



Chamber Connections



Vol. 49 // No. 5

cdcc.net

May 2026

CORNERSTONE



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Voting Now Open for Business Awards

As the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) enters the final months of our fiscal year, we are looking forward to celebrating all the success of 2025-2026. That celebration comes to a climax at the Awards for Excellence Celebration, our crowning event planned this year for Thursday, June 18th at Bally's Dover Casino Resort. This prestigious event honors the outstanding achievements of our members and their dedication to excellence, service, and the Central



Delaware community. Mark your calendar now and plan on joining us to celebrate our vibrant business community and the remarkable achievements of our members.

But before we can start the party, we need our members' help to recognize the nominees and select the winners of the Excellence in

Business Awards! The CDCC is excited to offer our members the opportunity to vote for these award winners. This simple act of voting shows amazing support within our membership and the Central Delaware business community.

NOW is the time to vote for Excellence in the Central Delaware community! This is simultaneously an easy and very difficult task

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Leadership Central Delaware Invitational Set for May 14th

As Leadership Central Delaware (LCD) draws to a close for the Class of 2026, plans are already underway for next year's class. This means a professional growth opportunity is now available to you. Are you looking for an experience that will assist you in your leadership journey, develop your leadership network, connect you with people of influence, and build your understanding of the importance of collaboration? The CDCC invites you to learn more about this



The diamond program of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce

inspiring program at a FREE LCD Invitational Reception on Thursday, May 14th, 5 – 7 p.m. at Burwood Estates, 3367 Upper King Rd.,

Dover. Your name could very well become part of the roster for the LCD Class of 2027 – LCD is YOUR opportunity!

Since its inception, Leadership Central Delaware, the diamond program of the CDCC, has graduated more than 500 individuals and made a significant positive impact in Central Delaware. LCD is designed to create effective, dynamic, and knowledgeable

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We are YOUR Chamber!



Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce
cdcc.net

May's Putt-Putt & Networking Combo Event

The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) is again teeing up a fun-filled mini golf tournament teamed with a premier networking event on Wednesday, May 27, 2026, at Tre Sorelle Dolce Ice Cream & Mini Golf in Wyoming, Delaware from 4 – 7 p.m. This event brings together local business owners, professionals, and community members for a day of friendly competition, engaging networking, and lively entertainment. The Chamber Mini Masters Mixer is



a Central Delaware event you don't want to miss!

Showcase your team and company pride by dressing in creative T-shirts or costumes as you putt-putt your way

through a labyrinth of mini-golf. The CDCC can't wait to see the creative costumes you and your golf team put together this year! The Mini Masters is an entertaining event perfect to experience high-spirited camaraderie and good company with a hint of competition as you and your team sink 18 holes of mini golf. Now is the time to start gathering your friends, family, or coworkers to form your winning team competing for the coveted BLUE

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Dina's Digest



PRESIDENT
Dina Vendetti

It's Time to Speak Up!

Delaware is a place where voices are heard. I find that to be one of the most unique, most fascinating, most endearing things about the First State. Delawareans who choose to engage with the state's decision-makers are given a say in how the future is shaped. Every person is invited to be part of the conversation – every Delawarean is encouraged to show up and to speak up!

At the CDCC, we fondly refer to Legislative Hall as “The People’s House” – a name that truly describes its foundational purpose. This label conveys the idea that for Delawareans, Legislative Hall is a center for democracy: “a government of the people, by the people, for the people” (Thank you, President Lincoln!).

During these last couple of months of the legislative session, we will spend a good bit of time at The People’s House. Lawmakers are working diligently to create policies, bills and laws that will move our state forward.

As the General Assembly meets and deliberates, you can be sure that Your Chamber is involved in those conversations. Our job is to advocate on your behalf for legislation that is business friendly and will support the ongoing development and growth of businesses in Central Delaware. Over many years, this Chamber has built strong relationships with our legislators, and we do our very best to influence their work by providing information to them about how proposed legislation will influence you and your business.

When legislation is introduced that we find detrimental to our business community, we meet with lawmakers, we suggest changes, and we practice the art of compromise. Those changes are often taken into consideration and bills are revised. At the end of the process, when a bill that we “opposed” passes, the bill that passed is VERY different from the bill that was first introduced. And that, dear members, is because of the work of Your Chamber.

As with any pursuit or endeavor, there are good days and bad days! On our best days, ideas are considered, pros and cons are weighed, and legislation is crafted in a way that truly benefits the people – residents, business leaders, and legislators alike.

We understand that not every day qualifies as a “best” day. On some days, things at the People’s House can go a little sideways. It has been our observation that what happened on those days is someone made what they thought was a wonderful, well-studied decision... but the people were not included, either because they were forgotten in the process, or because they failed to be present.

In addition, as laws are voted into place, decisions must be made regarding their implementation. Are they fair to all concerned? Will they adequately answer the pain point that motivated their creation? If not, what kind of additional legislation needs to happen to correct their course?

As we move closer to the conclusion of the session, please keep an eye on the Legislative Alerts and Legislative Calls to Action from Your Chamber through our email system. We are usually able to tell when phone calls, emails, and letters will help to sway a decision – when we need your help, we will send a “Legislative Call to Action.” When you see that in your inbox, please assist us by contacting your legislators and expressing your opinions. This kind of contact will help them know your wishes and will help them understand how certain laws will impact your company’s bottom line.

As you, our members, go about the day-to-day running of your businesses and all that entails, we want to assure you that Your Chamber is working behind the scenes keeping you informed about legislation that is under consideration, making your voices heard, lobbying on your behalf, and influencing decisions.

For more information about Your Chamber’s work in legislation, and to reference the Tracking List of the legislation currently being followed by your Chamber, please give us a call at the CDCC office (302)734-7513 or visit our website at www.cdcc.net and click on “Legislative Pillar.” We are honored to serve as the voice of the Central Delaware business community and happy to represent you as often as needed to help you grow your businesses!

Calendar of Events

MAY

- Wednesday, May 6th**
Bluesuiters Golf Tournament
10:00am Reg.; 11:00am Start,
Jonathan's Landing Golf Course, Magnolia
- Thursday, May 7th**
Leadership Central Delaware
8:00am - 5:00pm, Economic Development Day
- Thursday, May 7th**
Kent County Open for Business
8:30am - 10:00am, Kent County Levy Court
- Tuesday, May 12th**
CDCC Board Meeting
7:30am - 8:30am, Faw Casson
- Wednesday, May 13th**
Coffee Coaching 9:00am - 10:00am, via Zoom
- Thursday, May 14th**
Member Orientation
12:00pm - 1:30pm, via Zoom
- Thursday, May 14th**
LCD Class of 2027 Invitational
5:00pm - 7:00pm, Burwood Estates, Dover
- Monday, May 18th**
CDCC Executive Committee Meeting
8:00am - 10:00am, CDCC Conference Room
- Tuesday, May 19th**
LCD Steering Committee Meeting
12:00pm - 1:00pm, CDCC Conference Room
- Wednesday, May 20th**
Marketing Committee Meeting
2:30pm - 3:30pm, via Zoom
- Monday, May 25th**
Memorial Day Office Closed
- Wednesday, May 27th**
Ambassador Committee Meeting
3:30pm, Tre Sorelle Dolce Ice Cream & Mini Golf
- Wednesday, May 27th**
The Chamber Mini Masters / Sunset Business Mixer 4:00pm - 7:00pm, Tre Sorelle Dolce Ice Cream & Mini Golf

JUNE

- Thursday, June 4th**
Leadership Central Delaware 8:00am - 5:00pm, Energy & Environment Day
- Thursday, June 4th**
Kent County Open for Business
8:30am - 10:00am, Kent County Levy Court
- Tuesday, June 9th**
CDCC Board Retreat
9:00am - 4:00pm, Macau Kitchen at Bally's Dover Casino Resort
- Wednesday, June 10th**
Coffee Coaching
9:00am - 10:00am, via Zoom
- Thursday, June 11th**
Member Orientation
8:30am - 10:00am, via Zoom
- Friday, June 12th**
LCD Closing Retreat
9:00am - 3:00pm, Harvest Ridge Winery
- Tuesday, June 16th**
LCD Steering Committee Meeting
12:00pm - 1:00pm, CDCC Conference Room
- Thursday, June 18th**
Awards for Excellence Celebration
5:30pm - 9:00pm, Bally's Dover Casino Resort
- Wednesday, June 24th**
Ambassador Committee Meeting
4:30pm, Delaware State Police Museum
- Wednesday, June 24th**
Sunset Business Mixer
5:00pm - 7:00pm,
Delaware State Police Museum

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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Investment Outlook Based on Current Environment

“War What is it good for? Absolutely nothing.” For those who know the quote from a Seinfeld episode, it’s not Tolstoy. It’s from a song recorded by Edwin Starr that hit number one on the U.S. Billboard charts back in 1970.

So what’s the point? Not much outside of America involving itself in another foreign war. Given everything going on, we delayed this quarter’s newsletter a couple of weeks to see how things would shape up with the war in Iran, because lately, that’s all markets have seemed to care about.

Now, halfway through April, it appears the market believes this may be drawing to a close. Let’s hope so. The S&P 500, which had been down about 8% on the year, is now back to positive territory. Oil, which had been around \$120 a barrel, has moved back down into the \$80s.

Will this rebound last? Your guess is as good as mine as it’s still difficult to make heads or tails of whether things are truly progressing toward peace. One day we hear the Strait of Hormuz is open, the next that it’s closed. This matters because it’s not just oil moving through those waters, but also key products like fertilizer and helium, both of which play critical roles across global industries.



David F. Boothe

Stocks and bonds both performed very poorly in the first quarter of 2026. That said, investors who were diversified to an even greater degree, with foreign exposure and managed futures, have done quite well. Studies have shown that commodity trend-following strategies (managed futures) can increase returns and reduce risk, as they are not correlated to either stocks or bonds. As of March 31, 2026, the S&P 500 was down 4.6% year to date, bonds were flat to negative, yet the SGA Trend Following Index was up 7.1% with some strategies up double digits.

BIG INVESTMENT SERVICES

So what should we expect moving forward? The market was already struggling before the war in Iran and has been largely sideways since October of last year. There are also additional factors to consider, including a new Federal Reserve Chair being installed in May. Historically, markets have experienced double-digit volatility following such transitions.

On top of that, the market remains relatively expensive, the job market shows signs of weakness, inflation continues to be sticky, and economic data is somewhat cloudy.

That said, there’s still a lot of good to talk about. The consumer has been incredibly strong, and the market has been surprisingly resilient in the face of uncertainty and the fog of war.

Putting it all together, the economy, the consumer, and the markets have been relatively strong, which supports

the case for future upside. At the same time, the current risk versus reward balance in the market is less compelling than it was just a few short years ago.

As a result, the focus remains on maintaining a diversified approach, including exposure to foreign markets, bonds, and things such as managed futures strategies which can perform well when traditional investments do not.

Tolstoy DID say “The two most powerful warriors are patience and time.” So in closing, things appear to be improving, but it could take time. Our outlook remains cautiously optimistic, with the emphasis on cautious.

For more information about B.I.G. Investment Services, visit them online at www.abigplan.com.

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MINI MASTERS MIXER

Continued from Page 1

Jacket, trophies and prizes including a kid’s mini BMW car from Hole-in-One Sponsor i.g. Burton Auto Group. This would also be a good opportunity to invite business partners who aren’t yet members of the CDCC to play on your team. You can use your golfing time to build your relationship and introduce them to the CDCC family. But don’t delay – the deadline to sign up your team is fast approaching!

Don’t forget that this event is also a Sunset Business Mixer – the premier networking event of the CDCC.

Typically held on the last Wednesday of the month, the Sunset Business Mixer is always engaging, but when we team it with THE Mini Masters tournament at Tre Sorelle Dolce Ice Cream & Mini Golf, everyone is in for

an over-the-top sweet treat. Attendees can expect regular CDCC mixer-style activities such as amazing networking opportunities, 50/50 cash raffle, door prizes, and important CDCC announcements. Don’t forget your cash for the raffle and your business cards for the networking and door prize entries!

But wait! That’s not all...the event will also feature food trucks, snacks & beverages, yard games, music, and of course, ice cream from Tre Sorelle Dolce. It’s completely free to attend the Mixer and watch the Mini Masters Tournament, so take advantage of this good time with your Central Delaware community as we enjoy spring and build our community together! You’ll want to take the opportunity to form valuable business connections and learn about other businesses and organizations.

Plus, we would love a door prize from your business for the Mixer. The members love winning these, and it’s a great way for you to get a bit of additional exposure for your business or organization. CDCC members are also welcome to bring a non-member guest to the Mixer. This is a great way to show them that the CDCC Mixers are always the leading way to meet new like-minded individuals, connect with your local community, and have fun while doing it! If they decide to become a CDCC member, you’ll get a \$50 discount off your membership dues. NICE!

The CDCC would like to thank this year’s Tournament Sponsor: Holy Cross High School, and our host Mike Marasco of Tre Sorelle Dolce Ice Cream & Mini Golf. Thank you for your generous support of this event and bringing joyful connections and

memories to the community! The CDCC is still offering sponsorship opportunities, so don’t miss your chance to build your name recognition and brand at this fun-filled, high-energy event. For more information on sponsorships, please contact Cindy Friese at 302-734-7513 or cfriese@cdcc.net.

For more information about the Mini Masters Mixer, to register your team or RSVP for the Mixer, please call the CDCC at 302-734-7513 or visit our website at www.cdcc.net/events/chamber-events. This evening will be a blast with your presence and participation! The CDCC can’t wait to watch you sink a hole-in-one on the mini golf course at Tre Sorelle Dolce Ice Cream & Mini Golf on Wednesday, May 27th from 4 – 7 p.m.!



CORNERSTONE

Let's build together: Chesapeake Utilities streamlines natural gas projects for builders and developers

As commercial construction and development activity continues across central Delaware, Chesapeake Utilities is making it easier for builders and developers to plan, manage and advance natural gas projects. In January 2026, the Company launched its new **Builder and Developer Gateway**, a self-service online resource designed to streamline interactions and reduce administrative steps for both commercial and residential projects.

The Gateway reflects Chesapeake Utilities' long-standing commitment to working closely with builders and developers on projects of all sizes, from small commercial facilities to large-scale developments. By bringing key tools and resources together in one centralized platform, the Gateway helps industry professionals save time and keep projects moving.

