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THE CHAMBER Impact

JUL/AUG 2023

Congratulations – Leadership Aurora and Emerging Leaders



Congratulations to the Leadership Aurora Class of 2023

On June 1, 2023, the Leadership Aurora class of 2023 celebrated their graduation from the 10-month program that began in September of 2022 with a 2-day retreat in Breckenridge, CO. The graduates in alphabetical order are: **Katie Anthony**, Doubletree Denver Complex; **Ousman Ba**, African Leadership Group; **Brian Clark**, Adolfson & Peterson Construction; **Clayton Coker**, Falck Rocky Mountain; **Kennady Copeland**, FirstBank; **Eren Corapcioglu**, Nelnet; **James DeHerrera**, City of Aurora, Water Department; **Mody Diop**, Colorado Air National Guard; **Rick Elsinger**, Aurora Collision Center; **Eva Gergely**, Rocky Mountain Regional VA; **Dawn Gissendanner**, Colorado Access; **Robyn Hills**, Aurora Public Schools Foundation; **Kam Kaaoush**, Colorado Air National Guard;

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LA Class of 2023 at their June 1 graduation.

Emerging Leaders Inaugural Class Graduates

The Chamber's Emerging Leaders (EL) program graduated its first cohort of 21 on June 13, 2023.

The EL program was conceived a few years ago when Leadership Aurora Program Director and Chamber Executive Vice President Rene Simard discussed the idea of a leadership development program with his wife and strategic advisor, Diane. He had been ruminating on the fact that throughout his years as LA program director, it was noticeable that some class members were expecting and needing leadership training and development – which is not the focus of the Leadership Aurora program.

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The inaugural class of The Chamber's Emerging Leaders.

To see upcoming Chamber meetings
as well as Chamber member events –
go to the calendar!

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► Chair's Letter

Wow! The summer of 2023 has been off to an unusual start with all the rain and storms, and I hope everyone is staying safe.

Going into this next year as The Chamber Board Chair, I am grateful for the experience as a board member of witnessing businesses thrive and having long-term success after surviving the pandemic.

As we move forward, The Chamber will continue to focus on the businesses of the Eastern Metro Area – with community first and business always. There will also be some big changes for The Chamber members and staff. With President and CEO Kevin Hougen's retirement after 28 years, we are incredibly grateful for the leadership, contributions, and commitment the Chamber and business



Kristi Kleinholz
Chair

community have received from Kevin during his tenure. The Aurora Chamber would not be where – or what – it is today without Kevin's leadership. Thank you, Kevin!

Naomi Colwell, who has been with The Chamber 21 years and served as the President and CEO of the Brighton Chamber for three

years, will serve as the interim president and CEO beginning July 1, 2023.

Another big change coming this next year is that The Aurora Chamber office will be relocating. The move will not be too far from the current location, and the staff is very excited about the move.

The Chamber Board will continue to focus on increasing membership, connecting large businesses with small

businesses, and succession planning. If any of these areas interest you and you have experience, please let myself or a staff member of The Chamber know.

It is my honor to serve as the Chair of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. The Aurora Chamber has been and continues to be a great community and family for me, since I started my involvement when I was with Outback Steakhouse and then continued when I transitioned to Mesa Moving and Storage.

To our members – I appreciate your commitment to the success of the community and the success of The Aurora Chamber of Commerce.

Kristi Kleinholz,
Chamber Board Chair, 2023-2024
Account Manager and Agent Relations,
Mesa Moving and Storage

► ChamberBoard

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Kristi Kleinholz | *Mesa Moving and Storage*

CHAIR-ELECT

Tyrone Adams | *Colorado Association of Realtors*

IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR

Brian Sowl | *Nelnet*

PAST CHAIR ONCE REMOVED

Chad Nielsen | *Wagner Equipment*

TREASURER

Kelly Phillips-Henry |
Aurora Mental Health & Recovery

SECRETARY

Joel Boyd | *Town Center at Aurora*

VICE CHAIR-BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Joel Boyd | *Town Center at Aurora*

VICE CHAIR-COMMUNITY SERVICES

Beth Braaten | *Colorado Technical University*

VICE CHAIR-MEMBER SERVICES

Brian Sowl | *Nelnet*

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Alan Antolok | *Adolfson & Peterson Construction*

David Barber | *RE/MAX Leaders*

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Dave Carro | *Oakwood Homes, LLC*

Katie Denman | *Children's Hospital Colorado*

Jennifer Dunn | *FirstBank*

John Gustafson | *Kaiser Permanente*

Timothy Kunkleman | *Lumen*

Karen Lovett | *UCHealth*

Liz Munn | *Jacobs*

Yvonne Valdez | *Citywide Banks*

Hallie Woods | *The Medical Center of Aurora*

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Col. Thomas A. Banker | *Colorado National Guard*

