



Center  
on Rural  
Innovation

PROJECT  
**SPARK**

**Building and  
Supporting a  
Tech Economy  
in New Ulm**



# D-D

JUNE 6, 1944

## From One Family Tree.

### 36 NOLTE COUSINS SERVED IN WAR; TWO WOUNDED

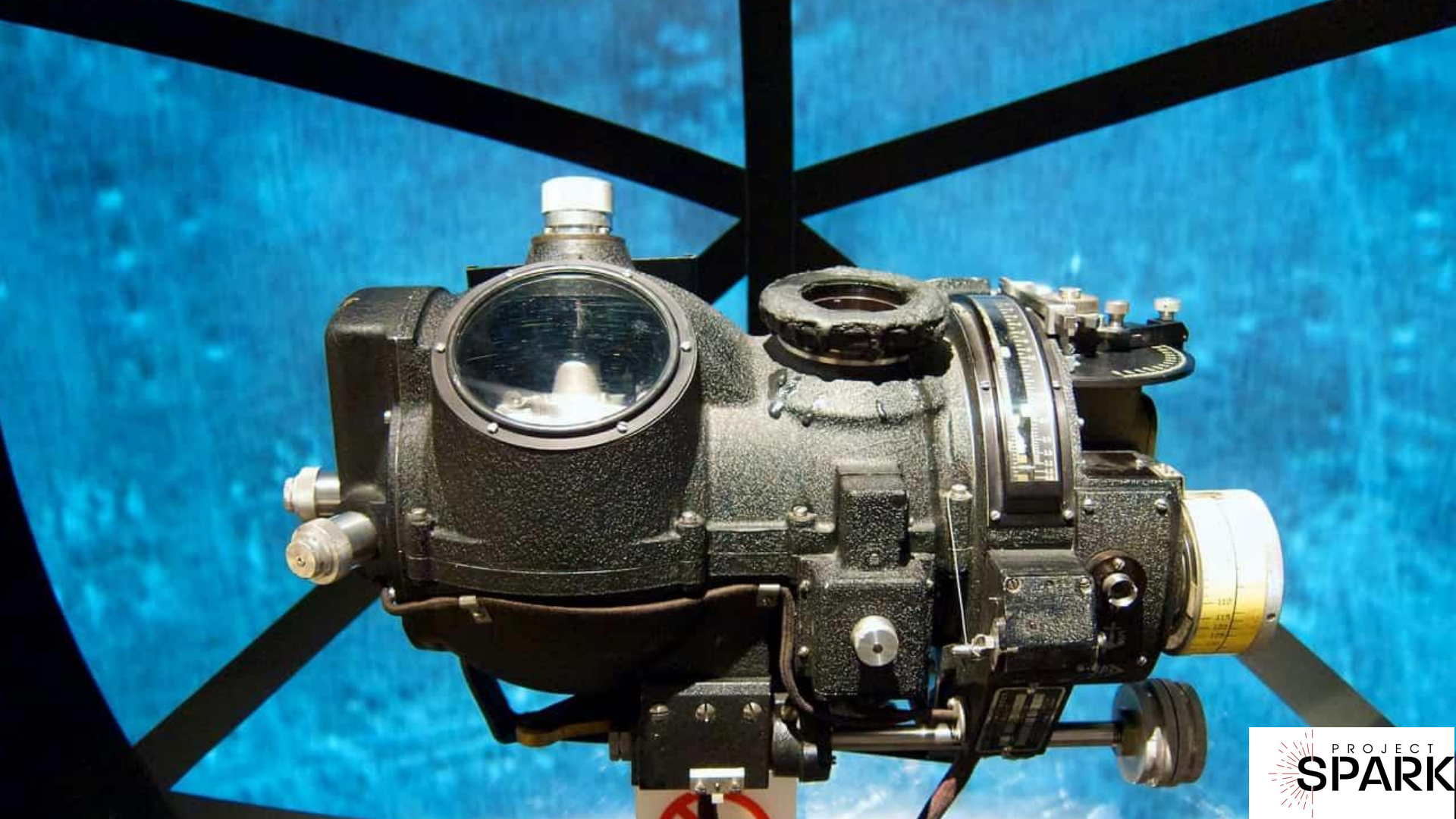


THE FAMILY TREE of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Nolte, former farmers of Martin county, Minnesota, furnished "timber" of unusual proportions for Uncle Sam's armed forces during the recent war. Carl Nolte was born in Germany in 1912, and in 1929 he and his wife, Louise, settled in Illinois. In 1935 they moved to Martin county where they farmed until Nolte's death in 1938. They had 12 children, of whom eight still are living, five residing in Martin county. If, the elder Nolties had been living they would have seen 36 of their kin in army, navy and marine uniforms in World War II.

