



NEWSLINE *February 2025*

A Publication of the Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce

The Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce supports our members and our region as a partner for business, workforce, and tourism development.

2025 STARTS OFF STRONG FOR THE CHAMBER AND ITS MEMBERS



Left: Marcus Failing, owner of The Shaggy Moose Barbershop, 300 N. Comrie Avenue in Johnstown, welcomed family, friends, Chamber members, and elected officials to his January 17 ribbon cutting event. Find more information about his services and his business on their [Facebook page](#).



Above: The Chamber's Governmental Affairs Committee held its Legislative Breakfast last month and were happy that over 100 Chamber members participated in this important event. Thank you to [HFM CTE Culinary Arts](#) students who prepared the wonderful breakfast. The elected officials who attended are pictured with Chamber officials directly above, from left, Governmental Affairs Committee Chair David Jankowski, Senator Patricia Fahy, Assemblyman Robert Smullen, Assemblyman Matthew Simpson, Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh, and the Chamber's Anne Boles. Read a partial transcript from the event on pages 18 and 19.



Above: A great crowd joined the Chamber at [The Eccentric Club](#) to help ring in the New Year and celebrate the holidays at the Business After Hours on January 16.



Message from the Executive Director

Dear Chamber Members,

2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair—Geoff Peck, *Nathan Littauer Hospital & Nursing Home*

Vice Chair—Jeffrey Methven, *St. Mary's Healthcare*

Secretary—Carl Marucci, *Community Bank*

Treasurer—David Jankowski, *Joley Re Holding Corp.*

Elizabeth Bridge, *Liberty ARC*

Seth Brown, *Brown's Ford*

Ashley Capobianco, *Townsend Leather Company, Inc.*

Christie Davis, *Fulton-Montgomery Community College*

Ashley Delaney, *The Wesson Group*

Mike DiMezza, *HFM Career & Technical Education*

Janine Dykeman, *Mental Health Association in Fulton & Montgomery Counties*

Ryan Faville, *Stewart's Shops*

Ryan Heck, *Alpin Haus*

Colleen Ioele-DeCristofaro, *Howard Hanna Real Estate*

Peter Lawrence, *The Family Counseling Center*

Matt Ossenfort, *Gallagher*

Mike Schaus, *THNK Tank Media/WENT Radio*

Janet Stanley, *Lee Shops at Wagner Square*

CHAMBER STAFF

Anne Boles, *Executive Director*

Mark Bolebruch, *Finance*

Jennifer Hammons, *Special Projects Assistant*

Natalie May, *Business & Education Partnership Coordinator*

Terry Swierzowski, *Newsline Editor/Reporter*

Nicole Walrath-VanAlstyne, *Director of Workforce Development*

THE FULTON MONTGOMERY CHAMBER IS A MEMBER:

- ◆ [Business Council of New York State](#)
- ◆ [Center For Economic Growth—Capital Region](#)
- ◆ [Chamber Alliance of New York State](#)
- ◆ [Fulton County Center for Regional Growth](#)
- ◆ [Fulton County Farm Bureau](#)
- ◆ [Montgomery County Farm Bureau](#)
- ◆ [New York State Farm Bureau](#)

As we move into February, I am excited to continue working alongside our community's incredible businesses and organizations. This month, we celebrate not only the heart of winter but the heart of our region—our resilient, innovative, and engaged business community.

Reflecting on 2024's Progress January was a time of reflection, and as I look back at the strides we've made, I'm proud of all the accomplishments and growth we saw in the Fulton Montgomery Region. Despite the challenges of the past year, our businesses have remained strong, adaptive, and eager to support one another. Whether through collaborative partnerships, new local initiatives, or the success of community events, our region continues to thrive because of your dedication.

Looking Ahead: Exciting Opportunities in 2025 As we look to the year ahead, there are many exciting events and opportunities to look forward to in the coming months. In particular, we are already planning for our annual Business Expo and Awards Celebration on April 3rd, which will feature celebrating our winners and networking opportunities for businesses of all sizes. This event is a great way to showcase your products, connect with other members, and share your unique contributions to our community.

Valentine's Day & Winter Promotions: In the spirit of love and community, we will be sharing Winter and Valentine's Day promotions. We have a lot to offer in our region, all year round! We encourage local businesses to participate by offering discounts, special events, or unique products that bring people together and support our regional economy. Please let us know what you are planning, and we will help spread the word.

Your Voice is Powerful: As always, the strength of our advocacy efforts lies in your involvement. As Chamber members, your stories, feedback, and needs help guide the direction of our efforts. I encourage you to reach out to me or our team with any concerns or policy challenges you're facing. Whether it's a local issue affecting your day-to-day operations or a broader legislative concern, we want to hear from you. Together, we can ensure our region's collective voice is heard and understood by our local, state, and federal officials.

Community Heroes: Finally, I want to take a moment to recognize the extraordinary efforts of several of our members who have gone above and beyond in supporting our community. Whether it's through charitable contributions, volunteer work, or providing critical services, these businesses are truly the heart of our region. Keep an eye on our social media pages and website for volunteer fairs that celebrate the wonderful work being done by our fellow Chamber members, and how you can help with the efforts! *(continued on page 9)*

Welcome New Members

January 2025

THE SHAGGY MOOSE BARBERSHOP

300 North Comrie Avenue, Johnstown

(518) 774-2554 | [Facebook](#)

Barbershop featuring services such as haircuts, fades, beard shaping and shaves, head shaves, face shaves, facials and more. They also specialize in kid's haircuts and certificates for kids for their first-time cuts! Appointments are appreciated by phone or on booksy.com (link [here](#)), and walk-ins are also welcomed!

PURPLE GLASS HEALING ARTS LLC

64 East Fulton Street, Gloversville

(518) 224-2583 | purpleglasshealingarts.com

The area's wellness center providing flexible, affordable office, teaching and meeting space for licensed and certified wellness facilitators. A beautiful, comfortable, centrally located, easily accessed, safe space offering short and long-term options to self-employed providers. We offer a variety of wellness and self-care services and personal growth classes and workshops to the community and visitors alike. Tour today and feel the inspiration of possibility!

ZONTA CLUB OF MONTGOMERY-FULTON COUNTIES AREA

(518) 848-6364 | <http://zontadistrict2.org>

Not-for-profit organization whose mission is to Build A Better World for Women and Girls. With 26,000 members belonging to 1,100 clubs in 63 countries, Zontians volunteer their time, talents and support to local and international service projects focusing on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

CONVENIENCE/DELI STORE, INC.

98 Spring Street, Gloversville

(518) 752-5050 | [Facebook](#)

Convenience store/deli that offers the widest variety of specialty and name-brand grocery, tobacco/vape products in the area. We are a deli/confectionary that has a variety of hot/cold foods, candy, snacks, cold drinks, and grab and go products such as toiletries, paper products and more. Our inventory includes a huge variety of lighters, ashtrays, cases and gift sets. Come check us out!

REGULATED HUMAN COMPLIANCE, LLC

308 Church Street, Amsterdam

(518) 281-1678 | <https://www.RHCompliance.com>

Assisting small businesses comply with the New York State Shield Act which was signed into law in 2019. We are experienced professionals who specialize in areas including Cyber Security Training, HIPAA Training, Written Policy Documentation, and more. We have the skills and knowledge to help businesses of all sizes navigate the many different compliance requirements.

MEMBERSHIP MESSAGE

Anne Boles

Happy February! As we continue to work toward a prosperous 2025, we're excited to help you grow your business and maximize your membership benefits with the Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce.

