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BUSINESS CLIMATE

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TOURISM

12



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INFRASTRUCTURE

30

ON THE COVER

Abrasives manufacturer Weiler Corp. is one of the Pocono Mountains region's signature companies.

Photo by **Michael Tedesco**

CONTENTS

2019 EDITION • VOLUME 5

8 BUSINESS CLIMATE Mountain Might

The Pocono region delivers on all counts as a place to live, work, visit and invest in.

12 TOURISM Destination for All Seasons

Nature, yes, but there's so much more to explore and experience in the Pocono Mountains.

15 QUALITY OF LIFE Building Boom

Two major developments underscore the region's attractiveness for investment.

18 TALENT Ready for Work

Career planning, workplace readiness and STEM learning programs prepare the region's future workforce.

5 Overview
6 Discover

33 Economic Profile

23 HEALTH To Your Health

Hospitals chart the course for wellness across the Pocono Mountains region.

27 INNOVATION Zone Coverage

A new federal program encourages investment in distressed areas.

28 ENTREPRENEURSHIP Empowering Entrepreneurship

Pocono Mountains resources help turn passions into paychecks.

30 INFRASTRUCTURE Clean and Green

Grassroots efforts keep the Pocono Mountains region looking its best.

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QUALITY OF LIFE

Whether it's digging into the region's best dishes or diving into its lively cultural scene, locals are living their best lives. Explore how the Pocono Mountains region plays during the day and at night.



STAY INFORMED

Moving to the Pocono Mountains might make sense for your bottom line. See how the numbers add up.



TALENT

Discover how educational institutions and local companies are partnering on innovative workforce programs.



INNOVATION

Explore the region's cutting-edge companies, forward-thinking economic development strategies and much more.

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Each article can be read as a stand-alone feature on livability.com/pocono-mountains-region or within the digital magazine.

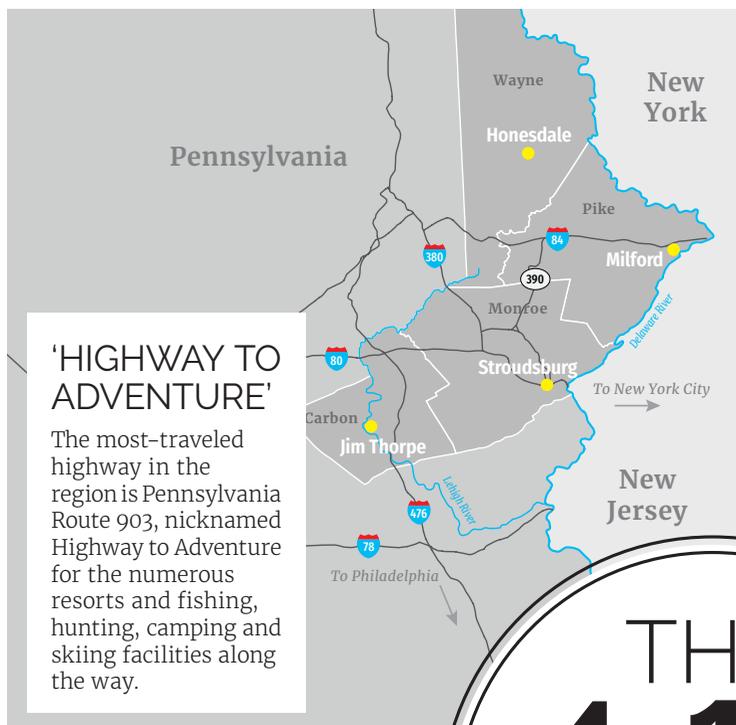
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'HIGHWAY TO ADVENTURE'
 The most-traveled highway in the region is Pennsylvania Route 903, nicknamed Highway to Adventure for the numerous resorts and fishing, hunting, camping and skiing facilities along the way.

MOVING RIGHT ALONG

Interstates 80, 81, 84, 380 and 476 run through the region. Air transportation advantages include Cherry Ridge Airport, Jake Arner Memorial Airport, Pocono Mountains Municipal Airport and Spring Hill Airport. The region has proximity to Lehigh Valley International Airport and Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport. Class I rail carriers Canadian Pacific and Norfolk Southern as well as short-line carriers Delaware-Lackawanna Railroad, Stourbridge Line and Reading Blue Mountain & Northern Railroad serve the region.

Face the Music

The annual Pocono Mountains Music Festival takes place throughout the summer at a number of venues. The festival showcases top performers in chamber music, cabaret, jazz, pop and musical theater, with audiences always seated close to the acts.

BUILT TO LAST

The Pocono Mountains region is gaining a reputation for its diverse and growing manufacturing base, with major companies such as Boyce Products, Kahr Arms, KME REV Group, Leighton Electronics, Loveshaw, New Wave Woodworking, Sanofi Pasteur, Sutphen East, Tobyhanna Army Depot, United Envelope and Weiler Corp.

THE
4-1-1
 ON LIVING, WORKING
 AND VISITING THE
 POCONO MOUNTAINS
 REGION

Seeing Diamonds

Mount Airy Casino Resort is Pennsylvania's first AAA Four Diamond-rated casino, offering more than 1,800 slot machines and 80 table games. Also on site are luxury hotel rooms, signature restaurants, an 18,000-square-foot spa, 18-hole golf course and the Get Wet kids splash pad.

TALENT PIPELINE

The region's talent pipeline is filled by higher education institutions including East Stroudsburg University and Northampton Community College-Monroe Campus, Lehigh Carbon Community College and workforce development assets, such as Monroe Career & Technical Institute, Carbon Career & Technical Institute and Lackawanna College's Lake Region Center.

Bottled Up

The Pocono Beverage Trail showcases 10 stops throughout the region where handcrafted beers, wines or spirits are made.



Kalahari Resort

IN A WORD

It's a given in the Pocono Mountains region, where even the word "Poconos" denotes beauty. It's a Native American term for "stream between two mountains."

Very Hospitable

The tourism industry contributes \$3 billion to the region's economy each year and accounts for more than a third of its jobs. The region's abundant lakes, rivers, resorts, golfing, skiing, fishing and hunting options draw more than 25 million visitors annually.

160 SKI TRAILS

are available to those who like to downhill ski as well as snowboard, snow tube, cross-country ski, toboggan and snowshoe.

Discover the Pocono Mountains

From spectacular natural attractions to action-packed resorts and lodges, historic communities with vibrant downtowns and a slate of innovative companies, the Pocono Mountains region offers high appeal as a place to live.

The Pocono Mountains region, which includes Carbon, Monroe, Pike and Wayne counties, is centrally located between the New York and Philadelphia metro areas. Home to more than 330,000 residents, the region has long been a hub of hospitality and tourism. Its affordability, roster of charming communities with vibrant downtowns and wealth of entertainment, arts and recreation options are drawing talent and new businesses alike. Here is a snapshot of just a few of the region's standout communities.

East Stroudsburg population ► 10,384

A borough that was originally known as Dansbury, East Stroudsburg in Monroe County offers residents an outstanding quality of life. The community of over 10,000 includes ready access to two major hospitals - Lehigh Valley Hospital-Pocono and St. Luke's Monroe Campus in nearby Bartonsville. Hikers and bikers will enjoy the community's bevy of parks and trails. Excellent academic options include the award-winning East Stroudsburg Area School District. East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania offers 55 undergraduate, 22 master's and two doctoral programs and is home to a highly regarded business accelerator program and the Entrepreneurial Leadership Center.



Honesdale population ► 4,240

Goofus and Gallant hail from Honesdale, a community of around 4,500 in Wayne County and home to the famed magazine Highlights for Children. Honesdale is a cultural hub that includes The Cooperage Project, which stages music performances among its many programs and activities to engage,

challenge and enlighten the community. Residents are served by the 114-bed Wayne Memorial Hospital. A signature feature of the community is the Stourbridge Line, a 25-mile historic railroad that runs from Honesdale to the Delaware River along the Lackawaxen River Valley. Honesdale is The Birthplace of the American Railroad and houses the nation's first-ever commercial steam locomotive that ran on train tracks.

Hawley // population ► 1,157

Hawley is home to a number of recreational facilities that make it a leisure destination, especially in summer. One of the most visited attractions is the 5,700-acre Lake Wallenpaupack, which offers 52 miles of shoreline. The annual Wally Lake Fest includes bands on the lake, sailboat rides, a boat parade, open market fair, a sailboat regatta and the Tour de Towpath bike ride. Hawley is an outdoor enthusiast's dream, with opportunities for biking and hiking at Delaware State Forest, Shuman Point Natural Area, Ledgesdale Recreation Area, Lacawac Sanctuary and Promised Land State Park. The Ritz Company Playhouse has been staging plays and concerts for residents and visitors to enjoy year-round since the early 1970s. Hawley is home to the Woodloch Resort, recognized as one of the top family resorts in the U.S.

Jim Thorpe population ► 4,633

Nicknamed the Switzerland of America because of its mountainous location and spectacular scenery, the community of Jim Thorpe, which takes its name from the fabled Native American athlete of the early 1900s, offers a historic downtown that features unique shops and impressive architecture. The historic Mauch Chunk Opera House, one of the oldest theaters from the vaudeville circuit, hosts year-round entertainment and special events. Outdoor adventure opportunities include whitewater rafting and hiking in Lehigh Gorge State Park. The Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway runs through the gorge from May through December from downtown Jim Thorpe. The Carbon County community also hosts the annual Olympic-distance Anthracite Triathlon.



Milford // population ► 1,001

Located on the upper Delaware River is Milford, a community proud of its highly regarded Delaware Valley School District. The charming Pike County borough hosts a half-dozen highly attended festivals each year. One of the largest is the renowned Milford Music Festival, held each June. The three-day Black Bear Film Festival takes place each October. Milford Beach is the start of the McDade Recreational Trail, which provides views of the river, forests and historic landscapes. Residents enjoy proximity to Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and its array of hiking, boating, fishing and camping opportunities. Milford's historical attractions include the 22-room Columns Museum, a mansion built for a New Jersey business mogul that includes a number of exhibits, such as the famous "bloody Lincoln flag" upon which the slain president's head was believed to have rested after his assassination.

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Mountain MIGHT

The Pocono region delivers on all counts as a place to live, work, visit and invest in

By Bill Lewis

Individuals looking for an active, outdoor-focused lifestyle and innovative businesses searching for the best location to grow and prosper are making the Pocono Mountains region their top choice.

The four-county region – Carbon, Monroe, Pike and Wayne – boasts lifestyle and business advantages that others can only envy, including spectacular outdoor attractions such as the ski run with the largest vertical drop in Pennsylvania and access to a network of higher education institutions and technology centers that guarantee the workforce is prepared for the knowledge-based jobs of the future.

Add a lower cost structure, an integrated transportation network and a location within easy driving distance of New York City and Philadelphia and you have an irresistible combination of assets that other locations can't match.

"Our advantages are all of the above. We have access to great universities and community colleges as well as top-rated career and technical schools at the secondary level. Quality of life

bar none rates 100 out of 100," says Kathy Henderson, director of economic development for the Carbon County Chamber & Economic Development Corp.

"We have four seasons of outdoor adventures including Blue Mountain Resort in Carbon County that boasts the highest vertical drop in the state. Lehigh Gorge State Park and Hickory Run State Park, also in Carbon County, are stunning in their scenery. Boulder Field in Hickory Run State Park is a nationally recognized natural wonder. We have a ready and willing workforce for every level of employment," says Henderson.

Shots Heard Around the Globe

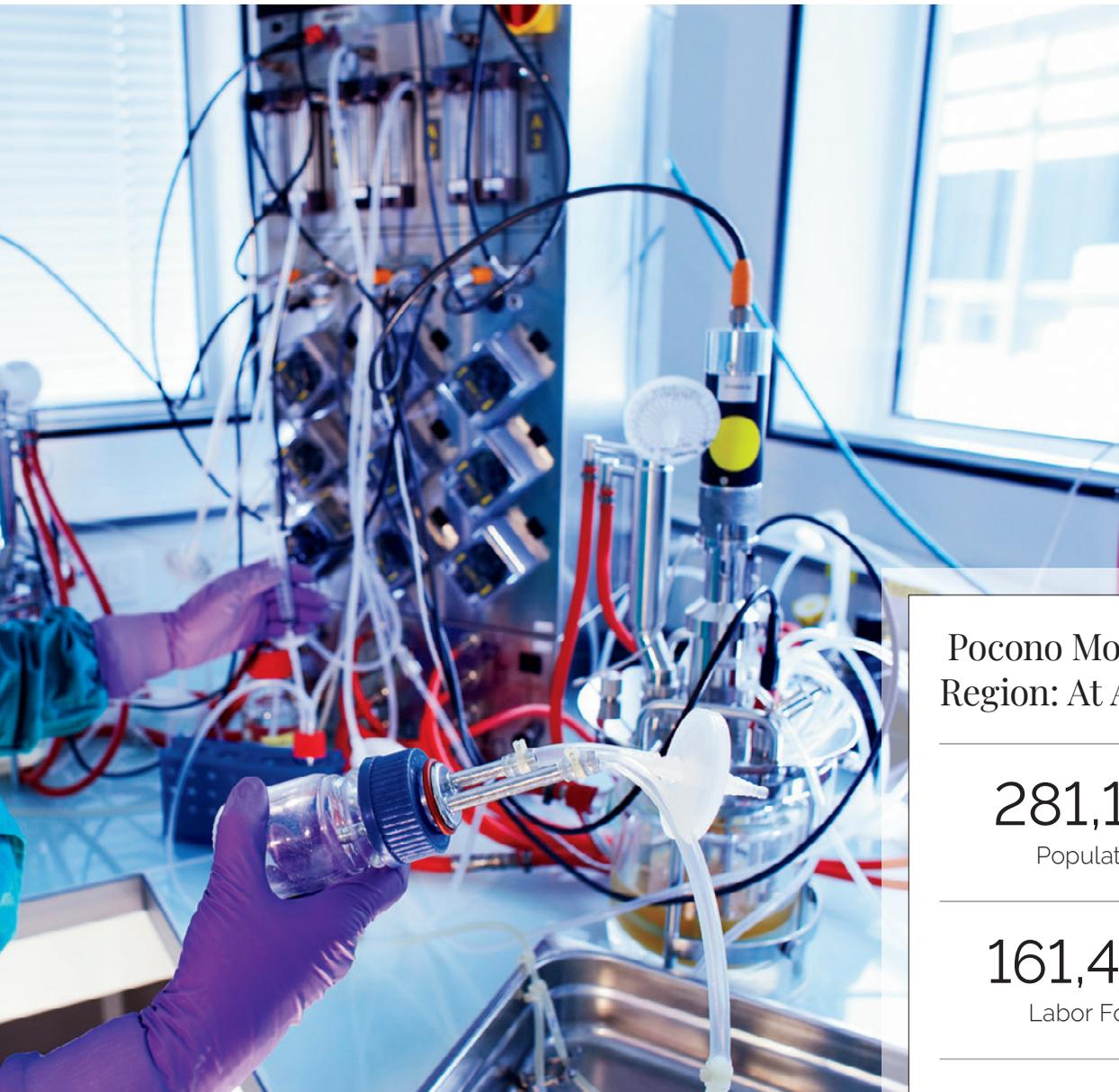
Major industry sectors in the region include life sciences, advanced manufacturing and logistics and distribution.



