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THE CHAMBER Impact NEWSLETTER

SEPT/OCT 2016

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Ballot issues to pay attention to this November

In addition to electing a new President of the United States, the November 2016 Ballot poses some important decisions for Colorado voters.

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce's Government Affairs, Education, and Energy Committee made recommendations to the Chamber Board of Directors, who approved The Chamber taking a position to support or oppose the following ballot issues:

YES - Initiative 96 - This initiative is also known as **'Raise the Bar,'** with the purpose of raising the threshold for Constitutional initiatives/amendments to be put on the ballot, and to be passed. It would require signatures of 2 percent of the registered voters in each of the 35 State Senate districts, and would increase the number of votes required for passage from a simple majority to 55 percent of all votes cast.

YES - 3A and 3B - Cherry Creek School District \$250 million school bond election.

YES - 3C - Aurora Public Schools \$300 million school bond election.

YES - SCFD renewal - The proposal provides citizens in Arapahoe, Adams, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas, and Jefferson counties with the opportunity to continue the investment of one penny on every \$10 spent in sales tax in the district, to support access to a diverse array of cultural and arts organizations. Currently, more than 300 organizations - ranging in size from those that serve the entire region to those that provide small, local venues - receive about \$54 million annually from the district.

NO - Initiative 75 - This is one of two oil and gas initiatives that would make changes to the State Constitution. Initiative 75 would allow county and municipal governments to enact more restrictive regulation on oil and natural gas development and production than what is currently imposed by the state. This could limit, delay, and outright prohibit development. *(As of the printing of this publication, the Secretary of State had not validated signatures for this initiative)*

NO - Initiative 78 - This is the second of two oil and gas initiatives that would make changes to the State Constitution. Initiative 78 would require that all new oil and natural gas facilities be located at least 2,500 feet from any occupied structure or area of concern. The COGCC produced a study that showed, if passed, this initiative would prohibit new drilling for 90 percent of the surface area in Colorado, and could have tremendous negative impacts on our economy. *(As of the printing of this publication, the Secretary of State had not validated signatures for this initiative)*

NO - Amendment 69 - Single-payer Healthcare for Colorado. This is an amendment to the State Constitution that would create a new, statewide system to finance health care services for Colorado residents. It would increase employee income-tax rates 3.33 percent and employer tax rates 6.67 percent. Amendment 69 is projected to bring in \$25 billion in new tax revenue each year.

NO - Initiative 101 - This initiative would change the State Constitution by increasing the state minimum wage from \$8.31 to \$9.30 per hour, beginning on January 1, 2017. It would then increase the minimum wage annually by \$0.90 per hour beginning January 1, 2018, until it reaches \$12.00 per hour on January 1, 2020. On January 1, 2021, the minimum wage would then adjust each year based on cost-of-living increases.



Ryan Simpson
Board Chair

Chair's Letter

While it might sound cliché, it is truly an honor and privilege to start this year as Chair of The Aurora Chamber of Commerce. I say this sincerely for several reasons. It's about when, who, and why. Allow me to elaborate...

When? While I have only been involved with The Chamber since 2011, I doubt many would argue that there hasn't been a more promising time for our Eastern Metro Area. Over these past five years, momentum has been building for many exceptional developments: ground has been broken for the Gaylord Rockies; light-rail transit becomes a reality this year for our communities; new businesses are opening and existing businesses are thriving; our defense economy remains strong; the offering of healthcare services continues to expand; residential development is strong; and our schools are expanding. I could go on and on.

Who? The Chamber, like any organization, is about its' people. My work with The Chamber has been most fulfilling based on the many people I have come to know and the friendships that have developed. Starting with the Board, it is a privilege to serve with so many exceptional leaders that are committed to seeing a strong and vibrant Chamber. Next, The Chamber staff are second to none as they work tirelessly to serve the membership and are exemplary professionals. Lastly and

most importantly, The Chamber is YOU, its' membership. It is a privilege to serve on behalf of so many businesses and individuals that are committed to the success of our community.

