

Advertisement

**BUSINESS**

# **One haircut at a time, Micron and OCC reach out to Syracuse's Black and Latino communities**

Updated: Oct. 24, 2023, 6:34 p.m. | Published: Oct. 24, 2023, 6:00 a.m.



Derrick Carr, project partner at Onondaga Community College, stands in Micron Technology's exhibit in the Museum of Science and Technology, in Syracuse. (N. Scott Trimble | [strimble@syracuse.com](mailto:strimble@syracuse.com)) N. Scott Trimble | [strimble@syracuse.com](mailto:strimble@syracuse.com)

131  
shares

By [Glenn Coin | gcoin@syracuse.com](mailto:gcoin@syracuse.com)

Syracuse, N.Y. – Derrick Carr says his barber knows more about him than his doctor does.

“We have hourlong conversations,” said Carr, the new project partner director at at Onondaga Community College.

That’s why Carr and [Micron Technology](#) are gathering together owners of barbershops and salons on Monday, to help them spread the news to their clients about the once-in-a-lifetime chance to work for one of the world’s biggest semiconductor companies. Stylists and barbers spend a lot of time in one-on-one conversations, and they tend to be focal points of social interaction in Black and Latino communities.

“I’ve worked with barbershops, stylists and other community organizations that are purveyors of culture and wisdom and history, in particular, in communities of color,” said Robert Simmons, Micron’s head of social impact and STEM programs. “They interact with all sorts of different people.”

The goal is to let people know about the potential for jobs at Micron and its suppliers, and OCC’s programs that will help people land one of those jobs.

Micron plans to build a massive semiconductor factory in the town of Clay. The company says it will have 9,000 employees by the time it completes all four fabrication plants, or fabs, in 2043. The first fab is set to open by the end of the decade.

Building a workforce skilled enough to build the highly specialized fabs, and then to operate and oversee the mind-bogglingly complex machines that will produce the chips, is a major challenge in Central New York. Micron has also pledged to hire people from lower-income areas and “historically disadvantaged populations.”

Advertisement

The barbershop and stylist event is one small step in Micron’s stated goal of reaching out to, and hiring from, underserved communities. The goal, organizers say, is to get barbers and stylists to talk up Micron during those extended, close interactions while washing and cutting hair.

Carr also hopes stylists and barbers can promote OCC's programs that could lead to a job at Micron or a supplier. The college already has technology and construction programs, and it has just added certificate and degree programs in electromechanical technology that could lead directly to semiconductor industry jobs.

"The biggest thing right now is breaking down misconceptions of you needing a four-year degree to be gainfully employed at Micron or other semiconductor industry companies," said Carr, who has been at OCC for about seven months. Before that, he had been a district representative for state Sen. John Mannion, and before that he was a representative for the United Healthcare Workers East union.

Advertisement

Monday's event won't be at OCC. Instead, it will be at Jubilee Homes, on South Avenue in Syracuse's southwest side.

"Core to our mission is really ensuring that we're going into the community, not always asking the community to come to Micron," Simmons said.

Reaching out to the Black and Latino community through hair-cutting salons isn't a new idea. Jubilee Homes, where the event will take place, often distributes information that way, said Executive Director Walt Dixie. In New York City, the Barbershop Books program stocks books in barbershops and encourages barbers to help teach literacy, especially to Black boys.

In Micron's U.S. locations, the company has reached out to Black and Latino communities in diverse ways. In Boise, Idaho, Micron's global headquarters, the company has held events with the nonprofit Brown Like Me, which serves the Black community. In Manassas, Virginia, where Micron has a chip-making plant, it offers internships to students at the largely Hispanic local high school.

Advertisement



And just last week at OCC, Micron conducted a “chip camp” entirely in Spanish for 50 Syracuse 8th-grade girls.

Simmons said the barbershop and stylist program like others, is a two-way street for him.

“It’s about sharing information with the community, but also using it as another opportunity to enhance my understanding of the community, to understand the human condition in the community,” he said.

---

## READ MORE ABOUT MICRON TECHNOLOGY IN CLAY

**Laborers union to build new training center in DeWitt with eye toward I-81, Micron projects**

---

**Joe Biden sheds light on how feds will boost Syracuse to become global hub for computer chips**

---

**Onondaga County gives more time for comments on Micron’s environmental impacts**

---

**One haircut at a time, Micron and OCC reach out to Syracuse’s Black and Latino communities**

---

**Schumer ‘very optimistic’ Upstate NY will win millions as semiconductor tech hub**

---

Advertisement

 **Gear up with HP** 

Victus 15L Gaming Desktop TG02-1000  
with Intel Core i5  
from \$489.99 ~~\$799.99~~ Save \$310 instantly

[SHOP NOW](#)

Glenn Coin covers weather, environment and Micron Technology for [syracuse.com](https://www.syracuse.com/)/The Post-Standard.

Got a tip, comment or story idea? Contact Glenn at: [Email](#) | [X](#) | 315-470-3251 (text or call)

*Editor's note: An earlier version of this story incorrectly said the event will be held Wednesday. In fact, it will be held next Monday, Oct. 30. The story has been updated to reflect this.*

If you purchase a product or register for an account through a link on our site, we may receive compensation. By using this site, you consent to our [User Agreement](#) and agree that your clicks, interactions, and personal information may be collected, recorded, and/or stored by us and social media and other third-party partners in accordance with our [Privacy Policy](#).

---

## Around the Web

### They're Not Scrubs. They're FIGS.

FIGS | Sponsored

[Shop Now](#)

### Game shows what the world without US military interventions would look like

Grand Historic Strategy Simulation | Sponsored

[Play Now](#)

### How Much Should You Pay a Maid for House Cleaning? Here Are the Rates.

Cleaning Services Costs In Syracuse Might Surprise You

Branded Links | Sponsored

[Learn more](#)

### Nature's 'Liquid Adderal' is going viral in Syracuse