



Profile
Michael Rotondo M.D. is reshaping URM's physician group. **Page 10**



Special Report
Breaking a stereotype, a growing number of older adults are connecting with iPads, Kindles and Skype. **Page 17**



Special Section
The 29th annual Athena Award finalists are profiled.

Hitting a billion

Broadstone Net Lease has reached \$1 billion in market capitalization

By **ANDREA DECKERT**

A local real estate investment trust has surpassed \$1 billion in total value, and its leader believes the recent growth is sustainable.

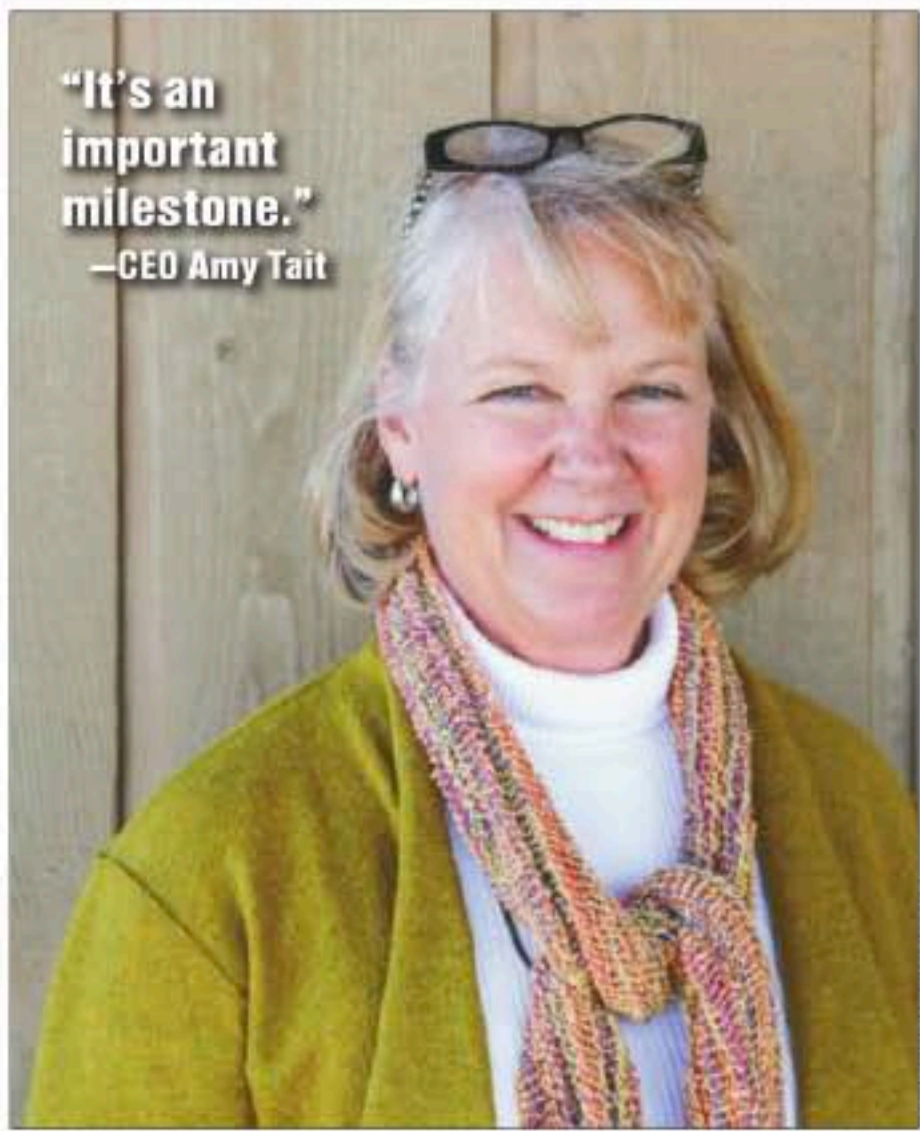
Amy Tait, chairman and CEO of Rochester-based Broadstone Real Estate LLC, said its Broadstone Net Lease reached total market capitalization of \$1 billion after an increase in property acquisitions during the fourth quarter.

"It's an important milestone," Tait said.

