



## Cautious Optimism

Friends of TVCOG,

### Troja est open (Troy is open!). So is the Tech Valley Center of Gravity!

As most of you know, the COG is fully operational and all members are welcome in the facility to work or play (while following our Covid-19 policies). We want to thank you again for your support during the height of the pandemic, supporting our short- and long term sustainability by paying monthly dues and donations. Our reopening would not be possible without your support.

In Rensselaer County, New York, 70,231 people (44.3%) have received at least one vaccine dose and 49,498 (31.2%) are fully vaccinated. The statewide positivity rate is 2.39% as of April 26th—its lowest since before the holiday season of 2020. The Capital Region's 7-day positivity rate is steadily around 1.7 percent. With these rates, we have started to see Troy gaining some more forward momentum. We're excited to see more new members joining the CoG and more folks walking the fair streets of historic Downtown Troy.

We're also excited about the return of in-person programming here at the COG. For children's events, we're dipping a toe in the water by joining in on the district-wide event, Troja Est Open, for May's outdoor Steam-Powered Saturday, and providing a virtual offering in addition. For adults, we are keeping the majority of our large events virtual (e.g Social Night, Member Meetings, Food for Thought, and Hatched) but we are also starting to offer small size classes. By limiting in-person classes to 3 participants maximum, and expanding the offerings for our one-on-one Quick Start Guide classes, we are able to ensure safely social distanced class options for everyone. We will continue to monitor pandemic conditions as decisions are made regarding indoor gatherings and update accordingly.

We encourage you to safely utilize the Center of Gravity as much as you like and join us this weekend for Troja Est Open.

-- Cheryl Kennedy, Executive Director

## News from the Makerspace



### Queenship Game Studio Awarded DEC Community Arts Grant

Queenship Game Studio is a Troy-based MWBE-qualified game studio making games about mental health, social interaction, and relationship building. Sponsored by the Tech Valley Center of Gravity, the Queenship team was awarded a DEC Community Arts Grant for their in-production title "The Shadowcross: A Tale of Inner Darkness," an RPG about dark emotional states and the importance of community. This non-combative video game features a traveler who must make their way by successfully navigating the landscape of Gravewood and speaking with and learning about its residents - in order to avoid succumbing to the shadow within.

## In the Spotlight...

### Troja Est Open! Celebration in Downtown Troy

On Saturday May 1, Downtown Troy will offer socially-distanced and responsible outdoor spectacles. The "Troja Est Open" event will kick off at 11 a.m at River Street Market with an unveiling of a modern "Trojan Horse." The horse, handcrafted by Danny Killion of Weathered Wood, will remain on display at River Street Market until noon, and then complete a promenade to Riverfront Park, adjacent to the Troy Waterfront Farmers Market and up to and along River Street, Monument Square and Broadway, where stores will have sidewalk sales and specials. Bars will be open, with ample outdoor seating, and will each serve a signature "Enjoy Troy Cocktail." The day's events will culminate in a choreographed drone light show over the Hudson after dark. You can learn more about the day's schedule and featured events [here](#).

As part of this celebration, the THINQubator at TVCOG will be hosting a special outdoor, in-person STEAM-Powered Saturday event for children ages 4-12 and their families. Click the link below or scroll down to the "THINQubator News" section of this newsletter for more details about our contribution to this special event.

[More Details Here](#)



## Classes, Events & Programs

### Spring Trimester Classes Begins May 1!

Tech Valley Center of Gravity is excited to begin in-person classes for non-members, as well as small group classes, starting May 1. **Registration is open now for classes in the Woodshop, Glass Arts and Laser Cutter Zones, and for Quick Start Guide classes, which are one-on-one lessons.** Classes are socially distanced, capped at a maximum of three people, and masks are required. [Learn about our COVID-19 safety policies here.](#)

Classes with open spots include:



### Laser Cutter 101: Make an Illuminated Acrylic Sign

Offered on: May 22, 12-2pm

\*1 spot left in this class!

This class is geared towards beginning laser cutter makers or those looking for a refresher. Participants will learn safe laser cutter operation and the basics of designing for the laser cutter and go home with a battery-powered illuminated acrylic sign of their own design. Class size is limited to 3 participants.

