

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Happy New Year to everyone. 2018 was a year of growth, innovation, and launches for the programs under the TRIP umbrella, and we were excited to end the year on a great note. In 2018 we saw the launch of the Naval & Maritime Consortium, the monthly Innovators Circle, and countless other projects and programs to help grow the economic opportunities in our region. We have formed great partnerships with our cities, towns, business leaders and community representatives, and have begun to establish TRIP as a national regional collaborative and economic development model for other communities to emulate and foster innovation on a national scale.

2019 looks to be a year of action and progress for TRIP. In the past two years we have found our footing, and now is the time to move forward with the many projects and plans we have developed. We look forward to announcing the next phases of the Tourism Ambassador Program and Maritime

Entrepreneurial Collaborative, in addition to new initiatives from Community Concierge, the Naval & Maritime Consortium, and Ignite. We also look forward to developing the Thames River Business Exchange as a center of investment and business growth in 2019.



*David McBride,
Executive Director*

I'd like to thank all our members, partners and supporters for a great 2018. In only two years, TRIP has grown to impact and support numerous aspects of Southeast Connecticut, including our schools, our businesses, and our communities. I am truly humbled by the commitment and hard work from each of our programs and look forward to everything we intend to accomplish in 2019.

COMING IN 2019

TRIP is always looking to expand the programs to serve our business community and develop the resources available in our region. While most of our programs have been in the news, there are two upcoming concepts which are not in the public eye. We look forward to sharing more information about these projects as the year progresses.

Maritime Entrepreneurial Collaborative & Accelerator (MECA)

With the support of CTNext, MECA is designed to link startups within the maritime industry with the business contacts, technical support and networking opportunities they need to grow. After hearing about the project, The National League of Cities (NLC), an advocacy group that represents 19,000 cities, villages, and towns, has said "MECA will build upon the Thames River region's greatest economic asset--its port and maritime industry--to connect, support, and build a new class of startups. We are thrilled to have Thames River engaged and look forward to seeing MECA come to fruition." NLC has agreed to work with TRIP on further developing and implementing the plans in 2019.

Thames River Business Exchange

Current plans for the Thames River Business Exchange lay the groundwork for a platform where businesses can sell and trade equity in their startup and existing businesses. This project is still in its formative stage, and more information is expected later this year.

January Innovators Circle

The Innovators Circle will hold their monthly meeting on Wednesday, January 23rd in New London to discuss plans for 2019 and provide community and business insight to TRIP projects. If you are interested in more information about the Innovators Circle, please contact David McBride at director@thamesriverinnovation.org

Moving Our Programs Forward in 2019:

NAVAL & MARITIME CONSORTIUM

The Naval & Maritime Consortium officially opened its doors to the business community on November 8th at UConn Avery Point. Electric Boat and offshore wind developers reinforced the strong business opportunities for the supply chain in the coming years. Guests networked with the Connecticut Port Authority, the Connecticut Procurement Technical Assistance Program, the Small Business Administration and other partners. The Consortium is now signing on founding members and establishing key partnerships with local, regional and global maritime industries. A Board of Directors and Board of Advisors have been formed and the new Consortium website is now live and can be found at navalandmaritimeconsortium.com.

In December, the federal Economic Development Administration awarded the Naval & Maritime Consortium a \$62k grant to support early stage development of the organization. This assistance is invaluable in establishing the framework for growing the Consortium into an entity that unites manufacturers, developers, and investors in our region to address industry issues and form partnerships that lead to heightened business and job opportunities.

Looking forward, the Consortium will be kicking off 2019 with their first membership event on January 24th at the Innovation Partnership Building at UConn's main campus in Storrs from 4:00 pm – 6:30 pm. The event is open to members, as well as those who may consider becoming members. More information on the member event can be found on the website.



IGNITE

In 2018, Ignite had a large impact on our region and on inspiring the innovators of today and tomorrow. In September we saw the launch of the Marine Makerfaire with the goal of inspiring the next generation of designers and engineers while providing grade school students with their first experience with new marine technology. In addition to inspiring young minds, Ignite has provided programs for uniting students of color with regional business leaders and scientists for mentoring opportunities, provided pitch coaching for science fair participants, and supported the education of science and technology throughout our region.

