



RENSCONNECT

WHERE BUSINESS + COMMUNITY CONVERGE

MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

Looking Back at 2021: Working Together as Catalysts & Conveners



Edwin C. Anker IV, RA, AIA
2021 Chamber Chair

It's been a privilege to serve as the 2021 Chair of the Chamber's Board of Directors. If there is anything I've learned during the past year, it's the power of the reciprocal commitment that exists between the Chamber and its members. Working together, our organization provides a dynamic environment that helps people grow their networks and build their professional communities. Sharing a common vision, we are effective catalysts, conveners and champions of the recovery and renewal efforts that benefit everyone. Let's take a look at 2021 and what was accomplished.

A Full Calendar

We knew from feedback that members wanted and needed timely training and events for themselves and their teams, as COVID stretched into a second year. So we delivered. In 2021, we presented a hybrid of virtual and in-person programming, including "Ask the Experts" panels on economic forecasting, pay equity audits and futurescaping to help businesses and non-profits find new paths forward. We brought elected representatives on the local, regional and national levels into interactive forums to get your questions answered and your concerns heard. Our well-attended Wonder Women events shared stories

and strategies while mentoring a new generation of professional women. And our ever-popular Golf Classic was again a sell-out event. Still to come: a season-long celebration of downtown Troy with the 39th annual Troy Victorian Stroll, kicking off on Sunday, December 5. "Shop, Dine and Stroll" all through the holiday season!

Success by the Numbers

If ribbon cuttings are anything to go by, Rensselaer County is OPEN FOR BUSINESS. The Chamber organized 20 ribbon cutting ceremonies in 2021 for a wide variety of members, from grand openings to milestone events. Membership continues to grow with attraction and retention numbers higher than the national averages, as new and renewing members find real value in their investment. Businesses see that we are not only an events organization, we are a powerhouse of networking and resources that help our members achieve professional success.

Strong Leadership

The Leadership Class of 2021 was unlike any we have had before because they persevered during COVID-19 and, against considerable odds, accomplished their goal of graduating. The Chamber's award-winning Leadership program is very close to my heart; I'm a 2011 alumnus and credit the program with assisting in my own career in significant ways. Thanks to the efforts and creativity of our Executive Board and Leadership Committee, the Class of 2021

never wavered and finished the curriculum with in-person sessions and graduation honors. The Class of 2022, a diverse group of professionals, is well underway and will graduate in the spring.

Great IDEAs

In keeping with the Chamber's strategic plan and our ongoing commitment, the Board of Directors participated in Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) training in 2021. We are currently creating action plans to guide membership, governance, programs and The Leadership Institute towards greater equal access for all members. Look for news on this initiative in 2022.

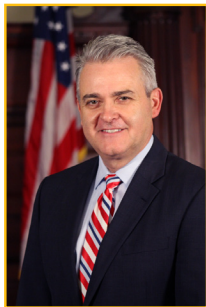
As I make way for incoming Chair Katharine Doran, let me say a sincere "thank you" to our members for your ongoing commitment to the Chamber and to our shared mission. Your enthusiasm, resilience and ingenuity are an inspiration. Remember, the more you get involved, the more you get out of your membership. Please reach out to us and stay connected, now and through 2022, with your ideas, your needs and your challenges; we look forward to hearing from you.

Wishing you a happy and healthy New Year,

LEARN WHAT'S AHEAD IN 2022 | JANUARY 27

Register Now: State of the County Luncheon

Join the Chamber at the 2022 State of the County Luncheon and learn what's ahead for Rensselaer County and the business community. Rensselaer County Executive Steven F. McLaughlin will review the past year and present his vision and plans for the future, including the status of significant local economic development initiatives and opportunities for business. Attendees are encouraged to bring questions to this event for a Q&A session after remarks. Register today for your seat at this sell-out event!



