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Srirupa Dasgupta, Owner, Upohar

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



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In this edition of *Thriving!* you'll learn how an *idea* resulted in community organizations rallying together to help reduce poverty County-wide one meal at a time; discover the *opportunities* available for companies to grow their businesses and be competitive in the marketplace; and gain insight into a *solution* to address the growing workforce challenges.

So as you turn the page, we hope you are engaged, entertained and ready to be transformed, and come away with ideas, opportunities and solutions to help you thrive, your business excel and our community prosper.

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Piloting Change from the Kitchen to the Streets

Srirupa Dasgupta founded her business to save employees from poverty and economic dependency. But it may just be true that her employees saved her business.

In 2008, Dasgupta, then new to her role as director of web content and multimedia at Franklin & Marshall College, heard Muhammad Yunus address the Lancaster Chamber's Annual Dinner, hosted that year by the college.

"I thought he was going to talk about microfinance," for which in 2006 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, she recalls. "And he didn't. He talked about social entrepreneurship. So his speech was a catalyst."

Two years later, Dasgupta conceived the idea for Upohar, a social impact catering business that would employ, train and pay living wages to people struggling to gain footing in the workforce, particularly refugee women. It would be a new adventure on her life journey—from a steady rise in the

corporate world to the ups and downs of entrepreneurship.

She remembers Yunus asking in his speech: *"Do you want to join me in this experiment?"*

"Yeah," she thought to herself. "I'll join you in this experiment."

'PERFECT TIMING'

Dasgupta, known to friends and colleagues as "Sri," started her career in the software industry. She graduated from Smith College with a degree in computer science and studio art and rose through the ranks of the healthcare software division at McKesson Corporation to become director of development and technical services. She then moved to Lucent Technologies, where she managed a global team in marketing and consulting services

When the tech bubble burst, *"I decided that it was a good*





time to rethink where I was going to go," she says. "By this time, I was in California, I was married and I thought, 'Is this the lifestyle I want?'"

So she started a certification program to become an executive and leadership coach. Eventually, she founded Shokti Leadership Coaching, working with executives and business professionals from companies like Lonza, Charles Schwab and TIBCO Software, Inc.

She suspended her practice when she moved to Lancaster in 2007 and took the job at F&M a year later, expecting to revive her coaching practice at some point.

"I was commuting back and forth to California," she says. "So it came together that maybe coaching small businesses is not where I want to be. Is there a market here for that? No, not really."

That's when she heard Yunus speak.

"The timing was perfect," she says of his message. "There is something here for me, and I don't know what it is, but I'm going to hang in here and see what emerges ..."

"And it came to me."

THE PILOT

Upohar, meaning "gift" in Bengali, was born through what one might call a process of elimination. Dasgupta wanted to do something that brought her skills together, and nonprofit was not one of them. Instead, she wanted to use market forces to create a self-sustaining business that would also solve a social problem. So, there had to be a market need.

"In 2008, global cuisine wasn't even on the horizon" in Lancaster, she recalls. "And vegetarian still isn't."

That's why she chose the food industry, having an interest in cooking and a background in catering from her years in college. She felt the business could solve a problem of job creation for a specific group of people, and whittled down the options to refugee women.



The granddaughter of refugees during the partition of India, Dasgupta says she could resonate with that experience.

She describes her first catering job as a "trial balloon": cooking a year-end meal for an F&M class.

"I have a software background," she laughs. "I always do a pilot."

She hired two refugee students from J.P. McCaskey High School, they cooked an authentic Nepali meal at a church and figured out how to get the food to the venue and serve it buffet-style. *"Literally, proof of concept."*

Dasgupta ran some other, more official, trials before she hired her first two part-time employees, refugee women who had recently arrived in the United States from Iraq. One spoke only minimal English; the other, none at all. They started working in a community kitchen with necessary licenses and permits. The social enterprise experiment was underway.

THE FIRST CHALLENGE

"So, all kinds of assumptions that I made proved to be completely wrong," Dasgupta says. "I assumed that well-paying, flexible employment would be preferable to full-time, low-paid work."

But that's not the case, at least for people who receive welfare benefits. That group includes many recent refugees to the United States, who are given 90 days to find a job.

"So, when I offer them a job, they have to take the job," Dasgupta explains. "And I say, 'It's a part-time gig, and I'm going to pay you \$15 an hour,' and all

of that good stuff. It sounds good on paper."

The problem, she learned, is baked into the catering business. When Upohar was busy, the employees would report strong earnings to the welfare office, and their benefits would be cut. But that often meant they would have no income—benefits or earnings—when the catering business experienced a lull. The social enterprise was feast or famine for the very people it aimed to serve.

"It was a disaster," Dasgupta admits. "This happened as soon as I started. It hit me in the face."

She could see two solutions: find contract work that guaranteed steady catering hours, or open a restaurant. Among other things, she pursued lunch contracts with day care centers and private schools, but the math did not add up. Eventually, she stopped hiring and helped her employees find other work.

"I thought, maybe I should close the business. On paper it looked good, but I didn't know about this welfare issue," she says. "But one of the women, she hung on with me."

That employee, whose husband landed a job, was no longer the sole income earner in her household and was taking courses for teacher certification. She wanted to see Sri succeed.

In 2013, after *"trickling along,"* not pursuing big catering jobs, Upohar opened a restaurant.



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THE RESTAURANT

"I really did not want to open a restaurant," Dasgupta confesses. But it was the only way to fulfill the social mission. "I had to either open a restaurant or close the operation."

Upohar's restaurant opened at 241 Roseville Road, in a small shopping complex near Walmart in Manheim Township. Gina D'Ambrosio, owner of Food For Thought Catering, leased the building for its commercial kitchen space. Having no interest in operating a restaurant out of the location, she invited Upohar. Dasgupta agreed, with three conditions: That D'Ambrosio would train her and her staff on running a restaurant business, that her rent would be affordable, and that she had an exit clause, which she would exercise in two years.

Until then, she made it work, "reverse engineering" solutions to her mission-driven challenges.

To overcome a language barrier, the restaurant offered buffet service with labels for each dish and its ingredients. Eventually, refugee employees cooked while employees from homeless shelters, fluent in English, worked the front of the house. But there was one challenge she couldn't overcome.

"I looked at that location, and I thought, 'This isn't going to work,'" Dasgupta admits. "Not only is it a tough location for any restaurant, my staff doesn't have transportation."

Dasgupta knew any feasible location had to be on a bus route. But she laughs, *"I didn't look at the bus schedule!"*

The last bus stopped at 5:30 p.m. So the restaurant could only serve lunch. Later, it arranged to open for dinner on Saturdays. After two years running the restaurant, Upohar's revenues hit \$120,000, up from about \$20,000 annually in its first two years of catering. But the restaurant was losing money.

"It would have been viable if we had a different location, or if we had bus service," Dasgupta believes. But "if I can't be open for dinner when people actually want to come, then there's no point staying open for lunch, because I can't work the numbers."

THE FUTURE

"After I closed the restaurant, again it was a decision point," Dasgupta says. "I said, 'I'm done.' I tried my best. It didn't work. Businesses close all the time."



But, again, one of her employees pushed her to keep Upohar alive.

"These employees, they keep me going."

With several catering orders booked through the spring, Dasgupta and her former restaurant manager served the events while trying to figure out what to do. Looking for visibility, she tried a crowdfunding campaign to purchase a food truck. She raised only about a third of the cost, but purchased one anyway. She saw it as a marketing investment.

But she still felt she needed an environment in between the food truck and the catering business—somewhere she could offer employees regular hours and provide training for the catering side of the business. Dasgupta ran her ideas

by Christina Maldonado, a fellow caterer who specializes in Puerto Rican cuisine. She asked for advice on hiring a manager who could run the day-to-day operations of the multi-channel business. Instead of advice, Maldonado offered to take the job.

"If you are serious, I don't want you as an employee," Dasgupta told her. "I want you as a business partner."

The two catering companies merged to form Global Flavors Catering, a division of Upohar Ethnic Cuisines, which now also runs Christina's Criollo, a stand at Lancaster Central Market, and the seasonal food truck. The business operates out of a kitchen on James Street, where the company recently announced it would open a takeout window for— you guessed it—lunch.

But Dasgupta has not abandoned plans to reopen a restaurant elsewhere. Besides, she says, the James Street kitchen is at capacity. The food truck is booked for the summer. And catering is booming.

"Because of those two visibility channels (the food truck and market stand), we are getting a lot, a lot, a lot of catering business," Dasgupta says.

It's probably too early to call Upohar's story a true success,

but Dasgupta has come a long way toward realizing her vision as a social entrepreneur. Especially considering the challenges she's faced along the way.

"Even if I had said I'm going to close this business altogether, I don't know that I would have called it failure," she says, reflecting on the low points. "It has demonstrated what works and what doesn't and why it doesn't work."

She still sees the enterprise as a science experiment, testing hypotheses. That's why she encourages other entrepreneurs to include proof of concept in their business plans.

"If it fails, do it early and do it with minimal damage," she advises. "For every mistake that I have made, I would not have found those unless I did a trial run."

And in her case, she had the good fortune of employees who pushed her to keep experimenting. One might even say, they've been a "gift." **LT**



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PEOPLE:

What's On My Phone



Rise & Shine

I can't remember the last time I started a day without first consulting the **Weather** and **Google Calendar** apps. The weather report and meetings schedule are key factors in deciding whether it's a "client-facing, business casual" Mike or "no meetings today, comfy clothing" Mike kind of day.



Social Butterfly

While it's unclear if my chosen career path or natural penchant for socializing is to blame, the result is the same: all the social media. I am currently an admin for six **Instagram** accounts, eight **Facebook Pages** and five **Twitter** accounts, which are a mix of personal and professional. Yes, notifications are (mostly) turned off.



