

# The Alliance Matters

*Newsletter of the CNY Defense Alliance*

May 2020

Visit us at [www.cnydefensesalliance.org](http://www.cnydefensesalliance.org)



Welcome to "The Alliance Matters," where you can read about our initiatives and accomplishments and relevant news about CNY, our defense ecosystem, our members, partners, and upcoming events.

Check out Central NY is Thriving!!

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=598503340900040>

***Federal and Defense assets power CNY's high-tech economy.*** *The Alliance works to protect and expand those assets and the countless jobs and opportunities they bring to the region. We are your voice in Washington, Albany, and beyond!*



**OUR MISSION:** Promote, Advocate, Strengthen and Expand the Defense and Federal assets that support the economies of the five-county CNY region, including:

- **Air Force Research Laboratory Information Directorate (AFRL/RI),**
- **Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS),**
- **Eastern Area Defense Sector (EADS),**
- **FAA-Designated New York Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Test Site.**

With so many of us working from home, the Alliance is happy to share a slate of good news about progress and achievement in CNY, as well as some of the many ways the region, our members, our federal assets, and local, state, and federal representatives are pulling together to keep us all safe and moving forward in these challenging times.

## Central NY Coming Together to Fight COVID-19

Leading as always, the AFRL Information Directorate, aka Rome Lab, continues to make vital contributions to national security and the future of computing and information science, while implementing policies and procedures to keep personnel and the community safe from COVID-19. The lab has acted quickly to enable military and defense personnel to conduct remote work safely, rapidly deploying secure access to classified networks. <https://www.wpafb.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2143911/amid-covid-19-hurdles-afri-develops-jump-kits-to-rapidly-enable-operations-suppl>

## Amid COVID-19 pandemic, AFRL technology protects medical facilities

The Department of Defense is deploying Counter-Small Unmanned Aerial Systems (C-sUAS) developed by the **Air Force Research Laboratory's Information Directorate** to military medical facilities in support of the medical response to COVID-19, including the hospital ships USNS Mercy and USNS Comfort. With the increase in COVID-19 patients, this technology is essential to provide security to ensure that lifesaving operations

continue unhindered. Read more at <https://www.wpafb.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2162849/amid-covid-19-pandemic-afrl-technology-protects-medical-facilities/>

The Lab has leveraged its many connections with businesses and non-profits to get critical Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) from those who can make it to the hospitals in need. <https://www.wpafb.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2146679/afrl-small-business-office-connects-hospitals-medical-facilities-in-need-of-pr/> In addition, the Lab is providing local residents with the opportunity to share a patriotic moment each week while social distancing, from their cars, or during solo morning exercise, by playing the Star Spangled Banner every Friday morning at 7:45, audible throughout Griffiss Business and Technology Park. Roll down your windows as you drive by! <https://www.wpafb.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/2127118/patriotic-tributes-prevail-at-afrls-rome-lab-amid-covid-19-concerns/>

EADS, too, continues to execute its 24/7 air defense mission, and is in fact recruiting and hiring – a unique opportunity during the NY Pause. Anyone interested in being part of this critical effort can contact Staff Sgt Courtney Wilson at the 174<sup>th</sup> Attack Wing recruiting office, 315-233-2161 to learn more.

Academe and the private sector are also making major contributions. Regional SUNY campuses are making a huge difference. Medical trials for COVID-19 treatments and tests are underway at Upstate Medical University. More than 62,000 people have gotten information about COVID-19 symptoms using the new Upstate University Hospital [triage hotline and online assessment tool](#), and Upstate is now conducting in-house testing, using their own protocols for more accurate results: Innovation and independence, two hallmarks of CNY! <https://www.syracuse.com/coronavirus/2020/04/syracuse-hospital-now-processing-its-own-coronavirus-tests-for-faster-results.html> Alliance member SUNY Poly's faculty and students, with support from Oneida County, are using the university's many 3D printers to create face shields for front-line healthcare providers. SUNY Poly's Center for Global Advanced Manufacturing (CGAM) is producing about 50 per day. <https://wibx950.com/suny-poly-using-3d-printers-to-make-face-shields-for-medical-workers/>

Alliance member Syracuse University introduced internist Dr. John Callahan to local company JMA Wireless to produce a ventilator based on an open-source design from MIT. In just 10 days JMA engineers, in consultation with Dr. Callahan, came up with the Pandemic Response Emergency Ventilation Assembled in Liverpool New York, or PREVAIL NY, which will produce hundreds of ventilators each week. <https://www.localsyr.com/news/local-news/jma-wireless-teams-with-local-doctor-to-create-emergency-ventilation-mechanical-system/> Syracuse faculty have also been actively 3D printing personal protection equipment (PPE) for healthcare workers, and collaborating with Upstate Medical University and SUNY ESF on human and environmental testing that will help monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and bring it under control. Many regional businesses are also keeping our essential workers safe by producing PPE. Frankfort company Genesis Disposables is producing gowns for healthcare workers, and Utica's Omelko Research is making, and donating, face shields. Cascade in Liverpool shifted from making protective gear for lacrosse to face shields for medical personnel.