Bruce Dalton | *Visit Aurora*

Bill Holen | *Arapahoe County Board of Commissioners*

Steve O'Dorisio | *Adams County Board of Commissioners*

Donald Sheehan | *City Councilman, City of Centennial*

STAFF

Naomi Colwell | *Interim President & CEO*

Rene J. Simard | *Executive Vice President*

Kevin Hougen | *Chamber Advisor*

Steve Phillips | *Director of Membership Development*

Alicia Rose | *Director of Business Development*

Mitzi Schindler | *Senior Director of Communications*

ASSOCIATES

Colorado Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC)

Six & Six, inc. | *Incredible Newsletter Design*

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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

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!

ChamberCommittees

An Inside Look

ARTS + BUSINESS CONNECTION

Experiencing Museo de Las Americas

Tuesday, May 2, 2023

By Mark Smith, ABC Chair, and owner of PhotoSmith Colorado

The May 2023 Arts + Business Connection meeting was an enlightening field trip to Museo de Las Americas, where Executive Director Claudia Moran-Pichardo shared her passion for the work being done at the Museo, as well as what she has learned about running a 501(c)(3) business. "The best luck in gaining funds comes from individual donors and foundations," she said. She also emphasized that as a business, a museum is not set up to sell a tangible product - it sells experiences. And, as the premier Latin American Art Museum in the Rocky Mountain Region, Museo de Las Americas also offers a business opportunity platform for artists, curators, local businesses, government, and more.

Museo de las Americas is dedicated to educating the community through collecting, preserving, interpreting, and exhibiting the diverse arts and cultures of Latin America, from ancient to contemporary – through innovative exhibitions and educational programs. The current exhibition, Colombia: The Corn, The River, and the Grave, tells an identity story of the anxiety and the calm of the Colombian territory, and the complexities



Claudia Moran-Pichardo

of the land as a point of divergence between the sacred and commerce. The exhibition runs until August 19, 2023.

Engaging Youth at DAVA

Tuesday, June 6, 2023

By Mark Smith, ABC Chair, and owner of PhotoSmith Colorado

The June ABC field trip to Downtown Aurora Visual Arts (DAVA) was an engaging experience for attendees, as DAVA Executive Director Krista Robinson began the meeting with a video produced by Visit Aurora about DAVA – a part of Visit Aurora's Made in Aurora series: <https://youtu.be/UqVp9gfZCHY>.

DAVA, which celebrated its 30th Anniversary in May 2023, provides free after school and summertime programming for youth, ages 3-18, based on their age group: Family Arts immerses children 3-6 years old - along with a parent or guardian - in a variety of art projects, while also developing their imagination, motor skills, and school-readiness; Ages 6-14 learn a variety of media in the arts, along with social skills such as problem solving, learning how to work in a



DAVA Executive Director Krista Robinson (far left), talks about the computer lab during the June 6 ABC tour, following her presentation about the organization.

studio and in their community, and following through to finish work started; DAVA provides job training in the arts and technology for the 11-14 age group; and for the 15-18 age group, the "Creative Action by Teens" students are engaged in higher level work individually as well as collaboratively. Examples of this work include creating a logo for the Charles Burrell Visual & Performing Arts Campus, and murals for both the Stanley Marketplace and Denver Urban Gardens. Additionally, in July DAVA begins a partnership with the Colorado Film School.

Following the presentation, Robinson took the group on a tour, explaining that some of the recent upgrades to the facility have been generously provided by the community - including Leadership Aurora. The computer art lab recently received new computers, so students are up to date with arts technology.

TRANSPORTATION

Highlighting Centennial and Lone Tree

Wednesday, May 3, 2023

By Tim Harris, Horrocks Engineers, and Transportation Chair

On May 2, 2023, the Transportation committee was updated about active and planned improvement projects in the cities of Centennial and Lone Tree.

Centennial Director of Public Works Jeff Dankenbring highlighted construction as well as signal software projects and updates that support mobility and safety in Centennial. He talked about design projects beginning soon, including the Havana and Easter intersection; an underpass of the Lone Creek Trail under Arapahoe Rd; and a "right-sizing" of Colorado Blvd between Orchard Rd and County Line

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Museo de Las Americas, 861 Santa Fe Dr, Denver, CO, 80204



Left to right at the Centennial and Lone Tree transportation meeting on May 3rd, 2023: Mayor Pro Tem and Centennial City Council, District 3, Richard Holt; Centennial City Council, District 3, Mike Sutherland; Centennial Director of Public Works Jeff Dankenbring; Transportation Committee Vice-Chair Anthony DeVito, AECOM; Lone Tree Director of Public Works and Mobility Justin Schmitz; and Transportation Committee Chair Tim Harris, Horrocks Engineers.

