



# RENSCONNECT

WHERE BUSINESS + COMMUNITY CONVERGE

DEVELOPING A STRONG WORKFORCE

## Chamber's "Connect with Careers" Initiative Launches New Videos

Taking a lead role in building the region's workforce readiness, the Chamber presents the Fall 2021 edition of "Connect with Careers," a virtual series for students in grades 8-12 to explore careers and discover pathways to identify and pursue their passions.

These impactful videos, featuring one-on-one interviews with local business professionals, bring to life viable careers in the region and how students can explore them. The videos are an important resource for area school districts and classroom teachers to help spark the minds of middle and high school students to pursue careers that match their talents and interests, especially during a time when in-person opportunities have been minimized due to COVID restrictions.



"Experts agree — workforce readiness requires collaboration between education and business," said Chamber President Manley. "This edition of 'Connect with Careers' week is the result of focus groups and feedback about the immediate need of students to connect with professionals from a variety of industries and backgrounds. Students gain insight from the shared stories of these professionals, including the importance of

transferable skills and non-linear paths to career success."

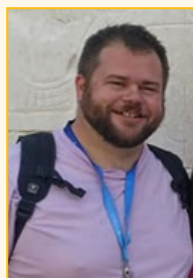
Beginning the week of November 15, eight new videos will be posted, featuring a new business professional from a different industry each day (see below for a sneak peek!) They will be added to the Connect with Careers archive of videos from 2019 and 2020, available at [renscochamber.com/develop-chamber/connect-careers](https://renscochamber.com/develop-chamber/connect-careers) and on the Chamber's YouTube channel.

***This initiative honors the late Bob Horan, Superintendent of the Schodack Central School District, and his commitment to foster dynamic partnerships between business and education for a vibrant, workforce-ready community.***

"After many jobs and searching for the career that was right for me, I found myself in an IT boot camp. Thanks to that one opportunity that I really had to chase after, my entire career life changed for the better. I found my passion in IT. **Internships and apprentice programs are amazing opportunities if you want to pursue a career in technology. Start early and put yourself out there.**"



Tami Cole, President & CEO, DocStrats



Robert Bushnell, Plant Foreman, Callanan Industries, Inc.

"If COVID taught us anything, it's that a career in the trades is almost recession proof. When I finished high school, I wasn't interested in college. I started as a laborer in heavy highway construction and found a career path that suits my skills and interests. **If you are willing to learn, Callanan can teach you what you need to know to succeed, to have a good-paying job and a good quality of life.**"



**Be entrepreneurial and ambitious in seeking out experiences that make you well-rounded.** You'll discover how your talents fit into this collaborative career path."

Stacey Bridge, Associate Director,  
The Troy Savings Bank Music Hall

"You don't have to be a performer to pursue a career in the performing arts. There are so many important and fulfilling jobs behind the scenes and it takes a team of dedicated individuals to make a show a success.



**But no matter your career, you have to be able to build relationships. My advice is to focus on what you enjoy most and what you excel at naturally."**

Tyler Culberson, Associate Real Estate  
Broker, NAI Platform

"At 18, I started an internship in commercial real estate and it was a springboard for me to expand into the market. In this career, every day is different and there are many skill sets needed.



**There are a lot of career opportunities within a financial institution, from marketing to technology to risk evaluation. The key is to find out how your talents can make an impact and a difference."**

Audrey Stone, Community Engagement  
Program Manager, Sunmark Credit Union

"I work with non-profit organizations to see how Sunmark can partner with them to accelerate their goals. Relationship-building and communication skills are a necessity.

Fall 2021 Edition of "Connect with Careers" is sponsored by:



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Phone: 518.274.7020 | Web: [renscochamber.com](https://renscochamber.com)

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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.