New Marketing Materials- The Chamber has been hard at work updating our marketing materials to better showcase the value of your membership and support your marketing efforts.

Maximizing Your Membership Benefits

As we move further into the year, we want to remind you of the many benefits that come with being a member of the Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce. Whether you're a new member or a long-time partner, we're committed to providing you with valuable tools, connections, and opportunities to help your business thrive.

Here's a quick reminder of some of the top membership benefits:

- **Networking Opportunities** – Attend Chamber events like ribbon cuttings, The Annual Awards and Business Expo, Workplace Wednesdays, and industry-specific gatherings to meet fellow business owners and community leaders.
 - **Exclusive Marketing Opportunities** – In addition to our new marketing materials, we offer members exclusive advertising opportunities in our newsletter, website, and Destination One (located at the Fulton County Visitor's Center).
 - **Advocacy Support** – We're here to help amplify your voice. The Chamber advocates for our members at the local, state, and federal levels, helping you navigate policies that impact your business.
 - **Chamber Member Directory** – Our online member directory is an excellent tool for visibility, helping customers find your business quickly and easily.
- If you haven't yet explored all the membership benefits available to you, please don't hesitate to reach out. We are here to help ensure that you're taking full advantage of everything the Chamber has to offer.



MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

January 2025

Thank you for your continued support!



41+ YEARS

- Gabriel Contractors of Amsterdam—59
- Brown’s Ford of Johnstown—53
- WEST & Co, CPAs, PC—52
- Ruby & Quiri, Inc.—51
- National Grid—51
- SWANY America Corp.—51
- Castiglione Gem Jewelers—51
- C. T. Male Associates—51
- NBT Bank—51
- Kingsboro Lumber—51
- Wood, Seward & McGuire & Sacco, LLP—51
- Apollo Northeast Sales and Service—50
- KeyBank—50
- Stewart’s Shops—50
- First Presbyterian Church - Johnstown—49
- Romana’s Italian Kitchen—45
- Santos Construction—43
- Brown Coach—42
- Philip Beckett, CPA, PC—41
- Spagnola & Spagnola, Accounting Firm, LLC—41

31 – 40 YEARS

- Gary DiSanto-Rose, DMD—40
- JAG Manufacturing, Inc.—38
- Amsterdam Auto Parts, Inc. (CarQuest) - 38
- City of Johnstown—37
- Gloversville Enlarged School District—37
- Family Counseling Center of Fulton County—36
- Kucel Contractors, Inc.—36
- Fulton County Sheriff—35
- Jones and Naudin Leather/Booth + Co.—35
- Holland Meadows Golf Course—35
- Partner’s Pub—34
- Town of Broadalbin—34
- Broadalbin Manufacturing Corp.—34
- Broadalbin-Perth Central School District—34
- Adirondack Lakefront Retreat on the Great Sacandaga, LTD—34
- MacKenzie and Tallent, Attorneys at Law—33
- Pineview Commons Home for Adults—33
- Lanzi’s on the Lake, Inc.—32
- Northville Public Library—31
- Peking In Johnstown Corp.—31

21 – 30 YEARS

- Abdella & Sise Law Firm—30
- Colonial Overhead Doors—30
- Townsend Leather Company, Inc.—29
- Fiber Conversion—28
- Sport Island Pub—28
- Daily Gazette Co., Inc.—27
- First Choice Financial Federal Credit Union—27
- Town of Charleston—27
- Village of Fultonville—27
- Village of Nelliston—27
- Town of Root—27
- Gloversville Johnstown Joint Wastewater Treatment Facilities—27
- City of Gloversville—27
- Eccentric Club—27
- Smith & Smith Contractors, Inc.—26

RIVER RIDGE LIVING CENTER
Rehabilitation & Long Term Care

100 Sandy Drive, Amsterdam, NY 12010
518.843.3503 • RiverRidgeLC.com

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLE’S LIVES
At River Ridge Living Center
We offer a comprehensive array of clinical Services

Our Therapeutic Recreation Program provides a variety of stimulating activities to fully engage our residents - fostering new friendships and enhancing well-being and happiness.

In our Rehabilitation Department our goal is to help you regain your strength to get you back home as soon as possible.

*"We are dedicated to enhancing the life of our residents."
If you are a team player, compassionate and reliable,
a career at River Ridge Living Center is for you!*



MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

January 2025

Thank you for your continued support!



- KeyBank—26
- Plaza’s Italian Bistro—26
- Say It With Signs—26
- Empire State Development—26
- Putman Enterprises—26
- The Glove Theatre—25
- F-M-S Workforce Development Board—25
- J. H. Buhrmaster Co., Inc.—24
- Roger’s Family Orchards—24
- Cranberry Cove Marina, Inc.—24
- Euphrates, Inc.—23
- Beckmann Converting, Inc.—22
- Fuel-N-Food—22
- Sacandaga Valley Arts Network—22
- St. Mary’s Healthcare—21

11 – 20 YEARS

- St. Johnsville Chamber of Commerce—20
- Community Bank—18
- Perfection Cleaning Service—18

- Arkell Museum and Canajoharie Library—17
- McDonald’s of Amsterdam/Fultonville/Palatine Bridge—17
- Life Christian Center Church—16
- Law Office of Heidi Gifford—15

1 – 10 YEARS

- OB1 Insurance Agency Inc.—10
- Mohawk Valley Economic Development District, Inc.—10
- Johnstown Historical Society—10
- Studio Herbage Florist—9
- Community Loan Fund of the Capital Region Inc.—6
- Dollar General Distribution—6
- Mohawk Harvest Cooperative Market—4
- St. Peter’s Health Partners—3
- McClary Media, Inc.—3
- Johnson Hall State Historic Site—3
- Salute to Service Veterans Coalition, Inc.—2
- Amsterdam Clock Tower—1



Sign up for a FREE employer account & post job openings and internship opportunities!

Any questions, please contact us at FMPartner@fmcc.edu

College Central Network



www.CollegeCentral.com/fmcc

College Central Network®
Ask around. The Network works.®



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING CHAMBER MEMBERS WHO APPEAR ON ALBANY BUSINESS REVIEW'S BOOK OF LISTS 2025

The *Albany Business Review* says of these companies, "Companies on The Lists are some of the largest and most prominent businesses of their kind in the region. These are companies to work with, work for, and to watch. The Book can be used to find the businesses and companies you should know in the Capital Region." More information can be found at <https://www.bizjournals.com/albany/datacenter/lists>

Health Insurance Agencies

- #4 – **Gallagher** - local health insurance premium volume in 2023 - \$300 million
- #5 – **OneDigital** - local health insurance premium volume in 2023 - \$76 million

Outpatient Surgery Centers

- #2 - **St. Peter's Surgery and Endoscopy Center** – surgical procedures 19,280
- #16 – **Johnstown Surgery Center (Nathan Littauer Hospital)** - surgical procedures done in 2023 – 912

Hospitals & Hospital Systems

- #2 - **St. Peter's Health Partners** – 208,062 patient days in 2023
- #4 – **St. Mary's Healthcare Amsterdam** – 25,480 patient days in 2023
- #6 – **Nathan Littauer Hospital & Nursing Home** – 8,796 patient days in 2023

Nursing Homes

- #16 – **St. Mary's Healthcare/Wilkinson Residential Health Care Facility** – 160 certified beds

Physician Practice Groups

- #2 – **St. Peter's Health Partners Medical Associates** – 477 local physicians
- #8 – **St. Mary's Healthcare Amsterdam** – 52 local physicians
- #10 – **Nathan Littauer Primary/Specialty Care Centers** – 37 local physicians
- #12 – **New York Oncology Hematology PC** – 34 local physicians

