



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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CNY is Solidified as a Green Hub

DAVID J. VALESKY October 27, 2009

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For many years, Central New York has been building a national reputation as a hub of green technology and has been promoting itself as a potential home for jobs in green industries. That promise and potential got a major boost in recent days as an effort I have been working on to attract one of the first electric car manufacturers in the country bore fruit.

Bannon Automotive, in partnership with Reva Electric Car Company, plans to begin producing road-ready electric cars at a plant in Central New York. The company plans to hire 100 employees to start, increasing to as much as 250 employees in the coming years.

The courtship of Bannon and Reva began almost a year ago when I received a call from Senate President Pro Tempore Malcolm Smith, who met with executives from Bannon at an event where he was told they planned to build electric cars in Michigan or Kentucky. Senator Smith, who I have brought to Central New York on several occasions, asked the executives, why not Upstate?

The next day, he and I spoke and he asked me where in Upstate New York we could possibly place an electric car company. Knowing quite well our region's able automotive workforce,

our community's educational institutions and our regional commitment to green industries, I told him, "We can do it right here."

Days later I hosted the first of many meetings where company officials met local business and community leaders to discuss the region's ability to make this exciting venture happen. The company was immediately quite pleased with what they saw, including the cooperation and coordination between local, county and state officials. More importantly, they were impressed with our workforce, our community, and our region's commitment to growing green industries and developing green-tech jobs.

All these months later, the deal is being finalized and announced. This is a defining victory for Central New York and helps put an exclamation point on our reputation as a hub of green technology and green jobs.

This process has also laid out a road map for how we continue to attract green technology jobs by working together and focusing on our regional assets.

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