best decision for themselves and the company.

- SHADI AHMAD

## OHIO'S HOSPICE

Dayton

1,355 employees

[ohioshospice.org](http://ohioshospice.org)

As one of this year's choices for Best Workplace in Ohio, Ohio's Hospice creates and fosters a "positive, strong culture that attracts, retains and promotes the very best staff," says Brandi Barlow, vice president of Administration.

The company, which has over 1,000 employees, was founded in 2013 as a nonprofit with Kent Anderson as its CEO. It is a partnership of mission-driven hospices committed to a shared vision and strengthening and preserving community-based hospices. Affiliates of Ohio's Hospice include Community Care Hospice, Ohio's Community Mercy Hospice and Ohio's Hospice at United Church Homes, among others.

To keep team spirits up, Ohio's Hospice has a Kindness Crew, which encourages staff members of Ohio's Hospice to volunteer with other community-based, not-for-profit organizations as a way to support activities that enhance and serve the communities in which they work, according to Craig Schrolucke, vice president of Mission Engagement and Communication. Some other stand-out programs of Ohio's Hospice include Bright Ideas, which solicits employee recommendations for ideas that improve quality, efficiency or enhance safety, and the Bouquet of Recognition, which identifies and rewards the contributions of the hospice staff.

Benefits at Ohio's Hospice include paid vacation, matching 401K contributions, mileage and tuition reimbursement, and Working on Wellness health programs and initiatives.

"Ohio's Hospice provides staff members with the resources and support they need to make a difference in the lives of our patients each and every day," Barlow says.

— BRYN DIPPOLD

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## THE UROLOGY GROUP

Cincinnati

250 employees

[urologygroup.com](http://urologygroup.com)

The Cincinnati-based health care provider, The Urology Group, prides itself on a professional environment where employees feel valued as well as a sense of ownership. According to Rebecca Rowland, the human resources manager for The Urology Group for the past 13 years, the company was named a Best Workplace in Ohio because of “our people and our culture.”

The Urology Group holds frequent team-building and community events (though not as many during the past year thanks to COVID-19), promotes a healthy culture with free health fairs and a fitness center in its Norwood facility, and has won numerous

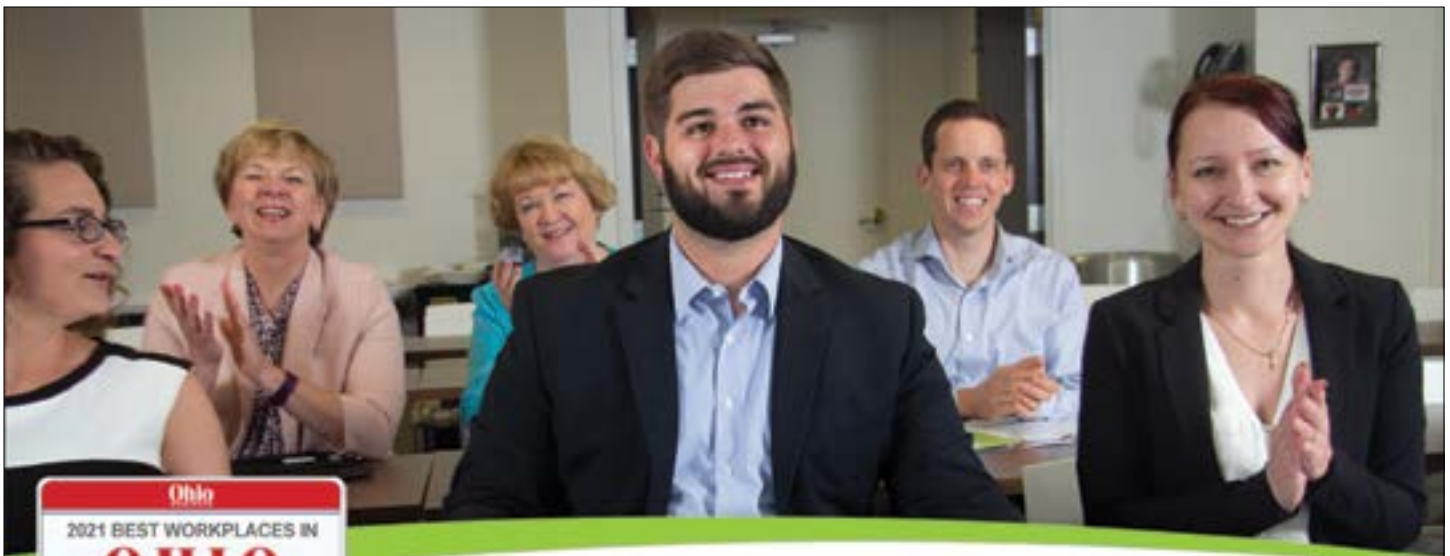
awards honoring its workplace and its employees. The company also recently hosted its 25th Anniversary Grill Out on July 8 for its employees and their families.