Why? The common theme amongst the Board, Chamber staff, and the membership is that we all have a vision for seeing our community succeed. With this shared vision, I am overwhelmingly encouraged about our future.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the big shoes I have to fill. I succeed some tremendous leaders who have recently served as Chair: Jason Altshuler; David Patterson; Jeff Thompson; and David Gruber. Exceptional leaders that I am privileged to have as friends. In closing, I doubt if there has been a better time to be a member of The Chamber. I look forward with excitement and great optimism about the year ahead.

All the best,
Ryan

ChamberBoard

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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!

Aurora launches new flat-rate permit fees

The City of Aurora has changed the way that it charges permit fees for simple construction jobs to make the fees more predictable, simple and fair. The city's new flat-rate fee permits allow customers to pay the same permit fee for the same project type, regardless of the job's value.

Flat-rate fee permits available include everything from water heater and furnace replacements to demolition and commercial roof replacements. The new flat fee process has no effect on the calculation and collection of city use taxes. The customer must still provide building material costs so the city can accurately estimate city use and county taxes.

For more information, contact the City of Aurora Permit Center at 303.739.7420 or permitcounter@auroragov.org. To apply online, visit www.aurora4biz.org.

Want to help plan Aurora's future?

Aurora is creating a new plan—*Aurora Places*—that will represent a collective vision for Aurora's future, and help guide city leaders for the next decade and beyond.

The comprehensive plan will establish policies and recommendations related to land use and development, neighborhood livability and housing, transportation and mobility, community health and sustainability, economic vitality, cultural diversity, and community life.

The city will build the plan based on a foundation of community participation and

feedback. Business owners and operators are invited to attend a business workshop to identify what is most important in making Aurora a business friendly and economically successful community.

- Sept. 21, 8 to 9:30 a.m., Aurora Central Library, Community Room, 14949 E. Alameda Parkway
- Sept. 22, 8 to 9:30 a.m., Aurora Central Library, Community Room, 14949 E. Alameda Parkway

Visit www.auroraplacesplan.com for events, project updates, online surveys and even a web-based mapping application.

Avitus Group releases Colorado pregnant employee law compliance guide

Avitus Group is releasing a compliance guide for Colorado businesses, in an effort to educate employers impacted by the new Reasonable Accommodation Law for Pregnant Employees. The law is called the Colorado Pregnant Workers Fairness Act and is an amendment to the Colorado Anti-Discrimination Act.

Beginning August 2016, the law requires employers to accommodate medical conditions and limitations stemming from pregnancy that may not separately qualify as disabilities under



the Americans with Disabilities Act. It protects individuals with conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, or a related condition without requiring that the conditions be disabling.

All Colorado employers are required to make reasonable accommodations for employees unless those accommodations would impose undue hardship for the employer. The law applies to all Colorado employers and it mandates new notification and posting requirements for employers. View the guide at info.avitusgroup.com/colorado-pregnancy-law.

Avitus Group is a worldwide company with headquarters in Aurora, CO, providing 'back office' support for businesses.

CASA event helps fund advocacy mission

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Adams & Broomfield Counties hosted its annual Indulge for **CASA** event in July at Balistreri Vineyards and raised nearly \$92,000. Funds raised will aid

CASA's mission of providing specially selected and trained community volunteers to advocate for abused and neglected children in the pursuit of safe and permanent homes.

CASA is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization working to make sure that every child who cannot live safely at home has a caring, compassionate **CASA** Volunteer Advocate who will help fight for their right to be safe, ensure that they are treated with dignity, and assure their safe passage out of foster care, building a stronger community for all. For more information, call 303.654.3378 or visit www.casa17th.org.



