NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
ADAM J. BELLO
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

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LOCAL BUSINESSES ENCOURAGED TO REGISTER NOW FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND DEFENSE CONTRACTING FORUM AND MATCHMAKER EVENT

October 13 event connects small businesses with contracting opportunities

ROCHESTER, NY — Monroe County Executive Adam Bello encourages small businesses to attend the 6th Annual Government and Defense Contracting Forum & Matchmaker, taking place Tuesday, October 13, 2026, at the Woodcliff Hotel in Fairport. Register online or in person the morning of the event. Visit MonroeUpstateNYAPEX.org for more details.

The one-day event connects small businesses, including innovators, manufacturers and construction firms, with government and defense buyers to explore contracting opportunities. Participating buyers include Lockheed Martin, L3Harris Technologies, Micron Technology, federal agencies and local governments.

The forum is hosted by Congressman Joe Morelle (NY-25), Monroe County Executive Adam Bello, the Monroe County-Upstate NY APEX Accelerator and COMIDA, in collaboration with the National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development APEX.

> “Rochester has long been a national leader in innovation and advanced manufacturing, and we have an important role to play in strengthening America’s defense industrial base,” **said Congressman Joe Morelle**. “I'm proud to join this forum as we help connect the ingenuity of our local businesses with new opportunities to grow, create good-paying jobs, and contribute to our national security.”
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> "Our annual Government and Defense Contracting Forum & Matchmaker highlights the vital role our local APEX program plays in bridging the gap between innovative small businesses and major defense buyers, driving economic growth across our region. By facilitating these critical connections, we are empowering local manufacturers to secure contracts that strengthen the national defense industrial base," **said County Executive Adam Bello**. "Thank you to Congressman Joe Morelle for his fierce advocacy and steadfast leadership in championing this program for Monroe County."

This year’s program focuses on critical technology areas in the defense industrial base. Luncheon keynote speaker Kris Baxter, corporate vice president and general manager of the

Auto Embedded Business Unit at Micron Technology, Inc., will discuss the importance of microelectronics. Additional sessions will cover innovation funding, building connections that lead to contracts, and the region's technology and manufacturing ecosystem.

The APEX Accelerators program serves as the axis for existing and new businesses to strengthen the defense industrial base by accelerating innovation, fostering ingenuity, and establishing resilient and diverse supply chains. APEX Accelerators provide free government contract support to industry on the military, federal, state and local levels.

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