A company with deep roots in the Pocono Mountains is focused on making the world a healthier place.

What is now Sanofi Pasteur USA grew from Pocono Biological Laboratories, founded by Richard Slee in Swiftwater in Monroe County more than 120 years ago to produce a new breed of smallpox vaccine.

Today, Sanofi Pasteur USA is an affiliate of France-based Sanofi S.A., the global pharmaceutical giant. Sanofi Pasteur USA employs around 2,400 people in Swiftwater and produces more than 1 billion doses of vaccine products annually, making it possible to immunize



Pocono Mountains Region: At A Glance

281,156

Population

161,400

Labor Force

6,737

Business Establishments

\$11.38B

Total Personal Income

\$39,891

Average Occupational Wage

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

about 500 million people globally each year.

The company is the largest in the world devoted entirely to vaccines. The World Health Organization credits Sanofi Pasteur with producing vaccines that protect humans against more than 25 infectious diseases.

The company manufactures modern pediatric combination vaccines for children and vaccines to combat cholera, diphtheria, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, influenza, meningitis,

rabies, tetanus, tuberculosis, typhoid and yellow fever.

Sanofi officials say about 3 million lives are saved in the world every year from their vaccines, but 1.5 million deaths could be avoided if all nations – especially the world's poorest – had access to their existing medicines.

Sanofi has ongoing partnerships with a number of international organizations including the World Health Organization, Gavi (founded by the Bill & Melinda Gates

Global pharmaceutical company Sanofi Pasteur has a more-than-120-year history making vaccines in the Pocono Mountains region.



Weiler Corp. manufactures power brushes and coated, bonded and nonwoven abrasives for surface finishing, deburring, grinding and cleaning. The company, headquartered in Monroe County, is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2019.

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

BRUSH WITH SUCCESS

One of the key players in the Pocono Mountains' advanced manufacturing sector has deep roots in the region. Weiler Abrasives, which designs and manufactures an array of surface conditioning solutions, is celebrating its 75th anniversary in 2019. The company came from humble beginnings, founded in a converted chicken coop by the grandfather of Chris Weiler, the company's president and CEO. Weiler relocated from Long Island, New York, to Cresco, a village in Monroe County, in 1957. Today, Weiler has more than 1,300 employees in eight countries, including 380 in the Pocono Mountains region. Weiler's products are used in markets that include welding and fabrication, industrial production and maintenance, repair and operations.

Foundation) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), all through which the company supplies vaccines where they are needed most.

Big Wheels

The region's affordability and location advantage appealed to American Tire Distributors (ATD), which chose Blakeslee for its new 1 million-square-foot mixing warehouse. The company announced the facility will support 70 full-time employees who will ship more than 2.5 million tires each year as well as wheels, tools and other automotive supplies.

The distribution center handles all of American Tire Distributors' proprietary and imported brands as well as a warranty adjustment center. The Pocono Mixing Warehouse primarily services vendors in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions as well as eastern Canada.

ATD executives say the Pocono Mixing Warehouse is an important investment that strengthens the company's industry-leading supply chain operations.

Routes to Success

The Blakeslee facility will have a significant role in ATD's growth, says Mark Chandler, senior vice president of supply chain.

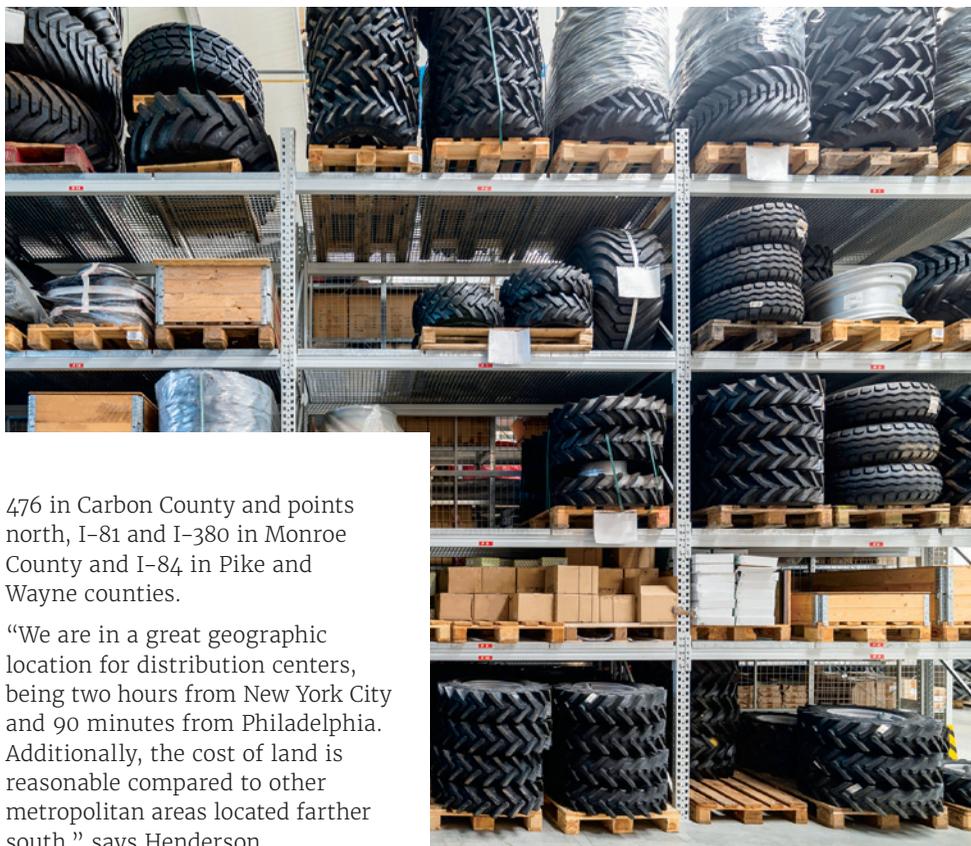
"Pocono, our fourth mixing warehouse, has one of the largest SKU assortments of any of our mixing warehouses, making it easier than ever for our customers to receive the products they need, when they need them. There's no doubt that the largest and longest-serving technology-enabled distribution network is taking the next step forward," he says.

American Tire Distributors is one of the largest independent suppliers of tires in the replacement tire market. The company operates more than 140 distribution centers serving approximately 80,000 customers across the U.S. and Canada. The company employs approximately 5,000 people.



2.5M

Tires distributed from
ATD's Blakeslee center



Distribution centers like ATD's are a valuable asset for the region, providing jobs that require a range of skill sets from forklift drivers to IT and logistics professionals. They also provide a boost to the tax base for local governments, says Henderson.

It's no surprise that the Pocono Mountains region is attracting logistics and distribution centers, she says, with ready access to I-80 and Pennsylvania Turnpike Route

476 in Carbon County and points north, I-81 and I-380 in Monroe County and I-84 in Pike and Wayne counties.

"We are in a great geographic location for distribution centers, being two hours from New York City and 90 minutes from Philadelphia. Additionally, the cost of land is reasonable compared to other metropolitan areas located farther south," says Henderson.

PHOTO: ISTOCK.COM/NORODEN

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The region offers a number of standout resorts, such as Kalahari Resort and Conventions in Pocono Manor.

Destination for *All Seasons*

Nature, yes, but there's so much more to explore and experience in the Pocono Mountains region

By Cary Estes

For more than a century, the Pocono Mountains region has been well known for being an idyllic secluded getaway. Stretching across 2,400 square miles of northeastern Pennsylvania, the Pocono Mountains region has attracted nature lovers, honeymooners and outdoor recreationists alike, many seeking a quiet escape from the crowds and fast-paced lifestyle of such nearby big cities as Philadelphia and New York.

