A Day in the Life of the Leadership Aurora Class of 2018

Since the Leadership Aurora Retreat in September 2017, the Class of 2017-2018 has been treated to enlightening subject matter through a level of access one rarely has a chance to experience. Media Day in December 2017 proved to be no exception.

While enjoying a great breakfast provided by the University of Colorado Cancer Center, classmates were brought together and spent the first part of the morning catching up with one another. It was a powerful reminder of the class’s ability to form relationships.

We were told that we’d be acting out a broadcast on the set of Aurora 8 later that day with ‘gentrification’ as the topic. Groups were given time to figure out who would be playing the parts listed and how they would approach their stance. After completing our initial planning, we were ready for our field trip to Fox31/CW2.

As we left the cozy confines of the Aurora Municipal Center, we were greeted by a large school bus that would take us on our way. The driver may have been surprised that adults dressed to the nines would immediately revert to the age and behavior she would normally encounter in this environment but none of us were.

Once we arrived at the station, we were met in the lobby by Channel 2 Anchor Mike Landess. He was kind enough to tour our class throughout the building, allowed us Q&A sessions with a number of high-ranking employees and even provided us with seats to watch a live broadcast. It was fascinating to hear how the industry has, and continues to evolve and just how much content is being sifted through on a daily basis.

Insider details were given to our class on what kind of stories they are looking for and how to get that information covered. If you’re curious about those details, I suggest you look into joining the next Leadership Aurora class.

Toward the end of our stay, we

[continued on page 7]
This year is already flying by, and it’s hard to believe that eight dynamic months have gone by since I’ve had the pleasure of serving as the Chair of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce. We started the year out with the question of “why” chambers exist and what value we bring to members and non-members.

The question remains consistent and can be evaluated by the 3Cs:
1) The Chamber is a Catalyst for business growth;
2) We are a Convenor of leaders and influencers to get things done;
3) The Chamber is a Champion for a thriving community.

The ‘3cs’ and the Economic Impact our Chamber has, was evident as a Convenor at the Association of Defense Communities summit we attended in San Diego the week of Feb. 12-14. Our team representing Buckley Air Force Base, the City of Aurora, and The Chamber of Commerce was selected to participate with senior experts on key issues facing our communities. We had a panel of experts speak on the funding we have received ($26 million dollars to date) from our Readiness & Environmental Protection and Integration (REPI) efforts to expand and protect Buckley AFB from encroachment.

The military industry is a crucial Catalyst of Colorado’s economic growth. The Department of Defense is responsible for about 8 percent of the state’s total economy in terms of employment, earnings, and state tax revenues. Since 2014, the State of Colorado has ranked as one of the nation’s fastest growing economies and Colorado’s deep ties to the Department of Defense and patriotic commitment to providing for the nation’s security will ensure the state’s legacy of success and prosperity. In addition, the State’s educated and highly skilled work force, low taxes and business costs, and attractive quality of life foster innovation, collaboration and integration are Catalysts across the entire economy.

And finally, The Chamber is — and has always been — a Champion for a thriving community, exemplified in the 63 years and counting of honoring people and businesses in the community making substantial contributions to The Chamber and to the community.

This year, we honor these Champions at the March 16, 2018 Annual Awards Dinner:

**BUSINESS OF THE YEAR / Mesa Moving and Storage**, award accepted by **Andrea Williams, General Manager**

**BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR / Randy Young, Local Store Marketer**, Jim ’N Nicks Bar-B-Q

**CHAMBER LEADERSHIP AWARDS / Jennifer Evans, Account Manager, Advantage Security**

**WOMAN OF THE YEAR / Gayle Jetchick, Executive Director**, Havana Business Improvement District

**MAN OF THE YEAR / Harry Bull, Superintendent**, Cherry Creek School District

**HUMANITARIAN AWARD / Randy Stilth, PhD, CEO/Exec. Director, Aurora Mental Health**

**COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP / Aurora Police Department**, award accepted by **Nick Metz, Chief of Police**

**BUSINESS FOR THE ARTS AWARD / Aurora History Museum**, award accepted by **T. Scott Williams, Museum Director**

**SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR / Aurora Warms the Night**, award accepted by **Brian Arnold, Executive Director**

**KEN MELCHER AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR AWARD / Michael Long, Director of Business Development**, Fairmount Cemetery

**Your Aurora Chamber of Commerce: Convener, Catalyst, Champion!**
An Inside Look at Chamber Committees

BUSINESS FOR THE ARTS

Touring the Possibilities at the Colorado Film School
Tuesday, January 9, 2018

The Colorado Film School is housed in an unassuming building on the Lowry campus of the Community College of Aurora. However, once inside and walking around, the possibilities seem to be endless – as witnessed by a group of Chamber members attending the January 9 Business for the Arts tour of the school.

Brian Steward, director of The Colorado Film School, began the tour in the theatre, with a briefing about the curriculum and a viewing of student work for commercials, through a partnership with Toyota.

