



# RENSCONNECT

WHERE BUSINESS + COMMUNITY CONVERGE

MESSAGE FROM OUR OUTGOING BOARD CHAIR

## Unforgettable Challenges, Resilience & Hope



**It's hard to believe the end of 2020 is almost here, a year that represents one of the most difficult in our lifetimes.** If you are like me, you are looking back and wondering how the time has passed so quickly, especially in the midst of many difficulties and hardships. While

many of these challenges continue to confront us, the amazing resilience and strength of our business community, leaders and workforce fortifies my belief that we and our families can look ahead with hope to the future and the coming of a new year. As I finish my term as 2020's Chair of the Board of Directors, let me say a few things about the past year and the Chamber's unwavering efforts to assist, encourage and advocate for our membership.

### COVID-19 Response

Throughout the long months of coronavirus, we have been continuing to reach out to our members in creative and tangible ways, breaking through the isolation. The Chamber worked to bring the latest updates, news and assistance to our members through an online Coronavirus Resource Guide and timely CARES Act Assistance webinars. Staff consistently pursue touchpoints with individual members and conducted a survey to target specific needs and challenges. We have increased our digital communication platforms, including eNewsletters, social media and monthly newsletters to keep members informed in the constantly evolving environment.

### Pivot to Virtual

We presented virtual events, such as Networking Plus to keep members connected, training sessions on technology and working from home, Digital Dialogues and Ask the Experts programs on topics that helped members adapt and meet challenges. More than 400 members have attended these virtual programs, a number that increases

every week. Marquee events, including the Annual Dinner and Van Rensselaer Awards, both successfully went virtual and our Golf Classic and The Leadership Class of 2021 have been able to meet safely in person. Also, we doubled the frequency of our virtual CEO Roundtables to twice monthly in response to the needs of businesses and are welcoming new leaders who have never participated before. They bring fresh ideas and perspectives for dynamic conversations.

### Chamber of the Year Award

In 2020, the Chamber received the prestigious "Chuck Steiner Memorial Chamber of the Year Award" from The Business Council of New York State, Inc. The award honors the Chamber's exceptional commitment to serving its membership and the business community through leadership, resources and advocacy, making our region a better place to live, work and succeed. We're extremely proud of Kate Manley and her staff for their tremendous work during this very challenging year.

I'd also like to thank our Board of Directors for their tireless efforts on behalf of our members. These individuals stayed committed and involved throughout the year, even while handling their own business challenges. We are grateful for this award and the validation of our organization's ongoing mission. As I make way for incoming Chair Ed Anker, I know our mission is in good hands.

### A Resilient Business Community

The pandemic made us adjust in numerous ways, tested our resilience and disrupted plans for economic activity and growth. Certainly, some members have been hit harder than others. It has also highlighted the strength of our business community and the power that can be achieved by uniting to work together. The Chamber strives to earn the distinction of being one of those leaders by focusing on our individual members and what they need most. Please reach out to us and stay connected now and through 2021, whatever it may bring. We are here for you.

Wishing you a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year,

**"Staying connected and useful to our members is our priority, as well as connecting people to each other."**

John Millet, CPA, President  
Bouchey & Clarke Benefits,  
Inc. and 2020 Chair of the  
Board of Directors

ASK A BOARD MEMBER:

## Membership & Involvement

**Meghan R. Keenholts** is a founding partner at E. Stewart Jones Hacker Murphy, LLP, where she focuses her legal practice on the representation of individuals who have been seriously injured, with an emphasis on medical malpractice law.



She has earned the respect of clients, colleagues, adversaries and courts for her legal acumen, work ethic, advocacy skills and passion.

### Q » What perspective do you bring to the Chamber's Board of Directors?

**A »** As a partner at E. Stewart Jones Hacker Murphy, I bring the perspectives of both an attorney and small business owner to the Chamber's board of directors. During COVID, this legal perspective has been particularly relevant and useful in assessing and limiting liability and risk associated with various Chamber events. I also bring the perspectives of a working mother and lifelong resident of Rensselaer County to the board. I believe these various perspectives are shared by many of the Chamber's members, enabling me to make meaningful contributions to our strategic growth, planning and programming as we strive to serve the unique needs of all of our members.

### Q » As a 2012 graduate of The Leadership Institute, how has the program assisted in your personal or professional growth?

**A »** I enrolled in The Leadership Institute six years into my legal career, when I was ready and eager to grow into a leadership role at my firm. The skills I honed through Leadership contributed to my role in spearheading the discussions that led to the merger of the E. Stewart Jones and Hacker Murphy law firms and to my being named the new firm's first female partner. On a personal note, I am grateful for the lasting friendships that I developed with classmates who have become some of my closest confidantes and trusted sounding boards, both personally and professionally. The Leadership Institute is a must for our region's up-and-coming leaders and I strongly encourage employers to offer this as a benefit of employment.