Those Poconos still exist, of course, attracting millions of visitors each year with their tree-lined beauty and picturesque lakes. But the region is not resting on its

reputation. These days, the Pocono Mountains also offer a wide range of entertainment options, providing a little hustle and bustle to go along with the peace and quiet.

There are expansive resorts with waterparks and casinos. There are spas and diverse restaurants and upscale shopping. There is an increasing amount of space for business meetings and conventions, as well as activities for families with children. So while you can still get away in the Pocono Mountains, you don't have to get away from it all.

"A lot of people like to say they have something for everybody, but in the Pocono Mountains we truly do," says Chris Barrett, president and CEO of the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau. "We've

become a true four-season destination with a large variety of activities with wide appeal. If you want to, you can still just sit in a cabin for seven days. But now you can also drive a half-hour or less to a large resort.”

Pools, Poker and Pilates

One of the leaders in this change is Kalahari Resorts and Conventions in Pocono Manor, which opened in 2015 with a 110,000-square-foot indoor waterpark. The attraction proved to be so popular that Kalahari recently doubled the size of its aquatic offerings, making it the largest indoor waterpark in the U.S. Kalahari also has more than doubled the size of its convention space, to 205,000 square feet, with a new 38,000-square-foot ballroom and 18 additional meeting rooms.

Meanwhile, Mount Airy Casino Resort Spa in Paradise Township recently wrapped up a \$40 million expansion project that includes 100 new hotel rooms (increasing the total to 288), a 16,000-square-foot ballroom and events center, and a 27,000-square-foot outdoor concert pavilion. This is in addition to the property’s existing spa, casino, indoor and outdoor pools, 18-hole golf course and nightclub.

For a calmer experience, The Lodge at Woodloch boasts one of the top-rated spas in the world. It has 27 treatment rooms to go along with saunas, whirlpools, a hydromassage waterwall, fireplace lounges, and studios for aerobics, Pilates, yoga and meditation.

On the horizon, there is a \$350 million entertainment and retail project called Pocono Springs scheduled to open in 2021 in Tobyhanna Township near Kalahari. The complex will combine the best of both of Pocono’s worlds, with 600,000 square feet of dining-shopping-entertainment offerings (including a 90,000-square-foot aquarium) along with outdoor hiking and biking trails.

“That’s going to be a huge, huge attraction,” Barrett says. “What’s



The Pocono Mountains region has seen hospitality-and-tourism revenue increase by 27.7% over the past three years, making it the fastest-growing region in the state.



The Pocono Mountains region offers outdoor recreation opportunities in all four seasons.

been amazing is the vision of the people who own the properties here in the Poconos. They’ve had the ability to constantly reinvent the product in ways that are always attractive to visitors.”

As a result, Barrett says, the Pocono Mountains region has seen hospitality-and-tourism revenue increase by 27.7% over the past three years, making it the fastest-growing region in the state. Travelers spent nearly \$3.9 billion in the Poconos in 2017, a record for

the region. That is important, since 65% of the region’s labor income is derived from travel and tourism, and nearly 38% of employment is connected to the sector.

“We are in a very strong growth mode, and it’s because of the strong capital investment in the region,” Barrett says. “We’re offering a good, innovative product. I credit that to the people who have been here for a long time. Whenever there has been a change in guests’ wants and needs, they’ve responded.”

TOURISM IS **GROWING**
AND PROVIDING
STRONG ECONOMIC GROWTH
IN THE



POCONO MOUNTAINSSM





BUILDING BOOM

Two major developments underscore the region's attractiveness for investment

By Jessica Walker Boehm

The Pocono Mountains region offers plenty of enticing amenities and advantages – charming communities with revitalized downtowns, dozens of must-visit attractions, a thriving outdoor recreation scene and proximity to major cities like Philadelphia and New York City, chief among them.

And it's only getting better, thanks to a wave of new development taking shape across the region.

A New Gateway

In Smithfield Township in Monroe County, 121 acres of a former dairy farm is being transformed into a multiphase mixed-use development.

Plymouth Meeting-based Legend Properties Inc. plans to build approximately 200,000 square feet of restaurant, retail and office space on the site, located between Routes 209 and 447. The development will

eventually include 236 high-end apartment units and 120,000 square feet of retail space on the opposite side of U.S. 209.

Developers envision Smithfield Gateway as a live-work-play destination where people eat, shop, work and live in one "harmonious" development. Once completed, the development will create about 1,000 jobs. The first phase of the project is expected to open in fall 2020.

"It's going to be a game changer for the region," says Jim DePetris,

CEO of Legend Properties Inc.

The Smithfield Gateway project will also lead to significant road improvements and expansions, with the two-lane U.S. 209 corridor set to include five lanes and additional traffic lights. Plus, a new loop road will be constructed to connect U.S. 209 with state Highway 447, which will improve traffic flow.

"We knew from the beginning that massive road improvements would have to be completed for the Smithfield Gateway project to move forward successfully," DePetris says. "Thanks to our wonderful team, a lot of persistence, legislative assistance and the support and efforts of the Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corp., we've

been able to obtain about \$5.5 billion in public grants that will be used to upgrade the roads and help make it possible for this development to accommodate the high volume of people it will attract.”

Raising a Village

About a half-hour north in Tobyhanna Township, a joint venture between JEMB Realty of New York and Colorado-based Denali Development Group plans the \$350 million Pocono Springs Entertainment Village and projects it to become one of the largest entertainment destinations in North America.

The village will be built in three phases. When fully built, it is expected to create more than 1,200 full-time, permanent jobs while drawing up to 5 million new visitors annually.

Along with nearly 600,000 square feet of entertainment-based destination anchors, including a 90,000-square-

foot aquarium, themed restaurants and a helium balloon ride, Pocono Springs Entertainment Village will feature distinctive architecture that will highlight the region’s natural beauty. Other features of the development include hiking and biking trails, a signature tree grove and a public park.

Slated to open during summer 2021, the village will be adjacent to the 977-room Kalahari Convention Center Hotel and Waterpark – the country’s largest indoor waterpark – which itself draws more than

1 million visitors each year.

“It’s going to be an experiential entertainment destination that will engage residents and tourists alike – a gathering place with something for everyone, no matter their age or area of interest, that will complement other attractions in our region, says John Jablowski, township manager of Tobyhanna Township. “There are already so many great things to do in the Pocono Mountains, and this entertainment village will be one more fantastic addition to the roster.”

It’s Fun Here ▶▶▶

FAMILY-FRIENDLY FESTIVALS ARE A POCONO MOUNTAINS SIGNATURE

The Pocono Mountains region knows how to celebrate, offering a slate of festivals and major events that fill the calendar year-round. Here is a just a small sample:

WEATHERLY HILLCLIMB

The quiet town of Weatherly in Carbon County has hosted the Weatherly Hillclimb every June since 1960, with daring motorists driving their own cars to attack six hairpin turns and several uphill straightaways. Drivers are timed over a one-mile course that features an elevation difference of 340 feet.

JIM THORPE WINTERFEST

Downtown Jim Thorpe hosts the annual WinterFest over President’s Day weekend each February, with activities that include concerts, ice carvings and the Jim Thorpe Mug Walk, in which participants purchase a special mug and then visit local shops where the mugs are filled with goodies. Another highlight is winter train rides along the Lehigh Gorge Scenic Railway.

CELEBRATION OF THE ARTS JAZZ FESTIVAL

Great music and juried artwork come together for two days every September at the Celebration of the Arts Jazz Festival in Delaware Water Gap in Monroe County. Events are held at several locations including Deer Head Inn, The Hall at Castle Inn and the Rick Chamberlain Memorial Stage.

