



Chamber Connections



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CORNERSTONE



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CDCC Presents 24th Annual Legislative Luncheon

A strong bond exists between business and government. They are completely dependent on each other. In Delaware, we are fortunate to experience a truly unique relationship between members of the business community and our legislators. When business leaders and politicians work together for the common good, we can accomplish great things.

On Thursday, March 12, 2026, from 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., the Central



Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) will host an event where that kind of collaborative effort and constructive conversation is sure to take place. Our 24th Annual Legislative Luncheon, brought to you by B.I.G. Investment Services, will be held in the Rollins Center at Bally's Dover Casino Resort (1131 N

Dupont Hwy, Dover). This unique opportunity, presented by the CDCC's Legislative Affairs Committee, will give guests an opportunity to meet our Kent County Senators and Representatives and participate in an open dialogue concerning business issues.

During the event program, legislators will participate in a discussion panel focused on timely

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A Deliciously Special Spot for A Business Mixer

After a winter of frigid temperatures teamed with snow and ice, are you ready to reconnect with business colleagues and expand your network? Would you like to enjoy delicious nibbles and refreshing beverages, any with prizes, prizes? If you answered "yes" to any or all of these questions, then the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) has the event for you!

NEW LOCATION



The Chamber is excited to invite you to the March Sunset Business Mixer on Wednesday, March 25th, from 5:00-7:00 p.m. Our host is the elegant Royal Prime Events & Steakhouse. The Mixer will take

place at the Royal Prime Steakhouse Lounge, which is located inside the hotel lobby at Bally's Dover Casino Resort, 1131 N. Dupont Hwy, Dover. The Royal Prime team is pleased to welcome CDCC members and their guests to experience the attentive service and elevated cuisine they offer.

Royal Prime Events & Steakhouse brings together venue versatility, technological sophistication, and

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We are YOUR Chamber!



55 Plus Expo Returns for 25th Year!

As pretty much everyone knows, seniors represent the fastest growing population in Delaware. People are living longer due to advances in medical technology, better nutrition, and greater access to healthcare. In addition, increased awareness of healthy lifestyle choices—such as exercise, smoking cessation, and stress management—along with better management of chronic diseases, have significantly extended both life



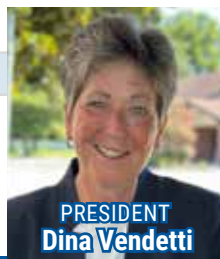
expectancy and quality of life. On top of that, the large Baby Boomer population is moving into an older age bracket, which has added to the growth of our senior market. Some

seniors are also moving to Delaware for the numerous activities, recreation, beaches and affordable living compared to nearby states.

The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) created the 55 Plus Expo event 25 years ago to help our member businesses connect with this growing segment of our population and their caregivers. We are so proud to bring this event to the community again this year. Mark

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Dina's Digest



PRESIDENT
Dina Vendetti

Connections Matter

Whether you're from Philly or Baltimore or New York or right here in Central Delaware, you probably understand the common community "I've got a guy (or girl)..." phenomenon. "I've got a guy" usually plays out something like this: Perhaps your neighbor's lawn mower is on the fritz and he's trying to figure out how to get his grass cut... you are likely eager to share that you've "got a guy" that could help and you're willing to introduce him. Or perhaps a business colleague is interested in utilizing a payroll company and asks for suggestions... or maybe a client shares that they are interested in finding someone to help them invest their money... or perhaps an acquaintance mentions that they need to obtain some reputable homeowner's insurance... I think we can all agree that, for every need that arises, it's always good when you've "got a guy (or girl)!"

"I've got a guy..." is a real-life illustration that "community" begins with a connection. From that connection, springs the beginning of a relationship where people get to know each other. Opportunities to assist each other come from knowing what others need in order to be successful at what they do. Finally, when that all comes together, there are plenty of reasons to celebrate!

Your Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce is like "I've got a guy" multiplied by over 700! Your CDCC is here to assist you in making connections. We connect people to information and education. We connect people to their legislators and encourage them to help influence business-friendly legislation. We connect people to a plethora of marketing opportunities. And finally, we connect people to each other.

As you know, we are now in the part of the year that we refer to as "event season." Each month from now through June contains at least one major event! In January, we were thrilled to mix it up with so many of you at the Correction Officers Association of Delaware's beautiful banquet room at our CDCC Trifecta Event (Sunset Business Mixer/Member2Member/CDCC Showcase). We were also excited to connect with you at our annual Economic Forecast Breakfast! February brought us the Military Affaire – a wonderful opportunity for our business

community to engage with our military community and make connections!

This month, we are looking forward to our Annual Legislative Luncheon (March 19th). Later this Spring we'll all meet again at the 25th Annual 55 Plus Expo (April 16th), The Bluesuiters Golf Tournament (May), THE Chamber Mini Masters (May 27th), and our Awards for Excellence Celebration (June 18th). And as usual, each month will bring Coffee Coaching, Young Professionals' Events, Member Orientation, Kent County Open for Business, Sunset Business Mixers, and much, much more!

These events provide the perfect setting for making those critical connections with fellow Chamber Members. As we come together over and over around a variety of topics, activities, and events, those connections strengthen and develop into partnerships, opportunities for collaboration, and avenues for building our community.

In this edition of the aptly named "Chamber Connections," you will discover the details surrounding these events and activities – and we hope that you will call in and register for as many as you can. Sponsoring or participating as a vendor or exhibitor at these events is a great way to help people connect with you and your business. The more they see your name, the more they will want to know who you are and what you do. Take advantage of these opportunities when you can and watch the connections in real time, right before your eyes!

To register for any of our events or to sign up to be a sponsor or vendor, please call the CDCC office at 302-734-7513 – or visit our Calendar of Events at www.cdcc.net.

Communities are comprised of people who feel a strong connection to each other, sometimes marked by conversations that begin with "I've got a guy (or girl)!" We are excited about the months ahead and about sharing these various events and activities with you. We feel a strong connection to you, our members, and we look forward to the many chances we get to re-connect with you many times over. Thank you for all the ways you work hard to make Central Delaware a strong and healthy community!

Calendar of Events

MARCH

- Monday, March 2nd**
CDCC Executive Committee Meeting
8:00am - 10:00am, CDCC Conference Room
- Thursday, March 5th**
Leadership Central Delaware
8:00am - 5:00pm, Public Safety Day
- Thursday, March 5th**
Kent County Open for Business
8:30am - 10:00am, Kent County Levy Court
- Tuesday, March 10th**
CDCC Board Meeting
7:30am - 8:30am, Faw Casson
- Wednesday, March 11th**
Coffee Coaching 9:00am - 10:00am, via Zoom
- Thursday, March 12th**
Member Orientation
8:30am - 10:00am, via Zoom
- Thursday, March 12th**
Legislative Luncheon
11:00am - 1:30pm, Bally's Dover Casino Resort
- Tuesday, March 17th**
LCD Steering Committee Meeting
12:00pm - 1:00pm, CDCC Conference Room
- Wednesday, March 18th**
Marketing Committee Meeting
2:30pm - 3:30pm, via Zoom
- Wednesday, March 25th**
Ambassador Committee Meeting
4:30pm, Royal Prime Lounge at Bally's Dover Casino Resort
- Wednesday, March 25th**
Sunset Business Mixer 5:00pm - 7:00pm,
Royal Prime Lounge at Bally's Dover Casino
Resort

APRIL

- Thursday, April 2nd**
Leadership Central Delaware 8:00am
- 5:00pm, Tourism Day
- Thursday, April 2nd**
Kent County Open for Business
8:30am - 10:00am, Kent County Levy Court
- Friday, April 3rd**
Good Friday Office Closed
- Wednesday, April 8th**
Coffee Coaching
9:00am - 10:00am, via Zoom
- Thursday, April 9th**
Member Orientation
8:30am - 10:00am, via Zoom
- Tuesday, April 14th**
CDCC Board Meeting
7:30am - 8:30am, Faw Casson
- Wednesday, April 15th**
Marketing Committee Meeting
2:30pm - 3:30pm, via Zoom
- Thursday, April 16th**
25th Annual 55 Plus Expo 9:00am
- 3:00pm, Bally's Dover Casino Resort
- Tuesday, April 21st**
LCD Steering Committee Meeting
12:00pm - 1:00pm, CDCC Conference Room
- Wednesday, April 29th**
Ambassador Committee Meeting
4:30pm, Residence Inn Dover
- Wednesday, April 29th**
Sunset Business Mixer
5:00pm - 7:00pm, Residence Inn Dover
- April / May**
LCD Class of 2026 Invitational
5:00pm - 7:00pm, TBD

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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The CDCC is your opportunity hub!





Promoting Your Business Using Daily State News/BaytoBayNews.com



Serving Delmarva since 1953, The Daily State News-BaytoBayNews.com offers powerful, local-first marketing solutions for businesses that want to connect with their communities.

Our mission is to strengthen the communities we serve by delivering unbiased journalism while helping local businesses grow. The Daily State News, both print and digital issues, reach audiences throughout Delaware and Maryland's Eastern Shore. Our award-winning newsroom is a trusted regional source, known especially for its in-depth legislative coverage at Legislative Hall—often as the only reporters on site.

“We pay close attention to the issues and initiatives taking place in

our community,” said Andrew West, Editor-In-Chief of the Daily State News and BaytoBayNews.com. “It is vital that we give readers news and information they need to participate in public discussions and make thoughtful decisions.”

Demonstrating that commitment, we have one full-time reporter following the state legislature and others who regularly contribute to this effort.

In addition to The Daily State News, we publish two monthly publications—Middletown Smyrna Independent, Milford Harrington Independent and in Maryland we have two weekly publications Salisbury Independent and the Somerset County Times. All our publications continue to grow in readership,

and advertising as local communities increasingly rely on trusted hometown news sources.

Connecting with an audience ready and willing to travel the region our quarterly magazine, Bay to the Beach, is distributed throughout the Delmarva region and available online at BaytoBayNews.com, it serves as a shopping and travel guide throughout the year.

We are a true one-stop shop for your marketing needs. Beyond print, we offer targeted postcards, preprint insertion, website creation and hosting, hyperlocal newsletters, website display ads, sponsored content (online and in print), and more—all delivered directly and competitively. And we are now offering front page sticky notes!

Our full-service digital advertising solutions in addition to website creation and hosting include programmatic display, video and connected TV streaming, geo-fencing, targeted email campaigns, local and organic SEO, paid search, Facebook and Instagram advertising, and new digital billboard opportunities.

Think local—and think efficiency. Instead of managing multiple vendors, you can access a full menu of advertising products through one dedicated marketing representative. With no middleman, we help you maximize every advertising dollar.

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CORNERSTONE

R&R manages commercial assets, so you don't have to



While R&R Commercial Realty provides top-shelf service to buyers and sellers on Delmarva, one of our lesser known services is property management.

