



SMC Monthly News

ADVANCING THE MANUFACTURING AND SMALL BUSINESS COMMUNITIES

MARCH 2018

SMC & MBA present the acclaimed Certified Supervisory Skills Series

We are very excited to offer to our members an all-inclusive Supervisory Skills Certificate Training Series through our partnership with the Manufacturer & Business Association (MBA) headquartered in Erie, PA.

The MBA has been conducting this series for their members for nearly 30 years, with their 10,000th graduate completing the program this past January. The program is applicable for anyone supervising/managing team members in every type of business. Candidates to consider enrolling in the series are those you recently promoted, are planning to promote or your supervisors who have not had access to such an all-inclusive series.

The Supervisory Skills Certificate Series is so highly regarded by MBA members that many have made the course a requirement as part of the position's job description.

Watch for details to come in the mail for this five-course series and equip your business for success.

For program and content questions, contact Patty Welther at 814-833-3200 or pwelther@mbausa.org.

10,000+ TRAINED!

What's Inside

State of the Association
2017 Year in Review

[page 2](#)

Top 10 Workplace
Discrimination Claims

[page 3](#)

HR Helpline
Typical Questions

[page 3](#)

New Medicare Cards

[page 4](#)

March Madness
Event

[page 5](#)

March Calendar
of Events

[page 5](#)

Write for Us!

Would you like to have your article appear in an upcoming issue of the SMC Monthly News? Well, now you can!

SMC is accepting articles for future publications on relevant, timely topics of interest to business owners. (Articles are subject to approval by SMC.)

Get free exposure for your firm and submit your article to the SMC Monthly News [HERE!](#)



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Year in Review 2017

State of the Association-2017

By Eileen Anderson, Director, Government Relations

Q. Why is Government Advocacy important for small businesses?

A. Small business issues and barriers to growth must be heard by those who write the laws and regulations that impact our businesses. If we are silent it means that we are “OK” with the status quo. SMC’s mission is to build a pro-business environment in Pennsylvania. Here are several of the actions carried out by members and staff in 2017. [Read More>>](#)

Resources

- PA Small Business Assistance - Look here for business services and resources. [Click here.](#)

Tax Reform for the Small Business Owner: Approach with Caution

By [Joseph P. Nicola, Jr., CPA, JD, CVA, Sistorson](#)



There has been a great deal of discussion and debate over the impact of tax reform on small businesses and their owners. Congress enacted the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act in late-2017, and, in doing so, created a number of business incentives. Many of these incentives will benefit

small businesses and their owners. In many cases, the benefits will depend on the overall tax posture of the owner and his or her family.

The impact of tax reform on small business owners and their families will be significant. Individual tax rates are lower, and the standard deduction has been increased. [Read More>>](#)

Monday, April 30, 2018 2018 Harrisburg Grassroots Lobbying Trip

Join your business peers for a day on the Hill. It’s part work and part play.

Work - meetings with lawmakers on Gov. Wolf’s mandated minimum wage, a long-range energy plan for PA, regulatory reform etc. **Play** - Hear four terrific speakers - Charlie Gerow, CEO of Quantum Communications, and a nationally recognized leader in strategic communications; John Nikoloff, Partner, ERG Partners, with more than 20 years of experience in public affairs and lobbying; Mike Bonini, Director of Public-Private Partnerships, Rapid Bridge Replacement Program; and Jessica Shirley, Policy Director, PA Department of Environmental Protection. [Register today, click here](#)



PennTAP’s Partnership with the Learning Factory at Penn State

By [Christie Black, cxb81@psu.edu](#)

Companies benefit by sponsoring student-engineering projects at Penn State

The [Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program](#) (PennTAP) offers companies an opportunity to move engineering designs forward by working with faculty and students at Penn State through a sponsorship with the [Bernard M. Gordon Learning Factory](#).

Tim Kerchinski, innovation team lead for PennTAP, said companies could present a project at the design, proof-of-concept or prototype assistance phase.

“Through the Learning Factory, sponsors have unique access to Penn State resources including the opportunity to engage with Penn State . . . [Read More>>](#)

HR INSIGHTS

Top 10 Workplace Discrimination Claims

In 2017, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) resolved more than 99,109 workplace discrimination claims—securing more than \$398 million from employers in the private and public sectors as a result of these claims. Discrimination lawsuits can be very time-consuming and expensive for employers, and can result in a loss of employee morale or reputation within the community.

Top Causes of Discrimination Claims
According to the EEOC, the following are the top 10 reasons for workplace discrimination claims in fiscal year 2017:

1. Retaliation—41,097 (48.8 percent of all charges filed)

[Read More>>](#)

This Deadly Flu Season is the Worst in Nearly a Decade

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the 2017-18 flu season is more intense than any other since the 2009 swine flu pandemic. Unfortunately, the CDC says this flu season is going to get worse.