Rd. In addition, he talked about construction beginning on Orchard Rd between Ogden Ct and the Highline Canal and the widening of County Line Rd between Broadway and University. Dankenbring also mentioned the upcoming completion of improvements to Centennial Center Park and replacement/widening of the bridge on Arapahoe Rd over Big Dry Creek.

Lone Tree Director of Public Works and Mobility Justin Schmitz discussed the rapid growth in the RidgeGate East community and City Center sections of the city. Major upcoming projects to improve mobility include construction of a mobility hub in the southeast quadrant of I-25 and Lincoln Ave; improvements to the I-25/Lincoln and the Lincoln corridor east of I-25; and expansion/improvements to the Link on Demand service providing no-fare service within Lone Tree.

The June 2023 Transportation meeting, featuring Arapahoe County Director of Public Works and Development Bryan Weimer, was postponed until Wednesday, August 2, 2023.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, EDUCATION, AND ENERGY (PUBLIC ISSUES)

2023 Legislative Review & Strategy for Final Days

Thursday May 4, 2023

Executive Director of Colorado Competitive Council (C3) Rachel Beck presented to the Public Issues Committee at the May 2023 meeting.

Beck reviewed the 2023 legislative session and summarized the strategy for the final days of the session. She explained that C3 has three main goals: pro-business public policy; Chamber and EDC advocacy support; and business basecamps. During the legislative session, the four recurring themes were litigation, environmental advocacy, identity politics, and storytelling.

Businesses could be negatively affected by bills covering issues including housing, labor & employment, and the environment. C3 continues to advocate against bills that



Rachel Beck

could be detrimental to local businesses, entrepreneurs, and the economy.

Housing bills include SB 23-213 Land Use, HB23-1255 Regulating Local Housing Growth Restrictions, HB23-1190 Right of First Refusal, and HB23-1115 Rent Control.

Labor & Employment bills include SB23-172 POWR, HB23-1118 Fair Workweek, and SB23-098 Gig Work Transparency.

Environmental bills include HB23-1294 Pollution Control Measures, SB23-016 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Measures, SB23-291 Utility Regulation, and HB23-1039 Electric Resource Adequacy Reporting.

Building a Strong Business Climate for Colorado

Thursday June 1, 2023

Loren Furman, President & CEO Colorado Chamber of Commerce, presented to the Public Issues Committee on June 1. She spoke about Colorado's business climate and presented the competitive challenges businesses are facing.



Loren Furman

The Colorado Chamber conducted two statewide CEO surveys to identify top challenges, along with confidential interviews with CEOs to determine why they are leaving Colorado or why they are moving operations out of the state. The Colorado Chamber also researches state by state competitiveness and performs economic analysis and launched statewide listening tours by region to assess specific challenges in different areas of the state.

Strengths identified by business leaders include a diverse and growing economy, technology innovation, sports teams, and Colorado's natural beauty and recreation. Weaknesses identified by business leaders include increasingly complex legislation and over-regulation, increasing wages and benefit affordability, employee recruitment and retention, housing supply and affordability, and public safety. Furman also identified Colorado metrics: #13 for best state for business; #36 for cost of doing business; #21 for tax climate; #16 for infrastructure; #36 for cost of living; #46 for most affordable housing market; and #21 for legal climate.

Furman recommended that to address these issues and challenges we should assess overall impact of laws and regulations, recognize we are competing with other states for jobs and investments, allow businesses time to adapt to new regulations, focus on workforce targets (trades/upskilling), explore business partnerships for housing in communities, modernize economic incentives, protect emerging technologies through legislation and regulations, and increase political balance by electing moderate leaders.

HEALTH SERIES

Call to Action for Substance Use and Addiction

Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative

Thursday, June 8, 2023

In 2020, substance use cost U.S. employers and taxpayers \$696 billion in absenteeism, low productivity, and healthcare expenses. Both employers and employees suffer when problematic substance use is left untreated, and statistics show that 75% of adults with addiction are part of the U.S. workforce. This staggering data continues to impact our population and economy.

On June 8, 2023, The Chamber collaborated with the Center for Health, Work & Environment (CHWE) to host a discussion about the Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative (RFWI) in the Chancellor Elliman Conference Center on the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. The Initiative is in partnership with the CU Johnson Depression Center and the Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse and Prevention.

The RFWI collaborates with partners and employers to guide businesses to create workplaces that support workers experiencing substance use and addiction. The Initiative provides education, training, and resources to help businesses implement workplace practices and support for employees in treatment and recovery.

CHWE director of outreach and programs, Liliana Tenney, DrPH, introduced CU Anschutz Chancellor Don Elliman, who welcomed attendees, followed by Chamber President and CEO Kevin Houghton.

Speakers included keynote speaker José Esquibel, director of Colorado Consortium for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention, and panel members Jamie Feld, Colorado Attorney General's Office director of Opioid Response; Cathy Emerson, Encore Electric benefits manager; and Michael Tubolino, peer support manager, Culinary Hospitality Outreach and Wellness. The panel was moderated by David Shapiro, CHWE senior manager of programs and partnerships.

The discussion covered the cause of substance use and addiction – which often stems from mental health struggles or



Discussion during the May 4, 2023, Government Affairs meeting featuring Executive Director of Colorado Competitive Council Rachel Beck.

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The panel at the Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative event, left to right: and Michael Tubolino, Culinary Hospitality Outreach and Wellness; Jamie Feld, Colorado Attorney General's Office; Cathy Emerson, Encore Electric; and moderator David Shapiro, CHWE.



The June 8 Recovery Friendly Workplace Initiative event was well attended, including business leaders, employers and employees, and healthcare professionals.

trauma – and emphasized that work is a key factor for individual recovery. Panel members concurred that employers should be open to conversations about substance use and mental health, and that the opposite of addiction is not sobriety, rather, it is connection.

The panel members also shared that a personal crisis should not be the first time that employers provide employees with resources. The goal of the RFWI is to meet businesses where they are and offer guidance for employers to be aware of the signs of abuse and addiction, and to provide tools and support for the recovery process.

Tenney concluded the event with a call to action: For employers to sign the [Colorado Recovery Friendly Workplace Pledge](#), acknowledging that their organization prioritizes mental health, addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery support for all employees. Additional resources can be found at the [Colorado School of Public Health RFWI](#) page and on [Colorado's RFWI Resource Guide](#).

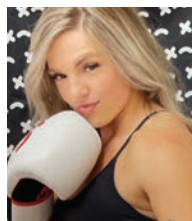
WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Working Out - Rumble Boxing Style

Tuesday, April 25, 2023

On April 25, the Aurora Chamber Women in Business Committee had a night out at Rumble Boxing in Southlands. Opened in February 2023, the studio is the first location in Aurora and is owned by Erica Hulings, a Colorado native. Hulings invited the Women in Business into the studio for an exclusive evening class to experience the thrill of working out in the club-like atmosphere.

Attendees put on boxing wraps and gloves, the lights went out, the music came on, and



Kindra Largent



Rumble Boxing General Manager Kindra Largent led the energetic class. Aurora Chamber WIB members were offered a discounted monthly membership and several members signed up.

The timing was great as the spring training challenge of 12 classes in 4 weeks started in May. After class, the group walked over to Bent Barley Brewing Company to enjoy a victory beer together.

Learning About Help & Hope for Our Best Selves

Tuesday, May 23, 2023



Debbie Stafford, MA, CAS



The May Women in Business event featured Debbie Stafford, MA, CAS, legislative director for Aurora Mental Health & Recovery. Held at the AMHR location at 791 Chambers Rd Aurora, CO 80011, Stafford

spoke about the importance of self-care. She said that flight attendants remind us to put on our own oxygen mask before helping others, therapists remind us to take care of ourselves to prevent burn-out, and mechanics remind us to care for small repairs before they are big.

She asked attendees about their self-care, and answers included rest, exercise, read, and massage. She also asked if there was a song they listen to for self-care, and someone answered, "The Eagles - Take It Easy."

Stafford talked about the "Power of One" – which refers to doing one thing that bothers you, doing one new thing at a time, making one call, taking one walk, or forgiving one person. At the end of the presentation, the group played "Self-Care Bingo." The winners were Linda Beardsley, Edward Jones; Phoebe Rozelle, Sentinel Colorado; and Kari Engen, Front Range IBN LLC. The prize was Calgon Take Me Away Bath Beads.

Tacos & Takedowns at the Martial Science Academy

Tuesday, June 27, 2023

For the May Women in Business (WIB) meeting, Marlana Salgado and Tom Beach, co-owners of the Martial Science Academy, invited the WIB committee to their studio to learn basic self-defense, situational awareness, and safety training.

Renshi Salgado is a 4th Degree Black Belt in Shito-Ryu and a 1st Degree Black Belt in Tae Kwon Do. She is also an Air Force veteran and wife to a retired Army veteran. While attendees made and ate tacos from the taco bar, Salgado briefed them with important

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Renshi Marlana Salgado

safety tips, including:
never accept a drink from a stranger; stay alert and aware of your surroundings; don't look at the phone when walking or sitting in the car; and always park in the same row to prevent wandering in parking lots.

Then, shoes and socks came off and the participants made their way into the studio. Salgado and Beach taught several self-defense tactics meant to detain and control (but not harm) a potential threat. The group learned how to detain a perpetrator who is too close for comfort or acting inappropriately by simply twisting and bending the wrist; how to instantly release a hand that is pulling hair; how to stop a choke hold with two fingers; and how to throw a person to the ground who comes up from behind.

Salgado and Beach offer private self-defense classes for small groups or individuals. Classes and schedules can be viewed on the website <https://www.martialscienceacademy1.com>.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Preparing the Colorado Freedom Memorial for Memorial Day

Wednesday, May 24, 2023

On May 24, 2023, a group of Young Professionals volunteered at the Colorado Freedom Memorial to prepare it for the upcoming 10 Year Anniversary/Memorial Day Celebration. The cleaning began at the Memorial Glass Panel Wall, which has more than 6,000 engraved names of Colorado men and women who died in action. The panels lean forward and back, representing the men falling in action. The wall can only be cleaned with water and cloth, so volunteers Justin Berry, Larry Gullledge and Nathan Larson gently sprayed it with a hose and



Attendees at the Tacos and Takedowns WIB event.



YP volunteers pose in front of the Colorado Freedom Memorial Glass Panel Wall containing more than 6,000 engraved names of the fallen. Left to right: Hanna Miller, Colorado Technical University (CTU); Trish Elley, CTU; Larry Gullledge, CTU; Jenna Nord, CTU; Kelly Stewart, Stewart Agency LLC; Justin Berry, CTU; Di Evans, Chamber Staff; Nathan Larson, CTU; Anne Marie Boger, Arapahoe Libraries; Jon Mize, Vasa Fitness; Kristen Elsinger, Aurora Collision Center; Ben Bustamante, Aflac; Mirna Villa, Pickens Technical College; Joe Conner, Legal Shield; Walter Porter, Mastery Neuroscience Training; and Diane and Rick Crandall; Colorado Freedom Memorial Foundation.

used cloth squeegees to remove the water, using tall pole extensions. The rest of the crew grabbed rags and Windex and delicately cleaned the international and gold star family monuments. The group also wiped down benches and light posts and pulled weeds.

The Colorado Freedom Memorial, at 756 Telluride St. in Aurora is a peaceful place to reflect and remember those who have given their life for our freedom.



Carefully cleaning the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument.

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47th Annual Armed Forces Recognition Luncheon

2023 AFRL Honors Military Members of the Year

Friday, May 12, 2023

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce's Defense Council held its 47th Annual Armed Forces Recognition Luncheon on Friday, May 12, 2023, to honor military serving in the Metro area. Awards were given to 13 military members from each branch of service, including their Reserve and Guard components, and a civilian from the community. The event was attended by 500 people and took place at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Denver.

"This is my favorite time of the year when we recognize junior enlisted members from all branches of the service and our Commonwealth

Partners" said Chamber Executive Vice President and Chief of Military Affairs Rene Simard. "I know personally how important these young service members are to our nation and it's an honor to pay tribute to them each year."

This year's keynote speaker was General David Thompson, the Vice Chief of Staff for Space Operations, United States Space Force. For the 18th consecutive year, Rick Crandall, executive director of the Colorado Freedom Memorial Foundation, served as the Master of Ceremonies, and for the 11th consecutive year, Colorado Technical University was the title sponsor.

"This event would not be possible without the tremendous support we receive each year from our community," said Tom Grayson, chair of the Chamber's Defense Council. ■



General David Thompson delivers the keynote address at the 47th annual AFRL event.



