

## NEWS RELEASE

June 23, 2020

Contact: Laura S. Eppler  
Chief Marketing Officer  
Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania  
Cell 610.417.5261  
[leppler@nep.benfranklin.org](mailto:leppler@nep.benfranklin.org)

For Immediate Release:

### **Ben Franklin Rebuilding Manufacturers Investments Include 17 Companies**

#### **BFTP Invests \$404,370 in Manufacturing with Return to Health Funding**

The [Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania](#) (BFTP/NEP) announces that it has made emergency investments in 17 regional manufacturers totaling \$404,370 to help these companies accelerate the recovery from the economic crisis caused by COVID-19. The funds were provided through a \$1 million disbursement from the [Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development](#) (DCED) that was matched by BFTP/NEP.

BFTP/NEP developed a Return to Health funding program including various types of company investments. Rebuilding Northeastern PA Manufacturers Investments will allow BFTP/NEP's recent established manufacturer clients with 250 or fewer employees to develop and implement plans for recovery.

BFTP/NEP also invested \$1,435,500 in 18 promising early-stage firms in this round with support from DCED. Ben Franklin's total Return to Health investments in the northeastern Pennsylvania economy is \$1,840,470, invested in 35 companies.

Many of these manufacturing firms were partway through the development of innovative production and process enhancements, and failing to complete them would hinder their recovery and growth. These clients will facilitate job retention and creation.

BFTP/NEP announces the following Rebuilding Northeastern PA Manufacturers Investments, which are provided to manufacturers as matching funding. The 17 companies receiving investments will engage a range of consultants to help them quickly, safely, and efficiently return to work and plan for growth.

**Adelphia Seafood**, <https://www.adelphiaseafood.com/>, West Lawn, Berks County

Ben Franklin investment: \$25,000

Support the company's supply chain and improve the company's competitiveness during the economic downturn caused by COVID-19. Adelphia Seafood processes, packages, and distributes fresh and frozen seafood to grocery stores and other retailers, restaurants, food service companies, and direct consumers.

**American Polarizers, Inc.**, <https://www.apioptics.com/>, Reading, Berks County

Ben Franklin investment: \$24,000

Improve product information access to respond to customer requirements more effectively than foreign competitors do. American Polarizers manufactures polarized and non-polarized optical products that are used for scientific and medical instrumentation. The company also produces for aerospace, electronics, photographic, and animated display industries, which contribute to important government security efforts.

**BRD Noise and Vibration Control, Inc.**, <https://hushcore.net/>, Wind Gap, Northampton County

Ben Franklin investment: \$25,000

Assess tools and methods to allow for a more touch-free workplace now and in the future by implementing 3D scanning and modeling technology to provide a more accurate product. BRD Noise and Vibration Control specializes in HVAC acoustic design and manufacturing to help architects, MEP and acoustical consultants, and design/build contractors in the specification of cost-effective approaches to keep mechanical equipment quiet. The firm also troubleshoots and implements remediation treatments for sound problems in existing construction.

**Cogle's Recycling, Inc.**, [www.couglesrecycling.com](http://www.couglesrecycling.com), Hamburg, Berks County

Ben Franklin Investment: \$24,400

Execute a feasibility and design project to help Cogle's Recycling reduce transportation and greenhouse gas emission while reducing costs for recovery, processing, and recycling. Cogle's Recycling is an environmentally conscious post-consumer and post-industrial recycler. The company continues to seek an efficient and responsible method to manage multiple waste streams.

**East Coast Erosion Control**, [www.eastcoasterosion.com](http://www.eastcoasterosion.com), Bernville, Berks County

Ben Franklin Investment: \$25,000

Enhance quality control software to improve the company's competitiveness during the economic downturn caused by COVID-19. East Coast Erosion manufactures erosion control products, turf reinforcement mats, and sediment devices for the construction industry. The company is one of the largest producers of erosion blankets and other erosion products in the U.S.

**Effort Foundry, Inc.**, [www.effortfoundry.com](http://www.effortfoundry.com), Bath, Northampton County

Ben Franklin Investment: \$25,000

Implement product and process improvements to improve the company's competitiveness during the economic downturn caused by COVID-19. Effort Foundry supplies high-integrity steel castings for the pump, valve, power generation, and military industries.

**Gateway Ticketing Systems**, <https://www.gatewayticketing.com/>, Gilbertsville, Berks County

Ben Franklin investment: \$25,000

Continue to improve the customer experience by implementing a reporting data warehouse to improve the company's competitiveness during the economic downturn caused by COVID-19. Gateway Ticketing Systems produces high-speed, access control, admission control, and ticketing software. The software is used internationally at zoos, water parks, museums, amusement parks, aquariums, ferries, and at other attractions.

**Heritage Sign & Display, Inc.**, [www.popsigns.com](http://www.popsigns.com), Nesquehoning, Carbon County

Ben Franklin investment: \$25,000

Continue to implement a new sales/marketing plan, improve manufacturing processes, and respond to high demand for products related to COVID-19. Heritage Sign & Display is a full-service Point-of-Purchase (POP) display supplier serving high-profile retail brands worldwide. The company leverages a line of in-house POP display design, development, and production capabilities to enhance clients' messaging and merchandising.

**Heyco Metals, Inc.**, <https://heycometals.com/>, Reading, Berks County

Ben Franklin investment: \$25,000

Support Heyco Metals' business transformation initiative and enhance the supply chain to improve the company's competitiveness during the economic downturn caused by COVID-19. Heyco Metals is a precision mill that produces copper and copper alloy coil and stainless steel strip to exacting specifications for use in automotive, medical, aerospace, connectors, and consumer electronics markets, including ventilators and testing products.

