

Chamber, Lakemont Park to Partner on Outdoor Trade Show

The “Buy Here. Thrive Here.” initiative continues to create opportunities to help local businesses get back on their feet. From a widespread media campaign to a gift card purchasing program aimed at helping bars and restaurants, BHTH is in high-gear and getting set for the next great opportunity. The opportunity will take place on Friday, September 11th. From 4:00 to 8:00 p.m., the Chamber and Lakemont Park will partner on an outdoor trade show and community stress-free event, guaranteed to start everyone’s weekend on a high note. There will be food trucks, music and access to local businesses selling products and providing information. For a small fee, businesses can reserve display tables or areas to set-up tents inside and outside park pavilions. For more information, contact the Chamber at (814) 943-8151.



Young Professionals to Host CEO Panel Discussion

Why should young professionals in Blair County commit to living and working in the county for the long haul? That will be the basis of a panel discussion hosted by the Young Professionals of Blair County on September 10th beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the Blair County Convention Center in Altoona. The panel discussion is expected to last 45-60 minutes and will be followed by a networking reception featuring light hors d’oeuvres. The panel consists of Ann Benzel of Benzel’s Bretzel Bakery, Andrea Cohen of Blair Companies, Jim Kilmartin of Pinnacle Cleaning and Center City Church, and Matt Stuckey of Stuckey Automotive. Moderating the panel discussion will be Steve McKnight, President/CEO of Altoona-Blair County Development Corporation. The cost to attend the panel discussion is \$15/person. To register,



Ann Benzel



Andrea Cohen



Jim Kilmartin



Matt Stuckey

contact the Chamber at 943-8151 or [register online](#). Corporate sponsor of the event is CNB Bank.

“Breakfast Club” Speaker to Put Covid-19 In Perspective

Has Blair County exceeded expectations in dealing with Covid-19 or is the verdict still out? That’s one of the questions that will be addressed at the next Chamber “Breakfast Club,” set for August 13th beginning at 7:45 a.m. at The Casino at Lakemont Park. Keynote speaker for the event will be Mark Taylor, Director of Public Safety, Blair County Department of Emergency Services. It is Taylor who has been at the forefront of the county’s efforts to monitor the spread and treatment of Covid-19. His presentation, “What Might Happen Next?” will provide insight into what similar areas to Blair County are experiencing and how the data is making it both easier and more difficult to speculate on the future. The cost to attend Breakfast Club is \$20 for Chamber Members and \$30 for non-members. Social distancing will be observed. To register call the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 or [register online](#). Corporate sponsor of the August Breakfast Club is Moore Power Sales.



BENefact

Chamber members will have their business listing appear in both the annual print directory and the online directory. This is a great way to reach thousands of potential customers!

Purchased Your Gift Cards Yet? Help Our Bars and Restaurants!

The Chamber's effort to help local bars and restaurants stay financially afloat during a difficult time is gaining momentum as more businesses recognize the need to assist one another by participating in the "Eat. Drink. Help." Initiative. As an offshoot of Buy Here. Thrive Here., this new program incentivizes businesses to purchase gift cards from bars and restaurants in exchange for ad space in the Chamber's weekly newsletter. The purchasing businesses must be Chamber members but the bars and restaurants are not required to be. For more infor-



mation on how to participate in Eat. Drink. Help., visit the Chamber Website at www.blairchamber.com and click on the Buy Here. Thrive Here. logo.

New Workplace Wellness Program to Debut in September

Among the many challenges created for businesses by Covid-19 are those which threaten employee health. To bring specific health issues to the forefront, the Chamber's Workplace Wellness Committee will debut a new initiative called "Chamber Chat," which will provide periodic Zoom programs with expert presenters and the opportunity for attendees to ask questions and share best practices. The first of seven "Chats" will take place on September 25th from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m. "We've limited them to a half-hour so that employers and employees can gain some good insight without tying-up a significant amount of work time," explained Phyllis Baker of Blair Regional



YMCA, who co-chairs the committee with Courtney Seidel of Stiffler McGraw. "There is no cost to participate." Among the six topics will be: Mental Wellness, Exercise, Employee Assistance, Nutrition, Insurance and Attitude. The dates of the Chamber Chats are: September 25th, October 9th and 23rd, November 6th and 20th and December 4th and 18th. To register for the September 25th program, [click here](#) or call the Chamber.



Chamber Seeking Next Group of Young Entrepreneurs

It's no secret that the best recipe for a successful community continuing to grow is for its businesses to be created and cultivated close to home. That recipe was the motivation for the Blair County Chamber's willingness to start a Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) program. The program will begin its fifth year in October and the application process for interested students has already begun. To apply, go to the Chamber Website at www.blairchamber.com and click on "Events and Programs."

Committee Meetings

BASICS Steering Committee
August 10th, 8:00 a.m.
Zoom

Attractions/Hotel Roundtable
August 12th, 8:15 a.m.
Lakemont Park

Farm-City Committee
August 12th, 11:00 a.m.
Devorris Center

Sustainable Blair County
August 12th, 1:30 p.m.
Devorris Center

Leadership Blair County Adult
Committee
August 12th, 3:00 p.m.
Zoom

Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield

Chamber
Golf Classic

SOLD OUT



Chamber Inviting Applications for VP Position

The Chamber is beginning the application process for the position of Vice-President of Programming and Membership Education. The fulltime position is available due to the upcoming retirement of longtime Chamber VP Juda Juda who is currently working part-time and will be officially retired at the end of December. Her replace-

ment will begin in September and will work with Judy on programs and events, most particularly on the Leadership Blair County Adult and Youth programs, which are integral parts of the VP position. Interested applicants should email resumes and cover letters to jhurd@blairchamber.com.

Little Free Libraries Initiative Runs Through August 28th



The Chamber's Leadership Blair County Alumni is assisting the Altoona Area School District in creating Little Free Libraries in eight elementary school neighborhoods. Books

should be targeted to children between the ages of five and eleven. They can be new or gently used. Monetary donations will be used to purchase books through participating vendors at reduced prices. Books can be dropped off at the Chamber Office between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. from August 3rd to August 28th. Checks can be made payable to the Blair County Chamber Foundation.

Leadership Youth Program Welcomes 2021 Class

The 18th class of the Chamber's Leadership Blair County program went through its orientation on July 28th at Highland Park. Sixteen high school sophomores from throughout the county will comprise the 2021 Class. The class members are: Camryn Beatty (Williamsburg), Grace Broadrick (Bishop Guilfoyle), Anaiyah Crone (Altoona), Emily Dale (Tyrone),

Rebekah Disney (Central), Olivia Gregg (Bellwood-Antis), Hailey Houck (Tyrone), Livia Lecrone (Hollidaysburg), Alexis Lovrich (Bellwood-Antis), Liliana Neri (Williamsburg), Will Price (Tyrone), Marissa Ross (Altoona), Hailey Vanish (Tyrone), Katelyn Williams (Bishop Guilfoyle), Kiersten Williams (Hollidaysburg) and Dominic Yanoshak (Bishop Guilfoyle).



Annual Appeal Has Helped Build Young Leaders



The Blair County Chamber Foundation has launched its Annual Appeal to raise funds that offset the costs associated with the Leadership Blair County Youth

program. That program, which is 100% funded by the Foundation, costs \$42,000 to operate. "We're grateful to the many businesses, organizations and individuals that contribute to the Appeal," explained Foundation President Brian Irwin. "It has allowed us to operate this outstanding LBC Youth program without relying on either the students or the school districts to cover the cost." Anyone who would like to contribute to the Appeal should contact Cindy Cessna at the Chamber at (814) 943-8151.

Congratulations...

... to UPMC Home Healthcare of Central Pennsylvania, which has been recognized by Strategic Healthcare Programs (SHP) as a "Superior Performer" for achieving an overall patient satisfaction score that ranked in the top 20% of all eligible SHP clients for the 2019 calendar year.

Nominations Deadline

The Blair County Chamber of Commerce is continuing to accept nominations for the Agricultural Community Excellence (ACE) Award. This award will be presented at the October 8, 2020 Breakfast Club. Deadline for nominations is today, August 10, 2020. To access a nomination form and a list of past honorees, [click here](#).