



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Wolf Administration: Show Some Love to Pennsylvania Businesses on Valentine's Day**

**York, PA** – The Wolf Administration today reminded Pennsylvanians to shop local in support of the commonwealth's many confectioners, florists, artists and small business owners on Valentine's Day 2020. During a tour of York County-based Wolfgang Confectioners, one of the nation's oldest confection companies, Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Executive Deputy Secretary Neil Weaver and Department of Agriculture (PDA) Deputy Secretary Cheryl Cook highlighted the strength of Pennsylvania's food processing industry.

"Pennsylvania's food manufacturing strength is a direct indicator of our world-class business climate and position in the world market, and our continued investment in this industry is critical," said DCED Executive Deputy Secretary Weaver. "From macrolevel investments, like providing grants to train workers; to microlevel investments, like consumers who make the conscious decision to buy local, we all have a role to play in supporting Pennsylvania's businesses and manufacturers."

Pennsylvania is known as the "Snack Food Capital of the World" and its snack food and confectionery industries generate more than \$5.1 billion in sales annually. The commonwealth's 2,300 food-processing companies are number one in the United States in the value of shipments of canned fruit and vegetable specialty products, chocolate and cocoa products, potato chips and pretzels.

"Valentine's Day is the perfect opportunity to support Pennsylvania's agriculture and food industry by exchanging locally made chocolate and confectionaries, enjoying our many wineries and breweries, or dining at a farm to table restaurant," said PDA Deputy Secretary Cook. "Buy local for your friends and loved ones, for the love of Pennsylvania's economy."

In Spring 2018, The Manufacturers' Association was awarded a \$247,500 grant through the Pre-Apprentice and Apprenticeship Grant Program to enroll 25 apprenticeships in its South Central Pennsylvania program in the fields of tool and die, machinist, maintenance mechanic, maintenance technician, and others as requested by manufacturers. A recipient of part of that grant funding, Wolfgang Confectioners has enrolled one apprentice in the four-year mechatronics program and will enroll a second apprentice in the near future.

"Manufacturers are experiencing a severe skills gap in our region—92 percent report to us they have a hard time hiring the right, qualified candidates," said Tom Palisin, Executive Director of The Manufacturers' Association. "Apprenticeships are a proven strategy to hire and develop a highly skilled workforce, and progressive companies like Wolfgang Confectioners are partnering with the Association to create these programs and invest in their future success."

Wolfgang Confectioners was founded in 1921 by Delphi Eli and Mima Mae Wolfgang as The D. E. Wolfgang Candy Company. In the beginning, operations were run out of the Wolfgang family home in York, as the family sold chocolates at local farmers markets around South Central Pennsylvania. Over time, the company grew and expanded, leading to the opening of a factory in downtown York. Over the decades Wolfgang became known for its quality, delicious confections and its regionally recognized fundraising programs. The company produces private label confections and snacks for many national retailers, works with specialty confection entrepreneurs to innovate new products, and provides contract manufacturing services for large snack and confectionery companies throughout the northeast United States.

Apprenticeships are a key component of Governor Wolf's [PAsmart](#) initiative, an innovative way to improve coordination between state agencies, cut red tape, and invest in people and businesses to expand innovative job training in apprenticeships and other programs so workers get the skills they need to compete in the global economy.

The Pre-Apprentice and Apprenticeship Grant Program (Apprenticeship Program) is a statewide program which offers assistance to registered apprenticeship programs. The program's goal is to increase apprenticeship availability to Pennsylvania employers to assist them with their talent recruitment and development.

For more information about the Wolf Administration's commitment to workforce training, visit the [Department of Community and Economic Development website](#), and be sure to stay up-to-date with all of our agency news on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

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