Staying Sharp

My grandfather kept his brain sharp by completing the *New York Times* crossword puzzle every day, so perhaps my obsession with the **NYT Crossword** app is the result of genetics. However in those moments when I need my brain to focus, the **Noisli** app - with its arsenal of soundscapes ranging from nature sounds to indecipherable coffee shop din - is just what I need to dial in.



BY MIKE MCMONAGLE,
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Team Talk

My team at Indy Res relies on tools like Atlassian's **HipChat** and **Slack** to allow us to communicate around specific projects with ease. **Trello** and **Google Drive** are equally lifesaving when it comes to project and client management.



Podcastin'

I love me some podcasts, and I have apps like **Stitcher** and **NPR One** to thank for providing quick access to awesome shows like Radiolab, This American Life and TED Radio Hour. Podcasts provide the opportunity to step out of my immediate world of familiarity and learn something new. They're great for long car rides, too.

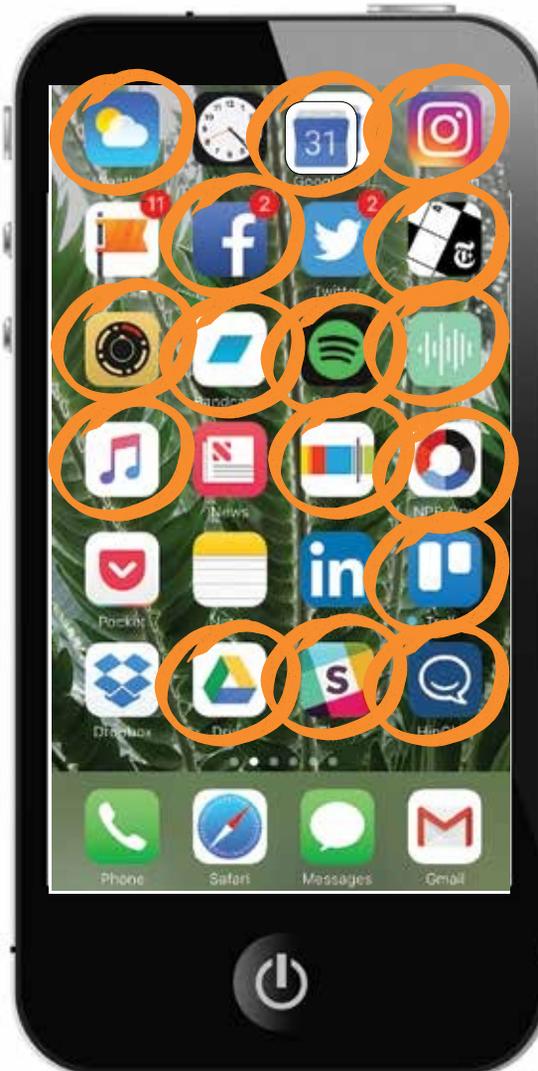


Soundtrackin'

As a musician, it's no surprise that I have 10+ apps dedicated to either listening to or creating music. My go-to's include **Spotify**, **Bandcamp** and the regular ol' **Music** app for listening, and **Figure**, an app that allows you to tap your inner DJ and make and manipulate beats.

Keeping it Together

I'll be honest; I created a home screen especially for this article. Typically, I have my apps grouped on different screens according to how they are used (for example: a work screen, a screen with news and podcast apps, etc). And yes, there are subfolders.



THE STATE OF CRM

in Central PA



In 1995, I was selling photocopiers on the streets of Harrisburg. I had just won a laptop in a sales contest and had no idea what to use it for, outside of Solitaire. Our top performing rep walked by my desk and tossed a 3.5" computer disk at me.

"What's this?" I asked.

"Just install it," he said. And with that, my life as a sales representative was fundamentally changed.

On that disk was Maximizer 1.0, one of the first customer relationship management (CRM) programs on the market. Soon, my Rolodex was gone, forever replaced by customer profile screens. Within weeks, I stopped door-to-door cold calling, moving first to telephone prospecting, later to batch faxing and eventually, email.

Since then, I've used many of the CRM products on the market. Like you, I've been alternately amazed or annoyed by them, and often both at the same time. Older and a little greyer now, my current responsibilities have me entering data into a CRM a little less, but optimizing it for my co-workers to use even more and analyzing what comes out of it on a daily basis.

But for all of the conversations I've had with people about CRM, I've come to realize that the uses (and abuses) are as different as can be. For some, CRM is the lifeblood of the

organization. At other companies, there might be a struggle to get employees to update records even once a month. Some businesses use it to reflect on what's happened, while few - but more all the time - are using it to predict what will happen next.

That being the background, we sent a survey to the *Thriving!* audience, specifically about their use of CRM. Here's what we learned:

SOMETHING IS PROBABLY BETTER THAN NOTHING.

For those wondering if a CRM is related to sales success, the survey provided clear guidance. When asked if they were currently hitting sales targets, 60% of respondents with a CRM claimed their organization was exceeding their plan, compared to just 25% of the non-CRM users. Curiously it didn't seem to matter which CRM was being used, so long as one of them was.

TAKEAWAY #1: If you're not using a CRM and your competition is, the data would indicate they might be out-selling you.

IT'S A CROWDED SPACE.

Despite the fact respondents were offered nine of the top CRM platforms in the market today in the survey, nearly 44% indicated that they were using something "other" than the

options provided to them. In total, 25 different CRMs were reported as being used by our audience. Market leader Salesforce was the top platform, being used by 20% of respondents.

In that regard, Central PA isn't much different than the rest of the US. A 2014 study by Gartner estimated Salesforce owning 19% of the market, while the smaller players not named in our survey market accounted for just over half.

Nationwide, the number two CRM provider is SAP, which barely registered on our survey results. That said, SAP's CRM solution is mostly targeted to large enterprises, which make up a fraction of the businesses in Central PA and only 13% of our survey respondents.

Before we move on, though, probably the most important statistic was that nearly 84.5% of all respondents had some sort of CRM in place. Even accounting for confirmation bias, that's pretty clear evidence that for most of us, CRM is in use.

And not only in place, but important. A whopping 63% of respondents said their CRM was much more important than it was to them just three years ago.

TAKEAWAY #2: There have never been more CRM options on the market, so if you're considering one, realize evaluation could take a while.

BUT USED FOR WHAT?

Not surprisingly, respondents felt that CRM's most vital use case is for storing customer and prospect information. While a few respondents tagged it as being "somewhat important," all others labeled it as either vital or very important.

In addition to storing contact information, most also rely on CRM as the best way to track customer communications. Respondents indicated a strong reference for tying email into their CRM so that as much information as possible is in a central location.

And not just email. At Intulse, phone calls are also logged and recorded to the CRM. VP of Sales & Marketing Keith Goodling explained.

"Because we sell telephone integration, it's second nature for us to think about how to integrate conversation into everything, and that includes the CRM. For users, that integration means saving the time it would take to manually log the call."

Opportunity & Pipeline Management serve as the number two and three valued features in the survey, and are also a key component in how Intulse uses their system. Like many respondents, Goodling tracks new leads into the system, as well as time spent in each stage of the sales funnel.

But moving on from these core features, we found CRMs being used (or not used) in very different ways.

While some use a multitude of CRM features, there are others who admit to not using many of them at all. For instance, while a fifth of respondents consider their CRM vital for collateral and proposals, an equal amount don't store collateral or proposals within the platform at all. The same could be said about meeting planning and campaign management. At RETTEW, Director of Marketing Shawn Barron said while their CRM is a valuable tool for business, their organization handles proposals and marketing outside of the CRM, while activities within the CRM are more constrained to tracking of new and ongoing opportunities.

"Ideally all of these would be integrated," said Barron, "But we've come up with valid reasons to manage proposals and marketing elsewhere and until the benefits outweigh the barriers, we'll probably keep things the way they are."

When asked about forecasting, only about a third of our audience found it vital to their success, but maybe more should. In fact, among the 14.5% of the audience that reported "greatly exceeding target," 87.5% of them considered forecasting to be a very important or vital CRM feature. Simply put, those companies that embrace forecasting are more likely to be crushing it. Correlation or causation? You decide.

TAKEAWAY #3 & #4: Recognize that even though CRMs have a lot of features, your organization might not use them all, and that's ok. That said, those that use their CRM for forecasting are more likely to also be exceeding targets.

WHAT'S HOLDING US BACK?

Despite the virtues and obvious importance of CRM, respondents agreed that CRM isn't without its challenges. On the plus side, only 22% of respondents felt that data quality was a major pain point for them. This was also backed up by the fact that in a separate question, respondents gave much higher data quality ratings to all categories than in a national report published last year. For

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BUSINESS: BUSINESS PRIORITIES

whatever reason – smaller staffs, a more engaged workforce or a more disciplined approach – our readers have better quality data than others outside of Central PA.

More companies here struggle with adapting their CRM to their unique business practices. Some, like RETTEW, have tackled this problem head-on by adding custom developed features and processes to their system. Like many companies, RETTEW has customized their CRM (Microsoft Dynamics, in their case), to support some unique business cases.

“We have a relatively rigid ‘go-no go’ process at RETTEW,” Barron said, “and we’ve modified our CRM to reflect that. In essence, you can’t truly open a project number without going through some predefined ‘go no-go’ steps.”

Of course, customization requires investment and Barron is quick to point out that while there are features of other CRMs that RETTEW might value, the customizations they’ve done decrease the likelihood of switching platforms.

Some survey respondents, rather than opt for customization, simply chose CRM packages tailor-made for their industries. Platforms in the responses included software specific to the travel, senior living and credit union sectors, offering more specific out-of-the-box features for their users.