As anyone who owns a commercial property knows, they're management intensive. To produce the maximum return on investment this asset class needs constant attention. Responding to emergencies and staying on top of routine maintenance are bare minimums. But, deep market analysis, innovative tenant acquisition/retention strategies and shrewd capital improvement projects are all needed to take these investments to the next level.

R&R Commercial Realty has been a market leader in these services since 1996. Since then, we've established long-standing contracts in all three counties of Delaware and built a network of nationwide industry contacts.

No commercial property is too big or small and no task is outside our

expertise. We offer an à la carte-suite of services depending on how much or little the property owner needs. From just relying on a trusted local firm to collect rents to comprehensive, top-to-bottom administration; R&R Commercial Realty is your solution.

Our management services include retail, office and industrial properties. Our firm is capable of overseeing the daily details of the management and operations of your property without losing sight of the owner's overall objectives. We understand the delicate balance between controlling operating expenses and providing a level of service that ensures value.

Our list of services includes, but aren't limited to:

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- Janitorial services
- Landscape maintenance and enhancement
- Lighting repairs, maintenance, and improvements

- HVAC maintenance
- Tenant relations/negotiations
- Collections and evictions
- Lease renewals
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- Vacancy management
- Marketing
- Capital improvement management
- Vendor contract services
- Financial reporting and record keeping

It's important to note that not all management companies are created equal. With R&R Commercial Realty, you're getting more than just a steady hand at the wheel. With a thick rolodex of satisfied customers, this firm has been built on the bedrock of proven performance. In a small market like the Delmarva peninsula, reputation counts. Ours is one of competence, reliability, conscientiousness, determination, and professionalism. It's our job to know this market, and we've developed an understanding of it that only comes with decades of experience.

By putting R&R Commercial Realty to work as your property manager, you get our team, reputation, and the institutional knowledge that's been painstakingly acquired through years of hard work. That's a superior product available nowhere else in Delmarva.

About R&R Commercial Realty: Established in 1996, R&R Commercial Realty is a highly successful real estate firm located in the center of the Delmarva Peninsula. With a focus on commercial real estate, R&R is one of the most visible and well-respected local firms. Services include commercial & industrial sales and leasing, land sales and development as well as property management.

For additional information about R&R Commercial Realty and its extensive inventory of commercial property, visit our website at www.randrcommercialrealty.com or contact our offices at 302-674-3400 or info@randrcommercialrealty.com.

Show Up, Stand Up, and Speak Up – The Delaware Way

How does government work? How do politics affect the business community? What are the current issues facing the general assembly and what role will they play for Central Delaware’s business leaders? February found the LCD Class of 2026 at Legislative Hall learning about the business of politics in the First State, hearing from elected officials and those who work with them and developing their awareness of the impact that Government and Politics has on the area’s business community. Class members also had the opportunity to examine the leadership traits of data driven, goal setter, and discernment through the lens of government and politics.

After some much appreciated coffee and pastries served by The House of Coffi, this informative and insightful day began with an introduction to the inner workings of the General Assembly and the process whereby ideas become bills that become laws. CDCC Board Member and lobbyist, Scott Kidner, and Rep. Daniel B. Short took the class through the process of lawmaking. They shared information about how laws are written, debated, and reviewed. Scott emphasized the need for involvement on the part of the community stakeholders and the need for clear, direct communication. In his words, citizens, business leaders, and any other voters who feel strongly about issues being discussed in the legislature must “show up and stand up.” Delaware is a state where all voices count, and every voice must be heard.

Both gentlemen spoke about the uniqueness of governing here in Delaware. More than most other states, legislators’ physical presence plays a large role in the business of government. Face-to-face, person-to-person encounters are the

foundation of lawmaking in the first state. The inflection of one’s voice, the look on one’s face, and the body language employed by representatives and senators alike can (and do!) make an impactful difference when crafting legislation. As lawmakers sit together and debate the pros and cons of pieces of proposed legislation, there is generated throughout the building an energetic “buzz” that tends to inspire and motivate those gathered at Leg Hall.

Class members were involved in two roundtable discussions regarding hot topics that currently face the General Assembly: Paid Family Leave and the Homeless Bill of Rights. Current CDCC board member and owner of Lean on Me Caregiving, Laura Garofoli and Rep. Bryan Shupe helped class members to understand the implications of the Paid Family Leave Act (HS 1 for HB 128) and the challenges of its implementation. Rep. Mara Gorman, 23rd District, and Representative Jeff Spiegelman, 11th District, worked together to provide information regarding the pros and cons of the proposed “Homeless Bill of Rights” (HB 135).

Both discussions centered around the impact that these pieces of legislation would have for the business community. Class members’ involvement in the conversations helped them to understand the expanse of these topics and the intricate levels of detail faced by lawmakers. It was interesting for class members to consider the position of lawmakers as they represent their constituents. All participants showed the importance of setting goals, using relevant and accurate data, and discerning what is best for the populace as they discussed the intricacies of these controversial topics.

Class members were given a look behind the curtain at the role of Kent County Levy Court. Kelly Pitts, LCD Class of 2022 and the county’s Public Information Officer, and Joel Gartner, the county’s Director of Administration, shared the role of county government here in Central Delaware. Starting with a little bit of history about Kent County Levy Court, the Class of 2026 was walked through the various roles and services of our county’s government and given time to consider the county’s role in establishing Kent as a business-friendly county.

After a tour of Legislative Hall by Sen. Eric Buckson and a delicious lunch served by Skyline Catering LLC, the role of the lobbyist was explained by Judy Diogo, CDCC president emeritus. Judy talked about the importance of relationships and the art of tactful persistence. She explained several strategies for engaging lawmakers and stressed the importance of finding ways to get them to listen. She also highlighted the critical skills of influence, negotiation, and compromise.

The role of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce was explained by the Chamber’s president and one of two CDCC lobbyists, Dr. Dina Vendetti. Dina talked about the need for the chamber to monitor the activity of the General Assembly and track bills that have the potential to impact the way business is done in Kent County. The CDCC is in the unique position of tracking upcoming legislation and notifying business members when their voices are needed to guide the path that legislation takes – this activity is a critical member benefit. She emphasized the need for people to respond to the “alerts” sent out by the CDCC on their behalf by calling

lawmakers or showing up to public hearings to voice their opinions.

Dina also emphasized the need for Delawareans to engage in the process of legislation and let their voices be heard. She underscored the idea that any resident at almost any time can walk up the front steps of Legislative Hall, enter through its massive doors, and be heard... really heard. This is a privilege not as easily afforded to the citizens of any other state in the country and encouraged class members as citizens of the First State to take advantage of it. Delaware regards every voice as important.

Government & Politics Day ended as class members visited the Dover City Council Chambers and participated in a mock City Council hearing. Class members were tapped to play certain roles in the meeting and participated in a lively discussion. Mayor Robin R. Christiansen was on hand to guide the activity and discussion. During the discussion, Mayor Christiansen aptly described Dover as “a place big enough to be a city, but small enough to enjoy the close-knit feeling of a town.” His interjection of “fun facts” served to enlighten and inspire class members as they passionately threw themselves into their assigned roles.

Class members were intrigued by this behind-the-scenes look at the creation of laws and the passing of legislation. This day gave them a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the role that business leaders play in the process and to consider when and how to show up, stand up, and speak up. They valued the face-to-face contact with the lawmakers and enjoyed their part in the day’s many discussions.

Photos continue on the Next Page





An Invitation to Join the Next Generation of Leaders

From the time we experience the childhood game “Follow the Leader” or the honor that accompanies the assignment of “Line Leader,” we begin to learn the importance of developing efficient, fair, and impactful leadership skills. In the simplest terms, “leadership” is defined as the art of motivating a group of people to act toward a common goal – but true, genuine, effective leadership is so much more. The toolbox of an effective leader contains a variety of skills and character traits that help guide, direct, and influence those who follow.

But how does one develop these skills and traits? And more impor-

tantly, how does one learn to use them appropriately to affect the change, stimulate the growth, and encourage the excellence needed to reach goals. To understand what this all means and to begin to discover your role in leading change in Kent County, check out the CDCC’s Leadership Central Delaware (LCD) program and become part of Central Delaware’s next generation of leaders!

The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) is seeking applicants for this dynamic and life-changing program. Later this Spring, your CDCC will host its annual LCD Invitational Reception.

This reception creates a platform where LCD alumni come together to share with prospective members of the next LCD class information about this paramount leadership development experience. Stay tuned for details regarding the date, time, and location of the Invitational Reception.

Since its inception, Leadership Central Delaware (LCD), the diamond program of the CDCC, having graduated more than 450 individuals, has had a significant positive impact here in Central Delaware. LCD is designed to create effective, dynamic, knowledgeable leaders. This program connects emerging leaders through diverse networks, while enhancing leadership skills and community knowledge, resulting in increased value, individually and professionally.

Participants in LCD gain an opportunity to develop resources and partnerships, an understanding of the role of leaders in the community, connections with people of influence, and an understanding of the importance of collaboration among businesses... all while developing and enhancing their own leadership skills. Sponsoring companies will receive ten

months of advertising to 1300+ people through numerous CDCC avenues, engaged and connected employees who are ready to make a positive difference, and recognition as a company dedicated to making Central Delaware THE place to live, work, and play.

LCD’s 10-month program is comprised of 9 day-long learning sessions (one per month, beginning in October), an opening and a closing retreat, and graduation. Each day-long session (8 a.m. – 5 p.m.) is focused on a different economic segment of Kent County. The days are spent in conversation with the leaders of various industries, enjoying presentations and tours, and engaging in hands-on learning experiences.

Start planning now to be part of Leadership Central Delaware and stay tuned for details regarding our FREE Invitational Reception. Class sizes are limited – participants are chosen through an interview process. To learn more about Leadership Central Delaware, please visit <https://cdcc.net/pillars/education/leadership-central-delaware/> or contact Dina Vendetti at the CDCC office (302)734-7513. It’s time to start building Central Delaware’s next generation of leaders!

LCD LEADERSHIP CENTRAL DELAWARE
The diamond program of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce

Thank you to our Sponsors!

Confirmed as of 9/18/25

Member News

Ronald McDonald House Celebrates 35 Years Serving Delaware

You know McDonald's, right? Doesn't everyone? The beloved, quick-service restaurant known for its classic burgers, golden crispy fries, and unforgettable milkshakes. So, most likely when you hear the name "Ronald McDonald House" (RMH) your mind fills with many assumptions of what the house is and what they do. This Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) editor hopes to share the facts with you about this amazing "home away from home" for many Kent and Sussex County families at a time when they can use an understanding smile and a caring heart.

Shawna Steinmann, RMH's passionate and energetic Community Engagement Manager for Southern Delaware, invited the CDCC team to visit the RMH and learn firsthand about their 35 years of service in Delaware. Invitation accepted, and we headed to Wilmington filled with excitement that wouldn't be dampened by the gray February weather.

RMH is described as a temporary residence for families of seriously ill or injured children who are receiving treatment at area hospitals. It is a nurturing and supportive environment that provides meals, relaxation, and recreation. If that were all, we could end the article here. But there is much more to the RMH story.