Bottom row, left to right: General David Thompson; Technical Sergeant Dalton Detwiler; Sergeant Trevor Owen; Petty Officer Third Class Paul Myrick; and Master Sailor Nicholas Korbel (Canada); Top row, left to right: Petty Officer First Class Jabari Johnson; Staff Sergeant Dominic Paris; Corporal Faith Kulesh-Orr; Sergeant Jazmine Moore; Camille Martinez (accepting for Petty Officer Second Class Krystal Mestas); Technical Sergeant David Ree; Technical Sergeant Tumursuren Byambadash; Technical Sergeant Lourdes Loperena Vega; and Sergeant Joshua Everett-Fordham. (Not pictured, recipient of the Bob Cardenas Award, Stephen Gourley). (Photos by Mark Smith, PhotoSmith Colorado)

AFRL Winners and Sponsors

Award

Air Force Active Duty
Air Force Reserve
Air National Guard
Army Active Duty
Army Reserve
Army National Guard
Navy Active Duty
Navy Reserve
Marine Corps Active Duty
Marine Corps Reserve
Space Force
Coast Guard
Commonwealth Partner
Bob Cardenas Award

Winner

Technical Sergeant David Ree
Technical Sergeant Tumursuren Byambadash
Technical Sergeant Dalton Detwiler
Corporal Faith Kulesh-Orr
Sergeant Joshua Everett-Fordham
Staff Sergeant Dominic Paris
Petty Officer First Class Jabari Johnson
Petty Officer Second Class Krystal Mestas
Sergeant Jazmine Moore
Sergeant Trevor Owen
Technical Sergeant Lourdes Loperena Vega
Petty Officer Third Class Paul Myrick
Master Sailor Nicholas Korbel
Stephen Gourley

Sponsor

City of Aurora - Mayor and City Council
Community College of Aurora
Adams County Board of Commissioners
Denver International Airport
Wagner Equipment
Denver Springs
DeNOVO Solutions
Boeing
Fitzsimons Credit Union
Lockheed Martin Space Systems
Amazon
Ideas, Commitment, Results (ICR)
Leidos
Aurora Chamber of Commerce

Meet the Mayor + Aurora Municipal Building Tour

Wednesday, June 14, 2023

On June 14, Young Professionals were treated to a two-hour, private tour of the Aurora Municipal Building which included a meet and greet with Mayor Mike Coffman. Leading the tour was City of Aurora Public Relations Manager Michael Bryant.

The tour started in the Council Chamber where city council meetings are held. Mayor Coffman spoke to the group about his three main priorities: crime, homelessness, and affordable housing. He also talked about water rights issues and announced he will be running for re-election in fall 2023.

The group then set out for a tour of the Aurora History Museum, led by Museum Specialist Keith Outcalt. While the group stood inside a trolley cart that had been owned by Donald Fletcher (c. 1890), they learned about the history of the Town of Fletcher, and how the town was renamed Aurora in 1907.

The group also explored the Aurora TV studio with Manager of Television & Cable Services Randy Simpson and met Interim City Manager Jason Batchelor. Leah Mayotte with Access Aurora explained how to contact the city with questions, concerns, or requests for services, and attendees were given an Aurora Eats brochure, highlighting the myriad of unique restaurant options in Aurora.

DEFENSE COUNCIL

Visiting the HQ Air Reserve Personnel Center

Thursday, April 27, 2023

Headquarters Air Reserve Personnel Center (HQ ARPC) hosted the April 2023 Defense Council.

HQ ARPC Vice Commander Colonel Jason Knight presented to the council and talked about the many ways the HQ ARPC serves its 1.3 million total force customers consisting of Air Force Active Duty, Reserve, National Guard and Retirees.

The council also heard from Senior Non-Commissioned officers about the unique roles they play in helping HQ ARPC accomplish its mission. In addition, attendees received



Col. Knight provides an ARPC overview to Defense Council members at the HQ Air Reserve Personnel Center.



YPs with Mayor Coffman in the City of Aurora Council Chamber during their tour.

updates from senior military leaders and congressional representatives from the offices of Senators Bennet and Hickenlooper, and Congressman Crow. Kate Hatten discussed the mission of the Home Front Military Network and Executive Director of the Colorado Freedom Memorial Rick Crandall provided an update on the Memorial's Visitor and Education Center capital campaign.

Einstein Bros. Bagels 3909 in Aurora provided a delicious breakfast.

140th Wing, Colorado Air National Guard

Thursday, June 22, 2023

The 140th Wing, Colorado Air National Guard hosted the June 2023 Defense Council. 140th Wing Commander Colonel Jeremiah Tucker provided a wing mission briefing, describing the Wing's various missions, including homeland defense and response to disasters in Colorado.



Defense Council members get up close to an F-16.



Col. Tucker provides the 140th Wing mission briefing to Defense Council members at the 140th Wing, Colorado Air National Guard.

The Wing also operates two space missions; a one-of-a-kind early-warning Mobile Ground System, located at Greeley Air National Guard Station in Greeley, CO, and a space control squadron and training detachment at Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, CO. Colonel Tucker also expressed the importance of finding a replacement for the aging F-16 fleet.

Attendees received updates from the major organizations at Buckley Space Force Base (SFB) and the Colorado National Guard.