In the end, however, the most oft-cited challenge with CRM usage was user adoption, with fully 36% of respondents saying it’s their biggest problem. Intulse’s Goodling can understand.

“We recently switched CRMs and it was entirely because our people, myself included, were not comfortable with the platform and inevitably avoided using it. It was slow and not intuitive for our workflow. While we tried to force the issue, the reality is that if you can’t get your users comfortable on the platform, you’re not going to get any data. And if you don’t get data, what’s the point?”

Goodling added, however, that with Intulse being a young company with a small sales team, the change was easier, though all the more critical.

“As we grow we want a system that people feel supports the business. In our case, the previous CRM wasn’t.”

WHAT ABOUT SALESFORCE?

With Salesforce being the most popular platform on the market, we were curious to see if the data would show the prototypical user to be different than our other respondents, and in a few small ways they were. Their average revenues were higher and they reported utilizing more of the

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available feature sets; probably not surprising given both the investment required and the robust platform available.

Respondents were a third less likely to feel as if the CRM couldn't support their unique business challenges, which also makes sense. Those of us who've paid consultants to bend Salesforce to yield to our world know it can be done, which is different than what is offered among the many out-of-the-box solutions that aren't built for customizations.

That said, using Salesforce - at least in our study - seemed to yield little, if any, competitive edge. While a slightly smaller percentage of respondents indicated they were behind sales targets, and a slightly greater percentage indicated they were somewhat ahead, none were among the 14.5% fortunate respondents to indicate they were greatly exceeding target.

To sum, Salesforce is probably a better product for getting the CRM to support your unique business processes, but it's not going to close business for you, and at the end of the day that's true for any CRM.

Where all of these tools succeed is on the "M" of the CRM - the management piece. The customer relationships? That will always be on you. **LT**



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THE SECRET TO USER ADOPTION

In our survey, User Adoption was an oft-cited problem with CRMs. It's a logical concern. If data doesn't end up in the CRM, finding value in it won't happen. But how do you boost user adoption? Here are some thoughts.

1. **It's probably not the platform.** It's probably your people. When you first go to a CRM - any CRM - it's going to be different than what you're used to, and different is hard. Expect that acceptance will vary and find some early adopters to spearhead your team. And for every article that suggests those early adopters will be young millennials, I'll tell you that in my experience it's not a generational thing, but rather an attitudinal thing.
2. **Accept the possibility that it could be the platform.** While users have to hold up their end of the bargain, let's face it: all of our businesses do have some shades of grey, either due to the industry we're in or the company we are working for. Some of us are heavy on phone usage, while others mostly email. Some rarely leave the office while others are road warriors. These realities of our business should frame our CRM selection.
3. **Stop thinking about forcing adoption.** Start thinking about providing value. Humans are inherently selfish and when it comes to CRMs, I've seen a lot of managers try to mandate adoption, without showing users how they can get value out of the CRM. Whether it looks like an easier way to prioritize tasks, simpler reporting or the elimination of paperwork, every CRM has been designed with the intent to lessen the administrative workload of the sales and marketing professional. Show your users how CRM will help them, and adoption will be less of a struggle.
4. **Make CRM a regular part of your meetings.** A funny thing happens when you start a meeting with a CRM dashboard on the screen. People realize you're going to be talking about the data housed within it. By running meetings with CRM reports, the company will begin to see that CRM isn't just about what goes into it, but what comes out of it.
5. **At all turns, fight duplicate entry of data.** As much as I will blame adoption on a user's resistance to change, let's be clear: If the user is having to re-enter data that exists elsewhere in the company, that's a challenge that must be accepted by the people in charge of the CRM. Double entry of data, in this day and age, is a waste of time and energy - the scarcest of all resources. Moreover, once you start porting data into your CRM automatically, the users will see it become a source of value for them. (See #3)



In every community, town and borough are hidden gems that offer unique, one-of-a-kind products and services that are helping put them on the map. And, Lancaster County is no different. What sets Lancaster apart is our diverse mix of industries. Our Made in Lancaster County article is a way to highlight those companies helping to make Lancaster County stand out regionally, nationally and globally.

In our Spring/Summer edition, we are highlighting some of those companies whose products and services were used in the Chamber's new building at 115 East King Street and helped make an impact on the entire business community.



A Move from Start to Finish

In March 2017, the Lancaster Chamber, along with our partners, EDC Finance Corporation, Economic Development Company of Lancaster County, Leadership Lancaster, Lancaster City Alliance and Central Penn Business Group on Health, moved into our new home at 115 East King Street. The move was more than just transferring items from one location to another; it symbolized a new Chamber and a new opportunity for all Lancaster County businesses.

The building represents the unveiling of the Chamber's new business model and our recommitment to better serve and meet the needs of the entire business community. It represents the home of our new BB&T Business Center, which will serve as a venue for all business professionals to learn, connect and grow. And, it represents the impact our community can make when we all come together.

It's often said that "It takes a village to raise a child," and in

many ways that can be said about the Chamber's new home. It took the entire Lancaster community coming together to help us create a vision and space for people to thrive, businesses to excel and our community to prosper.

IN THE BEGINNING

Imagine gathering with other local business leaders to discuss what today's youth need to lead Lancaster into the future. Having a place where all business professionals, regardless of position or industry, could come together to invent the next big idea. Having a platform where networking and conversations were stretching across all industries. Accessing the knowledge, insight and wisdom of local, regional and national speakers. A hub of activity that's sole purpose was to be a convener of business that offered top-quality resources. This hub of activity would be 115 East King Street.

With a vision in mind, it was time to enlist the help of individuals and companies that could transform an existing City building into a state-of-the-art hub that could serve the entire business community. This wasn't an easy task and required the expertise of architects, contractors and engineers. The dedication and commitment by Warfel Construction Company, RLPS Architects and Providence Engineering to the process was the start of something monumental for our community.

And so, our vision quickly became a reality...

THE CONSTRUCTION

It started from the top, down...



Get to know how GSM ROOFING and GSM INDUSTRIAL helped us keep out the elements with a new roof; as well add beauty to the interior.

Serving the community for 47 years under The Gooding Group umbrella are two businesses that specialize in building, constructing, manufacturing and fabricating products that give peace of mind. Whether it's the installation and maintenance of commercial and specialty roofing to custom metal fabrication, specializing in industrial equipment installation and repair, machining and contract manufacturing services, The Gooding Group is poised to enhance internal structures. And, such was the case with our building project. Their work spanned from the top, down.

 *"As members of the Lancaster Chamber since 1959, we were thrilled to be selected to work on the new building. While we did install a new Firestone EPDM roof on the building, our work*

on the building façade and internal decorative walls is what gets the most attention. The decorative slate, installed in the conference room, required that the wall be reinforced with plywood in order to support the weight of 650 pieces of North Country slate. We also installed a decorative copper wall in the executive conference room. (Check out the digital edition to watch this wall being installed.)

We are proud to support the expanded reach of the Chamber's new model, which strives to serve all businesses in the community, not just those who are members. GSM is honored to be included on the founder's wall as a financial contributor to the Chamber and the future of our business community." - Reed Gooding, President, GSM Roofing; and Brian Dombach, President, GSM Industrial

Moving from the roof, it was time to focus on the functionality and aesthetic beauty of the ceiling.

The design team at RLPS knew the ceilings could make or break the look and feel of the environment they envisioned for our new home. They also knew they could rely on Lancaster-based Armstrong World Industries to help them create ceiling solutions throughout the building that delivered a contemporary, elegant, bright aesthetic while maximizing natural light, integrating LED lighting and technology, and managing acoustical stability.



Whew! A tall order, yes, but that's what Armstrong is all about: making a difference where people live, work, learn, heal and play by providing ceiling solutions that make spaces great... and comfortable...and quiet...and efficient....and more.



Get to know how ARMSTRONG WORLD INDUSTRIES helped to impact how people experience 115 East King Street.

The custom statement ceiling on our Business Center floor- tapered, linear wood plank clouds painted in custom platinum - is the first and only of its kind and an incredible point of interest...a suspended conversation piece that does double duty by helping to manage noise levels. Throughout the rest of the building, there is a combination of standard and large format Armstrong ceilings, which truly impacts how people experience the space. The ceilings also have Armstrong's Total Acoustic performance to help reduce sound room to room and within a room, so office neighbors can't hear each other through the walls and corridor and common space distractions are minimized. In conference rooms and meeting spaces, the ceilings seamlessly integrate LED lighting and AV and mechanical systems while maintaining nice clean design lines. The executive conference room, on the top floor, changes up the design rhythm with a taupe-colored ceiling solution called Calla that has a smooth, refined appearance and noise reducing and sound blocking performance.

““We are so pleased to be part of the newly established 115 East King Street building in bustling and burgeoning downtown Lancaster. I am so impressed by what's been accomplished here. The Chamber brought together so many local business and community partners to transform what was a vacant building into a magnificent symbol of what business and community can do together,” said Jennifer Johnson, director, Corporate Communications, AWI.

When you think of construction, you think of the changes you can see - from framed walls to a new façade. But, often it's the part of construction that you can't see that plays an integral role in giving a building life.



Get to know how BERK-TEK helped us stay connected and bring power to our state-of-the-art technology.

For more than 50 years, Berk-Tek has been a leading manufacturer of more than 100 different network copper and fiber optic cable products. The company has led in the development of high-performance and enhanced fiber optic and copper cables designed to transport high-speed data, voice and power transmissions. Berk-Tek has manufacturing facilities in New Holland, PA and Fuquay-Varina, NC.

