



# RENSCONNECT

WHERE BUSINESS + COMMUNITY CONVERGE

HONORING EXCELLENCE

## 33rd Annual Van Rensselaer Awards Dinner Set for September 21

Join us at the Chamber’s 33rd Annual Van Rensselaer Awards Dinner, a celebration of excellence in the regional business community. Each year these prestigious honors recognize corporations, small businesses and exceptional individuals in Rensselaer County and the surrounding gateway communities. Van Rensselaer recipients are celebrated for their commitment to the economic, cultural and humanitarian advancement of the region, acting as ready and willing partners to other businesses and organizations. Come celebrate this year’s outstanding award recipients!

### VR Corporate Award Questar III BOCES



Questar III BOCES, a public education organization, was chosen for the Corporate Award because of its outstanding partnerships with the business community. Established in 1977, the organization serves 23 school districts in Rensselaer, Columbia and Greene counties, helping them to meet education and budget challenges with shared programs and services. Business-related programs include career and technical education, special education, adult education and workforce preparation. In all of these ways and more, Questar III collaborates with business entities and communities to discover how to get students ready for the jobs of today and tomorrow. These important partnerships are reaching students in K-12 with non-traditional education and training opportunities designed to inspire them to find their paths to success. [VISIT questar.org](http://questar.org)



### Edward H. Pattison Citizenship Award Howard M. Gross

From the beginning, Howard Gross wanted to create a business that put people first. In 1999, he founded eBizDocs, a premier electronic content solutions provider, specializing in software solutions, paper and microfilm conversion, scanner sales and service, and process consultation. The company, which is committed to hiring people with disabilities, serves private and public organizations and is a preferred source contractor for NYS entities. eBizDocs has received numerous honors and awards through the years. In 2019, Howard was given the “Corporate Citizen Award” by Best Buddies, for his outstanding commitment to empowering individuals with disabilities through employment. Howard is a recognized expert in applying sound business practices that can change peoples’ lives, a profitable lesson for the whole community. The Chamber is proud to choose him for the 2023 “Ebbie” Award. [VISIT ebizdocs.com](http://ebizdocs.com)



### VR Small Business Award Alexis Diner

Alexis Diner is known for its award-winning food and service, as well as its classic diner facade on Route 4. Loyal patrons, responsible for voting Alexis Diner “Best” in annual ratings for the past two decades, rave about the family-style atmosphere, the outstanding menu and specials, live music and much more. But it is Alexis Diner’s loyalty to the regional community that wins it this year’s Small Business Award. A longtime donor to food pantries, the diner stepped up during the pandemic to offer curbside meals while supporting many additional efforts to feed the needy. Local nonprofits, from sports teams to scholarship awards, rely on the diner’s generosity year after year, making Alexis Diner a fixture in the community that makes a real difference. [VISIT alexisdiner.us](http://alexisdiner.us)



THU  
SEP  
21

**Register now at [renscochamber.com/events](http://renscochamber.com/events)**  
🕒 *Networking and cocktail reception 5:30 p.m.; awards and dinner 6:30 p.m. \$150 member | \$1,500 for Chair’s Circle Table of 8 (includes program recognition).*  
*Hilton Garden Inn, 235 Hoosick Street in Troy. Sponsored by Capital Bank, CDPHP and OneDigital. Floral sponsor is BBL Companies. Cocktail hour sponsor is Hudson Valley Community College.*



Presenting Sponsors

Floral Sponsor

Cocktail Hour Sponsor

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 by the Chamber. Submissions considered for publication are based upon content and space availability.

**Norris Pearson, President**  
90 Fourth Street, Suite 200, Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: 518.274.7020 | [renscochamber.com](http://renscochamber.com)

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

@Renscochamber  
 @RenscoChamber  
 Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce  
 @renscochamber



Market. Develop. Connect.

RENSCOCHAMBER.COM  
90 FOURTH STREET, STE. 200 | TROY, N.Y. 12180



PRRST STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ALBANY, NY  
PERMIT NO. 164



