

insight

The 2017 Van Rensselaer Awards

The 2017 Award Recipients

**BBL Family of
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VAN RENSSELAER
CORPORATE AWARD



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VAN RENSSELAER
SMALL BUSINESS AWARD



Photo by Albany Business Review

Chester Opalka

EDWARD H. PATTISON
CITIZENSHIP AWARD

Register now for the **Van Rensselaer Awards Dinner** on Thursday, September 14 at the Hilton Garden Inn, 235 Hoosick Street in Troy. Networking and cocktail reception at 5:30 p.m.; awards and dinner at 6:30 p.m. \$130 per member; \$260 per non-member. \$1,550 for Chairman's circle table of 10. Sponsored by Bouchey & Clarke Benefits, Inc. / Bouchey Financial Group, Ltd. Capital Bank and CDPHP.

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For more than 25 years, the Chamber has recognized businesses that invest in the economic, cultural and humanitarian advancement of the Rensselaer County region by bestowing the **Van Rensselaer Awards** and the **Edward H. Pattison Citizenship Award**. We are pleased to announce the 2017 Van Rensselaer award recipients:

BBL Family of Companies is ranked among the top U.S. contractors, offering a complete scope of client services through its five subsidiaries. For 43 years, BBL has grown its reputation for client satisfaction, teamwork, integrity and quality. Founded as a small, local business, BBL maintains a strong community presence. A deep sense of compassion for others is central to BBL's corporate culture. The company supports initiatives and organizations that strengthen lives and improve communities through philanthropy and the volunteer efforts of its employees. A corporate sponsor for numerous charities, BBL celebrated its 40th anniversary by donating \$1,000 gifts to 60 grassroots organizations nominated by BBL employees.

Wojeski & Company CPAs, P.C. practices a client-first philosophy, partnering with individuals, businesses and entities to provide services for public accounting, tax planning and compliance, mergers and acquisitions, auditing, business advice on financial and operational issues, fraud examination and more. Wojeski & Co. is committed to giving back to the regional community. The Wojeski Fund supports underprivileged children in Rensselaer County by providing essentials such as eyeglasses, medical co-payments, clothing and shoes and by providing opportunities for children to experience activities including summer camp, school field trips, work study programs, high school graduation caps and gowns and more. The fund, administered through the nonprofit CoNSERNS-U, was founded in 2004 and has raised more than \$165,000.

The Edward H. Pattison Award, also known as "The Ebbie" recognizes good citizenship and a philanthropic spirit.

Chester Opalka is a respected entrepreneur, investor and philanthropist. After 20 years in pharmaceutical chemistry, he co-founded Albany Molecular Research, Inc. (AMRI), which quickly grew into a publicly traded company. He holds dozens of patents, including one that led to a new class of drug to treat congestive heart failure. Since retiring from AMRI, Mr. Opalka has continued to foster economic growth and scientific innovation as an investor in chemistry and technology-based startups. He also supports the regional arts community as an advisor and donor. His family's generosity established the Opalka Gallery at the Sage College of Albany, a lauded arts venue that attracts prestigious exhibits and thousands of visitor to the campus. In addition, the Opalka Family Scholarship supports college students studying art or elementary education.

ASK A BOARD MEMBER: The Leadership Institute

Lauren Groff is the founder and CEO of Groff NetWorks, LLC, one of the leading providers of managed IT services and network support in the Capital District. He is an author, teacher and an award-winning member of the regional business community. He serves as chair of The Leadership Institute for 2018.



Q: Why is The Leadership Institute so effective?

A: The program is a skills-based professional development program that brings participants face-to-face with relevant business and social issues and presents ways to successfully address them. They are guided through real-world situations by executive-level faculty, including some of the region's most accomplished professionals. One of my favorite aspects was gleaning valuable gems from the highest ranks of leaders in this area. Participants learn from faculty and meet valued mentors. Graduates gain all of these advantages for their professional and personal development.

Q: What type of skills does the program build?