The company's New Holland factory employs 350 people in a 325,000 sq ft. facility that manufactures more than 1 billion linear feet of copper twisted pair cables each year. In addition to their focus on exceeding their customers' technical requirements, they also strive to be a leading corporate citizen. With environmentally-conscious manufacturing programs, progressive employment policies and a pledge to maintaining high-quality manufacturing facilities and jobs within the United States, Berk-Tek is committed not only to their customers, but also to the local community.

““We are proud of our relationship with the Chamber, and are happy to play a role in keeping their IT networks up and running!” - Susan Larson, Marketing Communications Manager, Berk-Tek

BEAUTIFICATION

With both the internal and external structures in place, it was time to add the more visual elements that would bring 115 East King Street to life. Throughout January and February of 2017, a rainbow of colors could be seen covering the once dull drywall, thanks to Two Dudes Painting Co; installers from Certified Carpet could be seen laying the textured carpet that weaved throughout the building with furniture and lighting being positioned to create a welcoming and casual environment.



Get to know ARMSTRONG FLOORING and how their inspired flooring designs helped to get our new building off on the right foot.

You know their work. Just look down. You'll see it in the perfectly balanced strong and soft visuals of the luxury vinyl tile in our office lobby, warmly greeting visitors as they enter our building. You'll see it in the durable, hardworking floors of our staff cafe, providing an inviting space for thoughtful conversation. You'll see it in the classic color and design coordination underfoot in our Business Center, where local professionals can innovate and collaborate together. That's Armstrong Flooring - a company dedicated to its mission of developing products with the power to positively impact the spaces where people live, work, learn, heal and play. Based in Lancaster, it's the #1 manufacturer of resilient and wood flooring products across North America. And while the floors are unmistakably beautiful, we're also quite taken with our designer's creative use of Armstrong Flooring's product as the rustic street number wall art behind our reception desk.

“Our commitment to Lancaster County spans more than a century. That's why we're so proud to be involved in community efforts that make this area so special, like the state-of-the-art new home of the Lancaster Chamber. Armstrong Flooring is known worldwide for inspired flooring designs, but it's what's in our own backyard that continues to inspire us: our employees, our customers and this wonderfully unique Lancaster County community we love to call home.” - Alison van Harskamp, Corporate Communications, Armstrong Flooring



Get to know RICK WELDING and discover how they transformed the way our floors were connected with artistic and modern craftsmanship.

Nestled in a small shop in New Holland is a budding metals and structural steel fabricator that is reinventing itself and working to make a lasting mark in the community.

Rick Welding traces its roots back to Carvell and Rick Welding/Fab-Rick Industries in the Brownstown/Ephrata area. When Fab-Rick Industries closed and Joe Rick, Sr. passed away in 2013, Joseph Rick II decided to carry on the family name, opening Rick Welding with his wife Angela. Joseph and his team have reinvented themselves and continue to strive to improve on the past as well as serve owners and customers alike.

“As far as the Lancaster Chamber job it was a privilege to work with Warfel as well as Dale Shenk on another successful project. We consider it an honor to work on a high profile job with the structural steel and stairs in the Lancaster Chamber building. We started the fabrication and erection of the structural steel back in August. For the stairs, we started fabrication in November, the rest in December and finished installation in January. We really hope everyone is happy with the atrium stairs.” - the Rick Welding Team





BUSINESS: MADE IN LANCASTER

In an effort to capture transparency, the design of the new building needed to allow for ample natural light.

Get to know HOWELLS GLASS CO and how they helped illuminate and capture the surrounding view of our new neighborhood.

Howells Glass Co., Inc. has been involved with the Lancaster community since its founding in 1924. The company's long-term staff represents hundreds of years of experience in the glazing industry. Now a 3rd generation, family-owned and operated business, directed by Robert G. Howells, they continue to provide the Lancaster area and beyond with quality aluminum, glass and glazing for both commercial and residential projects.



"We would like to welcome the Lancaster Chamber to their new home and wish them success in their ongoing efforts on behalf of Lancaster. It was a pleasure to be able to work with our long time neighbors and partners in revitalizing their building in downtown Lancaster with a fresh, energy efficient look and great facility which will be an enduring place from which they can focus and expand their work with the business community." - Robert Howells, President, Howells Glass Co, Inc.

THE MOVE

The time had now come...March 17. The big move! It was a day anticipated by many - it was a new beginning and new chapter for the Chamber, its partners and the community. Thanks to Armstrong Relocation Company, and an internal staff "Move Team," we met the day head-on with ease.

As the article indicates, our transformation would not have been made possible without the expertise, guidance and craftsmanship of our local community; however, it would also not be possible without the support and commitment of all of our building campaign donors to date. If you are interested in learning how you might be able to participate and be recognized in this legacy project, please contact Sarah Maser at smaser@lancasterchamber.com or 717.397.3531.

COMPLETION

Sure, we're all moved in and one would think that's where the article ends. But, a new building with four floors needs ample signage - whether it's to provide direction or showcase the many generous building campaign donors to date.

Get to know H&H GRAPHICS and how their artistic designs helped direct people to opportunities.

Lancaster has been home to the H&H Graphics Inc., dba The H&H Group and Sir Speedy since 1972. They have provided printing for all of those years. Their printing capabilities include offset as well as digital print. Additionally, they are now a marketing services provider, and a full service sign company.

With 36 employees who live in Central PA, the H&H goal is to have a positive impact on people, businesses and the community. They feel that when they help their customers be more successful through their marketing efforts, the community has an opportunity to be a better place.

“Not only did we have the opportunity to do the life safety signs needed for occupancy, we were the ADA provider. And, even more fun than that, we were the company to provide the donor wall in the lobby and the donor signage throughout the building - giving credit to the companies and organizations that helped make the Chamber building dream become a reality. Knowing that the Chamber's vision is that Lancaster is recognized as a model of prosperity, we are proud to help the Chamber. We feel that we are a fortunate community to have a great Chamber that wants to help businesses be successful.” - Mary Kohler, President & CEO, H&H Graphics

The building is a true example of the collective impact of our community and first class example of doing business locally. To see a complete list of companies and individuals that played a vital role in our building's success, visit lancasterchamberfoundation.org. **LT**



BY ALLISON BUCHER,
Communications Director,
Lancaster Chamber
Contact Allison at
abucher@lancasterchamber.com



Community & INDUSTRY NEWS



SHARE YOUR COMPANY'S GOOD NEWS WITH THE CHAMBER

Did your company or employee recently win an award? Did your company recently celebrate a milestone anniversary? Consider sharing your company's good news in the Chamber's upcoming edition of *Thriving!*. Submit your information today at thriving@lancasterchamber.com.



THE STANDARD GROUP earns award

The Standard Group was recently chosen as the third quarter winner of the 2017 UPS Irresistible Mail Award for its Holiday Inking Mystery Game direct mail campaign. The Standard Group is an enterprise print management and marketing logistics company.



RETTEW earns award

RETTEW recently earned a Diamond Certificate for the State Route 11 Bridge Project from The American Council of Engineering Companies of Pennsylvania. The award criteria includes innovation, complexity, exceeding client needs, future value to engineering and sustainable design. RETTEW, ranked on *Engineering News-Record's* 2016 list of top design firms, began providing civil engineering and surveying services in 1969.

RKL LLP earns recognition

RKL LLP was recently ranked 65th on *Accounting Today's* "2017 Top 100 Firms" list, two spots higher than the previous year's position.

RKL offers its clients close, personalized service along with a wide range of capabilities including accounting, tax, business valuation, merger and acquisition assistance, succession planning, business risk management, fraud and forensic accounting and more, along with technology consulting and investment advisory/financial management services through its subsidiaries.



FOCUSED. ON YOU.

LISTRAK, INC. earns recognition

Listrak, Inc. was recently named to *Inc. Magazine's* national list, the Inc. 5000 Fastest-Growing Private Companies in America. Listrak is helping digital marketers create personalized interactions to reach, engage and convert their shoppers across email, mobile, social, display, web and in the store.



DAS earns recognition

DAS was recently named 2016 Distributor of the Year by Sony Car Audio. DAS designs, imports, and distributes truck and auto supplies, travel gear and mobile electronics that offer safety, convenience, comfort and connectedness to on-the-go consumers, through a series of channel partnerships, including: Travel Centers, Convenience Stores, Heavy Duty Trucking, Electronics & Specialty Retailers.



FIG INDUSTRIES earns award

Fig Industries recently earned a 2016 Davey Award for the design of its first edition publication of *Fig Stories*. Fig Industries is committed to producing meaningful and strategic brand design and marketing.



MOSER ROOFING SOLUTIONS, LLC earns award

Moser Roofing Solutions, LLC recently earned a 2016 Duro-Last Project Award for a roofing project they completed in Baltimore, MD. Moser Roofing

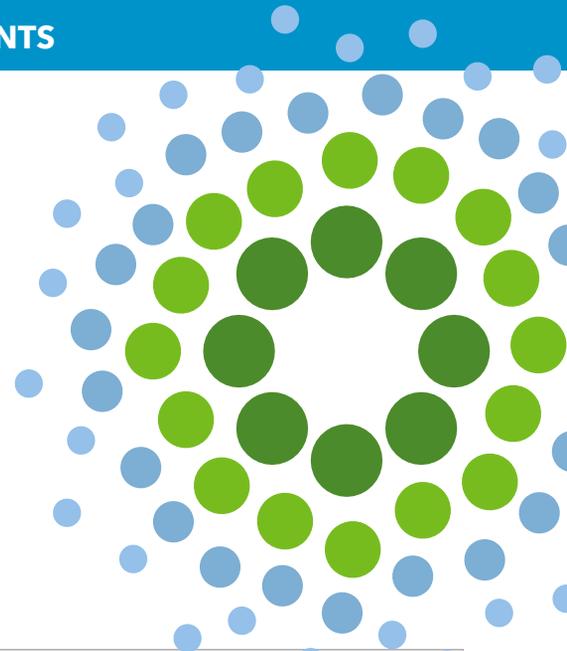
Solutions, LLC is a family-owned commercial roofing contractor specializing in repairing, restoring and replacement of commercial roofs with energy-efficient roofing materials.



