

# PROGRESS CHENANGO

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## Chobani continues to grow community impact efforts



By CATHERINE SASSO  
The Evening Sun

NEW BERLIN - Chobani President Peter McGuinness describes the company's 2019 success by saying, "We had a really good year from a business prospective. We had a really great year from a philanthropic prospective."

In 2019, the modern food company launched over 35 new products and increased its benevolent efforts towards the community.

McGuinness spoke pas-

250 bags filled with food went to local students that were in need in Norwich. Each bag contained shelf-stable items, Chobani coupons, and a gift card for fresh fruits and vegetables. Chobani volunteers, including founder and CEO Hamdi Ulukaya, organized the food, packed the bags, and assisted in delivering them to the five schools in the district.

sionately about the company's latest efforts to pay off student lunch bills. "We took on lunch shaming. Kids are going hungry and being shamed for their economic status. It was something we saw that we thought was wrong. Its hard to believe that goes on in our country in 2019. It's an injustice."

Last year, Chobani paid off school lunch debt in Central New York, Warwick, Rhode Island, and Twin Falls, Idaho. In New York, they contributed \$35,085 toward lunch debt. Locally the company cleared the outstanding lunch debt for Oxford Academy Central School, Sherburne - Earlville Central School, and Edmeston Central School.

"Kids going hungry because of their economic status is unethical and inhumane frankly," said McGuinness.

Paying off lunch debt is not the only way Chobani has ensured kids get healthy

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SUNY Morrisville Norwich Campus Student Marsha Friedel poses with SUNY Morrisville President David Rogers after receiving the State University of New York Association of Council Members and College Trustees Award for Excellence in Student Initiative Scholarship. (Submitted photo)

## Norwich's Morrisville Campus leads county in education values

By ZACHARY MESECK  
The Evening Sun

NORWICH - SUNY Morrisville's Norwich Campus is celebrating 50 years of promoting educational values in Chenango County, with a year of advancing technologically and heading educational leadership in its region.

According to SUNY Morrisville Norwich Campus Director Lindsey Lefevre, the college's mission is to offer access to educational opportunities for the local community and the southern tier region.

"We act on that mission in a variety of ways through offering degree and non degree programs and training," said Lefevre. "We see ourselves as being in the business of building partnerships and collaborations that bring students, faculty and staff, the community, and businesses together."

Lefevre said for instance, the college recently co-sponsored the Bridges Out of Poverty training with Improve Norwich Now.

"That training had close to 100 people in attendance and included students, faculty, staff, local non profits, and community members," she said. "The college then sponsored a follow up event to that training where we talked about a variety of projects that local individuals and agencies are working on and how we can build on those efforts in the future."

"The college will continue to play host to other meetings of that nature as we see ourselves as collaborators with the community."

She said along with promoting educational opportunities, the college is also working on a number of new career opportunities including an Admissions and Workforce Development Position. She added that the position would allow staff to link traditional student recruitment to work with local industry partners to identify their needs to recruit and retain a solid workforce.

Another position is the Commuter and Adult Learning Specialist, which is a dedicated position to enhance on-campus student programming for a commuter campus and advises the Norwich Student Government

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## A tradition of looking ahead, Raymond invests in community and technology

Raymond is a part of Toyota Industries. They employ about 7,000 people world wide, roughly 1,900 of them locally. The largest of the company's facilities is the corporate headquarters in the Village of Greene, established there in 1922. Right, a Raymond manager examines distribution software designed and sold by the company to help improve warehouse efficiency.



Above, a Raymond employee carries out a quality inspection of a recently manufactured fork truck line.



By TYLER MURPHY  
The Evening Sun

GREENE - One of Chenango County's oldest and largest employers, The Raymond Corporation is continuing to succeed by becoming a cutting edge leader in e-commerce and technology.

Raymond is a part of Toyota Industries. They employ about 7,000 people world wide, roughly 1,900 of them locally. The largest of the company's facilities is the corporate headquarters in the Village of Greene, established there in 1922.

Though the material handling industry was down

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# A tradition of looking ahead, Raymond invests in community and technology —

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slightly overall from the previous year, a big driver behind the developing market was e-commerce.

“So all in all, it was a good year for Raymond. It’s a very competitive marketplace that we’re in because of the need for it seven days a week, 24 hours a day, for material handling to support e-commerce’s very short lead time,” said Raymond Corporation President and CEO of Michael Field.

Other major developments for Raymond in 2019 included investment in the facilities at the company’s headquarters in Greene. A small addition is being built in front of the building, transforming the main entrance to showcase Raymond equipment as visitors come in the building, and freshen the appearance.

One of the important achievements the company accomplished in 2019 was the recognition and awards it earned.

The company was named Corporate Citizen of the Year by the Binghamton Chamber of Commerce.

Raymond Vice President of Human Resources Steve VanNostrand said, “The Binghamton Chamber recognized Raymond just for our overall impact on the organization. We were

able to highlight with them particularly what our people do to help make the communities where they live and where our business is located simply a better place.”

Raymond also received more than 16 awards in 2019 from various sectors of their business. On the operations and manufacturing side they received awards for innovation, products and technological solutions. Raymond associates were also honored, receiving awards for contributions to the industry and the community.

Raymond supports several local not-for-profit organizations, contributing to about 150 of them. Many of those are brought to the company’s attention by employees. Field said it was important for the community to grow as Raymond did. He said the company has a good relationship with county officials and the Town of Greene and was here to stay.

“We try to plant a lot of seeds around our local communities that we think will make it a better place to live, retain great talent here in the community, and help those who are less fortunate. We are really focused on encouraging our people to volunteer in any way possible,” said Field.

“Part of our culture



Raymond provides up to 40 hours of paid time off for each employee to do community volunteer work as a core policy within the company.

as a company is we try to balance and strongly encourage a feel of a local family-run business, but at the same time offering our people global opportunities as part of a large global company. So that focus on community is something that we reinforce in our policies and how we allocate our spending in the community.”

Raymond provides up to 40 hours of paid time off for community volunteers as a core policy within the company.

“Because we’re so integral in the community here, for example we have a lot of employees who are part of the fire depart-

ment. So, when there’s a fire, employees leave work and go take care of the community. That’s something that’s existed for a long period of time,” said VanNostrand.

Another major area of focus for the company is on education, starting at elementary school and working all the way up.

“We provide time for our people and strong encouragement that they volunteer in supporting a large number of activities, but a lot of them being STEM or STEAM related, as we’re trying to continue to grow technical talent and recognize manufacturing opportunities in our local community,”

said VanNostrand.

“Each year we put on a very significant manufacturing day event. We’ll bring in 250 or so students, and equally important, teachers and guidance counselors, and we’ll walk them through how a manufacturing company operates. They’ll get a chance to see our manufacturing floor, and then we share with them a lot of technology things, like virtual reality, that really help us provide some excitement and some encouragement to pursue those types of education and career opportunities,” said Field.

The next event will be at beginning of October in 2020 as part of a National Manufacturing Day. There are some other national programs, like Skills USA, that Raymond is a leader on a national basis in, and encourages people to pursue opportunities in manufacturing.

“We’re trying to provide more visibility, encourage further growth and development at an individual level, and still educate our teachers and guidance counselors about the career opportunities that exist in manufacturing companies,” said Field.

An innovator in the industry Raymond had a head start with several products already in position to take advantage

of the changing market. Raymond produces and sells support services and technology that aid e-commerce by making warehousing and distribution more efficient, the reduced times in turn-around in getting shipments out the door and to customers is at the heart of e-commerce trends.

The gains in these products and service help keep the company ahead of the industry’s downward trend.

“Any product that is used in that kind of high-speed distribution is in need. So order picking equipment, that move palettes as well as cases of material, are very critical to warehousing and distribution,” said Field.

In addition to being a leader in producing premium forklifts, Raymond sells alongside them a layer of technology-enabling software that is directly integrated into the fork trucks. The software has a wide range of capability. It can keep track of individual trucks, or a fleet of them, it can also help organized the distribution centers they work in or managed several distribution centers at the same time.