### Q » What is the value of Chamber membership to yourself and to your law firm?

**A »** My firm has been an active member of the Chamber since 1964. Through our membership and sponsorships we are committed to supporting the Chamber's mission to promote business and community growth and development. The value to our firm is multi-faceted. We benefit from the Chamber's marketing and business development opportunities, attracting new clients and referral sources. We also benefit from business relationships with other Chamber members. In addition, the Chamber's efforts to promote and support strong, vibrant communities assists us to attract employees at our flagship office in the City of Troy. Our firm, and other businesses across all industries, are better positioned for growth and success with the resources and support of a strong Chamber and local business community behind us.

Market. Develop. Connect.

RENSSELAER COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
90 FOURTH STREET, STE. 200 | TROY, N.Y. 12180



Presorted  
First-Class Mail  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ALBANY, NY  
PERMIT NO. 164



Member Milestones

20 Years

Charlene’s Sewing Services

15 Years

Empire Media Network, Inc.

10 Years

Northeastern Association of the Blind at Albany

Town of Schodack

5 Years

Pinnacle Human Resources, LLC

Workforce Development Institute

Welcome New Members

Capital Region Workforce Development Board  
Employment Training Service  
Rep: Brian Williams  
175 Central Avenue  
Albany, NY 12206  
Phone: 518.462.7600  
VISIT capreg.org

Duncan’s Dairy Bar  
Restaurant & Bakery  
Rep: Julie Squadrito  
890 Hoosick Road  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: 518.279.9985  
VISIT duncansdairybar.com

Insightpath, LLC  
Technology Consulting  
Rep: Terry Nawrot  
19 Railroad Place  
Suite 204  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866  
Phone: 518.879.2156  
VISIT insightpath.io

Please join us in welcoming all of our members by patronizing their businesses. You can invite businesses and organizations to join our growing Chamber by contacting us at 518.274.7020 or info@renscochamber.com.

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

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Instagram: @Renscochamber

Member News



Sunmark Credit Union received approval from the memberships of two credit unions to merge with Sunmark. Columbia-Greene Federal Credit Union brings 5,000 members and \$36 million in assets to the Sunmark portfolio and Hudson River Financial Federal Credit Union brings 7,000 members and \$70 million in assets. VISIT sunmark.org

Vanderheyden earned a three-year CARF Accreditation for its Child and Youth Services and for its Community Housing Apartment and Group Home programs. The certification is the highest level of accreditation available, recognizing substantial conformance to CARF standards. The accreditations show Vanderheyden’s commitment to offering programs and services that are measurable, accountable, and of the highest quality. VISIT vanderheyden.org



Pioneer appointed Carlo Fusco as vice president – commercial relationship manager for its commercial banking division. He will work closely with the bank’s commercial and credit teams to provide value to existing commercial clients while fostering new client relationships. VISIT pioneer.com

Hill & Markes, a family-owned wholesale distributor, donated \$1,500 to Ellis Hospital for Breast Cancer Awareness month. The money represents a portion of the company’s breast cancer facemask sales and was donated in partnership with a Hill & Markes’ vendor. VISIT hillandmarkes.com

Pursuit, an alternative business financing company, announced the retirement of President and Chief Executive Officer Pat MacKrell, effective December 31, 2021. MacKrell will continue as CEO until his retirement and Tom McHale, senior vice president and a 23-year veteran of Pursuit, will assume the role of president, effective January 1, 2021. VISIT pursuitlending.com



Boys & Girls Clubs of the Capital Area (BGCCA) is partnering with GylvLink, a web-based platform that connects corporations looking to donate to nonprofits that serve populations in need. Businesses can use the platform to donate supplies to BGCCA, including home learning kits that are necessary to the agency’s pre-kindergarten programs. About 500 local children are served through BGCCA’s virtual learning efforts since the outbreak of COVID-19. VISIT bgccapitalarea.org and gylvlink.com/post/5juK72qZcv9

It’s A Dog’s Life

My Little Dog & Co. LLC, a specialty pet boutique, is offering private shopping sessions for small groups of 6 to 12. The sessions are aimed at providing a safe, stress-free shopping experience for pet lovers to discover the store’s variety of apparel, accessories, home goods and gifts. To make a reservation, email mldogandco@yahoo.com or direct message to facebook.com/mylittledogandco. My Little Dog & Co. is located at 264 North Greenbush Road in Troy. VISITmylittledogandco.com

Ribbon Cutting

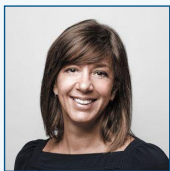


Your CBD Store celebrated a grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony at 598 Columbia Turnpike in East Greenbush (Hannaford Plaza). The store offers a variety of organic, non-GMO CBD products. VISIT yourcbdstoreeastgreenbush.company.site

Ribbon cuttings are presented by the Chamber, in partnership with Rensselaer County IDA. Contact Tom Engle at 518.687.1243 or tengle@renscochamber.com. RENNELAER COUNTY life looks good from here™

BST & Co. announced the following appointments and promotions at the financial and management consulting firm: Trevor Carroll, associate; Lauren Clark, senior associate; Andi DeLancy, accounting specialist; Cris Malizia, manager; and Jess Rushlow, client experience coordinator. VISIT bstco.com

id29 welcomed Nicole Pitaniello as vice president of health and wellness. An industry veteran, she has dedicated her career to healthcare and pharmaceutical marketing. Her passion is to partner with clients who seek to improve the health and well-being of others. VISIT id29.com



Outstanding “Biz” Partner



eBizDocs was named “Partner of the Year” by PSIGEN Software, Inc., an innovative leader of document

capture, workflow and management software. eBizDocs was chosen from a worldwide network of PSIGEN partners for its ability to continually exceed customer expectations. Superior product and implementation knowledge allows eBizDocs to apply the PSIGEN document capture and management solutions in numerous state and local government agencies and commercial businesses. VISIT ebizdocs.com

EventsCalendar 2020 Visit renscochamber.com to register for these upcoming events

STARTS DEC 06 Troy Victorian Stroll This year’s Stroll is a full season of enjoying downtown shops and eateries. Enjoy strolling among unique retailers and restaurants in a safe, fun and festive atmosphere. Check our Stroll website daily for updated events and special promotions all season long! Begins Sunday, December 6. For the latest information about special events, visit victorianstroll.com.

MON DEC 14 Holiday NetworkingPlus Virtual Event Get connected, develop leads and build relationships at our most popular networking event of the year! Kick off your holiday season, finish 2020 strong and discover fresh ideas and business contacts for a great start to 2021. Virtual event via Zoom, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., EST. No cost; members only. Register online at renscochamber.com. Sponsored by Sunmark Credit Union.

THU DEC 17 Quick Learn: Maintaining Your Website with WordPress Learn how to maintain an existing WordPress site, including updating content, creating links, importing images and publishing changes. Capped at 12 attendees, with a limit of one person per company. Sign up today! Webinar 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. EST No cost. Register online at renscochamber.com. Presented by the Chamber, in partnership with MicroKnowledge, Inc.

THU JAN 14 State of the County Breakfast Rensselaer County Executive Steven F. McLaughlin presents what’s ahead in 2021, including local economic development initiatives and the ongoing challenges of COVID-19. Bring your ideas and questions to participate in a Q&A. Virtual event via Zoom, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., EST. No cost. Register online at renscochamber.com. Presented by the Chamber, in partnership with Rensselaer County.



# spotlight



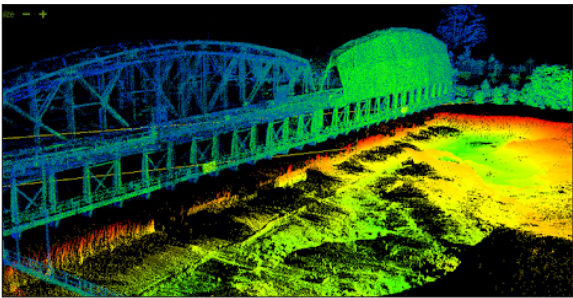
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H2H Geoscience Engineering is a consulting firm offering geologic, hydrogeologic, geophysical, hydrographic, engineering, environmental, construction management, surveying and mapping services. H2H’s team of highly qualified professionals, representing a combined 100+ years of experience and expertise, offers innovative, reliable and solutions-driven results to government and private clients locally and around the world. From groundwater studies and environmental assessments, to volunteer work with state police — including solving a missing person’s case — H2H’s staff relies on creative problem-solving, cutting-edge technology and an entrepreneurial spirit to successfully serve its diverse client base and grow the Troy-based firm.

“We hire top-notch people who can do a lot of things really well,” said Richard Hisert, PhD, PG, co-founder of the firm in 2005 with colleague Alan Hall, PG, who passed away five years ago. “We look for entrepreneurs who think like leaders, smart people who want to be stimulated by exciting, challenging work. Because our engineers and scientists are cross trained, our team can serve clients on site in a timely and cost-efficient manner. We also invest in the best tools and

technology, including The Atlas, the most advanced combined bathymetric and LiDAR survey vessel in the eastern U.S.”

From the jungles of Panama to the mountains of the Adirondacks, H2H’s team and its joint venture creation, Yerkes South — H2H JV, LLC, have expanded its projects in Central and South America and are working with clients from France, Ireland, Great Britain, Germany and Italy. H2H represented the United States in a joint US-China mining innovations delegation and has been the lead due diligence consultant on more than \$5 billion in acquisitions. The firm’s high-end, high-resolution aerial, aquatic and structural mapping capabilities are in demand by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Emergency Management Agency, New York State Canal System, government, educational and private entities. Celebrating 15 years in business in 2020, H2H is committed to giving back to local families and communities through food banks and other charitable groups.



## MAXIMUM EXPOSURE

### High-Impact Exposure Opportunities

Get the attention your business or nonprofit deserves in 2021 with customized marketing packages designed to target your goals and stay within your budget. The Chamber’s marketing team provides personalized service with a full menu of high-impact print, digital and sponsorship opportunities that bring tangible results. Let us customize your package!

- » For only \$200, our RENSCONNECT newsletter inserts are ideal for businesses and organizations. Direct-mailed with no postal costs to you, the inserts are included in our print and digital newsletters.
- » Purchase a Spotlight article in our monthly newsletter for \$550. Direct-mailed by the Chamber, Spotlights are also posted in our digital RENSCONNECT newsletter.
- » Tap into our digital marketing with website advertising and e-newsletters. With higher-than-average views and open rates, both are effective strategies.
- » Sponsor Chamber events and get maximum exposure. Choose from a variety of popular programs to suit your timing, audience and budget.

For more information, contact Tom Engle at [tengle@renscochamber.com](mailto:tengle@renscochamber.com).

### Check Out These Chamber Benefits

Here’s a quick reminder of important benefits we offer to you and all of your employees. For additional member benefits, [visit renscochamber.com](https://renscochamber.com).

#### ✓ CONSTANT CONTACT DISCOUNTS



Constant Contact is a one-stop source for your marketing needs, giving you more ways to build your business. Chamber members receive exclusive savings on Constant Contact’s entire suite of online tools, including: email marketing, social campaigns, event marketing, surveys/polls and e-commerce. Tools include landing pages, websites, a free logo builder and an easy-to-use Search Engine Optimization (SEO) tool to drive traffic to your website. Contact our representative Erik Bunaes at [erik@endorphindigital.com](mailto:erik@endorphindigital.com) to get up to a 25% discount, even if you’re already using Constant Contact.

#### ✓ CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN

Did you know that only chambers of commerce can legitimately issue a certificate of origin? Our Chamber is here to issue, sign and stamp certificates of origin at no charge to members in good standing. Certificates of origin are prepared by exporters to verify the origins of overseas exports and are required by law. Fraudulent certificates can lead to exports being rejected at ports, fines and other penalties. Trust the Chamber to help your business succeed and save you money. [VISIT renscochamber.com/cost-saving-benefits](https://renscochamber.com/cost-saving-benefits)

## IN MEMORIAM

### Remembering Andrew J. Matonak



Andrew “Drew” J. Matonak, retired president of Hudson Valley Community College, passed away peacefully on November 7 after a courageous battle with cancer. A great friend of the Chamber and a board member from 2011 to 2013, Drew served as HVCC president for 13 years, from 2005 until his retirement in 2018. He led the college during a 13-year period of impressive growth and innovation in academic programming and student services, as well as a striking transformation of the college’s 120-acre campus and its technological infrastructure. Drew is remembered as a genuine, caring and compassionate leader, mentor and friend by all who knew him, and his dedication to student success will continue with the establishment of the **President Andrew J. Matonak Student Leadership and Scholarship Fund at the Hudson Valley Community College Foundation**. To make a contribution, visit [hvcc.edu/giving/online](https://hvcc.edu/giving/online).

## “CONNECT WITH CAREERS” VIDEOS

### Chamber Offers Career Resources for Students

If you are a teacher, a parent or have an interest in the region’s workforce readiness, check out the Chamber’s new “Connect with Careers” videos, an online series for students to virtually explore careers and discover pathways to join tomorrow’s workforce. Featuring local business professionals from various industries, these videos are an online resource designed to connect students with potential careers. The video series is part of the Chamber’s workforce readiness initiative, which seeks ways to develop a strong pipeline of career-ready workers for now and the future. Use the QR code at left or go to [renscochamber.com](https://renscochamber.com).



## Alumni News from The Leadership Institute

Edwin Anker IV, RA AIA, Class of 2011, will serve as the Chamber’s Chair of the Board of Directors for 2021. He was elected to the board in 2019 and served as chair of The Leadership Institute Committee in 2020. Ed is the Troy Office Director and Senior Project manager for Phinney Design Group, a multi-disciplinary architecture, interior design, green building consulting and construction management firm. [VISIT phinneydesign.com](https://phinneydesign.com)



Submit your Leadership Institute alumni news to Communications Manager Tom Engle at [tengle@renscochamber.com](mailto:tengle@renscochamber.com).