Manufacturers

- #14 – **Electro-Metrics Corporation** - \$11.1 million local revenue in 2023

Engineering Firms

- #9 – **C.T. Male Associates Engineering, Surveying, Architecture, Landscape Architecture**

- & **Geology DPC** - \$14.1 million local billings in 2023

Largest Distribution Centers

- #1 – **Target Distribution Center – Amsterdam** – size of facility in square feet 1,848,871
- #4 – **SLA Transport Inc./Universal Warehousing Inc./Ace Heavy Duty Repair** – size of facility 1,000,000 sf
- #5 – **Walmart Distribution Center No. 6069** – size of facility 868,000 sf
- #17 – **DHL Supply Chain/Walmart Distribution Center No. 9169** – size of facility 266,400 sf

Colleges and Universities

- #10 - **Fulton-Montgomery Community College** – local enrollment 1,946 in 2023

Women-Owned Businesses

- #7 – **AccuStaff (Rafferty Enterprises Inc.)** - \$14.12 million in local revenue in 2023

Fastest Growing Companies (Small)

- #5 – **Electro-Metrics Corporation** – 3-year local revenue growth 52.05%

Fastest Growing Companies (Medium)

- #13 – **Alpin Haus** – 3-year local revenue growth 27.52%
- #14 – **Sunmark Credit Union** – 3-year local revenue growth 20.85%

Fastest Growing Companies (Large)

- #4 – **Stewart's Shops Corp.** – 3-year revenue growth 45.44%
- #11 – **CDPHP** – 3-year revenue growth 20.87%
- #12 – **MVP Health Care** – 3-year revenue growth 20%

Internships

- #15 – **C.T. Male Associates** – 6 interns in 2024
- #16 – **NBT Bank** – 5 interns in 2024

Albany Business Review Book of Lists 2025 continued

Private Sector Employees

- #6 – **Stewart’s Shops Corp.** – 3,765 total local staffing (1977 FT; 1788 PT)
 #14 – **St. Mary’s Healthcare Amsterdam** – 1,635 total local staffing (1,067 FT; 568 PT)
 #17 – **CDPHP** – 1,272 total local staffing
 #18 – **MVP Health Care** – 953 total local staffing

Privately Held Companies and Nonprofits

- #2 – **MVP Health Care** – Capital Region revenue in 2023 \$3.19 billion
 #3 – **CDPHP** – Capital Region revenue \$2.9 billion
 #5 – **Stewart’s Shops Corp.** – Capital Region revenue \$2.5 billion
 #6 – **St. Peter’s Health Partners** – Capital Region revenue \$1.67 billion
 #20 – **St. Mary’s Healthcare Amsterdam** – Capital Region revenue \$166.67 million
 #25 – **Nathan Littauer Hospital & Nursing Home** – Capital Region revenue \$113.37 million
 #29 – **Alpin Haus** – Capital Region revenue \$93.63 million
 #39 – **Sunmark Credit Union** – Capital Region revenue \$72.44 million

Chambers of Commerce

- #6 – **Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce** – total gross revenue in 2023 \$521,397

CPA Firms

- #9 – **WEST & Co., CPAs, PC** – 12 local CPAs

Largest State Contracts

- #8 – **MVP Health Plan** – contract value \$564 million

Logistics Companies

- #3 – **SLA Transport Inc./Universal Warehouse Inc./Ace Heavy Duty Repair** – 90 full-time local employees

Residential Real Estate Firms

- #1 – **Howard Hanna Real Estate Services** - \$1.01 billion local sales volume in 2023
 #3 – **Coldwell Banker Prime Properties** - \$709.65 million local sales volume in 2023

Banks

- #1 – **KeyBank** – Capital Region market share 24.62%
 #4 – **NBT Bank** – Capital Region market share 6.32%
 #16 – **Community Bank** – Capital Region market share 1.67%

- #17 – **1st National Bank of Scotia** – Capital Region market share 1.49%

Commercial Mortgage Lenders

- #4 – **NBT Bank** – Capital Region commercial loan volume in 2023 - \$161 million
 #7 – **Community Bank** – Capital Region commercial loan volume in 2023 - \$90.14 million
 #14 – **Sunmark Credit Union** – Capital Region commercial loan volume in 2023 - \$48.13 million
 #15 – **1st National Bank of Scotia** – Capital Region commercial loan volume in 2023 - \$25 million

Credit Unions

- #2 – **Sunmark Credit Union** 90,227 members
 #6 – **First Choice Financial Federal Credit Union** 13,324

Residential Mortgage Lenders

- #11 – **Sunmark Credit Union** – residential mortgage loan volume generated locally in 2023 - \$63.56 million
 #13 – **NBT Bank** - residential mortgage loan volume generated locally in 2023 - \$36.28 million

SBA Lenders (Small Business Administration Lenders)

- #2 – **NBT Bank** – local SBA loan volume in 2023 \$4.35 million
 #7 – **KeyBank** – local SBA loan volume in 2023 \$1.53 million

Property & Casualty Insurance Agencies

- #1 – **Gallagher** – local P&C insurance volume in 2023 \$390 million

Largest Fundraising Events

- #16 - **The EVENT (Nathan Littauer Hospital Foundation)** - \$177,000 net revenue raised in 2023



(continued from page 2—Executive Director’s Message)

As always, I am here to support you and advocate for the success of your business. If there’s anything we can do to assist you, please don’t hesitate to reach out. Thank you for your continued partnership, and I look forward to an exciting and prosperous year ahead.

Warm regards,
 Anne Boles, Executive Director
 Fulton Montgomery Regional Chamber of Commerce

DANELI PARTNERS ANNOUNCES NEW APPOINTMENTS

Daneli Partners, a leadership development and executive coaching firm dedicated to developing leaders, igniting their energy, and helping to drive business success, is pleased to announce the following appointments.

Joshua Noble, joins the team as leadership development specialist. Noble is an artist and executive coach with a commitment to fostering equitable learning environments, proven expertise in decolonizing classical pedagogy, and successful implementation of inclusive teaching practices and transformative educational methodologies.



He has produced live events, podcasts, and media in the US and abroad, and has served as host for panel discussions featuring leading industry professionals in film and television. Noble has been recognized for notable performances, guest artist appearances, publications, and collaborations with prestigious institutions, including the Wallis Annenberg Center, the Watermill Center, the National Winter Playwrights Retreat, the Wellstone Center in the Redwoods, Boston University, The Flea Theatre, the Calderwood Pavilion, Yale University, Yale Center for British Art, Yale Repertory Theater, Lifetime and Lifetime Movie Channels, CW Seed, and Paramount's *A Quiet Place: Day One*.

In addition to his leadership experience in the arts, Noble brings a justice-centered, anti-bias approach to the integration of project management systems and AI language learning models. Noble coaches students from experience as a former admissions director and first-generation specialist in navigating the college admissions process, especially for emerging artists considering Bachelor of Fine Arts or Master of Fine Arts training programs. He earned a Master of Fine Arts from Yale University and is a proud member of SAG/AFTRA.

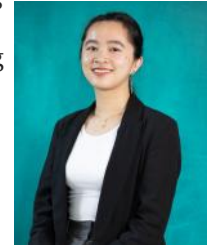


Joe Morotti, also joins Daneli Partners as leadership development specialist. Morotti has devoted his 36-year professional career to the Little Falls School District. In addition, Morotti was an elementary principal at the Benton Hall and Monroe Street School. He also served as an adjunct professor at Herkimer College in Macroeconomics, American Government, Psychology,

and Sociology for more than 20 years. While teaching, he was also the department chairperson for the Social Studies

department. Morotti also coached numerous sports including Cross-Country, Track, Basketball, and Baseball.