THU JAN 27 Register now at renscochamber.com/events
☀️ Check-in and luncheon 11:30 a.m., remarks and Q&A 12-1 p.m. \$40 members.
Franklin Terrace Ballroom, 126 Campbell Avenue in Troy. Presented by the Chamber, in partnership with Rensselaer County. Sponsored by Hudson Valley Community College and The Wagoner Law Firm, PLLC.

RENSSELAER COUNTY
life looks good from here™



THE WAGONER FIRM, PLLC

Troy Victorian

39TH ANNUAL

Stroll Season

Shop, Dine and Stroll Troy ALL Holiday Season

Beginning Sunday, December 5!

Featuring Lively Outdoor Entertainment:

12/5, 12/11 & 12/18

Visit [VICTORIANSTROLL.COM](https://victorianstroll.com)

Thank You To Our Sponsors:

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 a publication of the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce. Submissions are considered based upon content and space availability.

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 Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce
 @renscochamber

New Members

C-Suite Advisors

Professional Outsourced Services
Rep: Sabrina Houser
26 F Congress Street
Suite 158
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
Phone: 518.350.4020

Cadence Creative

Consultants
Rep: Tamara Gatchell
3307 State Route 150
East Greenbush, NY 12061
Phone: 518.424.1133
[VISIT cadencecreative.co](http://visit.cadencecreative.co)

Cloverlawn Creative, LLC

Graphic Designers
Rep: Lauren Marchese
1027 Cloverlawn Road
Troy, NY 12180
Phone: 518.203.8970

IronGlass Productions

Photo & Video Production
Rep: Jacob Ritz
4300 NY 50
Suite 105
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
Phone: 518.312.1975
[VISIT ironglassproductions.com](http://visit.ironglassproductions.com)

Rosewick Films

Photo & Video
Productions - Weddings
Rep: Juan Soler
4300 NY 50
Suite 105
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
Phone: 518.817.6794
[VISIT rosewickfilms.com](http://visit.rosewickfilms.com)

Ryan's Wake Public House

Restaurants
Rep: Chris Ryan
403 River Street
Troy, NY 12180
Phone: 518.270.9253
[VISIT ryanswake.com](http://visit.ryanswake.com)

Sky Films Incorporated

Film Production
Rep: James Tusty
45 Teal Road
Averill Park, NY 12018
Phone: 518.674.1630

Team H.E.R.O.

Community Organizations
Rep: Jerry Ford, Jr.
2320 5th Avenue
Troy, NY 12180
Phone: 518.209.2420
[VISIT teamhero101.org](http://visit.teamhero101.org)

Where Smiles Grow Dental

Pediatric Dentist
Rep: Dr. Jennifer Charlesworth
81 Miller Road
Suite 900
Castleton, NY 12033
Phone: 518.785.3911
[VISIT wheresmilesgrow.com](http://visit.wheresmilesgrow.com)

Worksite Benefits

Health Insurance
Rep: Candy Marrero
3991 Route 2 - Tamarac Plaza
Cropseyville, NY 12052
Phone: 518.326.3939
[VISIT worksitebenefits.biz](http://visit.worksitebenefits.biz)

Please remember to patronize your fellow Chamber members and invite businesses and organizations to join our growing membership!

Member News

CDPHP's Medicare Advantage plans were the highest rated in New York State and among the highest in the nation, according to *U.S. News & World Report's* 2022 Medicare Advantage honor roll, receiving five out of five stars for HMO and PPO products. Effective January 1, most CDPHP Medicare members are eligible for new add-ons, including 30 hours of in-home support services, increased dental and eyeglass coverage, lower specialist co-pays and more. [VISIT cdphp.com](http://visit.cdphp.com)

Unity House of Troy, Inc.'s Domestic Violence Services program in Hoosick Falls recently welcomed The New York State Unified Court System's Community Court Access Program (CCAP) to its facility at the Hoosick Falls Armory. CCAP is intended to help individuals who can't physically attend court proceedings to connect virtually and remotely, as well as accessing legal resources. [VISIT unityhouseny.org](http://visit.unityhouseny.org)