“I like to call us an old-time mom and pop’s doctor’s office on steroids,” Rowland says. “That’s what it grew from over the past 25 years. It started as a five-man practice over in Northern Kentucky, and they picked up additional urologists throughout the years. It’s kind of grown as a family.”

The Urology Group also implements Go365, a point-based wellness program where employees can gain points for monitoring and improving their health, going to regular check-ups and taking online health assessments. These points translate into dollars, and by the end of the year, employees can earn up to \$800 for taking care of their health.

“We’ve had employees very actively engaged in the wellness program,” Rowland says. “So that’s something to be very proud of. We’re just excited to see where the future takes us.”

– BRYN DIPPOLD



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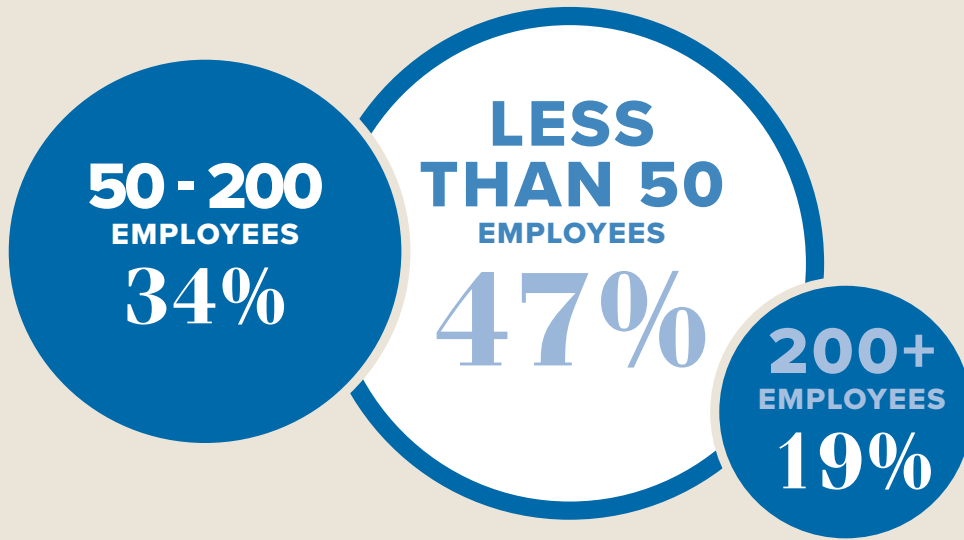
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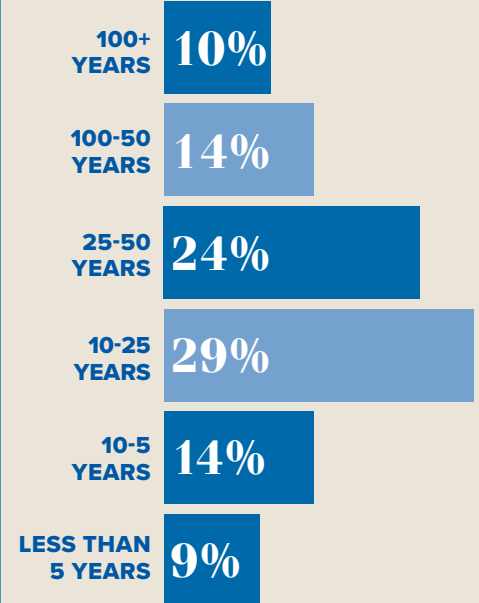
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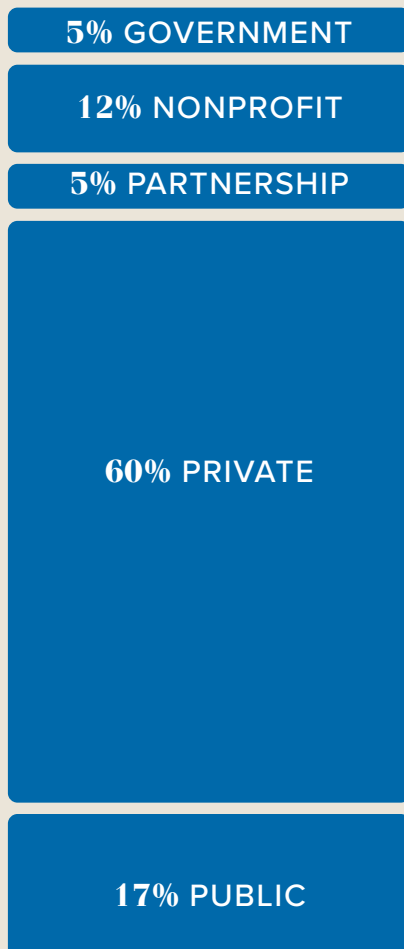
## Company Size



