



Making Moves in Massachusetts

April 2017

Expanding in MA

Culinary training and staffing company **SnapChef** launched the first stage of its expansion to **Springfield**, where it will continue its work to combat the culinary industry's shrinking labor pool by providing culinary job opportunities to individuals throughout New England. Read more [here](#).

Marlborough-based toy company **OYO Sportstoys** is undergoing an **\$8 million** renovation to meet increasing demand and expand its product line. The company expects to bring **195 jobs** to the city within the next decade. Read more [here](#).

New England's largest cabinet maker, **Metropolitan Cabinets and Countertops**, based in **Norwood**, is growing its cabinet and countertop factory to a combined **145K SF**, an expansion that **almost doubles its existing manufacturing space**. Read more [here](#).

Billerica-based medical device firm, **Insulet Corp.**, will open a new **195K SF** manufacturing site later this year in **Acton**. Read more [here](#).

Shrewsbury-based **OptiMA**, maker of whiteboards, dry-erase boards, and accessories, will **triple its manufacturing space** by moving to new **34K SF** facility next month. Read more [here](#).

Start-up **Drift**, which makes enterprise sales software based around chat bot-style messaging interface, expanded to a **17K SF** office at **Copley Place** in **Boston**. Read more [here](#).

New Products & Funding

The **Massachusetts Downtown Initiative** awarded **\$210K** in grants to **14 communities** across the state for projects focused on **downtown revitalization**. Learn more [here](#).

InnovaSea Systems, based in **Boston**, secured **\$15 million** to develop an all-in-one system for farming fish in the ocean which the company and its partners say is vital to a sustainable future for the seafood industry. Read more [here](#).

Frequency Therapeutics, a biotech company in **Woburn** focused on hearing loss, secured **\$32 million**. Read more [here](#).

Digital health company, **ZappRx**, based in **Boston**, secured **\$25 million** which will help the company grow its specialty pharmaceutical management platform. Read more [here](#).

Watertown biotech, **Lyndra**, which seeks to make pills last longer with fewer side effects, secured **\$23 million** as it prepares to launch first-in-human trials this month. Read more [here](#).

The **Massachusetts Life Science Center** awarded **\$19 million in tax incentives to 22 companies** in exchange for their promise to **create nearly 1,300 new jobs** in the Commonwealth in 2017. Read more [here](#).

Dedham-based **Reflexis Systems**, which provides workforce management software to large retailers, secured **\$33 million**. Read more [here](#).

Global biopharmaceutical company **Celgene** is expanding by **40K SF** in the previous Amgen space in the Alewife neighborhood of **Cambridge**. Read more [here](#).

Silk Therapeutics, which develops natural skincare products using its proprietary activated liquid silk as the core ingredients, is **nearly tripling its space** from **3,300 SF to 9,800 SF** in **Medford**. The construction team has already delivered the expanded clean-tech area for development and manufacturing and has begun work on the office area, which is scheduled for delivery June 1. Read more [here](#).

Boston start-up **Freight Farms**, which builds automated Internet-connected farm systems in shipping containers, secured **\$5.3 million**. Read more [here](#).

Energy storage company, **VionX Energy Corp.**, based in **Woburn**, secured **\$12.75 million**. Read more [here](#).

As it looks to wrap up a mid-stage trial of its lead drug for pneumonia, **Waltham** biotech **Arsanis**, secured **\$45 million**. Read more [here](#).

Ambassadors @ Work

MassEcon and Governor Baker Welcome 18 New Companies to MA

Earlier this month, the MassEcon Corporate Welcome Reception spotlighted 18 companies new to Massachusetts at Sanofi Genzyme in Cambridge. Click [here](#) for photos and company profiles from the event. Thank you to sponsors Sanofi Genzyme and WPI.

The Future is Now: How Massachusetts Technologies are Shaping the World - MassEcon Annual Conference

Andrew McAfee, Principal Research Scientist at MIT, will be the featured speaker at MassEcon's Annual Conference focusing on how Massachusetts technologies are shaping the world. McAfee, also a renowned author and management thinker, will join the conversation with Curt Nickisch (Senior Editor at the *Harvard Business Review*), Chris Gahagan (CEO at Symbotic), Emily Reichert (CEO at Greentown Labs), and Ana Maiques (CEO at Neuroelectrics). Click [here](#) to learn more and register for the event.

Kick-off May National Small Business Month with MOBD Listening Sessions

Beginning May 2, the Massachusetts Office of Business Development will be hosting listening sessions throughout the Commonwealth focused on small business with Lt. Governor Polito, Deputy Secretary Kirk, Secretary Ash, and Assistant Secretary Vega. Learn more [here](#).

Notes on the Economy

According to the **Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development**, the state unemployment rate rose from 3.4% to 3.6% last month, sitting below the national average of 4.5%. Massachusetts experienced an increase in labor force with the **addition of 200 state jobs, 2500 jobs in the financial sector, and 800 jobs in the professional, scientific, and business services**. Read more [here](#).

Confidence among Massachusetts businesses is at its highest level since 2004, according to the Associated Industries of Massachusetts (**AIM**)'s **Business Confidence Index**, rising .3 points to 62.4 in March (the seventh straight month of improved confidence and 5.9 points higher than a year ago). Read more [here](#). In contrast, [MassBenchmarks](#) reported that state economic growth has slowed down in the first quarter of 2017, currently sitting at 1.2%, largely due to weak wage and salary growth and labor constraints. The report predicts continued growth over the next six months, but at a subdued pace.