New Members

- 1st Impression Dental**  
Dentist  
Rep: Pooria Shahin, DDS  
719 Franklin Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11238  
Phone: 718.230.0908  
[VISIT 1stidental.com](#)
- Apricot Fine Jewelry Works**  
Jewelry  
Rep: John de Rosier  
188 River Street  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: 518.254.8780  
[VISIT apricotworks.com](#)
- Aquatic Development Group**  
Manufacturing  
Rep: Kristin Renchkovsky  
13 Green Mountain Drive  
Cohoes, NY 12047  
Phone: 518.783.0038  
[VISIT aquaticgroup.com](#)
- Bank of Greene County**  
Bank  
Rep: Matthew Ellis  
602 Columbia Turnpike  
East Greenbush, NY 12061  
Phone: 518.943.2600  
[VISIT thebankofgreeneconomy.com](#)
- Blue Skies Travel, LLC**  
Travel Advisor  
Rep: George Balogh  
2 Pittsfield Avenue  
East Greenbush, NY 12061  
Phone: 518.477.4700  
[VISIT blueskiestravel.com](#)
- Budget Blinds East Greenbush**  
Window Treatments (SDVOB)  
Rep: Shawn Murphy  
Phone: 518.844.0800  
[VISIT budgetblinds.com/east-greenbush-ny/](#)
- Capital Area SQL Server User Group**  
Non-profit training  
Rep: Edward Pollack  
Phone: 518.221.0387  
[VISIT meetup.com/capital-area-sql-server-user-group/](#)
- Chick-Fil-A**  
Restaurant  
Rep: Will Potts  
502 North Greenbush Road  
Rensselaer, NY 12144  
Phone: 518.576.7272  
[VISIT chick-fil-a.com/locations/ny/north-greenbush-ny](#)
- Chris Silveri Real Estate**  
Real Estate  
Rep: Chris Silveri  
20 Aviation Road  
Albany, NY 12205  
Phone: 518.898.6660  
[VISIT howardhanna.com/agent/detail/christophersilveri/10208808](#)
- Clarity HR Solutions, LLC**  
HR Services  
Rep: Joanmarie Dowling  
187 Wolf Road, Suite 210  
Albany, NY 12205  
Phone: 518.708.6776  
[VISIT clarityhumanresources.com](#)

Ribbon Cuttings & Grand Openings



Stage One Dispensary, 810 Broadway in Rensselaer  
[VISIT stageonedispensary.com](#)



LiveWell Group, One Juniper Drive in Delmar  
[VISIT livewellgroup.com](#)



Dolled Up, 470 North Greenbush Road in Rensselaer  
[VISIT vagaro.com/dolledup8](#)



Camp Is-Sho-Da, 231 Upper Mannix Road in East Greenbush  
[VISIT girlscoutsny.org/en/camp-properties/is-sho-da.html](#)



Holiday Inn Express, 8 Empire Drive in East Greenbush  
[VISIT ihg.com](#)



Chick-Fil-A, 502 North Greenbush Road in Rensselaer  
[VISIT chick-fil-a.com/locations/ny/north-greenbush-ny](#)



Stacks Espresso Bar, 13 Third Street in Troy  
[VISIT stacksespresso.com](#)



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

EventsCalendar 2023

All events are members only. Visit [renscochamber.com](#) to register!

THU  
SEP  
21

**Van Rensselaer Awards Dinner**  
A celebration of excellence in the regional business community!  
  
🕒 Networking and cocktail reception 5:30 p.m.; awards and dinner 6:30 p.m. \$150 member/ \$1,500 for Chair's Circle Table of 8 (includes program recognition). Hilton Garden Inn, 235 Hoosick Street in Troy. *Sponsored by Capital Bank, CDPHP and OneDigital. Floral sponsor is BBL Companies. Cocktail hour sponsor is Hudson Valley Community College.*

TUE  
SEP  
26

**Meet Your Legislators**  
Join the Chamber as we meet with our state representatives, Senator Jacob Ashby and Assemblyman Scott Bendett. Hear from these key decision makers and gain a perspective into legislative activities at the state capital.  
  
🕒 Check-in and breakfast 8:30 a.m.; program 9-10 a.m. \$50 members. Comfort Inn & Suites, 99 Miller Road in Castleton. *Sponsored by Groff NetWorks, LLC; National Grid; and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.*

TUE  
OCT  
17

**NetworkingPlus Luncheon**  
Generate new leads and build business relationships at this high-impact event, designed to avoid repeat introductions and guarantee valuable business contacts. Take this opportunity to deliver a brief message about your business or organization.  
  
🕒 Check-in and luncheon 12 p.m.; networking 12:30-1:30 p.m. \$50 members. The Century House, 997 New Loudon Road in Latham. *Sponsored by Aflac.*

TUE  
OCT  
26

**Wonder Women Roundtable Luncheon**  
Top women professionals share their experiences and strategies for success. Inspiring and informative roundtables will spark lively and candid conversations about career challenges and solutions. Come discover the wonder woman in YOU.  
  