In addition to the increasing number of individuals falling ill with the flu, the hospitalization rate for the flu has jumped. This year's dominant virus, H3N2, has been around for 50 years, but it is usually the most lethal of the seasonal strains. [Read More>>](#)

HR Brief

New HHS Secretary is Focused on Opioid Crisis, You Should Be Too

A recent study by the National Business Group on Health (NBGH) revealed that 80 percent of large employers are concerned about employees' abuse of prescription opioids.

The government is concerned, too. With about 91 Americans dying from a prescription opioid overdose every day, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) declared a public health emergency in October 2017. Tackling the opioid crisis is a top concern for the new HHS Secretary Alex Azar.

Employers across the country are working to curb the misuse of prescription opioids. With more employees falling victim to addiction, employers are seeing lower productivity, higher health care costs and fewer qualified applicants. [Read More>>](#)

Call the
HR HELPLINE Today!

412-371-1500

[CLICK, for a list of typical HR Questions!](#)

Benefits

BUZZ

Benefit tips by
SMC Insurance Agency, Inc.

Spending Resolution Affects ACA Taxes

On Jan. 22, 2018, President Donald Trump signed a short-term continuing spending resolution into law to end the government shutdown and continue funding through Feb. 8, 2018. The continuing resolution impacts the following three taxes and fees under the Affordable Care Act (ACA):

- Cadillac tax
- Health insurance providers fee
- Medical device excise tax

The ACA imposes a 40 percent excise tax on high-cost group health coverage, also known as the "Cadillac tax." The resolution delays implementation of the Cadillac tax for two years, until 2022. [Read More>>](#)

New Medicare Cards

The Medicare Access and CHIP Reauthorization Act of 2015 requires the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to remove Social Security numbers (SSNs) from all Medicare cards by April 2019. A new Medicare beneficiary identifier (MBI) will replace the SSN-based health insurance claim number (HICN) on the new cards.

CMS states that beginning April 2018, it'll start mailing new Medicare cards to Medicare recipients in phases by geographic location.

Why are the new cards important?

According to CMS, the new cards will help fight medical identity theft for people with Medicare. By replacing the SSN-based HICN, CMS can better protect the following: [Read More>>](#)

Would you like to advertise in the SMC Monthly Newsletter? If so, call Kim at 412-371-1500 for details.

Health-related Productivity Costs

While offering health coverage and benefits for employees and dependents is a major business expense, lost productivity due to physical and emotional health problems can be far more costly for employers. Lost productivity is classified in two ways: presenteeism and absenteeism. While absenteeism means that the employee is physically not at work,

presenteeism is when an employee is physically at work but a physical or mental health condition negatively affects their work quality and quantity. Employers spend two to three dollars on medical-related productivity costs (presenteeism) for every dollar spent on pharmacy and health care costs.

[Read More>>](#)

TIME TO RENEW YOUR INSURANCE?

Call the SMC Insurance Agency experts for a free, no-hassle insurance quote today!

412-371-1500

Community Connections

March events

To see a complete list of 2018 events, please visit www.smc.org.

For event information or to inquire about sponsorship opportunities, please call 412-371-1500.

- 16** March Madness
Bar Louie, Downtown Pittsburgh
1:00-4:00 pm, [Register Here](#)
- 20** Coffee Connections
UPMC/Highmark Consent Decree
SMC Office-Cranberry
8:00-9:30 am, [Register Here](#)
- 21** Coffee Connections
UPMC/Highmark Consent Decree
King's Family Restaurant-Cannonsburg
8:00-9:30 am, [Register Here](#)
- 21** Great Gathering V at Southpointe
Pgh. Social Exchange & SMC
Hilton Garden Inn, Southpointe
6:00-9:00 pm, [Register Here](#)
- 21 & 22** Supervisory Skills Series Course I
SMC Business Councils, Cranberry Office
8:00 am-4:30 pm, [Read More>>](#)
- 22** Coffee Connections
UPMC/Highmark Consent Decree
Panera Bread-Greensburg
8:00-9:30 am, [Register Here](#)
- 27** Coffee Connections
UPMC Health Plan Expansion into Central PA
Brew Cumberland's Best
Mechanicsburg, PA
8:00-9:30 am, [Register Here](#)
- 28** Coffee Connections
UPMC Health Plan Expansion into Central PA
i-ron-ic, York PA
8:00-9:30 am, [Register Here](#)

MARCH MADNESS

March 16, 2018 | 1:00-4:00 pm

Bar Louie, North Shore, Pgh.

[Click to Register!](#)



Monday, April 30, 2018

2018 Harrisburg Grassroots Lobbying Trip

Join us for our annual trip to Harrisburg.
Take the time to make a difference.

For information, [click here](#)



2018 Opportunities

IMPACT Pacific Alliance: Mexico, Colombia, Peru and Chile

Opening Doors to U.S. Equipment Manufacturers
for Trade in Pacific Alliance Countries



EXPOMIN Chile Mining Show
April 23-27, 2018

[Register Here](#)



IMPACT Pacific Alliance:
Mexico, EXPOMINA Peru
Mining Exhibition,
September 12-14th 2018

[Register Here](#)

What is the IMPACT Project?

[Read More>>](#)