CARGAS SYSTEMS earns recognition

Cargas Systems was recently named to Bob Scott's prestigious VAR Stars list. Only 100 value added resellers of mid-market accounting software are chosen for Bob Scott's VAR Stars and the selection rests on one basic principal: quality, not revenue, as the deciding factor. Cargas Systems is an employee-owned business software and consulting company specializing in the following areas: Intacct® cloud accounting, Microsoft Dynamics, custom software solutions and Cargas Energy mobile and back office software for fuel delivery and HVAC service companies.

To register, visit lancasterchamber.com/events or call 717.397.3531.



MAY2017

| | |
|----|---|
| 17 | 145th Annual Dinner 5 to 9 p.m., Lancaster County Convention Center, 25 South Queen Street |
| 18 | Critical Etiquette in the Professional World 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., 115 East King Street |
| 23 | Emerging Issues in Professional Ethics (CPAs) 7:30 a.m. to Noon, 115 East King Street |
| 24 | Mixer - Mid Penn Bank 5 to 7 p.m., 2120 Oregon Pike |
| 25 | PA Dram Shop Defense: Avoiding a Risk and Liability Hangover 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., 115 East King Street |

JUNE2017

| | |
|----|---|
| 01 | Creativity & Innovation Series 8 to 11 a.m., 115 East King Street |
| 02 | Professional Development Friday - Marketing 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., 115 East King Street |
| 06 | Become a Savvy Negotiator 1:30 to 4:30 p.m., 115 East King Street |
| 07 | Women-Owned Business Showcase & Conversations 11:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m., The Jay Group |
| 08 | Wake Up to the Issues Forum 7:30 to 9 a.m., Lancaster Country Club |
| 13 | Discovering Your Talents 1 to 5 p.m., 115 East King Street |
| 14 | Excellence Exchange 7:30 to 9 a.m., Lancaster Country Club, 1466 New Holland Pike |
| 14 | Mixer - FASTSIGNS 5 to 7 p.m., 121 Centerville Road |
| 20 | Overcoming Barriers to Success 1 to 5 p.m., 115 East King Street |
| 21 | Industry Tour - High Concrete 8 to 10 a.m., 125 Denver Road, Denver |
| 22 | YPN Progressive Mixer 5 to 8 p.m., TBD |
| 27 | Incentive Compensation - A Better Way to Recruit 8 to 11 a.m., 115 East King Street |
| 28 | Think Big: a Small Business Celebration 7:30 to 10 a.m., American Music Theatre |

JULY2017

| | |
|----|--|
| 11 | Lancaster City/Lancaster Township Consortium 7:30 to 9 a.m., TBD |
| 11 | Get Connected! 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., 115 East King Street |
| 12 | Cocalico/Ephrata Consortium 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., TBD |
| 19 | Lititz/Manheim/Manheim Township Consortium 7:30 to 9 a.m., Lancaster Airport Authority, 500 Airport Road, Lititz |
| 19 | Mixer - Rhoads Energy Corporation 5 to 7 p.m., 624 South Prince Street |
| 20 | Columbia/Donegal/Elizabethtown/Hempfield Consortium 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Ironstone Ranch, 1 Hollinger Road, Elizabethtown |
| 25 | Solanco/LS/Penn Manor Consortium 7:30 to 9 a.m., TBD |
| 26 | Conestoga Valley/Elanco/Pequea Valley Consortium 7:30 to 9 a.m., TBD |

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PREVIOUS LANCASTER CHAMBER PROGRAMS & EVENTS



COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS - HEROIN

"The Community Conversation on the Heroin and Opioid epidemic was quite shocking. The presentation was very direct and honest as the presenters live with this crisis on a daily basis. The extensive exposure and relationship was clearly defined in the connection between the user, family, friends, workplace and community. The issues addressed were quite astounding to me since I am not in contact with this situation on a daily basis; i.e. health care costs, the training costs for the responders, the employer costs, the risks that the responders face daily along with the psychological issues that friends, family and the community are faced with. I previously believed that this crisis did not affect me as we tend to believe 'not in my backyard.' This has made me aware of the necessity to review my environment daily for possible situations that might need interventions.

I now understand that paths must be created to enable the entire community to come together through awareness - employers, family, churches, organizations must engage, listen, talk and support."

Toni L. Tice, Human Resource Manager, Payroll Specialist
Longenecker's Hatchery, Inc.

During our inaugural Prosperity Indicator Community Conversations we focused on the heroin and opioid epidemic that is crippling Lancaster County and our region. We started with a national and regional assessment on this crisis and then localized the issue and its impact. Local experts shared how business can play a role in combating this crisis, the impact heroin is having on the community and signs employers can look for, potential treatments options and more.

For more information and resources, visit lancasterchamber.com then "Community Initiatives."

WAKE UP TO THE ISSUES FORUM

"I attended my first [Chamber] breakfast in March of this year. I was interested in hearing Congressman Smucker speak about current issues concerning Pennsylvania and the current health care issues. I am part owner of a small business in Lancaster County and like a lot of small businesses we struggle with providing our employees good health care that is affordable, rising taxes, and finding and hiring dedicated employees.

I was not sure what to expect but I was very pleased with the program. I enjoyed meeting new people, both business owners and those who are involved in business in some capacity. I will definitely attend another [Chamber program]."

Kandis Shaffer, General Office Manager
Lancaster Truck Repair

Congressman Lloyd Smucker met with business and community leaders at our Wake Up to the Issues Forum and spoke about the goal to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act, tax reform and strengthening the workforce.





COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS - IMMIGRATION

According to a report released in 2016 by the New American Economy, in 2014, there were more than 23,000 foreign-born people in Lancaster County who represented 4.4 % of the population but 5.3% of the employed labor force. Those individuals contributed \$1.3 billion to the County's economy; and, compared to the native population, had higher levels of education and were more likely to be self-employed.

In 2016, the Chamber commissioned a study from New American Economy highlighting the economic and demographic contributions of immigrants in the County. In short, it showed that our immigrant residents have an impact on the local economy through their high rates of workforce participation, large tax contributions and spending.

During our latest Prosperity Indicator Community Conversations local business and community leaders addressed how employers can better incorporate immigrants into their workforce, the barriers to entry for immigrants in starting a business, how ag employers recruit and retain their immigrant labor force, and much more. To learn more about the report and what companies are doing to address immigration locally, see p40.



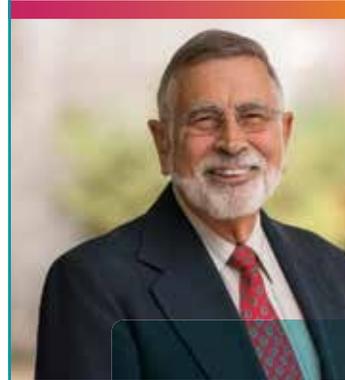
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Out & ABOUT

GRAND OPENINGS CONGRATULATIONS!



Conrad Siegel Actuaries opening at 201 Granite Run Drive, Lancaster. Conrad Siegel Investment Advisors, Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Conrad Siegel Actuaries, one of the largest and most respected employee benefit firms in the mid-Atlantic region. Conrad Siegel Investment Advisors, Inc. provides independent investment advisory services to retirement plans and high net worth individuals. They are independent of any financial institution and do not receive commissions, therefore, allowing them to make recommendations in their clients' best interests.



S'more Space Storage opening at 581 Stony Battery Road, Landisville. The property is approximately 37,000 feet of rentable storage space with a total of 308 units. The storage units include a variety of sizes with temperature control, vehicle parking space and features moving supplies, advanced security monitoring, and gated keypad access.

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THE BOOK FOR 2017

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~Jack Daly, CEO, Professional Sales Coach, Inc.



Rocky Springs Entertainment Center on their recent ground breaking at 1495 Millport Road, Lancaster - the ground breaking kicked off their \$1.9 million renovation and expansion. The expanded facility will include a laser tag arena, a game arcade, and sit-down restaurant serving craft cuisine and specialty cocktails. Owners Sherry and Fred O'Neill also plan to expand their private bowling suite and renovations will be done to the facade and parking lot. Brand new flooring, seating and fixtures will round out the renovations. The project is slated to be completed late summer 2017.



Tiny Town on their recent grand opening at 533 Janet Avenue. Tiny Town is Lancaster's newest indoor play-place and lounge for children and families. With nine luxury playhouses, children will go wild with imagination! Tiny Town is settled in 8000 square feet of beautiful space formerly occupied as a manufacturing plant. Locally owned and operated by Hannah Harris and her family; they have included an unprecedented opportunity for her employees to bring their children to work with them every day – allowing parents to be with their children and keep more money in their paycheck.

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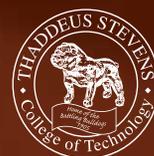
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If you're a wildlife enthusiast, there's the rush and gurgle of the powerful Susquehanna River, the distinctive chirp of cardinals competing for territory, the cadence of woodpeckers high in the trees, the hum of the bees, the splashing of ducks and geese, and the rustle of the grass from the harmless little snakes slithering from one side of the trail to the other and disappearing into the greenery.

If you're a history buff, there's the stone and brick ruins of old iron furnaces dating back to local industry in the 1800s, Point Rock Tunnel – an abandoned railroad tunnel cut into the rock – that has now become part of the Trail, the Wright's Ferry Bridge carrying Route 30 across the River, the remaining stone piers of the covered bridge which was burned during the Civil War to prevent Confederate soldiers from crossing the Susquehanna into Lancaster County in 1863, and many more historic sites along the way.

