Job creators gather at The Chamber

With the purpose of strengthening our local economy, Sen. Cory Gardner and the Aurora Chamber of Commerce pulled together a forum of Chamber member businesses on Friday, June 19. Sen. Gardner and his senior leadership team visited with more than 25 business leaders at The Chamber offices, discussing topics including highways and transit, the VA, the Affordable Care Act, regulation reforms, energy growth, research and development for healthcare, and the Trade Promotion Authority.

“Dramatically increasing Colorado jobs is one the best opportunities we have to spur growth and re-assess American Leadership,” says Chamber President and CEO Kevin Hougen.

“Keeping in touch with the small business owners who are responsible for so much of our economic growth is critically important. I’m glad I was able to meet with members of the The Chamber, and I look forward to continuing communication with them as the Senate considers legislation affecting Colorado entrepreneurs.”

The diverse business community was well represented at the event by individuals from Advanced Circuits, Aurora Economic Development Council, Boeing, Centennial Container, Children’s Hospital Colorado, ConocoPhillips, Falck Rocky Mountain, FirstBank, Forsberg Engerman Company, GEO Group, Good Chemistry, Hurricane Grill and Wings, Parsons Brinkerhoff, Spalding Rehabilitation Hospital, Wagner Equipment Co, and Wells Fargo Bank – Business Banking.

Past, present, and future Chamber leadership creates economic prosperity

Creating jobs and wealth, and expanding healthcare: these are just some of the priorities for The Chamber, and The Chamber Chair of the Board of Directors.

Pictured, (left to right) are Chamber Chair Jason Altshuler, Director of Operations at Westerra Credit Union; Chair-elect Ryan Simpson, Chief Operating Officer for The Medical Center of Aurora, HealthONE; and Immediate Past-chair David Patterson, President of Falck Rocky Mountain. Through their organizations, these leaders represent jobs in healthcare and the financial industry, as well as creating and contributing to economic prosperity in the community.

The Chair is the chief elected officer of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce and presides at general membership meetings, meetings of the Board of Directors, and Executive Committee meetings.
First, a big thank you to our immediate past chair David Patterson and previous chair Jeff Thompson, for their leadership over the past three years, which has continued to enhance The Chamber as a progressive, vibrant organization in our community. I’ve had the privilege to work with these fine gentlemen (as treasurer and chair-elect) for the last couple of years, and I have learned a lot from them. I feel honored and humbled as I follow in their footsteps, and will do my best to represent The Chamber well.

Over the 114 years The Aurora Chamber of Commerce has been in existence, we have had many great leaders. When you get the chance, take 15 minutes to walk down the Chamber hallway... you can see the former Board Chair letters and pictures displayed. It is quite spectacular to see all the talented folks who have volunteered and stepped up to the challenge. When you see one of these fine ladies or gentlemen, please thank them for taking on this role and be sure to thank your business (for supporting them) as they volunteered their time to help The Chamber. Aurora has an extremely successful Chamber because of the cohesive working relationship between our great Board of Directors (listed below) and our world-class Chamber staff (also listed below). We are so fortunate to have such a knowledgeable Chamber President, Kevin Hougen, along with his wonderful staff. I’m constantly amazed at how they know practically everyone. I feel like if I stand next to them, maybe their awesomeness will wear off on me... and I too can know more about Aurora, its wonderful businesses, and its great and diverse people.

As I mentioned in the title of this column, it’s all about the relationships... Want to have a thriving and successful business? Well, you’re going to need to know some great people! I know, you say “Jason, where am I going to meet a lot of great people who can help me with my business and connect me with my community?” (I’m so glad you asked that question.) The Aurora Chamber, of course!

Attend a business before or business after hours event, a tips and leads group, or perhaps make a new friend or business connection at a ribbon cutting. Get to know one of the Chamber ambassadors, or a Board member. Talk with one of the Chamber staff and prepare to be amazed by their knowledge and connections. Remember, it is all about the relationships, and as a member of the Chamber – you, and your employees, have access to this “social network.” Sure, you’re busy - as we all are. Schedule some time in your day, reward yourself with some new friendships/business contacts, and connect with your community. After all, they’re the ones who patronize your business, so be sure to thank them and patronize theirs.

Social media and technology may change the way we do business and interact, but it is never a replacement for a true business relationship. We need that handshake, eye contact, verbal and language cues... otherwise, the context is sometimes lost.