🕒 Check-in and luncheon 12 p.m.; roundtables 12:30-1:30 p.m. \$50 members. Franklin Terrace Ballroom, 126 Campbell Avenue in Troy. *Sponsored by Martin Electric, Pioneer and WB Games New York.*



# spotlight



Troy | New York  
ph: 844.672.3473  
[orbitalfire.com](http://orbitalfire.com)

**OrbitalFire is a leading cybersecurity provider focused exclusively on solving cybersecurity challenges for small businesses.** OrbitalFire provides fully managed and affordable solutions to help small businesses achieve compliance, minimize risk and protect data and reputation. CEO Reg Harnish, a nationally recognized speaker, author and entrepreneur, established OrbitalFire specifically to serve small businesses. A former founder and CEO of GreyCastle Security, Harnish and his OrbitalFire team offer complete or a la carte cybersecurity to fit nearly any budget.

**“Most cybersecurity solutions are complex, expensive and designed for large organizations. OrbitalFire focuses on the 99.7% of businesses that are underserved – small businesses,” said Harnish. “OrbitalFire’s suite of comprehensive services helps small businesses prevent, detect and respond to cybersecurity threats. We defend your money and your reputation.”**

These days, small businesses have big cybersecurity challenges. “Customers and prospects are smarter about cyber risk, and if you want to be part of their supply chain, you need to be less of a risk to them,” said Harnish. “Ransomware and wire fraud are everywhere. Hackers used to target big enterprises, but they’ve figured out that small businesses are easy victims. Cyber insurance is getting really expensive. If you want to insure your business against cyber risks, you need to implement a growing list of protections.”

From assessments, training and monitoring, to policies, penetration testing and incident response, with OrbitalFire small businesses get a dedicated outsourced team of cybersecurity experts to do the work for them at the most affordable rates in the industry and without long-term contracts. In addition, OrbitalFire works seamlessly with existing IT, making it more secure, compliant and resilient with no wasted overlap. “As the cybersecurity small business experts, OrbitalFire helps you win more customers and avoid potentially costly disruptions by creating and delivering a cybersecurity plan built for your business needs,” said Harnish.

**SMALL BUSINESS  
CYBERSECURITY  
RESOURCES:**



@orbitalfire



@orbitalfirecybersecurity

## New Members

**CRH Mechanical**  
Heating Specialist  
Rep: Chris Herrington  
701 Groveside Road  
Buskirk, NY 12028  
Phone: 518.625.3655

**Daniel Weinheimer Real Estate**  
Real Estate  
Rep: Daniel Weinheimer  
22 Century Hill Road  
Latham, NY 12110  
Phone: 888.276.0630, ext. 1900  
[VISIT danweinheimer.com](http://danweinheimer.com)

**Dolled Up**  
Salon  
Rep: Arianna Keller  
470 North Greenbush Road  
Rensselaer, NY 12144  
Phone: 518.852.3289  
[VISIT vagaro.com/dolledup8](http://vagar.com/dolledup8)

**Life Storage**  
Storage  
Rep: Sarah Titterington  
500 River Street  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: 518.312.4478  
[VISIT lifestorage.com/8234](http://lifestorage.com/8234)

**Luizzi Development**  
Construction  
Rep: Chuck Pafundi  
857 First Street  
Watervliet, NY 12189  
Phone: 518.482.8954  
[VISIT luizzibros.com](http://luizzibros.com)

**Rensselaer Farmers Market**  
Retail  
Rep: Scott Abraham  
Rensselaer Riverfront Park  
Rensselaer, NY 12144  
Phone: 518.595.8109  
[VISIT rensselaermarket.com](http://rensselaermarket.com)

**Stacks Espresso Bar**  
Cafe  
Rep: Cara Sherwood  
13 Third Street  
Troy, NY 12180  
Phone: 518.203.7852  
[VISIT stacksespresso.com](http://stacksespresso.com)

**Stage One Dispensary**  
Retail  
Rep: Joshua Mirsky  
810 Broadway  
Rensselaer, NY 12144  
Phone: 518.451.9540  
[VISIT stageonedispensary.com](http://stageonedispensary.com)

**TD Bank**  
Bank  
Rep: Mitalda Kita  
71 Troy Road  
East Greenbush, NY 12061  
Phone: 518.477.9311  
[VISIT tdbank.com](http://tdbank.com)

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



## Welcome to the Newest Class of The Leadership Institute

The Chamber is proud to announce **The Leadership Institute Class of 2024**, participants in our award-winning, skills-based program. This year’s dynamic and diverse group of professionals are poised and eager to expand their leadership and business acumen. Participants will join more than 450 Leadership alumni who are applying their valuable talents within their professions and communities. **The Leadership Institute is sponsored by CDPHP.**