If you're looking for the perfect place for exercise and recreation, there's kayaking or canoeing on the River, climbing and rappelling on Chickies Rock, and walking, cycling, rollerblading and more along the beautifully-maintained 14-mile Trail that runs from Falmouth to



This article highlights and supports the work that's being done in the community to satisfy the Physical Environment dimension of our Prosperity Indicators.

Columbia. There are also plenty of parks and places to have a picnic or just sit and take in all the breathtaking sights and sounds.

Improvements to the Trail continue, with the section of trail on the riverfront side of the railroad tracks in Marietta slated to be paved this summer. Couple that with the educational programming, recreational opportunities and resources available at the Columbia Crossing River Trails Center on Walnut Street in Columbia, and it's no wonder the number of people using the Trail is expected to increase.

The Columbia Crossing River Trails Center first opened its doors on March 16 of last year, and in 2016, alone, the Center helped more than 23,000 guests at their front desk. *"This number is probably very small compared to Trail usage, as there are five Trail access locations, as well as many hours that the Trail is used when the Center is not open,"* explained Hope Byers, manager of the Center.

As with any project of this scale, the construction of the Trail,

and near the Trail," said Byers. *"At Susquehanna Heritage [which operates the Columbia Crossing River Trails Center], we work hard to drive economic development through increased heritage and ecotourism. By managing Columbia Crossing, we have a unique opportunity to share great places to eat, shop and explore during a visitor's outdoor adventure."*

According to Bob Shank, owner of Shank's Tavern on Waterford Avenue in Marietta, Lancaster County's oldest continuously operated Tavern which still retains its vintage appeal and family atmosphere, *"The Trail has brought a lot of people in. It has been really good for the community."* With their delicious menu, including gluten-free, vegetarian and other special dietary options, and their wide assortment of craft beer, fine liquor and more, Shank's Tavern is sure to attract more and more Trail users in the coming months.

Chiques Rock Outfitters has two locations in Marietta and Columbia and offers everything you need for an adventure



which has taken more than 20 years to build, was met with some concerns from residents in the local communities related to specific sections of the Trail. But according to Michael Domin of County of Lancaster, many of those concerns have dissipated since residents have begun to see the benefits of the Trail in their communities. *"Overall, development of the Trail was supported by the communities and entities it involved. With the recent completion of the trail from Columbia to Bainbridge, businesses along the route have witnessed an influx of customers and an uptick in business. I think Marietta has benefitted the most."*

With the historic, welcoming charm of the parks, homes, restaurants and other businesses in the communities that line the Trail, it's no wonder the local food, lodging, retail and other industries are benefitting from the increased use of the Trail.

"We have had very positive feedback from restaurants along

on the Trail, including canoe, kayak and tandem rentals, bike rentals, climbing equipment, guides, shuttle service, catering and box lunches, and more. According to owner James Cox, "We bought the Marietta property in anticipation of the trail." He says the benefits of the Trail to his business and the community are primarily related to exposure - "We give 50 brochures away a week - up from previous years. Most of the businesses, to my knowledge, have seen increased bike and automobile traffic."

For the team at Columbia Kettle Works on North 3rd Street in Columbia, which serves a variety of beers, wines, and cocktails, as well as snacks, meat and cheese plates and sandwiches, the Trail has also made a positive impact on their business. *"We are only two blocks from the Columbia Crossing trailhead,"* said Bill Collister. *"As soon as the trailhead opened, we began seeing bikes chained out front,*





in our building and cars with bikes on racks out front. We and our bartenders routinely talk with customers and find out they are in town for the Trail. Many say they knew of our place and expected to stop in while on the Trail; others found out about us from the Columbia Crossing building personnel.

"We put a drawing of the Columbia Crossing building on the back side of our 64 oz. growlers and a map of the Trail is on the back side of our 32 oz. growler. In addition, visitors to our establishment will see information on our two screens about other places in town they can visit, as well as a large

scale copy of the Trail map," he continued.

And as for the Trail's impact on businesses in the greater Columbia community - "Many people coming in find out about the antique establishments and other places of interest they can see or find out about our brewpub for the first time due to the Trail and tell us they'll be back, as they did not know all that existed in Columbia."

According to Byers, the development of the Northwest Lancaster County River Trail is part of a larger initiative - called the Susquehanna Riverlands Conservation



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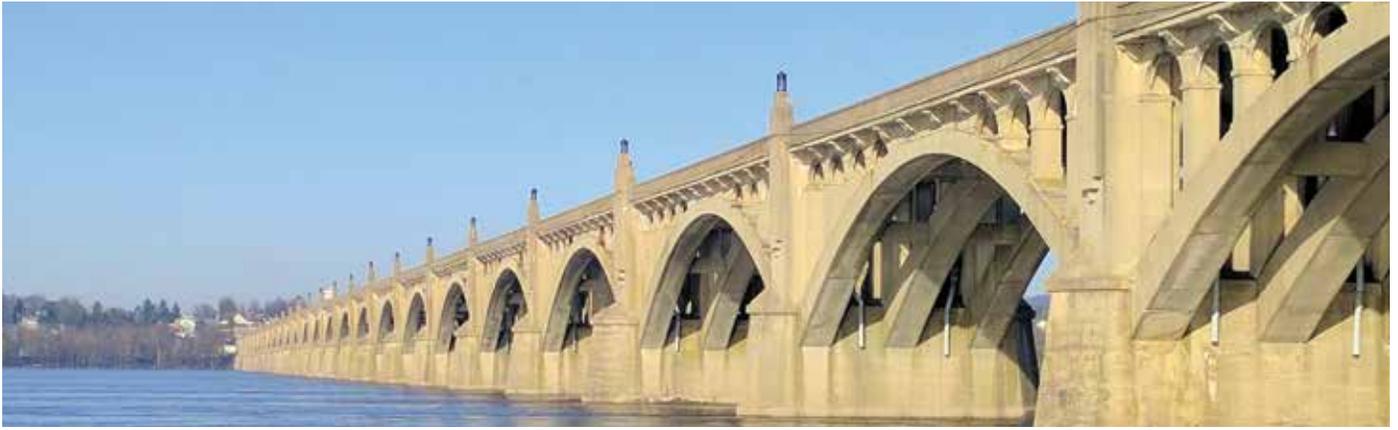
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Landscape. This initiative, along with the trail and Columbia Crossing, is funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. All of these projects are designed to highlight the special places and landscape of the river region in Lancaster and York Counties to drive tourism and economic development. *"A group of Lancaster and York partners, including Susquehanna Heritage, are leading the charge to make the Susquehanna Riverlands a national destination for outdoor fun and cultural discovery."* As part of this initiative, a new website - <http://susquehannariverlands.com/> - was launched to help visitors explore the River, including the trails, overlooks, museums and more along the way.

Want to experience the Northwest Lancaster County River Trail for yourself and check out the communities and businesses along the way? Information to help you plan your trip is available at the website, above. Happy trails! **LT**



BY AUDREY FISKE-ESBENSHADE,
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This article highlights and supports the work that's being done in the community to satisfy the Well Being of People dimension of our Prosperity Indicators.

To solve the issues facing Lancaster County it requires business and community leaders at the table sharing ideas, discussing opportunities and finding solutions. This article demonstrates how business professionals and community members collaboratively leveraged their assets to solve a problem affecting our local community. While this solution helped address the immediate problem, it's also having lasting effects that will help both our future workforce and our quality of life prosper.

ON THE MENU: Combating Poverty

In the summer and fall of 2015, Community Action Partnership (CAP) was welcoming the new leadership of Dan Jurman. In ramping up his new role, Jurman met with many fellow organizations, community leaders and constituencies to understand the landscape of need and opportunity. One of those meetings was with Crispus Attucks Community Center. The two organizations began a dialogue that would eventually lead to an innovative social enterprise called Reunion. *"We had the infrastructure, and they had the idea for a food-related social enterprise, so we were the missing piece to each other's puzzle,"* says Jurman.

Reunion is a phenomenal new culinary experience for Lancaster County. A southern food inspired food truck and catering service, Reunion serves as a commercial training kitchen for members of our community who are facing barriers to employment. Apprentices in the program may include those who have had formal training but need relevant experience. They may not have access to coaching, mentoring, or referrals that could otherwise lead to job placement. Whatever the barriers to employment may be, a Reunion apprenticeship provides that stamp on a resume that can open new opportunities.

NOT JUST CULINARY

Reunion apprentices will work in a food service environment, but the training they receive is transferrable to many fields. *"Interview skills, accountability, managing emotions, these are just some examples of the soft skills*



apprentices will develop, and they are the same skills that employers are telling us are lacking," says Jurman. Such skills are a springboard for the living wage jobs that a Reunion experience (each lasting a few weeks) could provide.

As part of the Mayor's Commission to Combat Poverty, an action plan called "One Good Job" identified connection to employment opportunities and family-sustaining wages with health benefits as vital to lifting families out of poverty. While this may seem obvious, what may not be obvious are the significant barriers to such employment opportunities. This is precisely what Reunion aims to address.

According to the "One Good Job" action plan, Lancaster City has 9,470 adults living below the poverty line and without full-time employment. The plan aims to connect more families to living wage employment each year, with a goal of 3,000 families by year 15.



MANY BENEFICIARIES

The benefits of Reunion extend far beyond workforce training. As a revenue-generating enterprise, Reunion will also benefit Crispus Attucks' community meal program by providing a renewable source of funding. Additionally, revenue from the food truck and catering business will be reinvested so that Reunion will continue to serve new apprentices and will continue to feed the pipeline of companies seeking new employees.