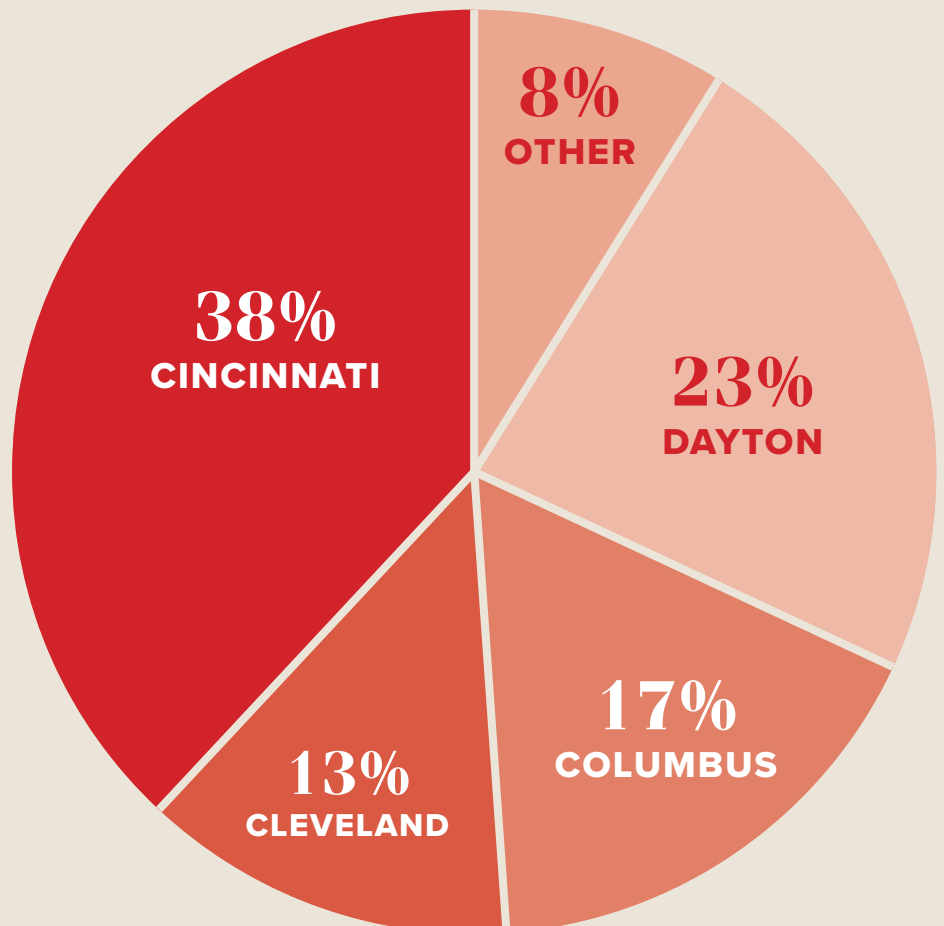
## Company Age



## Company Type



## Metro Area







Elite Biomedical Solutions, LLC  
Cincinnati  
48 employees  
elitebiomedicalolutions.com