Steward shared that he would like to be able to offer a four-year degree, but admitted that that would certainly require expanded facilities, faculty, and funding. “It’s good to dream, and we will keep that dream in mind — and we even have a plan for a four-year program, but for now we will continue to provide two and three year degrees that are educating incredible filmmakers and citizens of the world.”

CCA Arts and Communication: Inspiration and Perseverance Thrive
Tuesday, February 6, 2018

The Arts and Communication Department at Community College of Aurora is another hidden gem of educational opportunity in the community, and on February 6, 2018, a large group of Chamber ‘arts enthusiasts’ were treated to breakfast and a broad overview of what’s happening within the walls of CCA’s Arts Building on the CentreTech Campus.

Offering degrees and certificates in Art, Communication, Music, Theatre, and Humanities, CCA’s Arts and Communication Department is busy, productive, and innovative - and the faculty and staff are engaging and engaged.

The well-choreographed presentation included Lynette Jachowicz, PhD, Chair of Arts and Communication; Kate O’Donnell, Lead Art Faculty; Jonah Skurky-Thomas, Art Faculty; Vicki Graham, Lead Communication Faculty; Stacy D-Angelo, Director of Theatre; and Michael Pickering, Director of Music.

Pickering walked attendees through what he titled the “Long Strange Trip It’s Been,” which refers to the academic process required to create and receive approval for a new program within the department. Pickering began with a vision for a Music and Entrepreneurship Program in 2016, and is planning to roll the program out fall 2018.

His sound advice to all during such an long and complicated process is “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”

Dr. Jachozicz shared that the department is also interested in exploring engaging with the community through bringing in local artists to inspire and teach students, as well as finding internships for students with local businesses.

TRANSPORTATION

Better Transportation, Better Colorado: DRCOG and Legislative Updates
Wednesday, February 7, 2018

With continued economic growth and the growing population, Transportation has become a hot topic in Colorado. Granted that all of the other issues, including healthcare, housing, jobs, etc. are also of great importance — but how do we ‘get to’ all of these other priorities?

Transportation.

At the February 7, 2018 Transportation meeting, attendees were updated on the broad reaching transportation-related efforts and issues facing Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) and The Colorado Legislature in 2018.

DRCOG representatives Celeste Stragand, Regional TDM Program and Marketing Manager, and Steve Cook, Transportation Planning and Operations, gave a comprehensive overview of Way to Go, the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan, Transportation Improvement Plan, and other activities.

Stragand, who manages the Way to Go program, talked about how the program works across the region as a partnership between DRCOG and seven transportation management associations in the region. Goals of Way to Go include reducing traffic congestion, improving air quality, and reducing single-occupant vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled by 10 percent each by 2040.

Specific to Aurora, Cook noted recent DRCOG funded projects, including the 23rd Ave. Bicycle/Pedestrian Path, the Metro Center connection facilities, and Colfax Ave. bicycle/pedestrian project. In addition, Toll Gate Creek Trail and the Westerly Creek Connection are in progress. DRCOG continues to explore emerging transportation trends and initiatives such as Mobility Choice Blueprint, CDOT’s Road-X, autonomous vehicles, connected vehicles, ride hailing companies, package delivery methods, and improved human service transportation.

“Money to support all types of projects is always an issue,” said Cook. “But we continue to move forward and to best leverage the dollars we have and those we anticipate.”

Regarding Transportation issues in the Colorado State Legislature, Axiom Politics Legislative Director Melissa Nelson-Osse, and Legislative Advocate Michael Steppat talked about current and potential transportation bills.

To see a list of current bills in the Legislature that The Chamber is following, go to

[continued on page 4]
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, EDUCATION, AND ENERGY

Legislators’ Breakfast
Monday, January 9, 2018

The annual pre-session Legislators’ breakfast was held January 9 at the Community College of Aurora. The event hosted more than 100 attendees to meet and learn more about the Eastern Metro Legislators. Government Affairs committee chair, Su Ryden, former House Representative and small business owner, began by introducing Mayor of Aurora, Steve Hogan and newly-elected Mayor of Centennial, Stephanie Piko.

Ryden then introduced present Senators and House Representatives, who each had an opportunity to speak about their plans for the upcoming session. Legislators giving updates were: Senator Nancy Todd, SD28; Senator Rhonda Fields, SD29; Representative Mike Weissman, HD36; Representative Jovan Melton, HD41; Representative Dominique Jackson, HD42; and Representative Phillip Covarrubias, HD36.

Top priorities discussed were transportation, healthcare and safety, along with other pressing issues such as veterans’ affairs, economic development, taxes, and labor and employment.

Legislators who were invited but could not be present are: Senator Dominic Moreno, SD21; Senator Kevin Priola, SD25; Senator Daniel Kagan, SD26; Senator Jack Tate, SD27; Senator Lois Clark, SD31; Representative Dafna Michaelson-Jenet, HD30; Representative Joe Salazar, HD31; Representative Andrienne Benavidez, HD32; Representative Cole Wist, HD37; Representative Polly Lawrence, HD39; and Representative1 Janet Buckner, HD40.