A centralized resource for natural gas projects

The Builder and Developer Gateway serves as a one-stop location where builders and developers can submit approved project service requests and access information needed for natural gas installation and planning. Through the Gateway, users can submit service line and meter set requests online, whether working from the office or in the field.

Builders can also upload required documentation, including site plans, headers and other supporting materials, helping support a more efficient review and coordination process. The platform further allows builders to assist customers and tenants with starting natural gas service in their own name,



reducing delays as projects near completion.

In addition, the Gateway features information on available energy efficiency incentives, allowing builders and developers to evaluate options that can help manage project costs while delivering long-term value for end users.

Supporting commercial growth with natural gas

For commercial customers, natural gas continues to offer practical advantages, including reliable performance and long-term operating cost benefits. Chesapeake Utilities works with builders and developers across Delaware and Maryland to support a range of commercial projects, from retail and office developments to industrial and multifamily facilities.

The Builder and Developer Gateway complements this direct support by providing faster access to tools and information that help projects move forward more efficiently. For commercial developers, natural gas can be a competitive asset, supporting energy-efficient appliances and systems while delivering dependable service year-round, including during severe weather.

Natural gas also helps attract energy-conscious tenants and buyers by offering lower energy costs and proven performance for heating, cooking and water heating applications.

Designed with builders' time in mind

The Builder and Developer Gateway was developed with a focus on efficiency and ease of use. By reducing paperwork,

improving accessibility and centralizing project-related resources, the Gateway aligns with Chesapeake Utilities' broader approach to partnership and customer service.

As development continues throughout central Delaware, Chesapeake Utilities encourages builders, developers and commercial customers to explore the Builder and Developer Gateway and learn how streamlined connections and smarter energy solutions can support successful projects.

To learn more or access the Gateway, visit www.chpkgas.com/builders-developers-gateway.

Central Delaware – A Destination Worth Experiencing

Tourism can be loosely defined as the act of finding recreation, relaxation, and pleasure outside of the home. Whether traveling to another locale to enjoy outdoor fun like camping, fishing, or just enjoying an afternoon in the sun, or spending time playing table games at a casino or cheering on the trotters, or visiting a museum, restaurant, or other local attraction, you are contributing to an industry that has an enormous impact on the state's economy. According to recent statistics, the tourism industry generates hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenue and serves as the 4th largest employer in the state of Delaware employing well over 55,000 workers!

The CDCC's Leadership Class was given an opportunity last month to learn first-hand the ins and outs of the Tourism Industry here in Kent County. They were treated to discussions by leaders in the field and taken to various venues to experience some of what Central Delaware has to offer residents and visitors alike. The class members, even those who were born and raised here in the First State, were astonished at the variety of experiences offered right here in their backyards!

The day opened at the Home2 Suites in Dover with a delicious breakfast and a wonderful comprehensive overview of the tourism industry presented by Pete Bradley, the Executive Director of the Kent County Tourism Corporation. Pete's presentation did a great job of showing the impact that tourism has on the economy. While tourism generates a great deal of revenue, looking at it through the lens of the multiplier effect and considering all the other industries and businesses that are needed to support it clearly shows the importance of tourism to the state's financial portfolio. In addition, Pete shared some relevant and impactful insights about leadership that have shaped his professional journey. His reflections were especially poignant as he shared with the class his plans for retirement at the end of May.

An exceptionally informative panel discussion was next on the agenda. Several representatives, leaders in their own right, took turns talking about their various roles in the industry. Class members had an amazing opportunity to interact with Juli Maichle – the general manager at Home2 Suites and LCD alum Class

of 2008, Kristin Garramone – co-owner and operations manager at Roma Italian Restaurant/Sul Tempo Cocktail Lounge, Jessica Doran – Marketing and Event Coordinator at Fifer's Farm Store & Kitchen, Travis Geiser – Business Development Executive at Dover Motor Speedway, and Alexis Nunan – Delaware Tasting Room Manager at Harvest Ridge Winery.

After the panel discussion, the class traveled to Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge for a driving tour led by refuge manager Oscar Reed. While showing off the highlights of Bombay's 16,000 acres, Oscar shared with the group that they would be just a few of the 100,000 visitors to the refuge this year. Reed explained that the state provides much needed funding to the refuge and that through that funding they were able to refresh the sanctuary's roadways and will soon break ground on a new visitor's center. The team at Bombay Hook concentrates a great deal on partnering with other entities in the community. Bombay Hook's staff provides many educational experiences in their beautiful visitor center. In addition,

"the Hook" partners with Delaware's Fish and Wildlife Service for their research and expertise in providing the best environment for the wildlife who call Bombay Hook "home." Class members were thrilled to witness the antics of a mother fox and her new babies – and were excited to see several eagles and blue herons as they flew about the refuge. The group was totally amazed by the pure beauty of the nature preserve, and members of the class were already making plans to return before their visit was complete.

Class participants found another hidden gem just south of the Dover Air Force Base. Veteran volunteers were happy to show off the acquisitions of the AMC Museum. The group was provided with an interesting tour by veteran Dick Foskett who told the stories of several artifacts in the museum. They were also captivated by their outside tour of several of the museum's planes – including a walk through the infamous C- 5 Galaxy cargo plane.

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

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WILMINGTON UNIVERSITY

After a wonderful lunch by Veronica's Pizzeria designed to refuel our class members, the class headed to downtown Dover where the area's history was brought to life for them. They enjoyed an overview of the activities that shaped history in Dover's own Golden Fleece Tavern – a recount-

ing of the details and a reflection of our freedoms by Dover's own Mayor Robin R. Christiansen. At the end of his time with the group, he was sure to include the famous Cordelia Botkin story about Dover's Chocolate Candy Murder. The class then made impromptu visits to both the Old State House and the Biggs Museum of American Art.

The last destination on the Class of 2026's Kent County tour was Dover International Speedway. Pat Long, Director of Event Operations, and Colin Ward, the speedway's new communications manager, took the class up to one of their suites that overlooked the

track and explained the ins and outs of racing. The final stop for the day was at the base of Miles the Monster, where class members learned the story behind Miles and stood in awe at his size. They were pleased to see the names of all "Monster Mile" NASCAR winners around the base of the imposing statue and had fun posing for photographs. As an added bonus, Pat took the group inside the Monster and out on the stage in front of Miles for more photos – that was a very special moment and was extremely well-received!!!

Tourism Day was an eye-opening, educational day for our group

of emerging leaders. They were eager to learn more about the area and were impressed by the leaders who guided them throughout the day. Many of them indicated an interest in returning with their families to several of the locations they'd visited during the day – and others couldn't wait to go back to their homes and workplaces and share what they'd learned with their friends and co-workers. The day's events shed light on all the incredible things that Central Delaware offers – and class members felt a renewed sense of pride in the place they call home!



LCD INVITATIONAL

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leaders. This program connects emerging leaders through diverse networks, while enhancing leadership skills and community knowledge and increasing their merit, individually and professionally.

The LCD 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 hearing from the leaders of various industries, enjoying presentations and tours, and engaging in hands-on learning experiences.

Participants in LCD gain the 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.

Don't wait! RSVP for the LCD Invitational Reception today to find out more about the program from LCD Alumni and learn how you can be part of Leadership Central Delaware. For more details about the Leadership Central Delaware program, visit <https://cdcc.net/pillars/education/leadership-central-delaware/>. To RSVP for the FREE Invitational Reception, please contact the CDCC office at 302-734-7513 or adminassistant@cdcc.net. YOU could be in the next class of Leadership Central!

The CDCC is also seeking sponsors to help cover expenses for

meals, transportation, the opening/closing retreats, etc. Sponsoring companies receive ten months of advertising to 1,000+ people through numerous CDCC channels to reach engaged and connected individuals who make a positive difference, and recognition of your company's dedication to making Central Delaware THE place to live, work, and play.

If you are interested in supporting this community-building program, please contact CDCC President, Dina Vendetti, at 302-734-7513 or dvendetti@cdcc.net.

AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

Continued from Page 1

because we are surrounded by excellence in Central Delaware. It's almost impossible to choose just one winner in each category. Thankfully, the choice is up to you, CDCC members! Every year, the CDCC is honored to facilitate these awards that showcase the time, talents, and treasure trove of knowledge that each nominee has shared with others.

Voters, please take into consideration the growth of the individual/company, their response to challenges, and their involvement with their local community. These are pillars of strong leadership skills that must be highlighted and recognized. There are three categories for these awards: Large Employer of the Year (for companies with more than 50 employees), Small Business of the Year (for companies with up to 50 employees), and Young Professional

of the Year (for individuals between the ages of 21 and 35).

All nominations were carefully reviewed by the Excellence in Business Committee, and three nominees were chosen for each category. The winners are determined by the votes from fellow Chamber members and will be announced at the Awards for Excellence Celebration in June. Let your support and voice be heard! Voting is NOW officially open.

Each CDCC member business is asked to cast ONE vote in each category for the nominee they think exemplifies excellence this year – again, that's just one vote per business. We thought you'd like to read a little bit about our amazing nominees, so you will find their profiles below. We are honored to present our distinguished candidates to you.

Nominees for Small Business of the Year

Corp1

Corp1, Inc.

614 N. DuPont Hwy, Suite 210,
Dover, DE 19901
302-736-3466
www.corp1.com
Kelly Manchester, President



Describe your business (primary goods or services provided):

Corp1 is a Commercial Registered Agent and Company Formation service company representing the industry that brings in over 30% of the state's total annual revenue! Delaware is widely recognized as THE incorporation state and is the "corporate home" to approximately 68% of Fortune 500 companies and 80% of all initial IPOs. Commercial Registered Agent companies like Corp1 play a vital role in supporting and sustaining Delaware's economic growth.

A full live of services consists of: Registered agent services (service of process, annual reports); Corporate filings (new formations, amendments, qualifications, dissolutions); Document retrievals (good standings, certified copies, Apostilles); Court record searches; County record

searches; and UCC searches & filings.

Mission/Philosophy:

Corp1's Mission Statement is "Corp1, Your #1 Referred and Trusted Partner." At the center of Corp1's success is its commitment to people above profits. The company operates with clearly defined values – positivity, trust, relationships, growth, and accountability – that shape how it serves clients and supports employees. These values are not simply stated but demonstrated through the company's culture, stability, and the professionalism of its team.

Number of years in business:

Full Time since December 2010

How did your business start?:

Originally incorporated in January 1989 as Del Corp America, Inc. by Kelly's former in-laws, it was dormant for several years until she took it off the shelf in December 2010 and turned it into Corp1, Inc. with blind faith and the help of valued friends and excellent staff.

Number of employees:

Full-time: 26 Part-time: 1

Describe the growth of your business (staffing increases/sales):

Corp1 has expanded and grown from its Delaware roots over the years. In its early days, Corp1 had just two employees and we have now grown to over 26 with more onboarding soon. Geographically we opened up into Denver, Colorado in October 2012; created a Nationwide team to serve clients in all 50 states in 2020; acquired Search Company International Inc (a Colorado corporation) in August 2021; opened a branch office in Cheyenne, Wyoming in August 2021; created a branch office in Santa Fe, New Mexico in

September 2024; and just last year opened a branch office in Boston, Massachusetts in July 2025. We are currently exploring our next state as we speak! In addition to strategically expanding our geographical footprint, the company has grown revenues 30% year over year since 2023 and is on track to grow over 40% in 2026.

Describe the challenges facing your business:

One challenge is staying on top of state legislation and statutes that are constantly changing so that we can keep the entities we represent active and in compliance.

Another challenge is finding ways to make our processes more efficient as we grow and our volume of clients and business increases.

Describe solutions developed to address those challenges:

Finding and retaining the right talent to maintain the level of service we need to attract new clients.

What further distinguishes Corp1 is its approach to service. In an industry where clients are often passed between departments or sales channels, Corp1 prioritizes continuity and direct relationships. Clients work with knowledgeable professionals who understand their needs and provide consistent, personalized support – a model that has contributed to the company's reputation and continued growth.

Technology has been one solution to making our processes more efficient and finding programs and systems that are compatible to our industry and processes are giving us a competitive edge.

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

As mentioned above, several times, the right people and our investment in them help make our business grow.

Our website highlights our staff, their experience, and demonstrates our commitment in developing our people. <https://corp1.com/who-we-are/> Some criticize that we are exposing our staff to poachers but unlike competitor websites, we show we are real people, not a front to an overseas team getting paid pennies on the dollar to do the work. Clients want to do work with people they KNOW and people they LIKE! Highlighting our teams here helps foster those relationships and their trust in us.

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

Delaware will always be the headquarters and hub of our operation, but we are currently qualifying to do business in every state to provide services nationwide! Some will have our own physical branch offices and others will use our NPRRA correspondent network.

Additionally, as discussed above, we are looking for strategic locations where we can bring our reputation for outstanding service to a state that is currently lacking a competent provider.

What distinguishes your business from the others?:

As stated above under Mission, at the center of Corp1's success is its commitment to people above profits. Every other company I have been involved with focused on the reverse and I've watched them struggle with morale and turnover creating inconsistency in service quality and commitment from staff. We've always focused on SERVICE to our clients and our staff knowing that the

Continued on next page

Blessings of revenue would come as a result and by the GRACE of God it always has.

What contributions have you made in the community? (serving on boards/committees; serving as a volunteer; providing in-kind services):

Corp1 very much supports community involvement and giving back to the community. It develops our people, expands their world and supports an organization's mission which in turn supports the community.

Corp1 has also made decisions that reflect a broader commitment to Delaware's communities. While many service firms moved operations north to New Castle County as technology made relocation easier, Corp1 chose to remain in Kent County. This decision has helped maintain quality

local employment opportunities while offering competitive salaries, benefits, and a workplace where employees can grow and build long-term careers.

Here are additional examples of Corp1 and its staff's commitment to the communities at large:

- Kelly served on the CDCC Board of Directors and was briefly Chair of the Board before moving home to Colorado.
- Corp1 has sponsored sections of CDCC Leadership Central Delaware in the past.
- Corp1 provides Registered Agent and corporate filing and document retrieval services for free to many non-profits and small businesses.
- Kelly served on the Delaware Supreme Court's Board on Professional Responsibility.
- Kelly currently serves on the Colorado Supreme Court, Office of

Attorney Admissions, Character & Fitness Committee.

- Kelly served the paralegal profession in various capacities, including Delawar Paralegal Association Board of Directors, Rocky Mountain Paralegal Association Board of Directors, and National Federation of Paralegal Associations Board of Directors.