Fellow (and future) Aurora Chamber members: I hope to see you at a Chamber event in the near future, as we strengthen our relationships with our community, businesses, and each other. I want to wish all of you (and your businesses) a very happy, prosperous, and successful 2015-2016.

Jason Altschuler
Board Chair 2015-2016
**AFRL Honors 13 for 2014-15**

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce’s Defense Council held its 39th Annual Armed Forces Recognition Luncheon on May 8, to honor the military serving in the Metro area. For the third year, Colorado Technical University sponsored the event honoring twelve military members representing each of the branches of service and their Reserve and Guard components, and one civilian from the community. Also, for the first time, a military member from our commonwealth partners was honored. Other major event sponsors were Wells Fargo and Northrop Grumman as well as 44 other companies, organizations, and individuals supporting the military.

This year’s key note speaker, was Major General David Buck, Vice Commander for Air Force Space Command. The Master of Ceremonies for the 10th year running, was KEZV Radio personality Rick Crandall, an Air Force veteran and founder and president of the Colorado Freedom Memorial Foundation.

The twelve military honorees came from every major unit at Buckley Air Force Base as well as surrounding units from the Reserve and Guard components. They were selected from more than 40 nominees by a special panel of The Chamber Defense Council.

The luncheon, attended by nearly 600 military and their supporters was held at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel Denver and organized by the incoming Defense Council Chair, Suzanne Pilatus with Community Banks of Colorado.

**AFRL Awardees** - (Left to right) Commonwealth Partners - Sergeant Dan Hickey (Australia), 2nd Space Warning Squadron, 460th Space Wing; Navy Reserve - AG1 Lacleee Dickson, Operational Support Unit 1920, Navy Operational Support Center; Air Force Active Duty - Technical Sergeant Daniello Segovia-Spehar, Space Operations Wing, Aerospace Data Facility; Air Force Reserve - Senior Jamar Rachael Smith, Air Reserve Personnel Center; Coast Guard - Petty Officer Brett Lee, Coast Guard Cryptologic Unit – Aerospace Data Facility Colorado; Bob Cardenas Award - Tom Lyon (FIND TITLE); Army Active Duty - Staff Sergeant Jerry Sikes, A Company, 743rd MIB, Aerospace Data Facility Colorado; Colorado Air National Guard - Technical Sergeant Rebecca Holcomb, 140th Maintenance Group; Marine Active Duty - Staff Sergeant Derek Rosse, Marine Corps Support Battalion, Company A, Aerospace Data Facility Colorado; Navy Active Duty - CTR3 Sara Surratt, Navy Information Operations Command, Aerospace Data Facility Colorado; Army Reserve - Staff Sergeant Nicholas Smith, HHC, 1st Brigade I04th TD; Colorado Army Guard - Specialist Jeremy McCombs, MIT57 Engineer Detachment (Firefighters); and not pictured, Marine Reserve - Lance Corporal Brittany Christiansen, Combat Logistics Battalion 453, as she was deployed to Exercise African Lion in Morocco at the time of the AFRL Luncheon.

**Greater Metro Denver Healthcare Partnership selects new project coordinator**

Jeana Capel-Jones is the new Project Coordinator for The Greater Metro Denver Healthcare Partnership (Partnership). She comes to the Partnership with public workforce experience gained at the American Job Center in Golden, as well as years in the field of public relations and marketing at the West Chamber Serving Jefferson County and the City of Lakewood.

“Jeana’s experience in community relations and organizational management will be an asset to this collaborative,” says Judy Emery, Director of the Colorado Urban Workforce Alliance (CUWA) and formerly Project Manager for the Partnership. “She was also recently selected to be a part of the Workforce Development Workgroup for the State’s Innovation Model Program.”

The Partnership is an industry-led initiative convening workforce, education and economic development designed to meet the hiring, retention and training needs of the healthcare industry. The Partnership includes four workforce regions, key post-secondary educators and virtually all the major hospital systems and ambulatory care facilities in the metro area.

This sector strategy provides the framework and vehicle for direction and innovative solutions to meet the healthcare industry’s changing workforce needs. Leaders from the six hospital systems and ambulatory care facilities and recruiters from the metro area identified in demand occupations that remain hard to fill and critical to business. These include specialty nursing such as critical care and operating room nurses, medical coding and billing, medical lab technicians and scientists.