Defense Council Chair Tom Grayson and Chamber President and CEO Kevin Hogen, presented CAPT Jim MacDonald, Navy Reserve Center Denver and Lt. Colonel Nicholas Smith, Combat Logistics Battalion 453 with Defense Council coins in appreciation of their support of the council during their tenures.

The Colorado Association of Realtors hosted the breakfast, which was prepared by Legends of Aurora Sports Grill. ■

RibbonCuttings

Ribbon cuttings
mean business: **35 Jobs**



Oak Street Health

740 Peoria St., Aurora, CO 80011

Regional Vice President Tina Balgeman cuts the ribbon to mark the grand opening of Oak Street Health in Aurora. Founded in 2012, Oak Street Health specializes in helping older adults stay healthy by providing patients with comprehensive preventive care, personalized wellness plans, integrated health services, and educational and social activities to support overall health and well-being. (5/5/2023)
<http://oakstreethealth.com> (720) 531-7111

Robeks Juice

3105 South Peoria St,
Aurora, CO 80014

Owner Angie Baker cuts the ribbon to mark the grand opening of Robeks in Aurora. At the ribbon cutting, Baker treated guests to smoothie and toast samples, and lemon ginger shots. Robeks offers premium fresh-made juices and smoothies, wellness shots, acai bowls, and a variety of toasts including avocado, fig & prosciutto, strawberry and cream cheese, peanut butter & banana, and veggie & hummus. Boost any item on the menu with Robeks' energy, immunity, multi-vitamin, heart health, whey protein, pea protein, fiber, trim burner, or probiotic formulas. Enrich any item on the menu with chia seeds, flax seeds, cayenne pepper, turmeric, matcha green tea, bee pollen, spirulina, mint, raw honey, agave, goji berries, Greek yogurt, or cacao nubs. Stop in for a treat. (5/19/2023)
<https://locations.robeks.com/co/aurora/3101-s-peoria-st> (303) 862-8720



WaveMAX Laundry Aurora

15087 E. Mississippi Ave.
Aurora, CO 80012

Owner and Manager Rebecca Hommertzhaim cuts the ribbon to mark the grand opening of WaveMAX Laundry Aurora located at 15087 E. Mississippi, Aurora, CO 80012. The facility has new, highly water and energy efficient Electrolux washers and dryers, so customers can finish their laundry in less than an hour. The UV sanitation system provides hospital grade sanitation in every wash. Coins have been eliminated and replaced with a card payment system. Customers can get a text alert when their laundry is done, and the laundromat is fully attended. WaveMAX offers drop off laundry service as well. (6/16/2023)
<http://www.wavemaxlaundry.com/aurora-co> (303) 997-9465

READY TO WORK



**Ready to Work
Englewood**
Tuesday, June 6, 2023
4675 S Windermere St,
Englewood, CO 80203



A groundbreaking ceremony was held for the newest Ready to Work location in Englewood, CO, on Tuesday, June 6, 2023. The facility will house about 48 individuals, with an anticipated opening in November 2023. Ready to Work is Colorado's only 'work works' solution to homelessness, providing paid work in a Ready to Work social enterprise, dormitory housing, and case management support. Funding for the project comes from Englewood, Littleton, Sheridan, Arapahoe County, and donor foundations. Attending the ceremony: Melissa Green, Bridge House Ready to Work CEO; Ready to Work Board of Directors Marques Ivey, Nancy Jackson, Steve Barber, and Dave Mauro; Arapahoe County Commissioner Carrie Warren-Gully; City of Englewood Council Members Joe Anderson, Chelsea Nunnenkamp, and Jim Woodward; City of Englewood City Manager Shawn Lewis; City of Littleton Mayor Kyle Schlachter; former City of Englewood Mayor Linda Olson; City of Littleton Assistant City Manager Samma Fox; City of Sheridan City Manager Devin Granbery; City of Centennial Council Member Don Sheehan; Community Resources Director with Arapahoe County Katherine Smith; and Tri-Cities Homeless Coordinator Mike Sandgren.

LEADERSHIP AURORA (CONT'D)

Michelle Kaye, Operation Equine; **Candice Kmetz-Parkinson**, UCHealth; **Jimmy Knoch**, Citywide Banks; **Anthony Krenz**, Aurora Fire Rescue; **Stephanie Marnocha**, Juvenile Assessment Center; **Samantha O'Neill**, Pickens Technical College; **Christine Polak**, Nelnet; **Alec Quaid**, American Portfolios Denver; **Mark Smith**, PhotoSmith Colorado; **Minsoo Song**, City of Aurora, International and Immigrant Affairs; **Julie Stewart**, Community College of Aurora (class vice president); **Jenna Tarleton**, CSU Global; **April Tate**, Advantage Security, Inc.; **Charles Watts**, Aurora Federal Credit Union; **Andréa Wright**, City of Aurora, Housing & Community Services (class president); and **Mayra**

Zuniga, Colorado Access.