“In a nutshell, it basically gives you visibility down to an individual forklift level and a fork-

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## A tradition of looking ahead, Raymond invests in community and technology —

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lift operator level, all the way up through the fleet of forklifts or material handling equipment that might be in a warehouse or distribution center. So you have that visibility up and down the overall process of material handling," said Field. "You can also look at the energy storage, what is the health of the batteries and how they are being managed."

Like other leading companies in the industry, Raymond's software supports cloud-based data management and delivers real-time information about how the product or forklift is being used and is performing.

"Of course, like any other software that you would have on your cell phone, all the apps and all of the technology is continually evolving, and we're evolving at the same rate," said Field.

"In many ways it's like your phone. Your phone used to be used just to call someone; now there aren't very many people that don't have an expectation of a smartphone that is able to do other things. It's very similar relative to

material handling equipment— helping to manage the use of the equipment, enabling the operators to be proficient, and plan for different contingencies of operating the equipment in an operating environment," he said.

Demand for quick turnaround in the warehouse processing industry is a dominating factor and it drives product development, which is always searching for new ways to come up with quicker, more efficient ways to do the work.

For the last ninety years, Raymond has always been very customer focused and driven by its innovations, quality and service.

The company was launched to success by the clever use of patents during its formative years and in recent years launched a very successful virtual reality program that was ahead of the market. Its design has also been patented by Raymond.

The virtual simulator allows drivers to practice work on Raymond trucks with no risk of property damage or harm. It lets drivers practice their operational skills but also what to do in an emergency. Forklifts are heavier than most cars and contain counterweights weighing several thousands of pounds. Even seemingly small ones need to balance the heavy loads they



Raymond President and CEO of Michael Field, right, reviews a product line with an employee

must lift. This means due to their mass, even a low speed impacts can easily cause serious damage and harm.

The virtual trucks are designed to connect directly to the truck that the operator would be using in the real world, so the simulation closely mimics their actual operation.

"We're able to plug basically a single umbilical cord into the side of the truck, and all of the inputs from the handles and all the interfaces that the operator would have, work. And in 3D space, when you push the handle to go forward or to go backward, it shows you going forward and backward. So you're basically inside of a video game of the actual truck you're going to drive," Field said.

Field said innovations were continuing in 2019.

"We try to understand the challenges that our customers are facing, and one of the challenges that they face on a regular basis is operator training and improving of skills of operating material handling equipment. So we've actually added to our overall product offerings with e-learning capabilities, so remote learning capabilities, all the way to a virtual reality simulator training solution," he said. "So we're now able to shorten the time that an operator takes to become accustomed and proficient in operating a forklift."

In 2019 Raymond hired about 50 people for newly created positions and filled a number older positions with new employees. The compa-

ny has about 50 jobs still available ranging from welders, maintenance workers and engineers

"We have a lot of internal growth taking place where people are promoted to new opportunities, and that opens up a lot of entry level positions in almost every business function. So we're always going to be recruiting and we have a staff very dedicated to that," said Field.

Raymond has employees on 10 different boards representing various community groups.

For example, VanNostrand serves on the Our Lady of Lourdes Memorial Hospital Board as secretary and as a member of the executive committee.

On top of that, they are active supporters of a community organiza-

tion called Achieve, which does a lot of charity work in Chenango and Broome County

Raymond is also on a lead position in the Greater Binghamton Education Outreach Program, what they call GBEOP, which is shaping the relationship between business and education in the local community.

Field is a member of the Southern Tier Regional Economic Development Council and works with New York BEST (Battery & Energy Storage Technology Consortium) at the state level. The group is trying to grow the capabilities of producing, designing and selling energy storage in New York State.

Wanting to improve the community is also an important part of Raymond's internal culture.

"Yes, it's kind of an undying thirst for continuous improvement, trying always to make things better and always understanding your customer's perspective in improving what you do each day," said Field.

"We have an excellent relationship with our local, county and state representatives. Our view is that it's ultimately our responsibility to drive the success of the organization, so we appreciate the partnerships."