Subject Matter Work Groups are beginning to explore new solutions to training in four other critical occupations: surgical technicians, pharmacy technicians, licensed practical nurses, and medical assistants.

“By listening to the needs of business, the Partnership has been able to develop and deploy industry-relevant training programs impacting the talent pipeline with qualified applicants. These programs address the skills gap that industry is currently experiencing,” said Capel-Jones. “Working with our partners in education and in industry has made all the difference in building the bridge from education to employment.”

For more information about the Partnership, contact Capel-Jones at jcapel-jones@arapahoeegov.com or call 303-344-1500.

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Upcoming Events

**Upcoming Events (con't.)**

**AUGUST**

ChamberMaster Training  
August 12 | 12 pm

Health Series  
August 13 | 8 am

Women in Business  
August 25 | 12 pm

Business After Hours  
August 27 | 5-7 pm  
Location TBD

(see calendar for details and additional meetings)
Support the 7/20 Permanent Memorial

A mass shooting occurred in Aurora on July 20, 2012, at a midnight screening of The Dark Knight Rises. A gunman, dressed in tactical clothing, set off tear gas grenades and shot into the audience with multiple firearms, killing 12 people and injuring 70 others.

Since then, the City of Aurora has shown incredible resiliency in emerging from the shadow of this violent act. Now, nearly three years later, Aurora City Council is requesting help to construct a permanent memorial for the victims. The City of Aurora is repurposing an existing garden on the Grounds of its Municipal Center, and overseeing the project which will include benches, coverings, and meaningful art — determined by the victims and their families.

To find out how you can support Aurora’s 7/20 Permanent Memorial, text the letters “LA” to 74574, and information will be texted back to you.

AICS is an energy-saving star!

Aurora Interfaith Community Services (AICS) was selected as the Xcel Energy’s May 2015 Energy Star of the Month. AICS was selected because it has saved nine percent this year, compared to its 2014 energy bills. The savings for the first quarter of 2015 will buy food for a week for 250 people.

The team effort of staff and volunteers made this possible, along with modifications made to the building, including keeping the temperature regulated by a new thermostat, and refrigerators that can become freezers.

Xcel’s audit of AICS was through the Non-Profit Energy Efficiency Program (NEEP), which identified ways that AICS could improve its energy use, and provided donations for the improvements.

Cart Races greatly benefit Comitis

The 2015 Cart Races raised $10,315 for the Comitis Crisis Center. Albertsons Safeway matches dollar-for-dollar, all donations raised from the community to benefit Comitis’ Grocery Cart Races.

Cherry Creek Schools on Forbes America’s Best Employers

Forbes business magazine recently named the Cherry Creek School District one of America’s Best Employers for 2015. Cherry Creek Schools ranked 143 on the list of 500 organizations. It was one of only seven employers, and the only school district, in Colorado to make the list. Of the seven, CCSD had the highest ranking.

“We are honored by the designation,” Cherry Creek School District Superintendent Harry Bull said. “We have worked hard to create an environment that appreciates and rewards the people who make us one of the highest achieving school districts in that state and nation.”

Colorado Medical Waste attends Leadership Summit, receives award

Beverly Hanstrom, President of Colorado Medical Waste, Inc., was one of 100 small business leaders from across the country, selected to attend the Small Business Leadership Summit in Washington D.C. in May, 2015. The group discussed pressing issues facing

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small businesses, with opportunities to talk with elected officials and members of the Obama Administration about policies to strengthen small business. “Being chosen to attend this year’s Summit allowed me a unique opportunity to discuss important issues facing my small business and other entrepreneurs today,” said Hanstrom.

During the Summit, Hanstrom received the Sustainability Award from Congressman Mike Coffman (R-CO), for her work as a long-time local leader in the medical waste industry and innovation of new environmentally friendly technologies.

Cruise with a Vet for the Colorado Freedom Memorial

The Cruise With A Vet car show is Saturday, August 8, 9 am-1 pm. The event is at the Spring Hill Community Park, 756 Telluride St, Aurora, CO 80011.

The event benefits the Colorado Freedom Memorial, and will:
• Build awareness of The Colorado Freedom Memorial
• Raise funds for future improvements of the Memorial
• Say Thank You to Veterans for their service

The show is free to the public and everyone is invited to enjoy viewing a variety of eye-pleasing collector cars and seeing the Colorado Freedom Memorial. Great tunes will be provided by Perry Washington, The Masterpiece DJ.