Defense Council and Comitis partner to help homeless veterans

For the second consecutive year, The Chamber's Defense Council has chosen **Mile High Behavioral Healthcare/Comitis Crisis Center's** homeless Veterans as its "special interest" area. The increased exposure through The Chamber's Defense Council has significantly increased **Comitis'** community outreach and contributions. In the coming year, the Defense Council will expand its partnership with **Comitis** for homeless Veterans and their families. Some of the initiatives include assistance with fundraising, organizing a professional attire drive, and hosting a dinner for homeless Veterans and their families.

The **Comitis Crisis Center** serves homeless Veterans, individuals, and families. ■



Mile High Behavioral Healthcare/Comitis Board member and Aurora City Council At Large Bob LeGare accepts a \$10,000 donation from Jerry Quinn, Military & Veteran Programs Manager, of Wells Fargo Banks on-field at a recent Rockies game.

CCA receives grant to help working students with families

Community College of Aurora (CCA) has been selected as one of 14 national grantees to receive a four-year, \$3.9 million *Strengthening Working Families Initiative* grant award from the U.S. Department of Labor. The program, titled "Access to Success," will help parents access jobs in high-demand, high growth career pathways in healthcare, information technology, and advanced manufacturing. It will also help parents overcome child care, academic, and financial barriers.

The grant program will coordinate services across multiple partners to provide opportunities for working students who have families and who want to attend college. "In addition, it will help position **CCA** as a viable economic development partner and a trusted educational resource for those we serve," said **CCA** President Dr. Betsy Oudenhoven.

[continued on page 4]

Kick A Marketing certified by Yoast

Jo Guerra with **Kick A Marketing** recently received an SEO certification by Yoast – enhancing her expertise in getting business websites ranked with search engines and found online. “Search engine optimization (SEO) is an overused buzzword,” according to Guerra.



“There are a lot of companies promoting and selling SEO services that can actually hurt your standings with Google, and possibly get your company de-listed by search engines. It’s not an overnight process; It takes time to build and incorporate the right strategies to get your website ranked and found online and in turn, make more sales.”

The Yoast training is comprised of “holistic” SEO incorporating “best practices” for search engines. The course includes understanding search engines, keyword research, optimizing for site speed, technical SEO, content writing, visitor or user experience (UX), and conversion success. For more information, contact Jo Guerra at **KickAMarketing.com** or 303-246-8724.



Arapahoe County kicks-off countywide bicycle/pedestrian master plan

Arapahoe County recently kicked off the process to develop a comprehensive Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (BPMP), with a goal of improving walking and biking in the County, and beyond. The BPMP will identify a comprehensive system of on-street and trail facilities, safely connecting neighborhoods and destinations and encouraging walking and biking for travel and recreation. The BPMP will include both the incorporated and unincorporated portions of the County, including Aurora. It will be developed in close coordination with all local municipalities.

Work Well Project works well, and plans for next phase

The six-month Work Well Pilot Project is complete, and eight Chamber member companies successfully completed project benchmarks: **Community College of Aurora; Music Go Round - Aurora, CO; Mobile Physicians Network; Alzheimer's Association Colorado Chapter; Fitzsimons Credit Union; Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council; Central Colorado AHEC; and Aurora Chamber of Commerce.**

These participating organizations and businesses received — at no cost — advising sessions, wellness resources, program assistance, trainings, workshops, and funding. The Work Well Project is a collaboration between the **Aurora Chamber of Commerce** and **Tri-County Health Department**, funded by a grant from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Work Well Project 2.0-2017 will kick off on September 8, 8-9:30 am at The Chamber. Join us for a healthy breakfast, and learn about how your company/organization can benefit from this free program.



At the Work Well Project celebration, left to right: Jennifer Tellis, Tri-County Health Department; Mitzi Schindler, Aurora Chamber of Commerce; Deborah Hoefer, Community College of Aurora; Polina Yakusheva, Fitzsimons Credit Union; Alexis Richardson, Mobile Physician Network; Mickey Randleman, Westminster Chamber of Commerce; Ed Duggan, Music Go Round; and Rosalyn Reese, Alzheimer's Association Colorado Chapter. Not pictured: Shelly Tucker, Central Colorado AHEC; and Kevin Finder, Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council.