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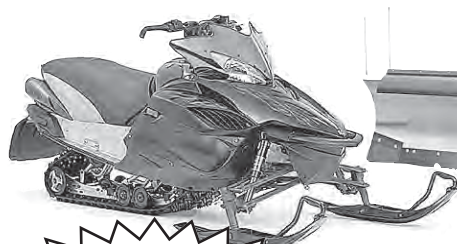
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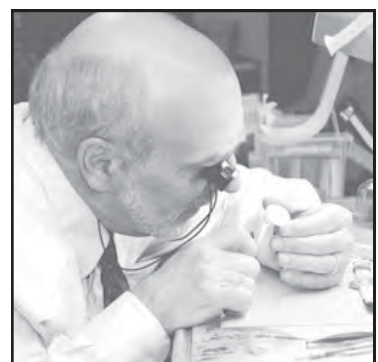
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# Chobani continues to grow community impact efforts —

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lunches. In September of 2019, Chobani partnered with the Food Bank of Central New York, Wholesome Wave, and the Norwich City School District to provide 250 bags filled with food to local students that were in need.

Each bag contained shelf-stable items, Chobani coupons, and a gift card for fresh fruits and vegetables. Chobani volunteers, including founder and CEO Hamdi Ulukaya, organized the food, packed the bags, and assisted in delivering them to the five schools in the district.

Additionally, The Chobani Scholars program has created a multi-year scholarship to support four new students annually at Cornell University who have a family connection to dairy farming and plan to pursue a career in the dairy industry. In addition to \$20,000 in financial support, each scholar has the opportunity to intern with Chobani during their college career.

Chobani not only supports local schools and students, they also support community improvement and building efforts.

In 2019, the company announced a donation of \$550,000 to the Village of New Berlin to aid in the construction and design of



Chobani hands out free yogurt during the 2019 Boilermaker 15k Road Race. The Boilermaker Road Race is a not-for-profit organization with the mission of promoting health and wellness.

the village's new firehouse and community center.

Chobani also encourages employees to volunteer time to causes they're passionate about by offering employees eight hours of paid volunteer time a year.

In 2019, the company doubled the size of their Community Impact Fund from \$100,000 to \$200,000. This is in partnership with the Community Foundation for South Central New York.

"These investments are for big ideas that help expand economic opportunity and promote entrepreneurship across the Central New York region," said Chobani representatives.

"I'm really proud, this is all while running the plants all year round.

Yogurt consumption is up. We're actually making and selling more pounds of yogurt year over year so we're buying more milk," said McGuinness.

Chobani's Milk Matters program supports dairy farmers to ensure they are using forward-thinking practices that will have productive and constructive outcomes.

"We developed a six-pillar program to support positive changes across the many aspects of dairy farming. Those six pillars are: environmental stewardship, animal care, worker well-being, local sourcing, economic opportunity, and support for dairy farms. Through Milk Matters, we've collaborated with Fair Trade USA to explore the development of a first-of-its-kind standard

and certification program for U.S. Dairy that will support dairy workers and provide meaningful premiums to benefit farmers and farm workers," said Chobani representatives.

Chobani uses 1.6 billion pounds of milk a year. In order to stimulate local economy, all the milk is sourced from farmers in New York and Idaho. The South Edmeston Chobani factory produces 760 million cups of yogurt annually.

"Our plant in South Edmeston is running so well. We have unbelievable employees. We could not be prouder that its running like a clock. We've launched 15 to 20 new products in that facility, and it's always gone perfectly, and that's a testimony to the quality

workforce we have," said McGuinness.

Chobani employees 2,100 in the U.S., 1000 of those positions are located in Norwich and South Edmeston. Jobs at Chobani across Norwich, South Edmeston, and New York City contribute to 58,000+ indirect jobs in New York state.

Chobani featured several new innovative yogurts in 2019. Greek yogurt with nut butters "contain a balance of fats for a healthy dietary pattern and are made with 30% less sugar than other yogurts." The yogurt will feature almond, hazelnut, and cashew butters.

