

Insight

MEMBER BENEFIT SAVES \$\$\$

Sign Up Today: Chamber Energy Alliance

For many energy consumers, this past winter's costs for electricity and natural gas hit hard. Periods of extreme cold caused usage to spike, resulting in increased energy costs for business and residential consumers. From January to March 2014, daily electricity market prices were double, sometimes triple, the norm. Across the U.S., energy prices made headlines, even prompting calls for intervention from media, watchdog groups and public officials.

But for some consumers, including many businesses participating in the Chamber's Energy AllianceSM program, prices remained stable. These users had opted for fixed pricing last year, thanks to this money-saving benefit of Chamber membership, and for many this winter's savings amounted to hundreds, in some cases thousands, of dollars.

"We have had very positive feedback from our members about the Energy Alliance program," said Chamber Director of Economic Development Cesar Astralaga. "Whenever we can make this kind of a difference in our members' bottom lines, we know we are fulfilling their expectations and our mission."

Danuta Okonski, office manager at Troy Tool & Design, LLC, knows just how significant her



company's Energy Alliance participation has been. "In our business we are so busy with customers we were glad to get the Chamber's help in working out our energy supply needs," said Okonski. "The expert consultants at EnergyNext helped us save money and stabilize our rate. The result is we have saved money on energy expenses without getting distracted from day-to-day business and the needs of our customers."

"The striking difference in these experiences underscores just how important the Energy Alliance is to businesses and organizations," said Boyd. "It also goes right to the heart of why members join the Chamber in the first place: they want value. The Energy Alliance is one of the Chamber's value-added services and this winter it really proved itself again."

Can the Chamber's Energy Alliance help you? There is no charge to participate and the staff at EnergyNext can give you a no-cost analysis. Contact Chamber Membership Manager Corbin Fridgen at cfridgen@renscochamber.com or 518.274.7020, ext. 17 and start saving.

Energy Next Inc. *Energy Next is the Chamber's Energy Alliance coordinator.*

LOCAL OUTLOOK, REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Join us for "Meet the Mayors" Breakfast on May 20



Find out what's on the horizon for the cities and villages in the region at the Chamber's annual "Meet the Mayors" panel discussion. Participating representatives are (photos above, l-r) Rensselaer Mayor Daniel Dwyer, Watervliet Mayor Michael Manning, Cohoes Mayor George Primeau, Green Island Mayor Ellen McNulty-Ryan, and Troy Mayor Lou Rosamilia. We'll hear an update on their respective municipalities and hold an interactive question and answer session with the audience. This is your opportunity to talk face-to-face with public leaders and discover how their administrations are working to attract and retain quality economic development.

Register now for the Chamber's **Meet the Mayors** breakfast on Tuesday, May 20 at the Hilton Garden Inn, 235 Hoosick Street in Troy. See calendar on page 2 for details.

Sponsored by Express Scripts



ASK THE EXPERT: Labor & Employment Law

Ryan Mullahy is an associate with Girvin & Ferlazzo, PC. He concentrates his practice in the areas of education law, private and public sector labor and employment law, and litigation. He also regularly counsels public and private sector clients on a wide range of legal issues.



Q: Why should businesses care about labor and employment law?

A: Business owners need to appreciate how much of their day-to-day operations are governed by dozens of state and federal labor laws. The laws affect almost every facet of a business from wages and benefits, to employee safety and health, to personnel issues, including hiring and firing. Failure to comply can lead to serious consequences such as having to pay additional employee wages, civil penalties (including attorneys fees), and in some cases, criminal liability. All of these consequences negatively affect a company's bottom line and its ability to operate.

Q: What are some common errors?

A: The misclassification of employees as independent contractors, or the assumption that certain employees are exempt from the overtime provisions contained in state and federal labor law. Employee classification mistakes, whether of individuals or groups, are easy to make and can have severe financial consequences.

Q: How can I ensure compliance?

