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THE CHAMBER Impact

MAY/JUN 2021

A Rising Sense of Hope and Optimism

There is a rising sense of hope and optimism in our State and communities today: A growing belief that the long, dark stretch of this horrible pandemic is nearly behind us, and our country is finally getting back to health and back to a growing economy.



Kevin Hougen
President & CEO

To date, more than 40 percent of the U.S. population have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Major partnerships with community providers have been successful, but we still need more of our minority community and economically

challenged citizens to be helped at every turn.

A major reason Colorado's economy is poised for a quick and vigorous recovery is that we were in a good place before the shock of the pandemic 14 months ago. Looking into the future, the economy is growing, as vaccinations rise, and case levels fall. This helps our beleaguered service sector in its revival. It is estimated that our 2021 average growth of 10 percent in the second quarter and more than 7 percent in the third quarter will surpass past economic recoveries.

We hear every day from businesses large and small that they struggle to find qualified workers for open jobs, and The Chamber is prioritizing workforce development to keep the economic momentum going, with **two new key programs** that will help to restore our economy:

- 1) **Business Services Liaison, Apprenticeship Program.** The first in the State of Colorado, our new partnership with Arapahoe/Douglas Works! and the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment will establish workforce resources available to employers, communicate those resources to the business community and listen to the workforce needs of the business community. The Chamber welcomes Katie Anthony as the workforce development professional and the newest addition to The Chamber staff (See page 6). This program is about putting people back to work with resources and partnerships!
- 2) **Emily Griffith Technical College's Culinary Quick Start Program.** This no cost, three-week program provides an educational path to a career in the culinary industry, by providing training in key areas of the restaurant industry, including knife skills, cooking fundamentals, and becoming ServSafe certified. The culinary industry that we might think of as restaurants, also includes senior-living centers, hospitals, hotels, casinos,

airports, etc. All of these industries and businesses need to be able to maintain a steady flow of qualified employees.

We are still monitoring several key decisions at the State Capitol. With more than half the session completed, there are still a number of bills we are following that will have significant effects on the business communities we serve today – and into our recovery this next year:

- 1) **Transportation funding** and rebuilding our infrastructure. With millions of dollars coming from the Federal Government in Washington DC to the State, we are hoping to be at the table with ideas and strategic planning for the immediate and long-term solutions.
- 2) Repaying the billions of dollars that the State of Colorado is borrowing from the Federal Government to replace our **Colorado State Unemployment Insurance Fund.** We hope the Governor will use stimulus dollars from the Federal Government to repay the depleted fund.

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Save the Date

**Honoring Our
Community Champions**
"We're All in This Together"

Friday, Oct 15, 2021

11:30 am – 1:30 pm
3203 Quebec St. (Quebec & MLK Jr. Blvd.)
Denver, CO 80207



Schedule of Events

23rd Annual Leadership Aurora Golf Tournament

Thursday, June 17, 2021

7:00am Registration / 8:00am Shotgun Start

Heritage Eagle Bend Golf Course

23155 E. Heritage Parkway
Aurora, CO 80016

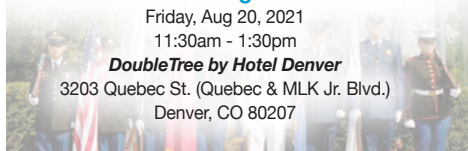
45th Annual Armed Forces Recognition Luncheon

Friday, Aug 20, 2021

11:30am – 1:30pm

DoubleTree by Hotel Denver

3203 Quebec St. (Quebec & MLK Jr. Blvd.)
Denver, CO 80207



Please go online to:

The **Chamber Calendar** to view upcoming meetings and events.

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ChamberCommittees

An Inside Look

ARTS + BUSINESS CONNECTION

Art + Community: Colfax Canvas Mural Event Tuesday, March 2, 2021

By Renee Leon, Arts + Business Connection Chair

On March 2, ABC committee attendees heard from the organizers of the Colfax Canvas Mural Event, scheduled for its second year, September 3-5, 2021. The "outdoor collaboration of culture and creativity," premiered in July 2020, and was successful, even during the pandemic! Producers of the event, Aaron Vega,



Aaron Vega



Chad Bolsinger



Ryan Foo

curator and facilities coordinator of The People's Building and Ryan Foo, director of operations and lead producer for the Black Actors Guild, along with artist Chad Bolsinger, shared the original objectives for the project, what was learned from the first year, and the overwhelmingly positive responses from local businesses and community members. They also shared the unique challenges of the event and the solutions being embraced by businesses and residents alike.

The organizers shared that the 2021 Colfax Canvas Mural Event will be expanded with more artists and a longer route than the first year. Get your walking shoes on!

Creative Pivots for Artist Entrepreneurs Tuesday, April 6, 2021

By Renee Leon, Arts + Business Connection Chair



Gary Reed

The April 6 Arts + Business Connection meeting featured a panel of three artist entrepreneurs who shared their stories of adapting and morphing their creative businesses to survive, and even thrive, throughout the pandemic -

and beyond.