Proud to be a USA medical manufacturer. Headquartered in Cincinnati, Elite Biomedical Solutions supports hospital biomedical departments by manufacturing new plastic replacement parts for their OEM infusion pumps and telemetry devices. Elite also offers depot repairs for its customers, who may be short-staffed. Its current portfolio offers parts and repair services for Infusion pumps, ambulatory pumps, patient monitoring and telemetry devices. Elite has a core team of 48 professionals on staff—including biomedical, mechanical, quality and plastic engineers with over 120 years of experience. As a family-owned and -operated business, Elite knows the importance of relationships. The Elite family nurtures, supports, values and invests in every single employee. Over the years it has developed a culture that not only fosters passion but also encourages personal growth. At the end of the day, a company is only as great as its employees. Elite believes great is an understatement.

Elite has created this successful culture by implementing the following four tenets: First, it gives our team the purpose and vision of providing high-quality products that ensure patient safety. Secondly, by upholding high morals in both its employee and customer interactions. Thirdly, by taking the time and energy to build strong and lasting personal relationships, it demonstrates how much it values its employees. Finally, by breaking the mindset of “I have to work,” to “I get to work.”

On paper, this sounds great, but its actions and extremely low turnover rates speak volumes towards this point. This is demonstrated by the comments and feedback that it receives from customers touring the facility. These customer tours have become Elite’s best sales tool. During the tours, in between the running of presses and the employee communication exchange, you also hear laughter, friendly competition and heartfelt support for each other. Some employees go their whole lives searching for a fulfilling career; therefore, the company says, it cherishes this place it calls home and the “family” that fills it. This is Elite’s first year to apply for and the first year to be named Best Workplaces in Ohio. It says it is an honor to be a part of this list of companies. It is a direct reflection upon its employees’ unwavering dedication to patient safety, strong work ethic and commitment to serve its customers, community and one another. Elite says that, as a small business, this award motivates it to foster and maintain its amazing culture and employee engagement.

“Working hard for something we don’t care about is called stress; working hard for something we love is called passion.” – Simon Sinek



**The Clinton County Port Authority** serves as the county's comprehensive Economic Development organization, representing all local communities in site improvement and marketing strategies, corporate site selection and local business expansion programs. We are experts in providing appropriate and aggressive incentives, financing options, and overall solutions to business retention, growth and relocation opportunities. Contact Economic Development Director Jennifer Klus to learn more.



*The Clinton County Port Authority leads the county's Economic Development activity on behalf of the County Commissioners, the City of Wilmington, the Community Improvement Corporation of Wilmington and the Clinton County Convention and Visitors Bureau. It also coordinates with the Wilmington-Clinton County Chamber of Commerce, the Clinton County Regional Planning Commission and Main Street Wilmington.*

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[devers@ccportauthority.com](mailto:devers@ccportauthority.com)

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**The Clinton County Port Authority** serves as the county's comprehensive Economic Development organization, representing all local communities in site development and marketing strategies, corporate site selection and local business expansion programs.

On behalf of the County Commissioners, the City of Wilmington, the Community Improvement Corporation of Wilmington, and the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and partnering with the Ohio Small Business Development Center (SBDC), the Wilmington-Clinton County Chamber of Commerce, the Clinton County Regional Planning Commission and Main Street Wilmington, the staff has expertise in providing appropriate and aggressive incentives, financing options, and overall solutions to business retention, growth and relocation opportunities.