A: By developing a strong relationship with an attorney or other person knowledgeable of the law and its application to your business. By avoiding issues before they arise, businesses can focus on business, and not the law.



The Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce (RCRCC) is a business, civic and economic development alliance that strives to enhance the economic vitality of Rensselaer County and the neighboring Gateway communities of Cohoes, Green Island, Waterford and Watervliet. The Chamber seeks to improve the quality of life within the community for both residents and businesses.

"insight" is published monthly. Submissions are considered for publication based upon content and space availability.

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Editor: Doreen M. Ercolano
Design: Spiral Design Studio, LLC

Printed on recycled paper.

Register for all Chamber events online at
WWW.RENSCOCHAMBER.COM/EVENTS

● NEW MEMBERS

Kay's Burden Lake Restaurant, Inc.
Pizza / Restaurants
Rep: Tom Lilly
10 Walsh Lane
Averill Park, NY 12018
Phone: 518.674.5413
www.kayspizza.com

Phillips Lytle, LLP
Lawyers
Rep: Richard Honen
30 South Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12207
Phone: 518.472.1224
www.phillipslytle.com

Superior Business Products, Inc.
Office Supplies
Rep: Ray Seefeld
3108 Carman Road
Schenectady, NY 12303
Phone: 518.356.1971
www.superiorbponline.com

The Whistling Kettle
Restaurants / Tea Room
Rep: Kevin Borowsky
254 Broadway
Troy, NY 12180
Phone: 518.879.1938
www.thewhistlingkettle.com

Windo-Therm, LLC
Manufacturers
Rep: Jim Devine
P.O. Box 405
Hoosick Falls, NY 12090
Phone: 518.424.7555
www.advancedenergypanels.com

Woodward Connor Gillies & Seaman Architects, PC
Architects
Rep: Kurt Woodward
20 Corporate Woods Boulevard
Albany, NY 12211
Phone: 518.434.2556
www.wcgsarchitects.com

CloseUP Conversation w/



Cesar Astralaga is the Chamber's director of economic development. With more than 24 years of experience in international markets, he aids companies with expansion planning, financing, government regulatory assistance and more. He also serves on the Chamber's Economic & Government Affairs and Ambassador committees. Cesar is board chair and president of Somos El Futuro, Inc., a non-profit providing scholarships and internships to Hispanic youth.

We have a very active membership of diverse professionals who are energized for success. The Chamber connects this thriving local market with regional, national and global opportunities. Our role is to create a platform for the success of the business community. We start by being the "go-to" resource for your business. Need to make a profitable move for expansion? We know the inventory of properties and realtors. Looking for workforce training and development? We'll connect you with the people and programs to make it happen. Just getting started? Let us help you create a business plan and introduce you to potential venture capital. We have our finger on the pulse of business and our mission is to help you navigate opportunities for success. The Chamber is here, every day, ready to help you achieve your goals. *What can we do for you?* Contact me at castralaga@renscochamber.com.

● MEMBER NEWS

The Museum of Innovation and Science (miSci) has appointed Carmel Patrick to the position of director of development. A non-profit management professional, she has more than 30 years of experience in fundraising, grant writing, marketing and community development. Patrick formerly worked as executive director of development at Schenectady County Community College.



Hoosick Valley Contrators, Inc. has been awarded a \$735,000 project with the City of Troy to build stairway access to Riverfront Park. The project is part of Troy's redevelopment of the Hudson riverfront, with the goal of improving public access between Riverfront Park and the city's downtown. The access will be built at the site of the former city hall municipal parking garage entrance at 273 River Street.

Time Warner Cable Business Class presents a veteran's business seminar titled "Cloud Computing: Making Sense of the Technology" on May 14, 7:30-9:30 a.m., at the Navy Operational Support Center, 251 Rudy Chase Drive in Glenmont. Seating is limited. Contact aamoroso@albany.edu or 518.380.5069 for information and registration..