Gary Reed of Reed Art and Imaging began by letting attendees know that his pre-pandemic business was focused on Fine Art Printing. So, when the pandemic greatly reduced the fine art printing business, Reed shifted to the printing needs of essential businesses (construction companies, hospitals, etc.), needing printed materials to encourage and support safety and compliance with COVID restrictions.

Though he struggled to keep things moving and unfortunately had to furlough

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ChamberBoard

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Michael Sheldon | Aurora Highlands

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DON'T FORGET: "Every employee of a Chamber member is a member of The Chamber"
Please route this issue to your sales reps, account managers, marketing directors, HR and PR departments. You can also access each month's newsletter online at our website, www.aurorachamber.org, so you can forward it to every employee in your company!

THE CHAMBER'S MISSION



The mission of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce is to give a voice to the business community and serve as an advocate for its members, creating a positive business environment that encourages their growth and long-term economic vitality

employees, Reed Art and Imaging was able to stay open. Reed noted that collaborating with and listening to clients and employees has helped to maintain relationships and to strengthen the business. Regarding fine art, they are now providing artists with a cost-effective way to reproduce their artwork for their clients. You can see the process at www.reedphoto.com.



Bobby Love

We then heard from Chamber and Young Professionals member Animation Impossible owner Bobby Love. Love is a stand-up comedian who started Animation Impossible (right before the pandemic) with the goal of providing creative, animated, mixed reality video content for clients. Video has been an important marketing tool for some time, but during the pandemic that importance increased as one of the best ways to market. By using fun voices, characters, and mixed reality marketing, Love's company provides a way for businesses to tell their story in a more interesting way. Love also shared his personal motto: Think - Feel - Do! Be realistic but act on the things that give you goosebumps and keep moving forward!

The charismatic Kandice Porter was the closing presenter. Porter is the creator and owner of Bonding To The Beat (BttB), an entrepreneurial and educational music enrichment program for families with children and for childcare facilities. When Porter started BttB, her goal was to share musical experiences with children during their formative years, so they can move, play, learn, and sing. While this is still her driving intent, the pandemic dramatically shifted her business. She went from having a staff of 20 and contracts throughout Colorado daycares to a staff of two. Instead of focusing on working with daycares, she has shifted to providing content that supports parents with children at home and says that she will continue to explore prospects in schools and private industry. Porter is currently assessing



Kandice Porter

and imagining the next phase for her business. In the meantime, she continues to create "Life Lessons for Littles," which is fun, digital content for families that can be accessed on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Bonding+to+the+Beat.

TRANSPORTATION

Mobility Hub and Front Range Passenger Rail

Wednesday, March 3, 2021

By Tim Harris, Transportation Committee Chair

The March Transportation meeting was focused on some non-highway elements of the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). Kay Kelly, chief of the Office of Innovative Mobility, explained that the role of her office is to reduce air pollution and highway congestion by expanding multimodal transportation options utilizing traditional and emerging mobility technologies. Their operations include integrating transit and rail into the statewide transportation system with notable accomplishments being the Bustang and Outrider service throughout Colorado.

Mobility Hubs currently being developed along the I-25 corridor are intended to increase transit reliability and ridership, to reduce highway congestion and decrease air pollution. Mobility Services looks at ways to make our transportation more accessible and efficient while Mobility Technology focuses on strategies and policies for addressing connected vehicles, autonomous vehicles, and other emerging technologies. Kelly's office is also the CDOT lead for electrification implementation in support of Governor Polis' Climate Goals.

Spencer Dodge, the liaison between CDOT and the Front Range Passenger Rail Commission, provided an update on the long-range vision to implement rail service between Fort Collins and Pueblo. Three potential alignments have been identified with initial construction costs ranging from \$7.8 to \$14.2 billion. Development would likely be in multiple phases with an initial phase of limited daily trips on a segment of the ultimate corridor. Next steps for the project include discussions

with the legislature regarding the governance structure and continuing efforts to secure funding for an environmental study. Funding may come from the State, federal grants, or partnerships with Amtrak or RTD.



DEN and CASP

Wednesday, April 7, 2021

By Tim Harris, Transportation Committee Chair



Cristal DeHerrera



At the April Transportation meeting, attendees heard from Cristal DeHerrera, chief of staff at Denver International Airport (DEN), and Dave Ruppel, director of the Colorado Air and Space Port (CASP).

DeHerrera updated the committee about activities at what is now the 3rd busiest airport in the United States.

"The impact of COVID-19 on air travel has been huge," said DeHerrera, "with DEN passenger totals dropping by more than 50 percent in 2020." She explained that DEN began preparing and adjusting budgets in January 2020, but the projected revenue losses were not as severe as forecasted, partly because DEN benefitted from having three major carriers and more domestic flights than some other airports. DEN also had to re-prioritize their Capital Improvement Plan, but were able to accelerate the Great Hall, Concourse Expansion, and Pena Boulevard expansion projects.