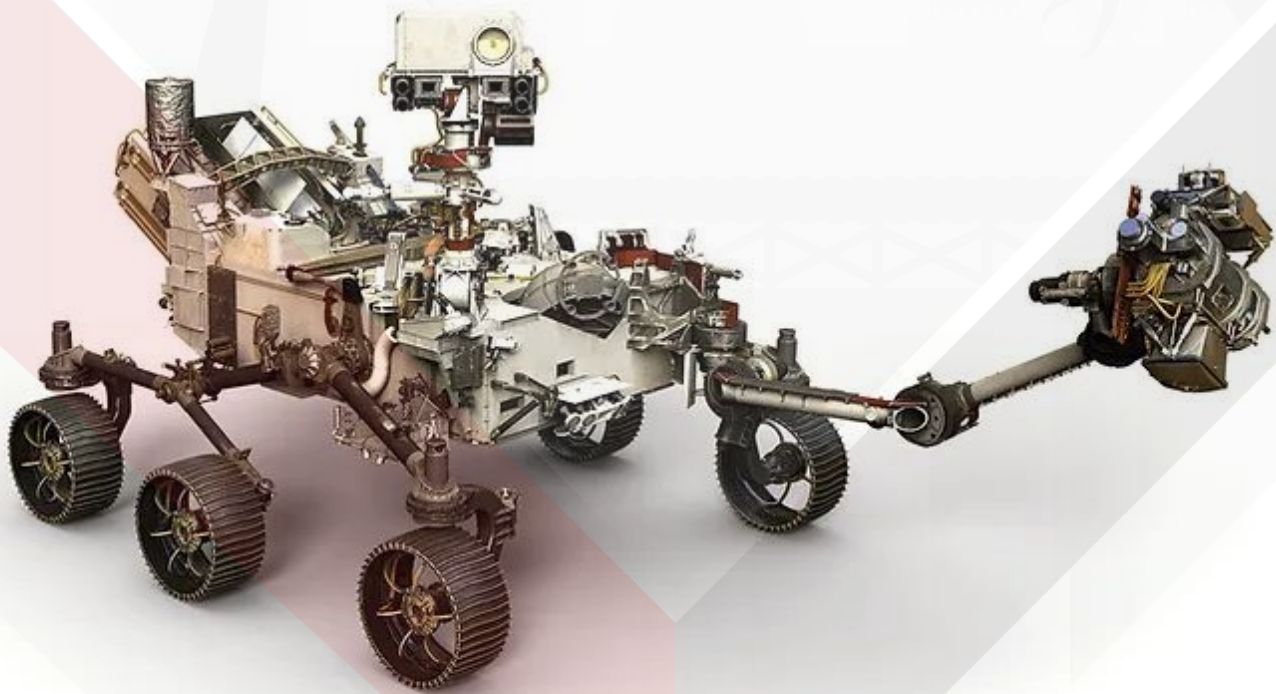
Of the 36 Nolte descendants, all first or second cousins, not one was killed in the war although two, Earl Nolte, son of Fred Nolte, and Reinhardt Wessel, son of Mrs. Amanda Nolte Wessel, were wounded. Five still are in service. There are 73 first cousins in the family. The service men are sons, sons-in-law or grandsons of the following children of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Nolte: Henry, Carl, Adolph, Will, Gus, Louie and Fred Nolte; Mrs. Emma Nolte Oltman, Mrs. Amelia Nolte Eversman, Mrs. Mathilda Nolte Haegele, Mrs. Louise N. Wessel and Mrs. Amanda N. Wessel.









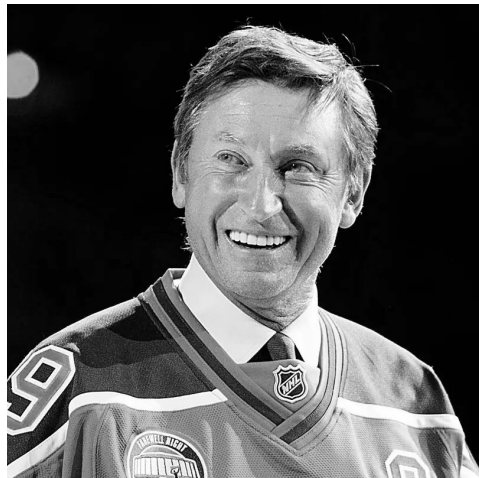
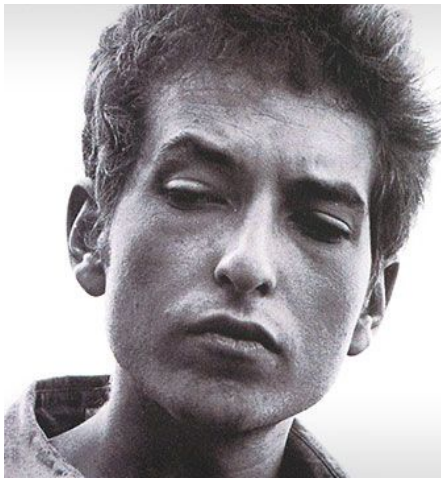


# Questions to Consider

1. What will our future economy look like?
2. How will technology and demographic changes impact this?
3. What strategy or strategies will we need to develop and implement adopt to ensure future economic vitality?

What will happen if we do nothing?





# QUIZ SHOW

Name the Philosopher



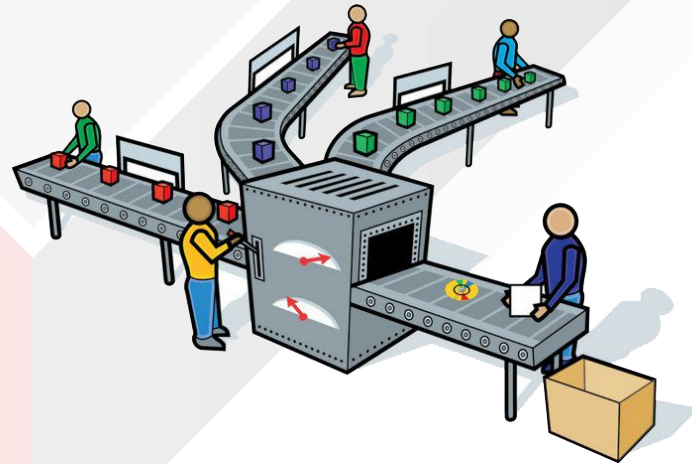
The times they are  
a-changing.