To fully grasp the impact, it is helpful to understand the reality in Lancaster City. While many areas have seen significant economic development, poverty remains a critical issue. Data from American Community Survey indicates that poverty rates in Lancaster are higher than those of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh (as a percentage of total residents).

The goal is to connect the working poor and the homeless who eat lunch at Crispus Attucks during the week to the opportunity to change their trajectory through Reunion. Cheryl Holland Jones, Executive Director of Crispus Attucks, explains: *"Not only change one person's life, but once you get a job, you possibly buy a house, change the entire direction of your family."*

The broader community will have the opportunity to experience Reunion as a new option for lunch, dinner and special events. The food truck will be positioned around the City and County, and a catering service will bring the unique menu of soul food to meetings, events, and parties. It provides the ideal opportunity to directly engage with solutions for addressing poverty. In partnering with Reunion for catering, special events, or even just a lunch break, you are literally reinvesting in your community. In that way, Reunion also serves to raise awareness about poverty issues and solutions.





More than 15 years ago, United Way of Lancaster County forged unlikely partnerships to tackle the seemingly unsolvable problem of homelessness in our County.

The result? The work done by what is known today as the Lancaster County Coalition to End Homelessness (LCCEH) has resulted in **Lancaster County being one of the first counties in America to be recognized for homeless system transformation.** Their work is far from over as LCCEH continues to fight for those facing difficult realities by rapidly diverting anyone who is homeless to an apartment or transitional housing program.

At United Way, we fund Community Impact Partnerships, like LCCEH, that fight for the health, education, and financial stability of every person in our community. Because change doesn't happen alone. We have one life. **To live better, we must Live United.**



United Way of
Lancaster County

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GENEROUS PARTNERS

Reunion would not have been possible without the generous partners who joined CAP and Crispus Attucks in their vision. Two funders, Lancaster County Community Foundation and the Gunterberg Charitable Foundation, provided financial support to get the program rolling. Development costs included a scholarship to SACA's Tec Centro program for the Master Cook, and of course, the purchase and build-out of a food truck.

Lancaster County Community Foundation's Dave Koser explained that their contribution came through the Ah-Ha Project, which supports social enterprise. *"Reunion is a great example of how our community can be fed and employed in a sustainable way, not relying on taxpayer funding and charitable contributions,"* adds Koser.

Reunion's first culinary team members include Vincent, Master Cook; and Robert, Program Manager. *"Being able to utilize my talent to help complete the mission that CAP has for the community is such a blessing,"* says Robert. *"I look forward to making a difference in the lives of the people in our community through this project."*

Reunion debuted in Downtown Lancaster on First Friday, May 5, 2017. Learn more at EatReunion.com. **LT**



BY LISA CAMPBELL,
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DISCOVERING HIDDEN TALENT

Contributions of Immigrants in Lancaster

Several years ago, Tony Legenstein received an email from friend and colleague Jim Dougherty, looking for others to join him as a mentor for refugees.

"It intrigued me," said Legenstein, president of Certified Carpet, *"but I didn't do anything about it."*

Not long after that, someone from Lutheran Refugee Services in Lancaster reached out to Legenstein to ask him to consider being a mentor, and this time he took the plunge and began mentoring a doctor from Cuba. *"His credentials meant nothing here, and he had to start over,"* said Legenstein. *"I didn't think that was right."* Legenstein's mentee went to school to be a nurse, and eventually moved on to New York. That was his introduction to refugees in Lancaster County.

In 2015, Dougherty came back to Legenstein with another refugee he was mentoring at the time, and asked if Certified

Carpet had some part-time work for him. Legenstein brought Mohamed Suliman (known as Suli) onboard for some part-time work, and a short time later offered him a full-time position in the area rug cleaning department.

"I liked him instantly and he was a good worker," Legenstein said. *"I was glad we (Certified Carpet) could help. I wish I would have been introduced to it earlier."*

The "it" he references is Church World Services (CWS) and the system or network for hiring refugees. CWS Lancaster is an organization that provides support and assistance to refugees through a network of churches, organizations and volunteers.

"We had been spinning our wheels trying to hire people," said Legenstein, sharing his frustration of doing hundreds of interviews, only to have people not show up for work,

not follow through on their work commitment, or unable to pass a drug test. *"We are giving everyone who wants to work an opportunity for a job. Refugees are happy to have an opportunity and are ready to work. They win."*

Since that time, Certified Carpet has hired a few other refugees, and while not all of them have worked out, they did successfully bring on Adel Jamus last year. Both Jamus and Suli are from Sudan, and while their paths to America are different, their gratitude to be here is similar. *"I didn't think it was possible to come to the U.S.,"* said Suli. He came for the "freedoms and dreamland" we offer.

Both were resettled with the help and support of CWS. They describe the support as *"people gave us help, classes to learn English and helped get us our first job,"* adding that Lancaster already feels like home.

Grateful for the support, Suli said he wanted to support himself from the beginning. *"I wanted to work and earn money,"* he said. *"I wanted to be here and earn my own living."*



Both Legenstein and the two employees credited CWS and the extended network of support services for bringing them together. *"When you're looking for employees, reach out to CWS,"* suggested Legenstein. He explained that CWS gets refugees their paperwork, housing and other support services. *"They didn't bring me anyone who wasn't ready to work."*

Suli and Jamus talk positively of the process, support and opportunity here in Lancaster. *"Everyone can have a chance to succeed,"* said Suli. *"Immigrants have a better chance here than in other countries."* And their advice to other immigrants: *"Work hard, take responsibility and respect the law and rules of the U.S."*

Until recently, success stories like this one and similar anecdotes were the only thing we had to point to when discussing the merits of immigrants in the county.

In 2016, the Lancaster Chamber, in partnership with the Lancaster County Refugee and Immigrant Coalition and the New American Economy, released the New Americans in Lancaster Report providing a snapshot of the demographic and economic contributions of immigrants in Lancaster County.

The report provides a foundation of information about immigrants in Lancaster County that was previously unknown, helping to replace speculation and some long-held thoughts and beliefs with facts and data. The report provides data on the significant spending power and tax contributions of the Lancaster County immigrant population, as well as their workforce contributions, educational attainment levels, entrepreneurship rate and more. To view the report, visit lancasterchamber.com then "Community Initiatives."

A FEW HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT INCLUDE:

- **The foreign-born population makes up 4.4% of the County's total population (23,094 people).**
- **Growth in the foreign-born population accounted for 8% of the County's overall population growth between 2009-2014.**
- **Immigrants make up 4.4% of the population in Lancaster County, but are 5.4% of our working-age population.**
- **Immigrants are overrepresented in their employment in key industries in Lancaster County, including Recreation and Accommodation; Manufacturing; Health Care and Social Assistance; and others.**
- **1,081 immigrants in Lancaster County are self-employed and their businesses generated \$37.7 million in business income in 2014.**
- **In 2014, foreign-born residents had higher levels of education than U.S. born citizens in Lancaster County.**
- **In 2014, foreign-born residents contributed \$1.3 billion to the GDP of Lancaster County.**

As we are still absorbing the data and identifying the challenges and opportunities we have in front of us to maximize the potential and contributions of New Americans in Lancaster County, we can look to several other communities across the country that have taken steps to do just this based on information and data they have collected about their respective communities.

Take for example, Dayton, Ohio. After suffering three decades of population decline, they took a proactive approach to initiate a Welcoming Dayton plan in 2011 and in just three years, they reversed their population decline by increasing their immigrant population by 70 percent.

COMMUNITY: BUSINESS & COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

St. Louis, through a collaborative effort of several community partners, implemented a proactive plan with a goal of having the fastest growing immigrant population in the country by 2020. They have already achieved that goal. Using a multi-pronged approach, they offered services for immigrants with professional degrees and experience to more easily transfer their education and experience to similar careers in the U.S.; they built and supported an entrepreneur network to encourage entrepreneurship among immigrants; and developed systems to keep international students in the area beyond graduation.

In these two examples, success didn't just happen. It took intentional planning, actions and collaboration among many organizations and institutions to get these results. *"Communities recognize the incredible value (New Americans) bring,"* said Kate Brick, Director of State and Local Initiatives at New American Economy, *"before including the contributions they make to the workforce, to the economy and to the overall community."*

During a recent presentation in Lancaster by New American Economy representatives, a panel made up of organizations providing services to immigrants and local employers, along with audience members, heralded their support for creating a plan for how Lancaster County can continue to

integrate New Americans into our community successfully. The sentiment was clear - it's time to put together a plan and initiate action!

A good plan will take a strong network of supporting organizations, as well as buy-in from the Government, social and private sectors of the community. We will need to start with a more coordinated plan for welcoming and attracting immigrants. It will take an intentional communication plan and wide dissemination of facts and data throughout the community to gain understanding. And it will take changing the narrative by focusing on facts and data.

The Lancaster Chamber is committed to advancing a collaborative plan with other community organizations and taking the necessary action to assure Lancaster County is positioned to attract and integrate New Americans into the local workforce and community, adding to the vibrancy and economic success of our county. Stay tuned.



BY CHERYL IRWIN-BASS,
Vice President & COO, Lancaster Chamber
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cirwin@lancasterchamber.com

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WHAT SETS LANCASTER APART ...

While communities across the country are discovering the contributions of New Americans as a whole, each community has some unique aspects of their immigrant population.

Kate Brick, Director of State and Local Initiatives at New American Economy, worked on Lancaster County's report and recently came to Lancaster to provide a deeper analysis of the report by comparing our local results to other areas throughout the country. She had several observations about how the immigrant population differed in Lancaster from other areas that engaged in similar data collection and reports.

13,570

Number of foreign-born residents who had naturalized as of 2014.