Phase 1 of the Great Hall will be completed in late 2021 and 39 new gates will be operational in early 2022. Some new passenger services resulting from COVID include food delivery to passengers at their

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER (CONT'D)

3) **The Public Option** health care proposal, under which government can set process, but they cannot reduce the actual costs. With House Bill 1232, hospitals that will not accept the new arbitrary price reduction can be fined \$40,000 a day, and the Commissioner can shut them down by revoking their license to operate in Colorado. Doctors and specialists and other health-care

providers can be fined up to \$5,000. What good is "affordable" health care if your doctor has moved out of state?

The Chamber is committed to creating a brighter future for our communities and this beautiful State we call our home. To achieve the American Dream, we will continue to work with our elected officials and when needed, we will stand up to bad

laws that have negative and often harsh consequences. These need to be heard and understood by all constituents.

2020 and 2021 have been, and continue to be, challenging for businesses, but we must believe that ahead of us lies a period of growth, prosperity, opportunity, and innovation that will improve everyone's lives!

Onward!

gates, COVID testing at the airport, the Verify app for pre-screening, and reserved seating on limited capacity trains.

Ruppel gave an update on activities and plans for CASP, which is one of only 12 FAA-licensed commercial spaceports in the U.S. Ruppel shared that CASP is either active in or developing testing and training facilities related to space, including satellites, micro-gravity experiments, space tourism, and hypersonic technologies.

"Of course, CASP has been affected by COVID, as we saw a 20 percent drop in fuel sales in 2020," said Ruppel. They are doing a master plan of their facility and a subarea plan of the surrounding area with Adams County to guide future development decisions. CASP is surrounded by more than 10,000 acres of future, industrial-zoned land. A 6,500-acre business park is planned to the south of CASP and a 700-acre business park is planned to the east. Both will benefit from existing rail service. They are also currently doing an environmental study for a proposed data center in the complex, and, a new restaurant, Mi Tierra, has opened at CASP.



Dave Ruppel



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, EDUCATION, AND ENERGY

Marijuana Hospitality Options Thursday, March 4, 2021



Alison Coombs

Ward V Aurora City Council Member Alison Coombs presented at the March 2021 Government Affairs meeting about the marijuana hospitality options in Aurora.

Coombs talked about the non-sale hospitality and the hospitality and sales options. For non-sale hospitality – or the "bring your own" option, there would be no sales of cannabis products on-site, and these fixed locations would be considered 'consumption lounges.'

Regarding the hospitality and sales option, there would be limited sales of cannabis products on-site, and possibly the option of tasting rooms.

Both options require local jurisdiction opt-in, as well as a variety of rules, restrictions, and considerations.

Xcel Energy Looks to the Future Thursday, April 1, 2021

The April Government Affairs meeting featured Tom Henley, area manager of Xcel Energy's Community and Local Government Affairs and Michael D. Sapp Jr., manager of



Public Service Company's State Public Affairs. Sapp covered energy related legislation and Henley discussed "Colorado's Energy Future under the Clean Energy Plan."

Xcel Energy serves 3.7 million electricity customers and 2.1 million natural gas customers in eight states. In Colorado alone, they spend \$1.3 billion in the local economies, employ over 4,300 people, and pay \$196 million in property taxes.

Xcel's bold vision for a carbon-free future resulted in 51 percent lower carbon emissions in 2020 with goals of 80 percent in 2030 and 100 percent by 2050.

Anticipated resource acquisitions by 2032 include 2,300 MW of wind, 1,600 MW of utility scale solar and 1,300 MW of distributed solar (onsite and solar gardens).

The Government Affairs/Public Issues Committee is sponsored by



DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COUNCIL

Diversity and Inclusion Video Resources for March 2021

Samantha Holden, MD, MS, medical director, Memory Disorders Clinic and assistant professor of Neurology talks about how patients can greatly benefit from accurate diagnosis and the latest treatments for memory problems.

The UCHHealth Memory Disorders Clinic is part of the CU Alzheimer's and Cognition Center, which provides opportunities for patients to participate in clinical trials and observational studies.

View this video at <https://vimeo.com/499787985>

Johnny Humphrey, Director of Inclusive Services at The Center on Colfax talks about working with organizations across the state to incorporate lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) Inclusion into their business and strategic plans.

The Center on Colfax is a leader in the Metro Denver/Aurora area with supportive services



Samantha Holden

for the LGBTQ community since 1976.

View this video at <https://vimeo.com/514745449>



Johnny Humphrey

Aurora-South Metro Small Business Development Center Friday, April 9, 2021

At the April 9, 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Council meeting, Marcia McGilley, executive director, and Elena Vasconez, associate director, of the Aurora-South Metro Small Business Development Center (SBDC), talked about SBDC funding from the Small Business Administration, and their connection to the Colorado Small Business Development Center Network (SBDC).

They shared a listing of their services, reviewed several aspects of the SBA federal funding, the greater statewide organization at OEDIT - Colorado SBDC Network, and Aurora-South Metro Key Partnerships. The Aurora-South Metro SBDC has been hosted by the City of Aurora since September 2014.

A sampling of the webinars provided by the Aurora-South Metro SBDC include:

- Business Planning Programs
- Fired Up: I Want to Start a Business!
- 201 Level Marketing, Financial, Lending & Funding webinars
- Pandemic Loan & Grant Webinars
- Industry Specific Programming
 - o Home Based Child Care
 - o Transportation & Construction
 - o Manufacturing

During the pandemic, McGilley reported that service volume doubled and, in some cases, tripled. The SBDC offered free and confidential one-on-one consulting, free/low-cost business educational webinars, and client referrals to local or state organizations. The SBDC team provided more than 4,200 consulting sessions, hosted 1,767 attendees at 125 webinars and events, 1,767, and provided resource referrals for more than 5,000 customers.

Marcia McGilley has served as the executive director of the Aurora-South Metro SBDC since 2008. She has owned six companies and has helped jump started over 1,000 businesses.

In addition to her position as associate director, Elena Vasconez serves as the Business & Economic Development Supervisor for the City of Aurora. She has more than 20 years of



Marcia McGilley



Elena Vasconez

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experience in business development, strategic planning, and organizational development.

For One-on-One Consulting or a listing of webinars, go to www.Aurora-SouthMetroSBDC.com, and for more information, email info@Aurora-SouthMetroSBDC.com or call 303-326-8686.

The Diversity and Inclusion Council is sponsored by



WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Speed Networking

Tuesday, March 23, 2021



Diane Eichler

In March, The Aurora Chamber of Commerce Women in Business and Young Professionals partnered with the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce for a fun-filled hour of speed networking, led by Diane Eichler of Decible Blue Creative Marketing.

The free, online networking event gave members of the two Chambers the opportunity to make new connections and promote their business to each of the 45 other participants, through four successive breakout groups. Participants were encouraged to share the purpose and goal of their business in each grouping and had the opportunity to ask for ideas from the other participants about how to help them be more successful.

Thank you to the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce for partnering with the Aurora Chamber of Commerce for this event.



Mental Health Impact of COVID-19

Tuesday, April 27, 2021



Jessica Hawks, PhD

Jessica Hawks, PhD, joined the Women in Business Committee on April 27 to discuss the *Mental Health Impact of COVID-19*. Dr. Hawks helped attendees understand how the pandemic has impacted the mental health of children and families.



She also shared specific strategies to improve mental health during these trying times and offered suggestions for balancing working from home with personal demands such as parenting.

Challenges that people have experienced related to the COVID-19 Pandemic include, stress and anxiety from either having contracted COVID or from dealing with the ramifications of losing their job, experiencing financial distress, dealing with homeschooling, and the uncertainty of the future. Stress and anxiety due to grief, social isolation, and an unstructured scheduled can create mood and behavior changes. Additionally, family conflict from the constantly changing dynamics due to the pandemic can become a major issue.

Dr. Hawks asked attendees to think about the number of additional roles they may have taken on and how many overall they are juggling.

Some warning signs of mental health concerns include a history of mental health issues, irritable or tearful episodes, intrusive thoughts or worries, acting out or tantrums, changes to sleeping or eating habits, isolation, lack of motivation, and not enjoying activities.

Dr. Hawks is a clinical child and adolescent psychologist and the clinical director of ambulatory services at the Pediatric Mental Health Institute, Children's Hospital Colorado. She is also an assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry, School of Medicine, at the University of Colorado. She provides outpatient mental health services to children and families presenting with a wide spectrum of mental health concerns.

With the rise of depression, Dr. Hawks emphasized the importance of addressing any issues or concerns as soon as possible. Dr. Hawks can be reached at Jessica.Hawks@childrenscolorado.org.

WORK WELL 2.0 HEALTH SERIES

COVID-19: Where We Are Now

Thursday, March 11, 2021

By Patti Corcoran, Tri-County Health Department



Caitlin Chapman, MPH, BSN, RN

One year after the pandemic began, The Chamber's Health Series received a COVID-19: Where We Are Now update by two of Tri-County Health Department's subject matter experts, Caitlin Chapman, MPH, BSN, RN, and Kathy Staats, MPH.

Chapman supervised the COVID-19 Case Investigation and Contact Tracing Task Force, and now leads the Mobile Vaccine Clinic for the COVID-19 response. Her work focuses on coordinating off-site clinics for eligible populations that face barriers accessing COVID-19 vaccine.

Staats is a policy coordinator who regularly serves the Community Health Promotion Division and was activated to the COVID-19 pandemic response as a founding member of the Business Re-Opening Task Force. The Task Force was developed to support businesses to re-open safely under public health and executive orders, by providing technical assistance and the latest guidance and resources.

Attendees learned some encouraging news about both vaccination and business re-opening progress from Chapman and Staats. At the time of this presentation, Arapahoe County was in the Blue Level and guidelines for large events are taking shape as summer approaches. On the vaccination front, 90 percent of the first Phase 1A group has had both shots, and more than 70 percent of the second phase population has received at least one dose. Tri-County has a policy in place for equitable access to vaccine, which includes mobile and pop-up sites, with options for businesses to apply to assist in vaccinations.

Go to Tri-County Health Department for current vaccine, business re-opening, and other pandemic-related news. For questions and concerns regarding current public health laws, contact callcenter@tchd.org or call 303-220-9200.

Recovering from the Mental Health Effects of COVID-19

Thursday, April 22, 2021



Addison McGill, MSW, MHA, LSW

"There is no question that the pandemic challenged most of us in some way regarding our resilience and mental health," said Addison McGill, MSW, MHA, LSW, at the beginning of his presentation to The Chamber's Work Well. 2.0 Health Series on April 22, 2021.

McGill talked about how we all need to recover from the various mental health effects of COVID-19, "Because our emotions affect our thoughts and behaviors, which naturally affect our life and our work," he said.

He shared strategies for maintaining/ achieving mental well-being as COVID risk decreases, including how to support a hybrid workforce, and to consider how workers have experienced the pandemic differently and therefore may need different approaches for assistance. Mental health issues run the gamut from depression and anxiety to traumas both direct and indirect, and from a vicious cycle of stress to disturbed sleep.

Employers can help their workforces by modeling good self-care, reinforcing

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Kathy Staats, MPH

open communication about benefits, destigmatizing mental health conversations, and offering incentives for using available resources. It is like eating a piece of fruit, McGill offered - "You have to remember to chew up the fruit and spit out the seeds."

McGill is the director of Business Development at The Medical Center of Aurora, HealthONE, and an experienced provider of mental health services.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Speed Networking

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

In March 2021, the Young Professionals joined Women in Business and the Colorado Women's Chamber of Commerce for a speed networking event. (See Women in Business, March 23, 2021)

Business Success Series – Dr. Fraud!

Wednesday, April 28, 2021



J. Michael Skiba,
MBA, PhD
(aka Dr. Fraud)

The Young Professionals welcomed J. Michael Skiba, MBA, PhD, better known as Dr. Fraud, as the April Business Success Series speaker. Dr. Fraud's presentation focused on the challenges of fraud, which is due to the increased use of technology. This past year has forced many businesses

to make changes in their technology usage, which can add to the possibility of experiencing fraud. Unfortunately, criminals are using this period of transition and learning for businesses, to wreak havoc.

Dr. Fraud shared how we can recognize and hopefully avoid being a victim of fraud. He touched on the dangers of posting certain things to social media, and how criminals use artificial intelligence to their advantage.

Skiba is Department Chair of Criminal Justice at CSU Global. Prior to taking on his role as chair, he worked international counter

fraud for 23 years where he investigated white collar crime around the globe, including working with government agencies on large scale cases in Malaysia, Brazil, Russia, and London.

DEFENSE COUNCIL

The 8th Civil Support Team

Thursday, March 25, 2021

The March 2021 virtual Defense Council meeting featured the 8th Civil Support Team (CST), Colorado National Guard. Lt. Colonel Ryan Brock, Commander, discussed the unit's mission, team composition, and its state and national responsibilities.

The 8th CST supports Civil Authorities at domestic chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) incidents or disaster sites by identifying CBRN agents/substances; assessing current and projected consequences; advising on response measures; and assisting with appropriate requests for additional state support. The team is prepared to respond 24/7 and was activated



8th CST Member utilizing detection equipment.
(Photo by: SSgt. Joseph VonNida, Colorado National Guard)

in March 2020 to assist with significant COVID testing across Colorado.

In addition to the panel, Defense Council members received organizational updates from senior military leaders at Buckley AFB; legislative updates from the offices of Senators Bennet and Hickenlooper, and Congressman Crow; and community reports on the Aurora Armed Forces Treatment Court and Aurora Veteran's Commission.

How HQ ARPC Serves its 1.3 million customers

Thursday, April 22, 2021

April's virtual Defense Council featured the Headquarters Air Reserve Personnel Center (HQ ARPC) Vice Commander Colonel Carol (CJ) Miller, who talked about the innovative ways HQ ARPC serves its 1.3 million total force customers. These include Air Force Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard, and Retirees. HQ ARPC has 117 programs and applications to support their efforts and the people they serve. They are proud to be in Aurora where they contributed more than \$112 million in economic impact to the local community.



Colonel
Carol (CJ) Miller



The Council also received updates from senior military leaders and congressional representatives from the offices of Senators Bennet and Hickenlooper, and Congressman Crow. Additionally, Major General (retired) Jay Lindell from the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade provided a Colorado Aerospace Update; District Attorney John Keller provided information about the 18th Judicial District's Veteran's Treatment Count; and Kate Hatten discussed the mission of the Home Front Military Network. ■

StaffSpotlight

The Chamber Welcomes Katie Anthony



Katie Anthony

Katie Anthony, the newest addition to The Chamber staff, is no stranger to Chambers. She interned with The Aurora Chamber during the summer of 2019, and with the Fort Collins Chamber in 2020-2021, while attending CSU. Katie graduated May 2021 from CSU with a BS in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing.

Anthony will serve in a new role at The Chamber as a workforce development professional, in the first-ever Business Service Liaison Apprenticeship Program.

This is a partnership between Arapahoe/Douglas Works! Workforce Center and the Aurora Chamber of Commerce, focused on providing apprenticeship opportunities while creating a direct relationship between The Chamber and the Workforce Center.

"I look forward to this opportunity to affect workforce development and am thrilled to be back at The Chamber!" said Anthony.

Anthony is a native Coloradoan and is a graduate of Smoky Hill High School. ■

RibbonCuttings & OpenHouses

Ribbon cuttings mean business: **30 Jobs**



Geico – John Sanchez Agency

10550 E. Garden Dr., Ste. 104
Aurora, CO 80012

John Sanchez, his wife Christina, their team, and Aurora Mayor Mike Coffman cut the ribbon for the new Geico – John Sanchez Insurance Agency in Aurora. "One of my team's biggest goals is to help our policyholders save money on car insurance, but our expertise doesn't stop there," says Sanchez. The John Sanchez Agency offers RV insurance, and for those stationed at Buckley

Air Force Base, they may be able to offer a military discount. They can also help bundle auto and homeowner's insurance for additional discounts.

(4/13/2021) www.geico.com/aurora-sanchez
303-824-3430.



Hyatt House Denver/Aurora | 12230 E. Colfax Ave. Aurora, CO 80011

The Hyatt House Denver/Aurora has officially opened its doors for service. The newly built hotel offers an easily accessible location and great rooms. Located just eight miles from downtown Denver, Hyatt House Denver/Aurora offers a relaxed home base for explorers looking to tackle a scenic hiking trail or discover the local, vibrant dining scene. The hotel is across the street from Children's Hospital Colorado, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, and the Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center. The hotel offers amenities including free parking, internet, breakfast, a fitness center, and a pool.

Attending the ribbon cutting were President and CEO of Visit Aurora Bruce Dalton, Hyatt House Denver/Aurora General Manager Deacon Cottrell, Executive Housekeeper Amalia Bradley, Director of Sales Celeste Delahanty, Chief Engineer Steven Steelfox, Regional Director of Sales and Marketing for Vision Hospitality Heather Brinson, COO of Vision Hospitality David Martin, Director of Construction of MBC Investments Ken Leeds, MBC Sr. VP of Investments and Asset Management Nikko Politis, MBC Chief Investment Officer Principal Jeff Stonger, Regional VP of Operations for Vision Hospitality Tom Mischak, City of Aurora Sr. Development Project Manager of Aurora Urban Renewal Authority Chad Argenter, and Hyatt House employee Issac Hyatt. (4/14/21) <http://www.hyathousedenveraurora.com> 303-364-1468.



Horizon Uptown

21871 E. 7th Ave. Aurora, CO

DR Horton City Manager Mike Loiacono, Marketing and Online Sales Manager Mandy Hills, Sales Representatives Michelle Christie, Brandon Burgess, and Joe Monarez, Aurora Mayor Mike Coffman, Arapahoe County Commissioner Bill Hoken, and Chamber Ambassadors celebrated the Horizon Uptown ribbon cutting in early March 2021. This developing community offers new homes at the intersection of E-470 and I-70, in the thriving Denver International Airport corridor. At Horizon Uptown, DR Horton is offering a new paired home product as well as single-family homes. (03/03/2021) www.horizonuptown.com
720-415-2657

Chamber Members Honored at City's Business Recognition Awards

The city of Aurora recently honored six outstanding local businesses at its 16th annual Aurora Business Recognition Award ceremony, hosted by the city's Business Advisory Board. The 2020 awards, delayed due to the ongoing pandemic, aired in a virtual format April 29 on AuroraTV and Facebook. The event specifically focused on businesses that have demonstrated innovation and creativity, great community impact, and tremendous resiliency during COVID-19.

This year's winners, including four Chamber members, are:

- **Community Impact Award: Legends of Aurora**, celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2020, is known for its excellent bar, friendly atmosphere and hospitality, and community involvement. Giving back is this central Aurora sports grill's philosophy, and this father-and-son operation regularly donates food and funds to help out schools and nonprofits in Aurora.
- **Aurora-South Metro Small Business Development Center's Chuck Hahn Small Business Advocate of the Year Award: Awarded to Stephanie Mufic**, the Business Services and Economic Engagement Supervisor at **Arapahoe/Douglas Works!**, who was closely involved with the Business Recovery Task Forces for Arapahoe and Douglas counties to support the business community through the pandemic.
- **Innovation & Creativity Award: The Wine Experience Café and Wine Cellar** quickly pivoted in the wake of public health restrictions from hosting lively dinner parties and packed special event nights to wine dinners to go, upscale takeout, and socially-distanced outdoor patio dining concerts.
- **Essential Heroes Honorable Mention Award: Village Exchange Center** helped deploy millions in relief funds and rental assistant to newly arrived residents, and distributed over 450,000 pounds of food, 35,000 pounds of prepared meals and nearly 19,000 hygiene packages to 6,740 people most impacted by the pandemic's economic downturn.
- **Essential Heroes Honorable Mention Award: Create Cooking School** continued to capture the heart of the community through cooking, investing in technology and training to move their passion to the online world and launching virtual classes with curbside ingredient pickup.



- **Small, Small Business Award: Envision Eye Care** is a family-owned optometry practice founded in 2015 focuses on serving immigrant residents originating from countries spanning the globe.

- **Resiliency Award: Winchell's Donut House** family-owned since 1993, had to think differently about how it could continue to serve customers during the pandemic, and their pivot strategies were successful, and they are stronger than ever.

Amy Ford joins Felsburg Holt & Ullevig as Director of Advanced Mobility

"Amy Ford is a nationally recognized mobility leader on the integration of transportation technology services such as automated and connected vehicles, cooperative ITS, sustainability, and mobility on demand," said Dean Bradley, president of Felsburg Holt & Ullevig (FHU). "We are excited to welcome her to FHU, and to have her help communities and agencies truly understand and then harness advanced mobility solutions to elevate how to move people, data and goods, today and in the future."

Ford's national expertise and regional experience includes having formerly led the strategic direction and activities of the Mobility on Demand Alliance and the Intelligent Transportation Society of America's (ITS) policy programs in the areas of connected and automated transportation, sustainability, electrification, and emerging transportation technology.

Prior to working with ITS America, Ford served as the chief of Advanced Mobility for the Colorado Department of Transportation.



Amy Ford

Chamber Members Collaborate for Financial Literacy



Renee Leon



Brandi Mabry

Aurora AutoPros Owner Renee Leon and The District's Business Development Manager Brandi Mabry realized a connection and formed a collaboration following a presentation to APS about the importance of financial literacy.

Leon learned of The District's ongoing and free financial literacy workshops and wanted to add some real-life examples. She reached out to Mabry,



who quickly saw an opportunity to include automotive maintenance and repair costs to personal budgeting and car buying/planning examples.

"Collaborating with Brandi was such a thrill! It felt great to enhance the workshop to include specific automotive expense information; The District is providing the community a great service with these free workshops!" said Leon.

The team at Aurora AutoPros helps customers understand and plan for maintenance needs with a comprehensive digital inspection and by encouraging customers to ask questions. Over the years, Leon has seen and heard stories of customers who learned about the importance of maintaining a vehicle the hard – and costly – way. She especially wants young drivers to be able to protect their investments through planning for maintenance costs.

The District Credit Union's free financial literacy workshops provide a comprehensive introduction to banking basics. Classroom workshops are grade-specific and can be linked to curriculum and cover the essentials for any grade level from Kindergarten classes to post-secondary groups and beyond. They offer remote workshops through online instruction and have pre-recorded presentations to share with teachers and community partners to put their students, staff, and families on the path to financial wellness.

For more information or to schedule a presentation, call 303.577.1074 or email mcakir@districtcreditunion.com.

DRCOG Honors Ron Rakowsky



Ron Rakowsky

Former Greenwood Village Mayor Ron Rakowsky was recognized by the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) with the John V. Christensen Memorial Award at their April 28, 2021 virtual awards

ceremony. Considered one of the region's highest honors, the award recognizes advocates of collaboration and cooperation.

Lisa D. Hough Named President/CEO of Adams County Regional Economic Partnership

The Board of Directors of Adams County Regional Economic Partnership (AC-

[continued on page 9]



REP) have selected Lisa D. Hough as the organization's new President/CEO. Hough will take the helm of AC-REP May 5, 2021.

Hough is a creative and dynamic business leader who thrives on developing business partnerships and being highly engaged in the community. Most recently, she served as Director of Strategic Initiatives for the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation.

"I'm thrilled to lead AC-REP's bold strategic plan for the metro north region, the area I've called home for many years. Together with our public- and private-sector partners, we will champion the region as a place for businesses to thrive, for residents to find outstanding careers, and for new companies to establish their Colorado roots," said Hough.

"What makes economic development different in Colorado is our commitment to collaboration - and Lisa Hough is a gifted executive who can bring businesses and people together for the betterment of our region and state. We will miss her day-to-day contributions in our office but are very excited that a key partner has gained such a valuable leader," said J. J. Ament, CEO of the Metro Denver EDC.