POCONO GARLIC & HARVEST FESTIVAL

The aroma of garlicky goodness fills the region on Labor Day weekend, when over 60 food and craft vendors offering everything from garlic ice cream to garlic-themed artwork in East Stroudsburg in Monroe County. The event includes musical acts, educational demonstrations and a garlic-eating contest.

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HONESDALE ROOTS & RHYTHM

A celebration of free music and the visual arts occurs every June at the Honesdale Roots & Rhythm Festival. Activities are staged around Honesdale's historic Main Street and Church Street and at Central Park, with events aimed toward people of all ages.

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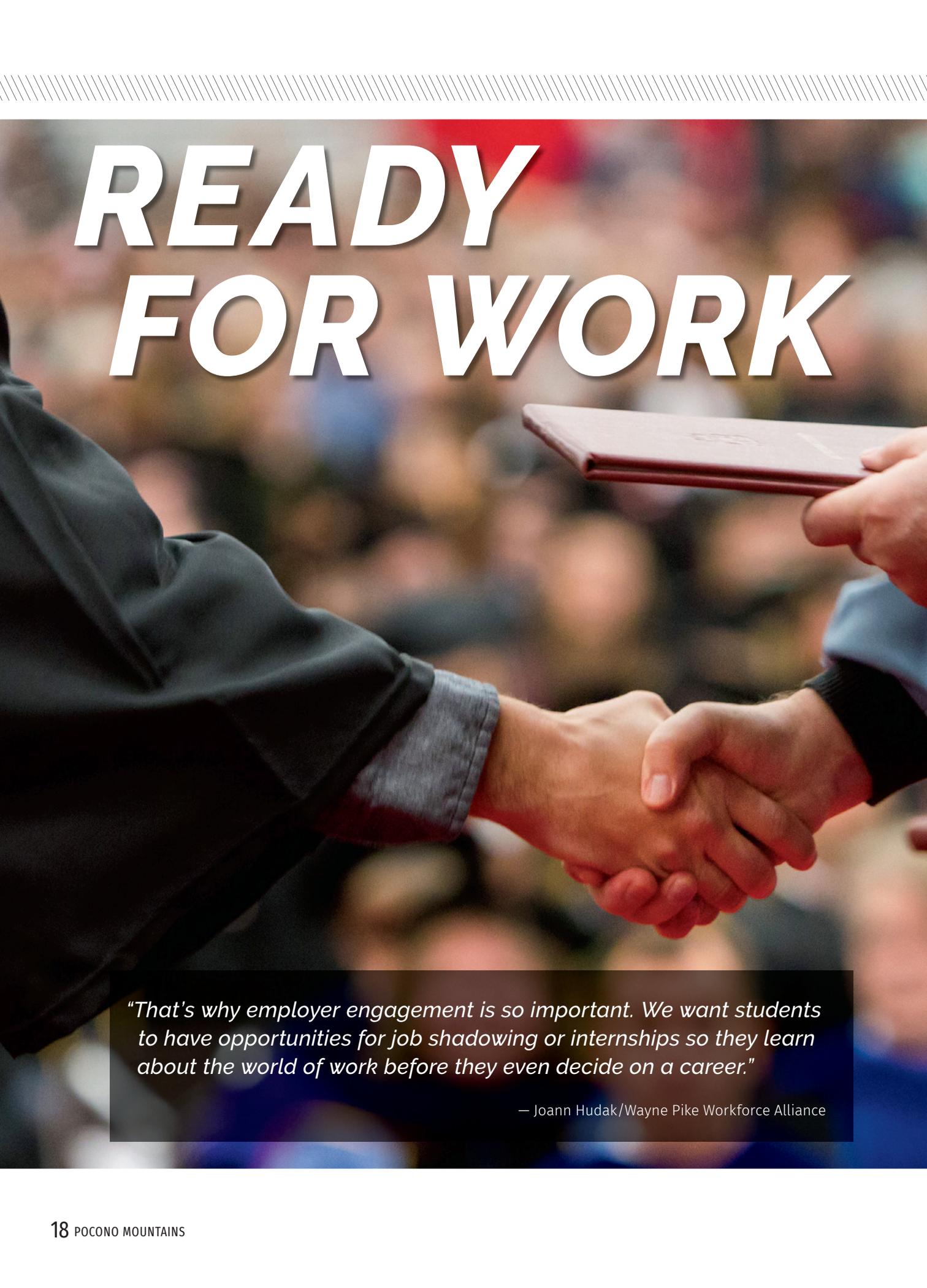
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"That's why employer engagement is so important. We want students to have opportunities for job shadowing or internships so they learn about the world of work before they even decide on a career."

— Joann Hudak/Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance



PHOTO: EAST STROUDSBURG UNIVERSITY

Career planning, workplace readiness and STEM learning programs prepare the region's future workforce

By Teree Caruthers

A strong workforce is a cornerstone of the Pocono Mountains economy, but as that workforce ages and the job market grows to include more positions requiring specialized skills, the region's education and business communities are working together to ensure future generations are prepared to fill in-demand jobs.

“The baby boomers are retiring en masse and in great numbers, and unfortunately, we do not have the skilled workers to replace them. Schools can't do it alone. They need the support of business and industry,” says Joann Hudak, chair of the Wayne Pike Workforce Alliance and education consultant for the National Center for College and Career Transitions or NC3T, a nationally recognized company with expertise in career readiness, technical education and helping communities bridge the gaps between education, workforce and economic development.

On the Right Pathways

In Monroe County, NC3T has partnered with the four school districts, Monroe Career and Technical Institute, East

Stroudsburg University, Northampton Community College, businesses and community organizations to address the shrinking workforce. In 2019, the group formed the Monroe Career Pathways Coalition, which links schools and industry in order to introduce students at an early age to careers in the region.

Hudak says the coalition leaders hope efforts will increase graduation rates and college and trade school enrollment as well as help students develop those soft skills that are so important to career success.

“There's definitely a gap in workplace readiness skills, or what we used to call soft skills. That is a consistent concern that I hear no matter where I go in the state,” she says. “That's why employer engagement is so important. We want



Top: School districts across the Pocono Mountains region have placed an emphasis on STEM learning. Bottom: Resources such as the Carbon Career & Technical Institute provide students in the region with academic, career and technical training.

students to have opportunities for job shadowing or internships so they learn about the world of work before they even decide on a career.”

Cosmas Curry, Stroudsburg Area School District superintendent, says he hopes the Pathways Coalition helps students realize the many career possibilities available right in their own backyard.

“We need parents to understand where the jobs are, what education is needed, what skills are needed and where their kids can go to get those skills.”

– Jeanne Miller, Owner of Miller Educational Services and the CSL Learning Ecosystem Lead

“We recognize that there’s a portion of our students that leave the county every year after graduation when they go off to college. But there is also a good percentage that may not go off to college, and we want them to realize that they can have a successful career in Monroe County even if they don’t go to a traditional four-year college,” he says.

Building Up STEM

“There are a lot of careers that require technical training, such as computer science and computer programming. We need 1 million programmers in our national workforce right now. That’s where we as educators can assist by putting in our curriculum coding courses and STEM courses,” Curry adds.

The Carbon, Schuylkill and

Luzerne STEM Ecosystem is just one example of educators and the business community working together to create STEM learning opportunities for students. The system, organized by Lehigh Carbon Community College, unites schools, industry and economic development organizations to connect students to STEM career paths and arm them with employable skills.

“By that, we mean problem solving, teamwork, collaboration and understanding the design method because so many of those skills are what the businesses and industry in this area say we’re going to need if we’re going to have a strong workforce,” says Jeanne Miller, owner of Miller Educational Services and the CSL Learning Ecosystem lead.