And the Session has begun: Legislative Updates
Thursdays, January 18, February 1 and 15, 2018

Throughout the legislative session, the Government Affairs, Education, and Energy committee meets twice a month on the first and third Thursdays, to keep the committee informed as new bills are frequently being introduced.

The Eastern Metro Legislators are invited to attend and provide updates on issues they are supporting. Representatives from Axiom Politics, the Chamber’s Lobbyist, also attends meetings, providing information and updates on existing bills and their current positions at the Capitol.

The committee is often advised by Axiom Politics, and will sometimes take positions on bills if there has been a motion to support or oppose. The committee will then bring their position to The Chamber’s Board of Directors, to make the final vote.

To date, the committee has taken a position on three bills:

• HB 1001 – OPPOSE – FAMLI Family Medical Leave Insurance Program
• HB 1033 – SUPPORT – Employee Leave to Participate in Elections
• HB 1178 – OPPOSE – Hold Colorado Governments Accountable Sanctuary Jurisdictions

The committee has also discussed and are monitoring the following bills:

• HB 1060 Income Tax Deduction for Military Retirement Benefits
• HB 1034 Career and Tech Education Grant Program
• HB 1086 Comm. College Bachelor of Science Degree Nursing
• HB 1007 Substance Use Disorder Payment & Coverage
• HB 1009 Diabetes Drug Pricing Transparency Act
• HB 1067 Right to Rest Act
• SB 157 Colorado Women’s Veterans Act
• SB 001 Transportation Infrastructure Funding
• SB 007 Affordable Housing Tax Credit
• SB 001 Transportation Infrastructure Funding
• SB 013 Protect Homeowners & Deployed Military

To learn more about these bills visit the Axiom Politics bill tracking site at http://coloradocapitolwatch.com/bill-tracker-votes/0/391/2018/0/.

The Government Affair, Education, and Energy Committee is sponsored in part by Pinnacol Assurance.

WORK WELL 2.0 HEALTH SERIES

Yep - It’s a New Year!
Thursday, January 11, 2018

No better time than the first part of a new year to assess your health and the health of your business.

One of the most popular New Year’s resolutions is to get healthy or healthier, and The Chamber’s Work Well 2.0 Health Series is ready to help you - and your business - keep that resolution!

On January 11, 2018, Work Well Coalition members and potential members met to eat a hearty and healthy breakfast and to discuss challenges and opportunities in creating and maintaining a healthy workplace environment.

One topic of discussion was ‘workplace policies,’ and the perception of what a healthy policy means. Many people think of a policy as something they are required to do, and therefore it is not always met with a welcoming attitude. The group discussed that a healthy workplace policy is more about the workplaces’ culture and how a policy might also be called “guidelines,” to soften the impact, perception, and to gain better acceptance within the organization.

Jennifer Tellis, Worksite Wellness Specialist with Tri-County Health Department, and Coalition liaison to The Chamber also opened the conversation for attendees to share their ideas about how to creatively use funding provided by the grant. Some innovative ideas include massages, healthy food for meetings, purchasing plants for the workplace, a bring your dog to work day, and an aromatherapy room or white noise machines for loud work areas.

It was a lively discussion, interrupted only by a few stretch breaks and some laughter - which are both incredibly healthy.

Interested in more information about how to get involved in The Chamber’s Work Well 2.0 Health Series Coalition? Contact Jennifer Tellis, 720-357-9183, jtellis@tcch.org, or Mitzi Schindler, 303-344-1500, mitzi.schindler@aurorachamber.org.

Workplace Health Symposium
Wednesday, February 14, 2018

In place of the February Work Well 2.0 Health Series meeting, coalition and Chamber members were invited to attend the American Heart Association’s Workplace Health Symposium at the University of Denver Cable Center.

The Symposium featured keynote speaker Kyra Bobinet, MD, MPH, CEO of EngagedIN, a neuroscience-based design firm specialized in behavior change - who spoke about what truly drives employees to connect with their own well-being. “Because, you know, people don’t always do what they know they should,” states Dr. Bobinet.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COUNCIL / WOMEN IN BUSINESS

“You Don’t Belong:” The Tacit Messaging of Gender Micro-Inequities in the Workplace
Friday, January 12, 2018

The Diversity and Inclusion Council and the Women In Business Committee partnered in January 2018 to host Maria “Giugi” Carminati, JD, with Carminati Law PLLC: The Woman’s Lawyer, who presented on the topic of “You Don’t Belong: The Tacit Messaging of Gender Micro-Inequities in the Workplace.”

(continued on page 5)
Giugi began by sharing her background in the industry and how she came to be The Women’s Lawyer. Throughout the presentation she offered facts to support her data and story. Some examples are:

- Women make up approximately half of all law school enrollees (48.7 percent) and J.D.’s (47.3 percent), respectively. However, women make up:
  - 18 percent of equity partners, and
  - 18 percent of managing partners for the 200 largest firms in the U.S.
- In corporate law, women make up 24.8 percent of general counsel for Fortune 500 corporations

Giugi related these facts to her personal story, explaining why she decided to start her own practice. She also discussed micro-aggressions against women and how this has — and can — affect women in the workplace, in any field.