Pre-registration for collector show cars is required due to limited parking for show cars. Registration fee is $25 per car.

If you know of a Veteran who would enjoy a “sweet ride” to the car show in an collector’s car, or for more information, contact John Kurowski at 303-972-8680 or john@kurowski.com or visit cruisewithavet.org for car registration and military veteran registration forms.

Visit www.cfmf.net to learn more about the Colorado Freedom Memorial.

Christie elected chair of ACEC

Ralph W. Christie, Chairman of Merrick & Company, was recently elected as the Chairman of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC), which represents 51 state and regional ACED member organizations. His term runs through April 2016.

Security Service Federal Credit Union a Top Ranking U.S. Call Center

Security Service Federal Credit Union’s (SSFCU) Member Contact Center has earned a spot in the top 50 medium-sized call centers throughout North America. This designation comes from BenchmarkPortal, a global leader providing benchmarking, certification, training, consulting and research to call centers worldwide.

“Our team handles nearly a quarter of a million calls, emails, faxes and social media posts every month from members around the world, and this recognition highlights our consistent dedication to our members,” says Chris Allen, senior vice president for Security Service’s Member Contact Center.

Supporting our Military

The Aurora Chamber’s Defense Council recommended that the Chamber Foundation approve a $10K gift to support Buckley AFB’s Deployed Family/Spouses program. The Chamber Foundation unanimously approved the request and the check was given to the 460th Space Wing commander. The funds will be used by the Airman and Family Readiness Center to sponsor monthly dinners and events for family members and spouses of deployed members from all branches of the service.

UCHealth improving access to emergency care

University of Colorado Health (UCH) is partnering with Adeptus Health’s network of freestanding emergency room facilities, First Choice Emergency Room, to improve access to high-quality emergency medical care for patients throughout Colorado Springs, northern Colorado, and the Denver Metro area.

“Providing the highest level of care, close to home for our patients, is one of UCH’s priorities,” says Elizabeth Concordia, president and CEO of UCH. “This partnership allows patients to receive care in a more convenient way, while offering seamless transfers for patients who need hospitalization.”

Currently, there are 12 First Choice Emergency Room locations, with two more under construction. The facilities will be renamed UCHealth ER.

Buckley named Community Hero

Lisa R. Buckley, CEO of American Automation Building Solutions Inc., right; is presented the Community Hero of Buckley award by Col. John Wagner, 460th Space Wing commander, left; May 14, 2015, at the Panther Den on Buckley Air Force Base. Colo. Every year, Buckley Air Force Base recognizes one individual from the local community for their efforts made toward supporting Team Buckley by presenting them the Community Hero of Buckley award. (U.S. Air Force Photo by Airman 1st Class Emily E. Amyotte/Released)
Newly renovated quality and comfort at Courtyard by Marriott – Denver Stapleton

Jodie Martin-Witt and Chaelynn Pacheco excitedly cut the ribbon to celebrate the newly renovated Courtyard by Marriott – Denver Stapleton, located at 7415 E. 41st Ave., Denver, CO 80216. At Courtyard by Marriott – Denver Stapleton, guests can enjoy rooms with plush bedding, stylish bathrooms, free high-speed internet, comfortable outdoor spaces to plug in, as well as a fire pit, business center, 24/7 market, a bistro restaurant, and 24-hour access to exercise equipment! Learn more at www.marriott.com/courtyard/ or call (303) 333-3303. (5/19/15)

Experienced Printers for all your printing needs!

- Celebrating 23 years in business, owners of Great Western Printing, Inc., Mark and Connie Werner cut the ribbon to their success! Great Western Printing, Inc. is located at 1826 S. Ventura St., Aurora, CO 80017, and is the first Denver/Aurora printer to offer high quality offset and digital printing along with signs, banners and trade show displays, accessories and promotional items. They are a Denver/Boulder BBB A+ Accredited business and recipient of a Gold Star Award since 2009. Learn more at www.gwprintingusa.com or call (303) 671-9291. (4/23/15)

This is “Love at 425°”

- Store Owner, Mike Challis (left), CEO of Papa Murphy’s, Ken Calwell (center) and Store Manager Darrick Fehringer (right), cut the ribbon celebrating Papa Murphy’s newest location in Southlands at 25791 E. Smoky Hill Rd., Aurora, CO 80016. Papa Murphy’s is known for their “take-n-bake” pizza that customers choose what they want on it, then take it home to bake. Ingredients include fresh hand grated mozzarella, hand sliced vegetables, and dough made from scratch, daily. Papa Murphy’s is the fifth-largest pizza company in the United States and the #1-Rated Restaurant Chain. Learn more at www.papamurphys.com or call (720) 621-8509. (4/23/15)

A Fine way to park and travel!