The original RMH in Philadelphia was started in 1974 by Pediatric Oncologist at Children's Hospital (Philadelphia), Dr. Audrey Evans, and co-founder Jimmy Murray, General Manager of the Philadelphia Eagles, with proceeds from sales of Shamrock Shakes at area McDonald's. The Delaware RMH was built in 1991 with 17 guest rooms. Since the opening, there have been several remodels and expansions including the addition of a 29,000 square foot wing that added 23 guest rooms, new kitchens, dining room, 25-seat mini theater, beauty salon, and family lounge areas. Shawna took us all through the RMH showing us every nook and cranny of the entire impressive facility, all while explaining the wonderful work that their staff and volunteers do with the assistance of the donations that they receive.



Pamela W. Cornforth,
President/CEO of Ronald
McDonald Charities of
Greater Delaware

In 2024, the RMH served 257 Delaware families, of that number, 92 of the families (36%) were from Kent County, 151 (59%) were from Sussex County, and the remaining 5% were from New

Castle County. The top Delaware areas served are Dover, Laurel, Millsboro, Seaford, and Milford. As Shawna likes to point out, "RMH is OURS (meaning downstate Delaware)."

The CDCC was pleased to have an e-conversation with the RMH Charities Greater Delaware President and CEO Pam Cornforth, who graciously took time out of her day to answer our questions.

CDCC: Congratulations on your 35th Anniversary! What goals or projects does the Ronald McDonald House of Delaware hope to accomplish as they start the next 35 years?

Pam Cornforth: *Thank you! Over the past 35 years, we have had the incredible privilege of welcoming over 55,000 families to stay at the Ronald McDonald House and thousands of families in our 2 Ronald McDonald Family Rooms located at Christiana Care*

and Nemours Children's Hospital, Delaware. When we first opened the doors of the Ronald McDonald House we had 17 guest rooms for families. Today, thanks to multiple expansions and the generous support of the community, we currently operate 52 guest rooms. It is remarkable to reflect on how far we have come! Since 2008, we have provided much needed overnight accommodation as part of our Family Room at Nemours. We operate 3 overnight sleep rooms, and we are usually at capacity.

As we look ahead, our focus remains clear: Serve More Families, Better. This means expanding access to our programs, strengthening the social support we provide families while they are at the Ronald McDonald House, ensuring that every family that enters our Ronald McDonald House or Family Room feels cared for, understood, and that this is their "home-away-from-home." As the needs of our families continue to evolve, we are committed to evolving with them—guided by compassion, community, and the belief that no family should face a medical crisis alone.

Feeding our families has become a top priority for our organization. We want to ensure that our families are provided with a hot evening meal 365 days a year at the Ronald McDonald House and lunches 5 days a week at the two Ronald McDonald Family Rooms and at least two dinners a month at each of the Family Rooms. Our energy

this year will be securing funding to ensure this is a reality.

CDCC: What is the biggest misconception that people have about the Ronald McDonald House of Delaware?

Pam Cornforth: *One of the most common misconceptions we hear, especially from those who have never visited us, is the assumption that the House is a sad place. Quite the opposite!*

While families come to Ronald McDonald House during challenging times you will see children playing and making new friends, families sharing meals, and parents finding comfort in conversation with other families that are facing a similar medical journey. They find strength in in these shared experiences. When you walk through the House, you are far more likely to find laughter than silence. We have many different programs at night for families who are looking for something to do. Bingo is a big hit as well as Paws, our pet therapy program and arts and crafts to just name a few programs.

Another misconception is that we are fully funded by McDonald's. In reality, 92% of our \$4.5mm budget comes from individuals, corporations, community groups, and foundations. The McDonald's system, including local owner/operators, suppliers, employees and customers,

provide valuable annual support for our programs. Their support extends from monetary contributions to volunteerism to board participation. Proceeds from donations at local McDonald's restaurants and support from the McDonald's system make up about 8% of our annual revenue.

Every dollar raised in Delaware stays here in Delaware to support our Ronald McDonald House and our Ronald McDonald Family Rooms ensuring families with seriously ill children have the services they need.

We ask our families for a \$15 per night donation, but no one is turned away due to the inability to pay. Our average night donation is less than \$3.00 and our cost to operate each guest room per night is \$153. The generosity of the community is what bridges that gap and makes it possible for our families to focus on what matters most – their child's health and being together.

CDCC: Currently, what is your greatest need?

Pam Cornforth: Right now, our greatest need is food and funding for our ambitious goals of feeding our families. As demand for our services has grown so has our meal program. Through our chef-led program, Spoonful of Hope, we have reimagined how we nourish families ensuring every meal is thoughtfully provided and served with care. We also rely heavily on the community to provide non-perishable breakfast and lunch items and individually wrapped snacks for our families to grab and go on the way to the Hospital. Our Lunches with Love program provides lunches that are prepared here at the Ronald McDonald House and delivered to the 2 Family Rooms. As we all know, food is expensive, so donations help us to cover the cost. We are also seeking volunteers to help with the meal and lunch preparations.

CDCC: In addition to spreading the word about the good work that you do at the Ronald McDonald House of Delaware, what else can the Chamber business members

and their teams do to help your mission?

Pam Cornforth: I would encourage the Chamber and its members to get involved in whatever way feels most meaningful and manageable for you. There truly is a place for everyone at the Ronald McDonald House.

We offer a range of opportunities- from hosting wish list drives and organizing third party fundraisers to sponsoring or participating in one of our signature Special Events. Volunteers are needed to help prepare meals and lunches as noted earlier. Some businesses and organizations choose hands on engagement, while others prefer to rally their teams around a collection drive or sponsorship. Every effort, no matter the size, makes a tangible difference for the families we serve.

I would also warmly invite any Chamber members to come visit the Ronald McDonald House. Seeing the House firsthand inspires people

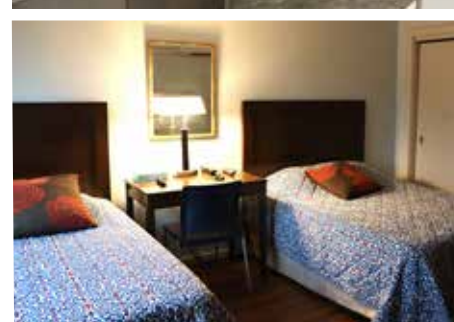
to find their unique way to get involved.

While Ronald McDonald is in Wilmington, directly across the street from Nemours Children's Hospital, Delaware, 30% of the families we serve come from Kent and Sussex Counties. We are just not Wilmington's House; we are YOUR Ronald McDonald House. And together, as a statewide community we can continue ensuring families never have to face a child's medical crisis alone.

For more information about Ronald McDonald House Charities Greater Delaware, their upcoming fundraising events, ways to get involved or how to give, please contact Shawna at shawna@rmhc-delaware.org or 302-656-6540. In addition, next time you stop in McDonald's, be sure to Round Up your order total to the next dollar. This donation goes directly to the RMH in Delaware. In 2024, that total was \$300,000. Now, that's food for thought!



Shawna Steinmann, Community Engagement Manager for Southern Delaware, and Katie Johnson, Operations Director, pose with Mumbi the giraffe.



Member News

NeighborGood Partners: Helping 52,000 Households in 50 Years!

“There’s no place like home.” Those were the famous words from the movie, “The Wizard of Oz,” that Glinda the Good Witch told Dorothy to say as she clicked her heels together three times and then returned to the safety of her home in Kansas. As Dorothy knew, “home” is more than walls and a roof. It’s a safe, comfortable place, in a supportive community, where you can build memories with your family and friends.

But not everyone is in the position to have a home. Delaware is facing a housing crisis and, according to NeighborGood Partners, currently ranks 17th in the country for housing rental costs. Housing prices and rental costs are both up, unfortunately workers’ pay hasn’t kept up with these increases. This isn’t just a personal challenge; this affects our communities in many ways...even the business community. It’s difficult to attract and retain workers when they can’t afford to live in the community where they work.

The CDCC recently sat down with Karen Speakman, Executive Director of NeighborGood Partners to learn about the work they do in Central Delaware and throughout Delmarva to help address this housing crisis. They are a mission-driven organization, and in their fifty years of housing development and services, they have assisted over 52,000 households and leveraged over \$2.3 billion in housing financing and assistance.

Guided by their core values: compassion, expertise, integrity, responsiveness, and innovation, NeighborGood Partners’ mission is to strengthen communities through housing, lending, and education. Karen explained, “We believe that every person has the right to live where they desire, in a safe, quality, affordable home, and deserves to be treated with respect and compassion, and without judgement.”

In the Real Estate area, they provide technical expertise to nonprofit organizations via real estate development consulting for rental housing and underwriting loans for cost-effective housing and community facilities. The work in Central Delaware has included twenty-one new single-family homes they have built and sold in downtown Dover, and seven houses are planned for FY 26.

NeighborGood Partners recently hosted an Open House of a four-home development on North Kirkwood



Street (Dover) of Passive Houses that represent the first Phius-certified homes in Delaware. The project demonstrates how extremely energy-efficient, climate-ready housing can be successfully delivered within an affordable homeownership model while meeting rigorous performance standards. At the event, representatives from the sustainability consulting firm New Ecology and NeighborGood Partners discussed performance goals, expectations for savings on residential energy costs, construction methodologies, and the applicability of this model for future residential development in Delaware.

For community development, NeighborGood Partners created a resident-driven neighborhood revitalization initiative, Restoring Central Dover, now in its eleventh year of holistic community development implementation. Lead by a diverse cross-sector Advisory Committee, their efforts include economic development, resident engagement, improving the home ownership rate in the area, safety, arts, health/drug addiction and ensuring the community is healthy and vibrant. In the fall of 2024, NeighborGood Partners opened a state-of-the-art facility to serve as the home for the Restoring Central Dover program staff, providing them with a dedicated space to engage and serve the residents of our community. In addition to housing the Restoring Central Dover initiative, they welcomed Delaware State University’s School of Business to the NeighborGood Center. The university occupies the second floor, offering training and support for community entrepreneurial opportunities, further enhancing the resources available to the area residents. In addition to the new building, Restoring Central Dover

recently received a \$12,500 Excellence in Education grant from the CenDel Foundation for the Partners’ ice cream shop, “The Scoop,” on West Loockerman Street in Dover. At the shop, students learn about running a business including teamwork, finance, leadership, and customer service skills.

Lending money for projects that speak to their mission is another important role for NeighborGood Partners. They have \$39 million in assets for financing affordable housing and other living spaces, neighborhood revitalization, and community facilities. The organization/corporation is underwritten, and financing is provided that works for them.

For individuals and households, NeighborGood Partners provides a variety of valuable financial counseling services including pre-purchase homeownership counseling, one-on-one financial coaching, and rental housing counseling.

“Most participants in NeighborGood Partners’ programs have housing needs and financial challenges and have long been underserved and

vulnerable,” Karen explained, “Folks find us through word of mouth, social media, and the internet. We are proud to be a HUD-approved housing counseling agency, as well as one of just two Delaware-based NeighborWorks America member organizations. Our organization is rated by NeighborWorks America as Exemplary, and they conducted an in-depth third-party evaluation of our performance, which concluded that ‘NeighborGood Partners is highly productive and responsive to the communities it serves.’”

Upcoming NeighborGood Partners events to celebrate the community and their 50th anniversary include a “Raise the Roof” fundraiser on May 14th, 4 – 7 p.m. at the Rail Haus, 92 N. West Street, Dover and a 50th Anniversary Gala on October 8th, 5 – 8 p.m. at King Cole Farm, 1730 Bayside Dr., Dover.

To learn more about the important work that NeighborGood Partners does in the Central Delaware community and to support their efforts, please visit them online at www.neighborgoodpartners.org.

Please join the CDCC to congratulate NeighborGood Partners on 50 years of amazing service to the Delmarva community, especially Central Delaware!



Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity Attends “Habitat on the Hill” in Washington D.C.

Representatives from Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity joined hundreds of local Habitat organizations and affordable housing advocates on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. on February 11, 2026, to demand Congress take action on the affordable housing crisis in America.

Habitat on the Hill, a three-day, D.C.-based event that began on Feb. 10, gathered advocates from 48 states, Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico to meet with their Congressional leaders. This year marks the 20th Habitat on the Hill event in Habitat for Humanity International’s 50-year history.

Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity’s Chief Executive Officer, Tim Bailey, and Chief Operating Officer, Chrissy Kyriss, along with representatives from Sussex and New Castle County Habitat’s, met with Delaware congressional leaders Senator Chris Coons, Senator Lisa Blunt-Rochester and Representative Sarah McBride. Central Delaware Habitat advocated for local legislative policies such as increasing state and federal investment in affordable housing, reforming zoning and land use policies, expanding and protecting tenant rights and supporting the acquisition and preservation of manufactured home communities.

“We are incredibly grateful to Senators Coons and Blunt-Rochester and Congresswoman McBride for their continued



Central Delaware
**Habitat
for Humanity®**

leadership and partnership in advancing affordable housing across Delaware. Thanks to their advocacy, all three Habitat affiliates in our state received a \$1 million earmark — a total of \$3 million in federal funding — to help expand homeownership opportunities for hardworking families. These investments, along with their leadership on broader bipartisan housing legislation, demonstrate a strong and growing commitment to addressing Delaware’s housing crisis,” said Bailey.

In addition to local legislative priorities, advocates urged Congressional members to fund the Self-Help Homeownership program at no less than \$20 million and the Home Investment Partnerships Program at no less than \$1.5 billion in the Transportation-HUD appropriations bill. They also asked for Congress to fund the USDA Section 502 Direct Loan Program at no less than \$1.25 billion in the Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration appropriations bill.

“Many people think that when a Habitat homeowner buys a home, it’s the end of a journey when really it’s the beginning,” said Chief Executive Officer of Habitat for Humanity International, Jonathan Reckford. “A house is not a home until a family is living in it.”

Advocates also called on elected officials to champion “Habitat’s federal solution for affordable homeownership supply” with the proposed Homeownership Supply Accelerator, a plan that aims to create a source of flexible financial assistance that supports property acquisition, new home construction and rehabilitation and other financial barriers faced by for-profit and non-profit developers serving modest-income homebuyers. An estimated number of 800,000 homes are needed to meet the demand of low- and moderate-income homebuyers, as stated by the National Association of Realtors in the 2023 “Housing Affordability and Supply Report.”

“2026 may be the most important year for affordable

housing legislation in decades. Affordable homeownership is foundational to strong communities and a strong workforce. We are fortunate in Delaware to have a congressional delegation that understands the urgency of increasing housing supply and is willing to work across the aisle to advance meaningful solutions. The bipartisan momentum we’re seeing in both the House and Senate gives us real hope that long-term, systemic housing challenges can be addressed,” said Bailey.

According to Habitat for Humanity International, the shortage of starter homes impedes workers’ access to job markets with economic opportunities, holds back local economies, exacerbates the wealth gap and keeps millions of would-be homebuyers in the rental market. The annual income needed to buy a median-priced home in the U.S. is \$119,800, as researched by Harvard University. The House and Senate have begun taking steps in advancing bipartisan housing legislation through the ROAD to Housing Act (S. 2651) and the Housing for the 21st Century Act (H.R. 6644).

For more information on Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity and what you can do to help them with their mission, please visit their website at <https://centraldelawarehabitat.org/>.



Valerie Norton, Kevin Smith, Kevin Gilmore, Senator Chris Coons, Tim Bailey, Chrissy Kyriss, Ricky Pollitt met with the Senator to advocate for affordable housing in Delaware.



Ricky Pollitt, Kevin Gilmore, Kevin Smith, Tim Bailey, Senator Lisa Blunt-Rochester, Jonathan Reckford, Chrissy Kyriss, Guest, Valerie Norton met with the Senator to advocate for affordable housing in Delaware.



Ricky Pollitt, Kevin Smith, Kevin Gilmore, Rep. Sarah McBride, Tim Bailey, Chrissy Kyriss, Valerie Norton met with the Representative to advocate for affordable housing in Delaware.

Special Feature

MILITARY AFFAIRE



A Memorable Celebration of Our Military

On Thursday, February 19, 2026, Dover Air Force Base service members mingled with business professionals of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) for the Annual Military Affaire. The event was a memorable celebration of TEAM Dover with close to 100 people in attendance and proved to be a great time for “touching base,” maintaining, and building relationships to impact Central Delaware in the best way.

A lively crowd gathered at the Air Mobility Command (AMC) Museum for our military friends to get to know the business community and learn about civilian life here in Central Delaware, while our members spent the evening expressing their gratitude and support for all that happens at DAFB.

This year’s Military Affaire, hosted by the Military Affairs Committee of the CDCC, was brimming with networking, relationship building, idea sharing, and easygoing camaraderie. The AMC Museum provided the perfect setting that stimulated interesting conversations among the event attendees. The museum houses over 35 aircraft varying in roles and sizes, realistic simulators, and exhibits telling the story of humanitarian and airlift and air refueling history. The Central Delaware community is so fortunate to have this impressive, award-winning museum in our backyard.

Vice Chairman Military Affairs Committee, Timothy M. Bayes, welcomed the attendees and introduced Col. Jamil I. Musa, Commander of the 436th Airlift Wing. Col. Musa’s presentation opened with an inspiring video created by the DAFB Public Affairs team that highlighted the history and mission of DAFB. You can view this video at <https://www.dover.af.mil/About-Dover/>.

After the video, Col. Musa took to the mic to personally address the audience and share the gratitude of the DAFB team to the community. He also introduced Col. Eric J. Rivero, Commander of the 512th Airlift Wing. Col. Rivero introduced their division leaders who each gave an update. Col. Musa also shared that Col. Justin A. Longmire, Deputy Commander of the 436th, will be retiring

soon. The CDCC wishes a sincere thank you and farewell to Col. Longmire. We will certainly his dedication to the local community and lively sense of humor.

The CDCC would like to express great appreciation to our DAFB Military personnel, the civilian Central Delaware Community, and everyone in attendance at this year’s Military Affaire.

Dignitaries and special guests in attendance included: Kate Rohrer (representing U.S. Senator Chris Coons), Betsey Stang (representing U.S. Senator Lisa Blunt Rochester), Jaclyn Hulihan (representing Delaware Lt. Governor Kyle Evans Gay), Delaware Senator Eric Buckson, Kent County Recorder of Deeds Eugenia Thornton, and Dover Mayor Robin R. Christiansen.

The CDCC would like to express our thanks to our signature sponsor, Dover Federal Credit Union and our premier sponsor, the City of Dover.

We would also like to thank our Five-Star sponsors: Bavarian Bakery, BBSI, Chesapeake Utilities Corp., Cigar Sessions, Comcast, Dover Family Housing – Hunt Military Communities, Dover Motor Speedway, First Class Properties, Hearth Bar & Grille at Hilton Garden Inn, and Liberty Tax Services.

Special thanks also go to the AMC Museum for being so accommodating and providing the perfect venue for the evening, Andrew Chupp and his team from The Catering Company for their delicious hors d’oeuvres and desserts, and NKS Distributions for the celebratory beverages.

The Military Affaire is one of three annual events planned and hosted by the CDCC Military Affairs committee. The State of the Base event traditionally takes place in late November. Then, watch for details to come at www.cdcc.net/events/chamber-events for our Bluesuiters Golf Tournament which will be held in May. We look forward to seeing you there, and we look forward to continuing our strong and growing relationship with Dover Air Force Base. Go, TEAM Dover!



Suit up in Blue on the Green with the CDCC!

Start practicing your swing because the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) is finalizing plans for our Annual Bluesuiters Golf Tournament in May. Enjoy 18 holes of competitive camaraderie with your fellow CDCC members and Dover Air Force Base Airmen as you swing for the hole-in-one prize and 1st on the leaderboard!

The CDCC loves engineering this event of over 100 golfers because it allows our members to have fun in the sun, support local businesses, and meet the Dover Air Force Base Airmen! Beneath the healthy competitiveness of the game, the CDCC's Bluesuiters Golf Tournament is an enjoyable way to gather together two unique groups of our flourishing Central Delaware community to network, build relationships, and create bonds to last a lifetime.

The purpose of the Bluesuiters Golf Tournament is to promote engagement between Central Delaware's civilian community and our admired Dover Air



Force Base community. To facilitate that, two community members will be paired in a golfing foursome with two members from Dover Air Force Base. The people you will meet at the Bluesuiters Tournament are passionate about what they do in Central Delaware and are looking to connect with like-minded individuals like yourself. There's no better way to do that than with a day spent away from the office, on a local golf course, enjoying a beautiful spring day with the fun-loving, active people that make up the Central Delaware community.

Once all the teams have completed their rounds and tallied their scorecards, they will

join together for a deliciously catered meal and refreshing drinks. Door prizes, tournament prizes, gift baskets and raffles will be up for grabs, too! You could be a double winner! This is a day for golfers of all skill levels who want to have fun! No need to be shy even if your par is little high!

You don't want to miss this unmatched day of golfing fun and friendship building. With golfers like you, our great members, DAFB service members, and generous sponsors, each year just keeps getting better and better. The CDCC sends their "Thanks" out to early sponsors Burke Equipment Company (Golf Ball Drop Sponsor), First

Command (Golf Cart Sponsor), and Tidewater Utilities (Hole-in-one Sponsor).

The exact May date and location will be announced soon. Even so, sponsorship opportunities and door prizes are being accepted now.

If you or your business is interested in being an event sponsor, sponsoring a DAFB Airman golfer, registering a team, or donating a door prize for the CDCC's 2026 Bluesuiters Golf Tournament, please call the Chamber office at (302)734-7513 or email adminassistant@cdcc.net. Sponsorship details can be found on pages 20 and 21 of our Sponsorship Packet at this link: <https://cdcc.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-2026-CDCC-SponsorshipPacket-FINAL-081125.pdf>.

You can never be too early to sign up for a sponsorship! The CDCC is looking forward to seeing you at Tee Time!



Special Feature

Save the Date for The Chamber Mini Masters Mixer

Save the date and start practicing your putt so you can ace every hole at this year's Chamber Mini Masters Mixer coming on Wednesday, May 27th, at Tre Sorelle Dolce Ice Cream & Mini Golf in Wyoming – the perfect location for this fun-filled event.

Begin thinking of the best golfers for your team of four so you can take home the coveted BLUE jacket and winning prize, and of course, bragging rights for the year. Also begin thinking about your coordinated costumes/t-shirts to represent your team and/or business in the best way. This is a great event for team bonding between family, friends, colleagues, and coworkers. Why not invite individuals from non-member businesses that you have a partnership with to join your team. What a great way to introduce them to the CDCC while building your business relationship with them in a lighthearted, fun-filled atmosphere! You won't want to miss

The Chamber Mini Masters



the fun of a highly competitive round of mini golf with your local CDCC community.

Details are still being finalized, so we'll let you know when registration is open. You know that slots fill up fast! The CDCC will again offer a 2nd round of play to allow more teams to participate (by popular demand). We are so excited to welcome you back to the whimsical mini-golf course at Tre Sorelle Dolce Ice Cream & Mini Golf – a real hometown and tourist treat.

Not much of a golfer – traditional or mini? It doesn't matter. In addition to the competition, this event is also a Sunset Business

Mixer which means that you do not have to play golf to enjoy the evening. The Sunset Business Mixer is always FREE to attend, and we highly encourage our members to bring business guests. Remember, when a non-member guest of yours signs up to be a member, you receive a \$50 discount on your annual membership fee. Nice!

The CDCC will have food trucks, a cornhole area, yard games, and of course prizes, prizes, prizes! Plus, we'll have a DJ there to keep the energy up with music and announcements with stellar sound support. Of course, Tre Sorelle's sweet treats will be available for purchase because it's always the right time to eat ice cream. There will be fun to be had for everyone!

Thank you to owners Mike and Becky Marasco for welcoming the community into their business for all the fun to be created and memories to be made – we couldn't do it without them.

Remember... save the date: Wednesday, May 27th, 4 – 7 p.m., for The Chambers Mini Masters Mini Golf Tournament and Sunset Business Mixer. For more info, call the CDCC at (302)734-7513 or visit our website at www.cdcc.net/event/chamber-events. The CDCC is offering sponsorship opportunities, too, so be sure to ask about this great marketing opportunity at this fan-favorite, full-filled event. This evening will be a blast with your presence and participation! We are so excited to see your competitive faces and A-game on the green or cheering from the sidelines at Tre Sorelle Dolce Ice Cream & Mini Golf on Wednesday, May 27th



LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON

Continued from Page 1

issues affecting businesses. Members of the CDCC will present pertinent questions to the gathered lawmakers regarding the issues that make up the Chamber's legislative agenda. This gives our business community the chance to hear from each legislator and learn more about their stance on current issues. The discussion will be kept to the issues that promise to have the most impact on business in Central Delaware. In addition, this event provides our legislators with the opportunity to hear first-hand about the impact legislation will have on their business constituents.

In addition to open dialogue, this event also provides strong networking opportunities for attendees. Business leaders have the chance to connect with elected officials, government agencies, and fellow entrepre-



neurs. Attendees can forge relationships that lead to future partnerships and collaborations. These connections strengthen the fabric of the local business community, creating a supportive ecosystem where businesses can flourish.

The cost of this event is \$65 for Chamber members, and a reserved table of 8 may be purchased for \$480. The Legislative Luncheon is open to the public, and non-members are invited to participate for \$80 per person. The ticket price includes networking with other business leaders and the legislators, a delicious buffet lunch, and the panel presentation.

This event would not be possible without the generous support



and investment of the event sponsors including Signature Sponsor, B.I.G. Investment Services.

The CDCC also thanks General Assembly Sponsors (as of 2/20/26): Allen Insurance, C.S. Kidner Associates/Capitol Strategies, Comcast Business, Delaware Crime Stoppers, Delaware Electric Municipal Corporation (DEMEC), Delmarva Power – An Exelon Company, Dover Motor Speedway, Dowding Resource Group, Energize Delaware, George & Lynch, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Delaware, Pepsi Bottling Ventures, PNC Bank, The Malmberg Firm, LLC, and The Willis Group, LLC.

The CDCC sends an additional thank you to Platinum Sponsors: B.I.G. Investment Services, Century Engineering – A Kleinfelder Company, Chesapeake Utilities Corporation, Daily State News, Dover Federal Credit Union, G. Fedale, Harrington Raceway & Casino, Kraft Heinz, Pratt Insurance, R&R Commercial Realty, and Royal Prime Events & Steakhouse.

For more information or to register for this informative event, please call the CDCC office at (302)734-7513, email admin-assistant@cdcc.net or register online at www.cdcc.net/events/chamber-events. We look forward to having you join us for this event on Thursday, March 12, 2026. You don't want to miss this influential gathering and your chance to help shape the future of Central Delaware.

Special Feature

Voting for Excellence in Business Coming in May!

Nominations for the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce's (CDCC) 2026 Excellence in Business Awards have now closed! The CDCC loves to shine light on our members who are doing extraordinary things for their businesses and their community. That is why we take great honor in celebrating those who are going above and beyond in their professional lives to continue to make Central Delaware THE place to live, work, and play!

Award nominees are chosen based upon their professionalism, performance, leadership capabilities, and their willingness to learn and grow. Colleagues take into consideration how their nominees respond to daily challenging situations and exhibit strong leadership skills in the business community. The CDCC looks for nominees to be kind, driven,

and community minded. Nominees are heavily involved in the community and know all about proper business practices here in Central Delaware. To be nominated means to be among the best of the best. Thank you to everyone who nominated someone special - we rely on your commitment to excellence from you and your nominees!

Now that all the nominations are in, the Excellence in Business Awards Committee, made up of previous award winners, will meet and review all those nominations. Three CDCC members will then be selected in each of the three categories and submitted by ballot to be voted on by the CDCC Membership. As a reminder, the award categories are: Small Business of the Year, Large Employer of the Year, and Young Professional of the Year.

While the CDCC facilitates the Awards ceremony and nomination process, the CDCC does not choose any winners. This is a community-based voted award event, where we let the CDCC community speak on behalf of the amazing leaders serving and working around you every day. Keep an eye out for the official ballot coming in early May. Each Chamber Member Business is allowed one vote per company. Ballots will be sent out through the Monday CDCC e-news, and through a broadcast email from the CDCC. More information on the nominees will be featured in the May issue of the Chamber Connections newspaper and on the CDCC website that same month. Voting will close on Thursday, May 28th. Make your calendar now and be sure to vote.

All nominees will be recognized at the CDCC Awards for Excellence

Dinner. Plus, the winners will be revealed at the dinner on Thursday, June 18th at Bally's Dover Casino Resort. The CDCC will also present a few additional awards from our team to recognize businesses and individuals that have gone "above & beyond" to support the work of YOUR Chamber. In addition to a variety of event sponsorships, tabletop displays are available for this event at \$150 each including a ticket to the event. Please contact Cristal at 302-734-7513 or cbrenneman@cdcc.net for more information.

Thank you for participating in the voting for the Excellence in Business Awards. We look forward to seeing you at the Awards for Excellence Dinner in June when we celebrate these businesses and individuals, and the entire CDCC membership!



SUNSET MIXER Continued from Page 1

culinary flair in one seamless event destination. Their dynamic space and flexibility allow planners to enjoy a unified, efficient approach without juggling multiple vendors or managing unnecessary complications. Whether you're planning a high-stakes corporate summit, a milestone wedding celebration, or an unforgettable business event, Royal Prime Events & Steakhouse, stands ready to make your gathering not just successful, but memorable. Partnering alongside the in-house Royal Prime Steakhouse, culinary quality is woven into every event they host. Whether you choose a plated dinner, specialty service, or creative menu options, your guests will enjoy meals that are thoughtfully prepared

and beautifully presented. With Royal Prime, food is not an afterthought, it is a centerpiece of the experience. The Royal Prime Steakhouse specializes in premium steaks, chops, and exceptional steakhouse fare made with only the finest ingredients. Our award-winning expert preparation and attentive service ensure a consistently high quality, style, and unforgettable flavor. During the Sunset Business Mixer, Royal Prime Events & Steakhouse will be offering thoughtfully prepared and beautifully presented dinners. The event will be open for anyone who wants to purchase something heartier from their menu. Each attendee will receive one ticket for beer or wine, and a full cash bar is also available. In addition to the spectacular location and delicious food, the CDCC Sunset Business Mixer is

a great way to catch up with other CDCC business members, make connections and collect qualified leads. Don't forget to bring your business cards to share with everyone you meet and be sure to drop one in the silver bowl to enter to win a door prize. You might even win a CDCC membership or a Morning Coffee opportunity. If you want to donate a door prize from your business, we would love that! Just bring it with you and drop it off at the registration desk. There will be a \$50 discount on a full purchase of \$100, so bring your cash! Don't forget, if you bring a guest who signs up to become a CDCC member, you'll get a \$50 discount off your membership fee. So, go through your contact list, and bring a guest or two with you! Attendees can park in any spots designated for hotel or Rollins

Center parking, and then enter the resort through the hotel entrance. The Steakhouse Lounge is in the hotel lobby, on the right as you come through the front door. For more information or to register for the March Sunset Business Mixer, please call the CDCC office at 302-734-7513 or visit our website at www.cdcc.net/events and register through the Calendar of Events. We look forward to sharing a culinary treat and raising a glass with each of you at the Royal Prime Steakhouse Lounge on Wednesday, March 23rd at 5 p.m.

New Location - See Page 23

Special Feature

It's Time to Honor Your Administrative Professional!

Administrative Professionals are an important part of every business. They are the glue that keeps the organization together. That is why there's a whole day to support Administrative Professionals! In the U.S. and Canada, it's always the Wednesday in the last full week of April, so April 22nd this year.

For close to 20 years, the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) has honored the wonderful, resourceful and creative people that are our Administrative Professionals! They always greet everyone with a smile. They are the essential backbone of a business,

driving operational efficiency, anticipating needs, solving problems, and fostering a positive company culture through their dedication and organization. We know how important their work is to keep your business or organization running smoothly.

So why not nominate your Administrative Professional for our "Best of the Best" award? These nominees can be administrative assistants, receptionists, secretaries, office coordinators, and other administrative professional positions.

Once the nomination deadline passes, the CDCC's Administrative

Assistant, Martha Lehman, will review the nominations and select three winners who will be highlighted in the Chamber Connections newspaper and receive a prize package filled with an impressive collection of gifts donated by our generous Chamber Member!

