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SPIE.OPTIFABULOUS!!



Highlights from Optifab 2023

Thousands of optics industry experts and professionals from around the world gathered at North America's largest optical fabrication exhibition. SPIE and APOMA organized Optifab 2023 in Rochester, NY in mid-October with a full agenda of presentations and activities. AmeriCOM hosted two noteworthy events, and was invited to speak at a third. Our plenary panel and Student Day activities became the buzz of the conference, while our CEO met with precision optics manufacturers to share the organization's priorities for the industry.

[Read More](#)

AmeriCOM recognizes optics companies across the USA for serving on the Advisory Boards of our partner colleges. Thank you!

Alpine Research Optics / Ball Aerospace / Beam Engineering / BridgeComm / Chronos Photonics / Corning / Corning Tropel Corp. / CPIA / Critical Frequency / East High School, Rochester City School District / Edmund Optics / Evolve Engineering and Software / Excelitas / IDEX / Jenoptik / JK Consulting / Kiosk Information Systems / KM Labs / L3Harris Technologies / L3Harris Technologies - Space and Airborne Systems / LightPath / Lockheed Martin / Luminar / Meadowlark Optics / NY Photonics - Rochester Regional Photonics Cluster / Ocean Insights / Optimax Systems, Inc. / OptiPro Systems / QED Technologies / Quantinuum / Raytheon / REO / Sydor Optics / Thorlabs / Thorlabs Lens Systems / University of Central Florida, CREOL / University of Rochester, Laboratory for Laser Energetics

SPIE Photonics Summit Recap

Federal funding and policy are critical to the success of the optics, photonics, imaging, and laser industries which help support virtually every sector of the U.S. economy. For a second year in a row, a capacity crowd convened at the nation's capital in September to hear directly from policymakers about their priorities and issues that affect our industry at SPIE's Photonics Industry Summit.

Rep. Joseph Morelle (NY-25), co-chair of the **Congressional Optics and Photonics Caucus**, spoke at a special session titled "*Potential Legislative Impacts*

on the Optics and Photonics Industry." The significance of national policy was not lost on attendees, many of whom participated in last year's inaugural summit just six weeks after the **CHIPS and Science Act** was signed into law. The state of progress on many of the initiatives introduced by that legislation prompted frequent questions and breakout discussions from attendees throughout the day.



Representative Joseph Morelle (NY-25), spoke at a special session at the September SPIE Photonics Summit.

[Read More Summit Highlights](#)

Valencia College Launches Optics Program

Central Florida faces a growing demand for precision optics technicians. Industry giants like Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, and L3Harris Technologies rely on technicians to help produce complex lenses for defense and national security systems. Other area optics manufacturers also have unfilled technician jobs as they produce precision lenses for everyday consumer applications. Now help is on the way. Valencia College in Orlando launched the inaugural cohort of its Precision Optics, Photonics, and Fiber Optics Technician training course which aims to have students job-ready in less than four months.



The first Precision Optics, Photonics, and Fiber Optics Technician training course consisted of sixteen students of varied ages and backgrounds. There is already a waiting list for the next class in the spring.

[Read more about this program and the industry partners providing support.](#)

Community Colleges Advocate for Support

Organizations involved in workforce development, like AmeriCOM, rely directly on community colleges to design and deliver the training programs that result in work-ready technicians.



Community Colleges by the Numbers

- 1,039 – Community Colleges total
- Fall 2021 total enrollment: 10.2 Million
- 58.6% of students are women
- 23% of students are parents
- 68% of students are also working full- or part-time
- Average age: 27
- Community College students make up 38.1% of all US Undergraduate Students

Josanne DeNatale, AmeriCOM's National Marketing and Workforce Development Operations Director, attended the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Advocacy in Action event in Washington, D.C. in September to learn about how the U.S. Congress is managing current community college and workforce related issues. The event served as a great reminder of the tremendous impact that community colleges have on the lives of anyone looking to build or advance a career in the technical trades.

[Learn more about the critical role of community colleges.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

SPIE Mirror Technology SBIR/STTR Workshop Huntsville, AL

Nov. 14-16, 2023

Defense Manufacturing Conference (DMC) Nashville, TN

Dec. 11-14, 2023

SPIE Photonics West

San Francisco, CA

Jan. 27-Feb 1, 2024

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