



RENSCONNECT

WHERE BUSINESS + COMMUNITY CONVERGE

MESSAGE FROM CHAMBER'S OUTGOING BOARD CHAIR

Let Our Accomplishments Drive Your Success

As I look back at a year's worth of progress at the Chamber, one of the most obvious successes is the newsletter you are reading right now, brought to you in full color this year for the first time in the history of our organization. It may seem like a slight change to some people but as any marketing professional will tell you, print is back and color still grabs attention.

Branding 2.0

Speaking of attention, our redesigned website at renscochamber.com is capturing a greater audience, with an increase of 11.4% in total visits since its launch last year. Top pages include the Homepage, Membership Directory, Chamber Events and the Job Board. And there's



"All of the Chamber's accomplishments are focused on our members. Our brand is *your* brand when you leverage the many opportunities available through your membership."

Nicole Stein, SEFCU Senior Vice President of Marketing Chair, 2018 Chamber Board of Directors

more good news: the Chamber's e-Newsletter has a higher-than-industry-average open rate and a click-thru rate that is more than double the industry average. It's all part of the Chamber's comprehensive branding to present our organization as a leading resource of information and the voice for the regional business community.

If there is one thing the past year as Board Chair has taught me, it's that all of the Chamber's accomplishments are focused on our members. Our brand is your brand when you leverage the many opportunities available through your membership. Get your company's message out through our newsletter inserts, online advertising, social media platforms and more. Take advantage of event sponsorships and build your own brand as a leader in our community. Need help getting started? Contact the Chamber for customized marketing and advertising packages that will meet your goals and your budget.

WE Advance

Another highlight of 2018 was the launching of **WE Advance** (Workforce and Economic Advancement), the Chamber's revamped initiative that combines

our economic development efforts with a committed focus on workforce readiness. **WE Advance** represents the power of the Chamber to bring together partners in both sectors to declare our region open for business and to ensure a robust economy. For more information and to find out how you can get involved, visit the Chamber's website.

Strategic Plan for 2019

Much of our Chamber's success is due to our strategic plan, which serves as a roadmap to reach the goals that will best serve the needs of our members. We are preparing now to develop our next strategic plan and we want your input. It is from your requests, suggestions and ideas that we will form a plan to guide our organization for the

next three years. Now is the time to tell us what you, our members, need most in order to succeed. Send us your input by filling out a brief form on our website or by contacting the Chamber at 518.274.7020.

A Time of Growth

In a time of stagnation for chambers across the nation, the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce is thriving. Our new member statistics and renewal rates are both well above industry averages. That means our members are satisfied with the programs and services we offer and willing to re-invest in our mission. It also means we are attracting new members who have heard our message, experienced our brand and decided to join our success. Thanks to word-of-mouth referrals from our members, we continue to build a strong Chamber together.

As I make way for incoming Board Chair Denise Padula, president of Alchar Printing, I would like to sincerely thank the entire 2018 Board of Directors, the Chamber staff and all of you for the opportunity to serve the Chamber. Here's to 2019 and a New Year of prosperity for all of us in the Rensselaer County community and beyond!

ASK A BOARD MEMBER:

Marketing on a Budget

John Tanner III is director of sales for Spectrum Reach, the advertising sales services offered by Spectrum. He is an expert in providing measurable, customized advertising and marketing solutions for the modern media landscape.



Q » How does the Chamber help members on a budget reach new customers?

A » It's all about engaging audiences in an impactful way and making every dollar count. In the past year, Spectrum Reach has used the Chamber's online, in-print and event-based opportunities to tap into community outlets and make B-to-B connections in Rensselaer County. We succeeded in getting our brand out there in new ways and advertising our AudienceApp, an exclusive planning tool utilizing household data to plan TV campaigns.

Q » What value will I get for my investment?

A » My team and I are immersed in the business of advertising and marketing every day and we know that results are the bottom line. In a highly competitive environment, the Chamber provides customized options that can be tailored to fit the needs and budget of any-sized member. Spectrum Reach chose a website sponsorship and e-Newsletter banners that gave us strong click-through results, a newsletter insert and print Spotlight, as well as event sponsorships that gave us person-to-person contact with other business professionals. The Chamber made it all possible within our budget.

