



The Center to Advance Manufacturing Monthly News

November 2025

As we move into November and begin wrapping up another fast-moving year, many organizations are asking the same question: where do we begin with artificial intelligence, automation, and the shift toward Industry 5.0? This question was a central theme in our recent webinar, *Industry 5.0: The Human–Technology Era*, presented by Tom Bush of Actual Reality Technologies, whose answer was clear, practical, and refreshingly attainable.

The session began by grounding participants in the broader evolution of manufacturing, walking through how each industrial revolution, from the steam-powered breakthroughs of Industry 1.0 to the interconnected, data-rich world of Industry 4.0, has accelerated the pace of change. One takeaway was unmistakable: the time between revolutions is shrinking. For manufacturers, that means staying informed, adaptable, and proactive is more important than ever.

A key message throughout the webinar was that Industry 5.0 is not about blindly automating or replacing people. Instead, its focus is profoundly human-centered, blending intelligent technologies with human judgment, creativity, and problem-solving to ensure people remain central to manufacturing operations.

The conversation also clarified an important distinction between machine learning and generative AI, two terms often used interchangeably but serving very different roles. While generative AI can support brainstorming, documentation, and communication, machine learning drives the high-confidence predictions manufacturers rely on for quality, maintenance, and decision-making. Pairing these tools, rather than choosing between them, is what unlocks real value in Industry 5.0 environments.

Another theme that resonated strongly was the importance of starting small. Manufacturers don't need perfectly connected systems or large upfront investments to begin this journey. Instead, Tom encouraged choosing one process, one line, or even one central question you want answered. Use the data you already have (even if it's messy) and let that drive improvement. Small wins, he reminded us, build momentum, confidence, and cultural buy-in.

The webinar highlighted several examples of how AI augments rather than replaces human expertise. Predictive tools that prevent failures before they happen, cobots that reduce ergonomic strain, and AI "copilots" that increase employee confidence all enable people to take on higher-value work while reducing the time spent on repetitive tasks. In this model, the future workforce won't simply operate machines, they will orchestrate them.

A final point centered on resilience: how to build systems and teams capable of adapting to rapid technological and economic change. Whether preparing for supply chain disruptions, forecasting workforce patterns, or designing processes that adjust quickly to customer needs, Industry 5.0 encourages organizations to strengthen their long-term adaptability.

If you missed the session, you can watch the full recording [here](#). The insights shared offer a grounded, accessible path for any organization beginning to explore what Industry 5.0 means for its people, processes, and competitiveness. As manufacturers across Northwest Ohio continue navigating rapid technological change, conversations like this help ensure our region stays informed, adaptable, and future-ready.

Strengthening Training Capacity Across Our Institutions

This fall, with the support of the Center, all three partner institutions received equipment investments to enhance their labs, training environments, and applied learning opportunities. These upgrades strengthen our region’s ability to deliver hands-on, industry-relevant instruction in advanced manufacturing. The impact will extend well beyond this year as students and incumbent workers access modern tools and technologies. More highlights from each institution will be featured in upcoming issues.

Supporting Owens Community College Student Success Through Mock Interviews

This month, the Center participated in virtual mock interviews hosted by Owens Community College to help prepare students in the school of business for future career opportunities. Our workforce training coordinator, Jeri Steinbrook, joined industry and community partners in offering feedback and guidance to students as they practiced their interviewing skills and provided feedback on their resumes. We’re proud to support efforts that build confidence and career readiness among the region’s future workforce.

Community Events

Great Lakes AI Week

Great Lakes AI Week at BGSU brought together leaders from industry, education, and technology to explore how artificial intelligence is reshaping every sector. The event highlighted BGSU’s strong commitment to preparing students with both technical AI skills and field-specific knowledge, positioning graduates for success in an increasingly AI-driven economy.

The week underscored Northwest Ohio’s growing leadership in responsible innovation, collaboration, and lifelong learning. Events like this strengthen the partnerships that support our regional manufacturing ecosystem and expand opportunities for employers, educators, and students alike.



Information Assurance Forum on Autonomous Mobility



The 24th Annual Information Assurance Forum on Autonomous Mobility at the University of Findlay brought together experts in technology, cybersecurity, and automation to examine how these fields are shaping the future of manufacturing and mobility. Highlights included regional defense initiatives from Airborne Outfitters (*pictured left: Jason Evatt, President & CEO, addressing attendees*), insights from Daifuku on automated guided vehicles, and even a crowd-roaming robot dog that stole the show. The event offered an inspiring look at the pace of autonomous technology and the expanding opportunities it presents for Northwest Ohio’s manufacturing ecosystem.

Regional Growth Partnership (RGP) & JobsOhio Regional Meeting

The Center recently attended the RGP and JobsOhio regional update, which offered valuable insights into the economic and workforce landscape across Northwest Ohio. The community college Presidents’ Panel (*pictured right*) highlighted the critical role our colleges play in meeting employer needs through seamless career pathways, industry-aligned credentials, and adaptable training models. These conversations remain essential as our region continues working to align education, training, and employer priorities to support long-term workforce growth.





Owens Community College Training Opportunities

Owens Community College is offering a four-part continuing education series designed to help professionals deepen their understanding of artificial intelligence (AI) and put it to practical use.

Artificial intelligence is transforming how we live and work, and this series highlights practical ways to use AI to boost productivity, streamline tasks, and build skills for the future. Classes are \$30 each or \$100 when registering for the full series. All sessions are available in person or virtually.