Dahlia Nguyen, joins Daneli Partners as a graphic designer. Before joining Daneli Partners, Nguyen held positions including motion graphic teaching assistant at the State University of New York at Oswego (SUNY Oswego) and package designer at Recollection. She earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from SUNY Oswego.



About Daneli Partners

Founded in 2017, Daneli Partners is a leadership development and executive coaching firm dedicated to developing leaders, igniting their energy, and helping to drive business success. With decades of combined experience, the Daneli team consists of practitioners and leaders who are personally driven and impassioned to re-energize leaders. Daneli serves clients in the Central New York region, across the country, and internationally. To learn more about Daneli Partners, visit its new website at danelipartners.com.

ST. MARY'S RESUMES OB/GYN CARE AT JOHNSTOWN FAMILY HEALTH CENTER

St. Mary's Healthcare is once again providing OB/GYN care in Johnstown, increasing access to women's health services in Fulton County.

OB/GYN providers now see patients Monday through Thursday at the hospital's Johnstown Family Health Center at 700 South Perry Street. St. Mary's also continues to provide OB/GYN care at its OB/GYN Health Center on the main hospital campus in Amsterdam.

St. Mary's temporarily halted women's healthcare services in Johnstown during the COVID-19 pandemic, in part due to staffing shortages. Additional providers have since joined the OB/GYN team. As a result, Dr. James Izzano, Physician Assistant Alisa Amell, Certified Nurse Midwife Stacy Arminio and Family Nurse Practitioner Taylor Fadrowski each provide care one day a week in the Johnstown office.

"We know that convenience makes an enormous difference in patients' ability to access quality healthcare and realize the resulting benefits," Dr. Izzano said. "As part of our commitment to our patients, we were determined to return to Johnstown as soon as staffing would allow. That time has come, and we are thrilled to be honoring that commitment."

The practice is accepting new patients in Johnstown and Amsterdam. For an appointment, call (518) 842-0373.

VALENTINES DAY FEATURES FLOWERS, GIFTS AND MORE—READ ABOUT OUR TWO CHAMBER MEMBER FLORISTS AND SEE THE LIST OF BUSINESSES THAT CAN HELP YOU TREAT YOUR SWEETHEART

STUDIO HERBAGE FLORIST: CRAFTING FLORAL DESIGNS WITH EXPERTISE AND HEART



Since its inception in 2014, Studio Herbage Florist has blossomed into a premier floral design business, proudly serving the Capital District of New York with a second location in Malta. Founded and owned by Jim Dempsey, a seasoned floral designer with a pas-

sion for horticulture, Studio Herbage offers a range of services that cater to both personal and corporate clients, delivering beautifully tailored floral arrangements and plants for every occasion.

Whether you're seeking sympathy flowers to express condolences or arranging a celebration for a loved one's milestone, Studio Herbage provides the perfect floral solutions. Specializing in sympathy, event, and everyday flowers, they understand the deep emotional connection that flowers represent and craft each arrangement with care and precision.

The studio's reach extends beyond personal events, offering a wide variety of services for corporate clients throughout the region. With weekly orders, special event floral arrangements, and expert plant design for offices and corporate spaces, Studio Herbage ensures that every business can enjoy the beauty and ambiance that flowers bring. Flowers are a great way to support your employees, staff, and clients with elegance and care from Studio Herbage Florist. Jim and his staff take pride in consulting with clients, offering recommendations on the best plants and flowers to enhance their spaces, as well as identifying who is best suited to care for them.

Studio Herbage excels in large-scale, themed floral designs for corporate galas, weddings, anniversaries, retire-

ments, and other special events. Their custom floral work has garnered a loyal following, with a reputation for attention to detail, creativity, and a commitment to delivering breathtaking designs. Whether for a personal celebration or a high-profile corporate event, Jim and his talented team ensure that every arrangement perfectly reflects the client's vision.

Jim Dempsey's deep expertise in floral design and horticulture is the foundation of Studio Herbage's success. A graduate of SUNY Cobleskill with both an AA and BA in Horticulture, Jim furthered his education at the University of Maryland, studying landscape design and architecture. His commitment to excellence is reinforced by his membership in the American Institute of Floral Designers (AIFD), a prestigious organization that regularly refers clients to Studio Herbage.

Jim's reputation as an expert in his field was recently showcased at the *Cathedral in Bloom* event in Albany, NY, where he was one of the featured floral designers. The event, which included 30-40 florists from all over New England and New York and New Jersey, highlighted the caliber of work Studio Herbage brings to every project. *Caring for the Bereaved: Special Programs for Cemetery Design and Maintenance*

Studio Herbage also offers a unique service for those in mourning: a special program for bereaved families who seek high-end, customized cemetery designs. With this program, Studio Herbage provides tasteful, elegant floral arrangements that are maintained and updated by the studio on a regular basis—

whether seasonally or per the family's requests. They also offer ongoing grave maintenance, ensuring that the final resting places of loved ones are honored and cared for with dignity and respect.

As Studio Herbage continues to grow, their dedication to crafting beautiful, meaningful floral arrangements continues. Whether you're planning an event, seeking floral design for your office, or simply looking to brighten your space with fresh flowers, Jim Dempsey and his team at Studio Herbage Florist are ready to help you bring your floral vision to life.

For Valentine's Day and Mother's Day – it's never too early to order! Contact Studio Herbage Florist today! 16 N. Perry Street, Johnstown | (518) 762-7755 | <https://www.studioherbageflorist.com/>



Colleen Ioele-DeCristofaro
Real Estate Salesperson
Cell: 518-281-4467
ColleenOpensDoors@gmail.com



Colleen Opens Doors



Promote YOUR business here for \$75/month WITH free links to your online platforms!



Contact membership @fultonmontgomeryny.org

FLOWERS BY LISA: CRAFTING BEAUTY FOR EVERY OCCASION

Flowers by Lisa transforms any occasion with beautiful floral arrangements tailored to each client.

At the heart of this floral business is Lisa MacIntosh, a passionate and dedicated florist who brings years of expertise to her craft. By day, Lisa hones her skills working full-time at Frank Gallo Florist in Schenectady, where she stays up-to-date on the latest floral trends and techniques. By night and on weekends, she puts her creativity and dedication into Flowers by Lisa, ensuring that every arrangement is a work of color, texture, and emotion.

Lisa's personal touch is what sets her business apart. Each floral arrangement is designed with the utmost care, reflecting the client's sentiment or the event's atmosphere. As Lisa says, flowers always make people smile – and we agree!

As Lisa continues to grow her business, she hopes to devote her full-time floral artistry to her own business within two years. She caters to customers throughout Montgomery County, as well as all over Fulton County.

Lisa has always had flowers in her genes - her Aunt owned a couple of greenhouses and Lisa worked in them starting at an early age. And along with her Mom, they would make arrangements for family and friends whenever they asked. And currently, her sister-in-law pitches in with arranging and delivering

whenever the need arises.

Watch the Flowers by Lisa [Facebook page](#) for her Valentine's Day special on a dozen roses, beginning February 1. As always, flowers/arrangements can be picked up at her studio at 404 Snooks Corners Road in the Town of Amsterdam or can be delivered by appointment. Contact Flowers by Lisa at (518) 788-0027 or flowersbylisa-2023@gmail.com to make any event special.