Class fee: \$50 COG Members | \$65 Non-Members. [Register here.](#)



### Woodshop 201: Introduction to the Lathe

Offered on: June 12 and July 31; waitlist open for May 15 class

Are you interested in learning how to use the wood lathe in the woodshop? This pen turning workshop is the perfect workshop for you! Learn the basics of pen turning, familiarize yourself with the lathe, and go home with a gorgeous custom made pen. This is a hands-on class with a limit of two participants per class. Each student will have their own lathe, and will be provided with direct instruction from the instructor. No prior experience necessary.

Class Fee: \$60 CoG Members | \$75 Non-Members. [Register here.](#)

[See All Classes Open For Registration](#)

Please keep an eye on our website for more updates as we move through the trimester and add more classes.

## News from the Manufacturing Incubator

### Small Moments, Big Impact

As an Incubator, we're more than just a mentorship program for startups (the Manufacturing Incubator). All that the CoG encompasses, from our equipment to our network of makers, helps to incubate and grow new businesses, manufacturing and otherwise. This month, we've welcomed some new business members who are excited to have access to our Formlabs 3B and Stratasys F270 3D printers. But more than the impressive flashy equipment, what inspires me the most are the small moments - when an employee stops in for five minutes to print a form (because who owns a printer these days?), uses our laser cutter to make a simple jig, holds a Zoom interview in our Board Room, or welds a metal part back together that would have cost hundreds to replace. As small as these moments may be, the small moments add up, showcasing how big of an impact we can have in helping businesses focus on what they do best.

-- Dan Falkenstrom, Facilities & Incubator Director

[Follow the Manufacturing Incubator on Facebook.](#)



Formlabs 3B 3D Printer

### Upcoming Incubator Events & Programs

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**  
 BUSINESS & PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT  
 VIRTUAL LUNCHEON SERIES: #9  
 SUSTAINABLE MATERIALS  
 FEATURING MIKE TUCKER OF TUCKER CONSULTING, LLC



#### Wednesday, May 5 from 12:00pm - 1:00pm

Mike Tucker will pull from his extensive knowledge of the packaging industry to present some considerations when designing plastic products for reuse and recycling. We'll touch on what materials are the easiest to recycle, biodegradability, and what happens at recycling centers and landfills.

Mike Tucker is a former VP of Sales and Engineering at Sonoco Plastics, a global packaging solutions leader. During his 32 years with Sonoco he developed sales channels and manufacturing operations in several countries, and has worked with major brands such as SC Johnson, McDonalds, and Kraft. His current venture, Tucker Consulting, focuses on assisting businesses with plastic related projects and helping new business startups.

[Learn More & Register Here](#)



#### Next HATCHED: Thursday, May 6 @ 6:30pm

This monthly program is co-hosted by the Tech Valley Center of Gravity in partnership with the Capital District Inventors and Entrepreneurs Meetup. Through our Hatched-CDIEM partnership, we host invention and product development feedback nights and quarterly special inventor speaker presentations to foster the inventor and product development entrepreneurship community in the Capital Region of New York State.

[Join the Meetup Group](#)

## News from the THINQubator

### Help Us Decide: Virtual or In-Person Summer Programming



**We need your input!** At this time, we have the opportunity to host STEAM-Powered Saturdays as a safely social-distanced, outdoor event for the summer. We want to make sure that we move forward with STEAM-Powered Saturday in a way that best serves you and your children. In order to help us do so, please answer this very short poll by May 15 to help us decide whether to remain virtual for the summer or to return to in-person programming.

[Take the Poll](#)

## Upcoming Classes & Events

### STEAM-Powered Saturday is Tomorrow: Virtual and In-Person!

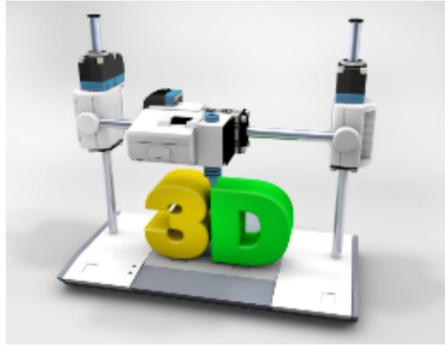
This month, we will be joining in the very special "Troja Est Open!" event taking place in downtown Troy, with a hybrid version of STEAM-Powered Saturday! On May 1st, we will be offering both an in-person activity from 10am-1pm, and a video tutorial, which will premiere on our Facebook page at noon.