At graduation, class members were overheard saying how fast the time went. 10 months was like a blink – filled with camaraderie, adventure, hard work, and discovery. As they experienced each monthly session, they grew to understand – even more – the importance of leadership in the community.

The class brought that understanding to their class project: Family Dinner Events at The Salvation Army Aurora at 802 Quari Ct, Aurora, CO 80111. They arranged to support a year of quarterly dinners for families, and to provide community resource information for those attending the dinners. The first - and



very successful – dinner was May 19, 2023.

Leadership Aurora began in 1984 to provide leaders in the community with an extensive awareness of the Aurora community and to encourage their increased community involvement.

For more information about the Leadership Aurora program or to apply by July 15, 2023, for the 2024 class, go to <https://www.aurorachamber.org/leadership-aurora/> ■

EMERGING LEADERS (CONT'D)

And that is how Emerging Leaders began, as an idea for a leadership training program, and as a pipeline for the Leadership Aurora program. Simard successfully pitched the idea to Chamber President and CEO Kevin Hougén, and then to the LA Board. The program was then developed over a two-year period, with support and input from LA Board chair Alan Antolak, Adolfson and Peterson Construction; Vice Chair Yvonne Valdez, Citywide Banks; Sunny Banka, Sunny Homes and Associates, Inc.; Anne Keke, Aurora Public Schools Board of Education; Kynnée Martin, IMA Financial Group, Inc.; Mo Barker; John Wolfkill, Community College of Aurora (CCA); and Nycci Jones, Nelnet. Other committee members included Leadership Aurora class of 2022 graduates Danielle Jackman, Aurora Mental Health & Recovery (AUMHR); Anthony Oyewole, Flintco; Mike Dineen, Boy Scouts of America (BSA); and Lynn Winchell, CCA.

The EL program is a six-month program



providing training and practical experiences in leadership development, including leadership qualities, traits, and skills; team and interpersonal relations, including building trust in a hybrid workplace; emotional intelligence; ethical behavior; conflict resolution; organizational communication; and community relations.

Graduates of the Emerging Leaders Class of 2023 are: **Nicole Banks**, CCA; **Traci Burton**, City of Aurora (COA), Public Works; **Courtney Butler**, CCA; **Eric Carlson**, Adolfson & Peterson Construction; **Ashlee Cummings**, Aurora Mental Health & Recovery

(AUMHR); **Chloe Dean**, AdventHealth; **Julie Dezell**, AUMHR; **Daisy Espin**, Aurora Federal Credit Union; **Shanna Farley**, COA, Communications and Marketing; **Alicja Gilbert**, Citywide Banks; **Nushat Jahan**, Impact Commercial Real Estate; **HyKyung Lee**, CCA; **Nicholas Love**, Colorado Air National Guard; **LaRae Martinez**, 52 Eighty Entertainment; **Eric Moore**, Colorado Access; **Kimberly New**, Fitzsimons Credit Union; **Eduardo Peralta**, CCA; **Yesenia Trevizo**, UCHealth; **Mirna Villa Linares**, Pickens Technical College; **Nnena West**, CCA; and **Alex Wharry**, BSA.

Appreciation goes to the following Chamber member companies for hosting meetings and sponsoring breakfast and lunch for the sessions: Adolfson & Peterson Construction; CCA and CCA Foundation; Falck Rocky Mountain Ambulance; Fitzsimons Credit Union; Pickens Technical College; Nelnet; and UCHealth. ■

MemberNews

AAUW Aurora Awards Three \$2,000 Scholarships

Three Aurora college students were awarded \$2,000 scholarships for the 2023-24 academic year by the Aurora branch of American Association of University Women-AAUW. The recipients are Kimberly Blanco, Emma Lehman, and Jessica Navarro, who will be honored at the branch's scholarship luncheon in September.

Scholarship applications for the 2024-25 school year will open next spring. College



students who will be juniors or seniors in the next academic year can apply for the scholarship. Students must be Aurora residents and currently enrolled or plan to enroll at an accredited Colorado college or university.

For information and applications, visit www.aurora-co.aauw.net. Applications will also be available from college financial aid offices.

AAUW-American Association of University Women is a top-rated 501(c)3 charitable organization whose mission is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy. However, AAUW scholarships are available to students without regard to gender. ■

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