Bob Dylan

quote fancy



# Our Area's Main Economic Drivers



# Current Situation

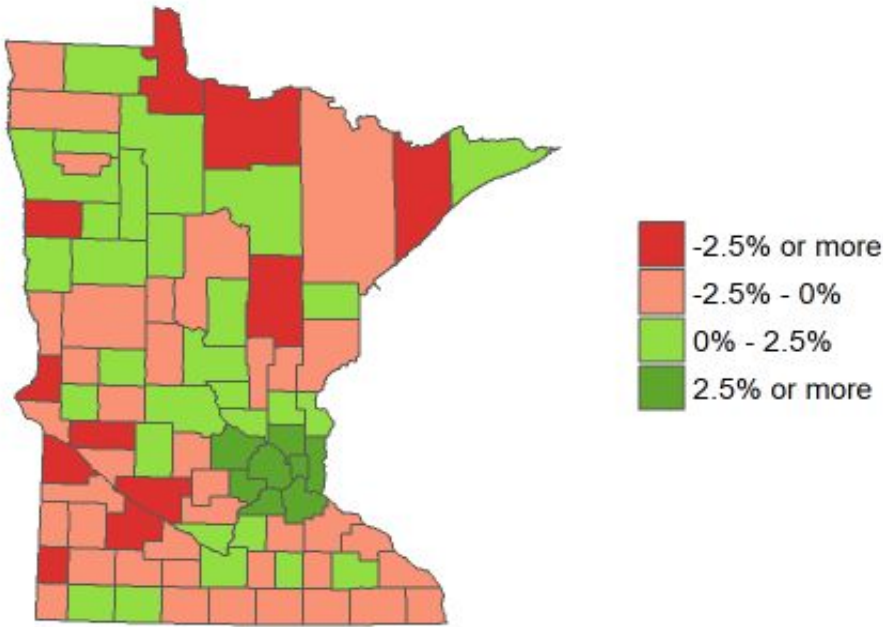
**The aftershocks of the pandemic and ongoing global skills shortage will continue to drive industrial automation investment in 2023, not only to supplement existing workers but also to unlock new business capabilities and insights.**

**Automation** has been a driver of progress since the first industrial revolution, but the rise of robotics and artificial intelligence has amplified its impact. **The global industrial automation market size was estimated at USD \$196.6 billion in 2021 and is set to surpass USD \$412.8 billion by 2030, according to Precedence Research.**

This boom in automation adoption will come in part as organizations in all sectors hedge against future events which could once again impact the availability of their workforce, says **Forrester** analyst Leslie Joseph.

*"Automation has been a major force reshaping work since long before the pandemic; now, it's taking on a new urgency in the context of business risk and resiliency. As we emerge from the crisis, firms will look to automation as a way to mitigate the risks that future crises pose to the supply and productivity of human workers. They will invest more in cognitive capabilities and applied AI, industrial robotics, service robots, and robotic process automation."*

# Average Decade-to-Decade % Change in Population Projections 2016 - 2050



Source: State of Minnesota  
Demographer's Office

**GLOBAL BIRTH RATE DECLINE**

**DESSUMATION OF RURAL MANUFACTURING**

**RURAL BIRTH RATE DECLINE**

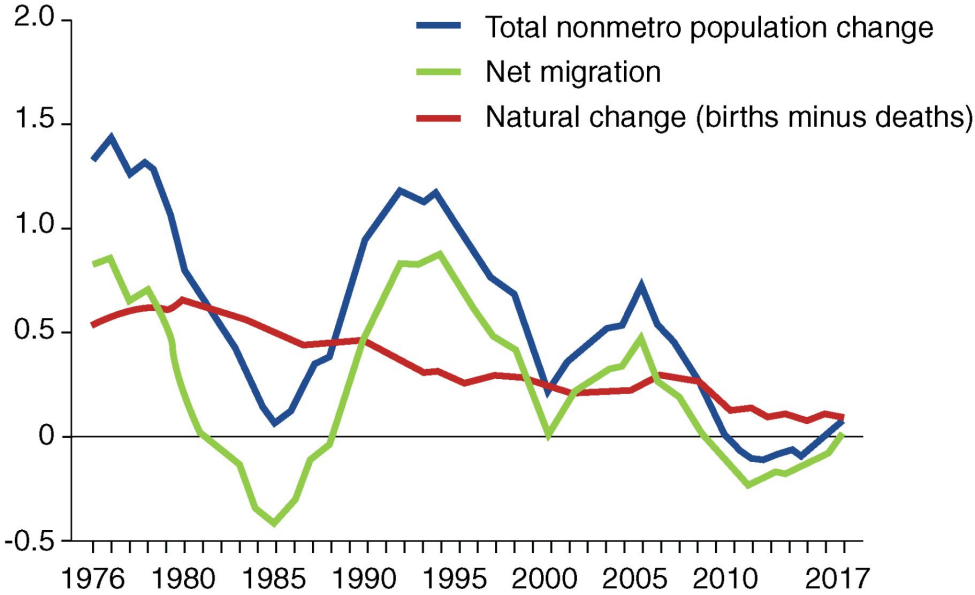
**RURAL POPULATION MIGRATION**





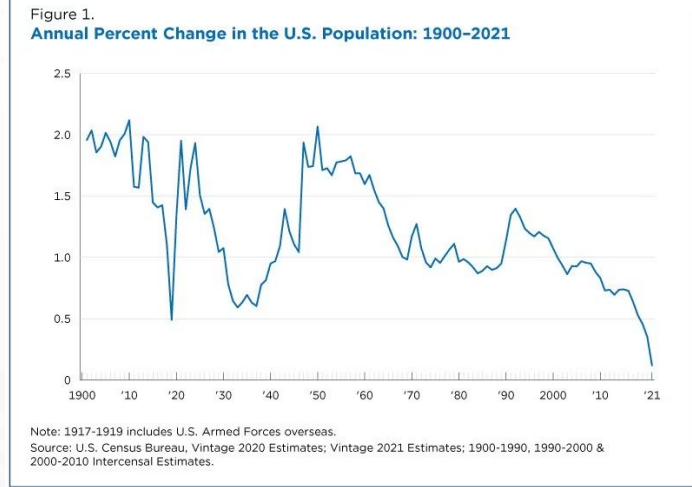
## Net migration has driven growth in the rural (nonmetro) population since 2011-12

Percent change from previous year



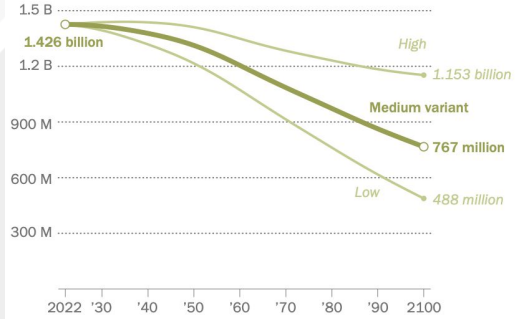
Note: Nonmetro is determined by the Office of Management and Budget, 2013 metro/nonmetro area definitions. Nonmetro status changed for some countries in 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Census Bureau.



## China's population is likely to fall below a billion people before 2100

Number of people, by variant

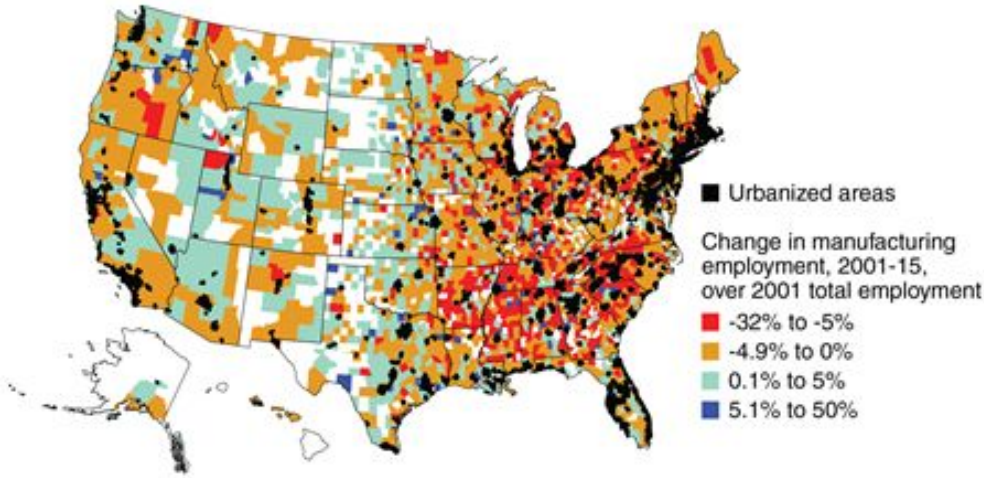


Note: May differ from national census figures. The medium variant is the middle-of-the-road estimate provided by the UN; high and low variant scenarios involve total fertility being 0.5 births above or below the medium scenario, respectively.  
Source: UN Population Division's World Population Prospects: The 2022 Revision.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



**Manufacturing employment declines were highest in the Eastern United States between 2001 and 2015**



Note: Counties in white have either missing or undisclosed data for either 2001 or 2015. Alaska and Hawaii not geographically representative.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service analysis using data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System.

Rural manufacturing is no longer the driver of economic growth that it once was:

**71 percent of U.S. counties experienced a decline in manufacturing employment between 2001 and 2015.**

## Manufacturing Economic Benefits

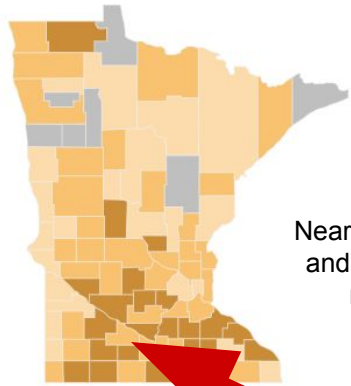
- In the U.S. today, manufacturing represents just 11% of U.S. gross domestic product, yet it accounts for 35% of American productivity growth and 60% of our exports
- U.S. manufacturing is the main engine of innovation in the U.S., responsible for 55% of all patents and 70% of all research and development spending
- Today, manufacturing employs over 12.5 million people and provides rewarding, living-wage jobs
- Every manufacturing job spurs 7 to 12 new jobs in other related industries, helping to build and sustain our economy

<https://www.ers.usda.gov/amber-waves/2017/october/rural-manufacturing-survival-and-its-role-in-the-rural-economy/>