All you have to do is fill out the nomination form and send it to the CDCC office by Wednesday, April 15 at noon. You can complete the nomination form at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/CDCCAdminAward>. If you prefer to complete a printed nomination form, just email Martha at adminassistant@cdcc.net or call

302-734-7513, and we'll send you one.

Do you have an Administrative Professional that you would like to nominate? Then, don't miss this chance! Complete the nomination form and submit it to the CDCC office by noon on April 15th. Please call Martha at 302-734-7513 if you have questions or need assistance.

We look forward to celebrating the valued Administrative Professional on YOUR TEAM!



La Ronda Moore - NeighborGood Partners



Lorraine Tanaka - Kent County



Tina Bailey - Century Engineering

55 PLUS EXPO

Continued from Page 1

your calendar now and plan to join us at the 55 Plus Expo on Thursday, April 16, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Bally's Dover Casino Resort, 1131 N. Dupont Highway, Dover.

As the longest running senior event of this size in Delaware, the CDCC's 55 Plus Expo is highly respected in our community. People attend this event to gain information on healthcare, finances, home improvements, and entertainment, engage with their local community, and support local businesses. People come to enjoy face-to-face interaction with local businesses and organizations who can enhance their quality of life, not only for themselves but also for people they care for. The 55 Plus Expo is the perfect opportunity to learn more about how you can support the loved ones in your life and help them maintain active and comfortable lifestyles. We all have seniors in our lives, and we all could use more information about how to care for them, and even for ourselves. You shouldn't wait until you're 55 to



start planning for that chapter of your life!

If you are interested in increasing your company's name recognition and expanding awareness of your brand to the senior market, you should consider participating in this event as a sponsor or a vendor! The 55 Plus Expo allows us to bring customers directly to you all in one location. The CDCC wants to attract quality leads to you and your business with the goal of building relationships with everyone who visits your booth. Your exhibit space allows you to set up an eye-catching display and gives you plenty of space to display your materials and bins of giveaway items. Plus, you'll be able to meet directly with the people who are interested in doing business with you. This Expo-style event also gives vendors and exhibitors the opportunity to network and connect with other businesses



are welcome, and most likely they could all benefit from the offerings. serving the same segment of the local market, and to help strengthen our business community.

The CDCC would like to thank our sponsors (as of 2/20/26): Bally's Dover Casino Resort, Bayhealth, Bay Terrace Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center, Coastal Bath Company, Delaware Health and Social Services – Division of Public Health Bureau of Chronic Diseases, Delaware Medicare Assistance Bureau, Dover Post, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Delaware, and Silver Lining Home Healthcare. Thank you for extending your support to this event and to the community!

In addition to the free admission and vendors, while you're at the Expo you can enjoy Bayhealth's Wellness Center and its variety of free health screenings, live entertainment, door prizes, giveaways and free parking. Caregiver's Support Exhibitors who offer information on care for the special seniors in your life will be highlighted with special signage throughout the venue so you can easily locate them. Don't miss this one-stop shop for all your life plans for those 55+ years to come!

The 55 Plus Expo is a FREE event open to the public with no registration required. Save the date, April 16th, on your calendar and plan to make a day of it with your friends, coworkers, and family members – all

are welcome, and most likely they could all benefit from the offerings.

The CDCC would like to thank our sponsors (as of 2/20/26): Bally's Dover Casino Resort, Bayhealth, Bay Terrace Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center, Coastal Bath Company, Delaware Health and Social Services – Division of Public Health Bureau of Chronic Diseases, Delaware Medicare Assistance Bureau, Dover Post, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Delaware, and Silver Lining Home Healthcare. Thank you for extending your support to this event and to the community!

For more information on attending the 55 Plus Expo or serving as a sponsor or vendor, call the CDCC office at (302)734-7513. We look forward to seeing you on Thursday, April 16th, enjoying this prominent expo and discovering new ways to live your best life – whether you are a senior, someone who soon will be a senior, or a caregiver! Visit www.cdcc.net/events/chamber-events for more information today!

Special Feature

CDCC Recognized with Award from Central Delaware Habitat

The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce was delighted to be presented with the “Marketing Partner of the Year” award from the Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity (CDHFH) on February 19, 2026.

This was one of 31 awards presented at their annual Looking Back Building Forward breakfast where they honored the exceptional achievements and contributions individuals and organizations made to CDHFH in 2025. The program also included an opportunity to look forward at 2026 and beyond as CDHFH continues to grow and evolve. The journey story of a new Habitat homeowner was highlighted, and Keriann Otaño from Delaware Opera performed live for the opening of the event. The morning also included a delicious breakfast served by Skyline Catering.

The CDCC is so appreciative of the work that the CDHFH does in our community, and we are humbled to be recognized at this event along with



Left to right: Representing the CDCC at the awards' event: Membership & Retention Coordinator – Jeff Spratley, Director of Marketing & Communications – Heather Cregar, President – Dina Vendetti their amazing supporters – including numerous CDCC members.

For more information about Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity, please visit them online at <https://centraldelawarehabitat.org/>.

Edward Jones®



Christopher Smith

Financial Advisor, CFP®, AAMS®

302.735.8770

**WE ARE LOCAL
AND WE ARE HERE FOR YOU**



**Complimentary Portfolio Review
Personalized Financial Strategies Strategic Planning**

Are You Interested in Sponsoring a CDCC Event?

We have plenty of opportunities for you to join the fun and ramp up your marketing to reach an engaged audience of businesspeople and other targeted demographics in the Central Delaware market.



For more information about sponsorships, contact Cindy Friese at 302-734-7513 or cfriese@cdcc.net. You can also find a comprehensive packet of sponsorship opportunities at www.cdcc.net/events/sponsor-a-chamber-event/



Special Feature



Dynamic Duo Hosts Sunset Business Mixer

Great food, great hosts, great people, and prizes, prizes, prizes! What more could you want for a fabulous evening? Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) members and friends gathered for another stellar Sunset Business Mixer on Wednesday, February 25, 2026, co-hosted by Bay Terrace Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center and Holy Cross High School. It was a great evening to exchange business cards, make new connections, and connect with your fellow local businesses, in addition to building your business' brand recognition.

The evening kicked off as members found their name tags and dropped their business cards in the silver bowl for the door prize drawings and stopped at the impressive refreshment area set up by the Bay Terrace team with a variety of cocktails, mocktails and other celebratory beverages. They also offered an expansive snack table loaded with savory, sweet and healthy grab & go nibbles to suit any palate. The venue came to life as our guests filled the room with engaging conversations, laughs, and hugs all throughout the evening.

Attendees chatted with the representatives from Bay Terrace about their spacious, upscale amenities, specialized rehabilitation programs, dedicated staff, and understanding that true healing happens when you feel valued, respected, and genuinely cared for as an individual.

The team from Holy Cross High School was excited to share with attendees the story of their journey to the present day, and their plans for the future. CDCC members enjoyed wandering around the facility to check out the classroom spaces for the faith-based school.

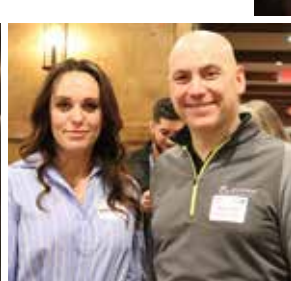
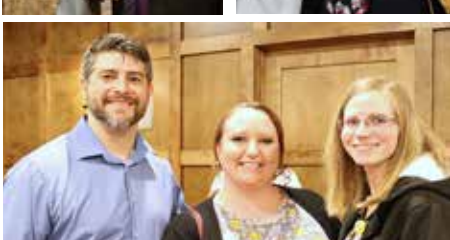
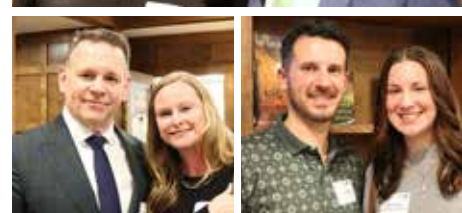
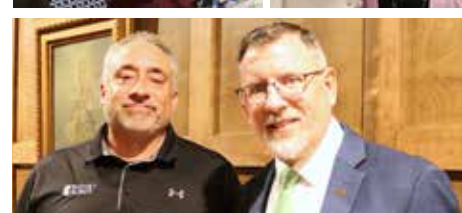
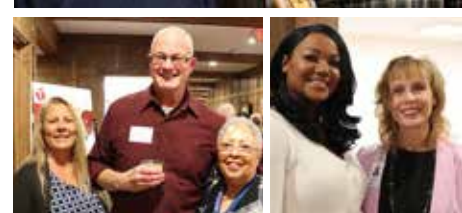
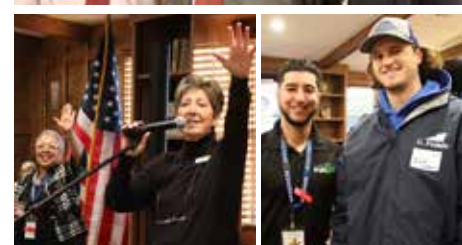
To finish the evening strong, CDCC President, Dina Vendetti, drew the business card door prize winners. Our members were thrilled to receive their



generous door prize gifts donated by other members in attendance, as well as gift cards and certificates to local stores and restaurants. The winners posed for pictures and excitedly cheered each other on! Plus, everyone diligently checked their red tickets for the winning number in the 50/50 raffle. Rocke Gaston from Harrington Realty was pleased to take home the \$96 cash prize. Congrats, Rocke! The 50/50 prize amount has continued to grow month-to-month thanks to the friendly persistence of CDCC Ambassador Tenish Gregory from CenDel. Nice job, Tenish!

Congratulations also to Member of the Month winner, Ken Pennington from Harrington Realty. Be sure to look for his article in the April edition of the Chamber Connections and on the home page of our website at www.cdcc.net for the month of April.

The CDCC would like to thank everyone in attendance at February's Sunset Business Mixer co-hosted by the "Dynamic Duo," Bay Terrace Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center and Holy Cross High School. Thank you to the attentive staff from both organizations who also made the night a great success! Thank you to everyone for a making this a great evening filled with community and enjoyment. The CDCC hopes to see you at an upcoming event very soon! Visit our event calendar at www.cdcc.net/events or give us a call at (302)734-7513 to learn more about the next opportunity for you to engage with the member of YOUR opportunity hub!



Ribbon Cuttings

CDCC Welcomes Tim Hortons to Dover with Ribbon Cutting

Tim Hortons®

DOVER, DE – On the frosty morning of Friday, January 30, 2026, the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to kick off the grand opening celebration for the new Tim Hortons restaurant, located at 737 N. Dupont Highway, Dover. Chamber members, friends, and local dignitaries joined franchise owner Kashif Mushtaq, and the Tim Hortons team to cut the ribbon and officially welcome this new restaurant to Dover.

Dover is currently the only Delaware location for this Canadian-based coffeehouse and restaurant. Their menu features a delicious selection of hot and cold coffees including lattes, macchiatos, and

cappuccinos, in addition to a variety of protein drinks, sweet tea, refreshers and matcha. Food items include an amazing variety of donuts and Timbits donut holes, mouthwatering pastries, bagels, and filling breakfast sandwiches and wraps to keep you going all morning long. Additional items are continually added to their menu.

The Dover community has been anticipating the opening of this new location with much excitement since construction first started last spring. In addition to the CDCC membership, Kashif was asked about what other plans they have for community involvement. He noted that Tim Hortons is active in supporting their communities, and the Dover location



has their own plans for this local community, especially first responders.

The grand opening celebration continued through Saturday, January 31st with special pricing on select coffees and Timbits.

For more information about Tim Hortons or to order online visit them at www.timhortons.com.

Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce to celebrate and welcome Tim Hortons to Dover and as a member of the CDCC!

CDCC Celebrates Murphey School Expansion with Ribbon Cutting

DOVER, DE – On Tuesday, February 17, 2026, the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) hosted a Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for The Elizabeth W. Murphey School's Transitional Living Program (TLP). Chamber members, friends, and representatives from the Congressional offices of Senator Chris Coons and Senator Lisa Blunt Rochester, joined Executive Director Mike Kopp, Assistant Director Murlene Clark, and Independent Living Director Melissa Briddell, and many members of Murphey School staff and Board of Directors to celebrate the opening of two more houses for their TLP.

In addition to the ribbon cutting, the attendees toured one of the newly remodeled TLP houses located on South Bradford Street in Dover and enjoyed a delicious and beautiful presentation of light refreshments.

The mission of the Murphey School's Transitional Living program is to provide safe, supportive housing and life skills to young adults aging out of foster care, empowering them to achieve independence and success. Each year, young adults in our community "age out" of foster care and leave the system, at times without permanent or stable housing.



Murphey School wants to bridge the gap! Studies show that youth who leave care without support face higher risks of homelessness, unemployment, and other challenges. In response to this critical need, the Murphey School's Independent Living Program (ILP) has expanded its Transitional Housing program by providing a total of 21 beds to help with the growing demand for safe housing. This gives more young adults the stability they need to successfully transition to independence.

While residing in transitional housing, participants receive mentoring and guidance from ILP workers, life skills training, budgeting, job readiness, personal development, driver's education support, access to community resources, supportive



networks, and of course safe, stable housing.

In addition, Murphey School is involved in the community in other ways. "We have been fortunate to partner with businesses, organizations, and neighbors in the Central Delaware community to provide extras and experiences for the children we serve," explained assistant director Murlene Clark. She went on to say, "We also patronize numerous area businesses for the children's recreations, extracurricular activities, and entertainment. It is our hope to continue collaborating

and building partnerships with other organizations and the neighbors in our community."

Anyone interested in learning more about Murphey School and their more than 100-year history in Dover should visit their website at www.murphey-school.org or call 302-734-7478.

Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce to celebrate this amazing expansion for the impressive Transitional Living Program of The Elizabeth W. Murphey School.

Ribbon Cuttings

CDCC Celebrates Opening of Oishii Asian Bistro with Ribbon Cutting



CAMDEN, DE – The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) hosted a Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony on Wednesday, February 18, 2026, for the new Oishii Asian Bistro located at 386 Walmart Drive, Ste. 1 in Camden. Chamber members and friends joined owner Jack Chen and his staff to celebrate the restaurant’s grand opening. During the celebration, they offered free food, drinks, and gift certificates to show their appreciation to those who attended the celebration.

Oishii Asian Bistro offers high-end Japanese teppanyaki, premium sushi, hibachi, and signature cocktails, adding to the diversity of the local dining scene and providing a New York Manhattan-style Japanese dining experience. Their menu includes a variety of dishes from hand-crafted sushi rolls to sizzling hibachi, and their skilled chefs create memorable dining experiences that celebrate the art of Japanese cooking.

The vision at Oishii is simple: fresh ingredients, NYC-level sushi craftsmanship, beautiful plating, and a warm, modern dining atmosphere. Whether you’re stopping there for a casual lunch, a special celebration, or simply craving fine sushi, Oishii promises an unforgettable culinary journey through the flavors of Japan. No time to dine in? No problem. Their sushi takeout is crafted with the same care, quality, and sense of occasion—

because great sushi should feel special anywhere.

When asked about their plans to give back to the community, Jack replied, “We aim to contribute to the local community’s development and participate in its growth. That is why we opened our restaurant here. We hope to accelerate local development and fulfill our responsibilities to the community.”

Anyone interested in learning more about Oishii Asian Bistro can visit them online at www.oishiisushi-hibachi.com or call (302) 286-9999. You can also find them on Facebook at Oishii Sushi Hibachi&Bar.

Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce to welcome Oishii Asian Bistro to Delaware and as a new member of the Chamber!

Have You Hosted A Ribbon Cutting, Yet?

Did you know that Ribbon Cuttings for your business are one of the benefits included with your Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) membership? That’s right...your annual membership includes that!

What? Did you just say, “What do I have going on that would merit a ribbon cutting?”

Well...there’s the obvious: a new location, grand opening or a grand reopening (after a renovation). But other celebrations that are perfect for a ribbon cutting include: being a new CDCC member, new ownership, rebranding or new signage on your business/office, anniversary (any year!), new or repainted fleet vehicles, and the list goes on. We would love to brainstorm other ideas with you.

What? You don’t have a brick & mortar location? No sweat! We can host the ribbon cutting at the Chamber office. Or maybe it makes sense to hold it at another location that is somehow tied to your business. Again, we would love to brainstorm some ideas with you.

Once a theme and location are determined, we’ll work with you to put together the best date/time. We’ve found it best to hold them during the week and close to lunchtime. This will help you get the best attendance. It’s always good if you can have some light refreshments and small giveaways for those who attend. Plus, you’ll want to have additional information about your business and business cards to give out to everyone who stops by.

Next, we’ll put together an event flyer that we’ll share with you and our membership. This will also be posted on our community calendar. You should share the flyer with your clients/customers, co-workers, business partners and associates.

We’ll email a press brief to the local media and dignitaries to invite them to the event. If there’s someone else you want to get that press brief, please send us their email address and we’ll include them in the email.

On the day of the event, we’ll show up early to help you with any setup, pick the best spot to do the ribbon cutting, direct people to parking and

greet them as they arrive. We’ll even bring the ribbon and our giant scissors!

During the ribbon cutting, we’ll take a photo and video. You’ll want to plan a few things to say during the video: introduce yourself, say your company name, what products/services you offer and where you are located. The video gets posted on our Facebook page soon after the event, so be sure to watch for it to like and share with others. The photo will be sent out to the local media outlets along with a press release describing the event and your business. This will also appear in the next edition of the Chamber Connections newspaper.

That’s all! It’s easy, and we’ll help you along the way.

Are you ready to start putting together your ribbon cutting? Please contact CDCC Coordinator of Membership & Retention Jeff Spratley at 302-734-7513 or membership@cdcc.net to put your plan into action.



New Member Spotlights

Welcoming New Member & New Owners – Sheridan's Irish Pub

Sheridan's Irish Pub is pleased to reopen in downtown Smyrna, Delaware with new owners, Jennifer Sutter and Rob Duffy.

The local restaurant and pub have operated for more than 20 years as a mainstay in the Smyrna community. Cousins Jen and Rob took over the Pub in late 2025 when the previous owners retired. The new owners plan to continue offering the traditional Irish and American food that have drawn hungry diners to the Pub on a consistent basis. The menu includes Irish sausage and mash, fish & chips, burgers, sandwiches & salads, corned beef and cabbage, and plenty more.

The bar includes a wide selection of Irish and domestic beers, cocktails and high-end Irish Whiskey, allowing everyone the opportunity to enjoy their favorite celebratory drinks anytime they visit the Pub.

Sheridan's Irish Pub is family friendly and has already filled their schedule with lots of fun and interesting events including local DJ Jay Davis on Fridays, Stoutie Night where your photo is etched in the foam on your Guinness beer, regular



food specials, and special menus for holidays.

For the upcoming St. Patrick's Day, they are hosting a family-style breakfast on Saturday, March 14th. This will include community seating, hot coffee, scrambled eggs, Irish bacon and sausage, oven-roasted tomatoes and baked beans. Tickets should be purchased in advance. The St. Patrick's Day celebration will continue in the afternoon with a block party from 3 – 11 p.m.

Jen and Rob are the perfect team to take over the reins at Sheridan's. They have both lived in Delaware for more than 25 years, and Jen has been a Smyrna resident for almost 20 of those years. Since day one,



she has been engaged with the local community and has always been interested in helping the town grow.

One of the first things that Jen and Rob did when they purchased Sheridan's was to become a member of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce. "I have been part of the Chamber for over 25 years when I worked with Bayhealth and then as the CDCC's Membership Director. I know the value of the business connections you get from your membership," Jen explained.

For more information on Sheridan's Irish Pub including their schedule of events and menu specials, please follow them on Facebook at [SheridansIrishPub](#). In addition, everyone is welcome to attend the CDCC ribbon cutting on Friday, March 20th at 4:30 p.m. to celebrate their new ownership and the opening of the Deck Bar.

Please join the CDCC to celebrate our new Chamber member, Sheridan's Irish Pub!

Welcoming New Member – Hangry Joe's Hot Chicken & Wings

Hangry Joe's Dover specializes in Nashville-style hot chicken, jumbo tenders, boneless wings, chicken sandwiches, and their popular legs and thighs options.

Guests can choose their spice level from "No Heat" all the way up to "Angry Hot." Local owner, Ammar Alhaddad, shared, "Our legs and thighs are one of the most affordable value options in town, and customers can even request their chicken with no seasoning at all — something not many hot chicken concepts offer."

Dining options include dine-in, takeout, online ordering, and late-night service (open daily from 11 a.m. to 1 a.m.). They also support local events and provide catering for businesses, schools, and community organizations.

The Hangry Joe's team points to their combination of bold flavors, customizable spice levels, and a strong commitment to the Dover community, as the things that make their business unique. "Beyond the food, we're very involved locally —



visiting businesses, supporting first responders, and building real relationships in Central Delaware. We're not just a franchise location; we're locally owned and invested in this community," explained Ammar.

In addition to being the local owner of Hangry Joe's Dover, Ammar is a physician and entrepreneur who is passionate about building businesses that create jobs and bring energy to the community. Ammar told us, "My family and I live in Central Delaware, and we are deeply invested in this area — not just through the restaurant, but also through local real estate development and community involvement.



As a husband and father, I care about creating family-friendly spaces where people can gather, enjoy great food, and feel welcome."

The team at Hangry Joe's Dover is made up of hardworking local employees who take pride in serving our community every day — especially during the restaurant's late-night hours when not many other restaurants are open.

When asked why they joined the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce, Ammar said, "We joined

the Chamber because we believe in building strong relationships with other local business owners and contributing to the economic growth of Central Delaware," he went on to say, "We're excited to collaborate, support other members, participate in community events, and continue strengthening the local business network. Being part of the Chamber allows us to stay connected, give back, and grow alongside other leaders in our region."

In addition to visiting them at their Dover location, 50 N DuPont Hwy, Suite 7, you can get more information about them by calling (302) 271-7449, or following them on social media for updates, specials, and community events. They frequently run community giveaways and promotions, so social media is a great way to stay updated.

Please join the CDCC to celebrate our new Chamber member, Hangry Joe's Hot Chicken & Wings!

Member of the Month



NAME: Zaneea Hall / Jennifer Jurczak

TITLE: Instructors

BUSINESS: Polytech Adult Education

ADDRESS: 823 Walnut Shade Rd. Dover, DE 19901

HOURS: 8am to 8pm Monday - Thursday 8am to 4pm Fridays. .

PHONE: (302) 697-4545

WEBSITE: <https://polytechworks.com/>



Tell us about your business/organization.

Polytech Adult Education in Woodside, Delaware provides hands on, career focused training for adults who want to upskill, reskill, or enter high demand fields. Our programs offer flexible schedules, supportive staff, and practical instruction designed for working adults and English language learners.

Tell us about your role in the business/organization.

As instructors in the English Learners in Careers (ELINC) program at Polytech Adult Education, we have the privilege of teaching advanced customer service and administrative skills to an exceptional group of multilingual adult learners. Many of our students are already U.S. citizens and bring extraordinary professional backgrounds from their home countries — including former dentists, attorneys, teachers, doctors, head accountants, and professionals who served in consulates and government offices.

Despite the challenges of transitioning to a new country, these learners demonstrate remarkable strengths:

- Multilingual fluency, often speaking three to five languages

- Strong work ethic, punctuality, and professionalism
- Rapid learning ability and a deep commitment to excellence
- A genuine desire to help others and contribute to their communities

Our role is to help them refine and elevate the customer service and administrative skills they already possess, giving them the tools to thrive in U.S. workplaces. Their dedication, cultural insight, and global experience make them some of the strongest potential employees any company could hope to hire. We consider it a blessing to support their journey and to witness the talent, resilience, and humanity they bring into the classroom every day.

Tell us something that makes your business/organization unique.

Polytech Adult Education offers beginner friendly, hands on training with flexible schedules that fit the lives of adult learners. Many students — many of whom are bilingual or multilingual — bring strong work habits, real world experience, and a genuine desire to contribute. They are motivated, reliable, and ready to work, making them valuable additions to any workplace.

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

Polytech continues to grow by developing new programs based on employer needs and expanding customized training options for local companies. We remain committed to helping adults gain the skills needed for today's workforce while supporting businesses with targeted, practical training solutions.

How has the Chamber helped your business/organization grow?

The Chamber's mixers, email blasts, and networking events have helped us connect with local employers and share information about our programs. They also welcomed our ELINC students to a mixer, giving them a meaningful opportunity to practice networking, meet businesses, and build confidence as they explore new career paths.

What is your best advice to other businesses/organizations?

Reach out to Polytech Adult Education for your workforce needs. Whether you're hiring bilingual or multilingual talent, seeking customized training, or looking to upskill your current team, we can tailor solutions that support your company's growth and help build a strong, well prepared workforce.

Ambassador's Corner

Erlene George



Erlene is the owner of a wealth management business, as well as an educator. She teaches people how money works so they can make informed decisions about how to manage their finances. Her mission is to help families earn more income and become properly protected, debt free and financially independent. She offers a variety of products and services designed to help people achieve their financial goals. Some of these products and services include investments, retirement planning, debt solutions, life insurance, identity theft protection, legal protection, Vivint Smart Home security system, auto and home insurance referral program, and a complimentary financial needs analysis to see if they are on track to achieve their goals and dreams. Best of all, she is happy to serve her clients virtually as well as in person. If her clients need additional income to secure their financial future, she often can offer them a profitable business opportunity.

Previously, for 20 years, Erlene was the owner of three floral businesses in Dover and became involved with the Chamber of Commerce during that time. She is grateful to the chamber for their education, marketing, legislation and networking opportunities, all of which have aided her businesses. Erlene explains, "Networking is key for business as well as personal growth and development. The numerous Chamber networking events have made this possible through building sustainable relationships instead of just adding to your number of connections. In addition, the Chamber has been an invaluable source of information, keeping their members informed through their bulletins and newsletters."

Erlene is a graduate of the Leadership Central Delaware class of 2018 and an active member of Fund for Women. She enjoys helping others and strives to make a positive difference every day. Being an Ambassador affords her the opportunity to do this, as

well as to give back to the community that has supported her for so many years. Another way she gives back is by providing complimentary Financial Wellness Workshops throughout the business community, including owners/employees/customers. In addition, she is expanding her business and looking for motivated, caring people to grow with her. Let her know if there is someone that keeps their career options open and could benefit from this amazing opportunity to diversify their income online via teleconferencing, especially in these challenging times.

To learn more about Erlene and her business, please visit her on the internet at www.primera.com/erlenegeorge. To schedule a workshop, financial needs analysis and/or receive additional information, please contact Erlene at 410-708-0678 or erlenegeorge@hotmail.com.

RENEWALS FOR MARCH 2026 - THANK YOU FOR YOUR RENEWAL!

Company Name	YRS	Company Name	YRS
BBSI - Dover	54	Dowding Resource Group	11
Kraft Heinz Company	54	Liberty Tax Service	11
Paul Edwards Carpet	35	Two Men And A Truck	11
Patterson Schwartz	32	Representative Lyndon D. Yearick	11
City of Harrington	31	BDK, Inc.	10
Harrington Raceway & Casino	30	Delaware Choral Society	9
Luther Towers of Dover	29	Wesley United Methodist Church	9
The Delaware State Fair, Inc.	28	George Bailey	8
Artesian Water Company, Inc.	26	Burke Equipment Company	8
Biggs Museum of American Art	26	DE TURF Sports Complex	8
Delwood Trailer Sales, Inc.	23	Snow's Painting Service, LLC	8
Incorporating Services, Ltd.	22	NextHome Preferred	7
Texas Roadhouse	21	Caruso Homes, Inc	6
Alzheimer's Association - Delaware Valley Chapter	18	DelMarVa SHRM	6
Comfort Inn & Suites Dover	18	Xpress Computer Systems	6
Telepathy Networks, LLC	18	Dover Public Library	5
PARASEC - PARACORP Inc.	17	ClearCaptions	4
First State CPAs	16	SunWise Family Dermatology & Surgery	3
Delaware Farm Bureau	15	Coastal Medical Center	2
Evergreen Post Acute	15	Delaware Health and Social Services/DSAAPD	2
Atlantic Refrigeration & Air Conditioning, Inc.	14	Delaware State Police Museum	2
Auntie Anne's Soft Pretzels	14	Holy Cross High School	2
American Legion Post 14 & Station 64	13	State Farm	2
Yogi Bear's Jellystone Park at Delaware Beaches	13	BrightPath Dover Child Care Center	1
Delmarva Benefit Group	12	Financial Growth Partners	1
Dover Motor Speedway	12	Help at Home	1
Excel Business Technologies, LLC	12	Pithari	1
Wattay Accounting	12	Rodel	1

NEW MEMBERS

Benchmark Physical Therapy	Neil Little	207 Stadium St	Smyrna	DE	19977	302-596-9752
Budget Blinds of Dover	Joseph Zohlmann	84 Willow Grove Mill Dr	Middletown	DE	19709	302-753-5750
CarpeVita Home Care	Briana Henriquez	205 N. Marshall Street	Newport	DE	19804	302-482-4305
Clearway Pain Solutions	Jennifer Eskridge	655 S. Bay Road	Dover	DE	19901	302-260-0278
GC Makeovers	Crystal Garrity	32591 Meadow Branch Dr	Laurel	DE	19956	302-448-6368
Oishii Asian Bistro	Jack Chen	386 Walmart Dr. Suite 1	Camden	DE	19934	302-286-9999
Peninsula Bath LLC	Melissa Long	36891 Bi State Blvd	Delmar	DE	19940	410-543-2324
The Joint Chiropractic	Troy Bratcher	50 North Dupont Highway Bldg. # 1, Suite 4	Dover	DE	19901	302-380-3180
Tim Hortons	Kashif Mushtaq	737 N. DuPont Hwy	Dover	DE	19901	302-450-5976
Zuha Trend	Aaron Bennefield	207 W. Loockerman St	Dover	DE	19904	302-883-2656

Congratulations - You're a 10!

"Congratulations - You're a 10!" is designed to recognize, congratulate and highlight recently renewed members who are celebrating membership anniversaries in increments of 10.



Coffee On Us!

SPONSORED BY

Tre Sorelle Dolce

The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce would love to connect you with something delicious! The photograph on our front pageheader 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 PERSON to CALL the CDCC Office (302-734-7513) with the correct answer and you will win a \$10 gift card to:



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 February "Coffee On Us" Contest was Denise Vendrick from Faw Casson who correctly identified the photo on the front page as Winterfest Downtown Dover, near the Santa House and the Dover Motor Speedway ice sculpture. Congratulations, Denise, and thank you for playing our game!

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

NEW LOCATION | NEW LOCATION | NEW LOCATION | NEW LOCATION

Sunset BUSINESS MIXER



WHERE



Bally's Dover Casino Resort
1131 N. DuPont Hwy, Dover
Enter through Casino Entrance

WHEN

Wednesday,
March 25,
2026
5 - 7 pm

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Appetizers
- Ticket for Beer/Wine
- Cash Bar
- Door Prizes
- 50/50 Raffle
(Don't forget your cash!)
- Member of the Month

Circulo Lounge is a new, innovative bar experience that is now open in Bally's Dover Casino Resort. Featuring Delaware's first and only rotating bar, the Circulo Lounge provides a unique, high-energy, and scenic drinking spot for guests.

During the Sunset Business Mixer, Circulo Lounge will be offering a delicious assortment of appetizers, and each attendee will receive one drink ticket for beer or wine. A full cash bar will also be available. After the Mixer, attendees are encouraged to visit one of the restaurant options throughout the Casino property to savor the flavors of a memorable dining experience.

Immediately before the Sunset Business Mixer, the CDCC will host a ribbon cutting for the new Circulo Lounge. This will take place beginning at 4:30 p.m. and all are welcome to attend.

Come join the ribbon-cutting ceremony to open the doors on the new Circulo Lounge, and stay for the celebration and unmatched networking with other local business professionals!

RSVP TO ATTEND! FREE TO ATTEND for all CDCC Members.

Email adminassistant@cdcc.net, call 302-734-7513 or
visit www.cdcc.net - Calendar of Events to register online.

Include your business, attendees' names and your contact info.

Please bring a guest! Let us know if you want to bring a door prize, too!



435 N. DuPont Hwy, Dover, DE 19901
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@CentralDelawareChamber



@chambercdcc