The project team will inventory and analyze existing bicycle and walking facilities; develop a future network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities that will safely connect neighborhoods and activity centers; develop design guidelines; and identify performance measures to track progress.

For the BPMP to be successful, the County wants to hear from the community about their vision for biking and walking in the County. For more information about the Arapahoe County BPMP, visit www.arapahoebikeped.com, or contact the County's Project Manager Ray Winn at rwinn@arapahogov.com or (720) 874-6551.

UCH receives a Colorado first in national rankings

University of Colorado Hospital has made it to U.S. News & World Report's prestigious Honor Roll of the top 20 hospitals in America — as the first Colorado institution ever to attain that accolade.

Liz Concordia, president and CEO of **UCH's** parent agency, **UCHealth** said that the recognition helps the hospital in recruiting top specialists from out of state, and keeping patients with complex care needs from going out of state for their care. ■



Ribbon cuttings mean business: 200 new jobs

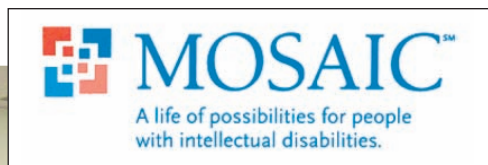


Check out what's new in Southlands – B-Dubs!

General Manager Scott Maurer, is joined by nearly a hundred staff members and local business owners, to cut the ribbon for **Buffalo Wild Wings'** newest location at 6100 S. Main St. Unit 107, Aurora, CO 80016. **Buffalo Wild Wings** started in 1982 with one restaurant in Columbus, OH. Since then, they have grown to have a store in every state in the U.S. and are opening around the world. **Buffalo Wild Wings** is known for "Wings, Beer, and Sports," but also offers a variety of other choices. **Buffalo Wild Wings** Southlands has a family friendly environment and a patio that oversees the Southlands Fountains. (720) 870-4475 www.buffalowildwings.com (711.16)

Mosaic in Denver celebrates 30 years

Community Relations Manager Stephanie Webb (far left) and Independent Contract Program Manager Kathryn Ireland gather with staff and clients of **Mosaic in Denver**, to celebrate 30 years of service. **Mosaic in Denver** began providing services in 1986 with many long-term direct care professionals, and offers a life of possibilities for people with intellectual disabilities. They support and empower their clients' pursuit of goals, and celebrate their successes. Some of their services include: supported living services; host homes; children's extensive services; and apartment living/in-home support. They are located at 10651 E Bethany Dr., Ste. 100, Aurora, CO 80014. (303) 369-9771 www.mosaicindenver.org (7.26.16)



Aurora welcomes a new Panera Bread

General Manager Adam Goodall and Marketing Manager Dacia Henshaw celebrate bringing **Panera Bread** to south Aurora by cutting the "bread" with local business owners and residents. **Panera Bread** started 30 years ago, and now there are nearly 2,000 locations in the US and Canada, including this newest location at 23590 E. Smoky Hill Rd., Aurora, CO 80016. **Panera Bread** believes in making food the customer can feel good about. Some of their menu items include freshly baked breads, pastries and sweets, bagels and spreads, soups, salads, broth bowls, pasta, Paninis and sandwiches, flatbreads and a kids' menu. (720) 616-5900 www.panerabread.com (7.21.16)

[continued on page 6]

New opportunities are available at Concorde Career College

Campus President Staci Hegarty along with staff and students, are proud to cut the ribbon, introducing their newest program for Surgical Technology. **Concorde Career College** offers a wide range of programs in the health field, and has campuses in nine different states. Financial aid and scholarship programs are available for those who qualify. **Concorde Career College** is located at 111 N. Havana St., Aurora, CO 80010. (303) 861-1151 www.concorde.edu (6.29.16)