"Our food philosophy of crafting quality products with simple ingredients is what makes Chobani a different kind of food maker," said Chobani representa-

tives. Although the company's focus is yogurt based products, they are starting to look at other healthy alternatives to everyday food choices. This includes coffee creamers and oat based milk drinks.

"We're going to launch a whole new line of products for 2020, we're going to continue to grow. In fact we're already off to a good start this year. And we're going to continue to be committed to giving back," said McGuinness. "We're a for profit company, but the better we do, the more we can do. And that's a company with a heart, we're a modern food company. A modern food company that makes great food, natural food that's good for everybody, and then does right by the community that they operate in."



Kids enjoy Chobani Gimmies at the 2019 Oneida County Farm Fest. Chobani Gimmies contain no artificial ingredients and contain twice the protein of leading kids' yogurt.

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## Success Story

## Norwich Merchants Association

The Norwich Merchants Association caters to the Norwich area by showcasing existing retail shops, restaurants and service providers as well as welcoming new merchants into the area. This group of dedicated merchants continue year to year to host and bring in events that show off what the city and town has to offer.

The Norwich Merchants Association is excited to start 2020 off with the announcement of their new website. The site located online at [www.norwichnymerchants.com](http://www.norwichnymerchants.com) will focus on linking the public with our dozens of members. The site will be launched in February and will be full of pictures and information about our merchants as well as a special photo gallery dedicated to the beauty of Norwich. Many of the merchants will have their information listed such as location and hours of operation and their website will be linked to make getting to the merchant you are looking for that much easier. The new site will showcase not only our events, but events scheduled for the area in 2020.

New Merchant Association President Jill Kraft says the board has been discussing hosting new events this year in hopes to create a bigger sense of unity downtown. "It is my hope to get more merchants on board to really extenuate how



The Norwich Merchants Association caters to the Norwich area by showcasing existing retail shops, restaurants and service providers

special this area is and use what we have to create a bigger momentum going forward."

The first event of the year the Merchants host is an annual Golden Egg Hunt that engages people in the history of the area while they search for this "imaginary" egg. Participants have a chance to win \$100 in merchant money.

"The merchant money is great as it allows people to pick which merchant store or restaurant they want to shop or eat at," said Linda

McNeil of McNeil Jewelers, adding also the money can be purchased throughout the year at any time at McLaughlin's which makes it convenient for gift giving as well.

Throughout 2020 the Merchants will continue to work on innovative ways to work together and there are a few new events that are already being discussed. "The merchants would like to bring back sidewalk sales in a bigger capacity and host some smaller events that get people out exploring the great things

we have to offer. Later in the year the Merchants continue to celebrate small business Saturday, an event that is nationwide and always has a lot to offer on the local level as well.

The Merchant's Association is continuing to look for ways to make the businesses who call Norwich home thrive and would love to hear new ideas for 2020! If you have event ideas or suggestions email them to [marketing.nma@gmail.com](mailto:marketing.nma@gmail.com).

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# Norwich's Morrisville Campus leads county in education values —

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Organization; finding those activities that will appeal to students who have multiple responsibilities outside their life in the classroom.

"An example would be someone who has worked with Colonial Theater to offer discounted prices on movie tickets so they can participate in an activity that involves the whole family," said Lefevre. "We are also currently seeking a Workforce Trainer on an as needed basis for Microsoft office applications; many businesses seek assistance in training their employees with basic and advanced level of these applications."

"We understand this is a need across all levels of industry and we want to respond to that need appropriately."

Another position is a dedicated Mental Health Counselor who would assist students with those stressors that college students often face including life/work balance, financial issues and coping mechanisms.

"We will be examining programming that will appeal to all of our students in order to enrich their experience on the campus and break down those barriers that hinder student success; provide them with those tools

that will allow them to be successful in their future careers," she said.

There is also room for a food vendor that provides daily service to our students and caters numerous events that we hold on campus.

"This has proved to be a much sought after service after we integrated this back on campus spring of 2019 and has allowed students to remain on campus more than in previous years," she added.