- Chester Pierce, MD, a Harvard Medical School psychiatry professor, first coined the term micro-aggressions in the 1970s, defining them as “brief and often subtle everyday events that denigrate individuals because they’re members of particular groups.”
- Micro-aggressions differ from ordinary aggressive acts in that they do not necessarily intend harm.
- Micro-aggressions are often subtle and can take on both verbal and nonverbal formats.
- Micro-aggressions have been utilized to explain subtle sexism and sex-based discrimination against women

Several studies have shown that gendered micro-aggressions cause detrimental consequences to women’s psychological and behavioral health as well as their careers

Giugi offered some vocabulary that many can relate to, including men who were present (as they laughed and nodded in agreement):

- Intrusive interrupting: intentionally or unintentionally usurping the speaker’s turn at talk with the intent of ceasing the speaker’s ability to finish organically
- Mansplaining: a man interrupting a woman to explain to her something that she actually knows more about than he does
- Manterrupting: unnecessary interruption of a woman by a man
- Bropropriating: a man taking a woman’s idea and taking credit for it

In her final thoughts, she gave advice on being proactive and how to acknowledge that gender bias is happening in the workplace:

- Be aware
- Recognize the existence of unconscious biases
- Counteract internalized sexism (trainings, seminars)
- Practice bystander intervention
- Credit work where credit is due

Inclusion Drives Innovation: Bridging Business and Ability
Friday, February 9, 2018

In a discussion about diversity, the topics of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation frequently come up, but it’s important to not forget all the characteristics that create a persons’ self being.

Jeff Sidders, MD, business outreach specialist with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, discussed the importance of capability in his presentation to the Diversity and Inclusion Council on February 9.

Dr. Sidders shared a bit about his personal background and how a brain tumor changed his life from practicing medicine, to becoming an advocate at the Department of Labor and Employment. He discussed how life can shift unexpectedly, and suddenly what a person used to be able to do, is no longer possible.

In his presentation Inclusion Drives Innovation: Bridging Business & Ability, he said “Diversity and Inclusion are good for the bottom line and absolutely necessary to remain relevant in today’s increasingly interconnected markets and global economy.” Dr. Sidders refers to the term Differently-Abled: a physical or mental condition that interferes with a person’s ability to walk, talk, see, hear, learn, speak, etc. He brings this up to make his point that disability is NOT a handicap. A handicap is the barrier. The example he gives is “stairs are the handicap. A person’s disability might be the inability to climb stairs.”

To be inclusive in a workplace, it is important to know these differences. He also acknowledges that disability affects people of all ages, race, gender, and backgrounds, and that nearly 20 percent of 54 million people in the U.S. have a disability. That’s approximately 1 in 5 individuals, in which many of these individual’s disabilities are hidden and not readily apparent. The likelihood of acquiring a disability increases with age. “This is the one minority group that any one of us can join at any time.”

Dr. Sidders provided some best practices on how to be inclusive in the workplace with differently-abled employees such as:

- Assist with recruiting
- Determine reasonable accommodations and assistive technology needs
- Promote a positive and barrier-free workplace
- Provide disability awareness training
- Provide consultation and technical assistance on the ADA
- Fund on-the-job training
- Offer an employer stipend
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)
- Provide coaching and training at the job site
- Follow-up with employer and employee
- Assist with current employees

He expressed that workers with disabilities represent a significant source of innovation and productivity and that a diverse and inclusive workforce is critical to success. Dr. Sidders concluded with a statement to encourage employers, “you now know a virtually untapped source of pre-screened qualified candidates.”

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Speed Networking Starts the New Year
Wednesday, January 24, 2018

As in 2017, The Young Professionals kicked off 2018 with Speed Networking – with a completely packed room!

Omada 7, formerly known as Extreme Relationship Management, hosted the event and offered participants step-by-step directions on how to accelerate business contacts by gathering in intimate groups of four, to share personal backgrounds and business goals. The session gave participants the opportunity to perfect their elevator speech, and to determine what information is necessary in a business conversation.

DEFENSE COUNCIL

Defense Council Social Launches Relationships at Launchpad Brewery
Wednesday, January 17, 2018


The brewery sponsored drinks and Jim ‘N Nicks Barb-B-Q sponsored food for the event. More than 50 people attended the social, including senior military and civilian leaders from various units on Buckley, and community/business leaders from the Eastern Metro area.
COMMITTEES (con’t)

DEFENSE COUNCIL (con’t)

New Buckley AFB Installation
Commander Reports on the
State of the Base

Wednesday, February 7, 2018

Colonel Troy Endicott, Commander of the
460th Space Wing & Buckley AFB Installation
Commander, addressed more than 225
democratic and community leaders at the annual
State of the Base luncheon on February 7. He thanked
everyone for the “partnership and friendship with
Team Buckley,” and said that the men and
women on Buckley AFB are “extremely grateful to have such tremendous
support from our federal, state, county and
local city officials.”