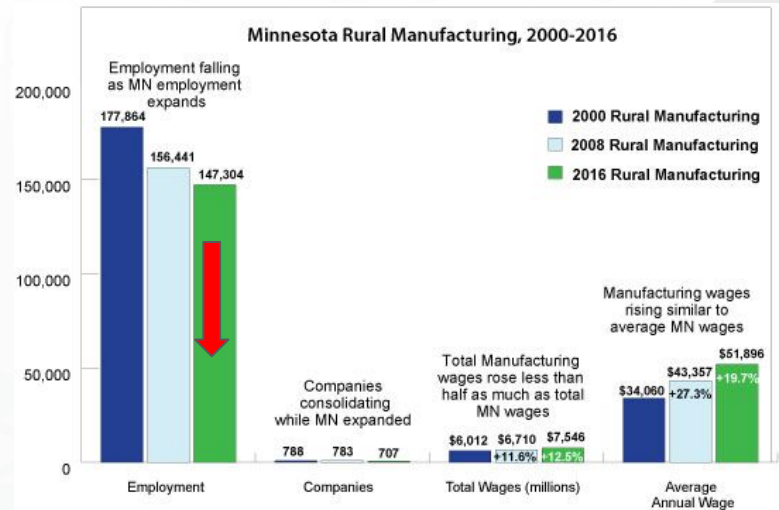
# Share of jobs in manufacturing

Minnesota counties, 2021



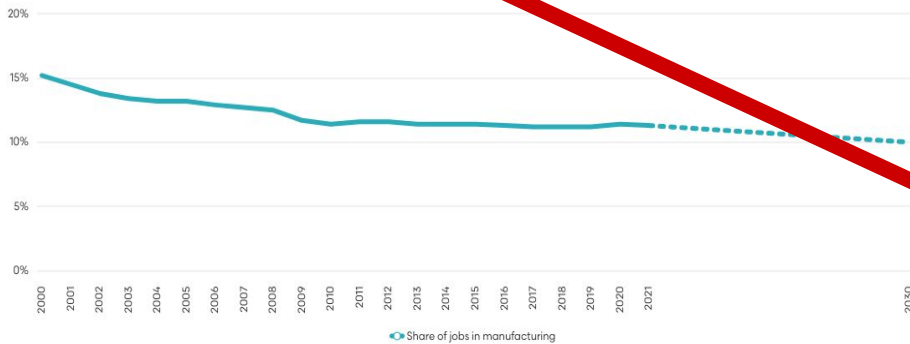
- N/A
- Less than 10.0%
- 10.0 to 19.9%
- 20.0% or more

Nearly 20% of all jobs in Brown and surrounding counties are manufacturing related

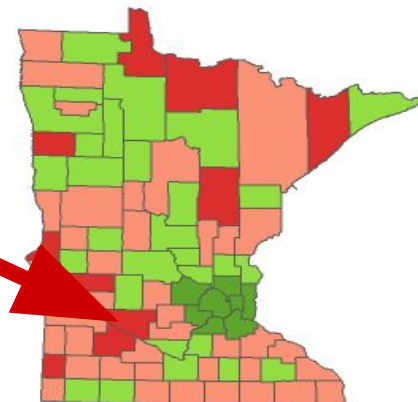


# Share of jobs in manufacturing

Minnesota, 2000-2030



# Average Decade-to-Decade % Change in Population Projections 2016 - 2050



- 2.5% or more
- 2.5% - 0%
- 0% - 2.5%
- 2.5% or more



# The Four Industrial Revolutions



## Industry 1.0

Mechanization and the introduction of steam and water power



## Industry 2.0

Mass production assembly lines using electrical power



## Industry 3.0

Automated production, computers, IT-systems and robotics



## Industry 4.0

The Smart Factory. Autonomous systems, IoT, machine learning

# Industry 4.0 2023 Top 8 Trends

	PRIMARY DEVELOPMENT EFFORT	SECONDARY DEVELOPMENT EFFORT	TERTIARY DEVELOPMENT EFFORT
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE	SOFTWARE		
ADVANCED ROBOTICS	SOFTWARE	HARDWARE	
IIOT (INDUSTRIAL INTERNET OF THINGS)	SOFTWARE	HARDWARE	
EDGE AND CLOUD COMPUTING	SOFTWARE		
ADDITIVE MANUFACTURING	SOFTWARE		
CYBERSECURITY	SOFTWARE		
BLOCKCHAIN	SOFTWARE		
WEARABLES	HARDWARE	EMBEDDED SOFTWARE	WIRELESS

# DIGITAL FARMING





# DATA DRIVEN FARMING

**Data**, including agronomic (crop management) **data** and machine operation data (e.g., fuel level, location, machine hours, engine RPM) is collected primarily from sensors embedded both in the machines and in the field (soil), but also pulls from external **data** (e.g., weather prediction data, commodity pricing).<sup>1</sup> Through JDLink™ Connect telematics, the **data** is automatically uploaded onto the cloud via cellular network, Wifi, or Bluetooth. Farmers access and manage the **data** through the MyJohnDeere.com portal of the cloud software platform. Through the Operation Center app on this platform, farmers can monitor activity in real-time, analyze performance, determine how best to utilize equipment, and collaborate with partners for insights and “prescriptions” using algorithms that help the farmer decide what to plant, where and when with optimized conditions.

[\[2\]](#) Because MyJohnDeere.com is an open **data** platform, the latter can be accomplished by farmers opting to share their **data** with apps created by third party Ag software providers leveraging the Deere APIs.

The more **data** that is collected, the more valuable it becomes to all stakeholders – farmers benefit from analyzing **data** collected over time and from other farmers’ **data** to inform decisions and Deere and software developers glean more insights paving the way for development of new value-added products and services.<sup>[3]</sup> Farmers can also share the **data** with input suppliers (seeds, fertilizer, chemical) to trigger automatic ordering for JIT delivery reducing downtime.