- Kelly served on the Miss Delaware Scholarship Program Board of Directors.

- Kelly currently serves on the Miss Colorado Scholarship Foundation Board of Directors.

- Corp1 and its staff are active members of the local chambers of commerce in every city it has offices: Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce, South Metro Denver Chamber of Commerce, Greater Cheyenne Chamber of Commerce,

and Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce.

- Corp1 and its staff are active members of the local paralegal association in every city it has offices: Delaware Paralegal Association, Rocky Mountain Paralegal Association (CO & WY), and Massachusetts Paralegal Association.

- Corp1 and its staff are active members of the national association for our industry – National Public Records Research Association (NPRRA). Kelly served on its Board of Directors and various committees for over 10 years. Corp1 staff currently serve on the Board of Directors and on various committees.



**EYE SPECIALISTS
OF DELAWARE**

Eye Specialists of Delaware

500 W. Loockerman Street, Suite 320,
Dover, DE 19904

302-678-1700

www.eyesde.com

Sharon Fields, Director Of Operations

Describe your business (primary goods or services provided):

Eye Specialists of Delaware is a leading multi-specialty ophthalmology practice serving central and southern Delaware, with locations in Dover, Milford, Seaford, and Millville. The practice is recognized as a regional leader in advanced medical and surgical eye care, consistently operating at the forefront of technology and innovation.

The practice specializes in the diagnosis and management of complex ocular conditions including corneal disease, glaucoma, cataracts, macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and dry eye. In addition, the team provides comprehensive optometric services including routine exams, contact lens care, and primary eye care.

The practice is staffed by a highly trained team of board-certified

ophthalmologists and medical optometrists, working collaboratively to deliver comprehensive, patient-centered care.

Mission/Philosophy:

The mission of Eye Specialists of Delaware is to enhance the lives of our patients by providing the highest quality medical and surgical eye care to all.

Number of years in business:

24 years for Eye Specialists of Delaware
69 years for Halpern Eye Care

How did your business start?

Halpern Eye Care evolved from a single basement practice in the home of Dr Harold Halpern in Smyrna into a regional optometric practice spanning two states. The timeline of this three-generation legacy highlights several key milestones:

- The Foundation (1946): Started by Dr. Harold Halpern in his Delaware home.

- Expansion (1974–2004): The entry of Dr. Joel and later Dr. Ryan Halpern turned the practice into a multi-generational family business under the leadership of Dr Ryan Halpern.

- Regional Growth (2012): The acquisition of Vision Associates marked a significant move into the Maryland market.

- The Transition (2015): By the time it was sold to MyEyeDr, the practice

had grown to 16 locations and a team of 200 professionals.

Number of employees:

Full-time: 41 Part-time: 2

Describe the growth of your business (staffing increases/sales):

As Eye Specialists of Delaware continues to grow, the practice has expanded its clinical capabilities through the addition of subspecialty physicians and support staff, allowing it to meet increasing demand while maintaining a high standard of care.

Describe the challenges facing your business:

Like many healthcare providers, Eye Specialists of Delaware faces ongoing challenges including rising operational costs, declining insurance reimbursements, and workforce recruitment. The practice is also managing increased demand from an aging population while navigating regulatory pressures surrounding scope of practice.

Describe solutions developed to address those challenges:

In response, the practice has focused on improving operational efficiency, optimizing workflow, and making strategic investments in technology to maintain high-quality

patient care while navigating an evolving healthcare landscape.

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

The practice actively engages in community outreach and education through events, physician engagement initiatives, and public demonstrations of new technology. These efforts increase awareness of advanced treatment options and strengthen relationships within both the medical and local community.

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

Over the next three to five years, Eye Specialists of Delaware will continue to expand operations to meet the growing demand driven by the rapidly increasing retirement population in central and southern Delaware.

This includes recruiting top-tier ophthalmologists and optometrists, expanding subspecialty care, and continuing to invest in the latest procedures and advanced technology to deliver best-in-class outcomes for our patients.

We are also focused on improving operational efficiency to navigate declining reimbursements and rising healthcare costs, ensuring long-term

sustainability while maintaining exceptional patient care.

To address a critical access issue in our region, we are actively planning the development of an in-office surgical suite to increase surgical capacity. Currently, local surgery centers are at or near maximum capacity, limiting timely access to care for patients in need of vision-saving procedures.

What distinguishes your business from the others?:

What distinguishes Eye Specialists of Delaware is the strength of its physicians, the depth of its clinical expertise, and its commitment to continuous advancement in patient care.

Our physicians are highly trained medical doctors with extensive experience in both medical and surgical eye care, bringing a level of expertise that allows us to manage everything from routine vision needs to complex ocular disease. Our professional and clinical staff are among the most respected in the field, and we place a strong emphasis on ongoing training and development to ensure we remain at the forefront of eye care.

We continue to expand our capabilities, including the recent addition of a fellowship-trained cornea specialist, allowing us to provide an even higher level of specialized care to our patients.

As a private, family-owned practice, we combine clinical excellence with a strong commitment to the communities we serve. Our reputation is built not only on outcomes, but on our dedication to treating every patient with the highest level of care and attention.

This combination of experience, innovation, and the community commitment positions Eye Specialists of Delaware as a leader in eye care across the region.

What contributions have you made in the community? (serving on boards/committees; serving as a volunteer; providing in-kind services):

Eye Specialists of Delaware's commitment to the community extends well beyond clinical care. Under the leadership of Dr. Ryan Halpern, the practice has taken an active role in the revitalization of downtown Dover and in addressing

broader community needs.

Dr. Halpern has led strategic investments in key downtown assets, most notably the acquisition and repositioning of First Capital Center—one of Dover's most prominent commercial buildings. Through thoughtful improvements and tenant placement, the building has been transformed into a hub for healthcare providers, nonprofit organizations, and local businesses, helping restore consistent activity and stability to the downtown corridor.

In addition to economic investment, the practice supports efforts aimed at improving quality of life in the community, including initiatives that serve individuals living in poverty and collaboration with local stakeholders to address safety and accessibility concerns.

Dr. Halpern is also working in partnership with local stakeholders to redevelop the historic Old Post Office property, transforming a long-vacant structure into much-needed housing. This project will increase residential density, help address the local housing shortage, and further strengthen the long-term vitality of downtown Dover.

Through these combined efforts, Eye Specialists of Delaware is not only delivering high-quality medical care, but also playing a meaningful role in building a safer, more vibrant, and economically resilient community.



La Baguette French Bakery

323 S. Governors Ave., Dover, DE 19904
302-741-0180
www.labaguettede.com
Anita Wheeler-Bezy, President/Co-Owner/
Marketing Director



Describe your business (primary goods or services provided):

French breads, pastries, croissants, cakes, sandwiches

Mission/Philosophy:

To provide fresh products to our patrons and for them to have an enjoyable experience in our store. Our authentic French products reflect our passion for great food. Beautiful Food, Exceptional Taste

Number of years in business:

9+ years

How did your business start?

We took our testimonials and sales records to the bank from our SOLD OUT "Chef's Table" events and they finally said yes to loan us money to open the bakery.

Number of employees:

Full-time: 7 Part-time: 24

Describe the growth of your business (staffing increases/sales):

We have increased our sales by

20% each year!

Describe the challenges facing your business:

Increase in minimum wage x 5 years was a huge challenge to overcome, but we did it.

Describe solutions developed to address those challenges:

We had to raise our prices each year. But our patrons love us, so they keep coming.

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

We started doing the Breakfast Club (live music & breakfast) a few years ago to increase Saturday sales.

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

Our goal is to renovate our Dover location and increase staff because we will get busier with the new

courthouse next to us.

What distinguishes your business from the others? :

We are the only real French bakery in the area.

What contributions have you made in the community? (serving on boards/committees; serving as a volunteer; providing in-kind services):

Anita has served on the Culinary Board at Del Tech in the past. And she is part of the Dover AFB Honorary Commander Program.

We work very closely with Habitat for Humanity. We donate frequently to local charity events. We BACK THE BLUE and show our appreciation for police and first responders.

And we donate all our leftover bread, croissants, etc. to homeless and church.

Nominees for Large Business of the Year



Advantech

151 Garrison Oak Drive, Dover, DE 19901
302-674-8405

<https://advantechsecurity.net/>
Jason Clarke

Describe your business (primary goods or services provided):

Advantech stands as a premier security integration partner across the Mid-Atlantic, delivering end-to-end solutions that protect people, property, and operations. From concept to completion—and beyond—Advantech designs, installs, and manages cutting-edge security technologies with precision and expertise. Their comprehensive offerings include access control, video surveillance, intrusion detection, fire and life safety systems, emergency communications, and identity management. Backed by responsive client support and advanced remote management capabilities, Advantech ensures every solution is seamless, scalable, and built for reliability in an ever-evolving security landscape.

Mission/Philosophy:

Advantech's mission is to seamlessly unify doors, frames, hardware, and security technology into one fully integrated solution. By delivering the scale, service, and expertise required to bring these elements together, we ensure every system functions as a cohesive whole. With accountability from design through installation and ongoing support, nothing is overlooked; specifications are precise, installations are coordinated, and systems remain aligned. The result is better-performing openings, projects delivered on schedule, and teams freed to focus on their core business instead of managing multiple vendors.

Our philosophy is rooted in coordination, accountability, and confidence. We believe complex systems work best when they are approached as one unified solution, not as disconnected parts. Through thoughtful integration and consistent execution, we provide our clients with clarity, reliability, and peace of mind in every decision.

Our vision is to be a world-class leader in creating safer, smarter spaces within the communities

we serve. This is driven by the exceptional service, trusted expertise, and dedication of our people. We are committed to consistency by partnering with proven, industry-leading brands—introducing innovative solutions to new clients while continuing to support and strengthen relationships with those we've long served. By attracting new customers and earning the loyalty of existing ones, we continue to grow as trusted partners in an ever-evolving industry.

The mission to SERVE (Serve our associates, customers and communities, Educate and elevate, Respect for ALL, Vision and Expertise) within the company is also important to our brand and employees. This recognizes the outstanding qualities, values, and contributions of associates towards Branch and Company Wide goals, all while remaining dedicated to and exemplifying our core values to SERVE every day.

Number of years in business:

36 years

How did your business start?

Founded in 1990, Advantech was established to serve the electronic security and life safety market in Delaware with a clear vision: to become the leader in property protection, life safety systems, and service installation. From the beginning, our purpose has been to operate as an innovative company, delivering creative solutions tailored to our customers' unique needs.

Recognizing that every client has unique needs, Advantech has developed many teams within the organization to meet the requirements of our clients. These are composed of experienced Engineers, Technology Operations Team, Systems Sales Managers, Project Managers, CAD designers, certified Service and Install Technicians, and a skilled Administration Team. This team-driven approach ensures that every solution is thoughtfully designed, expertly implemented, and fully supported.

We have remained true to our founding vision by consistently delivering exceptional customer satisfaction across sales, installation, and service. Our technicians are equipped with the tools, training, and motivation needed to perform their

work to the highest standards.

Today, Advantech proudly serves the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States under the Cook and Boardman group, and supports global accounts as contracted, continuing our commitment to excellence and innovation in every project we undertake.

Number of employees:

Full-time: 91 Part-time: 0

Describe the growth of your business (staffing increases/sales):

As technology continues to evolve, Advantech remains committed to creating secure environments for the people and organizations we serve every day. In response to widely reported incidents that have impacted the safety of schools, businesses, and public spaces, we have worked proactively to deliver solutions designed to enhance protection and help reduce future risks.

These challenges have reinforced the importance of staying ahead of emerging technologies and adapting to the growing demand for advanced security solutions. As a result, Advantech has experienced continued growth, both in the services we provide and the team members who make our work possible. Over the past two years, our workforce has grown by 15%, reflecting our ongoing commitment to meeting customer needs while maintaining the highest standards of service and innovation. We are proud to have built a team where 95% of our workforce in our office is from Delaware.

Describe the challenges facing your business:

Remaining at the forefront of technology is one of the biggest challenges Advantech faces. With rapid advancements occurring every day, including the continued integration of artificial intelligence, it is critical that we stay ahead of the curve. By continuously evaluating emerging technologies and investing in innovation, we ensure our solutions remain effective, forward-thinking, and aligned with the evolving security needs of our customers.

Another key challenge is meeting each customer's needs in a truly unique way. This is where our teamwork excels. Because every

situation is different, we take a customized approach to ensure each solution is tailored specifically for the customer. Even when implementing the same system across multiple buildings, each environment requires its own level of adaptation and attention to detail. Advantech embraces this challenge, working collaboratively to deliver solutions that are both consistent and uniquely suited to each application.

Describe solutions developed to address those challenges:

Advantech partners with a wide range of trusted vendors to ensure each customer's needs are fully met. Whether through attending industry trade shows, obtaining manufacturer certifications, or collaborating with leading partners such as ASIS and Global Security, we remain committed to staying at the forefront of the industry.

Ongoing certification and training for our technicians is essential, ensuring they have a deep understanding of the systems they implement in the field. This commitment to continuous learning enables our team to deliver innovative, reliable solutions with confidence and expertise.

Equally important is our focus on customer engagement. We work closely with our clients throughout every stage of a project, ensuring transparency, alignment, and ultimately a high level of satisfaction with the final result.

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

Recognizing the amount of time spent in the field bringing equipment online, Advantech developed a solution by establishing a dedicated Technology Operations team. This team is responsible for staging and preparing equipment in-house before it is deployed to the field or shipped directly to the customer.

By pre-configuring systems, this approach significantly reduces installation time and increases efficiency. Equipment arrives ready for a more streamlined, plug-and-play experience, having already been tested, updated with the latest firmware,

and configured with the necessary network settings. This allows technicians and customers to focus on seamless implementation rather than time-consuming setup processes.

This standardized approach was quickly embraced and has delivered measurable benefits across projects. It has proven especially valuable for international customers, enabling them to receive fully prepared, ready-to-deploy technology regardless of location. Today, Advantech supports projects across 11 different time zones, reinforcing our ability to deliver consistent, high-quality solutions on a global scale.

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

Advantech's goals over the next three to five years are clear and focused: to consistently showcase the value of the solutions we provide, continue growing alongside advancements in technology, and further strengthen the security of our clients' environments.

We are also committed to investing in the future of the workforce by supporting and developing low-voltage professionals at every stage of their careers. This includes creating opportunities for individuals entering the field through high school apprenticeship programs, as well as welcoming experienced professionals, including retired veterans, who are seeking meaningful work. By building a diverse and skilled workforce, Advantech aims to sustain long-term

growth while continuing to deliver exceptional service and innovation.

What distinguishes your business from the others? :

Our customers are the foundation of our business. Without their trust and continued partnership, our success would not be possible. We are committed to maintaining close, responsive relationships, ensuring our customers feel supported and confident in reaching out whenever they need us.

Our employees are equally essential to who we are. With an average tenure of six years, our team reflects both fresh talent eager to grow in the industry and long-standing professionals who have dedicated decades to Advantech. Many of our team members have been with the company for over 20 years, including two longstanding employees, one of whom has been here since the beginning and one who has been part of Advantech for 34 of its 36 years in business. This blend of experience and new perspective strengthens

our ability to deliver high-quality solutions.

Our team remains committed to continuous learning, actively maintaining certifications, and staying current with evolving technologies. We also partner with technical schools and the Department of Labor to offer apprenticeship programs that provide students with hands-on experience and a pathway into the industry as they complete their education.

We are especially proud that our growth has been driven without traditional advertising. Instead, our reputation is built on word of mouth, strong relationships, and consistently showing up for our customers.

What contributions have you made in the community? (serving on boards/committees; serving as a volunteer; providing in-kind services):

Several members of our staff actively participate in a variety of community programs. In addition, we organize company-wide community

service events throughout the year, encouraging broad involvement and engagement across our team.

Board Member of Modern Maturity Center, Delaware Police Chiefs Foundation, Red Cross; Board Member and Vice President of Odessa Fire Company; Actively participate in State Legislature meetings that involve Low Voltage workers; Adopt-A-Highway, White Oak Road, Dover, Delaware; Meals on Wheels Program; Leadership Central Delaware – several graduates; Leadership Delaware Inc. Program; Honorary Commander Program; Shepherds Place food drives and coat collections; Relay for Life; DE Turf Kickball Tournaments to raise money for playground; Buckets of Love; Town of Elsmere Volunteer Fireman; Active Military Members; Numerous Veteran employees; Murphey School Cleanup; Youth leaders in programs such as cub scouts and girl scouts; Youth sports coaches



Bally's Dover Casino Resort

1131 N. DuPont Highway, Dover, DE 19901
302-674-4600
www.BallysDover.com
Nicholas Polcino, Vice President and General Manager



Describe your business (primary goods or services provided):

Hospitality and Casino – Entertainment Company

Mission/Philosophy:

Bally's Dover Casino Resort is committed to providing a safe and enjoyable gaming experience. Our philosophy is grounded in three core values: Trustworthiness, Rewards, and Responsibility.

Number of years in business:

30 years

How did your business start?:

The foundation of our legacy traces back to the beginning of Standardbred horse racing in 1969, a pivotal moment that shaped our journey. In December 1995, we expanded our offerings with the opening of Dover Downs Slots. By 2007, we further

solidified our presence by adding 268 rooms, making us the largest hotel in Delaware at the time with a total of 500 rooms. Our expansion continued in 2010 with the addition of table games. In 2019, we entered a new chapter through a reverse merger with Twin River Worldwide Holdings, further broadening our horizons. Finally, in 2021/22, we proudly rebranded as Bally's Dover Casino Resort, reflecting our evolution and commitment to offering an exceptional experience for our guests.

Number of employees:

Full-time: 675 Part-time: 150

Describe the growth of your business (staffing increases/sales):

Over the years, Bally's Dover has evolved from a racetrack into a full-scale resort destination. Our

growth has been driven by continuous investment in our property, expansion of amenities, and a strong focus on guest experience. This evolution has supported steady employment growth and allowed us to become one of the area's largest employers, while continuing to adapt to industry trends and guest expectations.

Describe the challenges facing your business:

Like many in the hospitality and gaming industry, we face challenges related to increased competition, evolving customer expectations, regulatory requirements, and workforce recruitment and retention. Additionally, economic fluctuations and shifts in consumer behavior require us to remain agile and forward-thinking.

Describe solutions developed to address those challenges:

AWe focus on innovation, employee engagement, and guest experience enhancements to remain competitive. Investments in training, technology, and property improvements help us adapt to changing demands. We also prioritize team member development and retention through strong leadership, communication, and recognition programs, ensuring we continue to deliver exceptional service.

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

Bally's Dover continuously evolves its offerings to create unique, experience-driven moments that strengthen guest loyalty and drive growth. By blending innovative entertainment, reimagined spaces like our new Circulo Lounge, and personalized rewards, we have moved beyond traditional

loyalty programs to deliver immersive, memorable experiences—such as VIP events, exclusive access, and curated guest interactions. Guest feedback and insights help us tailor experiences, ensuring we remain relevant and engaging in a highly competitive market. This combination of creativity, personalization, and continuous reinvention reflects our commitment to exceptional service while building meaningful connections with our guests and community.

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

Our goals include continued reinvestment in our property, expanding entertainment and hospitality offerings, strengthening our position as a premier regional destination, and deepening our community partnerships. We are committed to enhancing the guest experience while maintaining a strong, supportive workplace for our team members.

What distinguishes your business from the others?

What sets Bally's Dover apart is our unique position as one of only three establishments of our kind in the state, offering a full spectrum of entertainment, dining, and hospitality all under one roof. As a true 365-day destination, we are always open and ready to welcome our guests, creating memorable experiences every single day. Beyond our offerings, what truly distinguishes us is our unwavering commitment to people and community. Our team takes pride in delivering exceptional service in a warm, welcoming environment, while our leadership remains deeply engaged in supporting local organizations and initiatives. We are more than a place of entertainment—we are a dedicated community partner, committed to making a meaningful impact both inside our doors and throughout the region.

What contributions have you

made in the community?

Bally's Dover is deeply committed to supporting the communities we serve. In the past year alone, we have contributed over \$100,000 to charitable organizations throughout Delaware, along with in-kind donations, event space, and ongoing fundraising support for partners such as the Central DE Habitat for Humanity, Delaware Breast Cancer Coalition, and local first responders to name a few.

Through our Bally's CREW program, our team members actively volunteer across Kent County, supporting initiatives like the Adopt-A-Highway, Earth Day projects, Habitat for Humanity 5K events, etc. while our leadership serves on key local boards and committees. Giving back is important to us and it is part of who we are—we are proud to be an active partner in helping our community thrive.



Delaware Hospice, Inc.

555 E. Loockerman Street, Suite 200,
Dover, DE 19901
302-478-5707
DelawareHospice.org
Missy Baker, Events & Outreach
Coordinator

Describe your business (primary goods or services provided):

As a community-based hospice, we are committed to our mission in supporting every individual and family facing a serious or life-limiting illness with compassionate and expert care. Our core values to SERVE every day.

Mission/Philosophy:

Our mission is to support every individual, family, and community with compassionate and expert care for serious illness

Number of years in business:

44 years

How did your business start?

Delaware Hospice, Inc. was founded in response to a recognized need within the community for compassionate, specialized care for individuals facing life-limiting illness. In 1978, the Episcopal Diocese

of Delaware began assessing this need, bringing together community leaders, healthcare professionals, and volunteers to explore how hospice care could better support patients and families.

That vision became a reality in 1982 when Delaware Hospice admitted its first patient. From the beginning, our organization was built on a commitment to ensuring that no one faces serious illness alone—providing comfort-focused care, guidance, and support regardless of a person's ability to pay.

What started as a community-driven effort has grown into a comprehensive, mission-based organization serving thousands of patients each year. While services have expanded to include palliative care, pediatric services, dementia care, and grief support, the founding purpose remains unchanged: to meet people where they are and provide care that supports both patients and their families through their serious illness journey.

Number of employees:

Full-time: 198 Part-time: 29

Describe the growth of your business (staffing increases/sales):

Delaware Hospice, Inc. has experienced steady growth driven by both increased community need

and the expansion of services beyond traditional hospice care. Since its founding in 1982, the organization has supported more than 175,000 patients and families, with annual patient volume continuing to rise—including more than 7,700 individuals served in FY2025.

Growth has been fueled by the development of specialized programs such as adult and pediatric hospice care (Delaware Hospice/Katybug), palliative care (Delaware Palliative), dementia care through the CMS GUIDE model (The Dementia Care Program), and expanded community-based services. This evolution has required continued investment in interdisciplinary staffing, clinical expertise, and operational infrastructure to support a broader, more complex patient population across multiple states.

Describe the challenges facing your business:

Like many healthcare organizations, Delaware Hospice faces increasing demand for services alongside workforce constraints, reimbursement pressures, and the growing complexity of patient needs. The rising prevalence of serious illness, including dementia and chronic conditions, has increased the need for earlier and more comprehensive support.

Describe solutions developed to address those challenges:

To address these challenges, Delaware Hospice, Inc. has focused on expanding access, integrating services, and reducing barriers to care. This includes launching new programs such as the Dementia Care Program under the CMS GUIDE model, enhancing palliative care services to support patients earlier in their illness, and integrating Transitions services across care lines.

Operational solutions have also been implemented, including the introduction of a Transportation Program to improve access to care, and the development of coordinated, interdisciplinary care models that improve communication between patients, families, and providers. These efforts help streamline care delivery while improving patient and caregiver experience.

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

A key innovation has been the organization's shift toward a continuum-of-care model, expanding beyond traditional hospice services to support patients earlier and more comprehensively. By integrating hospice, palliative care, dementia care, pediatric and family services, and community-based programs under a coordinated

approach, Delaware Hospice, Inc. has created a more seamless experience for patients and families.

Participation in national models like CMS GUIDE demonstrates a commitment to innovation in care delivery. Additionally, programs like our in-house Hospice Transportation Program and caregiver-focused resources reflect a broader, patient-centered approach that addresses not only clinical needs, but also the practical and emotional challenges of serious illness.

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

Over the next three to five years, Delaware Hospice aims to continue expanding access to care, particularly in underserved and growth markets such as Pennsylvania, while strengthening its position as a comprehensive serious illness care provider. Key goals include increasing patient reach across hospice and palliative services, advancing dementia care programming, and further integrating services to support patients across the full continuum of care.

Additional priorities include workforce development and retention, enhancing community and referral relationships, and investing in programs that improve quality outcomes, patient

experience, and operational sustainability. The organization also seeks to deepen its impact through innovation, partnerships, and continued alignment with evolving healthcare models.

What distinguishes your business from the others?:

Delaware Hospice, Inc. is distinguished by its community-based mission and commitment to serving all who need care, regardless of ability to pay, as well as its comprehensive approach to serious illness care. Unlike organizations focused solely on hospice, Delaware Hospice, Inc. offers a full spectrum of services—including palliative care, pediatric services, dementia care, grief support, and advance care planning—creating a more integrated and patient-centered model.

Its long-standing presence in the community, combined with a focus on quality, innovation, and personalized care, allows the organization to meet patients and families where they are—physically, emotionally, and clinically—throughout their journey.

What contributions have you made in the community? (serving on boards/committees; serving as a volunteer; providing in-kind services):

Delaware Hospice, Inc. plays a vital role in the community through direct care, education, and advocacy. Beyond serving patients and families, the organization provides grief support to the broader community, including children, adults, and schools. Through programs like New Hope—a nationally recognized youth grief support program—individuals are given the tools and support needed to navigate loss and build resilience. Delaware Hospice also led initiatives such as Honoring Choices Delaware, which advanced awareness of advance care planning and empowered individuals to make informed decisions about their healthcare.

In addition to clinical services, Delaware Hospice, Inc. actively partners with healthcare providers, community organizations, schools, workplaces, and local leaders to expand access to education and resources related to serious illness and end-of-life care. Staff and volunteers regularly contribute their time and expertise through community events, advisory groups, and outreach efforts—extending the organization’s impact beyond patient care and strengthening the overall health and well-being of the communities it serves.



Nominees for Young Professional of the Year



Catherine Jenkins
 Marketing & Communications Manager
 Kent County Tourism / Visit Central Delaware
 435 N DuPont Hwy Dover, DE 19901
 302-734-4888 (ext. 103)
 VisitCentralDelaware.com



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

Describe your current role with the company/organization:

As the Marketing & Communications Manager for Visit Central Delaware, the official Destination Marketing Organization for Kent County and its jurisdictions, I lead all marketing, advertising, and public relations efforts to promote Kent County as a vibrant travel destination and help drive meaningful economic impact for our community. My responsibilities span the full marketing mix: email marketing, organic social media and video content, paid social campaigns, website content, press releases, media relations, and the creation of advertisements and marketing materials. I also coordinate photoshoots and video productions, serve as our media spokesperson in television and podcast interviews,

and cultivate relationships with our community partners and local attractions. We are a small team of only three full-time and one part-time staff, so we all wear a lot of hats and help each other out wherever we can!

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

In the next three to five years, I hope to have a leadership position in my organization and within the community.

What distinguishes you from other young professionals?:

I think what distinguishes me from other young professionals is that I’ve always believed I’m capable of achieving anything I set my mind to, and I’m not afraid to ask questions or admit that I need some help to get there. There is so much power in knowing what you don’t know. I consistently seek opportunities to learn from those ahead of me, knowing that growth is what earns

you a seat at the table. And I never want to stop earning my seat. I’ve always been a hard worker with a drive to succeed, and I’m so grateful to have found a career that I’m truly passionate about. I absolutely love the tourism industry and the people I get to work with every day, and I think that really shows in my work. I am exactly where I am meant to be, and I will never stop learning and growing to be the best I can be at it.

What contributions have you made in the community?:

I am actively involved in several industry and community organizations. I currently serve as Chair-Elect (and incoming Chair) of the Mid-Atlantic Tourism & Public Relations Alliance (MATPRA), after previously serving as Board Secretary and Chair of the organization’s Marketing Committee. I also serve as a board member of the Delaware Arts Alliance

and as a member of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce's (CDCC) Marketing Committee. I also participate in monthly virtual sessions with incoming Dover Air Force Base service members, where I present on what they can look forward to in Kent County and help welcome them to the community.

As part of my volunteer efforts, while in the Leadership Central Delaware program, my classmates and I funded and built a book nook for Westside Family Health Care, a clinic that provides equal access to quality healthcare regardless of ability to pay. I have also delivered a presentation to Smyrna High School students in the Marketing Pathway program, sharing

insights on my role as Marketing Manager and the impact of tourism as an industry and potential career path.

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

I am originally from Westminster, Maryland, and I attended Salisbury University, where I earned my Bachelor of Arts in May 2020. Graduating from college during the pandemic was a whirlwind of unknowns, but it was this uncertainty that first led me to Delaware, and for that, I am forever grateful. At 23, I

purchased my first home and chose to put down roots in Kent County, a decision I continue to value both personally and professionally. I first fell in love with this area as a visitor, and now, as a resident working in tourism, I'm so proud to share what makes this area and community so special. Outside of my professional work, I am a passionate animal advocate and supporter of First State Animal Center SPCA. I enjoy traveling and exploring new places with my mini Australian Shepherd, Finnegan.

I am a proud graduate of the Leadership Central Delaware program (2024) and the Leadership Central Delaware Mastery program (2026), both of which were amazing experi-

ences that have further strengthened my leadership skills and community engagement.

I've also been incredibly fortunate to have worked under Pete Bradley for the last four years - a leader who fostered my creativity, trusted my judgment, supported my growth, and always led with empathy and understanding, creating an environment where my team and I could truly thrive. I'll always be grateful for his leadership and the lasting impact it's had on both my professional and personal growth.



Joselito (Jose) Arroyo

Project Consultant
Bright Side Roofing
 4 Mifflin Rd, Dover, DE 19904
 302-674-4642
www.trustbrightside.com



Number of Years at your current company/organization:
 2 years

Describe your current role with the company/organization:

As a project consultant with Bright Side Roofing, I work directly with homeowners and business owners to assess the conditions of their roofing and siding systems and guide them toward the best solutions for their needs. This includes conducting detailed inspections, identifying damage or potential issues, and educating homeowners on their options.

Ultimately, my focus is on providing honest guidance, quality service, and a positive experience that builds trust within the community.

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

My service first mindset and the way I prioritize trust, integrity, and

genuine relationships in everything I do. I focus on helping people make informed decisions and creating long-term value, both professionally and personally.

I am also set apart by my commitment to live that out beyond work, through my involvement with United Church and my fund Quarters for Kindness, where we donate rolls of quarters to families in local laundromats to spread joy. Giving back, staying connected to my community, and leading with purpose are important to me, and that consistency in both my personal and professional life is what truly defines me.

What contributions have you made in the community?

I've been intentional about giving back and making a positive impact in my community in several ways. I have actively been a greeter at United Church for 7 years and I started the Quarters for Kindness fund to spread joy in our community. I also volunteer at the Food Bank

of Delaware, donate to dogs at the SPCA, and serve as an ambassador for the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce, showing up to support local businesses through ribbon cuttings and community events.

Through these efforts, I aim to use my time, resources, and presence to uplift others, strengthen our community, and lead by example.

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

I bring discipline and leadership from my time in the Army, which guides how I approach both work and community service. Professionally, I was honored as Salesman of the Year with Bright Side Roofing, reflecting my commitment to excellence and client trust.

I am also part of the Leadership Central Delaware Class of 2026, where I am developing skills to better serve and support our community.



Saleana "Sal" Watson

Manager of Financial Planning & Analysis
Bally's Dover Casino Resort
 1131 N. Dupont Hwy, Dover, DE 19901
 302-857-3710
<https://www.ballysdover.com>



Number of Years at your current company/organization:
 10 years

Describe your current role with the company/organization:

As the manager of financial planning and analysis, it is my duty to check the temperature of the property. Each department

we have plays a pivotal role in the success of the casino. I bring data from each department together and present it in a way that allows upper management to make operational decisions

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

I love my current role as the Manager of Financial Planning and Analysis so for me, my goal is to always remain useful and efficient. In the next three to five years, I want to have a bigger positive impact on strategic decision making at

Bally's Dover. I want to go beyond the numbers and give the company financial data that turns into immediate actionable insight. I want to continue to develop my skills in leadership, presentation, and networking.

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

I think my persistence, adaptability, and faith. I believe

in the saying that how you do anything, is how you do everything. It doesn't matter what is happening (a snowstorm, a pandemic, or an event), I try my best to show up and be present for myself and those around me. I try to keep the "all one team," mindset, knowing that if one of us isn't okay – the whole team isn't. So, I keep a quick pick-me-up snack and a listening ear for those who need it. We really are stronger together. I'm not always loud and noticeable, but I'm present and when there's work to be done, I'm willing and able. I love a project,

especially an Excel one! When sudden changes need to be made, I adapt and overcome. I still get asked questions from previous roles I've held years ago, and I'm happy to help. My faith is the most important thing to me, and I hope it shines through. Everything that I say, that I do, and that I am is to bring Glory to God and there is no bigger or better accountability than that!

What contributions have you made in the community?

I have a heart for service and giving! I enjoy serving at United

Church in Dover when I'm able, providing meals and supplies for homeless shelters, putting together goodie bags, organizing donation drives, making/donating food baskets, and crocheting/knitting hats for others to wear in winter. I love performing random acts of kindness, because we always need a reminder that we are seen. I recently got invited to be on the board for the Cen-Del Foundation. I can't wait to see what that journey is like helping non-profits and reaching further into the community!

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

I'm an LCD Class of 2025 graduate, a CDCC Ambassador, an LCD Mastery 2026 graduate, and now a Young Professional of the Year nominee? What more could a girl ask for?! God Bless!

Members are invited to vote using this link: <https://tinyurl.com/ExinB2026>. Voting closes Thursday, May 28, 2026. Remember: ONLY chamber members are eligible to vote and only ONE vote in each category is allotted per member business. Consider this your civic calling. Together, we can continue to make our Excellence in Business Awards a true testament to the spirit of entrepreneurship and innovation in Central Delaware.

Thank you for your continued support and participation in the CDCC. We are so excited to celebrate this year's nominees, final winners, and the CDCC community at the Awards for Excellence Celebration at Bally's Dover Casino Resort- Rollins Center on June 18, 2026. Let's make this celebration the best one yet! Happy Voting!

VOTE ONLINE AT <https://tinyurl.com/ExinB2026>. BY THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2026 Remember, one vote per business!

Member News

Volunteer Perseverance and a Surprise Donation Fully Restore Historic 75mm Howitzer

The 75mm Pack Howitzer on display at the Air Mobility Command (AMC) Museum was acquired from the U.S. Army in 2014, but it arrived in rather poor shape. Thanks to dedicated volunteers, it underwent an extensive restoration that returned it to an impressive, like-new condition. However, one crucial component was still missing—the gun sight. Despite several versions produced, the restoration team struggled to track one down, embarking on a challenging search over the years. Each time a sight was located, it either proved



too costly or was sold before it could be acquired.

Then, in 2025, a conversation sparked a turning point. William Ellsworth, a military enthusiast from Pennsylvania, reached out to the museum to learn more about the

Howitzer's history. During their discussions, he learned of the ongoing quest for a gun sight. Taking on the challenge, Mr. Ellsworth began leveraging his contacts to find one. In a remarkable twist, he visited the museum for the first time in January 2026, presenting a gun sight that he had successfully sourced.

The donation event was attended by Bob Leicht, the chief of the Howitzer restoration team, who traveled from New Jersey to witness

this momentous occasion. After 12 years of perseverance, William Ellsworth's dedication paid off, allowing visitors to the AMC Museum to see the 75mm Pack Howitzer fully restored and complete.

For more information on the AMC Museum, visit their website at www.amcmuseum.org, or stop by the Museum Wednesday–Sunday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at 1301 Heritage Road, DAFB, DE. Admission and parking are free.



Pictured (left to right) Bob Leicht and William Ellsworth discuss the history of the 75mm Pack Howitzer.



William Ellsworth poses with the fully restored and complete 75mm Pack Howitzer

Groundbreaking



CDCC Hosts Groundbreaking for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Delaware

On the chilly spring morning of Thursday, April 2, 2026, the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) hosted a Groundbreaking Ceremony for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Delaware (BBBS) to begin construction on their new Youth Enrichment Center at 3156 Forrest Avenue, Dover. This new center is a major capital investment in youth infrastructure and will act as a centralized hub for mentoring, academic support, workforce development, wellness, and technology-based enrichment programs for youth across Kent County.

This groundbreaking is the result of years of strategic growth, community listening, and increased demand for mentoring and youth support services in Kent County. The event was attended by several special guests including elected officials, local stakeholders, BBBS staff and board members. BBBS board member Sam Moultrie led the event program, other speakers included US Senator Chris Coons, Delaware State

Representative William Bush, Dover City Councilman Andre Boggerty, BBBS Board President Morgan R. Dean, and BBBS CEO Anya Lindsey-Jenkins.

Several speakers talked of people and organizations who influenced and mentored them while they were growing up, and the impact that mentoring had on the person they are today. During the presentation, BBBS CEO Lindsey-Jenkins shared an overview of the project and the specific plans for the property, noting that the first area to open this summer will be a multimedia lab to include a gaming center, plus a studio for producing podcasts and recordings. Additional phases will continue in the fall and early 2027 including space dedicated to mentoring programs, workforce readiness, tutoring and homework, and wellness/life skills. Several of the speakers praised Lindsey-Jenkins for her forward-thinking vision that is now becoming a reality.

Lindsey-Jenkins shared the impetus behind this expansion in Kent County,

“The mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Delaware is to create and support mentoring relationships that ignite the power and promise of young people. As we evaluated data, community feedback, and program demand, it became clear that Kent County, particularly Dover and surrounding communities needed increased access to structured mentoring, workforce exposure, and safe enrichment spaces for youth.”

BBBS notes that growing numbers of young people are facing barriers related to poverty, academic challenges, and limited access to opportunity. Lindsey-Jenkins pointed out, “At the same time, we’ve seen incredible potential, strong schools, local businesses willing to partner, engaged civic leadership, and families eager for support. That combination of need and opportunity made Central Delaware a natural and strategic place for deeper investment.”

The Youth Enrichment Center represents Big Brothers Big Sisters long-term commitment to Central

Delaware. In the future, they plan on expanding workforce certifications, digital media training, leadership academies, family engagement workshops, and mental wellness support, all rooted in mentorship. They want this Center to become a community hub where young people can explore their interests, discover their strengths, and build the confidence to pursue their goals.

“Our goal is not just to operate in Central Delaware, but to be a trusted, lasting partner in strengthening the community for generations to come,” Lindsey-Jenkins emphasized.

For more information on Big Brothers Big Sisters of Delaware and the new Youth Enrichment Center, please visit their website at www.bbbsde.org or call 302-998-3577.

Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce to congratulate Big Brothers Big Sisters of Delaware on this exciting expansion and to pledge support for their work in Central Delaware.



Member News

Local Artist Transforms Children’s Library into Magical Reading Forest

There was a point in her life that watercolor artist, Patti Bishop, thought she would become an illustrator of children’s books. With the recent completion of a collection of 3 murals for the children’s section at the Duck Creek Regional Library, it seems like that plan has become a reality but on a much larger scale.

Patti is a Smyrna, Delaware-based artist and designer with over 30 years of professional creative experience, and founder of Patti Bishop Watercolors. She served as Visual Communications Chair at Delaware Technical Community College for 21 years and retired in January to focus full-time on commissioned watercolor portraits, original fine art, licensed home décor collections, and collaborative mural projects.

Soon after Patti retired, she received a call from Kathy Messer, president of Friends of the Duck Creek Regional Library. The Friends were one of the driving forces behind the massive expansion and remodel of the library which opened to the public on June 9, 2025. As part of the finishing touches on the children’s section of the library, the Friends were looking for some woodland-themed murals to build on the current décor, and Kathy knew just who to call for this project.

Patti and Kathy met to discuss specifics on the design the Friends were looking for with an eye on taking inspiration from



the existing wooden tree silhouettes on the walls and kid-sized chairs designed with racoon-tail backs. In addition, both women agreed that the design should include animals that you see in the Duck Creek area. “So, no bears,” Patti added with a laugh. The Friends wanted to steer clear of a cartoon look. “We were looking for something a bit more realistic with a friendly and whimsical feeling,” Kathy explained.

After their initial meeting Patti went to work in her studio on pencil sketches for each of the 3 murals, then she and Kathy would meet every couple of weeks to ensure that the design was on track. Patti pointed out that good communication is important through every step of the process. She added, “Clients hire you for your creativity, so you need to be able to show them that you understand their vision and build their trust in you.”

Once the pencil drawings were approved, Patti started creating the watercolor designs. Each of the animals for the murals were painted separately from the woodland scenes they inhabit. This gave Patti the ability to move the animals around to different spots and adjust their size if needed. The scenes included a forest in the background and a flower-filled meadow in the foreground. The colors used in the murals coordinate with the colors used throughout the décor in the children’s section.

For the next step in the process, Patti scanned all the various elements for the murals into her computer for her to assemble into the final design. Again, Patti and Kathy met regularly throughout this final process to make adjustments as needed. There were a few tweaks made including the repositioning of a couple of animals and the resizing of a fox, but thanks to the ongoing communication between the artist and client, the changes were minor.

Each mural was built at a quarter-size scale so that it would maintain a high resolution with clear, crisp images and vivid colors once printed. The final images were printed on adhesive-backed canvas wallpaper. The canvas material aided in the installation by preventing the wallpaper from stretching when it was applied or adjusted on the wall. The murals are each more than 5 feet tall, and the largest is more than 16 feet wide

x more than 6 feet tall. Patti and her husband, Charlie Bishop, completed the installation themselves in less than two days. On a Friday evening, they cleaned the walls and then returned at 8:30 a.m. the next morning to hang the panels and complete the installation by 6 p.m.

What do the Friends think about the new murals? Kathy enthusiastically shared, “They are more than what we thought they would be. Patti picked up on every detail. Sometimes your vision doesn’t always translate to an artist’s work. But this is like a dream come true!”

Plans are in the works for the sale of prints and notecards featuring animals from the murals to benefit the Friends of the Duck Creek Regional Library. And, of course, coloring pages featuring the woodland animals will soon be available for the kids. You can follow Patti’s design work and the installation process of the Duck Creek Regional Library murals on Instagram @pattibishopwatercolors. And you can view the murals in person at the library during their normal hours of operation at 22 South Main St., Smyrna. For more information, visit their website at <https://duckcreek.lib.de.us/>.

Patti is available to create and install custom murals for a variety of spaces including businesses, public spaces and private homes. For more information about Patti Bishop Watercolors, please visit the website at www.pattibishopwatercolors.com.