Broadstone Net Lease completed \$127 million in property acquisitions during the last quarter of 2014, including \$106 million in December. Broadstone Net Lease owns some 230 prop-

Continued on page 14

"It's an important milestone."
—CEO Amy Tait



G.W. Lisk adding facility

\$7M project expands company's operations

By **ANDREA DECKERT**

G.W. Lisk Corp. Inc., one of the region's largest employers, is in the midst of a roughly \$7 million expansion that will help the manufacturer keep up with growth.

Based in Clifton Springs, Ontario County, the firm is adding a 71,000-square-foot manufacturing facility near its main campus.

The company also is renovating a nearly 30,000-square-foot vacant school building there.

The new site will include manufacturing, laboratory and office space, along with a cafeteria, said Edward Maier, president and CEO.

The site also will help free up space

Continued on page 14

With some 800 workers, G.W. Lisk is the area's ninth-largest private firm.

RFID leader expects rise in jobs here

By **KERRY FELTNER**

For many manufacturers, controlling a factory floor is akin to counting chickens.

Omni-ID Inc.—which has its headquarters in Eastman Business Park—has invented a way to track materials for a variety of industries and is setting a new precedent for factory processes.

Top executive George Daddis Jr. and his team have invented and hold patents for the on-metal tag and the e-label solution called ProVIEW. The technology consists of passive UHF radio-frequency identification tags that give customers the ability for data capture and customization.

The company is considered the No. 1 provider of industrial RFID tags, due

Continued on page 16

Bankruptcies down in '14

The number of filings drops 51.8 percent over the past 5 years

By **WILL ASTOR**

Rochester-area bankruptcy filings fell again last year, dropping for the fifth year in a row.

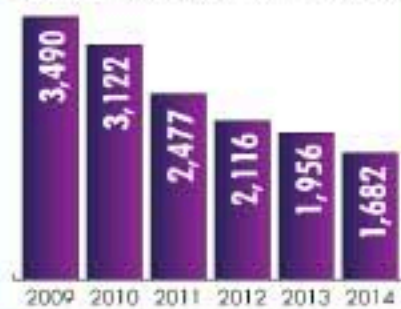
At year's end, new bankruptcy filings in the region were down 14 percent, from 1,956 in 2013 to 1,682.

The numbers reflect filings in the federal courts' Western District of New York Rochester Division, which includes the counties of Monroe, Ontario, Wayne, Livingston, Seneca, Yates, Steuben, Schuyler and Chemung.

The local trend is roughly in line with national numbers. Across the country, bankruptcies were down 12 percent to 910,090 from 1.03 million in 2013.

Steady decline

In 2014, Rochester-area bankruptcies reached the lowest point in five years.



Local bankruptcy filings have declined steadily since 2009, showing double-digit drops in every year but one.

Local bankruptcy filings fell 10.5 percent in 2010, 20.7 percent in 2011, 14.6 percent in 2012 and 7.6 percent in 2013, figures compiled by the clerk

Continued on page 15

Lawsuit marks new chapter in long dispute

By **WILL ASTOR**

In the latest salvo in a long-running dispute between local optics industry rivals, Lumetrics Inc. last week filed a fifth lawsuit seeking to stop Bristol Instruments Inc. from selling a device allegedly built with technology stolen from Lumetrics.

Now edging into its third year, the flap shows no sign of winding down.

Filed in U.S. District Court in Rochester on Jan. 6, Lumetrics' latest complaint against Bristol Instruments revives and repeats accusations previously leveled in two state court actions and two federal lawsuits.

Central to all is Todd Blalock, a one-time Lumetrics chief technology officer

Continued on page 15



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OMNI-ID

Continued from page 1

to its broad portfolio and sheer volume of tags manufactured, officials said.

Omni-ID's products include passive and active RFID tags that are designed for tracking assets in harsh industrial environments and high-value IT assets. ProVIEW, which combines tags and software, is designed for materials flow management in manufacturing.

"We actually have the world's strongest patent on metal RFID technologies, so there is no other practical way to build an on-metal RFID tag other than using our patent," said Daddis, president and CEO. "We believe we're the world's largest volume manufacturer of industrial RFID tags. We ship more tags for industrial manufacturing than any other company in the world."

Omni-ID employs 32 people in Rochester. It expects to reach 40 employees by the end of 2015. Companywide, the firm has a couple hundred employees and also has offices in the United Kingdom, Asia and India.