Among the Ecosystem’s key programs are SHINE, a 42-week after-school and summer program that spotlights STEM careers, teacher trainings and educator-in-the-workplace opportunities.

“It’s important that all students possess those STEM skills to be competitive for 21st-century jobs in northeastern Pennsylvania. But that also means that all teachers need the tools and strategies to help equip students with those skills,” Miller says. “We’re also creating a parent toolkit because if we’re going to make a difference in these students, excite them and motivate them, we need parents to understand where the jobs are, what education is needed, what skills are needed and where their kids can go to get those skills.”



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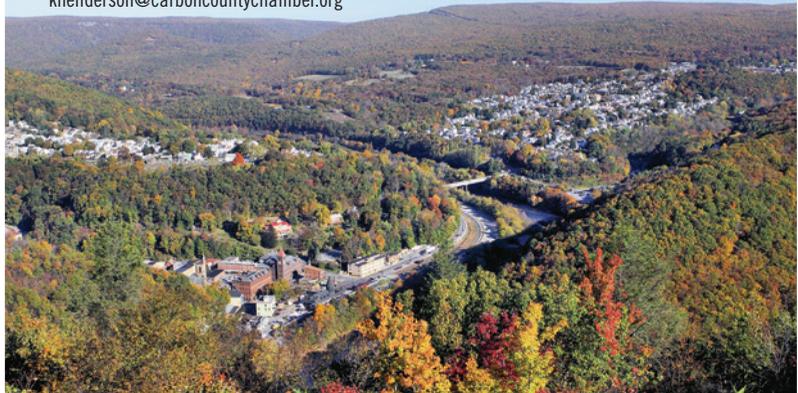
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TO YOUR HEALTH

Hospitals chart the course for wellness across the Pocono Mountains

By Carla Ariadne

Don't believe the wellness trend is here to stay? Here are some numbers to consider from Global Wellness Institute: The industry grew 12.8% from 2015-2017, to \$4.2 trillion.

And while personal care, beauty and anti-aging came in as the top sector (\$1.1 billion), preventative and personalized medicine and public health (\$575 million) doesn't fall far behind. Health care and hospitals in the Pocono Mountains region are tangible proof, sprinting with wellness initiatives and getting their patients up to speed with everything from mobile

PHOTO: ANITA SERGENT



Ahh, That's Relaxing

Spa locations in the Poconos are abundant. Take a deep breath and relax at any of the many excellent spas found throughout the Pocono Mountains region. Here are just a few:

▲ Mount Airy Casino, Resort & Spa

Mount Airy Casino, Resort & Spa offers hourlong treatments of pampering ranging from body wraps to new hairstyles. The spa is available to both hotel guests and non-hotel clients.

The Lodge at Woodloch

The Lodge at Woodloch in Hawley is recognized as one of the nation's top destination spas, with stress-relieving treatments designed to leave patrons reinvigorated and reenergized. Popular services include a hydrating milk and oatmeal bath, and a coconut lime body polish.

The Nest at Skytop

The community of Skytop is home to Skytop Lodge, where the fifth floor of the scenic building features The Nest at Skytop spa. Services include body treatments, facials, pedicures and 55-minute couples massage.

Pocono Manor Resort & Spa

Pocono Manor Resort & Spa, known to local residents as The Grand Lady of the Mountains, has welcomed guests since 1902. Its Laurel Spa features nine private treatment rooms with offerings such as clay wraps, seaweed soaks and aromatherapy.

Spa Kalahari

At the Kalahari Resorts Poconos in Pocono Manor, Spa Kalahari specializes in rejuvenating the mind, body and spirit. Two popular offerings are a watermelon body glow special and a 50-minute watermelon basil vodkatini scrub.

The French Manor Inn & Spa

Located in Newfoundland in Wayne County is The French Manor Inn & Spa, with its Le Spa Foret providing services including an indoor salt water pool, a six-step herbal facial, French cocoa wraps and a 50-minute fireside couples massage.

Cove Haven Entertainment Resorts

The spa at Cove Haven offers a wide variety of massages, aromatherapy wraps and other services to promote relaxation and wellness.

mammography to complimentary skin cancer screenings.

Health systems in the region are taking a leading role in getting residents to take advantage of the great access they enjoy to the great outdoors on a regular basis.

Exhibit A: St. Luke's University Health Network celebrated its fifth anniversary for the Get Your Tail on the Trail program in May 2019. The program is a collaboration between St. Luke's and the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor that encourages participants to make trail time quotidian and integral to living a healthy lifestyle.

The program has reached some impressive feats: Over 6,000 participants have collectively walked, hiked, run, biked and paddled more than 3 million miles. From a distant perspective, Earth's equatorial circumference is about 24,901 miles.

An act locally, think globally approach has branched Tail on the Trail well beyond St. Luke's Pennsylvania roots. In 2015, Tail on the Trail earned the Trails for Health Award from American Trails in Portland, Oregon. And just last year, its founders at St. Luke initiated a chapter program so that other regions can jump on the trail wagon and foster conscious community.

What's best, participants can sign up as an individual or with the organization. Pro health tip: Consider bringing it into the workplace as a means of team-building, relaxation and fostering outside the box thinking. Don't like to run solo? Fret not—plenty of events and challenges are a solid way to cross paths with like-minded individuals.

While St. Luke's was an early wellness adopter, the hospital doesn't stand alone.

At Wayne Memorial Hospital in Honesdale, resident dietitian Barbara Pratt uses her three decades of nutritional and physiological expertise combined with the latest research findings to counsel patients to meet their

health goals on a one-to-one basis. “The beauty of individual counseling is that it’s not a one-size-fits-all but rather a precise fit for that individual,” says Pratt who recommends integrating the MIND diet as a lifestyle choice for most patients. “You can reduce chances of dementia or Alzheimer’s by 53%.”

The MIND diet, which is a combination of the Mediterranean and DASH diet encourages green, leafy vegetables, berries, nuts, olive oil, whole grains, fish, beans and poultry.

Lehigh Valley Health Network (LVHN) has a wealth of resources and holistic programming year-round to get patients taking steps toward optimal health. Case in point, First Strides is a workshop to get run-phobes simply walking. The 10-week spring and summer program focused specifically for beginner walker and runner women has mentors supporting

novices through a gradual training program.

Sessions are led by local experts and cover all the running 101s and then some — think buying proper footwear, injury prevention,

6,000

Participants in the Get Your Tail on the Trail program

nutrition and cardiovascular activity. Before you know it, you may just be registering for your first 5K. Women aside, LVHN offers a monthlong interactive educational series every April for curiously inquisitive high

schoolers, dubbed Mini Medical School. This year’s exploration included novel approaches in heart, cancer, surgery and pediatrics— with a light shined on future-pacing and inviting speculation for never before thought of ways to make being healthy even healthier.

Perhaps most impressive though is the first-in-the-region mobile mammography coach (as in a passenger motor coach) designed specifically for the Lehigh Valley Cancer Institute to give the many women of Eastern Pennsylvania who lack convenient access to mammography a way to get their annual screening.

For added cancer-prevention measures, LVHN offers free skin cancer screenings, plus four membership fitness centers peppered throughout town loaded with diverse programming and amenities to keep the body moving, mind strong and heart happy.



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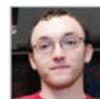
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Proud Development, LLC



Blaise Delfino '14
Fader Plugs, LLC



Amanda Jakubowski '15
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Nick Neely '19
Falchion Systems, LLC



Zach Waldman '19
Falchion Systems, LLC

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SIX Years And Counting...

