

Business Hall of Fame Nomination Deadline is Friday

After a two-year hiatus, the Business Hall of Fame is returning, albeit with a few significant changes. The event, started by the Blair County Chamber in 1990, will be held on June 16th at The Casino at Lakemont Park. Perhaps the biggest change is that event is now a luncheon instead of a dinner. The Hall of Fame luncheon will begin at 11:30 a.m. and conclude by 1:30 p.m. The luncheon will still be highlighted by the presentation of the Hall of Fame Awards. But rather than the four inductees in past years, there will be no more than two presented at this event. The Awards of Distinction will likewise undergo a change. While holdovers like Excellence in Small Business and Young Emerging Business will remain, there will only be one recipient in each of those categories instead of the three that existed in the past. And for the first time, there will be a Non-Profit Business of the Year Award. In the past, the Hall of Fame judges presented awards for safety, technology and sustainability. Those awards will be presented under a category known as "Business Specialty Awards" but only when a particularly outstanding accomplishment is identified. Despite the many changes that the Business Hall of Fame is undertaking, the nominating and selection process remains the same. Nomination forms can be downloaded from the Chamber Website at www.blairchamber.com. The deadline to nominate is this Friday, April 1st. For more information, contact Stacy Hoover at shoover@blairchamber.com.



Chamber Membership Campaign Launches Today

The Chamber is launching a major Membership Campaign that will begin today, March 28th and conclude on May 31st. The campaign, which will be introduced by the Chamber's Membership Committee, will feature a variety of initiatives that include a recruitment component by the Board of Directors, incentives for current members to help identify and sign-up prospective members and even a percentage discount on dues for those who join. Even with the incredible importance associated with making the campaign a success, the Chamber marketing staff has still seen value to inject a level of fun to the project. The campaign itself has been branded, "Catch'22 Membership Challenge." The slogan centers on the opportunity for Chamber members to earn \$50 in gift cards by recruiting a non-member and taking the recruitment process to its completion. For the joining new member, there is an immediate 10% discount off the first year's membership, provided they join prior to the May deadline. (For more information, contact Jessie Covert at jcovert@blairchamber.com.)

YEA! Investor Panel Event is Tomorrow at The Casino

The Investor Panel Event for the Chamber's Young Entrepreneurs will take place tomorrow beginning at 6:00 p.m. at The Casino at Lakemont Park. Eighteen students representing eleven businesses will make presentations to a panel of investors who will then determine how much funding will be allocated to each business. The Investor Panel will also deter-

mine a Most Outstanding Business as well as a runner-up. One of them will represent the Chamber's YEA! program at the National YEA! Competition in May. Dr. Randy Frye of Saint Francis University will be the moderator of Tuesday's event. For more information on YEA!, contact Joe Hurd at (814) 943-8151 or email him at jhurd@blairchamber.com.

Young Professionals to Hold "Family Fun Night"

The Young Professionals of Blair County will hold a Family Fun Night at Slinky Action Zone in Duncansville on April 7th from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. There are three packages available -- \$10 for pizza, soft drink, one game of laser tag and one round of duck pin bowling; \$15 for the same offer plus 200 arcade credits; and \$25 for the same offer plus a second game of laser tag and an additional 100 arcade credits. Cost to attend is \$10 for YP members and \$15 for non-members. To register to attend,



call the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 or register online at www.blairchamber.com. Family Fun Night is sponsored by Altoona-Blair County Development Corporation. Young Professionals of Blair County is a program of the Blair County Chamber.

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Ribbon Cutting



Beck, Smithbower, Ickes Financial

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held for Beck, Smithbower, Ickes Financial located at 350 Lakemont Park Blvd., Suite 3, Altoona. The firm focuses on comprehensive financial planning, wealth management, retirement income strategies, estate planning and more. For more information on services go to www.becksmithbowerickes.com. Joining in the celebration are, from left: Sherri Stayer, Chamber Ambassador; State Senator Judy Ward; Sue Fitzsimmons, Administrative Assistant; Robert Beck, Financial Advisor; Janet Smithbower, Financial Advisor; Samuel; Jesse Ickes, Financial Advisor; and Joe Hurd, President/CEO, Blair County Chamber of Commerce.



Be a part of the moment. Watch the video [here!](#)

Job Fair Still Has a Few Openings

If you're an employer still seeking qualified, dependable employees, an opportunity may still exist to provide access to them. But you'll have to act quickly! The April 13th Job Fair at the Jaffa Shrine still has a few spots open. There's no cost to employers and lunch is provided. The Job Fair is sponsored by PA CareerLink, the Blair County Chamber and Altoona-Blair County Development Corporation. For information, contact Jeff Schlick at (814) 940-6213 or Tom Duvall at (814) 940-6206.

Safety Workshop to Focus on Sex Trafficking

The Blair County Chamber's Safety Committee will host a workshop on April 13th from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. at The Casino at Lakemont Park. The topic will be "Sex Trafficking: From Instant Message to Instant Nightmare." The presenter will be Bubba Fatula who will identify ways to recognize the signs of sex trafficking. The cost to attend is \$20 for Chamber members and \$30 for non-members. To register, call the Chamber at (814) 943-8151 or register online at www.blairchamber.com. Sponsor of the workshop is CareSmart Solutions.

Few Spots Remain for Golf Classic

The Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Chamber Golf Classic will be held on Thursday, May 19th at Iron Masters Country Club. While there are just a few opportunities to reserve a foursome or an individual golf spot, the main sponsorships for the event have all been sold. Tee and green sponsorships are still available. To register for golf, contact Stacy Hoover, or for tee and green sponsorships call Jessie Covert at (814) 943-8151.