

**Our office doors are now open!**

## Keep Memorial Day a High Priority

With the many distractions associated with the pandemic, it's easy to forget that today is Memorial Day. More than just a federal holiday to honor the military personnel who died while serving in the United States Armed Forces, Memorial Day provides a well-timed opportunity for us to broaden our thought process and at least momentarily focus on another reason for which we should all be thankful. Those who have made "the ultimate sacrifice" have afforded us the luxury of dealing with our current challenges under a blanket of safety and freedom. Let's never forget that!



## Chamber to Launch "Buy Here. Thrive Here."

A Chamber initiative rolled-out six years ago to encourage more local buying will be getting an infusion of support and momentum – and even a new name – as it aspires to help businesses weather the tough times created by Covid-19. Officially "Buy Here. Thrive Here." becomes an offshoot of the Chamber's "Buy Here. Live Here." program. "Like its predecessor, it will emphasize to businesses and consumers the importance of making purchasing decisions with local companies in mind," explained Chamber Board Chair Darin Tornatore. "The biggest difference between the two programs is the degree of urgency. Our local businesses right now need immediate help just to stay afloat. They need



our entire community to direct their purchasing decisions, when at all possible, to those businesses in our county." The Chamber is also discussing the possibility of aligning with an innovative concept called "The PA 30-Day Fund" which would allow struggling businesses to apply for small grants that would help them buy time until the business was back on solid footing.

## Chamber Endorses Lawsuit Legislation to Protect Businesses

The Blair County Chamber joined chambers from throughout the Commonwealth in signing-on to a letter to the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation urging their support of temporary, targeted legal safe harbor from unwarranted lawsuits. The letter was drafted by the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business & Industry. Employers face the likelihood of lawsuits alleging exposure to the Coronavirus on a company's premises or through their activities or products. Such unwarranted lawsuits could be the death knell for many businesses already having a difficult time getting back on their feet.

**Congratulations...**

... to Phyllis Baker of Blair Regional YMCA and Courtney Seidel of Stiffler McGraw, who were approved by the Chamber Board of Directors as co-chairs of the Workplace Wellness Committee.

... to Sherri Steward, Human Resources Director at NPC, Inc., who was recently named Businessperson of the Year by the Pennsylvania Future Business Leaders of America (PA FBLA) at the 2020 Virtual Awards of Excellence ceremony.

# Retention and Recruitment Effort Approved by Chamber Board

The Chamber Board of Directors has approved a new program that will create a more formalized effort of retaining current Chamber members while also recruiting new members to the organization. The Retention and Recruitment Initiative will focus attention on helping members who may be having a difficult time making renewal payments. It will also provide incentives to non-members to join the Chamber. "We know that this is a difficult time for many of our members," acknowledged Chamber President Joe Hurd. "We never want anyone to leave the Chamber because of an inability to pay. We're also looking forward to talking to businesses who



might want to come onboard. Many of them were impressed with how we've kept the business community informed during these past two months." Any business interested in discussing membership renewal or is considering becoming a Chamber member, should call Joe Hurd at (814) 943-8151.



## If You're "Open For Business," Let Everyone Know

As businesses begin to re-open, it's important that we are able to offer both assistance and support. So the Chamber Website now includes a special section called "Open For Business." This is a member's only section and we invite members to let us know when they've opened and any special plans they have to put a little bit of emphasis on returning to active status! Send your "Open For Business" information to Linda Stotler at [lstotler@blairchamber.com](mailto:lstotler@blairchamber.com).

## Update on June Events and Programs

The status for our June Chamber Calendar is listed below:

•Workplace Wellness Committee	June 2nd	Still On (Zoom)
•Chamber Safety Fair	June 3rd	Postponed to Sept.
•Non-Profit Best Practices	June 5th	Postponed to Sept. 4th
•Chamber Golf Classic	June 8th	Postponed to August 20th
•Long Term Care Summit	June 8th	Still On (Zoom)
•Chamber Ambassadors	June 9th	Still On (Zoom)
•Committee of Non-Profit Businesses	June 9th	Still On (Zoom)
•Attractions/ Hotel Roundtable	June 10th	Still On (Zoom)
•Breakfast Club	June 11th	Postponed to ?
•Executive Roundtable	June 17th	Still On (Zoom)
•Board of Directors	June 18th	Still On (Zoom)
•Sustainable Blair County	June 24th	Still On (Zoom)
•Transportation Committee	June 25th	Still On (Zoom)
•Young Entrepreneurs National Competition	June 26th	Postponed to August 29th

## Have You Received Your Signs Yet?

It has been nearly two weeks since the Chamber emailed signage to our members for use in their businesses. Most remind people about the need to wear a mask while visiting local businesses. Others emphasize the importance of social distancing. If your business hasn't received these signs, contact Linda Stotler at (814) 943-8151 or email her at [lstotler@blairchamber.com](mailto:lstotler@blairchamber.com).

## SUCCESS STORY

McLanahan Corporation of Hollidaysburg recently donated 250 hoagies for staff at UPMC Altoona in recognition of the great job that they do!

## BENefact Chamber Membership can save you money.

BRANDbytes allows Chamber member businesses to place a full page ad in NETWORKS DIGITAL NEWS the first Monday of the month. Email Jessie at [jcovert@blairchamber.com](mailto:jcovert@blairchamber.com).