East Stroudsburg University has hosted Monroe County's Economic Outlook Summit, bringing together community and business leaders to carefully examine economic trends – employment, earnings, business climate, healthcare, housing and education – and comparing the results across 8 regional counties in an effort to understand our differences and to stimulate discussion focused on economic growth.

85%



of ESU May 2018 graduates felt their degree was relevant to employment opportunities.



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Zone Coverage

A new federal program encourages investment in distressed areas

By Dorian Martin

Though it offers a number of appealing features, including unique local retailers and restaurants, downtown Stroudsburg has struggled to fill some undeveloped parcels where earlier buildings were destroyed by fire or demolition.



With its recent designation as a Federal Opportunity Zone (FOZ), Stroudsburg now has new opportunities to enhance these downtown areas by offering tax incentives to companies or individuals looking to invest within the zone.

“Stroudsburg has had some challenges that we hope the opportunity zone will help to address,” says Chuck Leonard, executive director of the Pocono Mountains Economic Development Corp. “The county seat is someplace that you want to be able to project to outsiders as a really great center of economic and political activity. We’re comfortable with the attractiveness of downtown, but of course we always want to improve. We think the opportunity zone designation will provide another opportunity to accomplish that.”

Encouraging Investment

Created by Congress as part of the 2017 tax bill, FOZs create incentives for investment in select distressed areas. Regions that qualify using a variety of federal criteria, such as unemployment rates, can apply to the state for this designation. State officials make the final selections.

In 2018, Pennsylvania had 1,200 eligible tracts (including eight in the Pocono Mountains region) that were submitted for consideration to Gov. Tom Wolf. Of those, approximately 25% were designated

as FOZs. Stroudsburg emerged as the Pocono Mountains region’s lone designee.

The FOZs encourage investment by allowing investors to waive capital gains taxes when they decide to sell real estate investments that are located within the FOZ.

Leonard says Federal Opportunity Zones will be especially enticing for investors who own real estate or other assets in areas that are located outside of these opportunity zones. When they sell these assets, they can reinvest their profit into a building or asset located in a Federal Opportunity Zone and avoid paying capital gains taxes. Then when they decide to sell that building several years later, the capital gains tax continues to be waived.

“This is a long-term investment where benefits don’t accrue until after multiple years,” Leonard explains.

Projections suggest that these zones will offer a significant economic boost to investors who are willing to hold on to their investment over a long period of time. Leonard described one projection in which an investor initially would invest \$2 million in a project. After seven years, the investor might decide to sell at a profit of \$400,000. Normally, that amount would be considered capital gains; however, by initially making an investment in a Federal Opportunity Zone, the investor could keep the \$400,000 without being taxed.

Rolling Out

Stroudsburg’s designation as a Federal Opportunity Zone has sparked interest among several investors, although no deals have been completed. Furthermore, delays in the Internal Revenue Service’s issuance of rulings about the zones are slowing implementation. Leonard encouraged potential investors who are interested in putting funds into these zones to consult with their accountant.

Ultimately, these zones could be a stimulus for investment in Stroudsburg and other areas of the state.

“We believe the Federal Opportunity Zone along with a combination of available programs and incentives will encourage development of vacant properties in Stroudsburg,” Leonard said. “It will enhance job creation, add tax base and will make an already attractive downtown Stroudsburg even better.”



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Empowering

ENTREPRENEURSHIP



PHOTO: MICHAEL D. TEDESCO

Pocono Mountains resources help turn passions into paychecks

Story by Teree Caruthers

Sparking innovation in areas ranging from bioscience and software design to transportation and manufacturing, entrepreneurship has long been a cornerstone of the Pocono Mountains region's economic success.

One reason entrepreneurs can get their ideas off the whiteboard and into market is the availability of resources, including the homegrown incubators and business accelerators at the Innovation Center at East Stroudsburg University (ESU) and the Stourbridge Project in Honesdale.

Better Business Builder

Both are located within the Pocono Mountains Keystone Innovation Zone, created to help develop new businesses in Monroe and Wayne counties. The Keystone Innovation Zone (KIZ) Program was established by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development to foster innovation and produce entrepreneurial opportunities by combining the resources of public-private partnerships with those of higher education institutions, such as ESU.

The Business Accelerator located in the ESU Innovation Center, for instance, offers entrepreneurs access to facilities and equipment, a ready workforce of student interns and graduate students, business mentors, workshops to help with marketing and commercialization, and access to local investors and funding sources.

"The Business Accelerator is designed to provide flexible accommodations for early-stage companies – from coworking spaces to hot desks," says Keith Modzelewski, director of entrepreneurship at ESU. "Most importantly, the program provides business owners with exclusive networking opportunities and relevant business support services. Our programs encourage creativity and innovation and provide a wealth

of management and technical resources including access to ESU faculty expertise and student internships."

A Head Start to Startup

In addition to a dozen undergraduate and graduate degrees in business, ESU's Entrepreneurship Club provides students with a network of innovative thinkers and creative outlets for discovery. The Warrior LaunchPad, a student business incubator, supports students in creating their own companies and pursuing careers in innovation, and the President's Distinguished Entrepreneur Speaker Series enables students to speak directly with real-world innovators who have excelled in their respective fields, many of whom graduated from ESU.

Since 2012, ESU students have earned top honors in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education Student Business Plan Competition, TecBridge Business Plan Competition, and the Lehigh Valley Collegiate Business Pitch Summit.

"Creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem in the region is important in our collective efforts to diversify the business base of northeast Pennsylvania, encourage economic development and attract entrepreneurs to the area," says Mary Frances Postupack, vice president of economic development and entrepreneurship at ESU.

Perhaps nowhere is diversification through innovation more important than in the region's rural areas, such as in Wayne County, which includes the Stourbridge Project, a technology-

focused business incubator and coworking space.

Catalyst for Development

"There's a big push to invest in rural communities so that economic development opportunities and career opportunities for young people are comparable to those in urban areas," says Susan Shaffer, director of the Stourbridge Project.

The incubator helps entrepreneurs with product development and business planning and pairs them with seasoned business leaders for networking and mentoring. Shaffer says because of its reputation as a great place for second homes and retirement, the Pocono Mountains is a gold mine of leadership resources.



"We have a very strong cadre of recently retired executives who participate in mentoring the new companies. They come from all industry sectors and various parts of the country, so they have very rich experiences that they're able to share with those who are in the incubator," Shaffer says.

Left: The Innovation Center Business Accelerator at East Stroudsburg University offers startup companies access to a range of services.

Right: The Stourbridge Project in Wayne County is a coworking space and business incubator that supports technology-oriented entrepreneurs.

Clean and Green

Grassroots efforts keep the Pocono Mountains region looking its best

By Kevin Litwin

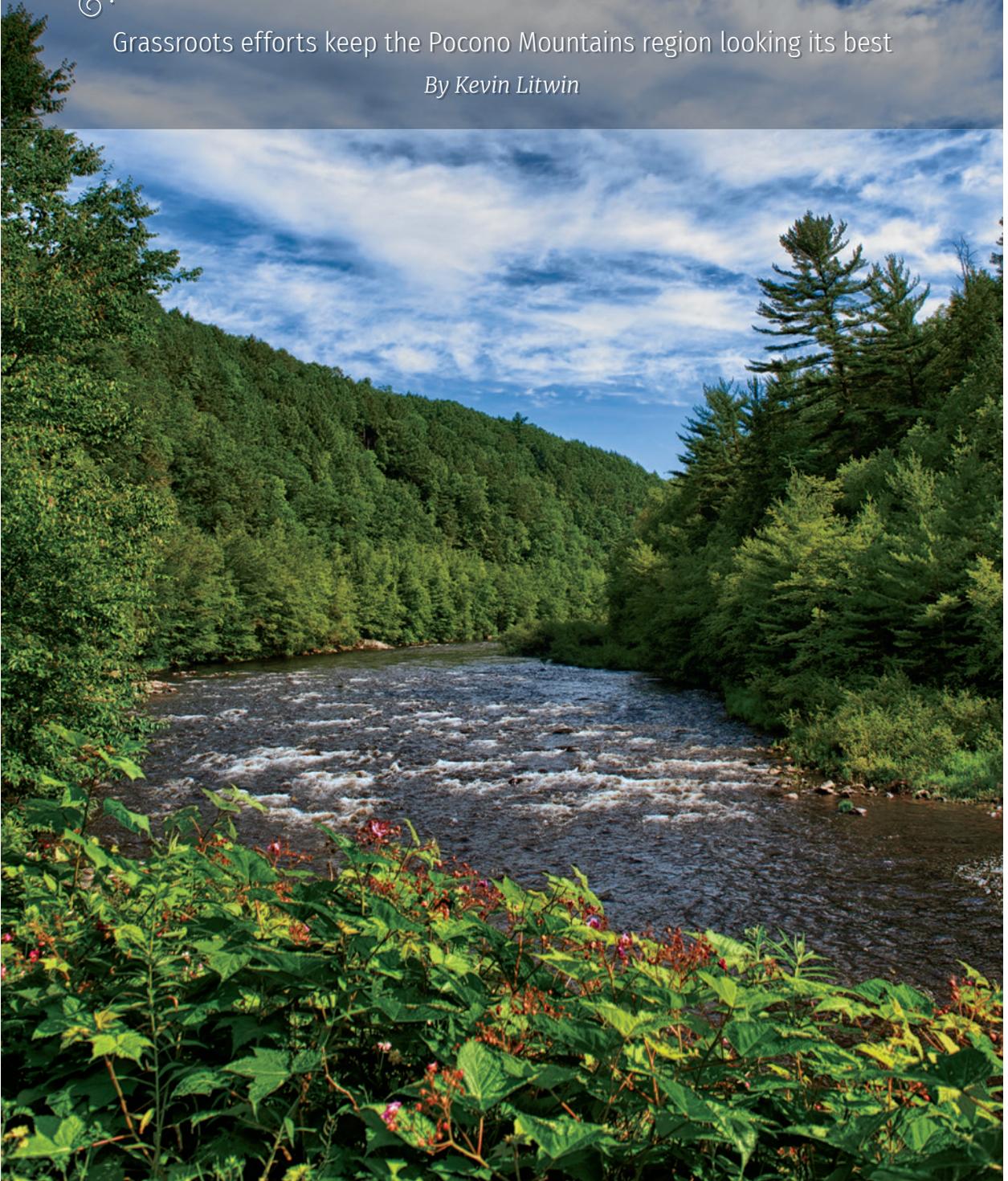


PHOTO: ANTHONY SINAGOGA

If you ask anyone who has been there what one word they associate with the Pocono Mountains, the answer most times would likely be *“beautiful.”*

Indeed, breathtaking natural features, from mountains to lakes, rivers and waterfalls are the signature staple of the 2,400-square-mile region, home to rolling mountain terrain, breathtakingly beautiful waterfalls, thriving woodlands and 170 miles of winding rivers.

To retain that image of beauty, eco-friendly initiatives are underway to make people aware that their help is needed to keep the Pocono Mountains looking good.

Annual events, such as On and Under the Delaware River Cleanup, which celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2019, serve as a rallying point for volunteers who want to keep the 70-mile Delaware River clean for future paddlers. In 2018, nearly 150 volunteers picked up close to 100 tires, 80 pounds of cans and more than a ton of garbage.

Each June for the past 23 years, the Wildlands Conservancy has run the Lehigh River Sojourn, a 32.6-mile guided paddling trip that begins in the Pocono Mountains and ends in Easton. Participants take in the region’s scenic views, visits from resident wildlife and a shared appreciation for preserving the Lehigh River.

Do Your Part

A relatively new anti-littering campaign called Pick Up the Poconos kicked off in April 2018 with an effort to bring the problem to light via billboards, social media and digital ads. The campaign also tries to get the attention of local political officials who can get out the anti-littering word to all their constituents.

“A big push in this campaign is ‘Do Your Part,’ asking people to do their



part of picking up the garbage, pitching in and don't add to the problem," says Kelly Shannon, public relations and social media manager with the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau, organizer of the initiative. "Not only does trash take away from the pristine beauty, but litter can also be harmful to animals that call these mountains home."

Shannon says littering issues come from a combination of tourists and locals and also garbage trucks and other trucks that drive through the region without proper tarps. In addition, because there is much wildlife, animals often get into garbage cans in residential areas.

"We recently had an effort that saw more than 1,600 bags of trash picked up along I-80 and I-380, and now we're aiming at tackling the exit and entrance ramps along Pennsylvania Route 33," she says. "It's a problem that now needs to be addressed, so we're making noise about it. Again, the main message is 'Do Your Part.'"



Spreading Their Wings

GRANTS HELP WITH UPGRADES AT TWO POCONO MOUNTAINS AIRPORTS

Two general aviation airports in the Pocono Mountains region have high hopes for improvement, thanks to grants to fund upgrade projects.

Jake Arner Memorial Airport in Lehighton has received a \$995,250 grant to rehabilitate the airport's aging aviation gas and jet fuel facility, with the money approved from PennDOT's Aviation Development Program. Jake Arner Memorial serves Lehighton and the surrounding areas and has about 40 based aircraft.

Also tackling a large project is Pocono Mountains Municipal Airport in Coolbaugh Township, with that facility also constructing a new fuel farm as well as T-hangars for private aircraft.

"We are essentially a gas station for airplanes and only make revenue through fuel sales to pay our operating expenses," says Bill Mullen, airport secretary and marketing chairman. "Our existing fuel farm is more than 50 years old, is underground and made from iron that rusts, so we will replace it with two aboveground, stainless steel, 5,000-gallon containers."

Mullen says the cost for the new fuel farm is \$1.2 million, so the airport applied for a 75/25 Pennsylvania Capital Budget Grant.

"We must raise \$300,000 and the state pays \$900,000, and we got our \$300,000 through an LSA (local share account) grant from gambling money raised from the casinos," he says.

Mullen says everything was approved in April 2019 but because of ecological inspections and permitting, the fuel farm replacement project probably won't start until the spring of 2020.

"It won't take long to complete and will occur at the north side of the airport," he says. "As for new T-hangars, we are constructing them with two previous LSA grants totaling \$800,000. It'll be great to rent them to airplane owners as an important source of income for this very needy airport."

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Weiler Corporation
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ECONOMIC PROFILE

POPULATION (2017)

Region

Carbon County

63,853

Monroe County

168,046

Pike County

55,691

Wayne County

51,205

Total: 338,795

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT (2016)

Carbon County

17,038

Monroe County

55,345

Pike County

11,227

Wayne County

14,745

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



PER-CAPITA INCOME



BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS

County	Number of Businesses
Carbon County	1,126
Monroe County	3,368
Pike County	918
Wayne County	1,310

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, PA Department of Labor & Industry

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Sanofi Pasteur:

- Employs thousands of individuals at its Swiftwater campus—the U.S. headquarters of Sanofi Pasteur—and is the largest private employer in Monroe County
- Continues to invest in Swiftwater, PA, including four new buildings, which has resulted in the hiring of several hundred employees
- Is one of the largest philanthropic contributors in Northeast PA, donating approximately \$1 million annually to PA-based nonprofits
- Supports and encourages its employees volunteering on boards of local and state nonprofits
- Implements comprehensive philanthropy and community relations programs that strengthen Northeastern Pennsylvania
- Is a past recipient of the PA Governor's Community ImPAct Award



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