

CHAUTAUQUA PROFILES

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Michael Calimeri,
Artone LLC president

Artone Looks Toward Future

Company's Products Can Be Seen Locally, Globally

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"The industry is strong, and we are looking forward to the future," Michael Calimeri, president and one of the owners of family owned furniture manufacturer Artone LLC told *The Post-Journal* recently.

Artone, or also known as Artone Furniture by Design, is a company of nearly 100 employees, and they specialize in manufacturing custom case goods, which is the furniture that goes into guest rooms within hotels. These items range from headboards, closets, night stands, to TV mounts. They create these products from scratch, using materials such as veneer, solid wood, to laminates, and often incorporate other materials such as quartz, glass, and LED lighting into their products. For the metal components, Artone orders the material from local sources in the area. Putting these products together requires a bit of planning and negotiation.

"We generally work with architects, developers, and owners of hotels, and often times we ask them what they want on a sketch or design, and we will bring that design to life," Calimeri said. He added that, "the process is finding the customer, and when we recognize their needs, we quote the project. And if the numbers meet their budget, we then look to provide them with shop drawings. If those are approved, we will receive a purchase order and make a sample room for the customer."

Artone has been a mainstay in the Jamestown area for more than four decades now. Originally located on Institute Street within a 54,000 square feet facility, Artone relocated moved to a new location on Allen street which clocks in at 240,000 square feet.

"We were landlocked at the building on Institute Street, and the buildings were split up. We were looking for something a little more free span, space that's under the same roof for more efficiency, and could accommodate the anticipation of growth that we wanted," Calimeri said.

The growth that Calimeri alluded to is reflected by their business partnerships with Wyndham Garden, Wyndham Hotel and Resorts, the Chautauqua



The front of Artone's building on Allen Street is pictured above. Artone moved into the building a few years ago, more than quadrupling the space the company has available. Below is the front desk inside the Allen Street facility.

Photos by Daryl Simons Jr.

Harbor Hotel, and most recently, the Double Tree by Hilton that recently opened in Jamestown. He talked about how the new facility has helped with bringing in new and larger clients.

"We are now able to bring the Hyatts, the Marriotts, and the Hiltons of the world into this facility, and once they see it, they are pretty convinced that we are a good manufacturer, and can be a good partner for them," Calimeri said.

As far as sales and marketing strategy, Calimeri said that Artone has "put a laser-focused program together." And in regards to the global market and off-shore noise that has been going on, he added that it will "continue to work in our advantage where 'Buy U.S.' is becoming more of a part of the conversation."

Calimeri said that Artone hopes to become a household name with developers on a commercial basis within the next couple of years.

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Though Artone generally works on projects that have one hundred rooms or more, Calimeri said that "there's always something special to a project." Each project has its nuances, with each often incorporating something unique, so these extra elements to the project are then assigned to the mill work department. This department has specialists who look at



each drawing, get the materials needed, and make it entirely by hand.

Artone is always looking for new talent, Calimeri emphasized. "We are always looking for good people that are willing to work. And if you have some woodworking skills, or the ability to understand how things go together, all the better."

Calimeri said Artone has created outreach programs and internships to local high school students that allow the students to tour the facility and learn about the man-

ufacturing process, particularly of how it has changed over the past few decades. From working as office personnel, being able to draw, using CAD (Computer-aided design), engineering products, and project management,

"Manufacturing today is nothing that it was decades ago," Calimeri said. These jobs provide another possible avenue for Jamestown to retain local talent.

For more information, Artone's website is www.artonemfg.com or call 664-2232.

Center

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She highlighted how New York state is "very supportive of small businesses" by providing lots of training and grant opportunities, often indirectly through nonprofits like the SBDC. Free, confidential and fact-based services are provided on a consistent basis for those who ask.

"I always recommend that anybody who has an idea ... should really focus on developing a business plan," Curatolo said in regard to anyone looking to start a new small business locally. "A business plan can help with marketing; it can help with so many different aspects of a business."

Templates for business plans are made available through the SBDC, and counselors can help make a business plan stand out for banks being asked to give a loan for a startup.

On the state level, New York offers grant opportunities to fund renovations and new equipment for select small businesses. Low-interest loans are also provided by local banks for these types of endeavors as well, Curatolo said. the Jamestown Renaissance Corporation also makes grants available for local businesses looking to update

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Courtney Curatolo,
Small Business
Development Center director

their storefronts to become more attractive for the aesthetic and economic benefit of the community.

"We help (small businesses) develop social media platforms," Curatolo added. "That's what we're here for."

SBDC provides a variety of business-related services to business owners in Chautauqua, Cattaraugus and Allegany counties. Curatolo is optimistic about the local economy and intends on invigorating the SBDC as its new director.

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