A: Participants are provided with an opportunity to develop their leadership abilities as well as entrepreneurial skill-sets and team building capabilities. Graduates find they have increased their value at work and within the greater community. In fact, nearly 85% of graduates surveyed experience promotion or career advancement and more than 96% say the program has significantly enhanced their professional skills. In addition, graduates leave with a portfolio of resources and networking contacts that continue to benefit them as they put their new skills to work.

Q: How do employers benefit?

A: The Leadership Institute is valuable to your business or organization because it integrates skill building with valuable networking opportunities. And, as everyone who knows me knows I LIVE for networking. Participants learn strategies for success and establish important relationships that continue to benefit them and their organizations long after graduation. Now is the time to sign up: the application deadline for the Class of 2018 is coming up fast! (see page 2 article)

"Ask a Board Member" is a monthly Q&A featuring members of the Chamber's Board of Directors.



The Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce 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.

SINCE 1900
"Serving New York's Tech Valley"

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

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117th ANNUAL DINNER {with a twist} & BUSINESS EXPO

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

Franklin Plaza Ballroom, Downtown Troy

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Latham, NY 12110
Phone: 518.785.8200
dartco.com

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Rep: Andrew Carroll
17 Nadeau Road
Clifton Park, NY 12065
Phone: 518.469.1370
heartlandpaymentsystems.com

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Rep: Alicia Bates
7 Southside Drive
Suite 200
Clifton Park, NY 12065
Phone: 518.952.7500

The Wellness Bookkeeper, LLC
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Rep: Aimee LaLiberte
163 Vosburgh Road
Averill Park, NY 12018
Phone: 518.429.1828
thewellnessbookkeeper.com

CloseUP Conversation



Gabrielle Polce is the Chamber's events manager. Email her at gpolce@renscochamber.com or call her at 518.687.1238.

Now is the time to learn more about The Leadership Institute, the Chamber's award-winning program that helps you or promising members of your team reach the next level of professional development.

The Leadership Institute kicks-off in September with a retreat at the YMCA's Camp Chingachgook on Lake George. Subsequent sessions are held once a month, presented by regional executives on a variety of topics. The program culminates with a graduation dinner and celebration in March.

The Leadership Institute boasts more than 300 alumni, many of whom are very engaged in the Chamber and support the program's advancement. If you have an employee ready to take on additional responsibility and advance professionally within your organization, The Leadership Institute is the high-impact program to invest in.

Applications are due by **Wednesday, May 17, at 5 p.m.** and are available on our website or by contacting me directly.

MEMBER NEWS

Albany Business Review's 40 Under 40 Award recipients for 2017 include 22 Chamber members. Congratulations to Keith Algozzine, United Concierge Medicine; Dorcey Applrys, Excelsior College; Matthew Callahan, Tri-City ValleyCats; Victoria Carosella Baecker, CDPHP; Ryan Case, KeyBank; Julie Clancy, Emma Willard School; Daniel Cullen, Capital Region Workforce Development Institute; Carmine DeCrescente III, Decrescente Distributing Co.; Patrick Doyle, Troy Boys and Girls Club; Leola Edelin, Renaissance Albany Hotel; Isabelle Ferain, GlobalFoundries; David Gardell, The Ruck (The Rolling Stock Co.); Kendra Hart, Martin Electric; Sean Maguire, Capital District Regional Planning Commission; Brian Murphy, Couch White; Kate Ollier, Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce; Joseph Payette Jr., Greane Tree Technology; William Price, StemCultures; Kelly Reardon-Sleicher, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; Sarah Robinson, Teal, Becker and Chiaramonte CPAs P.C.; Ali Skinner, CDPHP; and Marie Zimmerman, KPMG. Visit bizjournals.com/albany.