- Owners, Mike and Sherry Fine, break ground to Aurora’s newest airport parking facility. Fine Airport Parking originated in Tulsa, OK and has been operating in surrounding areas for more than 25 years. Fine Airport Parking is one of the safest and fastest ways for airport travel, and they offer a wide array of amenities including valet parking, auto detailing, oil changes, and refreshments. Learn more at www.fineairportparking.com. (6/2/15)
Planning your future can be fun! - Congratulations to Sean Cooper, President and CCO of Fit Financial Consulting, LLC on a successful business and ribbon cutting! Fit Financial Consulting, LLC is a Registered Investment Advisor working with individuals and families on financial planning, retirement planning, portfolio, security, and annuity analysis, budgeting, and money management. Sean believes that “bring money and finance to the forefront of people’s minds, and discussing it openly, can lead to a happier, healthier life, much the same way staying physically fit can.” Learn more at www.fitfinancialconsulting.com or call 720-808-6976. (4/23/15)

Flavored Crust Pizza? Count me in!! - Franchise owners Joel and Sheryl Alford cut the ribbon and welcome the community to their first Hungry Howies Pizza location in Colorado, at 6040 S. Gun Club Rd. #F4, Aurora, CO 80016. Hungry Howies Pizza has emerged as a major competitor in the pizza marketplace and consistently ranks in the top 10 of the nation’s largest pizza franchises. They are the “Home of the Original Flavored Crust Pizza”, with 8 different flavor options, calzone-style subs, salads, and gluten free options available. Learn more at www.hungryhowies.com or call (303) 627-4694. (5/18/15)

Education for the Future! - Director Lisa Meyerdierks, Director of Finance Cindy Donahue, and Congressman Mike Coffman cut the ribbon celebrating ITT Technical Institute’s move to a new campus located at 12500 E. Iliff Ave., Ste. 100, Aurora, CO 80014. ITT Technical Institute is committed to helping men and women develop skills and knowledge to pursue opportunities in many of today’s promising career fields, including electronics, drafting and design, criminal justice, business, information technology, health sciences, and nursing. They emphasize helping students to develop skills and knowledge in technical areas that can have practical value in the workplace. Learn more at www.itt-tech.edu or call (303) 695-6317. (5/6/15)

Yummy pizza created by YOU! - Netzer Katriel, General Manager of Uncle Maddios Pizza Joint, cuts the ribbon to their newest location at 10601 E Gardens Dr, Ste 105, in Aurora. Uncle Maddios Pizza Joint is a place where everything is fresh, from the pizza dough that’s made in-store each day to the locally-grown veggies that are delivered every morning. With limitless options, it is up to the customer to build their own pizza with three different dough options, six different sauce options and over 45 different cheese, meat or veggie toppings. Learn more at www.unclemaddios.com or call (303) 363-9075. (5/15/15)
Leadership Aurora Class of 2015 Graduates “with honors!”

Following 10 months of being together as the self-designated “Best Class Ever,” the Leadership Aurora Class of 2014-2015 Graduated on June 4 at the Aurora Municipal Center.

Many class members commented on how much they had learned, as well as how much they enjoyed the camaraderie of – and connection with – their classmates. Denise Denton, Executive Director of Aurora Health Access penned a poem about her experience in Leadership Aurora. Here is an excerpt:

I learned ‘bout our city, our officials, our cops, Our water, our history, No wonder it rocks!

We toured theaters and shelters, News rooms and schools; Got a new ‘preciation, ‘bout how this city rules!....

And then there’s the people, I met this past year,

That we ALL make good leaders, is now so very clear.

To see a complete listing of the LA 2015 class, go to www.aurorachamber.org/leadership-aurora/current-class.

Applications for the 2015-2016 Leadership Aurora Class are being taken until July 15. Information about the program and an online application are at www.aurorachamber.org/leadership-aurora.