#### Troja Est Open!

This activity will feature miniature, 3-dimensional laser-cut wooden Trojan horses for children to assemble, decorate and take home, inspired by the Trojan Horse created for the day's festivities. The "STEAM-Powered Saturday: Troja Est Open" event will also feature a battle robots demonstration and offer the opportunity to try them out!

This activity will take place on a drop-in basis from 10am-1pm on May 1st. Our event tent will be located outside on Broadway in downtown Troy, across from TVCOG. Masks and social distancing are required. Attendees will be asked to provide their contact tracing information, as per NYS outdoor event regulations.



#### Exploring 3D Design!

This month's virtual project is "Exploring 3D Design!" The video will take you behind the scenes of the designing and laser cutting process for the Trojan horses we made for STEAM-Powered Saturday: Troja Est Open! Then we will walk you through designing your very own 3D design project using TinkerCad, a free online software.

The video will premiere at noon on May 1 on our Facebook page, and will be available to view anytime afterwards. This particular activity does not require any supplies, but Trojan horse project kits will be available for pickup throughout the month at Bard and Baker Board Game Cafe starting on May 2.

[THINQubator Facebook Page](#)

## Volunteer Opportunities

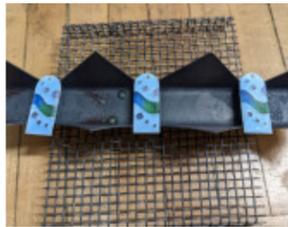
**STEM Careers Club:** Beginning this fall, TVCOG will be partnering with the Questar-III P-Tech and Early College High School (ECHS) programs located on the Hudson Valley Community College Campus in order to offer program participants an after school STEM Careers Club. This club will reinforce skill development for in-demand STEM career pathways with on-site career days and presentations from regional professionals in STEM careers, as well as project-based learning workshops.

As we prepare to launch this program in the fall, we will be seeking volunteers, featured one-time speakers and industry mentors interested in working with students grades 9-12. If you're interested in getting involved, please email us at [info@tvkog.net](mailto:info@tvkog.net).

## Updates from our Creative Community

### Made at the COG

What our Members are working on right now.



Member and Intro to Enameling instructor Kari Wood is working on delicate enameled jewelry pieces, using the French technique cloisonné and the COG's glass kilns.



Thanks to members Steve and R. Scott, who volunteered their time to fabricate this fantastic LEGO table for our THINQubator Zone in our Woodshop!



Volunteer Woodshop Zone Coordinator Kris Navratil built this lovely plant stand using only found 2 x 2s and scrap plywood. Take a class in the woodshop with Kris!

**Remember to tag your project on Instagram with #madeatthecog to show others what's possible here!**

### Virtual Social Nights

Social Nights for members will continue to be virtual for the time-being; meetings are held via Zoom every Tuesday at 6:30pm. The log-in information and the meeting agenda for the regular weekly updates is sent to members via email each Tuesday. Not getting these emails? Contact us at [info@tvkog.net](mailto:info@tvkog.net) to be added to the members-only mailing list.

**Tech Valley Center of Gravity is a makerspace, prototyping center, manufacturing incubator, STEAM-education center and creative community located in the heart of downtown Troy, New York.** A member-supported 501(c)(3) community resource organization, the Center of Gravity serves members from Albany, Columbia, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady counties and beyond with space, tools, technology and expertise to explore and exercise their creativity, turn ideas into objects of art and utility, and launch new ventures based on their own ingenuity.

### Featured Sponsor



The Center for Economic Growth is a nonprofit, regional economic and business development organization that serves as the primary point of contact for businesses interested in growing in or moving to New York's 8-county Capital Region. Whether you are looking for incentives, real estate or comprehensive demographic and business climate information, in need of entrepreneurship or workforce training services, or want to relocate or expand anywhere in the Capital Region, CEG knows the way. Learn more here.

[Click Here to Learn About Sponsorship](#)

### Join Our Creative Community

We are open and operating at standard hours. Membership hours and access types depend on the membership level you choose. Membership is open to anyone ages 18+ so join today!

### TVCOG's COVID-19 Protocols

Tech Valley Center of Gravity is committed to following guidelines set forth by New York State and to ensuring the safety of our community members. Review our Covid-19 policies and procedures on our website.