



# Chamber Connections



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www.cdcc.net

## It's Time to Tee Off with TEAM Dover!

It is time to get that golfing equipment into tip-top shape! It's time to clean up your spikes, dust off those golf clubs, get the cobwebs out of your bag and begin assembling your favorite golfing gear because a very popular TEAM Dover event, The Bluesuiters Golf Tournament, is right around the corner! This event, hosted by the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce's Military Affairs Committee, is designed to help maintain and strengthen the positive and supportive relationship the CDCC enjoys with the Dover Air Force Base. This unique tournament connects personnel from DAFB and members of the community for a day of golf and networking.



This year's golf outing, brought to you by Embrace Home Loans, will be held on May 19th at Jonathan's Landing. Registration will begin at 10 am,

with a shotgun start at 11 am. This golf tournament is open to golfers of all skill levels - from the novice to the seasoned golfer. Golfers will play on teams of four - two DAFB members and two civilians - to help foster great relationships, create partnerships, and spark incredible conversations.

Golfers can look forward to some pre-game time at the course's driving range. Activities will include a hole-in-one contest featuring amazing prizes and a golf ball drop used to determine the day's 50/50 winner. In addition, each golfer will have an opportunity to receive a door prize and goody bag.

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## Excellence in Business Awards – It's Time to VOTE!

"Excellence" has been defined in various ways: greatness... the quality of being outstanding or extremely good, of being truly the best at something... distinction... superiority... Among Chamber members, excellence is measured by positive interactions with the public, a demonstration of growth, a prevailing response to adversity, and a passion for service to the community. Excellence achieved by an active pool of high achievers is truly excellent.

Again, this year, we have been presented with three incredible nominees in each category. They are bright, intelligent, forward thinking, highly skilled... and more. Especially in this past year, they have shown resilience, persistence, and determination more than ever before. As we witnessed the way they handled doing business in the midst of a global

health crisis, we saw flexibility, innovation, and creativity. In short, they have each demonstrated excellence in their own way.

Each year, nominations are gathered for three prestigious awards: Large Employer of the Year (for companies of more than 50), Small Business of the Year (for companies of up to 50), and Young Professional of the Year (for individuals between 21 and 35 years of age). The nominations are reviewed by a committee comprised of previous award winners who select three nominees in each category. This is followed by a vote of the Chamber members that determines the winner. Finally, the awards are presented in June at the Awards for Excellence Dinner that concludes the Chamber's year of events.

See Excellence — Page 11



## Lessard Builders to Host May Sunset Business Mixer



It's time once again to re-connect with fellow business leaders, engage in conversations over delicious refreshments, share your business story with other business owners in our area - and BUILD your network! That's right - it's time to mark your calendar for the May Sunset Business Mixer

er - a FOUNDATIONAL opportunity to CELEBRATE your relationships with other member businesses! This popular event will be held on Wednesday, May 26th, from 5 - 7 pm, at Lessard Builders 261 E. Camden-Wyoming Avenue in Camden. Mark this date on your calendar and NAIL it down so that you can be there!

Lessard Builders had its beginning in 1951 in Long Island New York! Great-grandfather Dan opened a construction business and built homes, pole barns, and buildings. The business grew over the years and eventually relocated to Delaware, where it continues to be known



See Mixer — Page 3

# Judy's Journal



PRESIDENT - JUDY DIOGO

## Learning Together

The world around us is constantly changing, growing, and providing us with new opportunities. These new opportunities generally require one basic skill: the ability to learn. No matter how old you are or how much you know, there is always something to learn.

I am sure you have all heard the saying, "You don't know what you don't know."

Your Chamber is currently on a learning path regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I). We have partnered with the United Way of Delaware and the Delaware Racial Justice Collaborative to be become part of the Fusion Alliance. The purpose of this alliance is to advance racial diversity, equity, and inclusion within Delaware's business community by providing infrastructure and resources that will empow-

er businesses and business leaders, especially small and mid-sized businesses, with the expertise and resources needed to create and sustain a culture of inclusion within their companies.

Within the next few months, the CDCC will be adding a new page on our website that will house templates, videos, and various other resources to assist our members as they learn more about DE&I, too. It is also our plan to host workshops and seminars that will provide resources and opportunities for our members.

We know that, by working together, we become stronger. By **learning together**, we will become more knowledgeable, more aware, and more effective. In short, learning will lead to better businesses and better communities!

## Calendar of Events

Due to COVID-19 gathering restrictions, some of our events have become virtual, others will be hybrid offering both in-person and virtual access. For activities where a location is not listed, please call the CDCC Office at (302)734-7513 for specific information.

- May**
- Thursday, May 6th**  
Leadership Central Delaware  
8:00am - 5:00pm,  
Communications and Media Day
- Thursday, May 6th**  
Kent County Open for Business  
CANCELLED
- Tuesday, May 11th**  
CDCC Board Meeting  
7:30am - 8:30am,  
via Zoom
- Tuesday, May 11th**  
Young Professionals Social  
12:00pm - 1:00pm,  
Jonathan's Landing
- Wednesday, May 12th**  
Coffee Coaching  
8:00am - 9:00am
- Wednesday, May 12th**  
Marketing Committee Meeting  
10:00am - 11:00am
- Thursday, May 13th**  
Member Orientation  
8:30am - 10:00am
- Tuesday, May 18th**  
LCD Steering Committee Meeting  
12:00pm - 1:00pm
- Wednesday, May 19th**  
Bluesuiters Golf Tournament  
10:00am Reg.; 11:00am Start,  
Jonathan's Landing
- Monday, May 24th**  
CDCC Executive Committee Meeting  
8:00am - 10:00am
- Wednesday, May 26th**  
Ambassador Committee Meeting  
4:30pm,  
Lessard Builders
- Wednesday, May 26th**  
Sunset Business Mixer  
5:00pm - 7:00pm,  
Lessard Builders
- Monday, May 31st**  
Memorial Day  
Office Closed

**June**

- Thursday, June 3rd**  
Leadership Central Delaware  
8:00am - 5:00pm,  
Energy & Environment Day
- Thursday, June 3rd**  
Kent County Open for Business  
8:30am - 10:00am,  
TBA
- Tuesday, June 8th**  
CDCC Board Retreat  
9:00am - 4:00pm,  
TBD
- Wednesday, June 9th**  
Coffee Coaching  
8:00am - 9:00am
- Wednesday, June 9th**  
Marketing Committee Meeting  
10:00am - 11:00am
- Thursday, June 10th**  
Member Orientation  
12:00pm - 1:30pm
- Tuesday, June 15th**  
LCD Steering Committee Meeting  
12:00pm - 1:00pm
- TBD**  
Military Affaire  
5:30pm - 7:30pm,  
Dover Air Force Base
- Wednesday, June 24th**  
Awards for Excellence Dinner  
5:00pm - 7:30pm,  
Pizzadili Winery
- Wednesday, June 30th**  
Ambassador Committee Meeting  
4:30pm,  
TBD
- Wednesday, June 30th**  
Sunset Business Mixer  
5:00pm - 7:00pm, TBD
- TBD**  
LCD Closing Retreat  
9:00am - 3:00pm,  
TBD

Thank you to the CDCC Cornerstone Members!

An Industry Exclusive CDCC Marketing Package!

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www.cdcc.net

THE CDCC is the essential resource for growth of engaged businesses in Central Delaware.

## Chamber Connections

Published monthly by the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce, the first accredited Chamber of Commerce in Delaware. We represent the interests of the small business community. Over 800 businesses support CDCC.

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Additional mailings are available for a \$20 subscription fee. In many cases, more than one individual in a member business would like to receive information from the Chamber. By forwarding the subscription fee, the Chamber will satisfy the second class postage requirements and that individuals will be added to the mailing list.

# Cornerstone Member - Axia Hotel Group

## A Formula Blue™ Facelift Planned for the Holiday Inn Express & Suites®

The Holiday Inn Express & Suites® is the perfect stop for travelers who are looking for a simple and smart place to call home while on the road. This upper mid-scale hotel offers comfortable and stylish guest rooms and well-appointed suites with plenty of room to spread out. Owned by Axia Management Hotel Group, this hotel is known for its many amenities and convenient location.

The Holiday Inn Express & Suites® offers guests free Wi-Fi, free parking, an outdoor pool, free hot breakfast, 24-hour community business center, 24-hour fitness center, and the Priority Point Reward Program. Conveniently located just off Route 1, the hotel is just minutes from Dover International Speedway, Dover Air Force Base, Delaware State University, many government offices, and Dover's historic downtown. The DE Turf Sports Complex is just a 20-minute drive and Rehoboth Beach can be reached in less than an hour.

This popular InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) property is scheduled for an exciting facelift later this year, beginning in September, to meet the standards of IHG's Holiday Inn Express® prototype, Formula Blue™. This Formula Blue™ renovation will provide the hotel with a



fresh, contemporary look and feel. In addition to the new look, Formula Blue™ was created with special emphasis on reducing outside noise so that guestrooms can be quiet, comfortable spaces where guests can get a good night's sleep.

While the hotel will continue to offer guests the familiar amenities they enjoy, hotel executives have collaborated on a Property Improvement Plan that will include even more incredible features. A market space will be added in the lobby area and an outside patio will be built. The building will receive a new exterior, and guest rooms as well as public spaces will be improved. The hotel will remain open during the renovation process, which is expected to be complete by 2022.

The Axia Management Hotel Group has provided the highest level of hospitality to Central



Delaware's guests for more than 50 years. Their attention to detail, their sensitivity to the needs of their guests, and their reasonable pricing have all become the hallmarks by which their properties are known. Guests can look forward to all that the new and improved Holiday Inn Express & Suites® will have to offer, knowing that their stay will be easy, comfortable, and convenient – all at a good price.

For more information about Axia Hotel Group and their properties, please visit [www.axiahotelgroup.com](http://www.axiahotelgroup.com).



## Mixer

Continued From Page 1

for quality craftsmanship. Today, the team at Lessard Builders still prides itself on their history and the same principals their great-grandfather demonstrated over 65 ago: family, community, and working with people to turn their dreams into a reality! Come and learn all about what's happening at Lessard and about their impact here in Central Delaware.

The leading networking opportunity offered by the Chamber, the Sunset Business Mixer is one of the many benefits that accompany your membership. Mixers provide a great opportunity for CDCC members and their guests to spend time together at the end of a work-day in a casual setting, while meeting other business owners and collecting qualified leads. The Mixers occur 10 times during the year. Be sure to bring your business cards – you can share them with other attendees and enter the business card drawing to be the next CDCC Member of the Month!

Please note that, for in-person events, appropriate safety precautions will be in place to ensure the well-being of everyone. Guests will be asked to complete a brief health screening, including a temperature check (must be 99.5 or below), before entering. Attendance will be limited so that appropriate social distancing can be practiced. Masks are required.

To register for this event, please contact the CDCC office at 302-734-7513 or via email at [adminassistant@cdcc.net](mailto:adminassistant@cdcc.net). You can also sign up through the website, [www.cdcc.net](http://www.cdcc.net) by clicking on the Events Calendar. We hope to see you on Wednesday, May 26th at Lessard Builders in Camden for the Sunset Business Mixer!

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# Cornerstone Member - Dover Federal Credit Union

## 7 Ways to Get the Credit Score Everybody Wants

It's common knowledge that having a good or even great credit score is important, but far fewer people know how to get one, or how to keep and maintain it. We all want a great score but it doesn't happen by accident and it doesn't happen overnight. It can take time to establish and build your score, but with a couple of simple mistakes all of your hard work could be lost if you're not careful.



The following are 7 ways to get the credit score you've always wanted.

### 1. Be careful of how often you apply.

Every time you apply for a new loan or line of credit, lenders pull your credit report. A small amount of points is taken from your score each time this happens! You get these points back after a year, but continually having your credit ran can keep your score lower.

### 2. Don't get too many new loans at once.

When you open a new loan or line of credit, you also lose a small amount of points. You get these points back after a year, but just the same as having your credit report ran, opening too many loans and lines of credit at once can drop your score significantly. Try and plan out the loans you might need in the not too distant future (auto loan, personal loan, etc.) and space them out when possible.

### 3. NO late or skipped payments!

By making your payments on time and never missing one, you not only help build your credit and payment history, but you avoid losing massive amount of points. While it's better to pay more than the minimum, you always want to avoid paying less or not at all each month.



### 4. Keep low credit card balances.

I know, sometimes this is easier said than done. Avoid losing points by never carrying credit card balances that exceed 30% of the total limit of the card. If you do have higher balances, be sure to pay them down and you will see your score increase!

### 5. Use various types of credit.

Part of what makes up your credit score is what type of credit you use. By using various types of credit, including credit cards, personal loans, and auto loans, you can create a diverse credit portfolio which may increase your score. This helps prove to lenders that you can handle different forms of debt.

### 6. We all make mistakes.

Sometimes life throws something our way that we aren't prepared for. Whether you maxed out a credit card or were late on a payment, don't get discouraged. It might take extra time for your score to bounce back, but it isn't the end of the world. Make sure to take steps to pay your balance down or set reminders for when your payments are due. Eventually these little blemishes will fall off your report and your score will rise. If forgetting every month is the main issue, try setting up automatic payments with your lender.

### 7. Request your annual free credit report.

A lot of us might know our score but have never really seen what our credit report looks like. Everyone is entitled to a free credit report once a year. Take advantage of this and make sure that what's on your report is accurate. Not only does this help you avoid identity theft but can also help you to better identify areas where you might be losing points unnecessarily.

### Credit Takes Work, But We Can Help You Get There

The trick to having good credit is knowing how often to use credit, making payments on time, and being sure to use various forms of credit. Whether you are just starting out establishing credit, working to build or repair credit, or trying to maintain the score you already have, these are tips that should everyone should keep in mind. If you aren't where you want to be, let Dover Federal Credit Union help you get there with a free credit score analysis. To get started, contact Dover Federal today.

## TEAM

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Snacks and beverages will be available on the golf course provided by CDCC member businesses.