Omni-ID was one of seven companies spun off of British aerospace defense firm QinetiQ Group PLC in 2007. QinetiQ was involved in the development of radar during WWII in Britain and has created a variety of technologies, including LCD screens.

"We're founded on the principle of applying the new RFID technology at the time to metal or industrial applications," Daddis said. "So what's not well known is that RFID tags don't work on metal because essentially the metal deforms the surface of the antennae to the point that it really won't work. And so QinetiQ was involved in trying to create some stealth technology for their aircraft."

Omni-ID is a self-described "Internet of things" company that focuses on material flow management and asset tracking for large industrial customers. The company's clients include four of the top 10 auto manufacturers. It also services large capital goods manufacturers such as Whirlpool Corp. It focuses on IT asset tracking, oil and gas industry applications, tool tracking and manufacturing.

"We've been able to improve efficiencies, reduce material handling costs and it's just as big a help sometimes to find the areas where you're lacking or deficient at, and this is allowing us to capture data (in) real time," said Robert Hyden, IT program manager at Detroit, a division of Detroit Diesel Corp.—an affiliate of Daimler Trucks North America LLC—and client of Omni-ID.

For many businesses, the standard of tracking is using paper labels on materials.

"This creates what we call a work pro-



Photo courtesy of Omni-ID Inc.
"We believe we're the world's largest volume manufacturer of industrial RFID tags," says George Daddis Jr., president and CEO. "We ship more tags for industrial manufacturing than any other company in the world."



cess gap," Daddis said. "You can measure the goods coming in your front door and you can put labels on saying where they need to go, but after that they're gone. You don't know how much is falling out in between on all the intermediate process steps."

Many times companies can produce up to 20 percent more inventory than necessary, resulting in valuable money and time wasted, he explained.

Omni-ID's technology enables companies to track and redirect materials during the process of production—saving time, money and efficiency.

"The primary value proposition is to be able to count and understand exactly where and how many of your work-in-process items exist at any given time

and to be able to control and redirect that flow," Daddis said.

Hyden said that Omni-ID's technology often exposes inefficiencies that can be hard for clients to confront but are necessary for evolution.

"It's hard not to get caught up in emotion," he said. "You work somewhere and regardless of the business you're working at you kind of think, well, these are the problems and these are the reasons why but you don't have data to back it up. So you might blame it on people, process or machinery or whatever, but until you actually have something in place to track that and to give you hard numbers and take the emotion out of it, it's really difficult to truly solve a problem."

Empire Precision Plastics, on Lee Road, has worked with the firm on a variety of projects as a manufacturing partner. The company works on projects that Omni-ID has to manufacture in the United States such as Trade Agreements Act-compliant products, which are primarily for the U.S. Marine Corps.

"What's been fun about the relationship with them, from Empire's perspective, is they're into some pretty interesting and important projects," said Neal Elli, president for Empire Precision Plastics. "They seem to go out of their way to help make us successful."

Omni-ID deploys its technology in many different industries, such as on surgical instruments tracking the process of sterilization, for oil and gas companies that need to track hundreds of thousands or millions of pieces of pipe, and on factory floors for manufacturers across a variety of industries. Cli-

ents such as Cisco Systems Inc. use the company's product for IT asset tracking, and NASA has its laboratory equipment tracked by the local firm.

"I think they haven't even scratched the surface for applications," Elli said. "When you're trying to keep a shepherd's control of your assets in a factory and just trace things, there is just so much."

Omni-ID has seen 70 to 100 percent growth in revenues annually over the past three years and expects the same growth trajectory this year.

"I think the future is very bright for them," Detroit's Hyden said. "They seem to be very customer focused. They're always open to new ideas and willing to take things upon themselves and go the extra mile. They have brilliant people working there and everything that they've rolled out has lived up to the promise."

The company finds itself up against paper labels when competing for clients. Many competitors are using barcodes on paper labels to track assets, Omni-ID officials said.

"Today we're very lucky in that we're unique in the market in terms of having a visual tag, but to be clear there's no such thing as having no competition. Somebody's doing something now," he added.

With a global reach and focus, operating in Rochester is still significant.

"I like that we're building Rochester," Daddis said. "We're bringing in really good strong professional jobs, very good jobs here. We don't sell here but that means we're basically a net import of dollars into the county."

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Have a tip?

If you hear of something happening in Rochester's business community, call **(585) 546-8303** or email rbj@rbj.net.

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