Countless individuals and companies are stepping up to help others to continue operating and staying safe during social distancing. M.A. Polce Consulting is offering free, secure WebEx to local businesses to facilitate working from home <https://mapolce.com/webex-emergency-preparedness/>. Regional Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs), including Mohawk Valley SBDC and Thincubator, are hosting informational webinars, and are available for all services by videoconference. Even CNY's regional breweries and distilleries, like Old Home and Beak and Skiff, have made important contributions to keeping Central New Yorkers safe, turning operations from beverage production to creating safe and effective hand sanitizer for the public and for essential workers.

We have certainly overlooked other key contributions – if you know of any person or organization making a difference, please drop an email to [info@cnydefensealliance.com](mailto:info@cnydefensealliance.com) and we will be happy to share the good news!

### **Our Federal, State and Local Representatives Working Tirelessly for CNY**

All of our representatives have created informational pages and additional resources to help Central New Yorkers navigate the current environment and find the services and support they need. Anthony Picente has created an Oneida County “dashboard” to disseminate critical information on COVID-19, including an online survey to better understand the impact of the current restrictions on the county's business community.

<https://ocgov.net/health/coronavirus>

Regional congressional representatives Anthony Brindisi and John Katko have been working closely together to assure CNY receives the support it needs from the federal government. Brindisi secured a grant for regional hospitals. <https://couriernewsroom.com/2020/03/31/rep-anthony-brindisi-secures-grant-for-new-york-health-facilities-to-combat-coronavirus/> and he introduced a bill to ensure we break our reliance on China for vital medical supplies by mandating that the national stockpile buy American:

<https://www.syracuse.com/coronavirus/2020/04/why-are-supplies-from-china-needed-in-coronavirus-fight-brindisi-wants-that-to-change.html>

## **Progress Continues on Collaborative Open Innovation Center at Griffiss Business and Technology Park**

When businesses begin to resume operations in the coming weeks, there will be exciting new facilities and opportunities opening throughout the region. Take a virtual walk through

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AVF7mgnr7zo>

The AFRL-SUNY-Griffiss Institute-Oneida County Collaborative Open Innovation Campus (OIC) is well underway, still scheduled for a grand opening this summer. An amazing facility located adjacent to the Griffiss International Airport in the Griffiss Business and Technology Park, the OIC will bring together thought leaders and research scientists from government, defense, academe and the private sector in a single cutting-edge research and collaboration facility. This agile and transformative ecosystem will connect global technology leaders to collaborate and solve complex Air Force computing challenges, sharing ideas and facilities virtually and in person.

The Campus is strategically located outside of the AFRL boundaries to streamline the development of external outreach and collaborations in a setting that will include quantum computing and neuromorphic computing laboratories and a variety of different work and collaboration spaces.

Rather than simply waiting for collaborations to evolve organically, OIC will get efforts off the ground by focusing on a specific set of challenge problems to engage potential partners. The challenge problems will be created in conjunction with the Core Technical Competency (CTC) leads at AFRL/RI to complement their strategic visions, seeding areas for future work. These challenge problems will be updated annually. Initial challenge problems will include questions in quantum computing, quantum algorithm development, hardware to support AI/ML/Internet of Things, advancing AI/ML techniques, neuromorphic computing, distributed C2, advanced cyber, and much more. Challenge questions are available to prospective OIC partners.

## **SkyDome Indoor UAS Test Facility on Schedule to Open This Summer**

Progress is also continuing on the \$9 Million transformation of the West Bay Hanger which is adjacent to the OIC, into a first-of-its kind fully-equipped indoor Unmanned Aerial Systems test facility. Called SkyDome, this amazing project will enable users to conduct a wide array of tests and experiments on smaller UAS, including many that cannot be performed outdoors. The facility will provide an RF-controlled setting for communications and Command and Control (C2) technologies, a GPS simulator, and a growing array of weather condition simulations. "New York's forward-thinking investment in drone technology is placing the Mohawk Valley on the global stage for a growing industry," Governor Cuomo said. "This groundbreaking project will help solidify the region's status as a national hub for innovation, support our emergency response capabilities and bolster our ongoing efforts to rebuild the upstate economy region by region."

## **NYSTEC's New High-Tech Building**

Until New York went on "Pause" last month, many of NYSTEC's 200+ data scientists, network engineers, and cybersecurity experts were enjoying their new office space in NYSTEC's recently completed \$8.5 million headquarters building. GLDC partnered with NYSTEC to construct the 32,000 square foot high-tech building. NYSTEC's headquarters staff occupies 17,000 square feet of the building, and the rest is leased to Booz Allen Hamilton. The building is a shining addition to the Griffiss Business and Technology Park, the center of CNY's high-tech ecosystem. NYSTEC was founded in Rome, and the company plans to double the number of employees based in Rome over the next three years. The new building serves as a technology hub, a base for NYSTEC operations, and a local office for global companies.