Congratulations to Avitus Group in celebrating 20 years

Avitus Group officially marked 20 years in business with a kickoff anniversary celebration at the company's corporate headquarters located at 4600 S. Syracuse, Ste. 943, Denver, CO 80237. Willie Chrans, chairman of the board, gave a speech explaining the company plans to keep the anniversary celebration rolling all year long with continued support for local non-profit organizations in communities across the country. He also highlights Avitus Dental Management Solutions, Inc. as a new division company and supports higher education with announcement of free business training courses for dental students nationwide. **Avitus Group** is a worldwide company that simplifies, strengthens and grows businesses by providing 'back office' support (Payroll, accounting, taxes, recruiting, information technology and much more). (720) 648-0110 www.avitusgroup.com (7.14.16)



A new, refreshing treat in the neighborhood

Owners Sam Shooster and Rick Fernicola are enthusiastic about their grand opening for **Rita's Italian Ice**. Accompanied by local firefighters, patrons, and chamber members, they cut the ribbon for their newest location, just in time for the summer heat! **Rita's Italian Ice** offers a wide selection of treats to satisfy guests of all ages. From Italian Ice to classic old fashioned custard, you'll be sure to find the treat that's right for you. **Rita's Italian Ice** is located at 20209 E. Smoky Hill Rd., Centennial, CO 80015. (303) 996-0213 www.ritassmokyhill.com (6.22.2016)



Check out the new renovations at Embassy Suites by Hilton Denver Southeast

Charlie LaMont, general manager of the **Embassy Suites by Hilton Denver Southeast** is excited to announce their new renovations! Charlie was joined by staff and Chamber members to cut the ribbon, and show off the changes. With live music playing, an elegant display of appetizers and great company, the event was a great success. **Embassy Suites by Hilton Denver Southeast** hotel is ideal for business, family, and leisure travelers looking for a convenient place to stay with first class accommodations and amenities. (303) 923-4055 www.embassysuitesdenversoutheast.com (8.10.16)
(Photo courtesy of DeLane Robinson, Professional Photographer)

Welcome: Leadership Aurora Class of 2016-2017

These 36 community-minded business professionals have been accepted into the Leadership Aurora Class of 2016-2017. They will embark on their 10-month journey at a retreat in Winter Park, Sept. 15-17, 2016.



Adejoke Alao
Aurora Mental
Health Center



Eric Franks
Aurora Fire
Department



Justin Lawrence
Falck Rocky
Mountain



Todd Sigler
Advantage
Security



John Allen
Spalding
Rehabilitation
Hospital



Jim Galanaugh
Colorado
Community
Church



David Leski
Wagner
Equipment



Ted Snow
Community
College of
Aurora



Natalie Artibee
Nelnet



Malcom Hankins
City of Aurora,
Neighborhood
Services



Omar Lyle
Veterans
Affairs
Commission



Terry Spencer
Colin Spencer
Productions



Elise Becker
Aurora Mental
Health Center



Sharon Hattan
Citywide Banks



Olga Mead
Grade Power
Learning



Gill Thompson
Pickens
Technical
College



Jessica Berry
University of
Colorado
Hospital



Chad Jelinek
Adolfson
& Peterson
Construction



Mary Meeks
Community
College of
Aurora



Stephanie Webb
Mosaic
In Denver



Lamont Browne
Aurora
Public Schools



Jessica Jones
Keller
Williams



Brandon Mencini
The Medical
Center of
Aurora



Joumana Witt
Colorado
Technical
University



Gregory Cazzell
Aurora
Public Schools



Joshua Kusch
Aurora
Public Schools



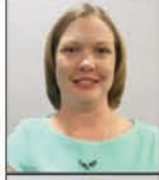
Alexa Pecorella
E-470 Public
Highway
Authority