Figure 3  
 Percent of total farms and total farm/ranch acres using GPS for on-farm production activities, 2013 and 2019

Percent of farms, 2013



Percent of acres, 2013



Percent of farms, 2019



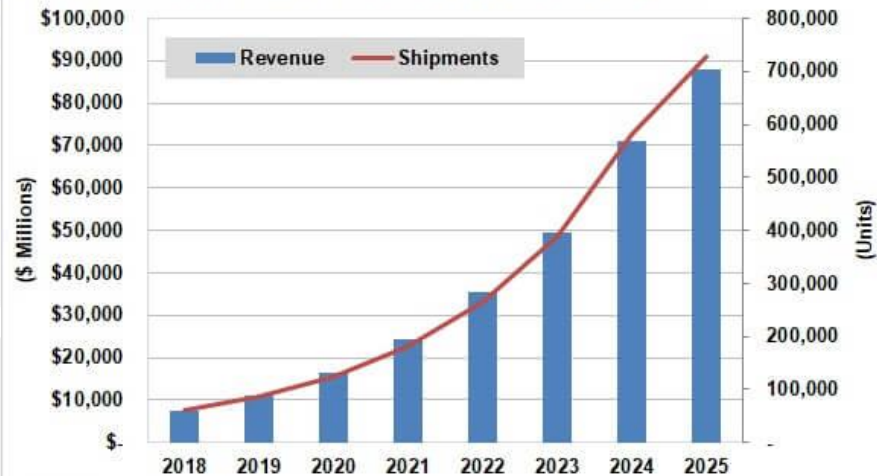
Percent of acres, 2019



## AGRICULTURAL AUTOMATION AND ROBOTICS



Agricultural Robot Revenue and Shipments, World Markets: 2018-2025



Source: Tractica

# Digital Agriculture Top 8 Trends

	PRIMARY DEVELOPMENT EFFORT	SECONDARY DEVELOPMENT EFFORT	TERTIARY DEVELOPMENT EFFORT
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE	SOFTWARE		
ROBOTICS	HARDWARE	SOFTWARE	
IIOT (INDUSTRIAL INTERNET OF THINGS)	SENSOR	HARDWARE	SOFTWARE
EDGE AND CLOUD COMPUTING (DATA ANALYTICS)	SOFTWARE		
DRONES	SOFTWARE		
CYBERSECURITY	SOFTWARE		
PRECISION AGRICULTURE	SOFTWARE		
REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE	HARDWARE	EMBEDDED SOFTWARE	WIRELESS



# IT'S ALL ABOUT THE DATA

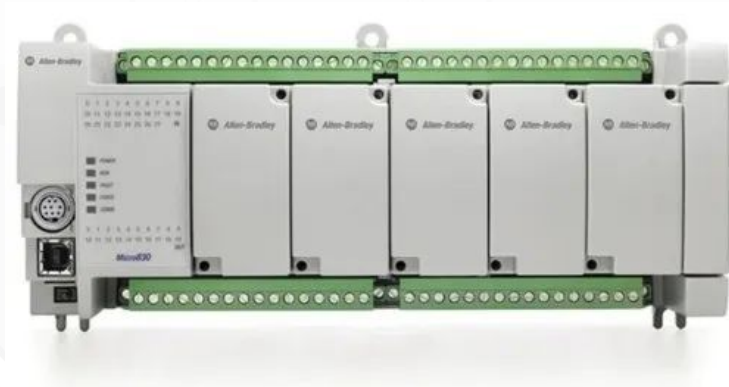
Do you see the similarities in future manufacturing and agriculture trends ?

WHEN IT BECOMES ALL ABOUT THE  
DATA - SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT  
IS REQUIRED

# Artificial Intelligence



# AI Accelerates Software Development





# SUMMARY

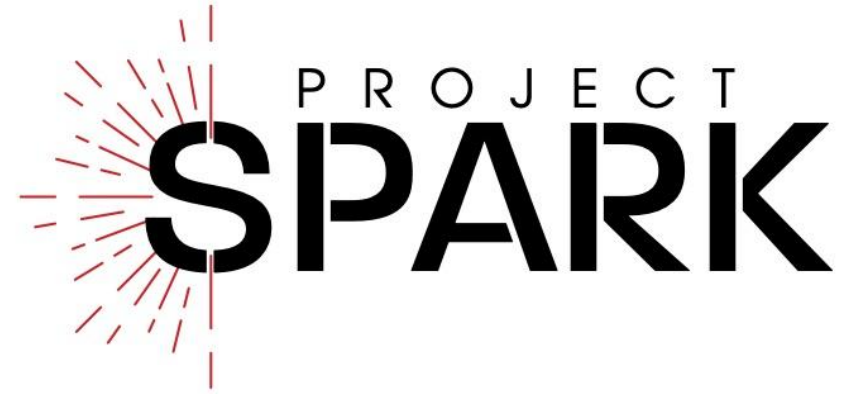
- Industry 4.0 and Digital Agriculture **will require additional software and hardware development**, from which new jobs, industries, and economies will emerge.
- AI (Artificial Intelligence) **will rapidly** accelerate many software development efforts.
  - Data Analytics
  - Predictable Maintenance Analytics and Automatic Supply Chain Management
  - Cyber Security
  - GPS Guidance
  - PLC Programming
  - Artificial Intelligence
  - Wireless Communications
  - Intelligent Sensor Development
- AI will expand the number of people developing new software solutions
- Project Spark and CORI Partnership



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# Vision and Strategy





"Skate to where the puck is going,  
not where it has been."

— Wayne Gretzky

# Our Digital Revolution has Already Begun

- New Ulm (Nuvera) has already laid the foundation for a technology renaissance to occur in New Ulm and the surrounding area by installing high speed internet fiber in all their service areas.
- New Ulm operates an **independent electrical grid** that significantly reduces the risk of brownouts or blackouts.
  - Critical requirement for Cloud-based software services or high levels of factory automation.
- Over the past 18 months New Ulm area schools have begun implementing Project Lead the Way, a K-12 STEM Curriculum to help ready our students for future workforce requirements.
- NUBRIC/Project Spark has formed a partnership with the Center on Rural Innovation to develop a technology hub / business incubator in New Ulm.
- Two of New Ulm's motor manufacturers, Windings and Parker Hannifin, will continue to benefit from future automation initiatives.