## **AFRL Rome Fiscal Year 2020 Update**

AFRL Rome Budget lines (62 and 63) stayed steady. The Alliance was successful in working with Senators Schumer and Gillibrand and Congressman Brindisi to capture funding that will support:

- **Quantum Information Science [Public/Private] Innovation Center (QIC)**

This facility will be the centerpiece of the Open Innovation Campus Quantum Research. It will be a state-of-the-art environment, bringing together prominent NY State and other national universities, private industry and government labs to investigate novel solutions to challenging problems for the DoD, and for a wide array of other domains, including Financial, Aviation, Cybersecurity, and Health Care.

- **AI/Machine Learning [Public/Private] Center of Excellence**

Also located at the Open Innovation Campus, this research and development platform will kick start an AI/ML ecosystem and accelerate the development of new algorithms and data repositories. This facility will serve as an intellectual magnet, tapping top researchers in multiple disciplines, from computer science and data analytics to engineering.

## **DFAS – Big Win**

“...the (Defense) Department is not considering or recommending any combinations of functions involving DFAS or other defense agencies, nor any use of commercial providers for the services provided by DFAS,” said its executive summary. The 20-plus-page report, recently issued, was prepared for the Department of Defense by the Office of the Chief Management Officer and Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), as directed in the fiscal 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

Rome DFAS, located at Griffiss park, has about 960 employees and is one of five major DFAS operating sites. Rome DFAS union local President Edward Abounader praised the efforts of Brindisi’s office as well as the offices of U.S. Senators Kirsten Gillibrand and Charles Schumer, both D-NY, in helping to strengthen the case for DFAS during the federal review. He also emphasized the “metrics provided by DFAS management” regarding its operational details, which “certainly led to the conclusions you saw in that report.”

<https://romesentinel.com/stories/big-win-for-dfas-says-union-official,97563>

## **Atlantic Strategies Group Washington Update – 1 May 2020**

The Senate returned to work, with judges and FISA renewal on the docket. The House did not return, but leadership is looking for ways to proceed safely on critical pending business.

Defense and COVID Relief: HASC Chairman Adam Smith said he does not see a need for more DoD funding in the next relief package. While the Defense industry will need significant recovery support, he argued that the \$738B FY20 Defense budget is sufficient. SASC Chairman Inhofe framed Smith’s statement in the context of negotiations over the next package, and multiple sources say that the Department has asked the Services for lists of programs that could be/need to be plussed up this fiscal year.

DoD Reprogramming Request Taking Shape: Acting Pentagon Comptroller Elaine McCusker requested info by May 8 on Services’ reprogramming priorities so their proposals can be vetted and possibly included in the Department’s annual omnibus request to Congress. COVID quarantines are slowing spend rates across multiple accounts and there are likely to be unobligated operations and maintenance and military personnel funding in the fourth quarter. That funding expires at the end of the fiscal year, so over the next few months DOD could reprogram that money and move it into contracts where it can be executed at the end of the fiscal year.

CARES 2.0 Priorities Emerging: Lots of signaling on partisan priorities for the next relief package, which is not expected before mid- to late-May (at the earliest). Speaker Pelosi wants to see as much as \$1 trillion (Yes, that’s a “T”) in relief for state and local governments, assistance that could arrive in as many as three separate 'tranches' to aid to hard-hit states, counties and municipalities - and could extend for three or four years, providing long-term help as the economy stabilizes. This in addition to hundreds of billions more expected to be included in the bill to help workers, families and businesses weather the crisis.

Senate Republicans blanched at the \$1 trillion number, but with both the National Governor’s Association and the

National Council of State Legislatures submitting bi-partisan letters to Congress and the WH in recent weeks, urging significant assistance to state and local governments who have seen emergency costs skyrocket while state and local tax income has cratered, there is growing bipartisan support for a significant bailout. Meanwhile, Majority Leader McConnell has made clear that a top priority and “redline” for Republicans in the next bill is liability protections for employers from lawsuits in the post-coronavirus world.

Recovery Priorities also Emerging: A large recovery package seems weeks/months away, but there is growing consensus that such a bill(s) will be necessary, and likely to include:

- Relief for mid-size companies, including Treasury-backed low-interest loans, and “paycheck security”
- This is a bill drafting effort being led by Mark Warner working w/ Mnuchin and Pelosi:
  - Must prove 20% revenue reduction
  - Not limited to size (maybe not cover large public companies)
  - Goal to cover 100% of paychecks up to \$90K but he understands this is ideal and will need to be negotiated.
  - Would tie this to the employee retention tax credit that was passed in CARES.
- Infrastructure broadly defined – roads/DoD projects/broadband, etc
- “Made in America” efforts targeting medical PPE and the Strategic National Stockpile – the WH has a draft EO and several bills have already been introduced in both Houses.