Hill & Markes, a family-owned wholesale distributor, launched a new podcast, *Since1906*. The podcast episodes, geared towards business professionals, feature authentic and inspiring conversations with CEOs, VPs and other industry experts who discuss the depth of Hill & Markes' history and mission, the company's commitment to the well being of its employees and the strategies that made the third generation business into a well-known industry leader. Founded 115 years ago, Hill & Markes is a distributor of ice cream products, janitorial products, food service, packing, shipping and office supplies. The podcasts download on Apple Podcasts and Spotify and are available online. [VISIT hillnmarkes.com/since1906](http://visit.hillnmarkes.com/since1906)

New Hires

Alaant Workforce Solutions announced the hiring of Senior Talent Acquisition Managers Michelle Conn and Lauren Valentine. They bring more than 30 years of combined experience in helping businesses build high-performing teams. Alaant experienced a 30% growth in job placements and a 50% increase in direct-hire revenue during the past year, amid a historically challenging job market. [VISIT alaant.com](http://visit.alaant.com)



Awards & Recognition



Integrated Tissue Dynamics President and Chief Scientist Frank L. Rice, PhD, spoke to the research and investment community gathered at the 4th Annual International

Cannabinoid Derived Pharmaceuticals Summit in Boston, Massachusetts. Drs. Rice and Phillip Albrecht, the company's co-founders, and their team were published on the topic in a recent issue of *The Journal of Pain*. [VISIT intidyn.com](http://visit.intidyn.com)

architecture+ was recognized with a Merit Award for Interior Architecture by AIA Columbus, an architectural membership organization. The award honors the firm's work on The Behavioral Health Pavilion at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio. The project is the largest facility in America for child and adolescent mental health on a pediatric medical campus. [VISIT aplususa.com](http://visit.aplususa.com)

Holiday Cheer



HMA Contracting Corp. and Capital District YMCA partnered to deliver full Thanksgiving meals to families as part of the

Caring Community Basket Brigade. Founded by HMA in 2016, the brigade has delivered more than 2,400 Thanksgiving meals, with this year's goal set at 1,000. [VISIT hmacontracting.com](http://visit.hmacontracting.com) and cdymca.org

The Palace Theatre

presents Chevy Chase live on stage following a screening of *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation* on December 15 at 7:30 p.m. Chase will share stories from his television and movies and answer audience questions. [VISIT palacealbany.org](http://visit.palacealbany.org)



Team Work



STRIDE Adaptive Sports' award-winning "Capital District Sled Warriors" are teaming up with members of the **Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute** men's ice hockey team for assistance and comradery as the STRIDE players train for competitions coming up this winter, including defending their gold medal championship at the Empire State Winter Games in Lake Placid. [VISIT rpi.edu](http://visit.rpi.edu) and stride.org

Partner Award



Whitney M. Young Jr. Health Center publicly honored Maria College with its 2021 Community Partner Award for working with the health care organization during the COVID-19 pandemic. The college provided

nursing students earlier this year to help administer COVID vaccines at large community clinics. The award was presented at Whitney Young's annual Legacy Event. [VISIT wmyhealth.org](http://visit.wmyhealth.org)

EventsCalendar 2021-22

[Visit renscochamber.com](http://visit.renscochamber.com) to register for upcoming events

**STARTS
DEC
05**

Troy Victorian Stroll Season

This year's event is a full season of strolling downtown shops, restaurants and

retailers in a safe and festive atmosphere. Celebrate the holiday spirit and enjoy Troy all month long.

🕒 **Begins Sunday, December 5.** For the latest information, visit victorianstroll.com.

**THU
DEC
09**

Holiday NetworkingPlus Luncheon

Register now for this popular event! Kick off your holiday season,

finish 2021 strong and discover business contacts for a great start to the new year. Be sure to bring a doorprize to spread holiday cheer.

