



May 30, 2017

## Pittsburgh Robotics Market

MANUFACTURING

BY EVAN OGRODNIK

On Tuesday, May 23, Schneider Downs was a co-sponsor of a moderated panel discussion on the future of robotics and artificial intelligence (AI), and particularly, its impact in Pittsburgh. The panelists included Dr. John Dolan, a faculty member of Carnegie Mellon University's Robotics Institute for over 25 years; Jackie Erickson, the Director of Communications for the Advanced Robotics for Manufacturing Institute; Jeremy Searock, co-founder of Advanced Construction Robotics; and a few individuals extensively involved in the autonomous vehicle industry, including a representative from Uber's Advanced Technologies Center. The panelists gave us insight on some of the many great things happening in our city in the robotics industry, and my takeaway is that it rivals anything being done the world over.

It is likely obvious that Carnegie Mellon University attracts some of the most brilliant technology students, but in years past, that talent has left our fair city to explore opportunities elsewhere, namely, Silicon Valley. The times appear to be changing, as the panelists indicated that our talent here is the best in the country, if not the world. Pittsburgh has tremendous professional growth opportunities in the robotics industry as major companies are making significant investments in the area, particularly with autonomous vehicles. Additionally, the cost of living is very reasonable relative to some of the other tech hubs in the country, the city has great cultural amenities, and recent top rankings as a "most livable city" or "best restaurant scene" don't hurt, either. And MetLife Investment Management's Tech Markets 2.0 study just named Pittsburgh as one of four "growing technology hubs" outside of the market leaders of Silicon Valley and Boston.

Where the tech scene here struggles is with continuous interest and investment from the financial backers in Silicon Valley. Despite the talent that resides here, we haven't seen the capital infusions from venture capital and private equity firms that have funded so much of Silicon Valley. Pittsburgh needs a few big success stories to demonstrate to the world that we are a major player in the robotics industry, and that we are finding solutions and solving problems within the industry.

As the aging workforce ("boomers") begins to retire, and the skills gap continues to grow, the use of robotics may help supplement or replace these important skillsets. Those businesses with concerns about workforce, efficiencies, processes, etc. may consider exploring ways to use robotics. The opportunities seem endless with the right ideas. For more information on how robotics and artificial intelligence are impacting Pittsburgh manufacturing, [contact us](#).

You've heard our thoughts... We'd like to hear yours

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