**Nazareth Pallet Co., Inc.**, <https://nazpallet.com/>, Northampton, Northampton County

Ben Franklin investment: \$25,000

Improve production processes to reduce costs while continuing to be compliant with COVID-19 restrictions. Nazareth Pallet customizes, recycles, and rebuilds wooden pallets.

**Noble Biomaterials, Inc.**, <http://noblebiomaterials.com/>, Scranton, Lackawanna County

Ben Franklin Investment: \$25,000

Test Noble's silver-based products against relevant virus strains to characterize the products' resistance effectiveness. A global leader in bacterial management solutions, Noble Biomaterials develops, manufactures, sells, and markets advanced antimicrobial technologies designed to manage all forms of viral and bacterial contamination for medical, defense, industrial, and consumer markets. Noble's core technology, X-STATIC®, is a proprietary silver-based antimicrobial solution used for mission-critical applications including advanced wound care, infection control, and odor elimination. Noble has more than 200 licensees, including Johnson & Johnson, NASA, 3M, US Special Operations Command, adidas, and others.

**Production Systems Automation, LLC**, <https://psasystems.com/>, Duryea, Luzerne County

Ben Franklin Investment: \$25,000

Production Systems Automation (PSA) is seeking FDA Emergency Use Approval (EUA) and patent registration for an N95 & KN95 mask decontamination unit, The SaniPro 2000 PPE Oven. The SaniPro 2000 is developed to address the growing PPE mask shortage caused by COVID-19 by killing the virus through the use of heat and humidity, known as Moist Heat Incubation, thus allowing for safe re-use of N95/KN95 masks. The SaniPro 2000 is capable of decontaminating up to 120 masks per decontamination cycle and each mask may be decontaminated for safe re-use up to five times prior to disposal. PSA provides engineering, design and manufacturing of specialized automated equipment. The company has machining and fabrication capabilities as well as innovative design and engineering resources that allow it to respond to clients' needs in various industries.

**Sealstrip Corporation**, <https://sealstrip.com/>, Gilbertsville, Montgomery County

Ben Franklin Investment: \$14,250

Upgrade to Global Food Safety Initiative certification, a new requirement because of COVID-19, which ensures the food supply is safe and stable. Sealstrip designs and manufactures easy-open and easy-reseal systems for flexible packaging, pressure-sensitive tapes, and related products for industries including food and pharma/medical.

**Shumaker Industries**, <https://www.shumakerindustries.com/>, Northumberland,

Northumberland County

Ben Franklin investment: \$25,000

Complete research and development, testing, and prototype development for a water reclamation project that was halted due to COVID-19. Shumaker's produces the Load-and-Go Ready Mixed Truck Wash® system. Load-and-Go greatly reduces post-loading wash-down time and reclaims wastewater and residual waste solids for reuse. Shumaker Industries manufactures drums and other steel accessories for concrete mixers.

**Tower Products**, [https://www.towerproducts.com](https://www.towerproducts.com/), Easton, Northampton County

Ben Franklin investment: \$25,000

Perform a workflow and process review to streamline operations while remaining COVID-19 compliant, and implement a customer relationship management module as the next phase in the company's Enterprise Resource Planning implementation. Tower Products manufactures environmentally sensitive offset and flexographic pressroom chemistry products.

**United Gilsonite Laboratories**, <http://www.ugl.com/>, Scranton, Lackawanna County

Ben Franklin investment: \$25,000

Identify and implement product and process improvements to improve the company's competitiveness during the economic downturn caused by COVID-19. United Gilsonite Laboratories manufactures innovative and industry-leading masonry waterproofing finishing products and wood stains that are used in homes and other buildings.

**[Vastex International, Inc.](http://www.vastex.com)**, [www.vastex.com](http://www.vastex.com), Bethlehem, Northampton County

Ben Franklin investment: \$16,720

Retain legal assistance as part of adjusting to the company's new operating environment as a result of COVID-19. Vastex International manufactures screen printing machinery, primarily for the apparel industry.

### **About the Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania**

The [Ben Franklin Technology Partners of Northeastern Pennsylvania](#) (BFTP/NEP) creates and retains highly paid, sustainable jobs by investing in and linking companies with experts, universities, follow-on funding, and other resources to help them prosper through innovation. It is part of a four-center economic development initiative of the [Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development](#) and is funded by the Ben Franklin Technology Development Authority.

BFTP/NEP's strategy encompasses three key areas:

1. developing and growing early-stage technology-oriented companies;
2. supporting established manufacturers as they creatively apply new technology to help them succeed globally by producing better, faster, and at a lower cost;
3. promoting an innovative community-wide infrastructure that supports Pennsylvania's business technology ecosystem.

Since beginning operations in 1983, BFTP/NEP has helped to create 19,257 new jobs for Pennsylvania workers and to retain 43,880 existing jobs, to start 525 new companies, and to develop 2,113 new products and processes. Since 2007, BFTP/NEP clients have generated more than \$1.6 billion in follow-on funding. The [Pennsylvania Ben Franklin Technology Partners network](#) has returned \$3.90 to the state treasury for every \$1.00 invested in the program.

BFTP/NEP owns, manages, and is headquartered in [Ben Franklin TechVentures®](#), an award-winning business incubator/post-incubator facility on Lehigh University's campus in Bethlehem. BFTP/NEP also owns and manages the [Bloomsburg Regional Technology Center](#). Applying more than 35 years of experience and two international awards for excellence in business incubation, BFTP/NEP leads a 13-member business incubator network that is among the largest in the nation.

###