🕒 **Check-in and luncheon 11:30 a.m.; networking 12-1:30 p.m.** \$35 for members. The Century House, Route 9 in Latham. *Sponsored by Ayzo Ridge Design, OrbitalFire Cybersecurity and Sunmark Credit Union.*

**THU
JAN
13**

Cannabis: An Economic Buzz

Thinking about growing, manufacturing or selling legal cannabis

in New York State? Discover opportunities and how to navigate the laws regulating this emerging industry from our panel of experts.

🕒 **Virtual event via Zoom, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., EST.** No cost. Register online at renscochamber.com. *Sponsored by The Wagoner Law Firm.*

**THU
JAN
27**

State of the County Luncheon

Learn what's ahead in 2022, including local economic development

initiatives. Come prepared to participate in a Q&A.

🕒 **Check-in and luncheon 11:30 a.m., remarks and Q&A 12-1 p.m.** \$40 members. Franklin Terrace Ballroom, 126 Campbell Avenue in Troy. *Presented by the Chamber, in partnership with Rensselaer County. Sponsored by Hudson Valley Community College and The Wagoner Law Firm.*

spotlight



104 Third Street
Troy, NY 12180
ph: 518.273.1872
getrucked.com

Say the words, “craft beer” to Dave Gardell, owner of **The Ruck**, and you’ll unlock a whole world of knowledge, enthusiasm and hospitality. Like the larger-than-life beer tap installed on the facade of its building, The Ruck takes craft beer to a whole new level.

“The Ruck has the best craft beer selection in the Capital Region, period,” said Gardell, who worked at The Ruck for seven years before purchasing the business 17 years ago. “From 518-hyperlocal to regional, state, national and international brewers, we have the privilege to

serve craft beers produced by wonderfully mindful people who are pursuing their passion. The Ruck opens the doors to the world of craft beer and gives you the opportunity to build your palate, learn about the origins of your beer and find out where else you can purchase it.”

With a rotating beer selection (32 draught lines in total), paired with seasonal menus of “nibbles” and plates prepared fresh from the kitchen, The Ruck carefully curates all of its offerings and maintains close ties with many of its brewers, often hosting live events that bring brewers and the public together. Over the years, The Ruck has evolved from local bar to rustic pub to a community gathering place. “We’ve grown up with Troy. The city is experiencing a renaissance and The Ruck captures that essence,” said Gardell,



who has an associate’s degree in Craft Beer Brewing from Schenectady Community College and is a Certified Cicerone, an accredited certification program that is the beer equivalent to a sommelier. “We’re always looking for innovative and creative ways in the kitchen and at the bar to present an alternative to the typical pub. We give people a reason to come back — and bring a family member or friend. When the focus is on ‘**Eat, Drink**,’ the ‘**Be Merry**’ takes care of itself.”

The Ruck’s website makes it easy to reserve a table, view menus, order delivery or curbside pickup, shop merchandise in The Ruck online store and check out upcoming events.

“Our communities are at a real crossroads and we need to reconnect. The bar setting or public house has always represented a social crossroads where people make a conscious decision to come together, meet friends, talk to new people and immerse themselves in the community,” said Gardell. “It’s food and drink harmonizing people together. That’s the reason for everything we do at The Ruck.”

MAXIMUM EXPOSURE

High-Impact Exposure Opportunities



Get the attention your organization deserves in 2022 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 bimonthly newsletter.
- » Purchase a Spotlight article in our *RENSCONNECT* newsletter for \$400. Direct-mailed by the Chamber, Spotlights are also posted in our digital *RENSCONNECT* newsletter.
- » Tap into our digital marketing with website and e-newsletter advertising. 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 the Chamber at 518.724.7020 or email info@renscochamber.com.

POST YOUR MEMBER NEWS

What’s New? Send it to the Chamber!