Colonel Endicott highlighted the men
and women of the 460th Space Wing, in addition
to the five major base partners that play such an
important role in the our nation’s defense –
Aerospace Data Facility Colorado, 140th Wing
(Air National Guard), Headquarters Air
Reserve Personnel Center, Naval Operational
Support Center, and the Army Aviation
Support Facility. He also announced that in
2017, Buckley’s fiscal impact on the local
economy was almost $915 million.

“Buckley AFB is the largest employment
center in Aurora and the operations carried
out there are critical to the safety of our
country,” said City of Aurora Mayor Steve
Hogan, who attended the event. “I absolutely
love having Buckley AFB in our community.”

The annual luncheon is jointly organized by
the Aurora Chamber Defense Council and the
Rotary Club of Aurora, and was supported this
year by table sponsors Colorado Technical
University, First Bank, Community College of
Aurora, Lockheed Martin, City of Aurora,
Aurora Police Department, Citywide Banks,
and the Rotary Club of Aurora.

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

18th Annual Women in Business
UNSUNG HERO LUNCHEON

Friday, February 9, 2018

The 18th Annual Women in Business Unsong Hero Luncheon on February 9 was a completely
sold out event, with nearly 250 in attendance at the DoubleTree by Hilton Denver-Aurora.

This year, the event recognized 20 dynamic
women for their contributions to their business
environment and the community, with Nancy
Freed, City of Aurora Deputy City Manager,
named the 2018 Women in Business Unsong Hero.

Finalists:
Marissa Banker, Colorado Technical University
Major Kinder Blacke, Air National Guard
140th Wing
Jan Jenkins, PhD, Aurora Mental Health Center
Jamie LaDuke, City of Aurora
Stephanie Sanchez, Mile High United Way

Nominees:
Theresa Bailey, UCHealth
Jennifer Dunn, FirstBank
Cathleen Ehrenfeucht, UCHealth
Kim Koch, Arapahoe County Government, CO
Vicki Mackie, Sites and Insights
Sarah McGregor, Aurora Symphony Orchestra
Chantashia Miller, NAACP Aurora Branch
Oma Mohamed, Aurora Chamber Volunteer
Aurora Ogg, Congressman Mike Coffman
Deb Peek, Sites and Insights
Chris Reefe, Adams County Government, CO
Megan Vizina, Colfax Community Network
Karen Willett, Air Reserve Personnel Center (ARPC)
Kim Wisneski, Pickens Technical College

Congratulations to these outstanding women who
deserve to be recognized for their contributions to the
community.

Diane Simard, Vice President/Board Member of
Bye Aerospace and a cancer survivor advocate, gave an
inspirational and moving speech. She told her story of
self-love, emphasizing that beauty does not come from hair
and makeup, but from within.

She made guests laugh then
brought them to tears by
describing the situation that
truly changed her life: Cancer.

She shared a quote by Maya Angelou,
“people will forget what you said, people will
forget what you did, but people will never
forget how you made them feel.”

The Unsung Hero Luncheon was generously
sponsored by Bye Aerospace, Westerra Credit
Union, FirstBank, and Colorado Technical
University. Table sponsors included The Aurora
Association of University Women, Aurora
Mental Health Center, City of Aurora, Citywide
Banks, Community Banks of Colorado,
Community College of Aurora, Metro Energy,
Mile High United Way, NAACP Aurora Branch,
Ray of Hope Cancer Foundation, Visit Aurora,
and Wells Fargo Bank.

Left to right: Jan Jenkins, PhD, Aurora Mental Health Center; Stephanie Sanchez, Mile High United Way; Nancy Freed, City of Aurora; Major
Kinder Blacke, Air National Guard 140th Wing; and Jamie LaDuke, City of Aurora. (Photo by Teri Mingilton, Elemintal Photography)
Aurora Public Schools Inaugural Job Fair

If your company recruits local high school students, you will want to attend Aurora Public Schools’ (APS) Inaugural Job Fair, April 24, 2018.

For this first-time event, APS is bringing top students from each high school together to connect with local employers. This free event, sponsored by the Hangar at Stanley, is formatted to offer a full day of 15-minute interviews with students as potential employees. Details are being finalized now, and space is limited; register soon to reserve your spot.

What: APS Inaugural Job Fair
When: April 24, 2018 8:00am-3:00pm
Where: The Hangar at Stanley, 2015 Dallas Street, Aurora, CO
Registration: To register, complete the online form: https://tinyurl.com/APSJobFair

Attending students will be Juniors and Seniors with an 80 percent average daily school attendance, who are on track to graduate (or graduating in May), and have a clean school discipline record. They will have completed resumes and will have been through interview skills prior to the event.

For more information, contact Josh Kusch, Specialist for Programs & Partnerships, at jfkusch@aps.k12.co.us or by phone at (303) 340-0859.