OWENS
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Demystify Artificial Intelligence: Past, Present, & Future

If you've used Google, you've probably used AI, and you've been using it for years. Unlock the secrets of artificial intelligence! This course offers a fascinating journey through AI's history, evolution, and its transformative effect on today's world. Build a strong foundation, understand ethical and social impacts, and prepare yourself to thrive in an AI-driven future and how it can benefit you in your everyday life. Whether you're curious about AI or aiming for a career in tech, this course will give you the essential knowledge to get started.

Date: Wednesday, 2/11, 6-7:30 p.m.

Artificial Intelligence Fundamentals & Tools

Dive into the exciting world of AI tools you can use every day! Learn the everyday tools that help AI work for you. From writing better prompts to boosting creativity and productivity, this hands-on course helps you build your own AI toolkit tailored to your goals - whether for personal growth or professional success. Gain real skills that employers value and watch your efficiency soar!

Date: Wednesday, 2/18, 6-7:30 p.m.

Building Your Own GPT or Agent

Ready to build custom AI? Learn to design, train, and deploy AI agents that solve real problems or inspire creativity. This course gives you practical experience in creating personalized AI solutions, with guidance on workflow building and ethical use. It's the perfect opportunity to turn your ideas into powerful tools and stand out in the AI revolution. Whether you are a content creator, entrepreneur or tech explorer, this workshop is ideal for you.

Date: Wednesday, 2/25, 6-7:30 p.m.

Artificial Intelligence Integrations for Efficiency - Make your job easier (and wow your boss)

This is where AI shines. Automate the tasks you don't like, streamline workflows, improve your teamwork and boost the results you get, by putting AI to work alongside common workplace tools you've already been using. Gain the skills to help businesses save time and improve collaboration - making you a valuable asset in any workplace. You'll impress your boss and expand your own possibilities in the workplace by adding CRMs, project management software and communication platforms, all while saving time and improving collaboration.

Date: Wednesday, 3/4, 6-7:30 p.m.

[Register Here](#)

Ohio MEP High School Internship Program

CIFT, northwest Ohio's Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) center, helps manufacturers grow and strengthen their workforce. Through the Ohio MEP High School Internship Program, companies can be reimbursed 50% of student wages (up to \$1,500) for hiring high school or career-technical interns between April 1, 2025, and March 31, 2026. Contact info@ciftinnovation.org to learn more.



JOIN US FOR

TECHCRED: THE COMPLETE HOW-TO

All the details, all your questions, one practical session



Join us at Owens Community College for a fast-paced, practical session on Ohio TechCred - the state program that helps employers reimburse up to \$2,000 per credential (up to \$30,000 per round) when employees complete eligible training.

Our Speakers



Jeri Steinbrook
Workforce Training Coordinator
Center to Advance Manufacturing



Charlene Page
Director of Workforce and Economic
Development
Owens Community College
Workforce & Community Services

What's In It For You

- **TechCred simplified:** overview of eligibility, qualifying credentials, and training providers.
- **Apply with confidence & capture the full benefit:** Step-by-step timeline from choosing credentials to submitting for reimbursement.
- **Avoid costly pitfalls:** The documentation to keep and the common mistakes that cause delays or denials.
- **Get answers fast:** Live Q&A and quick consults for your specific use case.
- **Tour the labs:** Guided walk-through of Owens' training spaces to learn about available resources
- **Leave with a toolkit:** Checklist, key dates, and contacts so you can apply confidently after the session.

TOLEDO-AREA CAMPUS:
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9
8 AM - 10 AM

FINDLAY-AREA CAMPUS:
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21
8 AM - 10 AM

REGISTER HERE

We're continuing our monthly Student Spotlight to celebrate interns, co-ops, and apprentices working with manufacturers and logistics companies across our partner schools. Real-world experience is where education and industry intersect, and each month we'll highlight a student's experience, what they learned, and their advice for peers.

If you'd like to learn about internship, co-op, and apprenticeship opportunities with students from Bowling Green State University, the University of Findlay, and Owens Community College, please reach out and we'll connect you. Together, we can create more pathways for students to build skills.

Carly Von Sossan

Bowling Green State University, Schmidthorst College of Business
 Role: Management Intern, Dayton Freight (Perrysburg, OH)



Carly Von Sossan, a business major specializing in Supply Chain Management and Business Analytics & Intelligence, spent her summer as a management intern at Dayton Freight, rotating through multiple positions to learn how freight moves from carrier to customer. She credits the College of Business for strengthening her communication and multitasking skills, which helped her step confidently into a fast-paced, hands-on environment. What she enjoyed most was the supportive culture - coworkers who were quick to answer questions, explain processes, and make her feel part of the team. Working across all shifts pushed her outside her comfort zone, but it also deepened her understanding of how each part of the operation connects, reinforcing her passion for logistics and validating her choice of major. Carly says the experience was "satisfying, fun, and interesting," and she looks forward to carrying the skills and perspective she gained into her future coursework and career.

Beyond internships and co-ops, our partner schools are creating powerful platforms for students to demonstrate their skills in action. One example is BGSU's upcoming Design Day, which offers an inside look at student-driven innovation and problem-solving.

Hosted by BGSU's College of Engineering & Innovation, the event showcases capstone projects from the Schools of the Built Environment, Engineering, and Aviation. It highlights how students are applying classroom knowledge to real-world challenges through creativity, collaboration, and technical skill.

The event offers a meaningful glimpse into the next generation of problem-solvers and industry professionals. Anyone interested in engaging with students and seeing their work firsthand is welcome to attend and explore the impressive projects on display. Free parking is available. For more information, contact cei@bgsu.edu.

Design Day
 Friday, Dec. 5 | 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 Kokosing Hall
 820 Park Ave., Bowling Green
 *Light refreshments provided.



College of
Engineering and Innovation

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

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