Following is a list of Chamber members who can offer you myriad ways to treat your sweetheart on Valentine's Day. As you can see, everything you want or need can be found in our region! For a full list of members, please remember to check our online Business Directory at fultonmontgomeryny.org.

Chamber Checks are also a great idea—get them from the Chamber or at Ruby & Quiri!

Retail/Specialty Stores

[Adirondack Country Market](#), 49 N. Main Street, B'albin
[Adirondack Harley Davidson](#), 106 Bellen Rd., Broadalbin
[The Adirondack Country Store](#), 252 N. Main Street, Northville

[Alpin Haus](#), 4850 Route 30N, Amsterdam
[Arnell Museum Store](#), 2 Erie Blvd., Canajoharie
[Ashley Homestore Select](#), 4908 Route 30, Amsterdam
[Candids with Emily Rose](#), 32 N. Main St., Johnstown
[Castiglione Gem Jewelers](#), 25 N. Main Street, Gloversville
[Craftsman Auto Glass & Detailing](#), 4656 Route 30, Amst.
[Dygart Farms Creamery](#), 243 Dygart St., Palatine Bridge
[Elizabeth Cady Stanton Sunflower Shoppe](#), 26 W. Main Street, Johnstown

[EmpowHERing Designs](#), 37 W. Main Street, Johnstown
[The Flower Barn Gift Shop](#), 132 Division Street, N'ville
[Frank's Gun Shop](#), 3831 State Highway 30, Amsterdam
[Giddy Grow Shop](#), 3549 State Highway 30, Gloversville
[Gloversville Sewing Center](#), 385 S. Main St., Gloversville
[Lee Shops at Wagner Square](#), 24 Church Street, Canjo
[Livingston Furniture & Mattress](#), 355 S. Main St., G'ville
[Milepost Hobbies](#), 4207 State Highway 30, Amsterdam
[Mohawk Harvest Cooperative Market](#), 30 N. Main Street, Gloversville

[Northville 5&10](#), 122 South Main Street
[Old Brick Furniture & Mattress](#), 107 Town Square Dr., Amsterdam

[Outdoor Motor Sports & Trailer Sales](#), 3953 State Highway 30, Amsterdam

[Paul Nigra Center for Creative Arts](#), 2736 State Highway 30, Mayfield

[Peaceful Valley Maple Farms](#), 116 LaGrange Rd., J'town
[Powerhouse Motorsports](#), 2493 State Route 30, Mayfield

[Ruby & Quiri](#), 307 N. Comrie Ave., Johnstown

[Runnings](#), 233 Fifth Ave. Ext., Gloversville
[Sanders Motorsports](#), 2702 State Highway 67, Johnstown
[School House Treasures](#), 3678 State Highway 30, Broadalbin

[SWANY America Corp.](#), 122 Balzano Dr., Johnstown

[T-Mobile](#), 213 N. Comrie Ave., Johnstown

[Viscosi Photography](#), 296 Albany Bush Rd., Johnstown

[Walmart-Amsterdam](#), 101 Sanford Farm Shopping Center
[Walmart-Gloversville](#), 329 S. Kingsboro Avenue

Massage/Spa/Personal Care

[Adirondack Therapeutic Touch](#), 246 S. Kingsboro Ave., Gloversville

[Bella Vita Salon](#), 123 Sanford Farms Shopping Center, Amsterdam

[Capano's Hairitage Salon](#), 31 Bleecker Street, G'ville
[Intuitive Touch & Massage](#), 211 N. Perry Street, Johnstown

[Go For It Fitness & Personal Training Studio](#), 7 Church Street, Gloversville

[Golden Sand Asian Spa](#), 228 N. Comrie Ave., Johnstown

[Jay Blendz Barbershop](#), 37 Prospect Street, Amsterdam

[The Shaggy Moose Barbershop](#), 300 N. Comrie Ave., Johnstown

[SW The Spa](#), 23 Fremont Street, Gloversville

[This is Bliss Massage Therapy](#), 24 S. Market St, J'town

Florists

[Studio Herbage Florist](#), 16 N. Perry Street, Johnstown
[Flowers by Lisa](#), 404 Snooks Corners Road, Amsterdam

Coffee/Specialty Drinks/Convenience

[7-Days C-Store](#), 45 Main Street, Amsterdam
[Betty Beaver Fuel Stops](#), Canajoharie & Fultonville
[Capital City Coffee Roasters](#), 274 S. Main Street, Gloversville (wholesale roaster; also available for purchase online or brewed/available at retail shops)
[Convenience/Deli Store](#), 98 Spring St., Gloversville
[Dunkin' Donuts](#) (Garcia Management), 160 Church Street, Amsterdam; 4882 NY-30, Amsterdam; 3682 Route 30, Vail Mills; 218 State Highway 30S (opposite Thruway Exit 27); 121 Riverside Drive, Fultonville (opposite Thruway Exit 28)
[Fuel-N-Food](#), 3006 State Highway 30, Gloversville
[Mohawk Harvest Cooperative Market](#), 30 N. Main Street, Gloversville
[Stewart's Shops](#) (various locations)
[Upstate Coffee Co.](#), 34 W. Fulton Street, Gloversville (wholesale roaster; also available for purchase online or at many retailers, including Mohawk Harvest Co-op)

Wine/Liquor Stores – Breweries/Distilleries

[Black Bear Wine and Spirits](#), 4867 State Highway 30, Amsterdam
[Bourbon Street Wine & Liquor Warehouse](#), 1451 State Highway 5S, Amsterdam
 DeMi's Wines and Liquors, 52 E. Main Street, Johnstown
[Fulton Street Liquor](#), 86 E. Fulton Street, Gloversville
[Great Sacandaga Brewing Co.](#), 3647 NY 30, Broadalbin
[Higher Ground Distilling Company](#), 2513 State Highway 30, Mayfield
[Route 30 Wine & Liquor Depot](#), 4930 New York 30, Amsterdam
 Sam's Discount Wine & Liquor, 56 Elmwood Ave., G'ville
[Schwalbacher Brewing](#), 30 E. Main Street, Amsterda
[Second Act Spirits](#), 37 Prospect Street, Amsterdam
[Southside Beverage](#), 1451 St. Hwy. 5S, Amsterdam
[Stump City Brewing, LLC](#), 521 W. Fulton Street Ext., Gloversville

Restaurants:

[5S Diner](#), 12 Hancock Street, Fort Plain
[Annie D's Grill](#), 38 E. Main Street, Amsterdam
[Anthony's Deli & Market](#), 1451 State Highway 5S, Amsterdam
[Brittany's Diner & Grocery Store](#), 105 State Highway 67, Ft. Plain
 Bosco's Family Restaurant, 165 Division Street, Amsterdam
[Caroga Lakeview Store](#), 2043 NY-10, Caroga Lake
[Dunkin' Donuts](#) (Garcia Management), 160 Church Street, Amsterdam; 4882 NY-30, Amsterdam; 3682 Route 30, Vail Mills; 218 State Highway 30S (opposite Thruway Exit 27); 121 Riverside Drive, Fultonville (opposite Thruway Exit 28)
 Gloversville Palace Diner, 62 S. Main Street, Gloversville
 Harold's Restaurant and Lounge, 176 W. Fulton Street, Gloversville
[Historic Hotel Broadalbin](#), 59 W. Main Street
[Holiday Inn Johnstown-Gloversville](#), 308 N. Comrie Ave, Johnstown
 House of Pizza, 219 Fifth Ave. Ext., Gloversville
[Lakeside Tavern & Marina](#), 306 Woods Hollow Road, Gloversville
[Lanzi's on the Lake](#), 1751 State Highway 30, Mayfield
[Loopie's Irish Pub](#), 410 Mohawk Drive, Tribes Hill
[Lorenzo's Southside](#), 1 Port Jackson Square, Amsterdam
[McDonald's](#) Johnstown, 200 N. Comrie Avenue
[McDonald's – Gloversville](#), Fifth Ave. Extension

