



CENTERSTATE
CORPORATION FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

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Economic Forecasters Predict Modest Growth Trends to Continue in 2017

*CenterState CEO: Leadership, Forward Looking Vision and Action needed
to significantly transform the regional economy*

SYRACUSE, NY – More than 600 people attended CenterState CEO's 2017 Economic Forecast Breakfast at the Nicholas J. Pirro Convention Center at Oncenter, today in Syracuse. Business and community leaders gathered to gain insights into the current economic climate in the region from their peers and experts.

M&T Bank Regional Economist Gary Keith presented the event's keynote address, providing an analytic assessment of national and regional economic trends from the past year, and an outlook moving forward.

"In 2016, the Central New York economy expanded at the fastest pace since 2012, although growth remained modest and well behind the U.S. norm," Keith said. Declining industrial output once again acted as a drag on service and construction sector gains. This pattern has played out for a number of years, reinforcing the importance of moving toward a broader, more diversified economic base that more closely resembles the rest of the country."

While the CenterState New York region is making progress in shifting its economic focus, much more work remains to be done, according to Keith.

"Buffalo and Albany are seeing increased investment in industries like education and health care, advanced manufacturing, business services and tourism, leading to employment and personal income growth. Central New York can also follow this path, aided by policies that support attracting and retaining high potential industries and companies, and by leveraging Upstate Revitalization funds to accelerate this transformation."

The event marks the release of the 2017 Economic Forecast Report for CenterState New York. The report includes the perspectives and projections of nearly 200 CenterState CEO members and business leaders from 14 industry sectors, and includes key market data from Manpower Inc. on industry, occupation, employment, and earning expectations through 2020.

Through a survey and focus groups conducted by third-party research firm Research & Marketing Strategies, Inc., forecasters reflected on the growth they experienced in 2016 and shared their predictions for 2017:

- 67% experienced growth in 2016, up from 58% in 2015.
- 68% anticipate increased sales or revenue in 2017; up 5% from 2016 projections.
- 51% expect to expand product and services in 2017, down 7% from 2016 projections.
- 49% expect profits to increase in 2017, up 2% from 2016 projections.



- 53% expect an increase in jobs and hiring in 2017, up 9% from 2016 projections.

The 2017 CenterState Economic Forecast additionally identified several opportunities and challenges that forecasters say impact their projections for their business and the regional economy.

Opportunities include:

- Organizations feel that Regional Council grants to Central New York will positively impact the local economy and provide a catalyst for growth.
- Technology has increased exposure for many small businesses opening new marketplaces allowing them to grow.
- Collaboration with regional colleges to provide targeted training to develop workforce.
- Organizations are exploring ways to take advantage of the growing drone industry.

Challenges include:

- Navigating an increasingly complex local, state and national regulatory environment.
- Keeping pace with evolving technologies.
- Attracting and retaining skilled talent.
- Managing the increasing costs of benefits.

Additionally, many organizations see the critical role they need to play in addressing issues of poverty in the region.

In his remarks, CenterState CEO President Rob Simpson challenged the audience to lead with their voice, through innovation and by example to drive the changes necessary to break the region out of a stagnant, slow growth economy.

“We have not seen any major growth curves for several decades and the predictions and sentiments shared by our forecasters repeat a prediction of slow and steady growth,” said Simpson. “This report, the outlook shared by members, and the very clear message from Gary Keith are an affirmation that the region’s status quo is alive and well. While other communities are progressing, we are stagnant. And it isn’t just about our position relative to the nation, our Upstate peer communities are also significantly outperforming us. It will take leadership from all of us.”

In closing the event, Simpson charged attendees to refuse to meet new opportunities with dysfunction and inaction, saying we must embrace a collective responsibility to lead, work harder and craft a better economic future for the region.

The 2017 Economic Forecast for CenterState New York can be found at CenterState CEO’s newly released website www.centerstateceo.com.

The CenterState CEO Economic Forecast is presented by **M&T Bank**. Corporate Sponsors include **Dermody, Burke & Brown CPAs LLC, Novelis, National Grid, O’Brien and Gere, Manpower, Inc.** and **RMS**; Media Sponsors are **Advanced Media New York, News Radio 570 WSYR Now on 106.9 FM, Business Journal News Network,** and **Visual Technologies**.

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CenterState CEO is an independent and forward thinking economic development strategist, business leadership organization and chamber of commerce; dedicated to the success of its members and the prosperity of the region. We serve as an advocate and resource for smart business, catalyze and facilitate regional growth, and promote community prosperity through results-driven partnerships, planning and problem-solving. www.centerstateceo.com

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