The Tri-City ValleyCats open their 2014 season on Friday, June 13 against the Connecticut Tigers at the Joseph L. Bruno Stadium (photo above). It will be the 13th season of professional baseball at "The Joe," as the 'Cats look to defend their New York-Penn League championship title. Purchase tickets www.tcvallycats.com, by phone at 518.629.CATS or at the stadium box office Monday through Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Questar III presents Career Expo 2014, an interactive exploration of careers for students in science and technology on Wednesday, May 7, 4:30-7:30 p.m. at The Franklin Terrace Ballroom, 126 Campbell Avenue in Troy. For details contact Pamela Mertz at 518.273.2264 or pmertz@questar.org.

The Whistling Kettle has opened its doors at 254 Broadway in Troy with a ribbon-cutting (at right). Owners Meahgan and Kevin Borowsky serve up specialty teas, related gift items and a menu of scones, sandwiches, salads and more. Catering and private parties are available. Visit www.thewhistlingkettle.com or call 518.874.1938.



Capital District Women's Employment & Resource Center (WERC) is hosting the sixth annual "First Impressions, Second Chances" fundraising event on Tuesday, June 3, 5-7 p.m. at The Crossings in Colonie. Proceeds will support WERC's mission to advance women's success in the workplace. Cost is \$40 per ticket. Register online at www.cdwer.org or call 518.225.3131.

TW Telecom, a national provider of managed network solutions, welcomes Joshua Homer to its Albany division as a network operations technician. He is responsible for network installation, maintenance and repair, and communications network transmissions systems, including digital cross connects, digital loop carriers, Ethernet, SONET equipment, digital switching and ancillary support systems.

The Food Pantries for the Capital District have promoted Angela Pender-Fox to program director. Under her management, The Food Pantries' programs have grown in the past two years, including a 12% increase in the distribution of food and other needed items. She will continue to develop strategic initiatives on behalf of the 53 food pantry coalition members, who provide 2.5 million meals annually.

The Upstate New York/Vermont Chapter of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society (LLS) has named Carol Miller and Dona Stone co-chairs of the 2014 Light The Night® Walk, set for Saturday, October 11 at Siena College. They will join Chair Emeritus Tami Gunsch in coordinating the event across 200 communities to raise funds and awareness. To sign up visit www.lightthenight.org/uny or call 518.438.3583.

events calendar 2014

MAY	JUNE	ADDITIONAL INFO
<p>Thursday • 5/8 The 114th Annual Dinner {with a twist} & Business Expo Join nearly 500 regional business professionals to celebrate the Chamber's premier annual event! Our popular Annual Dinner brings you an evening of non-stop networking in a relaxed environment, featuring a cocktail reception, Business Expo with 50 showcase booths, culinary stations with gourmet foods by Franklin Plaza, a decadent dessert room, casual seating, valuable door prizes, and more. Guests can network, dine, explore expo booths and meet and greet all evening, allowing for maximum opportunities to make connections, build relationships and enjoy high-impact networking. At Franklin Plaza Ballroom, Fourth and Grand Streets in Troy. From 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Reservations are \$120 per person; Chairman's Circle tables of 10 at \$1,495 each. Sponsored by BBL Family of Companies; Bouchey & Clarke Benefits, Inc.; Bouchey Financial Group, Ltd.; CDPHP; Columbia Development Companies; and NBT Bank. Dessert Room sponsor is CAP COM Federal Credit Union and Business Expo Tent sponsor is Turner Construction Company.</p> <p>Tuesday • 5/20 "Meet the Mayors" Breakfast The mayors of area municipalities will gather for the Chamber's annual "Meet the Mayors" breakfast, an informative panel discussion with Rensselaer Mayor Daniel Dwyer, Watervliet Mayor Michael Manning, Cohoes Mayor George Primeau, Green Island Mayor Ellen McNulty-Ryan, and Troy Mayor Lou Rosamilia. We'll discuss timely issues facing our region and what the future has in store for you and your business or organization. At the Hilton Garden Inn, 235 Hoosick Street in Troy. Sponsored by Express Scripts.</p>	<p>Tuesday • 6/3 Quick Learn Session Excel: Charts, Tables & Pivot Tables Spend two hours with expert instructors from MicroKnowledge, Inc. and learn new computer skills before lunchtime! Master Excel including creating and formatting charts using chart wizard, adding graphic elements, arranging pivot tables, and using slicers and sparklines. Now is the time to train yourself and your staff for greater efficiency at considerable savings. Registration at 8 a.m., program 8:30-10:30 a.m. Cost is \$79 members; \$99 future members/walk-ins. At the Chamber, 255 River Street in Troy.</p> <p>Wednesday • 6/4 Ethical Decision Making & Social Responsibility in Business How can business professionals reduce unethical actions in the workplace? Find out at this special presentation, featuring Charles Seifert, Ph.D, executive director of the Institute for Leadership Development at Siena College. Registration and breakfast at 7:30 a.m.; program 8-9:30 a.m. At the Holiday Inn Express, 8 Empire Drive in East Greenbush. Sponsored by MicroKnowledge, Inc. and Pierce Communications, Ltd.</p> <p>Thursday • 6/19 NetworkingPlus Luncheon Networking is the number one reason why members join the Chamber. Table rotations, talking points, and ambassador facilitation make for a valuable program. Bring plenty of business cards; enter to win a Spotlight article. At The Century House, Route 9 in Latham. Sponsored by CAP COM Federal Credit Union; Greenbush Eye Center; Groff NetWorks, LLC; and Santora Accounting & Bookkeeping Services, Inc.</p>	<p>TIMES: <i>All breakfast events start with registration and breakfast at 7:30 a.m., with the program from 8-9 a.m. (unless otherwise noted).</i> <i>All luncheon events have registration and lunch at 11:30 a.m., with the program from 12-1 p.m. (unless otherwise noted).</i></p> <p>COSTS: <i>NetworkingPlus programs are \$30 (unless otherwise noted) for members who have pre-registered. Walk-ins and future member registrations are \$45 each.</i> <i>All other programs are \$35 (unless otherwise noted) for members who have pre-registered. Walk-ins and future member registrations are \$50 each.</i></p> <p>Please Note: No-shows will be billed. 24-hour notice is required for all cancellations.</p> <p>Register online at: www.renscochamber.com/events</p> <p>Questions? Call us at 518.274.7020.</p> <p><i>If you have special requirements, please contact us one month prior to event to ensure we are able to provide for your needs.</i></p>

CONGRATULATIONS

Leadership Class of 2014 Graduates

The Chamber is proud to present the graduates of The Leadership Institute Class of 2014 (photo below). These professionals have completed our award-winning leadership training program, learning from a distinguished faculty of the region's top executives in the public and private sectors. Can you picture yourself among these leaders? Apply today for the Class of 2015; **Deadline is May 21 at 5 p.m.** (See article on page 4 for details.)

The Leadership Institute is sponsored by First Niagara, with media sponsorship by Albany Business Review



CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

2014 Golf Committee Welcomes You



The 2014 Golf Classic committee is looking for enthusiastic volunteers to assist in planning and coordinating one of the Chamber's most popular annual events. Whether you play golf or not, this is a great way to network, get involved, and have some fun. This year's Golf Classic will tee-off on Monday, July 28 at the award-winning Country Club of Troy. All-inclusive golf packages are \$195 per person or \$780 per foursome, including lunch, dinner, cart, and more. For \$35 per person

non-golfers are invited to join us for a 5:30 p.m. dinner at the clubhouse. Take advantage of a variety of cost-effective sponsorship opportunities for every sized budget: underwriting sponsors, contest sponsors, raffle prize donations and flag sponsors. Contact Kate Ollier at 518.274.7020, ext. 23 or email kollier@renscochamber.com. A special thank you to our major sponsors (as of printing):



WHAT'S NEW?

Send Your News Items to the Chamber

What's happening at your organization? The Chamber wants to know, and so do our readers and the regional business community! Spread your good news by emailing it to the Chamber's brand new, dedicated address: news@renscochamber.com. Easy to remember, easy to use and an easy way to get the word out on your growing business or nonprofit at no charge. Promotions, recent hires, new clients, contracts awarded, expansions and relocations, milestone celebrations and more are all great reasons to attract attention and build name recognition. Send us your news and photos for consideration in our newsletter, *insight*, which is direct-mailed to 2,700 members monthly with a pass-on rate of 6,000. You can also post news items yourself on our website at www.renscochamber.com and click on the "Member News" tab. Our website has grown to nearly 14,000 visits per month! Share your news today.



CHAMBER MEMBER

spotlights



The many facets of **Hope 7 Community Center** all share the same mission: to provide life essential and enhancing services to children and families in the community. Whether it's Hope 7's youth programs or food pantry, which assists 135 families monthly with nutritious food supplies, the organization promotes self-sufficiency, personal growth and community service.

"Our goal is to provide quality, affordable youth programs in a safe and nurturing environment," said Executive Director Phyllis Sandow. "We emphasize the importance of education through tutorial work and promote a healthy life style. We also encourage our children to pursue their talents and dreams through a wide variety of clubs offered at our center."

Founded in 1968 as East Side Neighborhood Recreation Center, Inc., Hope 7 was established by dedicated community members. Named for the fire-house in which it is located, Hope 7 is bustling with activities year-round. Through "Kids for Kindness," a community service club, children hold fundraisers to benefit local and international charitable causes, host food drives for Hope 7's pantry and send cards and gifts to veterans and seniors.

This time of year, Hope 7 is gearing up for its Traveling Summer Day Camp, a dynamic program for kids 5-13 years who love to spend time outdoors. Licensed by New York State, the camp travels to diverse parks where the children swim, hike, fish and experience hands-on enrichment activities. Hope 7 is seeking corporations and individuals interested in sponsoring a child for camp this summer. Contact Youth Director Samantha Adkisson for sponsorship and volunteer opportunities.

HOPE 7 COMMUNITY CENTER
596 PAWLING AVENUE | TROY, NY 12180
PHONE: 518.272.8029 | WWW.HOPESEVEN.COM



The mission of **Girls Incorporated of the Greater Capital Region** is to inspire all girls to be strong, smart and bold.™ The non-profit organization provides award-winning research based programs in six areas: leadership and community action; career and life planning; sports and adventure; self-reliance and life skills; culture and heritage; and health and sexuality. Following a 2001 merger with the Albany Girls Club, Girls Inc. became a regional entity serving girls in Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady and Saratoga counties. With programs centrally located at sites in Albany and Schenectady, Girls Inc. reaches more than 200 girls per day through its free after school programs.

"We believe empowered girls develop into achieving women," said Executive Director Ashley Jeffrey, whose leadership is being recognized at this month's "40 Under Forty" Class of 2014 by *The Business Review*. "We are committed to helping girls build skills and capabilities for a responsible, confident and self-sufficient adulthood."

Girls Inc. gives girls free access to a wide range of programs including STEM education, media and economic literacy, pregnancy and drug use prevention, career exploration and more. Through partnerships with area sponsors, Girls Inc. offers unique opportunities such as Eureka!® at CNSE, Operation SMART® (Science, Math and Relevant Technology) and Sporting Chance. Service workshops in mother-daughter relationships, healthy body image, and personal safety action are offered for a fee. Girls Inc. membership, however, is free to all girls, aged 5-18 years, and members have access to more than \$25,000 per year in college scholarships.

GIRLS INCORPORATED OF THE GREATER CAPITAL REGION
962 ALBANY STREET | SCHENECTADY, NY 12307
PHONE: 518.374.9800 | WWW.GIRLSINCCAPITALREGION.ORG

Complimentary Spotlights are awarded by random drawing at Chamber events. To purchase a Spotlight, contact Chyresse Wells at 518.274.7020, ext. 16 or cwells@renscochamber.com. Members must be in good standing and not have been featured within the past 24 months.

insight into...

Country Club of Troy Discounts

Dreaming of the golf course this summer? You can enjoy the award-winning links at The Country Club of Troy at significant discounts. Chamber members and their employees can waive the initiation fee — a savings of up to \$2,500. In addition, Chamber members pay no dues during their 1st, 2nd, and 13th months of membership, a savings of up to \$1,700. Take advantage of affordable membership options, including full-facility use for families/individuals, discounted rate for juniors, and corporate memberships. Access the 18-hole golf course, golf pro, tennis courts, tennis pro, swimming pool, and dining at the clubhouse. Contact the Chamber at 518.274.7020.

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BUSINESS ETHICS

Decision Making & Social Responsibility on June 4

Over the past decade business professionals have witnessed poor ethical decision making and its ramifications on a national and international scale. The National Business Ethics Survey of the U.S. Workforce reports that the level of ethical misconduct is high, with more than 41% of respondents observing misconduct in the workplace. What's a leader to do to reduce the chances of unethical acts in the workplace?

Find out at the Chamber's timely presentation "Ethical Decision Making & Social Responsibility in Business." We'll answer:

- » What defines ethical vs. unethical decisions?
- » What should guide our decision making?
- » How can we build an ethical culture at work?
- » What is social responsibility?
- » Can corporate social responsibility also mean good business?



Our presenter is Charles F. Seifert, Ph.D. (at left), professor of management and executive director of the Institute for Leadership Development at Siena College. With specialty areas in leadership effectiveness, ethics, corporate governance and applied statistics, Dr.



Seifert has served as a leadership consultant for several public and private organizations and has presented at more than 35 regional, national and international conferences. He has been teaching at Siena since 1996, following a corporate career in positions ranging from CFO to VP for commercial bank lending. He has been published in more than 14 journals and is currently at work on a Leadership textbook for Pearson-Prentice Hall. Dr. Seifert holds an MBA in Finance from Sage Graduate School, and a Ph.D. in Organizational Studies from the University at Albany.

Register now for **Ethical Decision Making & Social Responsibility in Business** on Wednesday, June 4 at the Holiday Inn Express in East Greenbush, 7:30-9:30 a.m. \$35 members; \$50 future members and walk-ins. See calendar on page 2 for details.

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UPCOMING DATES

114th Annual Dinner {with a twist} on May 8

Non-stop networking, gourmet cuisine and a relaxed atmosphere wait for you at the Chamber's Annual Dinner. Now is the time to reserve your ticket for this popular event that attracts nearly 500 regional business professionals for an unforgettable evening. Start with a stylish cocktail reception and then explore 50 business expo booths as you meet new contacts, chat with friends and catch up with colleagues. No rush—our casual program lets you set your own pace and enjoy!

Register now for the **114th Annual Dinner & Business Expo** on Thursday, May 8 at Franklin Plaza Ballroom in Troy, 5:30-8:30 p.m. \$120 per person; \$1,495 Chairman's circle table of 10. See calendar on page 2 for details.

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Apply Now for 2015 Leadership Class

THE
LEADERSHIP
INSTITUTE



It's time to take your career to the next level. If you or key members of your staff seek an educational experience that builds effective leadership skills, now is the time to learn how The Leadership Institute can elevate your professional and personal potential. Learn from leaders with our distinguished faculty and increase your value in your company and in your community. Join the growing ranks of alumni who are making a tangible difference in New York's Tech Valley. This is your year! **Application deadline is Wednesday, May 21, at 5 p.m.**

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Contact Kate Ollier at 518.274.7020, ext. 23.
Online applications are available at www.renscochamber.com/leadership-institute.

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