[McDonald's of Amsterdam](#), 158 Market Street
[McDonald's of Fultonville](#), 37 Riverside Drive
[McDonald's of Palatine Bridge](#), 22 Dutchtown Plaza
[New York Lunch](#), 21 Bleecker Street, Gloversville
[Nick Stoner Inn Seafood & Steakhouse](#), 1810 State Highway 10, Caroga Lake
[Partner's Pub](#), 21 S. William St., Johnstown
[Peaceful Valley Maple Farms](#), 116 LaGrange Rd., Johnstown
[Peking In Johnstown Corp.](#), 50 E. Main Street, Johnstown
[Plaza's Italian Bistro](#), 130 N. Pine Street, Gloversville
[Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen](#), 120 Veeders Mill, Amsterdam
[Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen](#), 252 N. Comrie Ave., Johnstown
[Riverside Pizza](#), 10 E. Main Street, Amsterdam
[Recovery Sports Grill](#), 5005 Route 30, Amsterdam
[Roman's Italian Kitchen](#), 219 N. Comrie Avenue, Johnstown
[Sam's Seafood Steakhouse](#), 281 N. Comrie Ave., Johnstown
 Sport Island Pub, 108 Riverside Blvd., Northville
[Taco Bell](#), 207 N. Comrie Ave., Johnstown
[Vintage Café](#), 21 W. Main Street, Johnstown



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AND ANNUAL AWARDS PRESENTATIONS

Thursday, April 3, 2025 - 4:00pm - 6:30pm

Johnstown Moose #1185, 109 S. Comrie Avenue, Johnstown

Business Expo

- Promote Your Business to hundreds of potential clients as a Vendor
- Network with other Chamber members
- Explore other regional businesses
- Learn about the Chamber



Annual Awards Presentation

Enjoy light refreshments while we celebrate and honor the winners in the following award categories:

- Tourism
- Small Business
- Family
- Entrepreneur
- Centennial
- Agricultural
- Young Professional
- Industry



To nominate yourself or a fellow Chamber member for these awards, please visit [this link](#).

- **Vendor table fee only \$50** (includes 8 foot table, chairs and lite fare)
- **Chamber members, their employees, and guests FREE to attend**

To register to be a vendor, or to find out about sponsorship opportunities, please download [application HERE](#). Questions? Please call (518) 725-0641 or email fultonmontgomeryny@gmail.com.

TOURISM NEWS & UPDATES

FULTON COUNTY TOURISM NEWS

CAROGA LAKEVIEW STORE/CAROGA FIRE & ICE FISHING CONTEST

Starts Saturday, 2/22 from 6AM to Sunday, 2/23 at Noon

Signup deadline: 2/16 by 8PM (tickets \$25/adult, \$10 kids 15 years and under) \$5 from every ticket will support The Caroga Lake Fire Department.

PARTICIPATING LAKES with weigh-in stations on each—East Caroga Lake | West Caroga Lake | Canada Lake | West Lake | Green Lake

Fish will be measured by length: Pickerel | Panfish | Trout | Splake | Rainbow Trout
Weigh-In Hours: SAT 7AM-4PM, SUN 7AM-1PM

Payout per category: 1st: \$250 | 2nd: \$150 | 3rd: \$100—Payouts to Top 5 Per Category with a \$4K minimum payout and a 100% prize payback. Cash and prizes redeemed at The Caroga Lakeview Store at 12:30PM on SUN. Join them for their DJ and



After Party. Wristbands must be worn to enter fish and claim prizes

Pick up entry form at The Caroga Lakeview Store, 2043 NY-10, Caroga Lake or get one [here](#). Forms can be mailed to the store with cash or check.

ADIRONDACK OUTDOORSMAN SHOW 2025

Saturday, 2/22 (10am-6pm) and Sunday, 2/23 (10am-5pm)

At the Johnstown Moose Club | 109 S. Comrie Avenue, Johnstown



Vendors/Displays featuring hunting, fishing, archery, trapping, camping, hiking, showshoeing, guides and charter services, taxidermy, collectible knives, custom ADK shirts and clothing, fly tying, antique hunting and fishing equipment, firearms

Featured Guests:

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White-Tailed Deer Expert Peter Fiduccia, “The Deer Doctor”

Recurse Bow Restorer Stuart Johnstown
Plus many other special guests and industry experts

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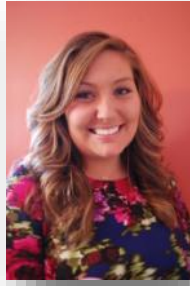
WALLEYE CHALLENGE UPDATES

The 16th Walleye Challenge will be held on February 15, 2025 on the Great Sacandaga Lake and is SOLD OUT with 1500 fishing enthusiasts participating. The raffles/awards will be handed out at Lanzi’s on the Lake that day at about 4pm. Please join us!

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS OF THE 2025 WALLEYE CHALLENGE:



Nicole Walrath VanAlstyne,
 Director of Workforce Development
 nicolew@fultonmontgomeryny.org



Natalie May,
 Business & Education Partnership Coord.
 nataliem@fultonmontgomeryny.org

HEALTHCARE CONVERSATIONS presented by the Chamber’s Business Education Partnership and HFM CTE (Career & Technical Education)



Students from every school district in the HFM region who are interested in the Health Sciences were attendees at the January 15 Healthcare Conversations event at the HFM BOCES Conference Center. Panelists first answered questions posed by Mike DiMezza, Principal of HFM CTE for

the audience, including what degrees/certifications were needed for their career; what skills, education, languages, and experience might be required for the field; childhood interests that influenced career paths; personal strengths that were focused on in choosing their careers; challenges they may have faced in attaining their career goals; and greatest accomplishments of their careers.

Panelists were

- Carla Pasquerelli, Athletic Trainer at Amsterdam High School
- Connie Palmerino, BS, R.T. (R)(M)Manager of Radiology at St. Mary’s Healthcare
- Angela Rhodes, LCSW-R, Director of Behavioral Health at St. Mary’s Healthcare
- Katie Pank, RRT-CTTS, BS, Cardiopulmonary Manager at Nathan Littauer
- Jenn Brundage, BSN, RN, Director of Clinical Operations in Nursing at St. Mary’s
- Madeline McCumber, SN, RN-BC, Nurse Coordinator at the Montgomery County Health Department
- Eileen Casey, MS, RN, CCRN, Director of Nursing and Assistant Professor at FMCC
- Brandi Ewing, Regional Director of Respiratory Services for St. Peter’s Health Partners
- Kathryn Cabrera, DPT, Physical Therapist at Building Blocks Learning Center
- Maggie Rowley, Care Coordinator Director at Nathan Littauer
- Nichole Mello, MS, RN, CPHQ, Director of Specialty Practices and Ambulatory Nursing at St. Mary’s
- Lisa Filiberto, Speech-Language Pathologist at Building Blocks Learning Center

The panelists were then joined by other healthcare professionals in roundtable conversations with the students. The conversations were organic in nature, with the students leading discussions. Some of the talking points between the healthcare professionals and students included exploring healthcare careers, skills needed in the fields, education, challenges, role of technology in the field, helping others

through healthcare, healthcare around the world, trends and the future of the fields, volunteer/shadowing opportunities and more.

