

# Insight

YOUR LEADER IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## Chamber Promotes Job Readiness

The Chamber is partnering with business and education leaders to advance regional workforce development and provide a well-trained pipeline of workers to fill the jobs of today and tomorrow.

“From discussions with our membership, workforce development is among the top challenges they face,” said President Kate Manley. “In response to their needs — and in keeping with our role as a leading resource for economic development — the Chamber initiated several projects that bring together business and education to provide job readiness solutions. These initiatives will help develop career-ready individuals for the region’s rising workplace needs.”

The Chamber and Questar III BOCES are partnering to “flip the stigma” of trade jobs among students and parents by producing videos that show advantageous career paths. The videos feature Chamber businesses discussing the high-tech changes in 21st century trade jobs in such industries as electrical contracting, construction, auto repair and manufacturing. The videos debuted at the Chamber’s **Third Annual Future of Workforce Readiness: Education & Business Partnerships** event in October and can be viewed on the



Chamber’s website at [rensochamber.com](http://rensochamber.com). “The opportunities for job advancement are virtually endless,” said Kendra Hart (photo, top), LEED GA, business development manager at Martin Electric. “It’s a great career opportunity to use your mind and your hands.”



In a video promoting the construction industry, Anthony Cerone (photo, middle), project manager with Hoosick Valley Contractors, Inc., talks about his positive career experiences.



Also through the Chamber’s efforts, CEO’s YouthBuild program has made new connections with manufacturers. The workforce development program helps individuals, aged 16 to 24, find viable opportunities for training and employment. “Thanks to the Chamber, we’ve made initial partnerships with Gurley Precision Instruments and Ross Valve Manufacturing Co., Inc.,” said Sean Morrissey (photo, bottom), workforce development specialist. “These manufacturing connections will expand what YouthBuild is able to offer.”

The Chamber is currently matching businesses with schools to encourage career exploration among students from kindergarten through college. If you are interested in joining this initiative by speaking to a class, hosting a teacher at your job site or giving a tour to students, contact Maureen McGuinness 518.687.1244.

## ASK A BOARD MEMBER: Giving Back to the Community

Kate Otis is director of Community Relations at DeCrescente Distributing Company. She is responsible for leading and managing philanthropic activities in alignment with DeCrescente’s commitment to support those in need. Kate is the company’s primary liaison for community members and charitable organizations seeking sponsorship.



### Q: What are the advantages of businesses giving back to the community?

A: The most important advantage is employee engagement. People like to work for a company that values philanthropy and supports their passion to give back to the community. Employees are the best ambassadors and charitable giving helps with retention and recruitment. In addition, a company’s reputation can be very closely tied to its support of non-profit organizations and can result in powerful brand exposure for businesses.

### Q: How do nonprofits benefit from partnering with businesses?

A: Financial investment is obviously vital, but nonprofits also benefit from volunteers, board and committee members, raising awareness and accessing areas of expertise. For example, pro-bono legal work to a small nonprofit could be more valuable to its growth and sustainability than a cash sponsorship. Successful nonprofits look to businesses to learn how to become more efficient, effective and sustainable. This attitude resonates with new generations of donors who want to make a bigger impact with their time, talent and treasure.

### Q: What is the Chamber’s role?

A: The Chamber is a great resource for facilitating all kinds of connections. Businesses and nonprofits should take full advantage of the opportunities the Chamber offers, including publicizing their news and attending networking events. Developing a diverse network and building relationships are keys to success. Chamber events provide introductions and face-time between donors and nonprofits that can result in collaborations and mutual success.

“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.

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

Kate Manley, President  
90 Fourth Street, Suite 200, Troy, NY 12180  
Telephone: 518.274.7020  
[rensochamber.com](http://rensochamber.com)

Editor: Doreen M. Ercolano | Co-Editor: Staci O’Neill  
Design: Spiral Design Studio, LLC

Printed on recycled paper.

## NEW IN 2017: RIDE SHARING & SNAPCHAT GEOFILTERS

### Get Ready for Troy Victorian Stroll on Dec. 3

Discover holiday magic at the 35th Annual Troy Victorian Stroll on Sunday, December 3 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Visitors from throughout the Northeast will join the festivities held on the historic streets of downtown Troy, including more than 100 free attractions with the region’s top performers, musicians, dancers, magicians and storytellers. There will be trolley rides, refreshments, an arts & crafts show and much more. Troy’s shops, boutiques and galleries will be open with unique gifts for everyone on your holiday shopping list. An outdoor food court at Monument Square will offer hot food and snacks and many Troy eateries and fine restaurants will be participating in this event.

**Brand new for this year: ride sharing and Snapchat geofilters** will make your Stroll experience better than ever! With ride sharing, you can be dropped off and picked up in the heart of downtown’s celebration. Dress up your Snapchat posts



with Stroll geofilters to share your fun at this special event. For up-to-date information about events and activities, visit [victorianstroll.com](http://victorianstroll.com).

For more than three decades, the Stroll has been presented by the Chamber and funded entirely through the generosity of individual and corporate donors. Make

your donation by contacting the Chamber today at 518.274.7020. This year’s sponsors (at press time) are:

**Platinum** - Dunkin’ Donuts; E. Stewart Jones Hacker Murphy, LLP; KeyBank; MVP Health Care; Pioneer Bank; Saratoga Eagle Sales & Service, Inc.; Troy Local Development Corporation (LDC). **Gold** - Franklin Hospitality; Rensselaer County. **Silver** - National Grid; The Rifenburg Companies; RPI Athletics; The Sage Colleges; SEFCU.



## Vote for Your Favorite Stroll Holiday Window!

The annual Stroll Window Decorating Contest, a fan favorite, is back! This year’s window decorating theme, “**Winter Wonderland**,” is sure to inspire creative holiday windows throughout downtown. The Chamber and the Downtown Troy Business Improvement District

invite you to cast your vote in this popular competition. Voting for People’s Choice will take place by “liking” the pictures on the Chamber’s Facebook page from November 29 through December 1, ending at 4:30 p.m. sharp. For more information, visit [victorianstroll.com](http://victorianstroll.com) and get voting!