Q » How do I get started?

A » It all starts with a phone call or email. Review the advertising and marketing opportunities that are available to all members by visiting renscochamber.com. The Chamber's staff wants to see your business or organization succeed. They utilize timely analytical data to develop a customized plan to best help you reach the 43,000 people employed by Chamber members. The staff listens to what you need and provides a cost-effective solution that works. All you have to do is reach out to them.

LEARN WHAT'S AHEAD IN 2019 | JANUARY 09

Register Now: State of the County Breakfast

Join the Chamber at the 2019 State of the County Breakfast and learn what's ahead for Rensselaer County and the business community in the coming year. Rensselaer County Executive Steven F. McLaughlin will review his first year in office and present his vision and plans for the future, including the status of significant local economic development initiatives. Attendees are encouraged to bring questions to this event for an interactive Q&A session after remarks. Register today to ensure your seat at this sell-out event!



Register now at renscochamber.com/events

☀ Check-in & breakfast 7:30 a.m.; remarks and Q&A 8-9 a.m. \$35 members | \$50 walk-in members. Hilton Garden Inn, 235 Hoosick Street in Troy. In partnership with Rensselaer County. Sponsored by Hudson Valley Community College and SEFCU.

WED
JAN
09



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.

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

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



@Renscochamber



@RenscoChamber



Rensselaer County
Regional Chamber
of Commerce



@renscochamber

Printed on recycled paper.

New Members

Combined Insurance
Employee Benefit Plans &
Group Benefits
Rep: Ryan Wilhelm
13 Cornell Road
Latham, NY 12180
Phone: 518.947.0554
VISIT combinedinsurance.com

Danforth Adult Care Center
Assisted Living Community
Rep: Tim Chapman
19 Danforth Street
Hoosick Falls, NY 12090
Phone: 518.686.5167
VISIT danforthadultcare.com

Greenstone Experiential Services
Professional Training &
Management Consultants
Rep: Greg Reid
120 Defreest Drive
Suite 20
Troy, NY 12180
Phone: 518.749.0232
VISIT greenstoneexp.com

Healthy on Lark
Restaurant
Personal Health Coach
Rep: Sharon Lastique
274 Lark Street
Albany, NY 12210
Phone: 518.650.7755
VISIT healthyonlark.com

Please welcome our newest members by stopping in to say hello and patronize their businesses.

CloseUP Conversation:
Building Membership



Elizabeth "Liz" McGarry is the Chamber's membership manager. Contact her at emcgarry@renscochamber.com or 518.687.1240.

The Chamber increases its membership in many ways, including building our brand and message across the regional business community. But one of the most effective ways is through word-of-mouth leads and YOUR referrals! If you are satisfied with the advantages of membership, like so many of our members, tell others about the value that comes from joining the Chamber community.

Every time you spread the word, the Chamber grows and so does our ability to provide high-impact events, services, resources and advocacy for businesses and non-profit organizations. Together, we are creating a vibrant community that provides a high quality of life for everyone.

Member News

Saratoga Eagle Sales and Service is planning to construct a multi-million dollar, 35,000-square-foot addition to its name-brand beer, spirits and craft beer distribution center in Saratoga Springs. The expansion is the result of a growing demand for alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages between Albany and the Canadian border. The company employs 180 people at its existing 150,000-square-foot warehouse and operations center. VISIT saratogaeagle.com

Hudson Valley Community College (HVCC) increased off-campus offerings with the grand opening of its Albany Center for Education (ACE), located at 30 North Russell Road near Central Avenue's Westgate Plaza in Albany. The site offers credit-bearing college courses, along with credit-free career training through HVCC's Workforce Development Institute. VISIT hvcc.edu

The Louis and Hortense Rubin Community Fellows Program is accepting applications from 501(c)(3) agencies in Rensselaer County that serve the residents of Rensselaer County through partnerships with faculty from **Emma Willard School, Hudson Valley Community College, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute** and/or **The Sage Colleges**. Applicants may submit grant proposals by March 1, 2019. VISIT sage.edu/rubin



The Tri-City ValleyCats' Assistant General Manager Michelle Skinner was named recipient of the 2018 Joann Weber Female Executive/Staff Member of the Year Award by the New York-Penn League. The prestigious honor recognizes her outstanding contributions to her profession. Michelle is a member of The Leadership Institute's Class of '19. VISIT tcvalleycats.com

The College of Saint Rose received a \$20,000 grant from **National Grid Foundation** to expand opportunities for students to build their leadership skills. The grant will expand services to 50 African, Latin, Asian and Native American students, helping them to grow as leaders and bringing together support structures for success. VISIT strose.edu or nationalgridus.com

Pierce Communications added Brianna Ferrara to its team as a public relations associate. She is responsible for handling the needs of the agency's clients and ensuring clients' brands and missions are upheld. VISIT albanypr.com

CAP COM Federal Credit Union merged with Albany City Lodge Knights of Pythias Credit Union, adding more than 200 individuals to CAP COM's membership of 146,000. CAP COM's award-winning member services include an array of financial solutions, multiple branches, a vast network of ATMs, educational resources, online and mobile technologies. VISIT capcomfcu.org

Hope 7 Community Center is seeking donations of \$50 in honor of the nonprofit's 50th anniversary to ensure Hope 7 is still serving its neighbors 50 years from now. The community center's goal is to raise \$20,000 by the end of the year. Checks can be sent to Hope 7 at 596 Pawling Avenue, Troy, NY 12180 or paid online through Paypal. VISIT hopeseven.com

LaSalle Institute's high school business program connects students with real-world workplace experiences in a broad range of careers and experiences. The program works with more than 50 companies in 13 countries from England to South Africa and is currently planning a third trip to the Youth Education Series at Disney World's Epcot Center to learn how the company operates. VISIT lasalleinstitute.org

Hill & Markes, an award winning wholesale distributor, announced the addition of Vice President of Sales Colin Doherty to the company's management team. With a long and distinguished career in sales and management, he brings a history of success in process improvement, analytic-based decision making and entrepreneurial thinking. He will focus on business-to-business strategies to elevate Hill & Markes to new heights. VISIT hillnmarkes.com

STRIDE Adaptive Sports will partner with Yawgoo Valley Ski Area in Exeter, Rhode Island to provide winter recreation services to the disabled community. STRIDE is well known for its broad adaptive sport programs at ski resorts such as Jiminy Peak, Catamount and others. VISIT stride.org

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany appointed two new executive directors. David Covey (left) will lead Catholic



Charities of Fulton and Montgomery Agency and Sondra Young (right) will lead Catholic Charities Housing Agency. VISIT ccrcda.org

EventsCalendar 2018-2019

DECEMBER

SUN DEC 02 **36th Annual Troy Victorian Stroll**
The region's premier free holiday event, attracting thousands of visitors from all over the Northeast. Enjoy food, fun, live music, crafts, shopping, dining and more. For a full schedule of activities, visit victorianstroll.com

☺ **The Stroll is from 11 a.m.-5 p.m.** This event is presented by the Chamber and funded entirely through the generosity of sponsors (see page 6 for a listing).

THU DEC 13 **Holiday NetworkingPlus Luncheon**
Jump-start your holiday season, get connected, develop leads and build relationships at this fast-paced networking event. Attended by more than 100 members, you'll make connections that matter. Bring a door prize to spread cheer; more than 60 prizes will be given away!

☺ **Check-in & luncheon 11:30 a.m.; networking 12-1:15 p.m.** \$35 members | \$50 walk-in members. Hilton Garden Inn, 235 Hoosick Street in Troy. *Sponsored by Bouchey Financial Group, Ltd. | Bouchey & Clarke Benefits, Inc.; Community Resource FCU; and MicroKnowledge, Inc.*

JANUARY

WED JAN 09 **State of the County Breakfast**
Rensselaer County Executive Steven F. McLaughlin presents what's ahead in 2019 including local economic development initiatives. Bring questions for a Q&A session. Register early for this sell-out event.

☺ **Check-in & breakfast 7:30 a.m.; remarks and Q&A 8-9 a.m.** \$35 members | \$50 walk-in members. Hilton Garden Inn, 235 Hoosick Street in Troy. *In partnership with Rensselaer County. Sponsored by Hudson Valley Community College and SEFCU.*

THU JAN 24 **NetworkingPlus Luncheon**
Get connected, develop leads and build relationships at our one-of-a-kind, fast-paced networking event. A structured format, three table rotations and ambassador facilitators ensure purposeful and effective networking for success.

☺ **Check-in & luncheon 11:30 a.m.; networking 12-1:15 p.m.** \$35 members | \$50 walk-in members. Franklin Terrace Ballroom, 126 Campbell Avenue in Troy. *Sponsorships are available.*

A LOOK AHEAD

» **Meet the Legislators**
02/15/19

» **Ask the Experts**
02/28/19

Sponsorship Opportunities Available!
Contact:
President Kate Manley
kmanley@renscochamber.com
ph: 518.274.7020 or

Events Coordinator Rachael Murray
rmurray@renscochamber.com
ph: 518.687.1238

ADDITIONAL INFO

No-shows will be billed; 24-hour notice is required for all cancellations.

Questions?
Contact Events Coordinator
Rachael Murray at 518.687.1238
or rmurray@renscochamber.com.

If you have special requirements, please contact us one month prior to event to ensure we are able to provide for your needs.



Register for Events:
renscochamber.com/events

Have a fundraiser or giving program this holiday season?
Post it for free to our Member Events Calendar for all to see:

www.renscochamber.com/member-events

Contact Staci O'Neill at (518) 687-1243 or soneill@renscochamber.com for assistance.

WIDE WELCOME FOR BUSINESSES

City of Rensselaer Experiencing Economic Growth

From waterfront development to rental units, infrastructure to recreational spaces, the City of Rensselaer is undergoing unprecedented growth that is attracting businesses, benefiting residents and creating a community that no longer stands in the shadow of Albany. Officials were successful in getting about half of the city designated a federal “Opportunity Zone,” which offers investors and developers capital gains incentives. “We’re taking a very proactive approach by having shovel-ready opportunities for quality growth,” said Charles E. Moore, AICP, director of the city’s planning and development office. “There is more investment going on right now than at any time in the past 50 years. Every new project builds more momentum.”



The city opened its new public esplanade along the Hudson River during the summer, a new 1.5-acre park with a 1,000-foot waterfront trail, bike path and potential for outdoor events. Designs and construction funds are underway to extend the trail to 4,000 feet reaching to the city’s boat launch. At the same time, Marx Properties is constructing the first phase of its De Laet’s Landing (see article below) which will give the public easy access from Broadway to the waterfront.



Across the city, more than \$60 million in infrastructure projects, including water and sewer lines, sidewalks and curbing, are being constructed. The whole stretch of East Street, often considered a gateway to the city because of the CDTA Rensselaer Rail Station (photo, above), has been upgraded with improvements. Together with ongoing upgrades of the Herrick Street bridge, the gateway welcomes visitors from all over the region.

Millions of dollars have been spent during the last few years to build residential rental units, creating a surge that continues to climb. “Rensselaer is in the center of a development triangle – Regeneron, the Capital and the Rensselaer Technology Park,” said Moore. Upscale new-build rentals include Bell Top Apartments on Lawrence Street, Fall’s Edge Apartments on High Street (photo, left) and 20 additional units at the former St. John’s Church convent off East Street. Renovations of old buildings on Broadway, Green Street, Partition Street and in other locations are adding to the apartment increases. With new residents coming in, the city is working to create recreation and green spaces, including public access to “The Hollow,” a 100-acre nature preserve on its eastern border.

Kiliaen’s Landing, an 18-acre site on the river, received a \$250,000 NYSERDA grant to make the waterfront and adjacent area SEQRA-ready for development. The city will be putting out a request for proposals. The Hilton Center, a former historic mill on the Hudson River (photo, right), has new owners. Three local investors have renovated the site and are working with the city to market the space. Potential tenants include a craft brewery and various residential and mixed-use projects. Grants are pending to rehabilitate some of Rensselaer’s oldest infrastructure on Forbes Avenue and on Tracy Street, with buildings that date back to the 1700’s.

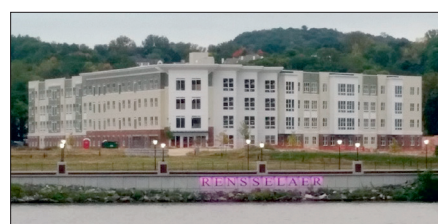


At the Port of Albany-Rensselaer, in the city’s southern industrial area, BioHiTech Global, Inc. is transforming an unused 40-acre parcel into a \$35 million composting facility that will handle 150,000 tons of municipal garbage annually. The biotech fuel plant at 36 Riverside Avenue, helps to solve regional waste disposal problems by composting the refuse, drying it out and shipping off the remainder to “burn green” in cement kilns in other states. VISIT rensselaerny.gov

WATERFRONT RESIDENCES

Phase One of De Laet’s Landing Nears Completion

The first phase of development at De Laet’s Landing in the City of Rensselaer is nearing completion. The mixed-use waterfront development, located one block from the Rensselaer CDTA-Amtrak Rail Station, has more than 1,000 feet of waterfront along the Hudson River, just across the water from downtown Albany. “The views are spectacular and we’ve created apartments that are spacious and beautiful. The world-class design fits so well on this priceless site,” said Peter B. Marx, president of Marx Properties. The newly constructed apartments are available for occupancy January 1, 2019.



The \$20 million first phase of construction includes a four-story, 96-unit luxury apartment building (photo above) along with more than 1,800 feet of new road, curbing, sidewalks and public utilities. Completion of this first phase is a critical milestone because it includes the initial sections of infrastructure needed to connect De Laet’s Landing and the waterfront with the City of Rensselaer. Marx Properties has approvals with City of Rensselaer for up to 1.3 million square feet of mixed-use development. Future phases of construction will include a mix of more apartments along with restaurants, office space and a hotel. VISIT delaets-landing.com

NEW SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Rensselaer Schools Making Strategic Partnerships



After a warm welcome by staff, students and the community, Rensselaer City School District’s new superintendent is busy forming strategic partnerships and connecting with businesses to give students the best opportunities for success. “The people who work in this district have a strong commitment to help kids who really need it,” said Joseph Kardash, who started his professional career as a software engineer for IBM before moving into public education. “We have a tight-knit team dedicated to making sure students don’t slip through the cracks.”

The district was awarded a \$400,000 Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education) grant to develop a coordinated network of services for holistic support of children and their families. The district is also partnering with Questar III’s Business & Education Partnership Opportunities program to connect with local businesses for classroom projects, workplace tours, student internships, curriculum enhancement and teacher professional development. In addition, the school district is laying the foundation for a roll-out of technology integration at an enhanced level, giving students even more opportunities to build a bright future. VISIT rcsd.k12.ny.us

MEET OUR INVESTORS:

Visionary



Rifenburg is one of upstate New York’s oldest and largest family-owned construction firms. Specializing in earth moving and restoration of all kinds, Rifenburg makes quick work of landfill expansions and closures, site work, highway and bridge expansion and utility installations. Since 1958, Rifenburg satisfies customers with dedication to projects, an emphasis on safety and the ability to take on big challenges while getting the job done on time and on budget. VISIT rifenburg.com

Champion



LOOKING FOR A SMART INVESTMENT?

With the Chamber’s **WE Advance** program you can invest in the success of our regional business community. In conjunction with the Rensselaer County Industrial Development Agency and the Center for Economic Growth, we serve as a catalyst for businesses starting up, expanding, or looking to make a profitable move.

Our high-impact marketing attracts regional, national, and international attention to our county’s dynamic quality of life and thriving business environment. Join the Chamber in this economic and workforce advancement initiative.



CONTACT:
President Kate Manley
kmanley@renscochamber.com
ph: 518.274.7020

“WE Advance” is published quarterly. Submissions considered for publication based upon content and space availability.



Pioneer Bank offers customers a comprehensive array of products and services, with competitive rates and the latest banking options. With 22 locations, ITMs and ATMs throughout the Capital District, Pioneer delivers a suite of sophisticated, secure and easy-to-use eBanking tools, mobile banking apps and other solutions, with some branch offices providing special services to fill community needs. Locations include new Pioneer branches at Greenbush Commons in East Greenbush, Mohawk Street in Cohoes and Upper Glen Street in Queensbury.

Pioneer is a leader in local lending, with quick turn-around times for business and personal loan needs. Decisions are made by local banking professionals who know the communities they serve and go beyond customer expectations.

“The current industry trend is one of consolidation and closure, but we have been focusing on opening new branches and expanding our service offerings... Our focus has been, and continues to be, meeting the banking needs of the Greater Capital Region.”

– Tom Amell, President and Chief Executive Officer

Pioneer Bank’s business model is simple: engaged employees create an environment of customer advocacy, resulting in financial success. Pioneer employees, motivated to succeed and do what is best for customers, in turn create customers who promote the bank and its services, creating financial success for the bank. Pioneer Bank’s success then translates into increased opportunities to create a world-class working environment for employees, a world-class banking experience for customers and the ability to make a real difference in local and regional communities. VISIT pioneerbanking.com

A1 Center of Excellence Planned for Downtown

Plans are underway to transform a 100-year-old building in Troy into the A1 Center of Excellence, a new artificial intelligence office and research space focused on life sciences, finance, energy and microchip development industries. The proposed \$2 million project is a combined effort of the Rensselaer County Industrial Development Agency and Bob Bedard, president and CEO of deFacto Global, Inc. The project would rehabilitate the building at 19 Third Street in Troy, placing the 34,000-square-foot facility back on the tax rolls. When completed, the building would be home to an A1 lab, offices for A1 companies and startups and event space. The development would add to the Third Street corridor’s renaissance. The neighborhood is now home to a fast-growing tech sector, including video game companies, software startups and incubators. The A1 project is expected to attract tech companies from across the nation and become an important center for artificial intelligence research in upstate New York, with the potential for up to 70 jobs created in the first five years. VISIT defactoglobal.com/ai-center-of-excellence



Rifenburg Marks 60th

Rifenburg Construction, Inc. is celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2018, marking six decades of success based on safety, teamwork and customer satisfaction. Since its founding in 1958, the company has grown to more than 350 employees and completes more than \$140 million in projects annually for municipalities, state agencies, and private companies.



“Our success is built on respect and appreciation for our employees, an emphasis on safety for all and responsiveness to clients,” said Chief Executive Officer George Rifenburg (photo above).

Rifenburg provides expertise in highway construction and restoration, site development, landfill technologies, environmental clean-up, utilities installation, mining, aggregate sales, equipment (sales, leasing, rentals), airport maintenance and runway reconstruction. VISIT rifenburgcompanies.com



CEO held a ribbon cutting for its new Griswold Heights classrooms, made possible through a partnership with the Troy Housing Authority. VISIT ceoempowers.org



State Hill Brokerage Corporation opened a new office at 568 Columbia Turnpike in East Greenbush. VISIT statehillbrokerage.com

eBizDocs Wins Award

eBizDocs received the 2018 NYSID Corporate Partner of the Year Award in recognition of the company’s deep commitment to empowering individuals with diverse abilities to be successful, independent members of the community. The award honors eBizDocs’ practice of hiring individuals with physical, developmental and mental health challenges and its commitment to matching the right person to the right job. Many of the company’s workers come on board with little or no data imaging skills or employment history. They are given the opportunity to learn valuable job skills working with up-to-the-minute technologies, teamwork and how to provide customer satisfaction. They also receive health benefits and 401k savings options.

eBizDocs is an electronic content solutions provider, founded by President and Chief Executive Officer Howard Gross. The company turns paper documents into efficient electronic files for many New York State Preferred Source customers and currently provides services to more than a dozen state and local government agencies. eBizDocs partners with organizations across New York State, such as The Arc of Rensselaer through NYSID. VISIT ebizdocs.com



Uncle Sam Athletics, a full-service indoor and outdoor gym, opened its doors with a ribbon cutting at 70-102nd Street in Troy. VISIT unclesamathletics.com



Howard Hanna Real Estate Services cut the ribbon on its new office at 600 North Greenbush Road in Rensselaer. VISIT howardhanna.com



Ribbon cuttings are presented by First New York Federal Credit Union. Let the Chamber host your ribbon cutting or grand opening celebration by contacting Staci O’Neill at 518.687.1243.

GIVE THE GIFT OF GREAT CONNECTIONS

Chamber NetworkingPlus Passes for 2019

With the Chamber’s money-saving NetworkingPlus pass you can lock in savings on the Chamber’s popular networking programs in 2019 and get six events for the price of five. These passes make thoughtful holiday gifts for business associates and are transferable among co-workers for even greater value. Our enhanced networking events guarantee you and your business maximum exposure and quality contacts. Our format includes:

- A structured program with quality contacts
- A diverse range of members with the same goal of growing and maintaining beneficial connections
- Table rotations to ensure three times as many contacts with no repeats
- Themed questions to promote purposeful discussions
- Ambassador committee members to facilitate networking

Make your resolution to network throughout 2019. Contact Events Coordinator Rachael Murray at rmurray@renscochamber.com or 518.687.1238 for information and pass purchasing.



“NetworkingPlus passes are a great deal for members. The ability to buy one pass and transfer it among staff members makes it even more attractive. And the events, of course, are valuable and fun to attend.”

Erik Bunaes, president and CEO, Endorphin Advisors, LLC

ENTER TO WIN!

Chamber Contest Says “Thanks” to Members

We’re giving thanks for our members by offering an exciting contest for two members to win customized Chamber marketing packages valued at \$1,500 each! It’s our way of saying “Thank You” for your continued support of the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce. Packages may include digital and print advertising, tickets to events and opportunities to showcase your business as a sponsor or expo booth participant. The two winning members will meet with the Chamber’s marketing staff prior to January 1, 2019 to develop a package to meet their specific business goals.

Enter online at renscochamber.com for a chance to win (only one entry per member). Eligible entrants must be Chamber members in good standing since November 2016 or earlier. Winners must maintain their membership through 2019 for the prizes to remain valid. Marketing packages are effective January 1 through December 31, 2019. Deadline to enter is Wednesday, December 12 at 12 p.m. Winners will be announced at the Chamber’s Holiday NetworkingPlus Luncheon on Thursday, December 13.



“After winning a ‘Giving Thanks’ package, we were able to access Chamber events and marketing strategies to make connections with other businesses and get our message out to a broader community.”

David O’Neill, office manager
Brunswick Veterinary Hospital

HOMETOWN SUCCESS

“Good News” Rensselaer County Awards



Joan Heffler Photography

The Chamber honored the 2018 recipients of our “Good News” Rensselaer County Awards, in partnership with Rensselaer County. Congratulations to this year’s winners: International Electronics Machines Corp.; Kay’s Pizza; The Great Schaghticoke Fair; STRIDE Adaptive Sports; and Wainschaf Associates, Inc. The event was sponsored by MVP Health Care.



CHAMBER MEMBER

spotlight

The name Franklin Hospitality is synonymous with fine quality, understated elegance, attention to detail and customer service that treats clients like family. Consisting of four entities — Michael’s Catering Service, Franklin Plaza Ballroom, Best Western Plus Franklin Square Inn and Franklin Terrace Ballroom — the Franklin Hospitality brand takes pride in exceeding expectations, creating lifelong memories and making dreams come true.



It started five decades ago when Michael A. Cocca Jr. established a catering service with an emphasis on fine dining for special events. “From the beginning we wanted to offer quality without compromise,” said Cocca. The company went on to become one of the pioneers of high-style, elegant weddings with large cocktail hours, elaborate desserts, fine china, wine service and waiters in tuxedos.

The growing business soon needed its own venue and in 1992 Franklin Plaza Ballroom was established. Cocca and his staff, many of whom have been with him for 30 or more years, transformed the historic bank building at the corner of Fourth and Grand Streets in Troy, into a jewel of a destination for elegant events. In 2001, Cocca purchased, renovated and launched Best Western Plus Franklin Square Inn, an award-winning hotel located across the street from the Plaza Ballroom that gives guests 88 luxurious rooms and suites.



In 2005, Cocca opened the doors to Franklin Terrace Ballroom, a catering facility that gives community groups and others affordable options for fundraising and special events. Ample parking and easy access make the facility a client favorite.

Most recently, the company added “The Third,” a glamorous rooftop terrace located

on the third floor of Franklin Plaza Ballroom featuring spacious, modern comfort and sweeping views of the Hudson River skyline.

Now booking for 2019 events at Franklin Terrace and 2020 events at Franklin Plaza, this home-grown hospitality company operates on the same foundational principles it started with: to give clients the wedding or special occasion of their wildest dreams. “We are not content simply delivering a lovely event,” said Cocca. “As a longtime member of the community, we take great pride in delivering the highest caliber events and fine dining to our clientele. Our guests aren’t just customers, they are family. Our staff is committed to going the extra mile to provide an experience that will keep you coming back for years to come.”

Photo, above (l-r): Joseph Galeski, executive VP; Michael Fusco, president; Michael Cocca, CEO; Gregory Cushman, general manager of operations.

Franklin Hospitality
4 Fourth Street | Troy, New York 12180
Ph: 518.270.9622 | FRANKLINPLAZA.com

To purchase a Spotlight, contact the Chamber at 518.274.7020

Alumni News from The Leadership Institute



Paula Jacobson ‘18 (left), MBA, CSSGB was appointed to the position of vice president of the Alumni Association Board for The Sage Colleges of Albany. She earned her Master of Business Administration degree in healthcare from Sage Graduate School in 2015 and is an awardee of the Sage Graduate School Helen Marx Harris ‘26 Research Award. Paula has served as an alumni board member since September of 2017. She is director of member relations at the Healthcare Association of New York State. VISIT sage.edu or hany.org

Stacey Bridge ‘09 (right), MBA, was promoted to associate director at The Troy Savings Bank Music Hall. She joined the staff at the music hall in the fall of 2015 as director of finance and administration after working at The Arts Center of the Capital Region and Capital Repertory Theatre. Stacey began her professional career in technical production roles, serving as scenic carpenter and stage manager while working with Shakespearean festivals. She holds a Master of Business Administration degree in nonprofit management from SUNY Empire State College. VISIT troymusichall.org



Submit your Leadership Institute alumni news to Communications & Web Strategies Manager Staci O’Neill at soneill@renscochamber.com.

Member Milestones

35 Years

Bryce Funeral Home, Inc.

30 Years

W. J. Lyons, Jr. Funeral Home, Inc.
Wynantskill Family Medicine

15 Years

Lavelle & Finn, LLP
Tremont Lumber - Ace Hardware

5 Years

All-Phaze General Contracting
Rensselaer City School District
Hometown Healthcare

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*Does not include sponsors of the 36th Annual Troy Victorian Stroll, who will be recognized in an upcoming issue.

VICTORIAN STROLL | DECEMBER 02

A Festive Time for All
Ages at the Stroll

The region's premier free holiday event, the 36th Annual Troy Victorian Stroll will attract thousands of visitors from all over the Northeast. Enjoy food, fun, live music, crafts, shopping, dining and more. For a full schedule of activities, [visit victorianstroll.com](http://visit.victorianstroll.com)

SUN DEC 02 ☺ The Stroll is from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. This event is presented by the Chamber and funded entirely through the generosity of sponsors. **Platinum Sponsors:** B95.5; The Daily Gazette; E. Stewart Jones Hacker Murphy, LLC; KeyBank; MVP Health Care; Pioneer Bank; Rensselaer County; First Columbia, LLC/River Street Market; and Saratoga Eagle Sales & Service. **Silver Sponsors:** Bouchey Financial Group, Ltd. | Bouchey & Clarke Benefits, Inc.; Magna5; National Grid; Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; The Rifenburg Companies; and Troy Boiler Works, Inc. **Bronze Sponsors:** Bonacio Construction; The Bonadio Group; Express Scripts; and Mosaic Associates Architects.

NETWORKING | DECEMBER 13

Holiday Networking
Brings Connections

This holiday season, get connected, develop leads and build relationships at this fast-paced networking event including three table rotations and maximum introductions. Attended by more than 100 members, you'll make connections that matter. Bring plenty of business cards and a door prize to spread cheer; more than 60 prizes will be given away, including a grand prize to the Mirror Lake Inn, Lake Placid!

THU DEC 13 Register now at renscochamber.com/events
☺ Check-in & luncheon 11:30 a.m.; networking 12-1:15 p.m. \$35 members | \$50 walk-in members. Hilton Garden Inn, 235 Hoosick Street in Troy. Sponsored by:

