

Delaware

Maintaining friendly skies for commercial drones

Once again an Innovation Champion, Delaware punches above its weight in measures of education and technology adoption.

A PwC report puts the value of commercial drone use at more than \$127 billion globally, with applications in agriculture, architecture and a range of other industries. In the First State, husband and wife team Theophilus and Suzanne Nix hope to capitalize on the growing field by training a generation of drone pilots.

With a grant from the Delaware Department of Labor, the Nixes established Drone Workforce Solutions, a drone training school that doubles as an employment and referral agency, matching graduates with employers looking for drone talent. The 10-week program goes beyond piloting and into building drones, and capturing and editing aerial images — skills that better equip them to meet the demands of commercial drone operations.

“We want them to understand what this machine does, so when things happen they can troubleshoot,” said Mr. Nix. “We think they make a better pilot when they can do that.”

The Drone Workforce Solutions curriculum also covers the drone rules established by the Federal Aviation Administration and prepares them for the FAA’s commercial drone license exam.

Sources: (WHYY) (Drone Workforce Solutions) (Delaware Online) (PwC)

WHAT DID WE DO RIGHT?

A 2017 executive order established an advisory council to prepare Delaware for self-driving vehicles.

WHAT CAN WE DO BETTER NEXT YEAR?

Delaware can create more jobs. Over the past five years, the state added fewer than 30,000 jobs — a rate well behind that of most other states.

WHERE HAVE WE MOST IMPROVED?

Drone rules are overly restrictive, but statewide legislation preempts municipalities from regulating the devices.

Best & Brightest	C
Fast Internet	A+
Grants Advanced Degrees	B+
Tech Workforce	B-
Tax Friendly	B
Attracts Investment	A-
Entrepreneurial Activity	D
Ridesharing	A
Short-Term Rentals	B
Sustainable Policies	B+
Self-Driving Vehicles	A
Drones	B+



Attracts Investment

At \$2,751.13 per capita, Delaware is second only to Massachusetts in research and development investment.



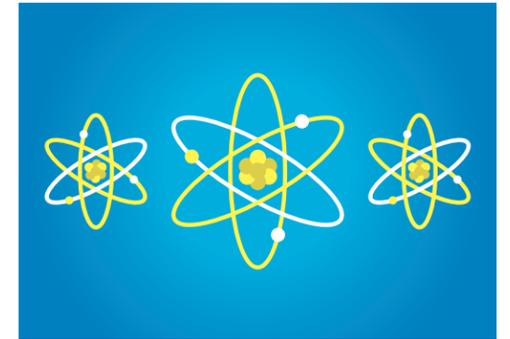
Tech Workforce

Delaware is home to nearly 35,000 tech jobs, about 37 jobs per 1,000 people.



Fast Internet

Delaware tied New Jersey for the highest percentage of households with internet speeds of at least 10 mbps (86 percent) and at least 25 mbps (83 percent).



Grants Advanced Degrees

More than 12 percent of Delaware residents over age 24 have an advanced degree, a cut above many other states.

A Booming Biotech Sector Brings Growth to New Castle County

Biotech company QPS Holdings will grow its presence in Delaware with two lab expansions in New Castle County.

The company, which operates a 12,000-square-foot lab at the Delaware Technology Park, will double its number of lab technicians, the latest expansion for the company that began in 1996 in one room of the Delaware Technology Park equipped with a single piece of equipment. Now, QPS brings in approximately \$130 million in revenue and employs 300 people in Delaware and 1,200 worldwide.

The expansion comes shortly after the University of Delaware was chosen by federal officials to house the National Institute for Innovation in Manufacturing Biopharmaceuticals, a national epicenter for pharmaceuticals production. The president of the Delaware Technology Park, where QPS is headquartered, said the company’s expansion and the university’s newfound anchor role in the national biopharmaceuticals market will be a boon to the state.

Sources: (Delaware Online)