Stanwood Joins Visit Aurora

Visit Aurora continues to grow its team, most recently welcoming Brian-Douglas S. Stanwood as Group Sales Manager. In this role, Stanwood will identify and connect with meeting, convention, and association planners to drive overnight visitors to the city.

“I’ve experienced first-hand the shift in Colorado’s hospitality industry and I can say without a doubt, Aurora is truly a destination on the rise,” said Stanwood. “With the introduction of the Gaylord Rockies Resort and Convention Center in 2018, we’re continuing to gain ground in Colorado’s growing meetings market.”

Comcast Grants Awarded to 60 Colorado Organizations

Comcast in Colorado contributes approximately $15 million in financial and in-kind resources each year to programs and partnerships helping communities across the state.

thrive. These contributions include grants from the Comcast Foundation, which totaled more than $650,000 to 60 Colorado nonprofit organizations in 2017. The grants help grow the impact of programs aimed at expanding digital literacy, promoting service, and mentoring tomorrow’s leaders.

Chamber members receiving grant funding in 2017 were Aurora Public Schools Foundation and the Children’s Hospital Colorado Foundation.

“The important work of these nonprofit organizations ensures that Colorado is a better place to call home,” said Rich Jennings, senior vice president of Comcast Mountain West Region.

Jim ‘N Nick’s Receives Purple Heart

Jim ‘N Nick’s Bar-B-Q received the designation of a Military Order of the Purple Heart Restaurant for their years of support of the Military. They are the first restaurant in Colorado to receive the distinction. The designation was celebrated on January 4 at the Jim ‘N Nick’s in Northfield, 8264 E. 49th Ave., Denver, CO 80266.

Avitus Group Launches New Service

Avitus Group recently launched Avitus Professional Acceleration, offering training and consulting services designed to help companies develop their managers and employees, including how to:

- better communicate
- deal with difficult employees
- identify and prevent harassment
- lead employees
- manage time and stress
- serve customers, and
- reduce risk in the workplace, particularly during active shooter events

“Avitus Group continues to expand our services to meet businesses’ ever-changing needs,” said Ken Baister, president of Avitus Business Services, Inc. “Avitus Professional Acceleration will enable companies to maximize their greatest assets, their employees.”

Interested businesses can get a preview of Avitus Professional Acceleration courses and meet the trainers at two events in spring 2018. The company is holding Active Shooter training April 10, and Dealing with Difficult People training May 22 in the Eastern Metro area in partnership with the Aurora Chamber of Commerce.

Wow Events’ Jim Berz Auctions a Successful Night for AHA

Jim Berz of Wow Events Denver, served as the fundraiser/auctioneer at the American Heart Association’s Denver Heart Ball on January 27 – which raised more than $1 million, including $100k from the live auction. Wow Events Denver is the sister company of Latitude Sports Marketing.

Mike Landess, longtime local personality and CW2 TV News Anchor hosted the event, and said “Auctioneer Jim Berz was outstanding!”

Avitus Group Acceleration

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Jim Berz of Wow Events Denver, live auctioneering at the American Heart Association’s Denver Heart Ball

were allowed to take photos on the set and were then escorted back to the lobby by Mike Landess, who then hopped on the bus and thanked us once more for stopping by!

When the bus dropped us off back at the Municipal Center, we were ready for class photos and lunch. After a delicious meal sponsored by Adolfson & Peterson Construction, we were ready for our Aurora 8 experience.

Different stations were manned as the groups were put through a studio rotation.

While half of the class was sitting in the control room, working the cameras on the set or actually being filmed, the other portion was treated to an engaging lecture from Jamie Alvarez from GBSM on messaging and communication.

While watching each group go through the process had its humorous moments, there was a great amount of information being absorbed. Watching our body language on camera, hearing ourselves respond to different types of questions, and understanding the importance of preparation for an interview, were all impactful. It was easy to see how much one could struggle without having a foundation already prepared. These experiences, combined with the earlier tour, provided valuable insight that should prove useful throughout our many careers.
Ribbon cuttings mean business: 270 jobs

Aurora Police Department District 2 Station
6 North Abilene Street, Aurora, CO 80012

On January 10, 2018, the new Aurora Police Department District 2 Station was dedicated with a ribbon cutting ceremony, with left to right, Chief Nick Metz, Captain (Ret.) Bob Stef, and Administrative Specialist Mary Johnson. APD District 2 includes most of northeast Aurora, and is divided into eight areas. District 2 also has a team of Police Area Representatives (PAR), working with local businesses, schools, and residents to maintain quality of life. (1/10/18) https://www.auroragov.org/residents/public_safety/police/district_2/ (303) 739-6050

Tangible
14200 East Alameda Ave., Aurora, CO 80012

Tangible is a curated collective, showcasing up-and-coming e-commerce purveyors, innovative brands, and authentic physical interaction. Tangible brings a handpicked online items to a traditional retail environment, allowing consumers to discover what’s next, now. Tangible opened their doors with Aurora Mayor Pro-Tem Marsha Berzins, Town Center at Aurora’s General Manager and Chamber Board Member Don Cloutier, Tangible’s General Manager Noemi Winn, and Chamber Ambassadors and staff. (1.17.18) https://towncenterataurora.com/stores/tangible (614) 632-4808