# Progress To Date

## Established Partnerships

Project Lead the Way

Region 9 and Federal EDA

The Center on Rural Innovation

## Results

### Project Lead the Way Adoption

- Martin Luther College
- St. Paul's Elementary School
- Minnesota Valley Lutheran High School
- New Ulm Cathedral High School
- New Ulm Public Middle School (under evaluation)

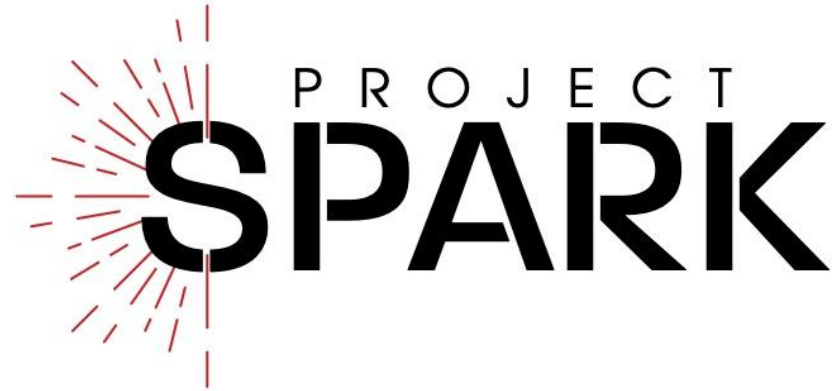
### Region 9 and Federal EDA

- Awaiting award for \$130,000 EDA Planning Grant for NURAP *New Ulm Robotics and Automation Program.*

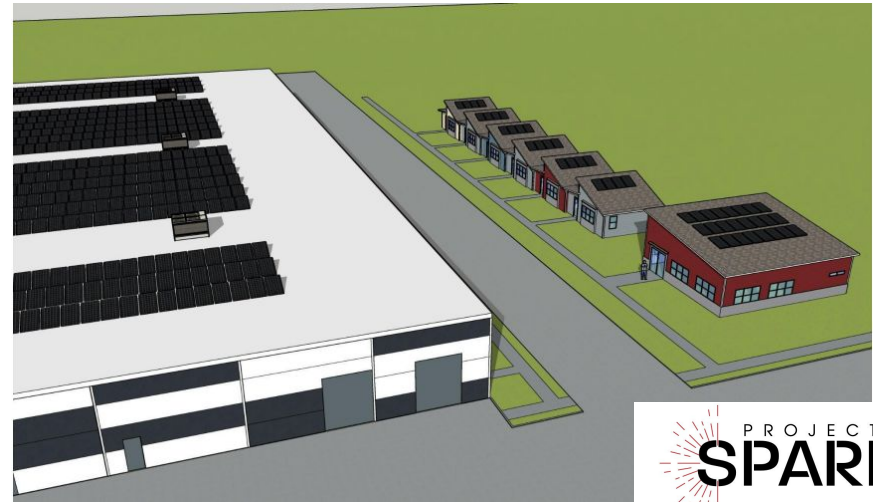
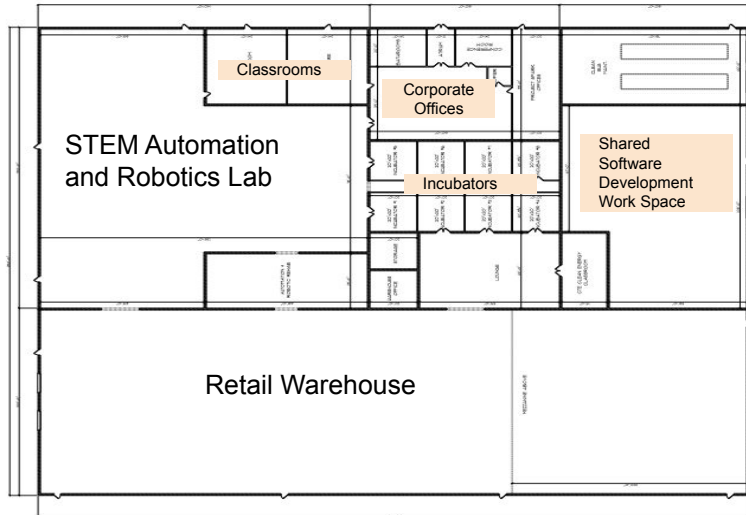
### The Center on Rural Innovation

- In early 2024 we will be applying for a \$750,000 EDA **Build** Grant.





**Education - Automation - Incubation - Commercialization**



# Technology and Business Incubator Campus

- State of the Art STEM Robotics and Automation Lab
- College Level Classroom Instruction
- Shared Software Development Suites
- 8 Business Incubator / Accelerator Spaces
- Commercial Warehouse Rental Space
- 5 Acre Solar Farm
- NUBRIC and Project Spark Corporate Offices
- 3 - 1 acre lots for new business expansion

Estimated Cost = \$6 - \$8M

# SO - How do we get there?

## Grant Funding

- Federal EDA Grants
  - Construction
  - Build to Scale
  - TECH Hubs Grant Program
- Federal USDA Grants
  - Rural Business Development Grants
  - RISE - Rural Innovation Stronger Economy
  - REAP- Rural Energy Assistance Program
- Minnesota DEED Funding
- Private Foundation Funding