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in Rensselaer County Regional Chamber  
of Commerce

ig @renscochamber



## New Members

**Beekman 1802**  
Cosmetics  
Rep: Alan Edstrom  
187 Main Street  
Sharon Springs, NY 13459  
Phone: 888.801.1802  
[VISIT beekman1802.com](http://www.beekman1802.com)

**Berlin Central School District**  
Schools  
Rep: Joseph Dhara  
17400 Route 22  
Cherry Plain, NY 12040  
Phone: 518.658.1500

**Center Square Asset Management**  
Financial Services  
Rep: Deborah L. Lane, CFP, CLU  
1651 Columbia Turnpike  
Castleton, NY 12033  
Phone: 518.477.5468  
[VISIT centersquareasset.com](http://www.centersquareasset.com)

**Christine Cooley Family Health, NP PLLC**  
Health Care Professionals  
Rep: Christine Cooley  
500 Federal Street, Suite 650  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: 518.441.8720  
[VISIT chriscooleyhealthcare.com](http://www.chriscooleyhealthcare.com)

**Community Caregivers, Inc.**  
Human Services  
Rep: Meredith Osta  
2021 Western Avenue, Suite 104  
Albany, NY 12203  
Phone: 518.456.2898  
[VISIT communitycaregivers.org](http://www.communitycaregivers.org)

**EGS Advanced Energy Solutions**  
Energy Brokers  
Rep: Jeffrey Sapirman  
15294 W. Brookside Lane, Suite 110  
Surprise, AZ 85374  
Phone: 315.297.7777  
[VISIT egs-aes.com](http://www.egs-aes.com)

**June Farms**  
Restaurants  
Rep: Matt Baumgartner  
275 Parker Road  
West Sand Lake, NY 12196  
Phone: 518.730.0330  
[VISIT junefarms.com](http://www.junefarms.com)

**Nielsen Direct Inc.**  
Mailing Services  
Rep: Robert Nielsen  
8 Apollo Drive  
Albany, NY 12205  
Phone: 518.456.6863

**Performance Plus Chiropractic Center**  
Chiropractors  
Rep: Dr. Gary Carr  
1801 6th Avenue, Suite 209  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: 518.332.9881  
[VISIT performance-plus-chiropractic.com](http://www.performance-plus-chiropractic.com)

**Rhinebeck Bank**  
Financial Services  
Rep: Bob Bazargan  
2 Jefferson Plaza  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601  
Phone: 518.261.9808  
[VISIT rhinebeckbank.com](http://www.rhinebeckbank.com)

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

## Member News

**GTM Payroll Services** acquired **Pinnacle Human Resources, LLC** and is expanding services to businesses in the Capital District. The acquisition enables GTM to offer a full suite of payroll and human resources support solutions to businesses. “For 30 years, GTM has provided clients with the best solutions available,” said Founder and CEO Guy Maddalone. “By adding an experienced team of human resources consultants and the customized HR support services offered by Pinnacle Human Resources, we will bring even more value to our clients to help them lower costs and streamline their processes.”  
[VISIT gtm.com](http://www.gtm.com)

**Hinman, Howard & Kattell, LLP** expanded its Albany office through the addition of attorneys and staff from the law firm of **Martin, Shudt, Wallace, DiLorenzo and Johnson**. The office serves clients beyond the Capital Region into the Adirondacks and the North Country, the Finger Lakes, Western New York, the Southern Tier and the Hudson Valley. [VISIT hhk.com](http://www.hhk.com)

**Siena College’s Stack Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship** inducted five alumni into the Maddalone Wall of Success, which recognizes individuals whose success in business inspires future generations of entrepreneurs. The 2021 inductees are: Bob Blackman, Blackman & DeStefano Real Estate; Matthew Fradette, The Wanderlust Group; Blake Hanan, Mealeo; Tom Huerter, Huersch Marketing Group; and Robert C. Miller, The Windsor Companies.