Despite the challenges brought by the last year, the **Clinton County Port Authority** continued to provide resources and support to allow existing businesses to thrive and grow, and attracted new business to the community, by:

- Launching ChooseClintonCountyOH.org, a website focused on pertinent information for site selectors.
- Distributing Small Business Safety PPE Toolkits.
- Collaborating with multiple community organizations to distribute important COVID-19 information to every household in the county.
- Establishing a partnership with the Ohio SBDC at Miami Regionals to give access to small businesses seeking aid and advice.
- Continuing – and expanding – the Site Authentication process with the State of Ohio.

Throughout the year, leads from the State of Ohio and the Dayton Development Coalition opened opportunities for business prospects in the area and started conversation on speculative and build-to-suit spaces. The region thrived and was recognized as a Top Micropolitan Region, and Ohio was noted a Top State for Business.

# Infrastructure: Real versus Political

CRAIG K. HEBEBRAND OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS ANSWERS OUR QUESTIONS ON OHIO'S BRIDGES, ROADS AND MORE  
BY TERRY TROY

**R**egardless of whether you sit on the right or left side of the aisle politically, few would argue against investing in our nation's infrastructure. The debate seems to be over how one defines the word "infrastructure"—some extending its meaning to include items like childcare, schools and health care and other issues that are important, but more societal in nature. That debate is holding up real investment in things like bridges, roads, dams and levees that physically hold together our society and business.

The American Society of Civil Engineers' latest report card gives our state an overall grade of C minus when it comes to physical infrastructure. So we asked Craig K. Hebebrand, president of the Ohio Council of Local Sections of the American Society of Civil Engineers, a few questions.

**OB:** First of all, do you agree with the C minus grade?

**CH:** A part of American Society of Civil Engineers' (ASCE) mission is to protect the public health, safety and welfare. The Ohio Infrastructure Report Card was created as a public service for citizens and policymakers to provide a clearer picture of the infrastructure needs and conditions. ASCE volunteers spent more than a year interviewing owners, reviewing reports and condensing reams of data into an easy-to-read assessment of Ohio's Civil Infrastructure Systems. The Report Card was peer reviewed by the ASCE's Committee on America's Infrastructure to

ensure that the Ohio Report Card met ASCE's high standards.

**OB:** How was the infrastructure graded?

**CH:** ASCE assessed 16 categories of Ohio's infrastructure based on eight criteria and using a familiar school report card format. Grades for the 16 categories ranged from B for Rail to D for Roads, Transit and Levees, with an overall grade of C-.

**OB:** Can you give examples of infrastructure needs that need to be immediately addressed?

**CH:** Many of Ohio's dams, levees, drinking water distribution systems and ports are approaching or have exceeded their design life expectancy. Ohio's deficient dams need about \$300 million for rehabilitation. Levee systems are nearly 50 years old and in need of risk assessments given that they provide flood risk reduction for more than 150,000 people and \$27.5 billion in property.

Inland waterways need approximately \$120 million to address critical maintenance over the next 15 years. Protecting Ohio's water resources by managing stormwater run-off and improving water quality by sustained wastewater infrastructure improvement is of high priority, as surface water from Lake Erie and Ohio streams are the source of clean drinking water for many Ohioans.

Ohio's Surface Transportation system of roads, bridges, rail, ports and inland waterways supports a diverse economy. Ohio's roads and bridges carry the third highest freight volume and the sixth highest vehicle miles travelled in the nation. Continued investment is needed to ensure future economic competitiveness.

**OB:** How do infrastructure needs impact the overall economy?



Craig K. Hebebrand, P.E., President, Ohio Council, ASCE

**CH:** Infrastructure includes all facilities that serve aviation, bridges, communication, dams, drinking water, energy, hazardous waste, inland waterways, levees, ports, parks, rail, roads, schools, transit, solid waste, wastewater and other public and private facilities. Though often taken for granted, infrastructure is the foundation on which our national economy, global competitiveness and quality of life depends

**OB:** What should we look for in terms of federal government support?

**CH:** To close the \$2.59 trillion 10-year investment gap, meet future needs and restore our global competitive advantage, we must increase investment from all levels of government and the private sector from 2.5% to 3.5% of U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2025. ■



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