ProteinHouse - Aurora
6790 S. Cornerstar Way, Unit A, Aurora, CO 80016

ProteinHouse celebrates their ribbon cutting and grand opening with Founder Larissa Reis, Director of Franchise Operations Robert Wank, Director of web, Media and Marketing Corey Thomas, and General Managers Thais and Andrei Krivokrasov, members of the community and Chamber staff. ProteinHouse is committed to making every aspect of your healthy dining experience the best it can be every time, by eating clean. It’s the ProteinHouse promise to provide an inviting, comfortable, modern, health food restaurant atmosphere, coupled with superior, healthy dining – featuring a variety of uncommon yet unbelievably delicious gluten-free and vegetarian menu items served and prepared by a friendly and courteous staff. (1.6.18) https://www.protein-house.com/aurora-co/ (303) 690-4921
Springhill Suites by Marriott – Denver Airport
18350 East 68th Ave., Denver, CO 80249

Springhill Suites by Marriott – Denver Airport opened their doors to the community for an unveiling celebration and ribbon cutting of their completed renovation. Included in the celebration were Centennial Mayor Stephanie Piko, Springhill Suites General Manager Brian Elliott, and Chamber Ambassadors and staff. Springhill Suites by Marriott – Denver Airport renovated 125 studio suites to provide comfort and functionality with upscale furnishings, separate living and sleeping areas, and kitchenettes including a microwave and mini-refrigerator. The property also features a new 250 sq. ft. boardroom. (2.8.18) http://www.marriott.com/hotels/hotels/denda-springhill-suites-denver-airport/ (303) 371-9400

Spinning the Year off Right!

On January 31, 2018, Chamber board and members were invited to CycleBar Southlands to “sweat off the stress” and bond at a spin class. CycleBar Southlands hosted the Pre-Opening Private Social for The Chamber, providing an opportunity for members to experience a premium indoor cycling workout class. CycleBar is located in Southlands at 6300 S. Main St., Unit N103, Aurora, CO 80016. (1.31.18) https://southlands.cyclebar.com (303) 974-6480.

CoraFaye’s Café
16251 East Colfax Ave. #210 Aurora, CO 80011

CoraFaye’s Café, Southern Cook’n and Soul Food in the Rockies, recently moved to Laredo and Airport Boulevard in a White Dome building. CoraFaye’s Café is known for their fried chicken and has been featured on Diners, Drive-Ins & Dives, was nominated as #1 Homestyle in Colorado by USA Today Best, and won “Best of Fried Chicken” by the 5280 Magazine/Westword. Have fun eating your way through food history with family recipes dating over 100 years. Owner, Priscilla Smith, celebrates their ribbon cutting with members of the community, staff, Chamber Board, Ambassadors, and Chamber staff. (1/10/18) www.corafayes.com (303) 333-5551
For 42 years, The Aurora Chamber of Commerce has joined with the business community in recognizing and honoring American service members assigned to units in the Aurora and Denver Metro area, through the Annual Armed Forces Recognition Luncheon. This prestigious event, sponsored by Colorado Technical University and coordinated by The Chamber’s Defense Council, recognizes the growing number of active duty service members in the area. It also reaches out to those who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

The luncheon includes an award ceremony for our Military Persons of the Year - 12 individuals who have been selected by their service branches for their outstanding achievements during the past year. There’s also a category for our Commonwealth Partners. Additionally, we recognize a member of the community who has contributed significantly to building greater understanding and support of the military with the Bob Cardenas Award.

“This luncheon is our way of recognizing members of the armed forces - Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard — throughout Northern Colorado including the Denver-Aurora area,” said Chamber President Kevin Hougen. “They make a great contribution to our community and to our nation.”

Nearly 600 people attend the luncheon including around 250 uniformed guests from military organizations throughout the area. Nominees for the Military Persons of the Year are chosen by their units and the twelve winners represent active duty, commonwealth partners, National Guard, and Reserve components from all the services.

The 2018 Armed Forces Recognition Luncheon will be held at the Doubletree Hotel Denver, 3203 Quebec St., Denver CO 80207 on May 4, 2018. Doors open at 11 a.m. with a formal flag ceremony to kick off the luncheon at 11:45 a.m. This year’s Keynote speaker is Brigadier General (retired) Ron Huntley - http://www.af.mil/About-Us/Biographies/Display/ Article/108866/brigadier-general-ronald-l-huntley/

Additional information and sponsorship opportunities are available on the chamber website at: http://business.aurorachamber.org/events/details/42nd-annual-armed-forces-recognition-luncheon-96403 or by contacting Rene Simard, rene.simard@aurorachamber.org at the Aurora Chamber or by calling 303-344-1500.
That Phone Conversation Isn’t Going Anywhere, But Your Car Is

Have you ever arrived at your destination with no recollection of the trip, missed an off-ramp exit, or not see the brake lights in front of you? These are a form of distracted driving called inattention blindness.