**Chad Binney**, PNJ Technology Partners  
**Tara Borodin-Galarza**, Phinney Design Group  
**Amanda Casale**, TRIP, Inc.  
**Cody Csontos**, Choice Physical Therapy  
**Sarah Czelusniak**, Commission on Economic Opportunity  
**Thomas Daniels**, Unity House of Troy, Inc.  
**Jack Dearborn**, HMA Contracting Corporation  
**Heidi Dillmann**, JD RF International  
**Marcia Etman**, Pioneer  
**Ryan Gauck**, CDPHP  
**Lizzie Honan**, The Troy Savings Bank Music Hall  
**Megan Izzo**, Broadview FCU  
**Raymond Lauenstein**, Aquatic Development Group

**Alex Lorimer**, Mosaic Associates Architects  
**Katri Noble-Johnson**, Northern Rivers Family Services  
**Dr. Brooke Paradise**, KIPP Troy Prep High School  
**Matthew Rucinski**, St. Pius X School  
**Melissa Signorelli**, Nassau Financial Group  
**Alison Simpson**, Mohawk Hudson Humane Society  
**John Slyer**, Sky High Adventure Community Center  
**Nicole St. Onge**, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute  
**Cheryl Stock**, Albany Port District Commission  
**Matt Tozzi**, Rifenburg Construction  
**David Wilber**, Teal Becker & Chiaramonte, CPAs, PC  
**Bobby Wood**, Troy Web Consulting

## Chamber Member Milestones

### 45 Years

Teal, Becker & Chiaramonte, CPAs, PC  
Tri City Rentals / Massry Realty Partners

### 40 Years

Duncan & Cahill, Inc.

### 35 Years

Saxon Sign Corporation

### 30 Years

Alp’s Timber Management Company, Inc.

### 25 Years

Cooley Motors Corporation  
Edelmann Sales, Inc.

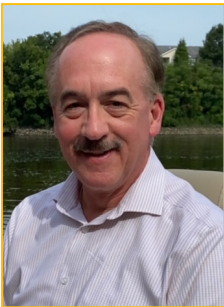
### 20 Years

Best Western Franklin Square Inn  
James E. Curran & Co., Inc.

### 15 Years

AAA Hudson Valley  
Bespoke Software, Inc.  
Town of Brunswick

## News from The Leadership Institute



**Noah Baum**, Class of ‘22, is the new Acting President and CEO at Troy Rehabilitation and Improvement Program (TRIP) Inc. Former Chief Operating Officer for TRIP, he is responsible for continuing and growing the mission of TRIP and and RCHR (Rensselaer County Housing Resources).  
[VISIT triponline.org](http://visit.triponline.org)



The Leadership Institute is sponsored by CDPHP

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

2023 Board of Directors

BRIAN WILLIAMS\* | BOARD CHAIR  
Capital Region Workforce Development Board

KELLI ARNOLD  
Pioneer

KIM BAKER  
St. Peter's Health Partners

JOE BONILLA  
Relentless Awareness

CLAUDIA BUTLER  
Amtrak

RACHAEL E. CAPO, ESQ.  
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

ASHLEY CASTLE  
GlobalFoundries

JASON CHEVRIER  
Schodack Central School District

CHRISTOPHER CONWAY  
Curia Global

BRYCE CUTLER\*  
Capital Bank

BRENDA DICKINSON  
Garelick Farms

KATHARINE K. DORAN, CPA\*  
Teal, Becker & Chiaramonte CPAs

JOANMARIE DOWLING, ESQ\*  
Dowling Law

MARK DUFFY  
Broadview Federal Credit Union

AARON FAGAN  
Fagan Associates

MIKE HAMEL\*  
HMA Contracting Corporation

KENDRA HART\*  
Martin Electric

RUSSELL HUTA  
Rifenburg Construction, Inc.

DENNIS KENNEDY  
Hudson Valley Community College

TIMOTHY KOSTO  
Taconic

CHRISTOPHER LOSZYNSKI\*  
DeCrescente Distributing

JAMES MONKS  
HighMark

E. PATRICE PERKINS\*  
The Word Architect

KATHLEEN PINGELSKI\*  
MicroKnowledge, Inc.

ELIZABETH REISS  
The Arts Center of the Capital Region

TOBI SAULNIER  
1st Playable Productions

BOB SHEVY  
National Grid

STARLETTA R. SMITH  
YWCA of the Greater Capital Region, Inc.