## Appointments



**Fenimore Asset Management**, an independent investment advisory firm and manager of the FAM Funds family of mutual funds, named Marc Roberts as a Portfolio Manager of the FAM Value Fund. He holds the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA®) designation and focuses on understanding and evaluating quality businesses and industries.  
[VISIT fenimoreasset.com](http://www.fenimoreasset.com)

**KeyBank** announced Fran O’Rourke, Regional Sales Executive for Key Private Bank, was named Market President for KeyBank’s Capital Region. In her new role, she will drive collaboration and coordination of activities and resources in the market, as well as serve as the face and voice of KeyBank in the community. She will also continue in her current role leading wealth management teams throughout the northeast. [VISIT keybank.com](http://www.keybank.com)



**Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York** made two recent staff announcements. Matthew King was hired as Director of Facilities and Properties, responsible for ensuring all facilities are operational and compliant. Ellen Donovan was promoted to Director of Philanthropy and will oversee all fundraising efforts. [VISIT girlscoutsnyny.org](http://www.girlscoutsnyny.org)

## Newly Elected



**Questar III BOCES** Business Office Manager and Controller Jennifer Mulligan, CPA, was elected president of the board of governors of the New York Government Finance Officers Association. A member of the organization’s board since 2009, she will serve a one-year term as president. [VISIT questar.org](http://www.questar.org)

## Ribbon Cuttings



**Integra HR, LLC** marked its two-year anniversary at 15 Second Avenue in Rensselaer. Integra is a full-service human resource consulting firm providing customized and cost-effective services delivered by certified professionals. [VISIT integra-hr.com](http://www.integra-hr.com)



**The Dogscape** cut the ribbon on its location at 205 Oakwood Avenue in Troy. A dog daycare, The Dogscape offers supervised play and socialization, certified handlers, discounted packages and on-site grooming services. [VISIT thedogscape.com](http://www.thedogscape.com)



**Center Square Asset Management** celebrated a ribbon cutting at 1651 Columbia Turnpike in Castleton. Center Square is an independent, family-owned wealth management firm founded in 2005. [VISIT centersquareasset.com](http://www.centersquareasset.com)

Ribbon cuttings are presented by the Chamber, in partnership with Rensselaer County IDA.

**RENSSELAER COUNTY**  
life looks good from here™

## EventsCalendar 2021-22

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

**WED  
NOV  
10**

**Member Benefits Orientation**  
Maximize your Chamber investment with all of the advantages of membership for you AND your employees. Discover exclusive perks and services designed to build business connections and save money.

☎ **Check-in and breakfast 8:30 a.m.; presentation 9-10 a.m.** No cost; RSVPs required. Chamber office, 90 Fourth Street in Troy. Sponsored by First New York Federal Credit Union.

**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](http://www.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.

☎ **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, Pinnacle Human Resources, LLC and Sunmark Credit Union.

**THU  
JAN  
27**

**State of the County Luncheon**

The Rensselaer County Executive will present what’s ahead in 2021, including local economic development initiatives. Bring your ideas and questions to participate in a Q&A.

☎ **Check-in and luncheon 11:30 a.m., remarks and Q&A 12-1 p.m.** \$35 members. Franklin Terrace Ballroom, 126 Campbell Avenue in Troy. Presented by the Chamber, in partnership with Rensselaer County. Sponsored by Hudson Valley Community College.



# spotlight



**First New York Federal Credit Union** serves the communities of Rensselaer County with its full-service branch at 31 Jordan Road and Route 4 in North Greenbush. The 2,100-square-foot facility is designed to better accommodate First New York’s growing membership and features ample parking and two drive-through, 24-hour First New York Interactive Express Teller Machines (with two more located inside the branch). Open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., the branch’s knowledgeable staff is ready to assist members with accounts, loans and financial needs.



“Our North Greenbush branch offers an experience that goes beyond everyday banking,” said First New York’s President and CEO Lucy G. Halstead. “It’s a comfortable environment where individuals and businesses can access complete financial services, including money management, loans and long-term financial planning. This branch represents First New York’s commitment to our membership in Rensselaer County.”