Healthcare professionals who also participated in the roundtable discussions were from Nathan Littauer Hospital and Nursing Home; St. Mary’s Healthcare; Mountain Valley Hospice & Palliative Care; The Family Counseling Center; Montgomery County Public Health Department; The Sentinel of Amsterdam; St. Peter’s Health Partners; HFM CTE; and SUNY FM.

Nicole Walrath-VanAlstyne, the Chamber’s Director of Workforce Development, said of the event, “We are so thankful to the dozens of healthcare partner participants who made this experience so special for our students. They were insightful, thoughtful, and informative with the information provided both by the panel, and in the roundtable discussions. We think this opportunity was so impactful for these students who are still exploring careers and education opportunities in the healthcare field.”



WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE
 MARCH 12, 2025
 11:00-1:00
 HFM BOCES CAREER AND TECH CENTER
 2755 STATE HWY 67, JOHNSTOWN, NY
 KRISTINA MARSHALL - K.MARSHALL@HFMBOCES.ORG
 NICOLE WALRATH - N.WALRATH@HFMBOCES.ORG
 REGISTER NOW

You'll have the opportunity to network with other women in non-traditional roles and interact with female students with passions and interests in non-traditional career fields.

START HERE GO ANYWHERE.

Details about this upcoming event, Women in the Workforce, can be found on page 20.

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WELCOME NEW CHAMBER BOARD MEMBERS

This month and next month we will feature information about your new Chamber Board members for 2025.

Take a minute to get to know them, and welcome them to Board membership!



RYAN FAVILLE
Director of Purchasing, [Stewart's Shops](#)

Ryan began his career at Stewart's Shops right after graduating from Siena College in 2008, where he received a B.S. in Accounting. From 2008-2012, Ryan was an accountant at Stewart's Shops, performing general cost accounting tasks, budgeting, and ad hoc projects. In 2012, he became the company's Transportation Manager, where he had oversight of the fleet and over 100 drivers. These drivers hauled Stewart's Shops products—dry, frozen, and refrigerated—gasoline, and bulk milk for the company. In 2015, he was promoted to Director of Purchasing where he has oversight of all product offerings in 360+ locations, procures all raw materials for in-house manufacturing (dairy, ice cream, and kitchen) and also does the company's price book management.

In the community, Ryan is currently on the Board of Trustees, and is a past Board Member of Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Capital Region, and is a Board Member of National Advisory Group, a convenience store industry group focused on supporting retailers throughout the country.

Ryan currently resides in Johnstown with his wife, Cassandra and their two children, Eleanor and Calvin.



MATTHEW L. OSSENFORT
Area Vice President, [Gallagher](#)

Matthew L. Ossenfort brings leadership experience from both the public and private sectors. As the youngest County Executive in New York State history, Matt led Montgomery County through transformational governmental and economic development initiatives, fostering efficiency and regional growth.

Now, as Area Vice President at Gallagher, one of the world's largest insurance brokerage and risk management firms, Matt focuses on delivering tailored solutions to key industries in Fulton and Montgomery counties, including:

- Nonprofits: Customized liability, property, and employee benefits programs.
- Manufacturing: Comprehensive risk management, including product liability and workplace safety.
- Healthcare: Robust insurance strategies addressing liability, regulatory compliance, and employee benefits.
- Public Sector: Innovative insurance and risk strategies for municipalities.

Gallagher's global resources and data-driven platforms, such as CORE360® and Gallagher Drive®, empower clients to manage risk, reduce costs, and protect their assets. Matt is committed to using Gallagher's expertise to support local organizations in achieving their goals.

Chamber's Legislative Breakfast Welcomes Chamber Members To Hear Officials Speak About Business Issues in Our Region and New York State

We were thrilled that close to 100 of you were able to attend the Chamber's Governmental Affairs Legislative Breakfast on January 10 at the HFM BOCES Conference Center. We want to thank our hosts for the event, David Ziskin, [HFM BOCES](#); Mike DiMezza, Principal of HFM's [Career & Technical Education \(CTE\)](#), CTE culinary arts students and chefs and assistants who prepared the excellent breakfast that was enjoyed by attendees. Following is a partial transcript of the discussion at the event:

From Anne Boles' comments at the Legislative Breakfast:

I encourage each of you to take full advantage of this chance to engage with our local legislators, share your thoughts, and ask questions about the policies and initiatives that impact your businesses and our region. The dialogue we have today is vital as we continue to advocate for policies that foster a healthy business environment and support the growth and success of our communities.

Four panelists:

- Senator Patricia Fahy, 46th Senate District (Montgomery County, parts of Schenectady and Albany Counties)
- Assemblywoman Mary Beth Walsh, Assembly District 112 (parts of Saratoga County; Towns of Broadalbin and Perth)
- Assemblyman Robert Smullen, Assembly District 118 (Fulton County, except for Towns of Broadalbin and Perth; Montgomery County except for Towns of Florida and Amsterdam; parts of Herkimer and Oneida Counties)
- Assemblyman Matthew Simpson, Assembly District 114 (Town of Northampton; Essex County and parts of Saratoga and Washington Counties)

First question is on the topic of Affordability and Inflation and is for Assemblyman Smullen and Assemblywoman Walsh: Rising inflation is impacting businesses of all sizes. What policies or solutions can be implemented at the state level to ease the financial pressures and reduce costs for small businesses and families in our region?

Smullen: This is what government is about – real people, real decisions, real problems and issues. Inflation is a product of overspending and overreaction to the pandemic. At both the federal and state levels in order to reduce inflation, we have to top what we were doing to start it, including encouraging federal officials from borrowing money for the problem, and to lower taxes. This will reduce the pressure on both residents and businesses in a circular economy. In NYS we have to reduce spending – we are at \$240 billion right now. More revenue enhancements are not appropriate for this year. We must reduce spending, reduce taxes, and put money in people's pockets right now. Small businesses should not have to pay unemployment insurance funds to the federal government – we should have our state pay it back.

Walsh: I agree with everything Bob Smullen said. The big "A" is affordability and the November election drove home

the point. It is a top concern of New Yorkers. We must resist the urge as legislators for gimmicks and one-offs. We should adopt the mission of doctors, "to do no harm." We don't want to create additional harm. We must lower the costs of doing business in NY, including attracting and retaining good employees, insurance and energy costs and more if we want to reduce inflation. We must make sure that we don't lay more mandates on businesses. We must practice fiscal restraint and think about what is doing harm to people and businesses.

The next question is for Assemblywoman Walsh and Senator Fahy: As you heard earlier, we have students ready to inspire the region and bring their talents to the workforce. What are some initiatives at the state level that align with our regional workforce and education goals, and then retaining that student to apply for a position in New York State.

Fahy: In my prior experience as a NYS assemblywoman, I was Chair of the Higher Education Committee and a first-generation college graduate. The affordability of higher education is, and will remain, important to me. One of the things that will help these students is the significant expansion of the TAP (tuition assistance program) program which was originally intended to serve lower income students, but we haven't raised the income eligibility for 25 years. Now any family with an income under \$125K can apply for this important program. Access and the affordability of college changed my life. In the Capital District, we are at the epicenter of new technologies and we need to continue to invest in things like AI (artificial intelligence) to stay ahead and to continue to keep our region at the forefront of these new technologies.