According to Lefevre, as the college moves forward it continues to focus on updating its technology and making the classroom as efficient as possible.

"The Norwich Campus will outfit a classroom with more advanced distance learning technology to enhance online learning," Lefevre said. "The technology, which includes additions of cameras and ceiling mounted microphones, will allow for more interaction and more meaningful instruction between instructors on-site and off-site students."

"This will also allow us to expand workforce trainings to businesses in a more convenient way."

She said other updates include a push for certification for manufacturing

jobs, which comprise a large portion of Chenango County career availability.

"We also realize the importance of agriculture in our community and have begun to offer agricultural classes on the Norwich Campus to increase awareness and education in this important segment of our economy," she added. "We held our first Celebration of Real Dairy Foods Day during the fall semester and look forward to developing workshops during the spring semester to help increase awareness of various career options within the agriculture field to local high school students."

The campus will also be developing its first bachelor's degree program: The Bachelor of Professional Studies in Human Services Leadership.

"This degree will combine human services and psychology with business and entrepreneurship courses to prepare students for either leadership roles in nonprofit and social service agencies or graduate programs in business or public administration," said Lefevre. "This is in addition to the development of a human services certificate, which is a 21-credit program that helps stu-

dents to begin a career in the human service field, preparing them for a variety of professional roles in direct support."

Students will be able to earn the certificate either in the classroom or online. In addition, the Human Services Institute will continue to provide a variety of Open Forums, trainings and professional development experiences.

The Institute already has several events planned for 2020. On February 28th, the Institute will offer a Technical Writing training for case managers, case workers, and care coordinators.

The Institute will also be sponsoring the Annual Leadership Academy in early June. The Academy began last year with a two-day training for new and aspiring leaders and featured local CEO's and Executive Directors as featured guest speakers.

Lefevre said the college continues to strive towards connecting the community, and has partnered with multiple local organizations to help make it happen.

She said the Commerce Chenango: Community Job Fair is one example of community partnership that resulted in over 100 potential employees gaining access to over 20 businesses.

She added that the Human Services Institute has worked closely with a number of agencies as well.

"We have co-sponsored a Grief Conference with Chenango County Hospice and Wilson Funeral Home," said Lefevre. "We also co-sponsored the Bridges Out of Poverty training with Improve Norwich Now, Chenango Health Network, eHealthy Connects and Care Compass."

"This is in addition to a variety of agencies hosting interns, including the local school districts, the Department of Social Services, Liberty Resources, Opportunities for Chenango, The Place, and Catholic Charities, among others."

Lefevre said the school continues to battle with shrinking high school graduation rates, but plans to be flexible to keep up with ongoing demands.

"The biggest threat to the Norwich Campus, especially being a commuter campus, are the shrinking high school graduation rates, and we have to remove the mindset that we can just find more students to increase enrollment, this is not the reality," she said. "It is important to understand

that higher education has to operate in many ways like a business; we have to diversify, we have to be flexible in when we are offering courses and offer accelerated degrees and we have to respond to what the industry leaders need from their workforce so they are able to sustain and thrive in our community."

"We have and will continue to evaluate programs and degrees that will be beneficial for our local community."

She added that the college admits approximately 140 new students annually between the spring and fall semesters; the majority of those students, 65 percent, are interested in a Nursing or a health related career.

There is a total of 10 full-time staff members, 8 full-time faculty members and 20 adjunct instructors employed at the Norwich Campus

The Norwich Campus hosts over 40 Chenango County high school students each semester who earn college credit on-campus.

20 different SUNY Morrisville courses are offered at various school districts in the county serving over 200 high school students.

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40 high school students from the Chenango County and surrounding counties attended Morrisville's Major Discovery Day last year, many of them part of the Liberty Partnerships Program from SUNY Morrisville and Binghamton University.



One of the programs offered by the Norwich campus last year allowed students to explore Chenango County's manufacturing industry by showing them what companies are here and what do they make that students may be using on a daily basis.

# Progress Continues To Be Made Here...



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