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### **Innovation is Driving Economic Growth in Allentown**

If you have a 4 year old child or grandchild and introduce them to FaceTime, they may never know a time in their life when talking on the phone did not include seeing the other person. They may actually think the phone is broken if they cannot see the person.

We are living in an ever changing, innovating period of history. The rate of change is more rapid today than it has ever been. The argument can easily be made that innovation is inherently a core value of any healthy business, and thus any healthy business community.

The Allentown Economic Development Corporation has been cultivating innovation at its Bridgeworks Enterprise Center for many years. Check them out at [www.allentownedc.com](http://www.allentownedc.com). Fellow Allentown Chamber board member and City Center Lehigh Valley's Vice President, Director of Sales, Jim Harbaugh says it is "all about the environment" that creates an atmosphere for millennials and innovation.

David Bond of Velaspan said they were drawn to Allentown by the synergy of young, technology professionals. "...we spent a good deal of time downtown for meetings, Chamber events, and hockey games. Networking opportunities have expanded exponentially. Feedback from our employees has been positive and our visitors have been highly complementary of both the office and the downtown area as a whole. There's so much energy downtown right now, this is a great time for Allentown and a great time for Velaspan. We're really excited about the future."

Velaspan joins Trifecta, Saw, and others. We can already see that five years from now, these businesses and others will be joined by exponentially more innovating businesses.

Around Thanksgiving, with a generous, multi-million dollar gift from Air Products, it was announced that Lehigh Valley Health Network is creating a healthcare innovation center in downtown Allentown.

City Center's Five City Center will be an urban innovation campus.

The Allentown Chamber of Commerce welcomes and celebrates the diversity of innovation in the City of Allentown, where a true urban environment is welcoming innovative Millennials to our community for the next generation. With boomers entering the "less is more" phase and millennials entering the wealth accumulation period of life, we will see millennials outspend boomers by 2017.

Innovation is being aggressively cultivated in our "very urban" Allentown and we welcome this new trend.

Allentown is Open for Innovation!