We are so grateful for the help of our sponsors in bringing this tournament to the community. We'd like to say a special thank you to AMB Mobile Massage & Wellness Center, Burke Equipment, Compass Investment Advisors, Delmarva Veteran Builders, Dover Federal Credit Union, Five Star Home Foods Incorporated, Humana, Independent Metal Strap, Pike Creek Mortgage Services, Inc., Pinnacle Rehabilitation & Health Center, Woody's on Wheels, and Wilmington University. A special thank you to our signature sponsor, Embrace Home Loans and to Jonathan's Landing for hosting our event. Anyone interesting in sponsoring this TEAM Dover event, should contact Cindy Friese at [cfriese@cdcc.net](mailto:cfriese@cdcc.net).

The tournament cost is \$80 per golfer, which includes a day of golf and dinner at the clubhouse after the event. Perhaps you'd like to thank some-



one from Dover Air Force Base for their service by sponsoring their golf for the day - this kind of sponsorship is also \$80. If you would like to participate in the tournament by golfing, sponsoring,

or donating a door prize, please contact Cristal at the CDCC Office at 302-734-7513 or by email [cbrenneman@cdcc.net](mailto:cbrenneman@cdcc.net). We will be excited to see you on May 19th for this fun event!

## Member News

# Dover Downs Revitalizes Community Action Program

Since 1969, Delaware's largest and most luxurious place to play, Dover Downs Hotel & Casino® has been providing a variety of entertainment and dining options to the Central Delaware community. The complex is owned by the Bally Corporation and is located in Dover on Highway 13. The most well-known features of Dover Downs Hotel & Casino® are the 500-room hotel, harness racing, the Casino which offers over 2,700 slot machines and 40 table games, and the Rollins Center, an 18,000 square foot multi-purpose ballroom which features entertainment, and hosts a variety of banquets, business conferences, and conventions. Adjacent to the Bally property is a .625-mile harness racing track and a one-mile concrete track used for NASCAR Motor Racing events, both owned by Dover Motorsports.

Dover Downs makes a significant impact on the hospitality industry here in Central Delaware and throughout the mid-Atlantic. People often travel quite a distance to avail themselves of all the hotel and casino have to offer. In addition, Dover Downs has a tremendous impact on the economy and provides the area with well over 1,300 employment opportunities.

While Dover Downs Hotel & Casino® has always been pleased to be part of the Dover community, their leaders are making a concentrated effort to re-fresh the way they engage in the community. They are keenly aware that the support of the local community plays a large role in their success. They are excited to initiate an intentional program that allows them to return the favor, that gives them opportunities to support the community by giving back.

"Here at Dover Downs Hotel & Casino, we're very excited to be embarking on the development and execution of our revitalized community action program aimed at supporting and giving back to the communities that support us," commented Tony Rohrer, the establishment's Vice President and General Manager.

While their efforts in this "fledgling year" of the program may be limited due to COVID-19 restrictions, the team at Dover Downs is working towards two events per month. These two events per month are in addition to numerous drives for goods and monetary donations already in place. The effort, coordinated by Nancy McCoy, executive assistant, began with employee volunteers and has already grown to include spouses. Eventually, some of the activities, especially gatherings of food, cash, and goods, will allow customers to contribute as well.

To date, the community action program has included a build at Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity, a Toys for Tots Drive which yielded 8 large boxes filled with toys, a Code Purple collection that gathered over 300 gently used, new, and handmade items, participation in the Shamrock Scramble 5K to benefit Kays Kamp



**Nancy McCoy, Community Action Program Coordinator**

for Kids, participation in Rock Your Socks for World Down Syndrome Day, monthly birthday bag drop offs to the Boys and Girls Club of Dover, monthly birthday boxes and other donations to the Dover Interfaith Mission for housing, and an Earth Day clean-up at Mallard Pond Park.

Ms. McCoy is already looking for and planning the next events with her sights set on an animal shelter, the Adopt-a-Highway program, and a porch beautification project at Dover Place – just to name a few! "We've been very fortunate with lining things up and getting people to participate," remarked McCoy. "It sort of reminds me of my Girl Scout leader days! It's wonderful to be helping the community."

As the team at Dover Downs continues to plan their events, they see no need to reinvent the wheel and duplicate efforts. Instead, they are hoping to help others who are already giving back by putting their efforts behind initiatives that already may be in place. For example, they have engaged in a partnership with Gals That Give in which they will help promote the work of Gals That Give and can be used as a resource. This strategy will enable them to spread the love, without spreading themselves too thin!

Mr. Rohrer explained it this way: "There are so many wonderful opportunities to get involved with charitable organizations, community initiatives and general projects in and around the Dover area that we feel we can contribute resources to. Whether our contributions are financial in nature, or from a human resource aspect, we intend to get out into the communities and make a positive contribution to the amazing efforts already in place."

The community action program is something that promises growth each year resulting in an integration into the culture of Dover Down's employees. The hope is that it will eventually just become a standard part of what they do. Due to the pandem-



**Tony Rohrer, Vice President and General Manager**

ic, Dover Down's pool of employees is currently a bit smaller. They have about 800 employees that have returned to work out of their workforce of 1,300. But, even with that, they are excited at the response so far. Approximately 40+ employees have already become involved.

This new initiative is not in any way mandated, but it remains completely voluntary. Plans are in place for some type of incentive contest where volunteers can be placed into a drawing for prizes. Plans are also in the works for establishing a wall of pictures in the employee break room celebrating what they have been able to accomplish. The hope is that this kind of recognition and celebration will create a good "buzz" around this effort and will motivate more employees to join in.

"One component of our community action program is the development of an 'All In' team of dedicated and caring employees, all eager and willing to participate and help in any way possible to make a difference," explained Rohrer. "Whether helping build a home for deserving individuals or creating awareness and a presence to support a charitable walk or run, we have numerous team members lining up to get involved. I could not be prouder of our Dover Downs team and their willingness to get involved and their excitement about donating their time and resources to improving the quality of life in our communities."

The folks at Dover Downs Hotel & Casino® understand that they have a responsibility to support the community. They believe in celebrating the good things that are happening here in Central Delaware not just by standing back and offering their cheers and applause, but by getting involved in the effort because, as Tony Rohrer believes, "the best hand is a helping one."

For more information about Dover Downs Hotel & Casino®, please visit their website at [www.dover-downs.com](http://www.dover-downs.com).



# A Class Reunion Around the Topic of Healthcare

This year's Health & Human Services day brought the Class of 2021 back together for the first time in several months – and what a happy reunion it was! The day's activities were hosted by the team from Bayhealth's Sussex campus who made everyone feel welcome and put together a day filled with information from beginning to end. From discussions about the pandemic to learning about the new residency program to the ins and outs of the Emergency department to having an opportunity to pet the therapy dogs, class members got an up close and personal look at one of the states leading industries.



A program of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce

The day began with a presentation by Bayhealth President and CEO, Terry Murphy, called "The Impact of Healthcare." Terry shared that Bayhealth is a technologically advanced not-for-profit health care system. An affiliate of Penn Medicine for heart and vascular, cancer, and orthopaedics, Bayhealth employs more than 4,000 workers and boasts a medical staff of over 400 physicians. The mission of Bayhealth is to strengthen our community, one life at a time.

Terry spent time sharing information about how the hospital worked to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. He presented statistical information and talked about their efforts to procure appropriate staffing and supply, their efforts to enhance internal and external communication, and their focus on infection prevention leadership. A great deal of time was spent discussing staff care and the services that were put into place to ensure the health and well-being of those working through the health crisis.

Mr. Murphy also spoke about the \$91 million financial impact of COVID-19. Much of that has been reimbursed through CARES act money and other funding from the state of Delaware, but there remains a \$30 million short fall. Despite all that,

Bayhealth is positioned for growth and is pleased to be expanding its footprint and preparing to launch its graduate education program.

Terry left the group with a medical caution regarding their own health and wellness. He explained that many people were required to delay their personal care to make room for all the COVID-19 cases. Some continue to delay care. His urged the members of the class to do whatever they can to maintain their health care by going for check ups and tests as needed. "The delay of health care is not only bad for the individual," commented Murphy, "it is detrimental to the community's health."

Next on the agenda, class members got an inside look at how hospital technology impacts the health-care system. Rick Mohnk, Vice President and Chief Information Officer at Bayhealth and CDCC Board Member, gave the group a glimpse of the important role technology plays every day, including during the pandemic. He also shared his perspective on what it means to be an effective leader. "People are brilliant if you give them a chance to be," he commented. Taking care of one's team is paramount to good leadership. According to Mohnk, the art of

leading can be described in this way: "Take care of each other. No Surprises."

Bayhealth is currently launching their new Graduate Medical Education program. Family Medicine Residency Program Director, Dr. Brintha Vasagar, and Internal Medicine Residency Program Director, Dr. Joseph Deutsch, spent time talking with the class about their preparation to welcome residents to Bayhealth. It is the hope of hospital leaders, as well as workforce development leaders, that the residents will remain in Central Delaware after their residencies are completed.

Class members also had the opportunity to hear from several other speakers later in the day. Foundation Director of Development, Charles "Chuck" Desch, and Development Specialist, Mary Curtin, spoke about the Bayhealth Foundation and its work to develop support for active and anticipated programs and services of the health system. Dr. Julie Cullen, Assistant Medical Director, Emergency Department, Sussex Campus, shared her experiences and insight into the work of the Emergency Department and what that looked like during the height of the pandemic. Dr. Cullen echoed Terry Murphy's warning about not delaying regular care. Charles Annan, Manager, Continuous Improvement Methodologies and Support, spoke about initiatives at Bayhealth to promote clear and effective communication among staff members, especially regarding safety issues.

One of the class's favorite portions of the day was their visit with Mouse and Brutus, the therapy dogs. Mouse, a Pomeranian and Toy American Eskimo, and Brutus, a Labradoodle, are both 7 years old. They enjoy their volunteer job at Bayhealth providing comfort and offering affection to patients. While the class was outside with Mouse

and Brutus, they were given the opportunity to write messages of encouragement and gratitude with sidewalk chalk on the walkways surrounding the hospital.

The day ended with a virtual panel discussion that was designed to give class members an overview of the various sectors of health care. The class welcomed panelists Erin DeFarno, Post Acute Medical Rehabilitation Hospital of Dover, Chris Fraser, Westside Family Healthcare, Louis Memmolo, Weiner Benefits Group, and Wayne Smith, Delaware Healthcare Association, and listened as each explained their unique role in Delaware's healthcare system.

The day ended with an amazing tour and explanation of the Linear Accelerator (LINAC). The LINAC is the device most commonly used for external beam radiation treatments for patients with cancer. The LINAC works by customizing high energy x-rays or electrons to conform to a tumor's shape and destroy cancer cells while sparing surrounding normal tissue.

Even though COVID-19 restrictions limited our movement, the team at Bayhealth did a remarkable job of sharing vital information with the Class of 2021. Health & Human Services Day packed with a variety of statistics, perspectives, explanations, and leadership wisdom. Class members were pleased to be reunited in person. They felt like they gained a tremendous amount of behind-the-scenes knowledge from the presentations and conversations they experienced during the day. They also felt a deep sense of appreciation for the way that Bayhealth handled the global health crisis and for the many sacrifices that were made during the past year.



Brutus loved his time with the Class of 2021.



Mouse, the therapy dog, seemed to receive as much affection as he shared!



Marie Kozel creates a special message for the staff at Bayhealth, Sussex Campus.



Social Distancing and Masks made the in-person experience a reality.



The Class of 2021 and alum Amanda Bowie (far right)



Terry Murphy, Bayhealth President and CEO



The tour of the Linear Accelerator was fascinating.



Rick Mohnk, VP & Chief Information Officer and CDCC Board Member

# Learning Leadership at the Garden Path

A significant part of our Leadership Central Delaware curriculum each year requires class members to work together on projects that will benefit the community. These Community Impact projects help students to apply their newly acquired and continuously developing leadership skills to real-life situations that will help other members of the Central Delaware community. These projects are submitted each year by non-profit member businesses and are voted on by class members during the Opening Retreat.

The LCD Class of 2021 chose a project submitted by NCALL (National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor Research Fund, Inc.). The project involves the construction of a pathway to their community garden. The garden, a collaborative effort of Wesley College, Delaware State University, and NCALL, is the only community garden in the city. Nestled behind the residence hall on the Wesley College campus, it is a co-operative garden that grows veggies for the local community and native plants for pollinators. The pathway will bring visibility and awareness to the garden, thus dispelling the no-



A program of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce

tion that the garden is the “best kept secret in town.”

Under the leadership of project managers, Tim Bailey of Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity, and Patty Isherwood of Bayhealth, class members have spent their leadership year planning and gathering resources to complete the garden project through the work of two committees, the project’s budget committee and the community outreach committee.

On Saturday, April 17th, class members came together at the garden site for their first of two workdays. The group gathered at the work site armed with gloves and water and went to work prepping the border beds adjacent to the walking path by adding soil, edging, and weeding. They also prepped and planted the actual garden beds. In



addition, they did some general clean-up of the area and made plans for the installation of a mural at the site.

The class’s next workday is planned for May as they install the mural and put the finishing touches on the project.

To donate or offer any assistance to the class as they complete their project, please contact the CDCC office at (302)734-7513.



Sponsors confirmed as of 10.22.21

## Thank you to our Sponsors!

# CDCC Special Feature



Thanks, Woody - delicious!



First Hole in One of the Event!



The winning putt of the tournament...



## THE Chamber Mini Masters

The Masters™ is held down in Georgia each year –  
 But this year we wanted to have it right here.  
 Augusta's big course - beautiful inside the fence,  
 And, of course, Georgia's land mass is really immense.

Compared to the First State, it's really gigantic!  
 Could we pull off a Masters™? Would it make us all frantic?  
 Being small and different, we'll avoid any rut...  
 Why not a Masters™ in Miniature – a game of putt putt?!

There's this place in Wyoming where we could all play –  
 “Kent County's Happiest Place!” people say.  
 Tre Sorelle Dolce is just like a dream –  
 Where mini golf is played right next door to ice cream!

In costume and golf garb the duffers showed up  
 They took their turns aiming for the little white cup.  
 The fans were so happy to be back together  
 In this unusual Springtime 80-degree weather.

There were trophies and prizes and stiff competition,  
 Strategies, tactics, and lots of ambition.  
 Players and fans had a big barrel of fun –  
 At the end of the day who would be #1?

The food trucks arrived with their goodies so dear –  
 There was plenty of water and soda and beer!  
 We talked and we ate – it was really quite neat.  
 We sampled the Chamber's Crabby Caddy treat.

Prizes were given – best putt and best dressed...  
 With applause and yahoos and excitement and zest.  
 Can you even imagine all the wild, happy racket  
 When the winner was awarded the Chamber's Blue Jacket?!

This brand-new event to new heights it did reach –  
 It rivaled that Masters™ in the land of the peach.  
 The Chamber Mini Masters was quite the success –  
 It will go down in our history as one of the best.

Many thanks to our sponsors, volunteers, and our host –  
 Being together's what we enjoyed most.  
 We've got just one more line to put in your ear –  
 Let's do it again at the same time next year!

**Best Dressed**  
 – Harrington ERA  
**Best Overall Team**  
 – Gang Greene  
**Tournament Champion**  
 and **Winner of**  
**the Coveted Blue Jacket**  
 – Mike Harrington



Thank you, Shay - what a treat!



Thanks, Friends from Fordham & Dominion



Thanks to the Gang from FLY High Cheer & Tumble who served the Crabby Caddy.



Mike Harrington, winner of the coveted Blue Jacket



Gang Greene, the Best Overall Team



Family Affaire, the Best Dressed



# Plans are Falling Into Place for the 55+ Expo

The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that, after a one-year hiatus due to the pandemic, plans are in process to bring the 55+ Expo back! It has been an interesting and challenging year as we have all been called to navigate the rough waters of COVID-19. We seem to finally be at a moment when things are starting to turn around and head back in a direction that feels more "normal." Safety protocols have gone great lengths to stop the spread and flatten the curve and vaccinations are beginning to restore confidence as we watch the light at the end of the tunnel grow brighter.

There is no doubt that many lessons have been learned throughout this emergency health situation. One of those lessons is the need to be prepared to take care of ourselves and those around us. The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce's 20th Annual 55+ Expo is an event designed to help do just that - learn what we need to do prepare for our own future and the futures of those we love. The 55+ Expo is NOT an event just for senior citizens. Much of what happens at the event is planned with seniors in mind and much of our focus is on helping them to maintain lives filled with good health and energy for every day. If however, one waits until they've reached those "golden" years before starting to envision and plan how they want them to look, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to make those dreams come true. In addition, many in the age bracket 35 and older find themselves caring for aging relatives. In addition to our Caregiver's Support Center, the 55+ Expo, with over 100 vendors, features a variety of goods, services, and resources that can help.

On its NEW DATE, Tuesday, August 10, 2021, from 9 am - 3 pm, participants are invited to Dover Downs® Hotel & Casino for one of the most comprehensive expos of its kind in Delaware, the CDCC's 20th Annual 55+ Expo. The



20th Annual  
**55+ PLUS EXPO**

Tuesday, August 10, 2021  
FREE Admission  
Dover Downs® Hotel & Casino

Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce is pleased to present an event designed to bring seniors and their caregivers together with the products and services that will allow them to live their best lives. This FREE event will showcase businesses that can assist our seniors as they do their best to maintain active lifestyles and stay involved in their local communities.

Bayhealth Medical Center will be on hand to provide the event with a Wellness Center. Consultants will be there to help answer questions and offer guidance on the journey to better health. Plans are underway for sponsor-conducted seminars and live entertainment.

The 55+ Expo also offers help for a younger generation that may be providing care for parents and grandparents. Details are currently coming together for our Caregiver's Support Center. Caregivers bear an enormous respon-

sibility. Knowing the multitude of resources that are available and how to find them will be a critical component as you care for friends and family members as they age.

The CDCC would like to take this opportunity to thank our businesses that have already committed to sponsoring this event (as of 4/27/21): our Wellness Center Gold Sponsor: Bayhealth Medical Center; our Gold Sponsors: Humana, The Center at Eden Hill, First State Orthopaedics; our Media Sponsor: Dover Post; and our Network Nook Sponsor: DART.

For more information, call the CDCC Office at (302)734-7513 or visit our 55+ Event page at [www.cdcc.net/55plus](http://www.cdcc.net/55plus). We look forward to seeing you on our new date, August 10th! Until then, stay healthy and be well.

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# Member News

## Join #LiveCentralDE and "Share Love to your Local!"

Central Delaware is an amazing place to be! There are new businesses taking root in our area. New housing developments are starting to bloom within a mile or two of our main corridors. New residents are finding their way into the heart of Central Delaware. Legislators meet here in thoughtful conversations to discuss ways to uplift and improve the lives of our citizens who seek to be part of the solution, who are eager to give back. Residents and visitors alike can experience life in the fast lane at our speedway or life at a slower pace in our towns, at our parks and our nature trails. History comes alive as stories are told about being the first to sign the Constitution or Caesar Rodney's famous horse-back ride to cast his deciding vote. Opportunities abound for tax-free shopping and incredible dining experiences. Grateful citizens observe and engage in activities that support the Dover Air Force base. Museums, art, and music add to the developing culture. Central Delaware is a place worth celebrating!

As in many places that people call "home," there are some unique gems here that go unnoticed - even by life-long residents. Did you know that space suits are made for NASA right here in Kent County at ILC Dover? Did you know that buffalo live here in the first state? Have you heard about the Cranberry Bog near Route 6 or the Round Barn on South Little Creek Road or the Tilapia Farm near Milford? Central Delaware is full of hidden treasures and off-the-beaten path places that add to its charm.

#LiveCentralDE, a new campaign recently launched by the Greater Kent Committee's Quality of Life Task Force, is designed to celebrate all things Central - and keep us from being the region's best kept secret! While reorganizing the Kent Economic Partnership, the Greater Kent Committee (GKC) commissioned Rockport Analytics to identify business and growth opportunities in Central Delaware. Among other opportunities, the data mined by this study identified a need to improve the quality of life in Central Delaware. The GKC's Quality of Life Task Force was established and commissioned to study the issue and make recommendations.

After much research and deliberation regarding what Kent County was missing, committee members turned their attention to bolstering support for what the area already offers. That is not to say that new amenities will not be considered - brew pubs, dog parks, family entertainment centers, and the like may very well be part of the evolving near-future of the region. As the committee began identifying the assets of the area, however, it appeared that what was really missing was an active marketing voice for the region.

"The need appeared to help folks gain a better understanding of what's here," commented Mike Rasmussen, committee spokesperson, Smyrna Councilman, and owner of Painted Stave Distilling. "We would like to find a way to engage more people, not just the 'super users' - the same small mass that seem to show up for everything."

It was out of that need that #LiveCentralDE was born. This new campaign is designed to create energy around the narrative that tells Central Delaware's story. #LiveCentralDE encourages individuals to complete a checklist of tasks de-

signed to create an awareness of all Central Delaware has to offer. Participants are encouraged to Eat Central (find delicious food at a local restaurant or food truck), Drink Central (sip some great local libations or craft sodas), Outdoors Central (enjoy a favorite local outdoor activity), Give Back Central (contribute time, talent, and/or treasure to a local cause), Shop Central (pay a visit to a local shop or boutique), Move Central (make exercise and movement a priority), Must-Do Central (explore some of the hidden gems that make our area unique), and Culture Central (enjoy a local gallery, museum, or theatre) - all between April 15th and May 30th. Participants who complete four categories can enter to win a gift card to a Central Delaware location. Those who complete all eight categories will be placed in a drawing to win an epic staycation at Dover Downs Hotel & Casino.

To participate, visit [www.visitdelaware.com/LiveCentralDE](http://www.visitdelaware.com/LiveCentralDE) to download the checklist. As categories on the checklist are completed, participants are asked to share their adventures on social media using the hashtag #LiveCentralDE. Find a link to #LiveCentralDE at [www.cdcc.net/living-here/play/](http://www.cdcc.net/living-here/play/). Sharing stories and using the hashtag has the potential to create some good "buzz" about all there is to enjoy here in Kent County. Completed checklists are to be submitted at [www.visitdelaware.com/LiveCentralDE](http://www.visitdelaware.com/LiveCentralDE) no later than May 30th.

"It's far too easy to fall into the trap of saying 'there's nothing to do here,' when nothing could be further from the truth," observed Rasmussen. "This is an area where there's a LOT to do. We are hopeful that this campaign will serve to change the story of our area from 'nothing to do' to 'SO MUCH to do.'"

Mike moved to Central Delaware



Mike Rasmussen, Quality of Life Task Force Spokesperson

seven years ago and acclimated quickly to the small-town feel. He feels that the area is a place where it is easy to feel deeply connected. He appreciates the variety of resources that are available here. "There's an awesome base of things to draw from in Central Delaware," he offered, "and it's never far from the people or places you want to be."

Members of the Greater Kent Committee believe that the timing is right for this kind of campaign. As places begin to re-open after the pandemic, #LiveCentralDE will give people some additional motivation to get out and start enjoying what the region has to offer.

Business owners who are interested in assisting with this campaign may consider donating gift cards and prizes to the cause by contacting Pete Bradley at Kent County Tourism ([pbradley@visitdelaware-villages.com](mailto:pbradley@visitdelaware-villages.com)).

Central Delaware residents are encouraged to participate, use the hashtag, share their stories, and help to re-write the amazing story that is Central Delaware! From dining to shopping to can't-miss things to do, let's come together and support our local community - let's love our local and celebrate Central. Together, we can make a difference!



### How to win:

Step 1: Complete 4 categories to enter to win a prize package from a Central Delaware location. Complete all 8 to enter to win an epic Staycation.

Step 2: Please write the name of the location visited and date when visited on the checklist.

Step 3: Share your adventures on social media as you complete each category with #LiveCentralDE

Step 4: Submit your completed check list by May 30, 2021 at [www.visitdelaware.com/livecentralde](http://www.visitdelaware.com/livecentralde)

- Eat Central**  
Eat great food at a local restaurant or food truck.
- Drink Central**  
Sip some great local libations, craft sodas, or tasty creations.
- Outdoors Central**  
Enjoy some of your favorite outdoor activities.
- Give Back Central**  
Give back to your local community and support those in need.
- Shop Central**  
Find what you want and need at your local stores.
- Move Central**  
Make exercise and movement part of your lifestyle.
- Must-Do Central**  
Explore some of the hidden gems that make central Delaware unique.
- Culture Central**  
Enjoy the area's galleries, museums, theaters and cultural activities.

## #LiveCentralDE

Share love to your local!

Complete the checklist inside, share your love of Central Delaware on social media and you'll be entered to win a prize.



VisitDelaware.com/LiveCentralDE

Business Name | Date of Visit

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**GANNETT**

# Excellence

Continued From Page 1

It is NOW time to cast your votes for the Excellence in Business Awards! Remember – each CDCC member business has one vote for the person/business who best embodies the Chamber’s criteria for excellence. One more time, the candidates are...

## Small Business of the Year

**Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity**  
**DE Turf**  
**The House of Coffi**

## Large Employer of the Year

**Bayhealth**  
**Century Engineering**  
**POLYTECH**

## Young Professional of the Year

**Ryne Johnson – Advantech**  
**Jesse Sapp – Chesapeake Utilities Corporation**

## Cassie Porter – Faw Casson

Members may vote using the ballot in this issue of the Chamber Connections – simply complete your voting and mail the form to the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce at 435 N. DuPont Hwy., Dover, DE 19901. Members may also vote online using this link: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/)

CDCC Awards 2021. Remember – only chamber members are eligible to vote and only one vote per member is allotted.

It is imperative that the members of the Central Delaware business community support each other’s successes. It has been said many times by many people that “when one wins, we all win!” There is so much good happening in Kent County that it is hard to choose a “best.” But by lifting up a “best,” we all are motivated to improve, to excel, to grow – and ultimately to contribute to the greater good of Central Delaware.

We look forward to celebrating all our nominees with you at the Awards for Excellence Dinner on June 24, 2021, at Pizzadili Vineyard & Winery!

## NOMINEES FOR SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR



**Business:**  
 Central Delaware  
 Habitat for Humanity ReStore  
**Address:**  
 2311 South DuPont Highway  
 Dover DE 19901  
**Primary Contact:** Chrissy Kyriss,  
 ReStore Director  
**Telephone:** 302-346-0220 X110  
**Email:**  
[www.centraldelawarehabitat.org](http://www.centraldelawarehabitat.org)

### Describe the business:

The ReStore recycles overstocked, second, used, discontinued, and salvageable building materials donated by manufacturers, stores, contractors, and individuals. These donated items are resold to the public and the proceeds go towards funding our affordable home projects.

### Mission/Philosophy:

The Habitat ReStore mission is: To generate revenue through the sale of donated items to support Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity’s mission of eliminating poverty housing, to promote neighborhood revitalization through the sale of low-cost building materials and other items, and to facilitate the reuse of materials reducing landfill waste.

### Primary good or service provided:

The ReStore sells donated items at 50%-70% off retail price. We sell building materials, home goods, furniture, and other home improvement items. The ReStore is Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity’s main fundraiser. The proceeds fund our future construction products. It allows us to continue to build affordable homeownership in Kent County.

### Number of years in business:

13 years

### How did your business start?

Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity was established in 1990, CDHFH’s first ReStore opened on July 1, 2007. We have gradually grown and moved locations to fit our growth in sales and programs. We moved to S. Dupont Hwy about two years ago.

### Number of employees:

Full-time – 3 Part-time – 8

### Describe the growth of your busi-



### ness:

**In staffing increases:** As the demand for low priced retail items increased, from 2016 to present we went from five ReStore employees to ten employees in 2020.

In 2019 Habitat for Humanity ReStore & Affiliate purchased and moved into their forever home.

### In Sales:

2016 \$333,733.48  
 2017 \$377,567.96  
 2018 \$404,747.58  
 2019 \$418,873.35  
 2020 \$429,874.43

### Describe the challenges facing your business:

We had to close for six weeks in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We also have had to change multiple policies to coincide with restrictions. Such as limiting volunteerism and holding donations for sanitary purposes.

As our inventory is all donation based, we rely heavily on donated items from individuals and corporations in our community. Due to COVID, we have a decrease in donations. We also have a challenge receiving quality donations that appeal to our customer base.

Reaching more customers in Kent County and making sure our mission of building affordable homes is understood.

### Describe solutions developed to address those challenges:

With working with the local government, we have been able to remain open due to imple-

menting a cleaning and sanitize schedule, quarantining new donations, mandatory masks for employees and customers. We have also instilled a new volunteer schedule that allows for more volunteer shifts and virtual volunteer opportunities to allow for volunteerism in areas of store that need extra hands.

We have developed a working Do and Do Not Accept donation list and a quality check for donations to allow us to make sure that we are able to sell the donated products. We have also started selling paint supplies, bedding, etc. which are items that are used frequently by consumers. We have also partnered with name brand suppliers, where they donate gently used items for us to sell.

Marketing, Marketing, Marketing. We have created a Marketing Plan for us to follow to reach more customers in more remote areas and to reach our target audience. We have increased our online presence and developed an online store for customers who wish to shop from the comfort of their home.

### Describe a creative, imaginative or innovative process you have developed that has helped your business grow:

We have developed several discount days to bring in more customers looking for a good deal on a great product. On Wednesdays we offer a senior and military discount, on Thursdays we have in-

stilled, Thrifty Thursdays, with various deals of the day on select furniture and when customers spend a certain amount to spin the wheel for a discount. Introducing an online store in 2020 due to COVID-19 has allowed for increase in customer reach. We also treat our customers like family. If you support CDHFH in any means, you become a part of the CDHFH family. We will make sure to remember your name, say hi every time you are in the store, etc.

### What are the goals for your business in the next three to five years?

To generate on average of \$50,000.00 a month in sales, continue to create and sustain partnerships with local organizations for donated items and/or sponsorships. Continue to train and maintain our excellent customer service skills and have a net income to gross sales ratio of 50%. We hope to instill more programs to help those in need in Kent County.

### What distinguishes your business from the others?

We strive to help those in need everyday. It is not only our mission, but it is instilled in every staff member, that what they do every day is making a difference in our community. You can drive to downtown Dover and see the progress that Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity is accomplishing. We are continuing to transform lives and creating a generational impact for many years to come.

### What contributions have you made in the community?

Serving on boards/committees: We have a board that helps us strive for affordable housing in the Kent County community. We also have a representative that sits on the Restoring Central Dover committee.

**Serving as a volunteer:** We partner with Dover PD, NCALL and The Green Beret Project to help individuals and families in Kent County by handing out food during the holidays and doing clean ups in downtown Dover.

**Providing in-kind services:** We have a Families in Need program that also those in need of furniture items to volunteer in exchange for a furniture item of their choice.

## NOMINEES FOR SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

**Business:** DE Turf Sports Complex  
**Address:**  
 4000 Bay Rd, Frederica, DE  
 19946  
**Primary Contact:**  
 Angie Eliason,  
 Executive Director  
**Telephone:** 760-835-7693  
**Website:** www.deturf.com



**Describe the business:**  
**Mission/Philosophy:**

The mission of the Kent County Regional Sports Complex Corporation (also known as the DE Turf) is to serve as an economic engine for central Delaware by providing a first-class sports destination venue that attracts sports tourism to the area. A premier facility for premier athletes.

**Primary good or service provided:**  
 An outdoor sports facility.

**Number of years in business:**  
 Four

**How did your business start?**

In 2009, the Greater Kent Committee (GKC) began conceptual discussions on what would become the vision to create the DE Turf Complex. Two related problems were identified: For several years, hotel occupancy in Kent County averaged 47 percent versus an industry standard of 60 to 65 percent. During that time, the Kent County Tourism Office was not able to respond to numerous requests for proposals to host high school and college tournaments because of the lack of an appropriate facility. The combination of these two issues resulted in a loss of potential economic activity within the county. The small businesses and tourism industry that made up a significant part of the local economy were negatively impacted by a disproportionately low amount of the visitor and spectator revenue normally associated with vibrant local and regional sports programs. As the conversation progressed, the challenge

became clear: How do we create an economic engine that would act as a catalyst for small businesses to create jobs across many industries, including the hotel, lodging, restaurant, service, and retail industries, while also increasing the capacity to compete for local and regional sport tournaments? The idea that emerged called for the creation of a sports complex that would stimulate small business start-up opportunities and increased jobs in the tourism industry by drawing multi-day events and tournaments. To that end, DE Turf received its status as a tax exempt 501(c)(3) organization from the IRS on September 19, 2012. In 2013, DE Turf entered into a lease agreement with Kent County for 84 acres of land and the Delaware Infrastructure Fund Committee awarded DE Turf the funds for utilities, water, sewer and roads. In 2016, ground was broken and in 2017, DE Turf began operations that resulted in more 40,000 visitors and 3,700 hotel rooms booked over tournament weekends as 1280 players took to the fields.

**Number of employees:**  
**Full-time – 7 Part-time – 30**

**Describe the growth of your business:**

**In staffing increases:** Started out



with three employees and has grown to seven full time and approximately 30 part-time, per season

**In Sales:** We have seen significant growth, even through Covid around 111% year over year

**Describe the challenges facing your business:**

Currently we are in need of getting the remaining fields at the DE Turf lighted, so we can bring even larger tournaments and events to central Delaware.

**Describe solutions developed to address those challenges:**

We are in the creative stages of addressing the financial challenge of getting the project done. Possibilities of grants, a capitol campaign and a few other ideas are currently being flushed out.

**Describe a creative, imaginative or innovative process you have developed that has helped your business grow:**

We have added birthday parties for kids at the facility, added fall boys and girls lacrosse leagues, starting in the summer of 2021 we will have a 7 v 7 football league and continue to source major lacrosse, soccer, field hockey, ultimate frisbee and flag football tournaments. I am also in conversations to bring

the US National/Olympic lacrosse teams to play an exhibition at the Turf in June of 2021!

**What are the goals for your business in the next three to five years?**

- Have all 12 fields at the complex lighted
- Pay off all Covid-19 related loans
- Build an additional storage building to house equipment needed to maintain the integrity of the fields, which attracts the premier athlete and tournaments
- Fund a maintenance/repair/waterfall account of \$1 million+

**What distinguishes your business from the others?**

The DE Turf is different from all other businesses, as we were born out of the idea to bring tourism and economic impact to the region. It is our main goal to have as many out-of-state athletes, families, spectators, coaches and referees at our facility every weekend. We strive to offer the highest level of customer service and facilities to our local athletes at the same time as keeping the hotels, bars, restaurants and shops full of out-of-state guests. We also have a major impact on helping keep businesses in central Delaware, afloat.

We also hosted 21 lacrosse and field hockey tournaments in 2020, hosting over 150,000 athletes, coaches, referees and spectators at the DE Turf without one incident or Covid-19 infection. We are very proud of this effort to help keep central Delaware's economy moving at such a difficult time.

**What contributions have you made in the community?**

Serving on boards/committees: Board of Directors for Kent County Tourism

**Providing in-kind services:** We offer free league registrations and other services whenever asked for benefits, fundraisers, raffles and prizes to the central Delaware community.

**Business:** The House of Coffi  
**Address:** 14 E. Loockerman St.,  
 Dover, DE 19901  
**Primary Contact:** Kristin Stonesifer  
**Telephone:** 302-270-1230  
**Website:** www.thehouseofcoffi.com



**Describe the business:**

Quaint, yet edgy coffee shop nestled in the historic district of Dover, DE.

**Mission/Philosophy:**

To serve quality drinks and build a community of love, peace, and harmony for all.

**Primary good or service provided:**  
 coffees and teas

**Number of years in business:**  
 3 years

**How did your business start?**  
 The House of Coffi started as a small girl's dream to have "Kristin's Cakes and Coffee." I tucked that away for a career in corporate America. In 2018, I decided to make the move – and what better place than my hometown!

**Number of employees:**  
**Part-time – 18**

**Describe the growth of your business:**

**In Sales and Staffing:** We saw 25% gross sales growth year of year from 2018 to 2019. This gave me the indication we were heading in the right direction. With the increase in gross sales, our staff tripled from 5 to 15. Growth continued in 2019 and through mid-March of 2020.

**Describe the challenges facing your business:**

After the onset of COVID-19, business was down 85%. People were ordered to stay at home and



many businesses in our area closed. For a walk-in coffee shop in the center of town, that was an enormous challenge. It was clear that we needed to be creative and change the way served people.

**Describe solutions developed to address those challenges:**

We held on and switched gears. We created contact-free COVID-safe delivery. We also initiated a holiday gift basket delivery option, which pushed merchandise sales out to our loyal customer base. Donations began to arrive for front-line workers – at that point, I knew

the community had our back. We continued to persevere!

Challenging times continue and I continue to diversify our business model in the way of menu items, services, and locations.

**Describe a creative, imaginative, or innovative process you have developed that has helped your business grow:**

We have been intentional about partnering with other businesses in the community. We have found ways to offer more to our guests by including menu items from other businesses on our menu. These partnerships have been beneficial for the partnering businesses as well, giving them exposure. We firmly believe that we can do more together than we can accomplish on our own.

In addition, we support the arts in all forms – musicians, painters, ceramics, photography, sewing, jewelry makers. We have held multiple art exhibitions. We invite local artists to display their work in our shop and on our walls. We take no monetary payment or any commission for selling goods or hosting events for

# House of Coffi

Continued From Page 12

these creative entrepreneurs. That has drawn people into our shop and given budding artists in our area an opportunity to “try their wings” in a safe space.

## What are the goals for your business in the next three to five years?

The main goal for The House of

Coffi is to grow our community and perfect our craft via practice, hard work, and quality products.

## What distinguishes your business from the others?

The House of Coffi is in the center of everything in downtown Dover. We are the hub, the spot where the shopping district, the historic district, the banking district, and government buildings all converge – we are literally the place where

Dover comes together. We draw a highly diverse clientele – students, business people, artists, politicians, and more - and we enjoy being a place where people come to meet, to share amazing coffee and tea, relax, and share conversations.

## What contributions have you made in the community?

We purchase sustainable coffee. That makes a difference not only here in Dover, but to the farmers

around the world who grow the beans and their families. That enables us to make a global impact, to do something that is bigger than ourselves for the good of the planet.

We make donations to local charities, sports, clubs, first responders, and mental health workers.

For the past 22 years, I have served on my family “board of directors” as the mother of four beautiful children! I anticipate that term continuing for a lifetime.

## NOMINEES FOR LARGE EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

### Business:

Bayhealth Medical Center

### Address:

640 S. State Street,  
Dover, DE 19901

### Primary Contact:

Kevin Snyder,  
Vice President of Marketing

### Communications

Telephone: 302-744-7213

Website: www.bayhealth.org

### Describe the business:

Mission/Philosophy: To strengthen the health of our community, one life at a time.

### Primary good or service provided:

Healthcare, including inpatient, outpatient and emergency services, as well as employed physician practices encompassing a variety of specialties.

### Number of years in business:

Bayhealth has been in operation for 24 years, but its hospitals, Kent General (presently known as Bayhealth Hospital, Kent Campus) and Milford Memorial (now the new Bayhealth Hospital, Sussex Campus) have been serving the communities of central and southern Delaware for more than 100 years combined.

### How did your business start?

Bayhealth was established in 1997 with the merger between Milford Memorial Hospital in Milford and Kent General Hospital in Dover.

### Number of employees:

Full-time: 3,457

Part-time: 712

Medical Staff: More than 400 physicians

### Describe the growth of your business:

In staffing increases: Our staffing numbers are constantly growing as a result of our long-term master strategic plan that was developed 10 years ago. Some recent examples of how we've grown and will continue to grow to meet the needs of our community, include:

- In 2019, the construction was completed, and the state-of-the-art Sussex Campus, designed to deliver a new level of healthcare to Sussex County, opened in Milford. In late 2020, the Nemours Building opened on the Sussex Campus, providing several specialty services. We have also begun expanding the fifth floor of Bayhealth Hospital, Sussex Campus with 23 more patient beds and the third floor to include five more women's services beds and a surgical suite. This expansion will help meet the growing community needs for years to come.

- On March 19, 2021, we welcomed 21 new physicians to the first year of our Graduate Medical Education (GME) program. These new physicians will officially join Bayhealth as part of the Family Medicine Residency Program and Internal Medicine Residency Program on July 1, 2021. The GME program will continue to expand and serve our growing communities as it adds more specialty residencies and brings more than 100 physicians to central and southern Delaware in the coming years.

- New family medicine, primary care and specialty care practices are also underway throughout Sussex County with the planned addition of a new GME practice in Milford and a new emergency and walk-in facility with primary and specialty services off Route 9. There are additional



&

plans to build new facilities or expand existing ones, including our current Harrington location. Other offices have moved locations to expand services, including the recent move of Occupational Health and Walk-in Care in Milford – now conveniently located on Rt. 113.

**In Sales:** We are a not-for-profit healthcare system. In Fiscal Year 2019, Bayhealth recorded 105,181 emergency department visits, 19,844 patients admitted to beds, 2,193 births, and provided \$64.8 million in unreimbursed care to patients.

### Describe the challenges facing your business:

Our greatest recent challenge has been and continues to be the COVID-19 pandemic. Its effects and related challenges are the same as those faced by other healthcare organizations. More specifically, it has:

- Placed an increased demand for and usage of PPE, particularly in the beginning when there was a time of shortage.
- Created a need to limit visitation based on CDC guidelines in order to maintain a greater level of safety for our patients, visitors and caregivers.
- Impacted our approach and ability to provide patients with services related to elective surgeries and preventative medicine.

Other challenges we've faced over the past year include educating our community about the importance of COVID-19 testing and vaccinations and navigating issues related to vaccine availability.

We're also paying close attention to our team members and caregivers. We know the pandemic has been hard on them – many have seen COVID-19 at its worst, others haven't hugged their loved ones in over a year, and some were asked to temporarily take on new roles as we adjusted our service offerings. We're focused on giving our team the tools, education and resources they need to remain resilient.

### Describe solutions developed to address those challenges:

Here are some examples of how we overcame the challenges related to the Coronavirus pandemic while also being there for our community in every possible way:

- At the very beginning of the pandemic, we quickly set up COVID-19 testing sites and created a Coronavirus Management Team (CMT) and related hotline, which offered referral-based drive-thru screenings. We set it up this way to help save community members from the inconvenience of attending a drive-thru and being turned away if they weren't eligible to be screened.
- We put immediate safety measures in place for our patients, staff, and community to help prevent the spread of the virus and we scaled our care units to meet surges as necessary.
- We helped educate our community through our CMT hotline, special eNewsletters, Facebook Live events, and more by sharing information from our physicians and other clinical staff as well as from key leaders of our organization.
- We collaborated with many people through-



out our local community, including donors and other businesses, to make sure we had the PPE and other critical supplies we needed to keep our patients and caregivers safe.

- We implemented innovative ways to facilitate communication between patients and their families, care partners and caregivers. Through assistive devices with video capability, such as tablets, the patient was (and is) able to connect with their loved ones beyond a simple phone call. This has been very rewarding and provides much needed comfort to all during required visitation restrictions put in place to keep our facilities safe.

- With the virus disrupting normal operations for many medical facilities, telehealth services became popular. When the threat of COVID-19 prompted doctor's offices to postpone routine office visits, it became clear Bayhealth's telehealth platform that was scheduled to launch later in 2020 needed to be set up more quickly to give physicians another option to safely treat patients, and Bayhealth team members across several departments worked together to make that happen.

- We were the first to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in the state and were the first to administer it.

- We helped staff and support weekend vaccine clinics and created an online “reservation” landing page where Delawareans can sign-up for our clinic and to register with the state for other opportunities.

- We created vaccine tool kits to share with local businesses to help educate their employees and get those who have been working from home vaccinated so they can resume working on-site.

### Describe a creative, imaginative or innovative process you have developed that has helped your business grow:

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, we implemented selection criteria to identify patients who would be eligible for same-day orthopaedic surgery/procedures, meaning they wouldn't have to stay in the hospital overnight. Once the COVID situation started to improve we were able to resume this process, which involves surgeons and their staff letting eligible patients know they would be having a same-day procedure either while speaking with their surgeon about their procedure or at the time they were scheduled for surgery. During a time when safety was a top concern, patients were not only happy to hear they wouldn't have to stay overnight but none of these patients had to be hospitalized for

# Bayhealth

Continued From Page 13

complications after they had their surgery. To help alleviate any fear and to educate patients about their surgery, we also created a video that is sent to them via email or via text as a link and we also mail other educational materials to them. Increasing the number of same-day orthopaedic surgeries also helped solve any issues related to bed shortages due to the pandemic.

## What are the goals for your business in the next three to five years?

1. Improve access to care and introduce services to inform and promote convenience to patients.
2. Improve quality and service while reducing cost of care through enhancing efficiency and effectiveness.
3. Affiliate with trusted partners to elevate services to the community.
4. Advance a culture of high en-

agement and high performance.

## What distinguishes your business from the others?

As a long-time member of our community, protecting the health of our friends, neighbors, families, and all who live and work here is important to us because we live here, too. Here are examples of the unique ways we serve our community:

- Our GME Program: We're bringing this unprecedented program to help train and attract physicians from across the country, with the ultimate goal of bringing more physicians to central and southern Delaware to serve our growing communities.

- Top Hospital Recognitions: We recently received the very prestigious honor of being named a Top Hospital in the United States and are the only one in the state to receive this designation. We were also the only hospital in Delaware to be named a Top Maternity Hospital.

## What contributions have you made in the community?

Serving on boards/committees: Bayhealth employees from all levels—executives, managers, clinical staff, etc.—serve on a wide variety of committees and several boards throughout the state and nationally, including ones that are not only focused on healthcare but other areas of community development. A few examples are Delaware Healthcare Association, Ebright, Directors of Nursing, University of Delaware, American Legion Ambulance Station 64, The Hope Clinic, American Heart Association, Easter Seals Finance Committee, DelTech Community College, and the Kent County Tourism Board. Our employees have very diverse backgrounds and are knowledgeable in so many areas that they are compelled to contribute to our community outside of what they are employed to do at Bayhealth.

**Serving as a volunteer:** Our Bayhealth family is involved in many volunteer events and organizations. With over 3,500 employees that give their free time, we interact with the community through Health Fairs,

the American Heart Walk, Pedal Away Prostate Cancer, American Lung Society, Go Pink, and Go Red, just to give a few examples. Our staff also participate in many church and youth programs during their own time. Our organization is very involved in our community because we are the community.

**Providing in-kind services:** Bayhealth not only supports the community with our employees' time and knowledge, we also provide financial support and donate medical supplies and materials to those in Delaware as well as other countries. Each year, Bayhealth provides an average of \$38,000,000 in free services, free surgeries, supplies, and subsidized programs. Most of our focus is in the State of Delaware with free medication and free blood pressure, diabetic, prostate, and breast cancer screenings on a monthly basis, but we also supply medical staff and materials to relief missions in the Philippines and Nicaragua.

## Business:

**Century Engineering, Inc.**  
**Address:**  
 550 Bay Road, Dover, DE 19901  
**Primary Contact:**  
 Scott Rathfon, P.E.,  
 Executive Vice President  
**Telephone:** 302-734-9188  
**Website:** www.centuryeng.com

## Describe the business:

**Mission/Philosophy:** To provide professional services by uniting quality, innovation, and creativity with dedication, responsiveness, and commitment.

In pursuing this we:

- Collaborate with clients to implement sustainable solutions.
- Cultivate distinctive, professional staff and services of outstanding value.
- Contribute, through service and donations, to our community.

## Primary good or service provided:

Century is a multi-discipline professional service firm providing a full slate of engineering related services to the Mid-Atlantic region. Services include:

- Transportation
- Civil
- Environmental
- Water & Wastewater
- Survey
- Structural
- Geotechnical
- Mechanical
- Electrical
- Utility Locating & Coordination
- Right-of-Way Services
- Construction Management & Inspection

## Number of years in business:

The first Delaware office was established in Dover in 1987 (34 years).

## How did your business start?

The Delaware office was first established to provide planning and design management services to DelDOT for the SR1, US 13 Relief Route project. It all started with a staff of six (6) in a townhouse in downtown Dover.

## Number of employees:

**Full-time** – 151  
**Part-time** – 5



## Describe the growth of your business:

**In staffing increases:** Century's Delaware operation started with six (6) employees in 1987 and has grown to a current high of 156 employees. We started in a 1000 s.f. townhouse in downtown Dover in 1987, then moved to a newly constructed 10,000 s.f. office just north of Dover in 1989. In 2000, we added an office in Newark, Delaware and then in 2019 we closed the north Dover office and moved in to a newly constructed 25,000 s.f. office in Dover.

**In Sales:** The Delaware operation started with a couple million dollars in backlog and has steadily grown over the years to now over \$22M in sales for the Delaware operation.

## Describe the challenges facing your business:

The typical challenges (not counting Covid) are recruiting engineering talent and fluctuations

in the economy. Recruiting new talent is an industry issue due to the lack of engineering students as compared to the needs and a local issue in attracting talent to the Dover market. The fluctuations in the economy affect us when there is not a sustained funding source for new projects.

## Describe solutions developed to address those challenges:

Some of the solutions to the recruiting challenge included opening the office in Newark to attract students from engineering universities in that area. Also, for the Dover market, we invest time in the local schools to promote engineering and try to attract students that intend to stay in central Delaware. We also work with local agencies in efforts to improve the quality of life in central Delaware and sell the good things that are happening in the area.

## Describe a creative, imaginative or

## innovative process you have developed that has helped your business grow:

For this response, I will go back to our Mission Statement and expand on the "dedication, responsiveness and commitment". Century is dedicated to the local community and we listen to the needs of the community and develop new and emerging markets based on those needs. We value responsiveness and putting the needs of our clients first by striving to provide a timely, quality product. And we are committed to the local area by hiring people from the area and being involved in the local community and organizations.

## What are the goals for your business in the next three to five years?

Our goal is to continue to grow in the area and be involved in improving the local community. We will continue to be involved in working with local school mentoring programs, improving the environment of the local area and improving the quality of life for those that live and work in central Delaware.

## What distinguishes your business from the others?

One thing we take great pride in is our effort and success to keep some of the best and brightest talent from Delaware in Delaware. We focus on local talent in the area that has the same dedication and commitment to improving the local economy and environment. Another thing that distinguishes our business is the dedication of our employees as can be supported by the low turnover rate of our staff.

## What contributions have you made in the community?

Serving on boards/committees: DAFB Honorary Commander Program; Greater Kent Committee; Delaware Tech Advisory Boards; DE Turf Board; Local Sport Organization Boards; Professional Organization Boards

**Serving as a volunteer:** Local School Mentoring Programs; Go Red/STEM event participation; School Robotics Club; Delaware Bay Clean-up

# NOMINEE FOR LARGE EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR

**Business:**  
**POLYTECH School District**  
**Address:** 823 Walnut Shade Road,  
 P.O. Box 22, Woodside, DE 19980  
**Primary Contact:**  
**Amelia E. Hodges, Ed.D.,**  
**Superintendent**  
**Telephone:** 302-697-2170  
**Website:**  
[www.polytechschooldistrict.com](http://www.polytechschooldistrict.com)



**Describe the business:**  
**Mission/Philosophy:** The POLYTECH School District Strategic Plan guides our high school, adult education, and district office work. This plan was developed by a diverse group of POLYTECH staff members, students, family members, and business and industry partners. The key components of our strategic plan are listed below.

**Vision:** To inspire a diverse community of learners to achieve individual, educational, and career excellence

**Mission:** To provide a supportive environment that inspires a community of life-long learners through innovative opportunities, dynamic partnerships, and engaging practical experiences

**Foundational Priority:** A safe and supportive culture for all students, staff and stakeholders

**Career & Technical Education (CTE) Priority:** Innovative Career & Technical Education supported by dynamic industry partnerships

**Academic Priority:** Differentiated learning experiences that advance academic achievement and life-long learning

**Primary goods or service provided:**  
 POLYTECH School District provides educational programs and training for students in grades 9-12 (POLYTECH High School) and for adults (POLYTECH Adult Education) throughout Kent County, Delaware.

POLYTECH High School is a comprehensive technical high school with approximately 1,200 students offering specialty training in twenty different technical programs of study and the full complement of academic coursework to meet Delaware's graduation requirements.

POLYTECH Adult Education offers skilled trades, transportation & logistics, healthcare and customized training for local employers; ABE/GED® prep, adult basic literacy and workforce training for English Language Learners, James H. Groves Adult High School programming, and a variety of professional and continuing education classes. Training at Polytech Adult Education is focused on high-demand occupational areas identified through input from industry partners, the Department of Labor, Delaware Workforce Development Board (DWDB), and Office of Occupational and Labor Market Information (OOLMI).

**Number of years in business:**  
 Kent County Vo-Tech was established 56 years ago in September 1965. It was consolidated in 1971 and became a full time comprehensive high school and adult education provider in 1991, when the name was changed to POLYTECH School District.

**How did your business start?**

The school district was established through state legislative action.

**Number of employees:**  
**Full-time - 179**  
**Part-time - 233**

**Describe the growth of your business:**

The high school grew over the years as the demand for vocational/high school needs increased. The school had approximately 800 students in the early 1990's and gradually grew by constructing additional classrooms to accommodate additional students, and the related need to increase staff. Over the past decade, the high school has served approximately 1,200 students per year and maintained a consistent staffing ratio under the state's unit count system.

Adult education programs vary from year-to-year based on local business and workforce demands, federal and state program authorization, and program implementation through collaborative efforts with the Department of Labor and other state agencies.

**Describe the challenges facing your business:**

COVID-19 has presented some operational challenges over the past year related to instructional delivery and school community activities for both high school and adult education students.

From a longer-term perspective, the greatest challenge our district faces is staying ahead of constantly evolving local industry and workforce needs.

**Describe solutions developed to address those challenges:**

During the pandemic, our district focused on ensuring a safe environment by adhering to all of the Centers for Disease Control and Delaware Division of Public Health guidelines for schools and the Governor's emergency declaration requirements. We acted quickly to obtain PPE, sanitation supplies and remote learning hardware and materials; to adapt our HVAC systems; and to reconfigure our classrooms to ensure at least 6 feet of distancing at all times. We communicated regularly with our high school and adult education staff members, students and their families to ensure everyone was aware of protocols and provided additional training to our staff so that they could operate in a hybrid in-person and remote learning environment.

Our high school had already implemented a 1:1 student technology initiative, which made the transition to remote learning less of a lift. Both our high school and adult

education divisions have provided remote and hybrid instruction throughout the 2020-2021 school year, with the majority of adult education programming occurring in-person.

Our district is committed to being responsive to local business, industry, and workforce needs. To do this we constantly focus on maintaining and strengthening existing employer partnerships and cultivating partnerships. These partnerships are key to our ability to respond to local business and industry trends and needs and to adjust our programs to meet both current and anticipated needs.

**Describe a creative, imaginative or innovative process you have developed that has helped your business grow:**

This year the district stood up two new district-wide committees to address needs specifically related to social justice and hybrid learning during the pandemic.

The Equity and Diversity Committee's purpose is to identify instances of institutional bias at POLYTECH and recommend actions for positive change related to curriculum and instruction, building relationships, disciplinary practices, and staff and student procedures.

The Reopening Committee was developed to plan for student, staff member and community safety and wellbeing; high quality instructional delivery; and operational changes/procedures required to provide a safe and effective hybrid instructional environment for all stakeholders.

In addition, over the past two years the Adult Education Division has developed several new programs to meet employer and workforce needs including:

- English Learners in New Careers (ELiNC) Program, which prepares adult English language learners for employment in growing job fields while also strengthening their proficiency in the English language.
- Heavy Equipment Maintenance Technician Program, which provides agricultural heavy equipment technicians with a thorough understanding of electrical and fluid power systems and skills for maintaining those systems.
- Civil Construction Laborer Apprenticeship Program, which is designed to prepare participants to enter into a career in the Civil Construction and Heavy Highway industries.
- Warehouse and Materials Handling Program, which prepares participants to work in a modern warehouse environment.
- Customized Training Programs which are developed and offered on-site and in partnership with industry partners.

**What are the goals for your business in the next three to five years?**

One of our goals is to strengthen the collaboration between our Adult Education and High School Divisions in order to provide tar-

geted, life-long, and cost-effective employment preparation and advancement opportunities.

We are developing and implementing new articulation agreements, which will allow POLYTECH High School and Adult Education graduates to enter into adult education and local college and university programs with advanced standing (credits awarded for successful completion of high school and adult education programs), which reduces the time and cost of career-advancement education.

The High School and Adult Education Divisions are also collaborating to align programming and career advancement opportunities by participating in Delaware's new Youth Apprenticeship Grant Program. This is a statewide effort, led by the DDOE and DDOL to expand pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship opportunities in both existing and new areas of business and industry.

**What distinguishes your business from the others?**

While our sister public school districts provide services for students in grades Pre-K through 12, as a career and technical school district our efforts are focused on preparing youth in grades 9-12 and adults for the workforce, while also providing a full complement of academic courses and programs. 100% of our high school students participate in a career and technical program of study while also taking all courses required to meet Delaware's high school graduation requirements.

In addition, we provide a wide range of educational programs for adults including Adult Basic Education (ABE), James H. Groves Adult High School Diploma, specialized industrial and business training, apprenticeship training, workforce development and certificate training, and professional/continuing education courses.

**What contributions have you made in the community?**

**Serving on boards/committees:** As the district superintendent, I serve as a member of the Greater Kent Committee and Delaware Racial Justice Collaborative (Kent County); DIAA Executive Board; DASA Chief School Officers Association; DASA Curriculum and Instructional Leads and Secretary of Education's Liaison Group; BRINC Executive Leadership Committee; and Delaware State Police Kent County Civilian Advisory Board.

**Serving as a volunteer:** POLYTECH School District students and staff members participate in a wide range of volunteer activities including, but not limited to Special Olympics events (host and coordinate), Delaware Food Bank events, Blood Drives (host and coordinate), National Honor Society and Project Unity volunteerism projects, MS Bike to the Bay, March of Dimes, March for Babies (host and coordinate), and Weekly staff fundraisers to contribute to charities.

## NOMINEES FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR



**Name:** Ryne Johnson  
**Title:** Account Manager

**Business:** Advantech  
**Address:** 151 Garrison Oak Drive,  
Dover DE 19901  
**Telephone:** (302) 674-8405  
**Website:**  
[www.advantechsecurity.net](http://www.advantechsecurity.net)

**Number of Years at your current company/organization:** 4 Years



### Describe your current role with the company/organization:

As an account manager, I am responsible for visiting with clients to design, prepare and plan implementing security solutions that enhance the life safety of all stakeholders. This includes meeting with clients and prospective clients, evaluating security concerns, designing a system with engineers, and preparing an agreement to review with the client. At Advantech, we pride ourselves in being a value add to our clients and valuing the client relationship/experience more than a quota.

### What are your professional goals in the next three to five years?

- Be in the top of the field as far as industry expertise and systems knowledge
- Make a positive impact on the safety and well-being of the community

### What distinguishes you from other young professionals? (Give an example of your positive leadership or achievements.)

At the early stages of my profes-

sional career, I have found separation from other young professionals in some ways. I am very willing to assist on the installation side with the technical team; to meet project deadlines. This not only allows me to build a rapport with the field technicians but develops my systems knowledge. It is important to do the labor-intensive work because you can appreciate the technician's attention to detail, on the job, and see the business from a different lens. This past summer, we were awarded a job at the DuPont building in Wilmington. The project had a very quick turnaround time – I spent a couple days on-site pulling cable and installing card readers in 100-degree weather with our two technicians so the building could be turned over to the customer.

At 27, I realize that levels of success are relative, while I am comfortable with current results of my efforts, I'm not complacent, nor am I consumed by it. I am willing to seek and absorb advice from people who have succeeded by overcoming adversity. The cheapest lessons to learn are from the mistakes of others.

### What contributions have you made in the community?

Currently – I serve as the assistant boy's lacrosse coach at Caesar Rodney High School in the springtime. This allows me to give back to the community through a game that taught me so much. It is much less about the game and more about using team sport to explain adversity and teach life lessons that can be applied to future endeavors. I was fortunate enough to have role models in my life and I pride myself on being that to the current players.

### Additional personal information you would like to share: (Educational background, accomplishments, awards received, etc.)

I was born and raised in Kent County – I was fortunate enough to receive a scholarship to play lacrosse at a Division 1 school in Maryland (Mount St. Mary's University). While playing I received first team all-league honors and the HEADSTRONG Foundation's Nick Colletuori achievement award for my team. Most importantly, I was a two-time captain and was able to get my MBA while away at school. Leadership has always been something that I have valued and that is exactly what brought me to Advantech.



**Name:** Jesse Sapp  
**Title:** Marketing Analyst

**Business:** Chesapeake Utilities  
**Address:** 500 Energy Lane,  
Dover, DE 19901  
**Telephone:** 800-427-0015  
**Website:** [www.chpkgas.com](http://www.chpkgas.com)  
**Email:** [jsapp@chpk.com](mailto:jsapp@chpk.com)

**Number of Years at your current company/organization:** 3+ Years

### Describe your current role with the company/organization:

- Support large infrastructure



and capital projects through market research and collateral creation.

- Prepare and distribute monthly internal newsletter.
- Collaborative with Sales to create effective and informative collateral.
- Create and edit databases with customer information to assist with mailing efforts.
- Manage and monitor the company's internal website and social media accounts.
- Lead and implement social media initiatives within the company.
- Manage digital media storage and optimization for the company.
- Support community outreach events and interact with the public at vendor booths.
- Create, distribute, and manage customer surveys.
- Gather information and provide reports on various fields within the natural gas industry.

### What are your professional goals in the next three to five years?

- Become a Marketing Manager at Chesapeake Utilities
- Increase my professional network by joining a future class of Leadership Central Delaware

- Continue to champion for positive change and growth in the workplace.

- Increase my industry knowledge by completing the Southern Gas Association's Certificate Program and the Energy Solutions Center's Training Programs

- Join additional Employee Resource Groups within Chesapeake Utilities

- Increase my professional capacity by joining a local Toastmasters chapter to grow my public speaking and communication skills.

### What distinguishes you from other young professionals? (Give an example of your positive leadership or achievements.)

- Led the initiative for Chesapeake Utilities to create a social media presence.

- Competed nationally through the Business Professionals of America for both Marketing and Entrepreneurship.

- Am a Certified Tourism Ambassador through Delaware's Quaint Villages

- Interned at Chesapeake Utilities for 4 years while attending college at the University of Delaware.

- Started an entrepreneurial

venture in college to sell custom bottle openers.

### What contributions have you made in the community?

Serving on boards/committees: Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce Marketing Committee; Southern Gas Association's Growth and Retention Committee; Energy Solutions Center's Commercial Buildings Consortium; Chesapeake Utilities' (SPARC) Mentoring Employee Resource Group

**Serving as a volunteer:** Volunteer regularly with the Food Bank of Delaware in Milford as well as support during many meal distribution events; Volunteered in building garden boxes and the playground at the Boys and Girls Club in Dover; Volunteered numerous years as a photographer and helper for the Fort Mead Spouses' Club Children's Hospital Holiday Party

### Additional personal information you would like to share: (Educational background, accomplishments, awards received, etc.)

- Graduated from the University of Delaware with a bachelor's degree in Entrepreneurship & Technology Innovation as well as an associate degree in Arts & Science.

- Recently achieved a long-time personal goal of entering the 500 kg club in weightlifting, which involves lifting a cumulative total of more than 1,102 lbs for a single squat, bench press, and deadlift.





# NOMINEES FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR



**Name:** Cassie Porter  
**Title:** Supervisor

**Business:** Faw Casson & Co., LLP  
**Address:** 160 Greentree Dr, Ste 203, Dover, DE 19904  
**Telephone:** 302-674-4305  
**Website:** www.fawcasson.com  
**Email:** clp@fawcasson.com

**Number of Years at your current company/organization:**  
5 (almost 6!)



**FAW CASSON**  
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS • BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

**Describe your current role with the company/organization:**

I am a Supervisor with the Entrepreneurial Services team at Faw Casson. Our team is dedicated to smaller businesses that are focused on growth and helping them get back to what they got into business to do! I love spending time helping clients get back on track and really understand where their money is going. I help them with things like record organization, understanding their business numbers, and consulting on business decisions.

**What are your professional goals in the next three to five years?**

In the next three to five years my professional goals are to continue growing my network of referral sources and to continue learning and helping educate the community when it comes to taxes.

**What distinguishes you from other young professionals? (Give an example of your positive leadership or achievements.)**

I am a graduate of the CDCC Leadership Central Delaware (Class of 2015, best class ever!). Completing the LCD program truly opened my eyes to what we have in Kent County. I've been able to apply what I learned in LCD to help myself grow as a leader within Faw Casson. I love working with my clients and helping them gain a better understanding of their businesses all while helping them be able focus on what they love to do.

**What contributions have you made in the community?**

Serving on boards/committees: I served as the Treasurer of Kent County Tourism for several years.

**Serving as a volunteer:** I am a Certified Tourism Ambassador for Kent County Tourism. In the past I have volunteered with the Food Bank of Delaware on various occasions. As part of the team at Faw Casson, I constantly get the opportunity to give back to the community we serve through various events that I enjoy being a part of. In the past we've volunteered with Dover Days, Red Day with Keller Williams, worked to improve State Parks, providing meals for the local men's shelters and various collections within the office just to name a few!

**Additional personal information you would like to share: (Educational background, accomplishments, awards received, etc.)**

I graduated from Goldey-Beacom College with my MBA and have recently been promoted to Supervisor. As far other accolades, I am a past Chapter Advisor for Theta Phi Alpha Fraternity and I'm a dog mom to the cutest beagle ever!

## Excellence in Business Awards 2021 Official Ballot

Sponsored by the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce, this award is presented annually to the businesses/individuals selected by the Chamber membership as being the most outstanding in terms of growth, innovation, and community contribution.

**Only one ballot per CDCC member business may be submitted.**

The winners will be announced during the CDCC Awards for Excellence Celebration on Thursday, June 24, 2021 at Pizzadili Winery.

(Vote for one business/individual in each category.)

**\*\*Vote online at:**

[www.surveymonkey.com/r/CDCC Awards2021](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CDCC Awards2021)

<p><u>Small Business of the Year</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity ReStore</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> DE TURF Sports Complex</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The House of Coffi</p>	<p><u>Large Employer of the Year</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bayhealth Medical Center</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Century Engineering, Inc.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> POLYTECH School District</p>
<p><u>Young Professional of the Year</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ryne Johnson, Account Manager, Advantech</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Cassie Porter, Supervisor, Faw Casson &amp; Co., LLP</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Jesse Sapp, Marketing Analyst, Chesapeake Utilities</p>	

For detailed information on the nominees, see your May edition of the Chamber Connections or view their biographies online at [www.cdcc.net](http://www.cdcc.net).

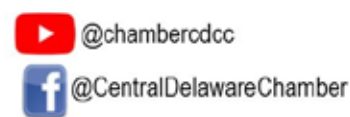
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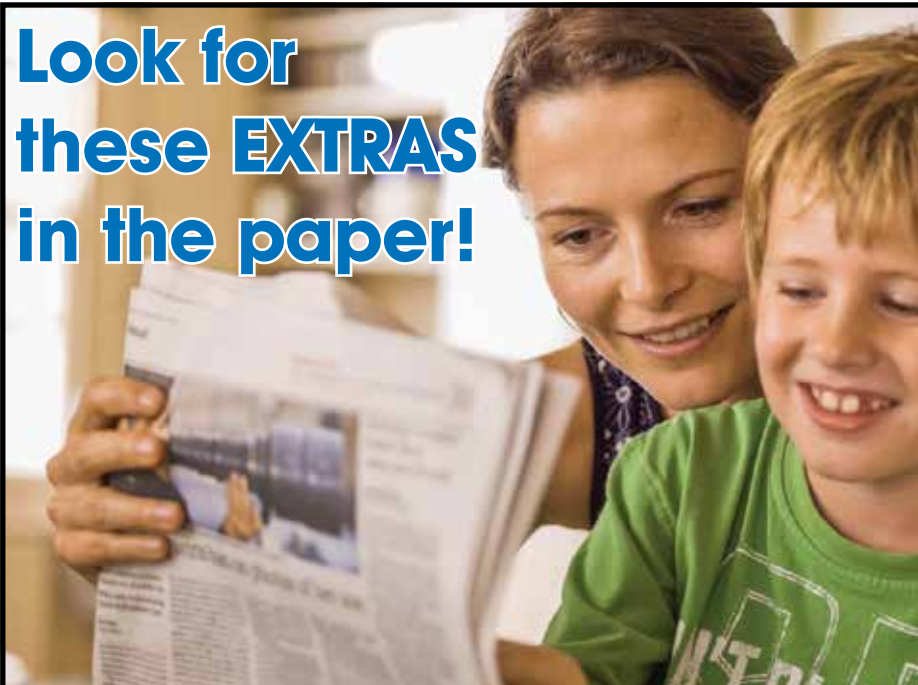
Business: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN YOUR BALLOT TO THE CHAMBER OFFICE BY WEDNESDAY, MAY 26<sup>th</sup>.**



435 N. DuPont Hwy, Dover, DE 19901  
302.734.7513 | (f) 302.678.0189  
info@cdcc.net | www.cdcc.net





Look for these EXTRAS in the paper!

Marketing Opportunities Available in these upcoming special sections:



summer edition features restaurants and beach communities Sunday, May 23



Dozens of engaging crosswords, mazes, word searches, Sudoku and more! Friday, May 28



Senior Resource Guide for Downstate Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore Sunday, June 6

In case you missed them, you can find these special sections online at BaytoBayNews.com/SpecialSections.

- W3 What Women Want Fest To Your Health
- Game On (March Edition)
- Bay to the Beach (Spring Edition)
- Live Love Laugh Wedding Guide



For information on advertising in any of these special sections, contact us at 302-741-8200 or [adsupport@newszap.com](mailto:adsupport@newszap.com).

# Member News

## Mayor Christiansen Issues National Walking Week Proclamation

The First State Webfooters Walking Club hosted a walk around Legislative Mall last evening (Tuesday, April 6th). The First State Webfooters Walking Club is a chapter of the national organization, American Volkssport Association (AVA). This walk coincided with National Walking Week (<https://ava.org/national-walking-week/>) – and Mayor Robin R. Christiansen was on hand to share a proclamation to that effect to club president, Kathy Kresko. The group of walkers was a mix of club members and “newbees.” Karen Kaufman also served served as one of the organizers of the event.



Mayor Christiansen presented a proclamation to club president, Kathy Kresko.



Mayor Christiansen was happy to meet the group and encouraged their habit of healthy activity.



Mayor Robin R. Christiansen met the First State Webfooters Walking Club in front of the Police Memorial on Legislative Mall. He remarked that it was an appropriate spot because of the walking that policemen do. He shared that Dover City Police will be initiating more neighborhood walking beats in the near future.



The group of walkers was a mix of club members and “newbees.”

# Join the CDCC in congratulating the winners of the



Donna Zelano, Family Dental Associates, P.A.



Lee Wagner, Home Instead Senior Care



Nicole LeSage, Miller Environmental Group

## 2021 Best of the Best Administrative Professionals' Contest

Special thanks to our sponsors: Fifer's Farm Store, Jen-Mor Florist, Merle Norman Cosmetics, and Mission BBQ.

### Member News

# Embracing Abilities at KSI

Since 1962, Kent Sussex Industries (KSI) has been offering a much-needed service to the Central Delaware community. This private, non-profit agency assists residents of Kent and Sussex counties with disabilities in their pursuit of potential employment and their quest for meaningful participation in the community. The work of KSI not only impacts their clients in a significant way, but also assists families and adds a meaningful contribution to the community in terms of workforce development.

Approximately 300 individuals per year receive services from KSI as they work through programs focused on pre-vocational skill building, life enrichment, specialized day services, and community inclusion. Each client creates their own goals and, with the help of the team at KSI, creates the support plans necessary to reach those goals. Through these programs and the training that they receive, clients develop self-advocacy skills and achieve a higher level of independence. The focus is never on what can't be done, but rather on what can be learned, trained, and developed. At KSI, it's all about "embracing abilities."

This past year has presented serious challenges to the folks at KSI. With the onset of the global health crisis, much had to be done to create an environment that would keep people safe, but still allow the team at KSI to maintain critical connections with their clients.

As the pandemic seemed to strengthen, many of the clients' off-site workplaces shut down, sending their workers home to do their jobs remotely, and creating a massive shift in the routine of the KSI folks. Because of the danger of contracting COVID-19 in small spaces and the impracticality of social distancing on KSI's busses, transportation provided by the agency came to a halt and became the responsibility of the clients' families.

The KSI facility was closed from March through July, 2020. During this time and under the direction of Linda Pearson, Vice President of Operations, each component of what happens at KSI underwent a radical transformation as the facility was completely

disinfected, plexiglass was installed, workspaces were re-constructed, special filtration was installed, social distancing was mandated, masks and gloves were utilized, and new safety protocols were put into place. This shutdown was certainly a hardship for KSI's clients and their families, but the team at KSI worked tirelessly to maintain their connection with everyone. They utilized Facetime, phone calls, ZOOM chats, and the like to communicate with the people in their care and did their very best to provide services remotely.

In August, the facility was able to cautiously and carefully re-open, but by invitation only and at a limited capacity of 100 clients. As for workforce, KSI is currently working with 62 employees - down from their usual 100. With the utilization of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and the new safety protocols in place, the training began on how procedures and programs would be carried out. "The community did a great deal to assist us," commented Ann Haggerty, KSI's Vice President of Mission Advancement. "Not only did they donate funding, but they came through with gloves, hand sanitizer, masks (some of which were handmade) - all things that had not been included in this year's budget. They were amazing."

The community also really stepped up its support through the Friends of KSI's Virtual 8th Annual Quarter Auction, held virtually in October 2020. Ms. Haggerty and numerous other online participants really enjoyed the event. They explained that it was a lot of fun and did well, raising much needed funding.

Many routines have been changed because of the pandemic and re-opening required much to be learned and re-learned. The cafeteria, once a place for down time and socialization, is not in use. Rather, the kitchen staff went to work perfecting individually boxed lunches that are delivered to the clients in the building. Individual craft boxes have also been assembled for the clients, eliminating the need to share materials and tools.

"Our clients have absolutely shined through all of this," remarked Haggerty. "They are leading the way on working together to get through."



Social distancing and masks are a must!

In the absence of off-site work opportunities, the team at KSI has incorporated technology training, activities to help everyone learn the new protocols, and interesting classes which the clients are enthusiastically taking part in and enjoying. Because of the constant communication during the shut-down, the resilience of the clients, and these new additions to the repertoire, they are not seeing overwhelming regression, but rather the development of persistence, determination, and independence.

As KSI continues what their CEO, Jayson D. Crouch calls the "rolling return" back to normal, they are currently hiring. They are specifically looking for drivers and direct support professionals. As always, the folks at KSI value the support of the community in terms of monetary donations and necessary items. They are always happy to create business partnerships and, when they are once again fully operational, are always eager to hear from companies who would like to serve as work sites for their clients.

As the staff members, clients, and families "claw their way back" to being fully operational, they are quick to acknowledge how much they have learned throughout this unusual year. They have learned much about how to maintain connections remotely with each other; they have learned a great deal about the implementation of increased technology, and this experience has reinforced for all of them the strength of the community support on which they rely. But more than anything, they have witnessed all over again the amazing things that can happen when, together, they work to "embrace abilities!"

To learn more about KSI and what they have to offer, visit their website at [www.ksiinc.org](http://www.ksiinc.org) or give them a call at (302) 422-4014.



KSI CaseManagers 2021



Clients tried their hand at hydroponics during an interest class.



Sporting the PPE allows the team at KSI continue their work!



There's still much being accomplished on the KSI production floor.



Special COVID Programming was implemented to keep people safe.

## CDCC joins bombshell hair studio for a Ribbon Cutting

DOVER – The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce hosted a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for bombshell hair studio on April 16th at 10 am. The ceremony was held at their location, 1655 S. DuPont Highway in Dover. Chamber members, friends, and staff members joined Tish Mattern and her team as they celebrated the Grand Opening of bombshell hair studio!

The mission of bombshell hair studio is to bring a new concept style salon studio to the Dover area. From its exterior façade to its stylish décor, Tish Mattern, salon owner, has followed her dream over the past year and created an elegant and luxurious style salon. With 20+ years in the beauty industry and her experiences of working in some of the best style salons in Philadelphia, she is thrilled to bring a high-end style salon to Dover.

While the primary focus of the salon is to provide outstanding hair care service from highly trained and well-established stylists, they also provide a variety of other beauty



services. The staff at bombshell is continuously engaged in honing their skills by participating in Advanced Mastery coloring and cutting courses. They are also certi-

fied in Keratin complex smoothing treatments and The Dream Catchers hair extension method. They use high quality professional hair care products for performing ser-

vices and sell a wide range of hair care products, including their very own branded hair care line, bombshell luxury hair care. bombshell hair studio is proud to be a part of the Central Delaware Community. The team at bombshell looks forward to finding ways to give back. Stylists from bombshell have already been involved in donating services for good causes and even teaching local youth about the beauty industry and their profession. They believe that offering their services in this way has made people feel good inside and out! They know and understand that they have the ability to make a difference by uplifting, supporting, and empowering others.

To learn more about bombshell hair design and what they have to offer, call (302) 735-1816. You can also visit them on the web at [www.bombshell-hairstudio.com](http://www.bombshell-hairstudio.com). Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce in congratulating Tish Mattern and the team at bombshell hair studio on their Grand Opening!

## CDCC joins Heart to Heart Health Services for a Ribbon Cutting

DOVER – The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce hosted a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Heart to Heart Health Services on Friday, April 9th, at 1:30 pm. The ceremony was held at their location, 1474 E. Lebanon Rd. in Dover. Chamber members, friends, and staff members joined the team at The Heart to Heart as they celebrated their Grand Opening!

Heart to Heart is an independent lab and training center, specializing in CPR and First Aid courses. The lab's mission is to provide accurate, efficient, and confidential lab testing to their clients. The mission of the training center is to empower in a diverse pool of participants the confidence and knowledge of Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid.

Heart to Heart's lab services include an array of CLIA waived testing that allow the team to provide results to the client and/or their doctor in 30 minutes or less. Some examples of this type of testing are COVID Antigen and/or Antibody, Influenza, Glucose, Urine Pregnancy and Drug Screen testing. They are also a lab draw site for UltraLabTests and Quest Diagnostics. Clients can schedule or walk-in, with their requisition or doctor's order, and have their blood work drawn and sent out for processing. Their doctor will



then receive their results.

The training center at Heart to Heart offers courses in CPR, Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and First Aid, as well as courses in bloodborne pathogens and babysitting. The trainers at Heart to Heart are certified to teach these courses through the American Heart Association, the American Health and Safety Insti-

tute, the National Safety Council, and the American Red Cross.

With nearly 20 years of nursing experience, Theresa Milhouse understands the difficulty patients experience when searching for a lab and/or training center nearby with extended hours. Since the start of the pandemic, this has become an even bigger challenge. Theresa was determined to help find a solution. She had enjoyed visiting Central Delaware often to visit her son and decided to relocate here and open her new business.

Heart to Heart Health Services is proud to be a part of the Central Delaware Community. For Theresa and her team, opening Heart to Heart Health Services is a way of helping to create a solution and serve the community. They look forward to finding other ways to give back like providing free COVID testing and discounted or free training courses.

To learn more about Heart to Heart Health Services and what they have to offer, visit them at [www.heart2hearthealthservices.com](http://www.heart2hearthealthservices.com) or give them a call at (302) 603-3976. Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce in congratulating Theresa and her team at Heart to Heart Services on their Grand Opening!

## CDCC joins Top Five BBQ Bakery for a Ribbon Cutting

DOVER – The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce hosted a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Top Five BBQ Bakery on April 5th at 11 am. The ceremony was held at their location, 1365 N. DuPont Hwy. in Dover (in the food court of the Dover Mall). Chamber members and friends joined the team at Top Five BBQ Bakery as they celebrated their Grand Opening!

The mission of Top Five BBQ Bakery is to serve great food for a great price all over Delaware. They are anxious to serve food items that people will love, in a way they'll enjoy, and for a great price! Top Five BBQ Bakery began in 2018 as a Food Tent at local events around Delaware, like Dover's Farmer's Market. Eventually, a food truck was purchased enabling Top Five BBQ Bakery to travel to events all over Delaware and in Maryland including NASCAR races, the Delaware State Fair, Dover's Comic Con, the Salisbury Festival and many more. Throughout the global health crisis, owner, Gregory Lockett never stopped thinking about and planning his next big step – his goal was to own his own restaurant. The accomplishment of his goal was celebrated as the ribbon was cut on the new restaurant in the food court at the Dover Mall on Monday, April 5th.



In addition to serving customers at their new location at the Dover Mall, the team at Top Five BBQ Bakery is happy to cater with or without the food truck for any occasion. From parties to company meetings to any kind of celebration involving delicious food, Top Five BBQ Bakery is willing to work with businesses, community organizations, and people everywhere to provide good food at a great price. They are particularly known for their \$5 BBQ meals, appetizers, and specials. Whether you order a pulled pork or pulled chicken sandwich, a cheeseburger, a que-

sadilla, nachos, or anything else on their varied menu, you are sure to enjoy a wonderful eating experience! Customers are invited to come in person or to order online through the website for pick up or delivery.

Top Five BBQ Bakery is proud to be a part of the Central Delaware Community. The team at Top Five BBQ Bakery is excited to join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce and is looking forward to all the Chamber offers to help grow their business. They are looking forward to networking with other Chamber members and are excited to have a chance to share their story. Top Five BBQ Bakery is committed to serving the community and is always looking for ways to give back. They have donated goods from their food truck for special events and have even designated a portion of their tip money to help local charities.

To learn more about Top Five BBQ Bakery and what they have to offer, visit them on the web at [www.top-five-bbq.square.site](http://www.top-five-bbq.square.site) or on their Facebook page. Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce in congratulating Gregory and Thais Lockett and Top Five BBQ Bakery on their Grand Opening!

## Member News

### Workforce Development: Growing Them Here and Keeping Them Here

As the First State continues to put efforts into drawing businesses into our area and as the business community continues to grow, the ability to produce well-trained, highly skilled workers is critical. Businesses are in search of employees that demonstrate a high level of skill in their industry area, as well as a mastery of those skills referred to as “soft skills,” things like a strong work ethic, problem-solving skills, communication, interpersonal skills, the ability to work on a team, and the like.

To assist in this effort, Delaware Technical and Community College established the Delaware Office of Work Based Learning in 2017. This office, housed on Del Tech’s Terry Campus in Dover, serves to coordinate employers, schools, and community-based organizations as they provide students with the essential skills needed for the workplace. The Delaware Office of Work Based Learning acts as a liaison that brings students, schools, and employers together in a strong statewide work-based learning infrastructure.

The folks at the Delaware Office of Work Based Learning work side-by-side with schools and local employers to develop immersive student work experiences. They spend time learning the needs of the employers and the areas where they need workers. Then, they work with schools to implement programs that will meet those needs. The hope of the employer is that once the students are trained and vetted while they are in school, they will be able to hire them and keep them after they graduate.

Working alongside Delaware’s Pathways Program and recently expanding into more academic careers, the work of the Delaware Office of Work Based Learning is to ensure that students are adequately prepared and trained for the jobs they wish to pursue and that local industries are thriving with a local home-grown workforce. Early experiences with work tend to positively impact a person’s interest in learning more, their ability to seek appropriate employment, and their future earning potential. Affording students opportunities to complete some of their training in a real-world work experience with a local employer can be the first steps to future employment in that organization.

“The biggest challenge for the Delaware Office of Work Based Learning,” stated Bryan Horsey, Delaware Office of Work Based Learning Director, “is finding employers who are ready and willing to participate.”

Of course, the onset of the pandemic last Spring forced the folks at the Delaware Office of Work Based Learning to make a giant pivot. Several businesses who could no longer welcome student interns to their physical locations jumped in with virtual programming to keep the program growing. Some even coordinated projects that could be completed in a virtual platform. These experiences were valuable and useful and many of them may continue even after the pandemic has passed, creating a hybrid platform that may, in fact, be more efficient, depending on the specific industry sector.

Within the program offered by the Delaware Office of Work Based Learning, students can avail themselves of three distinct experiences.

## Delaware Work-Based Learning

### A Del Tech Innovation

The first of these is awareness where students are exposed to various career options as employers make presentations, participate in career fairs, and open their businesses for tours. “This kind of experience helps students to understand what their local opportunities are,” explained Horsey, “It helps them to see what is right in their back yards.” The second kind of experience is exploration in which students are offered active hands-on engagement with Delaware employers as they conduct interviews, offer job shadowing, or facilitate industry-specific student projects. The final kind of experience offered to students is immersion. Immersive student work experiences offer students a way to jump-start their careers with structured project-based experiences in specific industries over several weeks with an on-site mentor.

The work of the Delaware Office of Work Based Learning tends to challenge the status quo in that it enables students and employers to find each other early in the process. Employers can then influence the growth of the students to meet the needs of their company, developing workers that would be well-suited for a career in their businesses. This kind of hands-on learning helps circumvent the intimidating red-tape often involved in applying to a larger, national corporation. In addition, it specifically develops home-grown workers suited for companies and eliminates the need for them to look nationally to fill their employment vacancies.

“The work that we are doing,” offered Mr. Horsey, “has the potential to change the culture of workforce development in our area by supporting the talent pipeline that already exists here.”

It is expected that new services will evolve in this arena in the near future. In fact, some CARES Act funding has been made available that will help Horsey and his team develop strategies to clearly understand job needs here in Delaware, including the number of vacancies that exist in specific fields and even specific departments.

The hope of the folks at the Delaware Office of Work Based Learning is that employers will become aware of the opportunities available to train and recruit workers and will step up and explore the possibility of becoming involved and what it might look like when they do. “They need to understand that working with secondary and post-secondary students can look like a thousand different things,” commented Horsey, “no two situations are alike and the definition of partnership changes with each situation.”

To simply start a conversation about possible participation in this initiative, please visit their newly revamped website at [www.deowl.org](http://www.deowl.org) or email Bryan Horsey at [bhorsey7@dtcc.edu](mailto:bhorsey7@dtcc.edu).

## New Member Spotlights

### Meet Dale Kurtz and Portrait Express

Located in the old train station in the heart of Wyoming, Delaware, Portrait Express is Delaware’s newest portrait studio. Portrait Express provides family portrait photo sessions, headshots, newborn photos, and much more. The folks at Portrait Express not only offer exceptional photography, but they print all the portraits on location. This enables customers to conveniently take their prints with them at the end of their appointment.

Dale has lived in west Dover his whole life. He began an aerial photography business in 2015 after some experience with a drone piqued his interest. That business eventually evolved into a real estate photography business. Dale specializes in all aspects of real estate photography including video production and even 3-D tours. When Dale is not taking photographs, he loves to ride his Harley. He also enjoys boating and camping.

With a firm belief that small business is the backbone of this country, Dale feels certain that membership in the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce is a perfect fit. He is happy to be part of the Central Delaware business community and is excited to make connections and network with other business owners. He looks forward to attending events and doing whatever he can to support the local community.

To learn more about Por-



trait Express, visit [www.Portrait-Express.com](http://www.Portrait-Express.com). You can also follow him on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/wyomingportraitexpress](http://www.Facebook.com/wyomingportraitexpress). Feel free to call for more information or to make an appointment at (302) 525-3222. Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce in welcoming our new member, Dale Kurtz, and Portrait Express!

### Meet Beatrice Smith and Bea Delightful



Bea Delightful is an authentic Haitian bakery located right here in Dover. Chef Beatrice specializes in Haitian delicacies such as pain patate (sweet potato pudding), coconut, peanut, and cashew tablet (praline candy), Haitian cakes, fudge, and bread. While she enjoys making custom cakes, treats, cookies, and more, her favorite tasty snack to produce is a vast array of regular and liquor gourmet popcorn! At Bea Delightful, only the finest ingredients are used to create handcrafted delights that will brighten the customers’ day. Bea Delightful takes great pride in living up to the company’s tagline “So Heavenly Minded, It’s Got to be Earthly Good!”

Hailing from Haiti, Chef Beatrice Smith is very happy to offer products from her homeland. She describes cake decorating as not only her profession, but her passion. Cooking and baking serve as her hobbies and much-needed therapy! She currently operates Bea Delightful out of her home, but she is hoping to expand in the near future. When she’s not baking, she loves to spend time feeding the homeless, making desserts at the Ronald McDonald House, and

creating personalized stuffed balloons, mugs, t-shirts, and the like. She and her husband are the proud parents of 11 children and grandparents to 9. They have lived in many parts of Delaware over the years but have fallen in love with Dover.

Chef Beatrice Smith is very excited to be a part of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce. She understands the value of Chamber membership and is thrilled to take advantage of all the resources the CDCC promises as she establishes her business and takes steps to help it grow. Chef Beatrice believes that her Chamber connection will help to equip her with the tools she will need in her business journey. She looks forward to becoming engaged in the activities of the Chamber and eagerly anticipates the opportunity to network with fellow members and business colleagues.

To learn more about Bea Delightful, visit [www.bedelightfulcakes.com](http://www.bedelightfulcakes.com). You can also follow them on Facebook, Instagram, or TikTok @beadlightfulcakes. Please join the CDCC in welcoming Chef Beatrice Smith and her bakery, Bea Delightful, into our membership!

## Ambassador's Corner

### Kate Greene

When Kate Greene and Jim Suhre, the husband and wife team behind the full-service advertising agency IMD4, moved to Dover in 2017, the first thing they did after unpacking was to join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce.

"A good chamber can be the heartbeat of a thriving business community," said Kate. "And the CDCC sure fits that bill. When we moved to Dover, we didn't know anyone, but the Chamber has helped us meet the community and we have found some wonderful clients along the way."

Because the CDCC has been so helpful in helping relocate IMD4 to the central Delaware area, Kate opted to become a Chamber Ambassador as a way to help other new members find out about all of the wonderful programs and opportunities the Chamber has to offer. Kate is excited to assist new members as they become acclimated and as



they learn the best way to make their membership work for their businesses. Kate also serves on the CDCC Marketing Committee, helping to determine the best way to communicate the Chamber's messages.

IMD4 is a full-service advertising agency, able to create all aspects of marketing to help grow your business. IMD4 also specializes in branding, consulting and business strategy, including site location analysis for growing businesses. They have decades of experience in marketing, design



and consulting work. Jim has worked for major New York advertising agencies, and both have worked in television as well.

To learn more about IMD4, and see examples of their work, visit their website, imd4.com.

## Member of the Month



### The County Women's Journal

**Name:** Barbara Steele  
**Title:** Sales Associate  
**Business:**

**The Kent County Women's Journal**  
**Address:** P.O. Box 57, Lewes, DE 19958  
**Phone:** 302-740-2149  
**Website:** [thewomensjournal.com](http://thewomensjournal.com)  
**Email:** [Barbarajretd@aol.com](mailto:Barbarajretd@aol.com)

**Tell us a little about your business/organization: what are your services/products, etc.**

Quarterly, Educational, Nationally Syndicated Local Publication supporting the community. When people read print, they retain longer than online.

Many save our Journals as educational options for future needs.

They also refer our professionals to family and friends.

**Tell us about your role in the business/organization.**

We invite local business to join and promote through print, website, and high touch events.

**Tell us something that makes your business/organization unique.**

Our unique Exclusive Opportunity with one in each category allows us to partner as an additional marketing arm for our many contributors.

**What do you see for the future of your business/organization?**

Continue to grow and serve the community and our family of contributors who renew year after year. We welcome new members to make our Journals even more valuable to readers.

**How has the Chamber helped your business/organization grow?**

The Central Delaware Chamber offers high touch, positive events with wonderful professionals. They support our efforts to connect with the BEST!

**What is your best advice to other businesses/organizations?**

Be visible and take advantage of all that is offered.

Connections are golden.

## Member Milestones



The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce is excited to include a new monthly feature for 2021 in the Chamber Connections. "Member Milestones" is designed to recognize, congratulate, and highlight the recently renewed member with the most years of membership in our organization. We truly appreciate the commitment and support of our members as we continue to serve as the essential resource for the development of businesses in Central Delaware. We couldn't do it without you!



This month, we are pleased to recognize two Milestone Members who are celebrating 50 years of CDCC membership, Burns & Ellis Realtors® and the Dover Army Navy Store.

Burns & Ellis Realtors®, owned by Terry and Tom Burns is the oldest real estate company in Central Delaware. They continue year after year to set the standard for excellence in their industry. Their residential listings consist of all kinds of homes including single family homes, condos, townhomes, new construction and lots or land on which to build the home of your dreams.

Whether looking for a home in the historic district or a luxury community boasting all of today's modern amenities, the team at Burns & Ellis is committed to maintaining the highest level of customer service and integrity. Whether you are buying or selling, the agents at Burns & Ellis will work with you full-time throughout the entire process. They want to be there for each client to ensure they get the results they desire! Learn more about Burns & Ellis Realtors® and view their comprehensive listings on their website at [www.burnsandellis.com](http://www.burnsandellis.com).

The Dover Army Navy Store opened its doors in downtown Dover in 1964. Specializing in Military and Police memorabilia, the Dover Army Navy Store boasts a large collection of patches, uniforms, pins, hats, and much more. In addition, they are also an official Boy Scout distributor. In fact, they are currently the only authorized commercial account for the Boy Scouts in the state of Delaware.

The team at the Dover Army



Navy Store constantly embraces the challenge of expanding their product list and fulfilling the desires of their customers to complete their collections. Their products are also now available on their website at [www.doverarmynavy.com](http://www.doverarmynavy.com).

Burns & Ellis Realtors® and the Dover Army Navy Store are proud members of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce. Congratulations to both on their 50 years of Chamber membership! Thank you to both for the role you play in Central Delaware and for what you bring to our community. And thank you for your support and your 50 year commitment to the CDCC!

# Thank You for Your Renewal!

NAME OF COMPANY.....	# OF YEARS
AARP Delaware.....	3
Affinity Home Care Services.....	1
All Around Maintenance, LLC.....	2
All Restored Inc. ....	10
Avery Hall Insurance Group.....	3
Bayard Pharmacy.....	8
Bennie Smith Funeral & Limousine Services.....	5
Buffalo Wild Wings/High 5 Hospitality, LLC.....	5
Burns & Ellis Realtors.....	50
Blyer's Store, Inc.....	24
Care First Dental Team - Robert R. Coope, DDS.....	9
Caring Hearts Home Care, LLC.....	5
Central Delaware Speech Language Pathology.....	2
Claws and Paws Pet Sitting.....	2
Comfort Inn - Rehoboth.....	18
Corp1, Inc.....	10
Delaware State Auditor Kathy McGuiness.....	2
Delaware State Housing Authority.....	17
Dover Army Navy Store, Inc. ....	50
Eagle Group (Metal Masters).....	43
Emlyn Construction Company.....	12
Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Middletown.....	5
Euphoric Herbals.....	1
Albert Evans.....	6
Excel Business Systems.....	7
Eye Specialist of Delaware.....	3
Fairfield Inn & Suites.....	20
Ferris Home Improvements.....	3
Fifer's Farm Store.....	32
First State Improv LLC.....	1
Fort Still National Bank.....	7
Greater Kent Committee.....	11
Green Diamond Builders, Inc.....	14
Heritage Shores.....	3
JEM Pest Solutions Inc. ....	6
Shawn Kirlin/ME The Moving Experience Real Estate.....	5
Knights Fine Jewelry Ltd.....	16
Laura's Choice.....	1
Leadership Delaware, Inc. ....	2
Leander Lakes, LLC.....	5
Meals on Wheels Delaware.....	2
Pats Select of Smyrna.....	1
Primerica - Erlene George.....	3
RPJ Waste Service, Inc. ....	14
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# Coffee On Us!

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The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce would love to connect you with something delicious! The photograph on our front page header changes each month, depicting picturesque and unique locations right here in Central Delaware. These photos are the subject of our monthly "Coffee On Us" contest. If you recognize the location of the header picture on our front page, be the first to CALL the CDCC Office (302-734-7513) with the correct answer and you will win a \$10 gift card to:

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You'll also see your picture and your company name on our Facebook page - and, of course, you'll win bragging rights for the month!

The winner of the April "Coffee on Us" contest was Melissa Allaband, of Merry Maids, who correctly identified Tre Sorelle Dolce Ice Cream & Mini Golf in Wyoming, DE. Congratulations and way to go! Thanks for playing our game!

*\*\*\*Please note that the same person is qualified to win the Coffee on Us Contest only twice per calendar year.\*\*\**

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