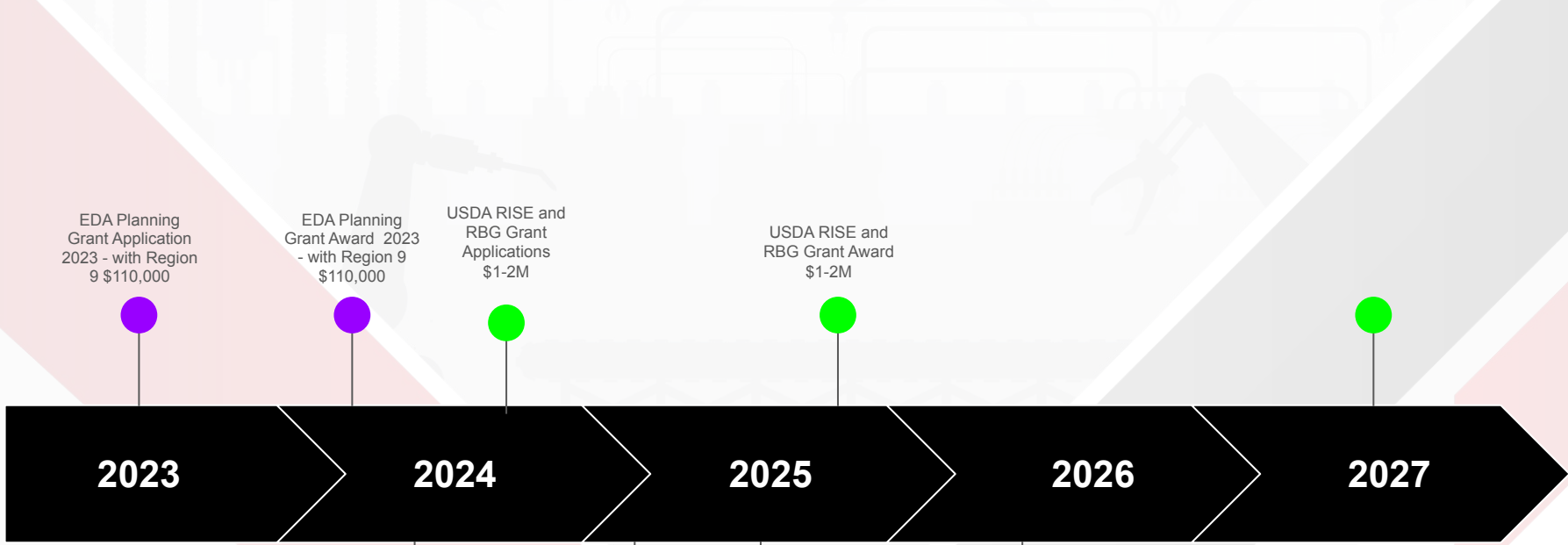
## Self Sustaining Revenue

- 5 Acre Solar Farm
- Commercial Warehouse Lease Space
- Ownership stake in incubated businesses

## Donor Support

- Project Spark is a 501 3 C organization.
- Favorably positions the organization for grant and donor funding.





EDA Planning Grant Application 2023 - with Region 9 \$110,000



EDA Planning Grant Award 2023 - with Region 9 \$110,000



USDA RISE and RBG Grant Applications \$1-2M



USDA RISE and RBG Grant Award \$1-2M



2023

2024

2025

2026

2027

CORI EDA Build to Scale Grant Application \$1.75M



CORI EDA Build to Scale Grant Award \$1.75M



EDA Construction Grant Application \$2.0M



EDA Construction Grant Award \$2.0M



# The Data Suggests.....

The manufacturing industry in our smaller rural towns will face extraordinary challenges in the near future.

- Continued population decline and migration
- An eroding tax base for community and schools
- Increased competition for qualified workers
- Increased price competition by competitors implementing higher levels of automation.

Digital agriculture, **especially autonomous farming**, will shift the need for human capital in the rural areas to **hardware and software development** in other locations. In short, it has the potential to accelerate rural population decline.

# Technology and Manufacturing Entrepreneurs with a New Ulm Connection



James J. Seifert



Tim Anderson



Todd Tyler

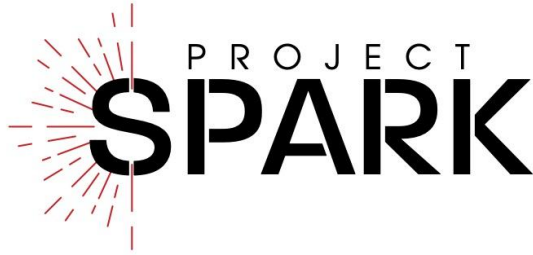


Jay Johnson

*And we are going to  
get a bit of help !*



Tom Kuckhahn



1. Is bold and courageous initiative
2. It's an expensive initiative
3. It's a regional initiative\
4. It's an **achievable** initiative
5. It incorporates offensive and defensive business strategies that will benefit New Ulm and our surrounding communities.
  - a. **Offensive**
    - i. It has the potential to create new high paying jobs and businesses.
    - ii. It can retain talent by providing college level degrees and certifications locally.
  - b. **Defensive**
    - i. It helps keep current manufacturers here by providing a well-educated and trained workforce that can work with tomorrow's technologies.
    - ii. It provides a safe-haven for those manufacturer that can no longer survive in small rural towns.





# Call to Action

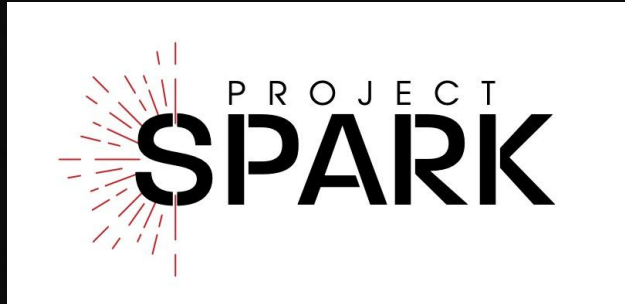
This MUST be a coordinated, regional effort !

We need representatives from city and county governments, school board members, teachers, and business leaders to join and lead this initiative.

[paul@nubric.orbg](mailto:paul@nubric.orbg)



Far better is it to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure... than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much, because they live in a gray twilight that knows not victory nor



eat.  
Roosevelt —  
OTES