AC-REP Board Chair Tom Stone, Vice President of Project Procurement for Adolfson & Peterson Construction, says Hough's deep industry, policy, and economic development experience will enable her to promote even stronger partnerships throughout the region and to bring more awareness to the business attributes of the metro north area.

AC-REP, a public/private, nonprofit economic development organization, is working to write the next chapter in Adams County and the metro-north Denver region by amplifying its unique business story, advocating for area businesses and industries, engaging area leaders, and focusing on placemaking initiatives and new infrastructure development.

Merrick and Company Earns National Recognition Award

Merrick & Company has earned a national recognition award for exemplary engineering achievement in the American Council of Engineering Companies' (ACEC) 54th annual Engineering Excellence Awards (EEA) for designing new stormwater facilities at the Globeville

Landing Outfall Park in Denver.

Merrick and Denver Parks teamed up to address undersized stormwater infrastructure that made the Montclair watershed increasingly susceptible to flooding. The solution was to create an open and more natural outfall at Globeville Landing Outfall Park through the addition of a 4,500-ft-long underground conduit system, wetland/water quality channel, upgrades to the channel leading to the South Platte River, and reconstruction of the surrounding park area.

The project achieved multiple goals of reduced flooding, increased community connectivity, elimination of superfund site contaminants, installation of native grasses plantings to improve water quality, and a revitalized community amenity. Visitors now enjoy active play areas, expansive lawn areas for recreational activities, multiple bike and pedestrian paths, outdoor seating and shaded gathering places, access to the river, and increased safety.

HCA Healthcare/HealthONE Named One of Top Five Large Health Systems

The HCA Healthcare Continental Division, which includes the HealthONE healthcare system in Denver and the Wesley Healthcare system in Wichita, is a top 15 (overall) and one of the top five large health systems in the country for the second consecutive year, according to IBM Watson Health.

"To be recognized as one of the top



large health systems in the country once is an exceptional accomplishment. To be recognized twice exemplifies the consistently superlative results of our hospital teams," said Sylvia Young, President and CEO of HCA Healthcare's Continental Division. "We hire top talent with a passion for a safe, compassionate patient experience. From our hospital leadership to those at the bedside providing direct patient care, to our colleagues in all areas of support services, we have teams whose focus never wavers from fulfilling our mission that 'Above all else, we are committed to the care and improvement of human life.' I am honored to work with such talented, caring and devoted colleagues and physicians in serving our communities."

Each year, IBM Watson Health reviews health systems across the country and rates them based on publicly available data, such as: highest safety rates; lowest numbers of complications or infections; short ER wait. ■



★ UPCOMING EVENTS ★

AT COLORADO FREEDOM MEMORIAL



MAY 29-31
Memorial Day Weekend
Self-Guided Tours, Flag Display



MAY 29TH • 10AM
Colorado Remembers
on Colorado Day
Annual Remembrance Ceremony



SEPTEMBER 11TH • 12PM
Patriots Day
20th Anniversary of 9-11
Static Displays and tributes



NOVEMBER 11-13 • 5-8PM
Light Their Way Home
Display of 6218 Luminaria's,
one for each of our fallen

For full event details, how to get involved and more go to:
ColoradoFreedomMemorial.com

MemberRenewals

CHAIRMAN CIRCLE

Adolfson & Peterson Construction
Anadarko Petroleum Corp
Arapahoe County Board of Commissioners
CenturyLink
Colorado Technical University
Felsburg Holt & Ullevig
KeyBank - S. Buckley Rd.
King Soopers - Corporate Office
Merrick & Company
The Medical Center of Aurora
Visit Aurora

RENEWALS

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Arapahoe County Department of Human Services
Aurora Asian/Pacific Community Partnership
Aurora Education Association
Aurora Mental Health Center
Aurora Singers
Cambria Hotel Denver International Airport
Colin Spencer Productions, LLC
Courtyard by Marriott - DIA
DK Promotions Colorado
Dope Mom Life Creative Content Agency
DoubleTree by Hilton Denver International Airport
E-470 Public Highway Authority
Edward Jones - Victoria Wildhaber - Financial Advisor
Embassy Suites by Hilton Denver Stapleton
EyeCare Specialties
Falck Rocky Mountain
Finish Line Car Wash

Gabrielle Cardwell
GOGO Charters Denver
Great Western Printing, Inc.
Harvard Square Retirement Community
Heritage Eagle Bend Golf Club
iPlace Seniors
La Cueva Restaurant
Legal Shield - Joe Conner
Legends of Aurora Sports Grill
M & M Auto Reconditioning, Inc.
Mosaic in Denver
Navy Federal Credit Union
Poonam's By Design
Publication Printers Corp.
Ready to Work Aurora
Regis University
Residence Inn - Denver Airport
SECORCares
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SKM Resources
Smitty's Sprinkler Systems
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