School Districts Host Delaware's Kick-off for Apprenticeship Week



National Apprenticeship Week kicked off in Delaware with a Celebration on Monday, April 27, 2026, hosted by the Polytech School District in partnership with the New Castle County Vocational Technical School District and the Sussex County Vocational Technical School District. Polytech School District Superintendent, Kevin Dickerson, welcomed the event attendees at the outdoor space including Delaware's U.S. Senator Chris Coons, Delaware legislators Sen. Eric Buckson, Rep. Shannon Morris and Rep. Lyndon Yearick, and Kent County Levy Court Commissioners Joanne Masten, Terry Pepper, and Robert J. Scott, Kent County Administrator Kevin Sipple, and representatives from the business/industry partners of the apprenticeship program. But the true stars of the event were the student apprentices who filled the three-quarters of the audience seating.



The theme of strengthening Delaware's economy was highlighted in the presentations by shared stories of successful apprenticeships and details of the impact of Delaware's vocational-technical school districts on the economy. According to a study completed by Chmura Economics & Analytics, Source JobsEQ® in fiscal year 2025, the economic impact from apprenticeships has been impressive. Delaware's registered apprenticeship programs served 7,422 high school students and 8,146 adult leaders, created 445 new jobs and generated \$40.4 million in labor income delivering an estimated \$11.80 return for every \$1 invested in 2025. The apprenticeship programs have filled critical workforce shortages and linked participants to in-demand careers including electrical, HVAC, plumbing, automotive technician, cybersecurity, welding/fabrication, heavy equipment



operations, industrial maintenance, and electro-mechanical.

The keynote speakers for the event included Senator Coons, President of the Delaware Chapter of Associated Builders and Contractors (ABC) Jennifer Cohan, and COO of M. Davis & Sons Inc. John Gooden. Each speaker emphasized the importance of apprenticeships to the local economy. In addition, Senator Coons referenced the income potential and significant savings on education by stating, "Finishing one of Delaware's apprenticeship programs is a million-dollar deal." Jennifer talked about the need to build interest in apprenticeships with middle school students and pointed out that 86% of those who participate in the program stay and work in Delaware. The 2025 Chmura study also noted 2,106 job placements and \$20,656 in a post-completion wage increase. On top of that, the Delaware Department of Education has found that 100% of those enrolled in the apprenticeship program complete it, 97% of them graduate, and 99% of them are college or career ready when they complete the program. John from industry partner M. Davis & Sons emphasized these statistics by saying, "There's

no limit to where you can go when you start your career in trades."

Delaware Secretary of Education Cindy Marten and Secretary of Labor LaKresha Moultrie presented Governor Matt Myer's Proclamation naming April 22 – May 2, 2026, as Apprenticeship Week in Delaware. Members of the 153rd General Assembly from all 3 counties, joined together to present a Legislative Tribute in honor of National Apprenticeship Week. Many of them briefly mentioned their connections to the state's vocational schools as students, teachers, parents, and/or employers.

When the presentations were completed, Superintendent Joseph Jones from the New Castle County Vocational Technical School District announced the most anticipated part of the program. Ink pens were passed to the apprentices from the 4 schools represented at the event to sign their workforce commitments. The crowd clapped and cheered as each individual was recognized and their trade and employer were announced. You couldn't help but feel the sense of pride sweep across the audience.

Closing remarks were presented by Kevin Carson, Superintendent from Sussex County Vocational Technical School District. Two important points that came from his presentation included the need to shift testing to include more comprehensive scoring as opposed to exclusively the more traditional testing methods. In addition, he emphasized the need to "normalize vocational education" so it is valued and respected in the same way as a college education.

For more information on Apprenticeship Programs in Kent County, please contact Polytech School District at www.polytechschooldistrict.com or (302) 697-2170.



FLIGHT LESSONS

A log from the Air Mobility Command Civic Leader
for the Dover Air Force Base's 436th Airlift Wing



Flight Lessons: Training the World's Best Pilots

On April 7th, twenty-four Air Mobility Command Civic leaders from across the nation gathered in Oklahoma for an immersive educational experience designed to shed light on the way the United States Air Force trains its aviators. This was an eye-opening and impressive adventure from beginning to end as we heard presentations, toured two air bases, met community leaders, spent time in military aircraft and simulators, and had opportunities to speak directly with the would-be pilots and their instructors.

The group's first stop was in Enid, a small city of about 50,000 that serves as home to Vance Air Force Base. We learned that the residents of this idyllic city see it as a perfect representation of what our country is all about: patriotism, work ethic, and support – that's why they lovingly refer to their hometown as "Enid, America." On our first evening together, we had an opportunity to meet the community's leaders and learn about the beautiful partnership between the community and the base – I must admit that this partnership reminded me very much of my own hometown!

Named for a local World War II hero and Medal of Honor winner, Lt. Col. Leon Robert Vance, Jr., Vance Air Force Base is home to the United States Air Force's 71st Flying Training Wing. The mission of Vance is simply "to train the world's best pilots to defend our nation." Everything that happens at Vance is designed to support that one very focused mission.

While at Vance AFB, we were treated to some very memorable and insightful experiences. We toured the base and the flightline, and watched as student after student, accompanied by their instructors, took off and landed with ease and absolute perfection. One real highlight for me was the opportunity we were given to sit in on a class, in real time, where student pilots were randomly quizzed about the specific actions they might take should they experience an emergency on board (i.e. engine failure, fire, enemy attack, etc.). These students were required to answer quickly and confidently regarding how they would determine what the emergency was and what their appropriate response would be. While much of the lingo was a mystery to this civic leader, one could not walk away from this experience without being impressed at the professionalism, knowledge, and know-how of these young airmen! WOW!

After our full day at Vance, we boarded a C-17 and headed to our next destination, Altus Air Force Base. With its average of 300 days of weather conducive to flying each year – and with few tall buildings or obstructions, Altus is a perfect location for training fliers! Like Vance, the mission is focused and specific: "to develop the decisive Mobility Force of the Future." After Vance, Altus is the next step for our pilots. This is where they learn to specialize in advanced mobility operations training on specific planes: the C-17, the KC-135, and the newer KC-46. Our group had the oppor-

tunity to tour the facility and even try our hand at jumping into the KC-135 simulator to learn the ins and outs of operating the boom in a refueling mission in the air!

On our last evening together, we were treated to a lovely dinner presented by the Altus Military Affairs Committee. We learned a great deal about how the folks in Altus care for their airmen and their families – and how the military population is tightly incorporated into the community.

Across both bases, there was much conversation not only about the mechanics of teaching flying techniques and emergency procedures, but also about providing services to ensure that the mental health of our airmen remains strong. Family readiness was also a priority, especially in today's global climate and the demands on our airmen while we are in conflict.

One of the most impactful experiences for this civic leader was the opportunity on two different days to have lunch with an airman. At Vance, I had the privilege of sharing that time with a graduate of that program who is now an instructor – and at Altus, with an airman who specializes in the financial obligations behind the mission. Our conversations were nothing short of amazing! We talked about everything from the lack of entertainment available in the towns to the rigor of teaching and learning, to future plans, to recruiting for the force, and more. Both conversations became very serious when, with no prompting on my part, they turned to the conflict in

Iran. While that conflict doesn't presently have a direct effect on the day-to-day activities at these bases, there is a definite impact on the hearts and minds of these young airmen. Suffice it to say that, when bodies started coming home, what they are training for became even more "real." They are carefully carrying the weight of that reality.

There were several takeaways for me from this journey, some bigger and more important than others! I had not previously visited Oklahoma and was interested to see the lay of the land as we traveled from the airport to Enid. What I saw were: massive farms with acres and acres of flat, green fields, hundreds of windmills, a sprinkling of oil rigs, and cows... for miles and miles... Also, I developed a renewed understanding of Oscar Hammerstein's famous lyrical description of Oklahoma as a place where "the WIND comes sweepin' down the plain!"

Another impression from this trip was a reminder of how young many of our airmen are! At one point, we were in an air traffic control tower with several airmen who were totally running the show with great ease and precision – not one of them was more than 30 years old. They have young energy, they are so bright, and they are respectfully excited to be part of something bigger than themselves. While they still have much to learn and experience in the way of life and "adulthood," it is a comfort to know

that we, as a nation, are in very good hands!

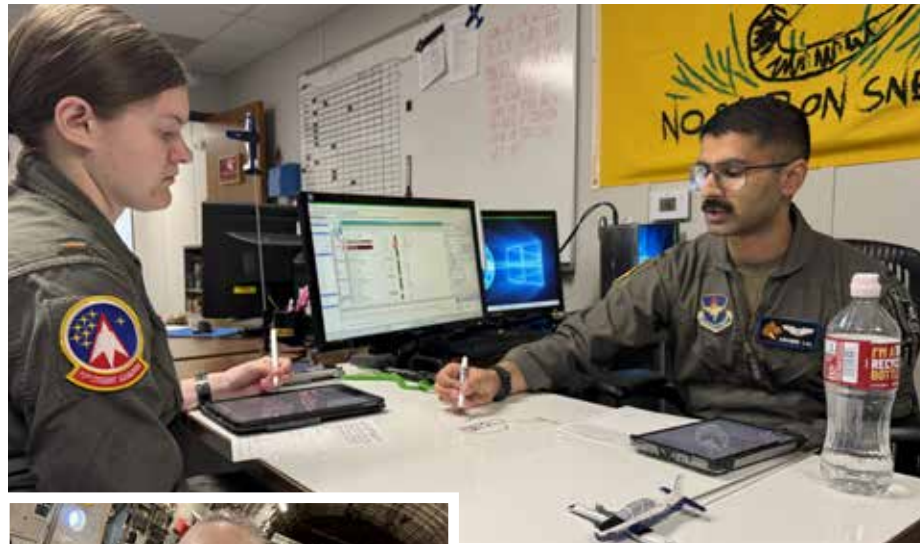
My biggest takeaway from this trip was a renewed sense of the need for community support for our airmen and their families. We talked a lot about the toll of war. We talked about the lives that have been lost and the much-deserved attention given to the fallen and their families through the dignified transfers and related activities. But we also took some time to talk about our airmen who

will return from this conflict to our bases and their families very much alive. We must not overlook the toll that this experience will take on them as well. They are engaged in a type of war that they have never seen before – and they will carry this experience with them long after they return. Because of their service, that is a weight that most of us will never be required to carry. We owe these brave men and women an enormous debt of gratitude – and

it is imperative that we take the time and energy to give them our support in whatever way we can.

Our next trip is scheduled for late August, when we will visit Dyess AFB and McConnell AFB in Kansas (I'm clicking my heels...). The focus of this trip will be preparation for military combat and warfighting as we examine the way we will deter and defeat adversaries in the high-end fights of the future. Stay tuned for more Flight Lessons to come...

Note from Dina: On the evening of April 23rd - two weeks after our visit, Enid America was hit with a devastating tornado that leveled homes and cars and caused the temporary closure of Vance AFB. Homes and lives were terribly disrupted. Our thoughts, prayers, and hearts are with the people of Enid and with our airmen and their families.



Special Feature

CDCC Guests Checked In at the Residence Inn by Marriot!



The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce's (CDCC) members and friends checked in at the Residence Inn by Marriot Dover (600 Jefferic Blvd, Dover) to meet, mix, and mingle on Wednesday, April 29th for another successful Sunset Business Mixer. New and familiar faces exchanged hugs, laughs, smiles, and business cards as they enjoyed food, drinks, engaging conversation and winning prizes, prizes, prizes!

The CDCC members always leave our premier networking event feeling not only motivated, but also with a pocket full of business cards from the contacts made during the event. The CDCC loves to see our members coming together to make things happen and stimulate growth in our community. With everyone working together, we can make a difference, so we are pleased to be able to offer this opportunity for our members and guests to meet and make it happen on the last Wednesday of every month.

The CDCC extends a thank you to the Residence Inn by Marriot team for being such accommodating hosts for the evening, welcoming the community into their "home," and offering a comfortable, and beautifully decorated space for like-minded professionals to connect, catch up, and exchange ideas.

We hope the event attendees learned something new about this inviting facility and its offerings, and we hope everyone had the opportunity to tour of the facility. Residence Inn does so much to support Delaware's tourism economy and is eager to welcome visitors. Thank you also to the Residence by Marriot Dover

team for their delicious and amazing grazing table galore they built for our members and guests. "Yummy" doesn't begin to describe the abundance of sweet and savory treats and refreshing beverages everyone enjoyed!

Congratulations to all the lucky door prize and 50/50 raffle winners, we hope you enjoyed your winnings and smiled the whole way home. Congratulations to our new Member of the Month, Jewell Gale-Brooks, who will be featured in the June issue of the Chamber Connections newspaper and on our website. Be sure to keep an eye out for her profile.

Thank you to everyone in attendance at April's Sunset Business Mixer at the Residence Inn by Marriot. It was truly an engaging evening of fun and friends, new and old, and relationship building to make Central Delaware stronger than ever. If this was your first CDCC Mixer, we thank you for coming and hope you had a great time being part of the meeting of Central Delaware minds! In addition, we hope that you will consider becoming a member of the Chamber so you can experience many more events like this.

The next Sunset Business Mixer will take place on Wednesday, May 27th at Tre Sorelle Dolce Ice Cream & Mini Golf. This event is partnered up with The Chamber Mini Masters Mixer. In case you missed the article, you can read more about this combo event on page 1 of this publication.

For more information or to register for an upcoming event, please reach out to the CDCC office at (302) 734-7513 or visit our website at www.cdcc.net/events. Potential members – we always love having you join us. Remember you can attend two events before we require membership. Thank you for another great gathering and see you soon, Central Delaware!



Special Feature

25th Annual 55 Plus Expo – Acclaimed Success!



On Thursday, April 16, 2026, the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) brought the community together in celebration for the 25th Anniversary of our 55 Plus Expo at Bally's Dover Casino Resort. It was an honor to once again welcome Delaware's fastest growing demographic to this event and connect them with a variety of services to improve their quality of life, in addition to offering them a day full of lively fun.

The CDCC would like to thank the more than 70 vendors and exhibitors who brought the Rollins Center to life for the event guests throughout the day. We appreciate your hard work, time, and service to Central Delaware's ever important 55 plus community and the CDCC. In addition, we were happy to once again feature Caregiver Resources for those individuals that are caring for family members or senior friends. We know they appreciated the support they found at the 55 Plus Expo. Vendors this year represented a variety of industries including healthcare, home improvements, nutrition, home care services, finance, technology, and more.

In addition to the amazing vendors present, there were many highlights to this year's event such as: Bayhealth's Wellness Center with plenty of free health screenings including some new ones available this year, the Modern Maturity Center's Steppin' Seniors dance performance, Dover YMCA's blood-pumping Zumba dance choreography, a cooking demonstration by Chef Carl of Macau Kitchen, the presenting of the colors by the First State Military Academy, take-home tomato plants from Delaware – Kent County Master Gardeners, a Delaware Trivia Contest presented by Kent County Tourism, and the giant, walk-through, inflated colon bringing unforgettable awareness to the importance of screenings for colon cancer. There

was much more to be seen, heard, and experienced at the CDCC's 25th Annual 55 Plus Expo. We hope you were there to enjoy it!

And to those who were there, the CDCC thanks everyone for attending and working at the 55 Plus Expo, from the volunteers handing out bags at the doors to the drivers from the local senior centers who ferried their residents and members back and forth throughout the day. Thank you to our local healthcare heroes who care for our community in so many ways. Thank you to all caregivers for supporting your loved ones. We are sure this year's event provided smiles, a feeling of community, and resources to help you or your loved ones live a better, happier, and healthier life.

Thank you to our 2026 55 Plus Expo Sponsors for their generous support!

Wellness Center Gold Sponsor:
Bayhealth

Silver Sponsors:
Coastal Bath Company, Delaware Medicare Assistance Bureau, Delaware Health and Social Services – Bureau of Chronic Diseases, Highmark Delaware, Silver Lining Home Healthcare, and Wellcare

Celebration Sponsor:
Bay Terrace Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center

Media Sponsor:
Dover Post

Event Sponsor:
Bally's Dover Casino Resort

Bag Sponsors:
Bay Terrace Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center, Liberty Tax
The CDCC is excited about what's in store for the 26th Annual 55 Plus Expo coming in spring of 2027! Plans are already under way. More details will follow as we finalize some important details. Stay tuned! For additional information about other CDCC events, go to: www.cdcc.net/events/chamber-events.



Best of the Best Administrative Professionals



Sara Black
Smyrna School District



Amber Ford
Village at Blue Hen



Stephanie Sargent
WSFS Bank

The CDCC thanks all nominators for recognizing their wonderful Administrative Professionals and their hard work this year. Please know that it was extremely difficult for us to choose just three winners. However, you can be assured that the CDCC appreciates the work each of these professionals does, and they are the BEST of the BEST! Keep up the great work!

Thank you to our amazing members who donated wonderful items for our winners: Caribbean Bush Tea, European Wax Center, Fifer Farm Store & Kitchen, Jen-Mor Florist, Special Touch Card Creations, and Texas Roadhouse.

Honorable mention goes to the hard-working individuals (in alpha order by last name): **Jennifer Bayes** – Century Engineering LLC, A Kleinfelder Company, **Elissa Bell** – IQ Fiber, **Tammy Dias** – Barkley Heating & Air, LLC, **Christine Haynes** – Dover Federal Credit Union, **Heather Keller** - The Rivera Group of Keller Williams Realty Central Delaware, **Megan Lawrence** – Keller Williams Realty Central Delaware, **Nancy McCoy** – Bally’s Dover Casino Resort, **Sarah McGarity** – Keller Williams Realty Central Delaware, **Kelly Moyer** – Holy Cross High School, **Ebony O’Conner** – Delaware State University, **Dalia Rodriguez** – Delaware Prosperity Partnership, **Fritzy Rodriguez** – Energize Delaware, and **Larissa Smith** – Harmony at Kent.

Ribbon Cuttings

CDCC Celebrates BenchMark Physical Therapy with Ribbon Cutting

SMYRNA, DE – On Tuesday, April 21, 2026, the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) was delighted to host a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the opening of a new Delaware location for BenchMark Physical Therapy. Regional Vice President Jai Lopez, Clinical Director Mackenzie Straw, and the BenchMark team were joined by Chamber members, and friends to cut the ribbon at their impressive new location at 207 Stadium Street in Smyrna.

In addition to the ribbon cutting, event attendees enjoyed a delicious barbeque spread from a local restaurant, celebratory beverages, door prizes, and guided tours of their facility by their friendly staff.

At BenchMark Physical Therapy, their commitment to patients is simple: effective, compassionate care marked by integrity and honesty. Mackenzie explained further, “We are known for our best-in-class physical therapy, patient care, and unparalleled customer service. We stand as the top physical therapy clinic in Smyrna – trusted by patients and healthcare professionals alike.”



They are proud members of the Upstream Rehabilitation family of clinical care, which provides BenchMark Physical Therapy with a nationwide network of expert physical and occupational therapists. At their Smyrna location, their physical therapy treatments include the following areas: headaches, chronic pain, joint pain, back pain, arthritis management, pre/post-surgery, and many other areas of specialty.

An initial visit to BenchMark Physical Therapy includes an evaluation by an expert therapist, plus a discussion of your goals and plan of care. Mackenzie shared, “We understand that choosing the right physical therapy provider is important. At our Smyrna clinic, we offer individualized treatment for a remarkable patient experience.” Treatments may include exercise, manual therapy (a hands-on technique used to decrease pain and increase range of motion), modalities such as electrical stimulation, moist



heat or ice, and patient education, including a home exercise program.

Appointments can be scheduled on their website at the “Locations” tab at www.benchmarkpt.com/, and BenchMark Physical Therapy accepts most major insurance carriers.

Anyone interested in learning more about this premier destination for exceptional physical and occu-

ational therapy care should visit their website, call (302)596-9752 to schedule an appointment, or plan an in-person visit to 207 Stadium Street, Smyrna.

Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce to welcome BenchMark Physical Therapy as a member of the CDCC and celebrate their newest Delaware location!

Ribbon Cuttings

CDCC Hosts a Ribbon Cutting to Welcome B/Net Systems

DOVER, DE – The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) was pleased to host a ribbon-cutting celebration at their Dover office on Tuesday, March 31, 2026, to welcome IT services company, B/Net Systems, to Delaware. Chamber members and friends joined CEO Chris Dean and Chief Information Officer Darrell Poe to cut the ceremonial red ribbon and officially welcome them to the community.

The mission of B/Net Systems is to provide managed IT services for small and medium-sized businesses. They strive for a trusted relationship with their clients, so they can provide objective and actionable IT advice. Their services include managing IT systems for their clients, both on-premises and cloud, and focusing on security, reliability, and high performance. They pride themselves on proactive IT management and a trusted relationship with their clients.

“Expanding into Delaware is a natural next step for our organization,” explained Darrell, “This move allows us to strengthen relationships, better support our clients, and invest directly in a community that



aligns with our values and long-term vision.”

B/Net Systems joined the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce last year and is also a member of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce. They have been involved with the local community through the Dover Air Force Base Honorary Commander Program and volunteered for the Georgetown Wings and Wheels annual event. During the Honorary Commander program, they were paired with the 436th Com-



munications Squadron and had the opportunity to assist the squadron as they developed IT best practices. They have coordinated cybersecurity events for DAFB and Dover businesses, and also one for the Georgetown businesses. They plan to continue

being heavily involved in the local community as opportunities present themselves.

For more information about B/Net Systems or to schedule an IT assessment for your business, please contact them at 202-630-7770 or visit them online at www.bnetsystems.com.

Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce to welcome B/Net Systems to Delaware!

CDCC Hosts Ribbon Cutting for the 50th Anniversary of Dover Pools

DOVER, DE – The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) grabbed their swim goggles and fins for the ribbon-cutting ceremony they hosted on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Dover Pools. As if on cue, the temperatures in Dover soared to 84 degrees Fahrenheit, making it the perfect weather to truly celebrate summer’s favorite activity of sitting by a backyard pool and the family-owned company that helps make it all happen. CDCC members, friends, and local dignitaries, joined co-owners Chris Anderson and his sister Nichole Anderson, and the entire Dover Pools team to cut the ribbon and kick off the celebration.

Attendees of the event enjoyed refreshments from the local Tim Hortons, plenty of clever Dover Pools summer swag including lip balm, can coolies and mini beachballs, plus they were offering a Spring Sale and an exclusive ribbon-cutting door prize.

Randy Anderson, father of the current owners, opened Dover Pools in 1976 with only one location in Camden. He discovered the greater



Dover market while he was traveling for his job as a sales rep with an inground pool manufacturer. Since then, they have expanded to 5 locations on Delmarva: north Dover, south Dover, Milford, Seaford and Salisbury, Maryland. They offer above ground pools, hot tubs, swim spas, saunas, and all the support products for them including chemicals, filters, toys, and games.

The mission of Dover Pools is to help homeowners transform their backyards into paradise by providing them with superior customer service, quality products, and an experience they’ll always remember. Dover Pools emphasizes more than just selling products. They focus on building relationships with customers, offering personalized solutions, and delivering a complete pool and hot tub experience. Chris explained, “We want our customers to be able to splash and dive



into a relaxing lifestyle right in their own backyards.”

Dover Pools and their family foundation are supporters of many local charities including the Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity, CenDel Foundation, Meals on Wheels, the Food Bank of Delaware, and others, and they have been members of the CDCC since they opened in 1976.

Nichole shared, “We are so grateful to our father for the legacy he left us.”

For more information about Dover Pools, please visit their website at www.doverpools.com.

Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce to celebrate Dover Pools for 50 splashing years of successfully serving Delmarva!

Ribbon Cuttings

CDCC Celebrates the New Dover YMCA Discovery Center



The Discovery Center is an exciting addition that will take youth programs at the Dover Y to the next level and create opportunities in the local community as part of their Family First Initiative. The new offerings at the Center will include childcare spaces for summer camps, "School is Out" care, and the expansion of the Kids Club. Dover Y youth members will also enjoy new featured programs such as the "Ninja Zone" obstacle course training, a "Makers Space" for crafting and fostering STEM skills, and "Teen Clubs" to build confidence and socialization skills. The new space will also be the center of many events including Family

Nights, Birthday Parties, and Parents Night Out.

John shared what inspired the ribbon cutting, "We believe all children deserve the opportunity to learn new things, discover their talents, and prepare for adulthood. Through fostering imagination, creativity, and connections while inspiring learning through literacy and STEM, we can greatly enhance academic outcomes and ensure youth are on a pathway to success. We are excited about taking this next step in supporting the critical needs of families in Dover through providing meaningful childcare, programs, and joyful experiences."

During the program, John recognized several community organizations including Bally's Dover, Draper Holdings Charitable Foundation, and Speedway Children's Charities for their generous support of this project. John added, "We invite other organizations to partner with us in creating opportunities that unlock possibilities for families and youth in Kent County."

For more information about the Dover YMCA, please visit them online at www.ymcade.org/locations/dover-ymca/.

Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce to congratulate the Dover YMCA on the new addition of the Discovery Center to their youth programs.

CDCC Celebrates Jen-Mor Florist's 55th Anniversary



each customer for weddings, funerals, seasonal holiday events, and even those day-to-day purchases.

When husband and wife team, Jane and John Zimmerman Jr., opened the business in 1971, they had two employees. Today, the business, led by their children John III, Michael, Gina (Fries) and Susan (Krabill), has grown to 22 full and part-time employees to handle incoming orders, creating live and silk floral designs, marketing, finances, inventory, deliveries, and the list of duties goes on. Each one of the kids oversees a different aspect of the business to match their individual strengths.

For any business to still be operating 55 years after opening is no small feat, but this is especially true for an inde-



pendent florist shop. Co-owner Gina shared that the number of these shops is half what they were in the 1970s. She explained that many young people shop online retailers as opposed to shopping locally, so they try to educate the next generation of the importance of buying from local businesses first. The continued success of their business speaks tells you the rest of the story.

The anniversary celebration included delicious cookies, cupcakes and punch,

a festive assortment of swag items, complimentary bouquets of flowers, and sale prices throughout their shop for the day.

For more information about Jen-Mor Florist, visit their website at www.jenmor.com or call 302-697-3273.

Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce to celebrate Jen-Mor Florist for their 55 years of bloomin' beautiful service to the Central Delaware community!

DOVER, DE –The sunshiny, spring morning of Thursday, April 9, 2026, was the perfect day for a ribbon-cutting ceremony hosted by the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) to celebrate the new Discovery Center at the Dover YMCA, located at 1137 S. State Street, Dover. Chamber members, community partners and supporters, local dignitaries, and friends joined Dover YMCA Executive Director John Rice, YMCA of Delaware CEO Jarrett Royster, YMCA of Delaware COO Linda Risk, and the Dover YMCA team and members to cut the ceremonial red ribbon and officially open the new Center.

John explained to the attendees that an ancient Japanese legend promises that anyone who folds a thousand paper cranes will be granted a wish. The Dover Y team, with the support of the community, folded those one-thousand paper cranes, and their wish for the Discover Center became a reality. Attendees of the ribbon cutting had the opportunity to make their own paper cranes, enjoy delicious and healthy snacks, see the Dover Y programs in action, and tour the new Center.

The mission of the YMCA of Delaware is to empower youth, foster healthy living, and promote strong communities. They do this through engaging amazing staff and volunteers, caring community partners, and a unified call to help individuals reach their full potential.

DOVER, DE – For more than five decades, the scent of fresh flowers and the artistry of bespoke bouquets from Jen-Mor Florist have been a cornerstone of Central Delaware's most celebrated moments. On Wednesday, April 1, 2026, the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) marked a rare milestone for the independent retail florist shop, Jen-Mor Florist, by celebrating their 55 years of business with a commemorative ribbon-cutting ceremony. Attended by longtime customers, the second-generation owners, and the long-time staff members, the celebration honored the shop's enduring legacy—from its humble beginnings in 1971 to its current status as a local institution that has weathered every season with grace and grit.

Jen-Mor Florist is known for their high-quality fresh flower arrangements, unique silk flower arrangements, overflowing fruit and snack gift baskets, vibrant house plants and dish gardens, and a variety of charming seasonal gift items when you want a special gift but don't know what you should get. They offer exceptional customer service and provide personal attention to

New Member Spotlight

Say “Hello!” to CarpeVITA Home Care

The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) is pleased to welcome CarpeVITA Home Care as a new member of the Chamber!

CarpeVITA into one of Delaware’s most trusted home care providers. The business has proudly been accredited by the Better Business Bureau (BBB) for over 10 years, with a consistent A+ Rating, reflecting its longstanding commitment to quality, integrity, and client satisfaction. They provide their clients with a new experience in healthcare, one that is personalized, streamlined, convenient and effective. CarpeVITA Home Care offers a full continuum of in-home non-medical services for clients from pediatric through geriatric care. Their services can range from one-hour check-ins to 24-hour around-the-clock care services.

CarpeVITA Home Care is unique in that they provide their clients with truly Personalized Care Plans that might include not only Home Care, but also Care Management Services, and additional services provided by CarpeVITA Authorized Providers. This combination ensures not only the independence of “aging in place,” but also the mental and physical stimulation and the care



between visits that ensures the best outcomes for the best value.

Robyn Sharp Mooney is the President of CarpeVITA Home Care, a remarkable leader whose career spans over 35 years of diverse professional experiences. She is a graduate of the Medical Center of Delaware School of Radiologic Technology and worked as an MRI Technologist at Christiana Imaging Center (CIC), combining technical precision with compassionate patient care. From evaluating and scanning patients to coordinating with physicians, managing scheduling, billing, and insurance matters, she gained a comprehensive understanding of healthcare operations.

After her time at CIC, her career took a creative and entrepreneurial turn as owner of a children’s clothing boutique and then a salon coordinator at a boutique hair and nail salon. During her time at the salon, Robyn was inspired by her experiences supporting loved ones diagnosed

with cancer, including her father and two close friends. This pivotal period sparked her interest in home health care, and in 2011, Robyn launched a home care business from her kitchen with just one client and one caregiver. Under her visionary leadership, CarpeVITA Home Care has grown into a leading provider of non-medical in-home care in Delaware, renowned for its personalized, flexible and compassionate approach.

Robyn’s dedication extends beyond her professional life. She has long been an active community leader, and an advocate for home and community care as a member of the Board of Directors for the Delaware Association of Home and Community Care and sits on the Advisory Board for Delaware First Health.

Despite her busy career, Robyn values family and personal time. She enjoys relaxing at the beach and cherishes moments with her husband, three adult children, and three grandsons. Robyn is not just a business Leader; she is a testament to the power of perseverance, compassion, and the difference one person can make in the lives of many.



At CarpeVITA Home Care, Robyn has surrounded herself with a dedicated, professional team and insists on upholding high standards of compassion, respect, dignity, kindness and confidentiality. They treat every client as if they are family.

To learn more about CarpeVITA and to schedule an affordability consultation, please reach out to them online at <https://carpevitahomecare.com/> or call 302-482-4305.

Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce to welcome CarpeVITA Home Care as a new member of the Chamber!

Introducing Chesapeake Bath and Home Solutions

The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) is pleased to introduce Chamber member, Chesapeake Bath and Home Solutions!

They offer full bathroom remodeling, tub to shower conversions, shower and tub replacements, luxury tile remodeling, walk-in tubs, free-standing tubs and whole home flooring. With expertise in bathroom remodeling and flooring across Delmarva, their team combines craftsmanship, reliability, and personal care in every project. They’re dedicated to delivering more than just renovations—they create spaces that improve daily living.

Chesapeake Bath and Home Solutions is an employee-owned company. This means that everyone with a key role in the company (sales, office management, general management, full remodels, production and marketing) owns shares in the company. Marketing Manager Taylor Joseph explained, “This leads to higher standards across the board because every project truly is personal



to the team. We hold each other accountable to that higher standard.”

Another unique aspect that sets Chesapeake Bath and Home Solutions apart from their competitors is the fact that they do whole bathroom remodeling, in addition to offering custom services from one-day updates to total full transformations with no subcontractors. Everything they offer is done in-house with their team. The team that designs, builds, and installs a client’s new bath takes real pride in their work and ownership in their client’s satisfaction. They’re not just contractors — they’re craftsmen with a shared commitment to excellence.

As a locally owned company, they are committed to delivering reliable service to their neighbors throughout Delmarva. Taylor detailed how their company started by saying, “Our team



came together to do things differently in an industry that was focusing on fast, one day in and out jobs that treated customers like numbers. We have all worked for several other companies within the industry and saw where our competitors just fell short. We decided there had to be something different when it came to bathroom remodeling in the Delmarva area.”

When asked what motivated Chesapeake Bath and Home Solutions to join the CDCC, Taylor explained, “We

are excited to be a part of community events as well as connect with other businesses who share our passion and values for being involved in the community as much as possible.”

To learn more about Chesapeake Bath and Home Solutions, visit them online at <https://chesapeakebath.com>, call 410-846-BATH (2284), or follow them on Facebook.

Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce in welcoming Chesapeake Bath and Home Solutions as a CDCC member!

New Member Spotlight

Introducing Dr. Rachael Speaking/Training/Coaching, LLC

The Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce (CDCC) is pleased to introduce new Chamber member, Dr. Rachael Speaking/Training/Coaching, LLC!

From Friction to Flow – Dr. Rachael help leaders understand how their teams are wired so they can communicate better, reduce conflict, and lead with confidence through intentional leadership and communication.

Her Core Services include:

- Leadership Development Training - Engaging, high-impact sessions designed to strengthen leadership capacity, build trust, and create high-performing teams.
- Facilitation - Dynamic, interactive facilitation for team sessions, retreats, and professional development experiences that drive meaningful dialogue and actionable outcomes.
- DISC Behavioral Training & Coaching - Practical, application-focused training and coaching that helps individuals understand how they are wired, improve communication, and reduce conflict.
- Keynote Speaking - Inspiring and insightful keynote presentations that equip audiences with tools to lead with confidence, connect more effectively, and elevate performance.



Dr. Rachael’s ability to connect with diverse audiences and turn leadership concepts into practical, actionable strategies people can immediately use sets her apart from other leadership coaches.

Dr. Rachael was born in Pennsylvania but moved to Delaware at the age of 9 and grew up in Middletown. She went to college in Delaware and has been here ever since. She has 2 teenage children, and a supportive and loving family. They love Phillies baseball, boating on the Chesapeake, fishing and spending time with their family pets.

With a career in Higher Education for over 20 years, and now Maxwell

Leadership Certified, Dr. Rachael started her own LLC, training and facilitating, as well as keynote speaking to those in the community and nearby regions. Her doctorate is in Leadership, and her experience and expertise have led me here to pursue making connections and building relationships with others for whom she hopes to be able to serve. She has a passion for adding significance and value to everyone. Dr. Rachael shared, “I believe everyone deserves to be led well; and deserves to be heard and valued!”

When asked what motivated her to join the CDCC, Dr. Rachael explained, “My drive and passion for leadership development, and for relationship building has led me to expand my network beyond Middletown and into central Delaware. I used to live in Sussex County during the summers growing up, and I have a passion for the people in both Kent and Sussex. I want to add value to our communities and help people believe in themselves, their teams, and their businesses.”

To learn more about Dr. Rachael Speaking/Training/Coaching, LLC, please visit her website at www.johnmaxwellgroup.com/rachael-knotts or connect on LinkedIn at



www.linkedin.com/in/rachael-knotts-ed-03641849/. You can also reach her at DrRachaelknotts@gmail.com or 302-593-5194.

Please join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce in welcoming Dr. Rachael Speaking/Training/Coaching, LLC as a new member!

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.



Member of the Month



NAME: Anne Williams
TITLE: Director of Development
BUSINESS: Delaware Public Media (WDDE 91.1 FM)
ADDRESS: P O Box 455, Dover, DE 19903
HOURS: Delaware Public Media operates 24/7/365,
 My Hours 8am to 4pm

PHONE: (302) 294-0349
WEBSITE: delawarepublic.org
EMAIL: awilliams@delawarepublic.org



Tell us about your business/organization.

Delaware Public Media launched as Delaware First Media/DFM News - a stand-alone online news operation in June 2010. Soon after, we were able to obtain a radio signal and license, and in August 2012, the DFM News website transformed into Delaware Public Media/91.1 WDDE-FM, the first Delaware-based NPR news station. Our primary service is journalism. We produce on-air and online local news coverage, interviews, podcasts, and stories about government, education, environment, arts and culture, and the people and communities that make Delaware unique. We also provide national and international reporting through NPR and other public media partners so Delaware residents can stay informed about the world around them.

We broadcast on WDDE 91.1 FM, stream online and through our mobile app, send weekly email newsletters, and publish daily news stories on our website. At the heart of it, our service is to provide information, storytelling, and connection to the First State.

Tell us about your role in the business/organization.

As Development Director at Delaware Public Media, I lead the station's fundraising and community engagement efforts, ensuring the long-term sustainability of Delaware's only statewide public media news service. I oversee membership programs, major gifts, and special initiatives that connect listeners and donors more deeply to our mission. With federal funding no longer part of our budget, my work focuses on building a broad base of local support to keep independent, fact-based journalism

accessible to all Delawareans. Drawing on decades of experience in public broadcasting, I work closely with our team and community partners to strengthen relationships, grow revenue, and reinforce DPM's role as a trusted source of news and information.

Tell us something that makes your business/organization unique.

Delaware Public Media (DPM) is the first and only public media news service and NPR affiliate located in and dedicated to Delaware. With the change in funding last summer, DPM's work is made possible by our listeners and neighbors, sponsors and local grants, which is both humbling and empowering.

DPM is here to serve Delawareans by providing unbiased, in-depth news and information that informs, educates, and engages, and we do that by providing local, award-winning reporting from our newsroom alongside trusted content from NPR and other public media partners. Our team covers everything from state government and education to arts, culture, and human-interest stories that reflect the people and communities of Delaware.

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

Our future is rooted in continuing to serve Delaware with trusted, independent journalism - and expanding access to our news and content. We want to reach more Delawareans through digital platforms, streaming, podcasts, events, and community engagement while strengthening our newsroom.

We see a future where public media plays an even

larger role in civic engagement, education, arts and culture, and community building. We want all residents to have access to reliable information about their government, schools, environment, economy, and communities.

How has the Chamber helped your business/organization grow?

The Chamber has connected us with other non-profits, local businesses, and leaders who care about Delaware. Those connections often turn into meaningful partnerships that strengthen our work and community.

It also helps us stay connected to the business community and better understand the economic and workforce issues affecting Delaware. That insight helps inform our programming so we can produce relevant news and information.

Public media works best when it's connected to the community, and the Chamber helps make many of those connections possible.

What is your best advice to other businesses/organizations?

I would encourage others to focus on community and partnership. When you focus on serving your community and doing meaningful work, growth and support naturally follow.

Start by listening to the people you serve to better understand and meet their needs. Then partner with other organizations that are doing the same. Don't just do the thing for the community - build it with the community.

Ambassador's Corner

Kate Greene



A thriving Chamber of Commerce is central to a thriving business community. A good Chamber of Commerce can help individual businesses connect and grow, all while strengthening the economy and lives of the members of that community. That's why one of the first things CDCC Ambassador Kate Greene and her husband, Jim Shure, did when they moved and relocated their business, IMD4 to Dover a few years was join the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce.

"Joining CDCC is one of the best things Jim and I have done since moving to Delaware," said Kate. "Not only have we made great connections for our advertising and marketing business, we've also made some great

friends and learned so much about our new hometown."

Once Kate felt settled into the community, she wanted to find a way to give back to the Chamber, so first she joined the Marketing Committee, then she became a Chamber Ambassador.

CDCC offers its members so much, but sometimes as a new member, and especially when you are now to the community, it's hard to figure out where and how to jump in. The job of the ambassadors is to help new members learn about the CDCC, and to learn about the great benefits to be gained from their membership.

"I also believe that the more you put into your membership, the more you get out of it," said Kate. "It feels great to

be able to help new members learn all about this great organization."

IMD4 is a full-service advertising agency with decades of experience in marketing, design and consulting work. Kate and Jim help clients grow their businesses through branding and advertising strategies, with all communications emphasizing the positives and mitigating the negatives. Kate and Jim have decades of experience in New York City and in the Midwest, and in all media including, TV, radio, digital and print. You can learn more about IMD4 at imd4.com.



RENEWALS FOR FEBRUARY 2026 - THANK YOU FOR YOUR RENEWAL!

Company Name	YRS	Company Name	YRS
Burns & Ellis Realtors	55	Leander Lakes, LLC	10
Willis Chevrolet, Inc.	48	Miller's Roofing & Coatings, LLC	8
University of Delaware	38	The Center at Eden Hill	8
William V. Sipple & Son, Inc.	38	The House of Coffi	8
Advantech Incorporated	35	Tidewater Utilities, Inc.	8
Kent-Sussex Industries, Inc.	34	Aloysius Butler & Clark	7
Becker Morgan Group, Inc.	33	Camden Wyoming Rotary Club	7
Dover Family Chiropractic	32	Miller Mortgage Group at AnnieMac Home Mortgage	7
Forever Media Inc. - Milford	32	Schlusser & Associates Mechanical Contractors	7
Westminster Village	31	Special Touch Card Creations	7
i.g. Burton & Co., Inc.	30	All American Electric Service LLC	6
Town of Smyrna	30	Dr. Wilma Mishoe	6
Byler's Store, Inc.	29	Select Pizza and Grill Smyrna	6
Sayers Jewelers & Gemologists Inc.	27	N.K.S. Distributors, Inc.	5
RRW Inc Home Instead	23	Tomeka's Homestyle Eatery	5
Delaware State Housing Authority	22	Coastal Bath Company	4
Correctional Officers Assoc. of Delaware	21	Jax n Daisy, Inc.	4
Yencer Builders, Inc.	20	The Art Society at Loblolly Acres	3
Lake Club Apts - Westover Companies	16	OEO Energy Solutions	2
Delaware Dept of Labor Div of Vocational Rehabilitation	15	WeCare Services	2
JDM No. 1 Plumbing, LLC	15	Cardiovascular Physicians of Delaware	1
Care First Dental Team - Robert R. Coope, DDS	14	Josh's Lawn Care LLC	1
Carey Insurance Group	13	King Self Storage	1
Fort Sill National Bank	12	Nutrihealth	1
JEM Pest Solutions Inc.	11	Spicer Bros. Construction Inc.	1

NEW MEMBERS

United Wound Care Centers	Eric Upperman	2600 Glasgow Ave, Suite 200	Newark	DE	19706	302-500-4412
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Coffee On Us!

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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 April "Coffee On Us" Contest was Murlene Clark from The Elizabeth W. Murphey School who correctly identified the photo on the front page as the intersection of Lookerman and Bradford Streets in Dover during the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Congratulations, Murlene, 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.

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