TARA WHITTLE  
The Kaelel Jamison Consulting Group

\* Executive committee members



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

90 Fourth Street, Suite 200 | Troy, NY 12180  
ph: 518.274.7020 | renscochamber.com

Connect with Careers is Back! Starting September 11, the Chamber's virtual series for students and educators will release brand new videos, featuring interviews with local business professionals. The videos are an impactful resource to help students discover careers that match their talents and interests. Check out all "Connect with Careers" videos at renscochamber.com/develop-chamber/connect-careers and on the Chamber's YouTube channel. Sponsored by Martin Electric, GlobalFoundries and Phinney Design Group.

LOCAL ISSUES, STATE REPRESENTATIVES | SEPTEMBER 26

Meet Your Legislators and Join the Discussion



State representatives will participate in an informative panel discussion at the Chamber's Meet Your Legislators breakfast. Join us as we meet with New York State Senator Jacob Ashby (top) and Assemblyman Scott Bendett (bottom). Take advantage of this opportunity to establish relationships with key decision makers and voice opinions on local issues. Attendees will get a first-hand perspective into the legislative activities at the state capital and participate in a Q&A. Register today and get ready to join the conversation!



Register now at renscochamber.com/events  
🕒 Check-in and breakfast 8:30 a.m.; program 9-10 a.m. \$50 members. Comfort Inn & Suites, 99 Miller Road in Castleton. Sponsored by Groff NetWorks, LLC; National Grid; and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.



CONNECT FOR SUCCESS | OCTOBER 17

Meet Your Next Lead at Chamber NetworkingPlus

Get connected, develop leads and build relationships at our one-of-a-kind, fast-paced networking event. The Chamber's networking events are a high-impact way to build your business contacts and meet motivated professionals. With three table rotations and a system designed to stop the hassle of repeat introductions, you are guaranteed to leave with a stack of business cards for potential leads. Attendees get time for a brief presentation of their business or organization, making these events even more valuable. Leverage our successful networking platform to engage representatives of the regional business community. See you there!



Register now at renscochamber.com/events  
🕒 Check-in and luncheon 12 p.m.; networking 12:30-1:30 p.m. \$50 members. The Century House, 997 New Loudon Road in Latham. Sponsored by Aflac.



WONDER WOMEN LUNCHEON | OCTOBER 26

MENTORING: Strategies for Career Success



Find inspiration to harness your powers, build your network and discover your own wonder women of support at the Chamber's upcoming Wonder Women Roundtable luncheon. We're gathering top

women professionals (at right) to share their experiences in a series of roundtables, focused on timely topics about today's challenges and triumphs. Join the lively and candid conversations about career strategies and solutions. Table hop as you meet with mentors and discover new strategies for success. Sign up for an event that will give you "a-ha!" moments and impactful connections. Develop empowering relationships with local "Wonder Women" and discover the wonder woman in you.

OUR PRESENTERS

Ashley Jeffrey Bouck, CEO, Mohawk Hudson Humane Society

Erin Crotty, Senior Vice President, CHA Consulting, Inc.

Patricia Fusco, President & CEO, Fusco Personnel

Kendra Hart, Vice President, Martin Electric

Theresa Moroukian, Principal, Mosaic Associates Architects

Patrice Perkins, CEO, The Word Architect

Tobi Saulnier, Founder & CEO, 1st Playable Productions

Register now at renscochamber.com/events  
🕒 Check-in and luncheon 12 p.m.; roundtables 12:30-1:30 p.m. \$50 members. Franklin Terrace Ballroom, 126 Campbell Avenue in Troy. Sponsored by Martin Electric, Pioneer and WB Games New York.

COLLEGE PRESIDENTS PANEL | NOVEMBER 16

Discover How Higher Education Drives Economy



As major employers in the Capital District, colleges and universities have an economic impact that reaches beyond campuses. Discover how these institutions collaborate with businesses for mutual success at the Chamber's College President's Panel Discussion. Hear regional leaders discuss their academic communities, future plans and the impact of higher education as an economic driver.



Our panel includes (top row, l-r) Christopher Ames, Ph.D., The Sage Colleges; Lynn Ortale, Ph.D., Maria College; Roger A. Ramsammy, Ph.D., Hudson Valley Community College; (bottom row, l-r) David Schejbal Ph.D., Excelsior College; Martin A. Schmidt, Ph.D., Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; and Charles Seifert, Ph.D., Siena College. Bring your ideas and questions for a dynamic discussion.

Register now at renscochamber.com/events  
🕒 Check-in and breakfast 7:30 a.m.; panel discussion and Q&A 8-9:30 a.m. \$50 members. Hilton Garden Inn, 235 Hoosick Street in Troy. Sponsored by Architecture+, Broadview FCU, Mosaic Associates Architects and UHY LLP.