Founded in 1937, First New York is a full-service financial institution providing personal and business banking to consumers and businesses in the Capital Region. The credit union has \$437 million in assets and serves more than 34,000 members, with eight local branches and 30,000 fee-free network ATMs nationwide. [VISIT firstnewyork.org](http://firstnewyork.org)

FOR YOU & YOUR EMPLOYEES

## Health Insurance Open Enrollment



**November is open enrollment month for the Chamber’s health insurance plans and now is the time to get information about money-saving options exclusive to our membership.** Bouchey & Clarke Benefits, Inc., the Chamber’s benefits administrator, is available to help you navigate the available plans for 2022, understand your options, compare choices and find the best fit for your needs and budget. This benefit is open to current Chamber members in good standing. For information on health insurance, contact Bouchey & Clarke at 518.720.8888.

MEMBER BENEFITS ORIENTATION

## Maximize Your Membership

**Maximize your Chamber investment by discovering all of the advantages of your membership, for you AND your employees at the Chamber’s next Member Benefits Orientation.** These informative events are for new and existing members to learn about exclusive perks and services designed to build business connections, save money and make the most of your membership. This is a great opportunity to meet with regional business professionals and learn how to market, develop and connect your business by leveraging all the Chamber has to offer. Come and find out what you may be missing!



WED  
NOV  
10

**Register now at [renscochamber.com/events](http://renscochamber.com/events)**  
🕒 Check-in and breakfast 8:30 a.m.; benefits overview 9-10 a.m. No cost for members; RSVPs required. Chamber office, 90 Fourth Street in Troy. Sponsored by First New York Federal Credit Union.



CHAMBER STAFF

## New Executive Assistant & Office Manager



**Welcome Rachel Brandenburg, the Chamber’s new Executive Assistant to the President and Office Manager.** Rachel serves as a liaison to the Board of Directors, The Leadership Institute, CEO Roundtables and other initiatives. She also manages the daily functions of the Chamber office. A native of Troy, she graduated from The College of Saint Rose and has eight years of marketing, administrative and IT experience. **Contact her at [rbrandenberg@renscochamber.com](mailto:rbrandenberg@renscochamber.com) or 518.687.1242.**

## News from The Leadership Institute



**The Leadership Institute’s Class of ‘22** continued their journey of professional development by participating in a “Strategic Thinking” session, hosted at the Albany International

Airport. Presenters were **Deb Best**, owner and principal, Deb Best Practices; **Brian O’Grady**, president, Health Care Markets, CDPHP; and **Philip Calderone**, CEO, Albany International Airport. Panelists included **Guha Bala**, president, Velan Studios, Inc.; **Gary Dake**, president, Stewart’s Shops; **Regina LaGatta**, executive director, External and Government Affairs and executive director, The College Foundation, Hudson Valley Community College; **Dr. Lee McElroy**, associate vice president and director of Athletics, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; and **Dr. James Reed**, president and CEO, St. Peter’s Health Partners.

**Applications for the Class of 2023 will be available in January; now is the time to plan for this exciting career development opportunity! For information, visit [renscochamber.com/develop-chamber/leadership-institute](http://renscochamber.com/develop-chamber/leadership-institute).**



The Leadership Institute is sponsored by CDPHP



**Dr. Gayle Healy**, Class of ‘10, Director of the Center for Careers and Transfer at Hudson Valley Community College, was promoted to Dean of Student Development. In her new role, she develops collaborative initiatives to enhance student support services and works with academic departments to develop programs that improve student persistence and retention. [VISIT hvcc.edu](http://hvcc.edu)

Submit your Leadership Institute alumni news to [leadership@renscochamber.com](mailto:leadership@renscochamber.com)