Everyday, online visitors check out our website’s Member News page for the latest announcements and noteworthy happenings from our members. Do we have YOUR news? The Chamber wants to share your business or organization’s successes with fellow members and help you get recognition for honors, awards, promotions, new hires, milestones, celebrations, relocations, events and employee

recognition. New client? Expanding services? Add news@renscochamber.com to your email distribution list or submit your news to our website by using the Chamber’s online form at renscochamber.com/news. Member news items uploaded to the website are also considered for the Chamber’s weekly e-Newsletter and print newsletter. For assistance, contact the Chamber at 518.274.7020 or email info@renscochamber.com.

✓ ENERGY ALLIANCE

Check Out This Timely Chamber Benefit



The Chamber’s Energy Alliance program, administered by EnergyNext, gives members the opportunity to lower energy bills by choosing more competitive rates. There is no cost to sign up or to participate. Through the alliance you’ll secure fixed rates from carefully selected top-tier energy suppliers, giving you money-saving options and peace of mind. For more information, call the Chamber at 518.274.7020 or visit renscochamber.com/cost-saving-benefits/energy-savings-program.

News from The Leadership Institute



The Leadership Institute’s Class of ‘22 participated in a “Communications” session in November, hosted at the Hilton Garden Inn in Troy. Topics included Principles of Communication, Communication Barriers and MBTI, Crisis Communication and Media Training.

Executive-level presenters were:

Diane Cameron Pascone, Director of Development
Unity House of Troy, Inc.

Christine Allard, Associate Director of The Archer Center
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Jo Ann LeSage Nelson, APR, Vice President of Client Services, Pierce Communications

Victoria Hostig, Director, Community Relations, CDPHP and Executive Director, CDPHP The Foundation.

Applications for the Class of 2023 will be available in early 2022. Now is the time to plan for this exciting career development opportunity for yourself or a key member of your team! For information, visit renscochamber.com/develop-chamber/leadership-institute.



The Leadership Institute is sponsored by CDPHP

Submit your Leadership Institute alumni news to leadership@renscochamber.com

Member Milestones

45 Years

Emma Willard School
The Arc of Rensselaer County

40 Years

CBRE – Albany

35 Years

BST, LLP

20 Years

Susan Odell Taylor School for Children

5 Years

Audubon International
Recovery Sports Grill East Greenbush

2021 Board of Directors

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Capital Region Workforce Development Board

* Executive committee members

YOUR GENEROSITY SUPPORTS OUR COMMUNITY

Thank You to Our Major Sponsors for 2021



Upcoming Events for Your Calendar

VICTORIAN STROLL | DECEMBER 05

Celebrate the Stroll
All Month Long

Enjoy downtown Troy throughout our 2021 Stroll season, with shopping, dining, entertainment, activities and pop-up specials all through the month. Featuring lively outdoor entertainment on December 5, 11 and 18. Enjoy a safe, festive and welcoming holiday experience for every member of the family.

STARTS
DEC
05

Troy Victorian Stroll
🕒 Begins Sunday, December 5. For the latest information, visit victorianstroll.com. The Troy Victorian Stroll is presented by the Chamber and made possible by the generosity of our supporters, including these event sponsors:



PIONEER | All Together Forward

Troy Redevelopment Foundation

NETWORKING | DECEMBER 09

Holiday Networking
Brings Connections

Celebrate the season and network with the Chamber's fast-paced program, including three table rotations for maximum introductions and is designed to avoid repeats, guaranteeing quality business leads. Be sure to bring plenty of business cards and a door prize. This is a great way to kick off the holiday season — register today and get ready to leave with new contacts for the new year.

THU
DEC
09

Register now at renscochamber.com/events
🕒 Check-in & luncheon 11:30 a.m.; networking 12-1:30 p.m. \$35 members. The Century House, Route 9 in Latham. Sponsored by:

