



**Press Conference to Introduce the Career
Connector of Livingston County New York.**

Wednesday, April 20, 2022

2PM at The Chamber

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Chamber launches the Career Connector of LCNY – A first of its kind in NYS - an interactive career exploration platform that virtually connects school districts and employers.

Board of Supervisors Financial Support Makes Effort Possible

We hear it every day, “I’d love it if my kids would stay and work in the area after high school or college, and have a job here but there are limited jobs and career opportunities here.” Employers across all industries within the county share with The Chamber daily, “I need employees, I have jobs that are going unfilled and I need qualified workers.” Additionally, educators assert that students need to hear directly from employers about the skills they need to be successful in the world of work, as well as the career opportunities that exist for them.

It is for these reasons and more that The Chamber is pleased to be working directly with school districts and businesses throughout Livingston County to launch a first of its kind in NYS, career awareness and career exploration platform that directly connects employers on the job site to students in the classroom, in real-time.

“Our mission is to help students expand and explore their career horizons and learn where their interests and abilities can take them as they begin to determine what careers will be open to them in the future,” stated the

Chamber's Education to Employment Initiatives Director, Angela Grouse. "We want our students exploring those options now, when it is at no cost to them; not in the middle of their college years when that exploration is coming with a significant price tag."

Grouse continued, "The ability to directly connect career professionals in our regional businesses with students to share a 'day in the life' on the job, and the training, education and pathways for students to move into these fields are critical as we look to fill talent pipelines with the emerging workforce. Young people need the opportunity to ask questions, explore and learn about jobs that may not even have existed five years ago. The regional and national labor shortages underscore the opportunities that exist in traditional trades (both skilled and unskilled), agriculture related fields, and advanced manufacturing are enormous. Students can walk out of high school or college and begin rewarding careers here in Livingston County."

"The Chamber is pleased to be working with six school districts serving Livingston County students who have purchased district licenses for this platform. Six local businesses, with more in development, have established corporate partner pages on the Career Connector to share career opportunities, impart the skills and abilities they are seeking, and building their brand awareness through virtual engagement with students and educators. The financial support from the Livingston County Board of Supervisors and their investment in students and employers in Livingston County, is the piece that binds this all together. At a time when businesses are struggling significantly, we are grateful to the Board of Supervisors for recognizing the importance of this effort and for the financial commitment that aids both students and businesses," stated Chamber president Laura Lane.

"It's important that our local students be fully informed of the many rewarding industries and careers available to them right here in Livingston County," said Livingston County Board of Supervisors Chairman David LeFeber. "We're proud to support educational efforts like this as a County and look forward to seeing the benefits of this platform in the near future."

The Career Connector of LCNy powered by Nepris is the regional landing page of the national, cloud-based platform that connects industry professionals with K-12 classrooms to bring real world relevance and career exposure to all students. Nepris has operated for almost a decade through a variety of engagement models to bring local employers and school districts together in one place to scale the industry and education connections. It matches the skills of working professionals to curriculum needs and virtually connects them with students to bring abstract lessons to life, mentor students on class projects, provide insight into a day in the life of a professional and offer virtual tours of workspaces. The Career Connector of LCNy allows employers and

educational stakeholders to prepare students for the regional and global workforce. Corporate partners can scale, manage, and track their employee engagement through education outreach to improve students' career awareness and readiness. Livingston County employers now have the opportunity to connect directly with students and educators across both Livingston County and the nation to showcase our region, their operations, and the career opportunities that exist within their businesses. These connections allow businesses and educators to develop the competencies and dispositions of the emerging workforce for the world of work.

Livingston County Superintendents believe, and business owners concur, that students need to appreciate the tremendous opportunities and the pathways into the careers that exist in Livingston County. "In pursuing the Nepris platform and specifically, the Livingston County branded version, we believe our students will be better able to learn about the many careers possible here in Livingston County. Unfortunately, we've all seen the typical pattern where our best and brightest often believe the only way to pursue a vibrant career path is to seek employment beyond Livingston County. We've also been working diligently to cultivate student understanding that college isn't the only career path and to generate interest in pursuing skills and experiences that can open up the world of work upon high school graduation. We believe that through more efficient and accessible career development exploration, via the Career Connector of LCNY, our local employers will be better positioned to build a much-needed pipeline for recruitment and long-term retention of our students moving forward. Through this digitally connected pipeline, our students will form their career goals and life aspirations with Livingston County being a viable option, rather than an afterthought," shares Matt Cole, Superintendent of Livonia Central Schools, on behalf of our Livingston County school districts.

Mary Ellyn Merle, Project Manager with Genesee Construction, Dansville, shares, "Employers are realizing more than ever that it is important to reach students at younger and younger ages during their public-school years. From a county perspective our demographic fits into careers in agriculture, construction, and manufacturing. To retain the population, local employers should be given the opportunity to present in schools which enables students to see the local opportunities. Throughout the pandemic we had to switch our in-school presentations to virtual platform presentations. Initially, we were hesitant about our ability to connect with the students without being in person. Looking back a year later, we have realized some significant benefits from virtual presentations since we could show students actual job sites such as large haul trucks and excavation at a 5-acre pond site. These virtual tours have been extremely successful at capturing the attention of the students as well as allowing a more accurate and informative look into what work looks like on a day-to-day basis in our industries. Especially in light of the short staffing so many companies are experiencing, having an online portal option where presentations could be recorded or live streamed within their preferred time frame would attract

more business owners to participate. We do not have a single subcontractor working for us that is not attempting to hire while seeing an age out issue in a large portion of their organizations.”

Joe Bucci Jr, Environmental, Health, and Safety Manager with American Rock Salt (ARS), shares his support of this effort. “Connecting with students virtually will allow ARS to communicate our story, the history of the company and the history of mining in the Genesee Valley. It will also provide the opportunity to explain what it means to be a salt miner, what challenges we face, and what needs to happen in order to promote continued success into the future. We can go into details about what the day in the life of a miner is, what skills we look for in new employees and what a student can do in order to prepare for a career in the industry. It also allows us to take students where we might not otherwise be able to bring them - underground, on equipment, etc.”

“I am beyond impressed with the vision and the foresight that the Chamber leadership has to pursue a technology solution to scale their employer and education connections and to bring equity of access to all students across their community. This implementation could pave the way for Chambers and other intermediaries across the nation to redefine how they engage their community to prepare students for the future of work. We are excited to be working alongside such visionary leadership to engage employers directly in impacting thousands of students.” Says Sabari Raja, CEO of Nepris, Inc.

The Livingston County Area Chamber of Commerce is the largest business focused organization in the county providing a voice for businesses as they work to create a vibrant and sustainable business environment by fulfilling their mission of fostering business development and providing opportunities for their members to grow. To learn more, please contact the Chamber at (585) 243-2222 or visit online at www.livingstoncountychamber.com.

PRESS CONFERENCE DETAILS

Location: The Livingston County Area Chamber of Commerce

Address: 4635 Millennium Drive, Geneseo, NY 14454

Date and Time: Wednesday, April 20, 2022 at 2:00 P.M.

For planning purposes, if you are planning to attend, please email Angela Grouse (angela@livingstoncountychamber.com) or call (585) 243-2222