Ignite has worked tirelessly to build an environment that fosters business development and provides key resources for regional startups to build their businesses and establish the Thames River region as an incubator of businesses. Moving forward into 2019, Ignite will be continuing their networking series, hosting monthly office hours with business development experts, and developing new tools to fertilize our environment as a rich area for new businesses.

COMMUNITY CONCIERGE

For Community Concierge, which was formed as a program of the Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut, 2018 was a year of new releases and new ideas to establish eastern Connecticut as a great place to live, work and play. In October, Community Concierge released a new resource for welcoming newcomers to the Thames River region with a five-minute video that showcases the strong communities, unique amenities, and beauty of living and working in eastern Connecticut. This resource is available for any business in eastern Connecticut to use in their recruitment efforts and can be found [here](#).

In addition to the new video, Community Concierge has launched a digital relocation guide which can be shared with prospective and new employees to help them acclimate to the region. The guide can be downloaded for free [here](#). Businesses can also take advantage of a new employee gift that encourages investment in the Thames River economy. The Community Concierge Discount Card provides a 10% discount on goods and services at participating businesses in the region. To participate by offering a discount or to purchase discount cards for you or your employees, visit [here](#).


Lastly, Community Concierge offered a series of events to help newcomers to the area meet new people and see new sites throughout the region, and will be continuing this series into 2019. The program's "Connections" and "Let's Go Local" event series were successful new ventures that brought hundreds of people together at unique venues throughout the region.



THAMES RIVER RECONNECTION

With 2019, Thames River Reconnection is ready to show what they have to offer the region. 2018 was a year of behind the scenes work, with important planning and collaboration taking place as the program moves forward with reconnecting the cities of Groton and New London. This included the selection of Ninigret Partners to lead a team of economic development and urban design professionals in defining reconnection and revitalization strategies for Hodges Square and the Thames Street Corridor. Looking forward, The Thames River Reconnection project aims to strengthen Hodges Square and Thames Street as innovation centers for the region through development, and placemaking.

Ninigret brings national experience in innovation place planning including Philadelphia, New Haven and Athens-Clark County, GA. In December, Ninigret was authorized to proceed with their work. Planning and initial research is underway with a series of public meetings anticipated this spring in both New London and Groton. A final implementation strategy will be complete early this summer. We look forward to unveiling what's next for Thames River Reconnection.



Naval & Maritime Consortium Welcomes New Members

- EOCS
- Ocean Surveys, Inc.
- AMK Welding
- Straton Industries
- Shipman & Goodwin
- UTDCO
- Sonalysts
- Hitachi Prime Technologies
- Thayer Mahan
- LBI
- Pat Munger Construction
- Mowhawk Northeast
- RDSI
- NA Metal Services
- Hull Forest Products, Inc.
- Fuss & O'Neill
- Prescoe Engineering
- VoiceGlance
- Aquabotix

Upcoming Events:

Naval & Maritime Consortium:

- January 24th , 4:00 – 6:30
1st Member Event,
Innovation Partnership Building
UConn Storrs Campus

Ignite:

- January 9th, 12:00 – 1:00,
Improv for Scientists
(and others who want to have fun)
BioCT Innovation Commons
- January 23rd, 10:00 – 2:00
Office Hours with Miranda Creative
BioCT Innovation Commons
- January 24th, 5:00 – 7:00
Women's Night at the Innovators
Networking Series
BioCT Innovation Commons
- February 21st, 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm
Innovators Networking Series,
Artificial Intelligence
BioCT Innovation Commons

TRIP in the News:

CT-backed bioscience accelerator picks 2nd cohort

December 28, 2018, New Haven Biz

Startup Success: Creating some buzz around bee projects

December 19, 2018, The Day

Courtney announces federal grant for submarine supply chain group in Groton

December 19, 2018, The Day

Groton business owner directs improve toward scientists, 'others who want to have fun'

December 5, 2018, The Day

41.3058° N
TR
72.0774° W

THAMES RIVER
INNOVATION PLACE

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