Drivers using cell phones look at, but fail to see certain events, it’s impossible to perform a safe response such as braking or maneuvering the steering wheel to avoid a crash. Just the act of using a cell phone while driving, even hands-free, increases your crash risk by 4 times.

In 2015, Colorado saw a minimum of 40 distracted-driving crashes every day. From 2014 to 2016 the percentage of Americans who owned a cell phone rose from 75 to 81 percent. Therefore, your chances of interacting with a distracted driver each time you get behind the wheel is significant.

What can you do? Make a pledge to keep your eyes on the road, your hands on the wheel, and your mind on driving:

• Put your cell phone in the glove compartment while driving
• Install an app on your phone that tells callers you are driving and will text or call back when you have arrived at your destination

• Place your device in a cell phone slip that deactivates your phone while driving
• Be a positive role model for your children who watch your driving behaviors every time they get in the car with you

For more information or to schedule a free one hour presentation on distracted driving, contact Laurie Lovedale, Injury Prevention Specialist with University of Colorado Hospital Trauma Services at 720-848-5165 or Laurie.lovedale@uchealth.org.

Member Renewals

225 Self Storage
ACA Insurance LTD - Peter Lee
Adams 14 Education Foundation
Adams County Board of Commissioners
Albertsons Safeway
Allegro Marketing/PrintMail (Flatirons Marketing)
Alpine Carstar Auto Body
Alzheimer’s Association Colorado Chapter
American Automation Building Solutions
American Sentinel University
Anadarko Petroleum Corp
Arapahoe County Board of Commissioners
Arapahoe County Early Childhood Council
Arapahoe County Security Center, Inc.
Arapahoe/Douglas Works! Workforce Center
Aurora Asian/Pacific Community Partnership
Aurora Association of Realtors
Aurora Family YMCA
Aurora Housing Authority
Bennett, Town of
Best Western Plus Gateway Inn & Suites
Boxing Frog Marketing LLC
Boys Hope Girls Hope
Bradley M. Pierce Legal Services, Inc.
Centennial Airport/A.C. Public Airport Auth.
Centennial, City of
City of Aurora - City Management
Citywide Banks - Mississippi
Cold Stone Creamery
CollegeAmerica
Colorado Academy of Family Physicians
Colorado Early Colleges Aurora
Colorado State Bank and Trust Mortgage
Comcast
CommonGround Golf Course
Community College of Aurora
Craig Wagner Trial Law
Education Foundation for the Colorado National Guard
EMO Trans Inc Regional
Equity Real Estate - Carri Cameron
Euflora
Fairfield Inn & Suites - Denver Aurora/Medical Center
Fairmount Funeral Home & Cemetery
Finish Line Car Wash
Food Bank of the Rockies
Gateway Business Park/ PaulsCorp
Gaylord of the Rockies/Rida Development
Good Chemistry
Great Western Printing, Inc.
Hampton Inn - DIA
Harvard Square Retirement Community
Haynie & Company
Holiday Inn Express Denver/ Aurora-Medical Center
Hyatt House Denver Airport
Hyatt Regency Aurora-Denver Conference Center
Ill D Electric
KeyBank - S. Buckley Rd.
King Soopers - Corporate Office
La Cueva Restaurant
LeGare, Bob
Len Lyall Chevollet, Inc.
Lotus School For Excellence
Lowry Conference Center
M & M Auto Reconditioning, Inc.
Metro Community Provider Network, Inc.
Nations Roof of Colorado
Navy Federal Credit UNION
Northrop Grumman
Oakwood Homes, LLC
Pachner Company, The
Parker Adventist Hospital
Parkside Village Retirement Resort
Pinnacol Assurance
Pradia Collaborative Solutions
Salud Family Health Center
Singing Hills Landscape, Inc
Six & Six, Inc.
South Metro Fire Rescue
Southlands
Springhill Suites Denver at Anschutz Medical Campus
Status Building Solutions
Sunny Homes & Associates, Inc.

New Members

Ark & Oak, LLC
AT&T Spring Mobile - Josh Hicks
CareNow Urgent Care
Coloradoans for Aarestad
Colorado Department of Labor and Employment - Div. of Vocational Rehabilitation / Jeff Sidders M.D.
Community Enterprise Development Services (CEDS)
Crowne Plaza Hotel Denver International Airport
EIS Solutions, Inc.
Evan Your IT Guy
Fitzmartin Consulting
Front Range Pharmalogic
Gilmore Construction
Grand Canyon University
HomeGuard Roofing & Restoration
Mile High Workshop
Mutual of Omaha Bank
Numana SEO / Numana Medical
Peak Properties Group
PhotoSmith Colorado
Web Wellness Botanicals

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Aurora, CO 80012
303-344-1500 • Fax 303-344-1564
website: www.aurorachamber.org
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\(^1\) The ability to reduce time in school and/or reduce tuition depends on the number of Fast Track exams successfully passed. Fast Track program credits are unlikely to transfer. Not all programs are eligible for 30% reduction in time and/or money.


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