2021 Board of Directors

- EDWIN C. ANKER IV, AIA\***  
Phinney Design Group
- RACHAEL E. CAPO, ESQ.**  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
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- TAMI COLE\***  
Documentation Strategies, Inc.
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AMRI
- KATHARINE K. DORAN, CPA\***  
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The Doane Stuart School
- SCOTT WILEY**  
Hoosick Valley Contractors, Inc.
- BRIAN WILLIAMS\***  
Capital Region Workforce Development Board

\* Executive committee members



Upcoming Events for Your Calendar

A MONTH-LONG CELEBRATION THAT STARTS SUNDAY, DECEMBER 05

Stroll Brings Holiday Cheer & Tourism to Troy

Eat, Drink, Be Merry and Support Local! Enjoy downtown Troy throughout our 2021 Stroll Season, beginning Sunday, December 5, with shopping, dining, entertainment, activities and pop-up specials all month long. The 39th Annual Victorian Stroll honors nearly 40 years of this special holiday tradition for the whole family, while introducing a new way to stroll. Enjoy a safe and welcoming environment for the entire month of December among the festive storefronts, restaurants and destination spots that make the City of Troy so unique. Vote in the 2021 Window Decorating Contest, play Stroll Bingo to win Holiday Prize Packs, and follow Stroll specials on social media. Enjoy the magic of this historic Victorian city as it transforms into a bygone era and make new memories of holiday fun and excitement.



STARTS  
DEC  
05

**Troy Victorian Stroll**  
🕒 **Begins Sunday, December 5.** For the latest information, visit [victorianstroll.com](http://victorianstroll.com). The Troy Victorian Stroll is presented by the Chamber and made possible by the generosity of our supporters, including these event sponsors (below). To join our family of supporters or to contribute to the Stroll, please contact the Chamber at [stroll@renscochamber.com](mailto:stroll@renscochamber.com).



SAVE THE DATE | DECEMBER 09

Connect at Chamber’s Holiday NetworkingPlus



**Celebrate the season and network with other business professionals at the Chamber’s Holiday NetworkingPlus event.** This fast-paced program includes 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. No wonder it’s one of the most popular Chamber events!

THU  
DEC  
09

**Register now at [renscochamber.com/events](http://renscochamber.com/events)**  
🕒 *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, Pinnacle Human Resources, LLC and Sunmark Credit Union.*



ENTER TO WIN

Chamber Contest Says “Thank You” to Members

**We’re giving thanks by offering an exciting contest for one of our members to win a customized Chamber marketing package valued at \$1,500.** It’s our way of saying “Thank You” to our membership for your continuous support of the Chamber! The package may include digital and print advertising, tickets to events and opportunities to showcase your business as a sponsor or expo booth participant. The winning member will meet with the Chamber’s marketing staff prior to January 1, 2022 to develop a package to meet their specific marketing goals.



Enter online at [renscochamber.com](http://renscochamber.com) for a chance to win (only one entry per member). Eligible entrants must be Chamber members in good standing since November 2019 or earlier. The winner must maintain Chamber membership through 2022 for the prizes to remain valid. Marketing packages are effective January 1 through December 31, 2022. Deadline to enter is Wednesday, December 8 at 12 p.m. The winner will be announced at the Chamber’s Holiday NetworkingPlus Luncheon on Thursday, December 9. Enter to win today!

Member Milestones - Congratulations!

50 Years

» Stewart’s Shops

30 Years

» Art Herman & Sons Builders, Inc.  
» Derek Karandy  
» Wojeski & Company CPAs, PC

25 Years

» Country Gardens  
» LoPorto Ristorante Caffe  
» U.W. Marx, Inc.

20 Years

» Spiral Design Studio, LLC

15 Years

» Brown’s Brewing Company, LLC  
» Mark D. Peabody  
» Rocky’s Music Studio  
» The Ruck

10 Years

» Gavant Software  
» GreyCastle Security, LLC

5 Years

» Harris, Conway & Donovan, PLLC  
» Phinney Design Group