The Rosenblum Companies was named the 2017 Community IMPACT Award recipient in the sustainable communities category by The Stakeholders, Inc. This award recognizes demonstrated leadership or innovation that advances sustainability and environmental stewardship in the community. Rosenblum was the first commercial landlord to utilize MycoBoard™ and MycoFoam™ wall tiles in its office buildings. Visit rosenblumcompanies.com.

architecture+ has received an Honor Award for Historic Preservation from the Eastern New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects for the rehabilitation of the Grand Staircase located between the Empire State Plaza and the Cultural Education Center. The \$7.4 million project was completed as a New York State Office of General Services term contract assignment. Visit aplususa.com.

GTM Payroll Services released GTM iPay, a secure online payroll platform for small businesses. Accessible 24/7 from a PC, tablet or mobile device, GTM iPay allows clients to add and edit employees, securely access and update payroll data in real time, generate payroll data reports, view payroll registers and access tax returns, according to CEO Guy Maddalone (photo, right). Visit gtm.com.



SEFCU and Tyler Technologies donated 450 books and more than 40 classroom bookcases to Arbor Hill Elementary (photo, above). The donation supports the school's efforts to encourage reading at an early age. Visit sefcu.com.

Troy Flag Day Parade celebrates its 50th Anniversary on Sunday, June 11, starting at 1 p.m. The parade is the largest event in the nation to honor the American flag. The all-volunteer parade needs contributions to be successful. Tax-deductible donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 56, Troy, NY 12181. To participate in the parade, call Jerry Weaver at 518.271.7182.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute students Vincent Arena '17, mechanical engineering and design, and Zaire Johnson '18, computer and systems engineering, were named as University Innovation Fellows. Both will participate in the national program that trains student leaders to create new opportunities for their peers to engage with innovation, entrepreneurship, design thinking and creativity. Visit rpi.edu.

Spring Line Design Architecture + Engineering hired Emily Konick, E.I.T. to the firm as a structural engineer (photo, right). She holds a Masters of Engineering in structural engineering and a BS in Civil Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Visit springlinedesign.com.



Community Care Physicians, P.C. (CCP) introduced a telemedicine app, VICA – Virtual Care. The app can be used to access certified CCP health care professionals in real time for urgent, acute medical issues using video chat on an iPhone. Patients of all ages within New York State, including those who are not patients of CCP, can use VICA. Visit communitycare.com.

events calendar 2017

MAY	JUNE	ADDITIONAL INFO
<p>Wednesday • 5/3 The 117th Annual Dinner {with a twist} & Business Expo Cost is \$130 members; \$260 future members; Chairman's Circle tables of 10 are \$1,550. At Franklin Plaza Ballroom, Fourth & Grand Streets in Troy. From 5:30-8:30 p.m. Sponsored by Bouchey & Clarke Benefits, Inc. Bouchey Financial Group, Ltd.; CDPHP; Community Resource FCU; and Saratoga Eagle Sales & Service. Dessert Room: CAP COM Federal Credit Union. Business Expo Tent: Turner Construction Company. After Party: Groff NetWorks, LLC.</p> <p>Tuesday • 5/9 Peak Your Company's Online Clout with Insights from Google and Adtaxi An educational workshop featuring effective online strategies, presented by Google and Adtaxi experts. No charge; Chamber members only. At The Century House, Route 9 in Latham. Registration and lunch 11:30 a.m.; program 12-1:30 p.m. In partnership with <i>The Record</i> and Saratoga County Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p>Wednesday • 5/24 Meet the Mayors Breakfast An informative panel discussion with the mayors of area municipalities. At the Comfort Inn & Suites, 99 Miller Road in Schodack. Sponsored by CDTA and Express Scripts.</p> <p>Wednesday • 5/31 Ask the Experts: Development Approach to Grant Writing for Nonprofits Learn how to use a development and PR approach to successful grant writing for your organization. Bring your questions and get answers that work. Registration and breakfast at 7:30 a.m.; program 8-9:30 a.m. At The Century House, Route 9 in Latham. <i>Sponsorships are available.</i></p>	<p>Tuesday • 6/6 Quick Learn PowerPoint: Building Effective Presentations Train yourself and your staff at considerable cost savings. Review the principals of effective PowerPoint presentation design and delivery. Registration and refreshments at 8 a.m.; program 8:30-10:30 a.m. Cost is \$79 members; \$99 future members. At the Chamber, 90 Fourth Street in Troy. Presented through a Chamber partnership with MicroKnowledge, Inc.</p> <p>Thursday • 6/8 NetworkingPlus Luncheon Get connected, develop leads and build relationships at this fast-paced, topic-driven networking event facilitated by Chamber Ambassadors. Increase your business contacts in a structured yet relaxed environment among fellow Chamber members. Remember to bring plenty of business cards as all attendees get equal time to spread their message during three table rotations. Cost is \$35 members; \$50 walk-in members. Registration 11:30 a.m.; program 12-1:15 p.m. At Franklin Plaza Rooftop Terrace, Fourth & Grand Streets in Troy. Sponsored by Community Resource FCU and Northwestern Mutual.</p> <p>Wednesday • 6/28 Member Benefits Breakfast This no-cost program is great for new members, your employees or anyone who wants to make the most of Chamber membership and discover all of our valuable benefits. Meet our staff and bring plenty of business cards to distribute. Great networking opportunity! No charge; registration requested. At the Chamber, 90 Fourth Street in Troy. Sponsored by Thomas K. Judd & Associates.</p>	<p>TIMES: <i>All breakfast events have registration and breakfast at 7:30 a.m., with the program from 8-9 a.m. (unless otherwise noted).</i></p> <p><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>All programs are \$35 (unless otherwise noted) for members who have pre-registered. The cost for walk-in members is \$50. The cost for future members is \$70 (unless otherwise noted).</i> No-shows will be billed; 24-hour notice is required for all cancellations.</p> <p>Register online at: renscochamber.com/events</p> <p>Questions? Contact Gabrielle Polce Events Manager 518.687.1238 gpolce@renscochamber.com</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>

COST-EFFECTIVE TRAINING

Quick Learn PowerPoint Session on June 6

Train yourself and your staff at considerable cost savings with the latest Quick Learn PowerPoint: Building Effective Presentations session. Review the principles of effective PowerPoint presentation design and delivery. Learn about organizing content and presentation planning, formatting, Slide Masters, color usage, transitions, animations and many other tips from the experts at MicroKnowledge, Inc. Seating is limited; sign up today!

Quick Learn PowerPoint: Building Effective Presentations is on Tuesday, June 6 at the Chamber, 90 Fourth Street in Troy. Sign up at renscochamber.com/events. Registration and refreshments at 8 a.m.; training 8:30-10:30 a.m. \$79 for members; \$99 for future members. Register now at www.renscochamber.com/events. Quick Learn workshops are available through a partnership with MicroKnowledge, Inc.



CONNECT FOR SUCCESS

Rooftop NetworkingPlus a View on June 8!

Join us for the Chamber’s upcoming NetworkingPlus Luncheon and enjoy meeting with regional professionals on the rooftop terrace of Franklin Plaza in downtown Troy. Networking to achieve high-quality connections doesn’t have to take a lot of time or money. We’ve designed all of our programs to maximize value with referrals, introductions and resources to help grow your business or organization. Networking is the number one reason why members join the Chamber. Spend quality time on a June afternoon in a beautiful setting and leave with new business contacts and professional connections. Don’t forget to bring plenty of business cards and get ready for success!



NetworkingPlus Luncheon is on Thursday, June 8 at Franklin Plaza Rooftop Terrace, Fourth & Grand Streets in Troy. Sign up at renscochamber.com/events. Registration and luncheon at 11:30 a.m.; program 12-1:15 p.m. \$35 for members; \$50 for walk-in members. Sponsored by Community Resource FCU and Northwestern Mutual.



MAXIMIZE YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Check Out This Chamber Benefit

Here’s a quick reminder of an important benefit we offer to you and all of your employees. For a full listing of member benefits visit the Chamber website at renscochamber.com.

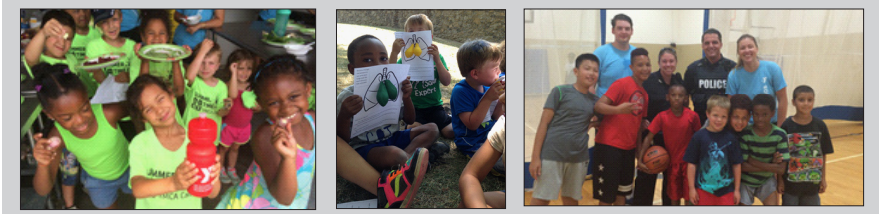
✓ REFERRALS & INTRODUCTIONS

It happens nearly every day - the Chamber connects people and business grows! We consistently receive requests for professional introductions, leads and referrals from the local community and from out-of-town sources. As a member, your business or non-profit organization receives automatic referrals, resulting in potential business. Need an personal introduction? All you have to do is ask! In addition, our online member directory is available to everyone, providing endless opportunities for new business connections. Our newly designed website makes it fast and convenient to search alphabetically or by business classification, making your business easy to find. Let the Chamber introduce YOU to the business community and watch your business grow.



CHAMBER MEMBER

spotlights



Capital District YMCA is working to ensure that kids have an exceptional 2017 summer camp experience. “The quality of our youth programming and summer camp offerings has really gone through the roof.” said Ashli Fragomeni, director of operations, who began her career at CDYMCA as a summer camp counselor years ago.

“Our organization is in a great position to provide summer camps in different ways throughout the City of Troy, engaging hundreds of kids with well-prepared camp leaders, exciting activities and memory-making experiences.”

Collaborating with the City of Troy and other youth stakeholders such as The Boys and Girls Club, The Arts Center of the Capital Region and CYO, the YMCA is helping to fill a void in programming this summer.

“It’s been a very positive community effort,” said Fragomeni. “The deputy mayor’s office brought us together and we all brought our strengths to the table with the common goal of giving the kids what they need and deserve.”

The YMCA also collaborates with the Troy City School District to provide the 21st Century Summer Program, helping to dissolve the learning-loss gap and provide unique summer experiences for students in middle school.

CDYMCA programs, services and scholarships for those in need are made possible by the generosity of its current donors. CDYMCA continues to seek the time, talent and treasure of individuals, businesses and corporate sponsors. Donations may be earmarked for a particular intention. Contact the YMCA for information.



CAPITAL DISTRICT YMCA
2500 TWENTY-FIRST STREET | TROY, 12180
PH: 518.272.5900 | CDYMCA.ORG



Monolith Solar’s team of experts has extensive experience in the engineering, design, and installation of solar PV power systems for homes, businesses, nonprofits and municipalities. Founded in 2009

by Mark Fobare, CEO, and Steve Erby, COO, Monolith is a reflection of their enthusiasm and hands-on knowledge of the industry, which has led to the company’s growth and expansion. Monolith recently hired more than 60 additional employees and the company has broken ground on new corporate headquarters at the Vista Technology Park in Slingerlands.

In addition, Monolith recently began generating electricity from the Capital Region’s first community solar farm, located on Route 7 in Johnsonville. Power generated from the 600 solar panels, installed in a five-acre former hayfield (photo, above), is credited through National Grid to 26 private homes and apartments. Instead of having panels located on their rooftops, the residents have bought into the community solar farm and benefit from electricity generated remotely. The electricity generated is sold to the local utility and members’ electric bills are credited based on the farm’s production.

“This changes the way power is distributed in the region,” said Monolith Sales Director Jennifer Amerling. “Everyone with an interest in solar power can now participate, regardless of their situation. It’s also an invitation for businesses, schools and municipalities -- anyone with a flat roof -- to join in providing solar-generated power to their neighbors. This is a great opportunity to build the sense of community and lower power costs.”

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Complimentary Spotlights are awarded by random drawing at Chamber events. To purchase a Spotlight, contact Maureen McGuinness at mmcguinness@renscochamber.com. Members must be in good standing.

Member Milestones

Thank you for your valued investment in the Chamber. Congratulations to these milestone members:

30 YEARS

Polsinello (1987)

25 YEARS

Goin Group, Inc. (1992)
WNYT TV - NewsChannel 13 (1992)

15 YEARS

Town of North Greenbush (2002)
City of Watervliet (2002)
Cargill Grain Division (2002)

5 YEARS

NYSEG (2012)

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DESIGNED WITH MEMBERS IN MIND

New Chamber Website at renscochamber.com

The Chamber has introduced a newly designed website to meet the growing needs of our members and reflects the organization’s dynamic, forward-thinking vision for the regional business community. The site at **renscochamber.com** features easy navigation; a clean, modern, responsive design; and helpful resources for businesses to locate, startup and grow in Rensselaer County.

“The new website provides an intuitive user experience for our members,” said President Kate Ollier. “More than a useful tool, the site is an informative platform for members to take advantage of their exclusive benefits. It’s also an interactive gateway for visitors looking to do business in the region. The website is an extension of the level of excellence expected from the Chamber.”

The new website is a key initiative of the Chamber’s three-year strategic plan and was developed in partnership with Chamber member adworkshop, an integrated marketing agency located in Troy. Fresh features include:

- Fully responsive design on multiple devices
- Enhanced membership directory
- New high-impact, affordable advertising opportunities throughout the website
- Commercial real estate board featuring member properties
- Newly restructured events calendar with an easier-than-ever registration form
- Increased exposure for member news, milestones and anniversaries
- Directions to events sent right to your smartphone

ECONOMIC INITIATIVES

Meet the Mayors Breakfast Panel on May 24



The mayors of area municipalities will gather for the Chamber’s Meet the Mayors breakfast, an informative panel discussion with Rensselaer Mayor Daniel Dwyer, Troy Mayor Patrick Madden, Watervliet Mayor Michael Manning and Cohoes Mayor Shawn Morse (photos above, l-r). They will discuss the issues, challenges and success stories of their respective municipalities and answer questions from the audience. Learn what’s ahead for local municipalities and the business community.

Register now for the Chamber’s **Meet the Mayors Breakfast** on Wednesday, May 24 at the Comfort Inn & Suites, 99 Miller Road in Schodack. Sign up online at renscochamber.com/events. Registration and breakfast at 7:30 a.m.; program 8 - 9 a.m. \$35 for members; \$50 for walk-in members; \$70 for future members. Sponsored by CDTA and Express Scripts.



ASK THE EXPERTS

Grant Writing for Nonprofits on May 31

Mark your calendars for **Ask the Experts: A Development Approach to Grant Writing for Nonprofits**. Guest presenter Diane Cameron Pascone, director of development at Unity House of Troy, Inc., will present tips and tricks for staff, board members and volunteers to successfully apply for grants. Learn how to take a development and PR approach to grant writing beginning with understanding necessary principles. Attendees are encouraged to bring questions and come prepared for a dynamic discussion.

As director of development, Cameron Pascone raises funds and awareness for Unity House programs that improve the lives of people living in poverty; victims of domestic violence; children with developmental delays; people living with HIV/AIDS and many others. A former newspaper columnist, she



is an author, speaker and teacher. Her specialties include non-profit management, marketing and communications and development.

Ask the Experts: A Development Approach to Grant Writing for Nonprofits is on Wednesday, May 31 at The Century House, Route 9 in Latham. Sign up at renscochamber.com/events. Registration and breakfast at 7:30 a.m.; program 8-9:30 a.m. \$35 for members; \$50 for walk-in members; \$70 for future members. Sponsorships are available. Contact Events Manager Gabrielle Polce at gpolce@renscochamber.com or 518.687.1238.

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