John Wolfkill
Community
College of Aurora
Foundation



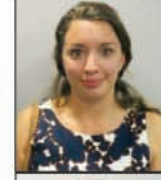
Jennifer Dunn
FirstBank



Jamie LaDuke
City of Aurora,
Internal
Services



Susan Ruby
Colorado Air
National Guard,
Buckley AFB



Heather Wydock
Visit Aurora



Troy Edwards
Aurora Police
Department



Danielle Lammon
Danielle
Shannon
Allstate Agency



Josie Shea
Aurora Mental
Health Center



Amanda Young
Jim 'N Nick's
Bar-B-Q

Leadership Aurora is a program of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce -
providing experiences you can find anywhere else!



Correction:

In the July/August Impact Newsletter page 3 article about the Work Well Pilot Project, Ed Duggan was incorrectly identified as a *Wellness Champion Steward* for the **Community College of Aurora**. Duggan is *Wellness Champion Steward* for, and owner of **Music Go Round** at 18541 E. Hampden Ave, #128, Aurora, CO 80013. **Music Go Round** buys, sells, and trades used musical instruments, and has been selected three times as the "Most Improved Store" in the Music Go Round Franchise system. Duggan also serves as the chair for The Chamber's Business for the Arts Committee.



*The Chamber would like to give a big shout out to David Garon and staff with the Care Committee of **DoubleTree by Hilton Denver-Aurora**, for their monthly charitable donation to the Colorado Freedom Memorial. Rick Crandall, president of the **Colorado Freedom Memorial** is very thankful for the generous donations.*

MemberRenewals

Abilene Awards & Logos, Inc.	Fire Safety Services
Academy Roofing, Inc.	Fitzsimons Redevelopment Authority
Advocates for Children	Forsberg Engerman Company
AFLAC - Donna Bonne	GBSM
American Automation Building Solutions	Glory to Glory Christian Center
American Medical Response of Colorado - Denver	Graebel Relocation
Anchor Network Solutions, Inc.	Green Acres Adult Community
Artistic Apparel Graphics & Signs	Heritage Eagle Bend Golf Club
Aurora Health Access	Hyatt Regency Tech Center
Aurora Mental Health Center	Itec
AxxessConnect	Job Corps
Bates & Associates, Inc.	Joe's Crab Shack
Bellevue Heights - Alzheimer's Special Center	Jordan Road CARSTAR Collision
Bent Fork American Grill	Les Schwab Tire Centers - Tower Rd.
Bernard Financial Services	Mainstream Video Production
Big D Pizza dba Blackjack Pizza	Miller Technology Group
Big Frog Custom T's & More	MITH Enterprises LLC
Big O Tires Havana	Mr. Greenjean's Landscape Services, LLC
Blackstone Country Club	NAACP-Aurora Branch
Bryan Construction, Inc.	Navy Federal Credit Union
Business Insurance Specialists	Office Evolution - Southlands
Capron Law, LLC	Pachner Company, The
Cherry Creek Retirement Village	Purewater Dynamics and The Great American Coffee Co.
Colorado Association of Realtors	Quality 1st Plumbing
Colorado Continental Roofing & Solar, Inc.	RD Dennis Enterprises, LLC
Colorado Escrow & Title	Regional Transportation District (RTD)
Colorado Insurance Professionals	Renaissance Denver Hotel
Colorado State University-Global Campus	RTL Networks, Inc.
Comfort Inn Aurora	Springhill Suites by Marriott - Denver Airport
Corporex Colorado, LLC	Suss Buick GMC
Denver Airport Marriott at Gateway Park	UCHealth Emergency Room- Aurora-Mississippi
Denver Marriott Tech Center	United Veterans Committee of Colorado
Developmental Pathways	U-Pull and Pay
Edward Jones Investments- Patrick Pogue	Watson & Co., Inc.
EMO Trans Inc Regional	Wiggins, Bill J.
Fairfield Inn & Suites - DIA	
Falck Rocky Mountain	

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