Walsh: I served eight years on the Assembly's Education Committee. I have six children, one of whom is on the autism spectrum. We are trying to identify middle schools' gaps – there are four-year college attendees who still don't graduate with degrees. We can address this through programs like our regional BOCES and with things like apprenticeship programs. We have already made significant investments in things like trade programs, but you still can't find a contractor to help you with repairs to your home. In NY we need to give students the skills they need to be successful. At the local levels, we can find lots of great initiatives that are doing a good job of this.

This next question is for Assemblyman Simpson and Senator Fahy and is about The CLCPA (Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act). New York's climate policies are ambitious, but what impact will they have on upstate New York businesses, specifically the electric school bus mandates. Are the mandates and regulations reasonable, and how can we balance environmental goals with economic growth and affordability?

Simpson: Our energy incentive programs need to be looked at. My parents (in their early 80s) are currently looking at investing in their home's HVAC systems, but they don't qualify for any incentives to do so. We must

look at the entire program, including projects that have a measurable environmental impact.

Fahy: The CLCPA was adopted in 2019. Does this include goals that should be more ambitious? Yes. Do they also need modification? Yes. CDTA, which is now thankfully also in Montgomery County, was the first transportation organization to use electric buses which will have a positive impact on fuel and long-term operational costs. We recognize that we need to modify the use of electric buses in rural areas. Look at the most recent wildfire disasters in California. We are also spending billions of dollars on unplanned disaster relief. I was raised on a farm where it was imbedded in me to revere the land and clean water and air. We have gotten away from this mindset. We can't ignore these programs; we must invest but also use efficiencies.

This question is for Assemblyman Simpson and Assemblyman Smullen. As you all are aware, Tourism and Agri-Tourism are huge economic drivers for our region. To encourage tourists to choose our region, the question is What policies are you advocating for that help existing attractions grow, and attract new ideas for businesses that promote tourism and economic development?

Simpson: The number one issue for our important tourism and agri-tourism businesses are regulatory agencies and the burdens they impose upon these businesses. For instance, the approve process for simple modifications for businesses are unbearable. Tourism in my district is a large economic driver, relying on four seasons. For instance, in recent years, snowmobiling has become harder to rely on, so activities in shoulder seasons are becoming more important.

Smullen: I was the Executive Director of the HRBRD (Hudson River-Black River Regulating District) of the Great Sacandaga Lake. There are over 400 commercial permits around that lake. Tourism depends so much on infrastructure. The GSL has great opportunities with the improvements that are being planned for the Route 30 corridor. Businesses who want to come here look for infrastructure – sewer, water, electricity, transportation and the like. Businesses want economic certainty in resources. In the Mohawk Valley, agri-tourism and the opportunities that provides are important to that region. These businesses have to be helped along. Our state policies have to make it easier for businesses to balloon. We need to keep an eye on the ball with this.

SELECT QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

John David Praught, Supervisor, City of Johnstown Ward 1:

What challenges as minority members do you have, and can you work with those across the aisle to overcome these challenges?

Smullen: There is a group called the Mohawk Valley 9, from Saratoga to Syracuse, who are helping to draw in the microchip industry to the area. This bipartisan group has been a catalyst to get things done.

Walsh: We have to work across the aisle. As a minority member, I know going in what challenges we have, but we do work together with all of our colleagues to accomplish things. If you don't care about who gets the credit you can get a lot done. We must find common ground to get the work done.

Simpson: I am the newest at the table, in my first year elected to this position. I have worked with Senator Fahy; she has been helpful in my short tenure in office. The key

is to be humble and understanding what we all share the same issues. You have to look at things through the lens of others. At the end of the day it is a must that we build relationships.

Fahy: I am the only Democrat on this panel. I see this working in the Adirondack Park groups who work on things together for whatever is needed for the Park, no matter their party. The legislation that was passed about the occupancy tax was the type of legislation that was put together by all for the benefit of all.

Cassandra Spencer, KeyMark/Kasson & Keller: I work for a manufacturer in the Fonda area. What incentives/programs are you supporting to help people to "Buy American" and "Buy New York," particularly from NY manufacturers?

Fahy: There has been an upswing with investments in manufacturing in the Capital Region, drafting off of the investments in the chip industries. I will continue to support these initiatives that will fuel the growth of our manufacturing industry.

Simpson: In my experience in touring farms in this first year in office, I am amazed by the products that are produced in our region. They are better and more appealing. I have drafted a bill for NYS income tax credit to encourage a framework where farmers would receive what their products are worth. Businesses that are encouraged to buy these products would also get help for these purchases through the NYS income tax credit.

Smullen: Our Farm – Our Food is a NYS school lunch program project. We have the capability to provide lunches for our state's schools with products from NYS. We have to level the playing field to get this done and learn how to better process NYS products for consumption by these students.

Walsh: Possible tariffs will have an impact on this issue.

Simpson: A business in my district was looking to move to Costa Rica because of the cost of energy in New York and other NYS policies that negatively impact costs/labor – they are higher here than anywhere else. The costs to businesses are negatively impacting them, and we have to be careful of putting our businesses at a disadvantage. We should also focus on workforce development, as well as on supply lines to the northeast, transportation, taxes, etc. which have a huge impact on manufacturers.

Ron Peters, Executive Director, Fulton County Center for Regional Growth:

Our businesses greatly benefit from programs that offer seed money for them to expand, hire and more. How can you support the ESD (Empire State Development) and the grant money that they extend going forward?

Fahy: I will continue to work with, and support, ESD. I also will continue to invest in youth and the future workforce with things like the Internship bill. I believe that the more we get these students in our businesses, the more we can keep them in NY.

Smullen: The DRI (Downtown Revitalization Initiative) has greatly impacted the Cities of Gloversville, Little Falls and others. And the rural equity program is important for our region to get municipalities and not-for-profits to work more closely together.

Simpson: We are losing people and businesses, so the support and involvement with the ESD is important. We must look at the affordability and profitability of businesses elsewhere as compared to NYS and be competitive.



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Wednesday, March 12 11am to 1pm
THE CHAMBER'S BUSINESS EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP AND HFM CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION PRESENT

WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE

[HFM BOCES Conference Center](#), 2755 State Highway 67, Johnstown.

Join us on Wednesday, March 12 for a Women in the Workforce event. This event was created to highlight women breaking barriers in non-traditional roles and to expose students to the opportunities they have right in their communities. We want our female students to have the chance to network and hear from women professionals in our region. Attendees will include select students from HFM component high schools. The day will begin with a panel discussion followed by personalized conversations held in a roundtable forum. Lunch will be provided by our CTE Culinary students. If you work in a non-traditional role and would like to be a participant, or if you have any questions, please contact Nicole Walrath-VanAlstyne at nwalrath@hfmboces.org

Thursday, April 3 4pm-6:30pm
BUSINESS EXPO AND CHAMBER AWARDS PRESENTATION, [Johnstown Moose Club #1185](#), 109 S. Comrie Avenue, Johnstown

There are opportunities for sponsorship, for tabling to display/talk about all your business has to offer, and to attend to see the Chamber Award winners and presentation, and to network with dozens of fellow members. Watch your email blasts for information as it becomes available, or email anneb@fultonmontgomeryny.org for sponsorship opportunities, or to sign up to display. Application for Chamber member businesses to display at the event and sponsorship information can be found [here](#).

ATTENTION BUSINESSES IN THE CITY OF GLOVERSVILLE

The [Gloversville Economic](#)

[Development Corporation](#) has loans

available for businesses located in the City at comfortable and competitive rates for a variety of needs and purposes! Interested businesses should call the Chamber or email anneb@fultonmontgomeryny.org

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