What Does Post-COVID Future Hold?

Hudson Valley Economic Head Breakfast Guest

Chamber President Ward Todd has also asked Oates to talk about Ulster County’s red-hot housing market, which has seen cash bids, bidding wars, sellers getting thousands over their asking price and even “virtual showings” for buyers worried they may miss out on a house.

Kingston was one of the top destinations in the country for people migrating out of New York City after COVID-19. The typical value of homes in Ulster County saw a 34-percent jump in the last year.

Oates said Ulster County needs to be concerned about the exodus out of Gotham because a flourishing New York City helps the county.

“While there are some advantages, and we’ve seen great investment coming to the region, there’s always that underlying concern that a wounded or underperforming New York City will have a dramatic impact on our regional economy,” Oates said. “We need to have a vibrant, growing New York City, so at some point that exodus has to kind of slow down. We have to see New York City rebound because we can’t do it alone.”

Oates returned as president and CEO of HVEDC in May 2018 following the resignation of Laurence Gottlieb. He held the same positions with HVEDC from 2009 to 2013.

HVEDC markets the region as a prime business location to corporate executives, site selection consultants and real estate brokers. HVEDC helped start the organizational, branding and promotional effort for NY BioHud Valley, Hudson Valley 3D Printing and the Hudson Valley Food & Beverage Alliance.

Before his initial work with HVEDC, Oates was vice president and regional director at Empire State Development Corp. In that position, he was responsible for managing New York State’s economic development initiatives in Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Westchester, Rockland, Sullivan and Putnam counties—seven counties represented by HVEDC.

From 2016 to 2018, Oates was managing partner of Bellefield Development Partners. He previously was CEO of Hudson River Ventures, a small business investment fund that works to empower entrepreneurs in the Hudson Valley.

To learn more about HVEDC and its work, call (845) 220-2244 or go to hvedc.com.

Chamber Breakfasts are a great way to stay on top of current events. For more information, contact the Chamber at (845) 338-5100 or go online at www.ulsterchamber.org.

Hudson Valley Credit Union is committed to providing our region’s businesses and families with a full complement of financial products and services to make them successful. Now serving more than 310,000 of our neighbors, the credit union offers 20 branches as well as a complete suite of electronic and automated services. Businesses and individuals who live, work, worship, attend school, or volunteer in Ulster as well as 11 other NY Counties can take advantage of the credit union’s many financial options.

As one of the region’s largest employers, Hudson Valley strives to be a positive force for economic growth, as well as a strong community partner. Credit union members consistently describe the credit union as member-focused, service-driven, professional, strong, and community minded. These qualities define Hudson Valley from the inside out, and are the result of their 58 years of unwavering dedication to quality service and financial excellence.

Stop by any branch to experience the credit union difference and see why Hudson Valley is the trusted financial partner helping our region’s businesses reach their financial goals.
UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

October 13 | 7:30 - 9:00 am
Chamber Breakfast Meeting
The State of the Hudson Valley Economy, Post COVID
Mike Oates, President HVEDC
The Venue Uptown
503 Washington Avenue | Kingston, NY
$25 Members-Advanced Pay • $30 Members-At The Door
$35 Non-Members
Sponsor: Hudson Valley Credit Union

October 21 | 5:30 Cocktails 6:30 Dinner
Business Recognition Awards Dinner
Diamond Mills Hotel & Tavern
25 S. Partition Street | Saugerties, NY
Join us to honor this year's Award Recipients
Tickets $125 per person

October 26 | 6:00 - 8:00 pm
YUP Trivia Night
@ The Venue Uptown
503 Washington Avenue | Kingston, NY
$10 per person
All proceeds will be donated to Ulster County Habitat for Humanity
Registration is required.

November 4 | 9:00 - 10:30 am
New Member Meet & Greet
Holiday Inn Express & Suites
1835 Ulster Avenue | Lake Katrine, NY
There is no cost for Members to attend.
Reservations are required.

ChamberNews
The official publication of the Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce
is a special advertising supplement to the Daily Freeman
115 Green Street, Kingston, NY 12401 – A Media News Group publication

Kevin Corrado, Publisher
Michele Sisco-Martin, Graphic Designer

To advertise, please call (845) 331-5000. To subscribe, please call (888) 699-7699

Register for all Events (845) 338-5100
www.UlsterChamber.org
The Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce has been selected as the winner of the Charles Steiner Memorial Chamber of Commerce of the Year Award by The Business Council of New York State. Chamber President Ward Todd accepted the award at the BCNYS Annual Conference last week.

Ken Pokalsky, BCNYS Vice President, cited the Ulster Chamber’s work assisting local businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic in announcing the honor.

“While many chambers stepped up to support their local business communities during the COVID crisis, our selection of the Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce, as Business Council Chamber of the Year, was based on their specific engagement and COVID response efforts,” Pokalsky said.

“The Ulster County Chamber delivered essential business outreach by creating innovative means to inform and stay connected with their members. Their engagement in social media forums to promote local businesses, especially the hard-hit hospitality section, and their success in providing other essential services to their member companies made them our top choice.”

The Ulster Chamber didn’t miss a beat after the government-imposed shutdowns last March, forming online Facebook groups, Ulster Eateries United and Small Businesses United. The pages let people know that the businesses, many of them restaurants, were still open and offering carryout. Many restaurants credited the group with helping them stay afloat.

Jess Davis, the Chamber’s Director of Membership, said the idea came to her when a Chamber business reached out for help as COVID-19 began.

“We brainstormed and just came up with the idea that we could give them a platform to communicate how they could do business,” she said.

The groups are still going strong with Ulster Eateries United boasting 12,400 members and Ulster Small Businesses United about 3,000. “There still is a pretty high engagement in both those groups,” Davis said.

Chamber members also got to enjoy Facebook episodes of “Jess Delicious” throughout the pandemic. The videos, which can be found on Ulster Eateries United, feature Davis visiting local restaurants and trying out their food and talking to the owners and customers.

Davis called it “humbling” to be honored as the state’s top chamber.

“There are so many chambers out there that have worked so hard to reinvent themselves through this,” she said. “I think our chamber is really unique and really special and it’s the Ulster County community as well. It was our community coming together and wanting to overcome this.”

Meanwhile, during the pandemic, the Chamber also held virtual events to keep its members informed about government assistance and resources, such as PPP loans and other programs.

The Chamber also continued to hold monthly networking breakfasts, though virtually. The Chamber even held its annual Buy Local Expo and Business Awards Dinner virtually.

In accepting the award, Chamber President Todd said, “We are pleased to receive this honor from such a prestigious organization as the Business Council of New York State.”

Todd said, “We thank them for recognizing our hard work during the pandemic. It was a challenge, but one that we accepted and, working with our county government and other community partners, we were able to overcome and keep our businesses open and thriving.”

The Business Council’s annual meeting ran from Sept. 22-24 and featured Gov. Kathy Hochul and a roundtable political discussion featuring former Gov. David Paterson, ex-Comptroller H. Carl McCall and former Attorney General Dennis Vacco. The keynote speaker was Syracuse men’s basketball coach Jim Boeheim, who is in his 46th season.

“After a challenging year and a half, our annual meeting agenda was focused on how to bring the state’s economy back to full strength. We believe our members found great value in this year’s programming, which we designed to help them continue to navigate the challenges left behind from the pandemic,” said Heather Briccetti, President & CEO of The Business Council of New York State.
“Welcome to the 2021 Buy Local Expo – live and in person,” Chamber President Ward Todd said in opening the 25th Buy Local Expo on Sept. 15 at Diamond Mills.

The Expo, Ulster County’s largest networking event, was held virtually last year because of COVID-19. The Expo returned in-person this year—albeit with masks—and local business leaders seemed genuinely happy to see each other again. There was an air of optimism as the five-hour event kicked off at noon featuring several first-time exhibitors.

“As every exhibitor was coming in this morning since 8 a.m., I felt a little bit more relieved, I felt a little happier,” Todd said during the opening ceremony. “The thrill of seeing so many folks live and in person is something that we’ve been waiting for a long time.

“It does feel very, very good and very special to see all of your faces. Even though we are masked, we are enjoying the face-to-face communication we’ve been lacking so long in this digital economy.”

John Burlingham, president of the Chamber’s board of directors and the owner of American Business Solutions, said he remembers last year’s virtual Expo and prefers the in-person version.

“Isn’t this great to finally see somebody live?” he said.

Todd called Ulster County Executive Pat Ryan a “great partner of the Chamber” when introducing him to the business crowd before the sold-out event.

“I haven’t seen this many people live in a really long time, so it feels great,” Ryan said. “I’m really glad we could make this happen. We can actually run our economy and do it safely.”

Ryan said the pandemic has been “absolutely brutal,” but he praised the business community for its perseverance.

“I’ve talked to so many of you about the challenges of the last year and a half and I just want to thank you for fighting through that and pushing through that, doing right by your employees, doing right by your customers, and doing right by your community,” he said. “What you’ve been asked to do is basically the impossible and somehow you’ve all done it and risen to that challenge and really exceeded that challenge.”

Ryan said the federal, state and county governments would be making investments to level the playing field between small businesses like those at the Expo and multi-national corporations. He also gave a plug to the Expo’s “Buy Local” theme.

“The spirit of buying local must carry the day going forward,” he said. “This is what really has to power us coming out of this pandemic.”

Tom Struzzieri, the owner of the host venue Diamond Mills, said he
knows businesses are still suffering from the effects of COVID-19, including a struggle to find workers in a diminished labor pool.

“I’m feeling that,” he said. “I get it and hopefully all the extraordinary abilities in this room and hard work you’ve all put together is going to help us rise above this and get through this all.”

“It’s because of us, all together, that we’re going to rise above this and succeed.”

Town of Saugerties Supervisor Fred Costello struck a similar theme.

“We are a resilient community,” he said. “We are here and we’ll certainly find our way through this. Ulster County is open for business and we welcome that. We are going to continue to create jobs and we are going to continue to be the economic hub of the Hudson Valley.”

John Naccarato, the owner of Naccarato Insurance and the Expo’s presenting sponsor, said he noticed that everyone had an “extra step in their walk” and were looking to a better 2022.

Businesses put their best foot forward with colorful, creative and informative exhibits during the day. The networking event gave business owners the chance to shine as they made pitches to each other and members of the public with brochures, imaginative giveaways and plenty of conversation.

RBT CPAs, based in Orange and Dutchess counties, featured a booth with employees Erin Blabac and Stephanie Ingold giving away scoops of ice cream.

“We like to have a theme with our booth every year and somehow tie that into our accounting practice. One of the ideas we had was to give out scoops of ice cream because we’ve got the scoop,” said Blabac, the firm’s marketing director.

The Ulster County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) displayed a “sponsor tree” featuring photos of some of the shelter’s animals. People could sponsor an animal for $50.

“Everyone’s familiar with the giving tree during the holiday season. You can take any animal off the tree and sponsor their shelter space for a month. We’re at full capacity,” said Jamie Dea, the SPCA’s marketing director.

The SPCA recently brought up a “good number” of animals from Louisiana after Hurricane Ida and could use the help, Dea said.

Other businesses used the Expo to demonstrate their products, like Kingston’s Dark Arts Tattoo. The shop, which has only been open a few months, offered a $60 flash sale and had a line most of the day.

“We just figured what we normally do during flash sales at our shop we would do here, and it’s basically like the other businesses handing out advertising,” said co-owner Christine Black.

Dark Arts Tattoo ended the day by winning a booth award for most effective demonstration.

The major booth awards went to Naccarato Insurance for Best in Show, while Emerson Resort & Spa finished second and Ashokan Equestrian Center for Autistic Children third.

Other winners included Ulster County Habitat for Humanity ReStore, most original booth design; One N Only Cakes, most creative giveaways; People’s Place, best new exhibitor; Jewish Federation of Ulster County, most friendly staff; David Leifer Photography, best use of technology; and Hennepen’s, best sales presentation.
ACCORD MARKET
PO Box 490
Accord, NY 12404
Henry Rich - Owner
Category: Grocers - Natural Foods
Description: At Accord Market, we prioritize local, sustainable food and products. We mindfully choose the brands we represent and carry, how they are sourced, and how they impact our communities. Accord Market not only carries those hard to find specialty products, but also offers a basic grocery shop of essentials. We hope to introduce our community to sustainable products, making environmentally-friendly alternatives an easy answer to everyday needs.

ARCHCARE AT FERNCLIFF NURSING & REHABILITATION
21 Ferncliff Dr.
Rhinebeck, NY 12572
Tammy Schappert - Talent Acquisition Coordinator
Category: Nursing Homes/Senior Residences
Description: ArchCare, the Continuing Care Community of the Archdiocese of New York, provides top-quality healthcare and other services to thousands of people each day through an ever-expanding array of home- and community-based and residential care programs. Working for ArchCare is an opportunity to give back to your community in a compassionate and nurturing way. Our staff’s true spirit of compassion, hospitality, and the tremendous enthusiasm they show for their work makes a difference in the lives of so many.

BEARSVILLE CENTER
PO Box 7
Bearsville, NY 12409
Kim Lockrow - Director of Operations
Category: Arts & Entertainment
Description: The heartbeat of Woodstock, Bearsville and all that transpired in this small hamlet on the edge of Woodstock, created the music revolution of the sixties. We aim to nurture and inspire future generations with ground-breaking and exciting new music. We offer an acoustically perfect live theater stage, state-of-the-art streaming platforms, and the famed Utopia Sound Stage.

CORE CARDIO KICKBOXING
PO Box 244
Haines Falls, NY 12426
Josephine Michaud-Denier - Owner
Category: Fitness/Health Clubs
Description: High Energy Fitness and Kickboxing Studio offering Unlimited Memberships, Limited Memberships, Drop-In Classes and Discounted Memberships for Front Line Workers.

GILDAY CREATIVE, INC.
122 Main Street
New Paltz, NY 12561
Sheila Gilday - President / Creative Director
Category: Advertising/Design
Description: We are a digitally forward independent website & graphic design agency based in the Hudson Valley that crafts strategies and design experiences to make things better. We’re passionate about coming up with ideas that go beyond the expected, telling stories that are smart and interesting, and about helping brands become icons.

J.T.S. DESIGN, INC.
P.O. Box 24
Ulster Park, NY 12487
Jeff Severson - Principal
Category: Web Site Development
Description: A web development company serving the Hudson Valley Region of New York and the surrounding tri-state area. Services include website maintenance, responsive (mobile-friendly) website design, custom web application development, WordPress development, and e-commerce solutions.

JULIET LOFARO PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHER
73 Pine Street
West Hurley, NY 12491
Juliet Lofaro - Owner
Category: Photography
Description: Specializing in personal brand headshot photography, for all your social media needs. Studio location in Rhinebeck and West Hurley. Also offering family and senior class portraiture.

KAKES A LA KIM
147 O’Neil Street
Kingston, NY 12401
Kimberly Fassilis - Certified Commercial Baker/Cake Decorator/Owner
Category: Bakeries/Baked Goods
Description: Custom Cakes, Decorated Cookies, Pastries, Cupcakes, and more.

MOLD MATTERS LLC
64 Dunneman Avenue
Kingston, NY 12401
Heather DaSilva - Owner
Category: Home Inspections
Description: Mold Matters LLC is a NYS licensed mold assessment company. Mold assessors are the first step when a mold issue is suspected. A mold assessor is required to be independent of the remediation company doing the work, as mandated by NYS law effective in 2016.

NORTH STAR NEW YORK
148 Glenerie Blvd.
Saugerties, NY 12477
Arthur Boice - Owner
Category: Marketing
Description: North Star New York is a high quality digital marketing agency. We help brands look better on social media. With the largest influencer network in the world, we will help you scale your brand to where you need it to be. My team and I are dedicated to grow your business with premium digital ads and other great services.

REEL U FILM
30 Willow Street
Kingston, NY 12401
Anthony Irizarry - Co-Founder
Category: Video Production
Description: REEL U FILM is a video production company that produces media content for businesses to use on their website, social media, and other promotional channels. We also do event videography and are a full-service company (pre-production, production & post production editing).
**SANTA FE BURGER BAR**

388 Main Street  
**Rosendale, NY 12472**  

**Jim Demosthenes** - Co-Owner; Operating Partner  
Category: Restaurants  
Description: *Bright, spacious and lively craft burger and beer restaurant. Great outdoor dining area just a stone’s throw from Joppenbergh Mountain and the Wallkill Valley Rail Trail. Hand-crafted burgers, salads, sandwiches and more. Choose from a selection of 40+ regional draft and canned craft beers. And what about those crazy shakes! Come for the burgers; stay for the milkshakes and fun!*  

**STAVO INDUSTRIES INC., D.B.A. ERTELALSOP**

132 Flatbush Avenue  
**Kingston, NY 12401**  
www.ertelalsop.com  

**Barbara Altomari** - Administrative Assistant / Export Coordinator  
Category: Manufacturers  

**SOLAVIS HOLISTIC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH COACHING**

PO Box 883  
**Kerhonkson, NY 12446**  
www.solavis holistic.com  

**Courtney Edwards** - Owner  
Category: Life Coaching  
Description: Solavis Holistic Behavioral Health Coaching provides paths to wellbeing through individual, group, and relationship coaching, meditation and mindfulness mentorship, and educationally-focused community partnerships. A trained counselor and meditation instructor, Courtney Edwards, owner and coach, is committed to enhancing mindful wellbeing in every-day life. The name, Solavis, is derived from the root words for sun (sol), and bird (avis). The mission of Solavis is for you to shine and soar.

**T-MOBILE**

51 Burnett Blvd.  
**Poughkeepsie, NY 12603**  
www.T-mobile.com  

**James Parsons** - Rural Market Manager  
Category: Retail  
Description: We are a national company joining the chamber in this area as we are looking to network and take part in the community. T-Mobile is America’s supercharged Un-carrier, delivering an advanced 4G LTE and transformative nationwide 5G network that will offer reliable connectivity for all. T-Mobile’s customers benefit from its unmatched combination of value and quality, unwavering obsession with offering them the best possible service experience and undisputable drive for disruption that creates competition and innovation in wireless and beyond.

**POUGHKEEPSIE CHAPTER-SPEBSQSA, INC.**

34 Nassau Road  
**Poughkeepsie, NY 12601**  
newyorkerschorus.org  

**William K. Standish** - VP Membership  
Category: Musicians  
Description: *Fun & Fellowship: As part of our men’s a capella chorus, you’ll not only experience the fun and fellowship of singing with a quartet or the chorus...you’ll spread joy through performance, enriching your life and the lives of others. Today, Barbershop singing is a lot more than old tunes - there is a wide range of styles with contemporary songs and arrangements.*

**WELLNESS RX**

5980 Main Street  
**Tannersville, NY 12485**  
www.WellnessRxLLC.com  

**Greg Madden** – Development Manager  
Category: Health & Wellness  
Description: *About Wellness Rx: Wellness Rx Pharmacy blends Traditional Pharmacy with Natural Medicine and is located at 5980 Main Street in Tannersville, NY. These natural blended products are also available through the online store. Wellness Rx looks at the entire scope of health and wellness of the whole person/patient with this unique combined wellness holistic approach. Wellness Rx also has several alternative wellness practitioners available by appointment and listed on their website @ www.WellnessRxLLC.com.*
Ribbon Cuttings

**DARK ARTS TATTOO**
1086 Morton Blvd., Kingston, NY
darkartstattoo.bigcartel.com

**WELLNESS CENTER AT PEOPLE’S PLACE**
17 St. James Street, Kingston, NY
www.peoplesplace.org/wellness-empowerment-center

**KINGSTON ATHLETICS & ARTISAN BLOW DRY BAR**
1300 Ulster Avenue (Hudson Valley Mall), Kingston, NY
www.Kingstonathletics.com

**GRAINNE AND THE MARKET AT GRAINNE**
299 Wall Street, Kingston, NY
grainnekingston.com

**ACCORD MARKET**
23 Main Street, Accord, NY
www.accordmkt.com

**GATEWAY HUDSON VALLEY DAY HABILITATION & PRO SERVICES PROGRAMS**
1 Amy Kay Parkway, Kingston, NY
ghv.org