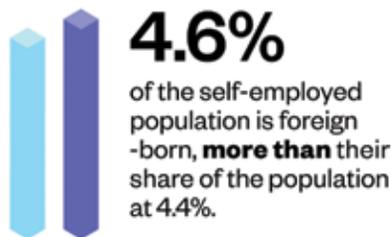
1. The first observation revealed that Lancaster County has a higher rate of citizenship among the immigrant population than Pennsylvania and the nation. Among Lancaster County immigrants, 58% became U.S. citizens, compared to Pennsylvania at 48% and nationwide at 47%.

Without knowing exactly why, Brick offered that perhaps it's because Lancaster County resettles more refugees here than in other areas. New American Economy's conservative estimate is that refugees make up 16.5% of the total immigrant population in Lancaster County, and they come with a pathway to citizenship. "They come here legally, with the appropriate documentation and do not face the same barriers to citizenship that some immigrants face depending on how they enter the country and for those entering on various types of visas," said Brick.

1,081

immigrants in Lancaster County are self-employed.

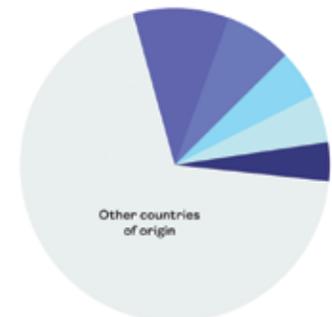
Their businesses generated **\$37.7M** in business income in 2014."



3. The third observation that Brick shared about how Lancaster data is different than in most areas is in the share of entrepreneurs. In Lancaster County, immigrants make up 4.4% of the population, and 4.6% of self-employed entrepreneurs. In many other communities, the share of entrepreneurs is typically a bigger percent of the population. For instance, in Pennsylvania immigrants are 6.4% of the population and represent 10.4% of entrepreneurs; while nationwide immigrants make up 13.2% of the population and 20.6% of entrepreneurs.

2. The second observation was that the New American population is more diverse in Lancaster County than in other areas throughout the country. "Most communities have a higher concentration of one country of origin," said Brick. In Lancaster, the highest percent of immigrants from any one country is slightly less than 10 percent.

Top five countries of origin:



| | | |
|---|----------------------------------|------|
| 1 | Vietnam | 9.6% |
| 2 | Dominican Republic ¹⁹ | 6.7% |
| 3 | Mexico ²⁰ | 5.3% |
| 4 | Germany ²¹ | 4.9% |
| 5 | Cuba ²² | 4.1% |





ADDING UP THE FACTS.

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79% of immigrants are of working age.



The need for a plan to successfully integrate immigrants into the workforce and the overall economy.

The reality is, many communities across the country have already put the facts together and are, in some cases, years into a plan for their communities to welcome, attract, keep, employ and support the immigrant population. These are the communities we will be competing against to attract the best and brightest talent to Lancaster County.

For more information and a complete list of resources, visit lancasterchamber.com then "Community Initiatives."

This article highlights and supports the work that's being done in the community to satisfy the Community & Culture and Economic Engine dimensions of our Prosperity Indicators.



ServSafe, Citizenship and French Macarons

In French culture, cooking is an art form that feeds the soul as well as the body and nourishes family and community – and the results are delicious! But imagine moving from France to the United States and trying to create a culinary masterpiece from your native country, only to discover that you don't even know how to measure the ingredients, anymore, because you're used to the metric system! Or realizing that the standards for something as simple as how long you wash your hands before handling food are entirely different than what you're used to.



That was the reality that Sylvie Bonin faced when she immigrated to the United States from France in 2008. For Bonin, French cooking is both her job and her passion. Through her business, Sylvie's Recipes in Lancaster, she provides French cooking classes for individuals and groups, creating incredible meals and desserts from Coq au Vin to Scallop Mousseline Wrapped in Fish to French Macarons

COMMUNITY: BUSINESS & COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

and White Chocolate Pistachio Ganache.

When Bonin moved to Lancaster she began what she describes as a “long and frustrating process” to find her niche in a new country and a new culture, including learning a new language.

“In a new country, you feel completely lost,” Bonin said. *“I learned English in school, but when you don’t practice a language, you lose it.”*

That’s when a friend told her about The Literacy Council of Lancaster-Lebanon. Bonin spent the next four years taking an English class with her instructor (now friend) Jane Myers who also helped Bonin through the process of becoming a citizen. *“It was very emotional for me,”* Bonin explained with tears in her eyes. *“When you become a citizen, you decide this is your place.”*

In addition to her citizenship test, Bonin had another test to take – her ServSafe Food Protection Manager Certification Examination. It sounds like a straightforward process – you study the materials, pass your test and you are certified to provide food services through your business. But when you’re still new to the language and culinary standards of your culture, a simple ServSafe Certification becomes a much bigger mountain to climb. Thankfully, Bonin once again had help from her friend Jane who made sure Bonin had all of the knowledge she needed to successfully pass the examination.

“In France, it’s different. In France, we cook the pork for a long time and the chicken for a short time. But here it is the other way around. Here you cook the chicken for a long time and the pork for less time!” Bonin said with a laugh.

Since she launched Sylvie’s Recipes six years ago, Bonin has taught

more than 400 students the art of French Cooking. *“One of my students started when he was 12, and now he’s in culinary school!”* she said.

When it comes to finding your place in a new country and culture, Bonin recommends the following: *“You need to participate in full in your country. Learn to speak the language*

and respect the culture. Learning the language helps you become more integrated and find a job.”

And for the rest of us: *“It takes bravery to face the unknown. Everybody can bring something. You just need to listen.”* **LT**

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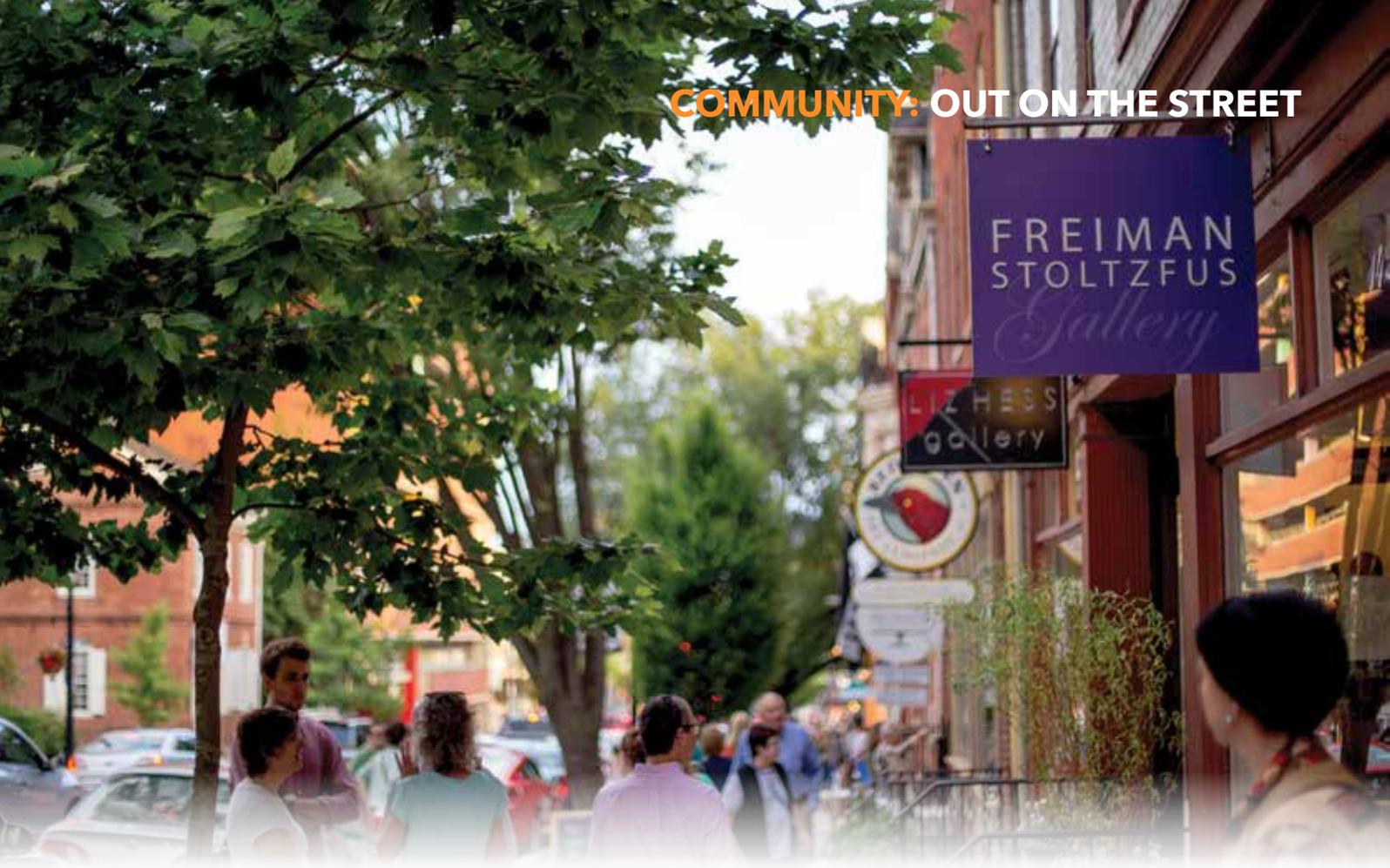
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TIPS FOR ENHANCING YOUR INTERNAL CULTURE

A strong internal company culture is key to enhanced customer service, employee retention and recruitment, and business success. In our Winter/Spring 2017 edition of *Thriving!* local business leaders shared with us how they and their employees live out their company's core values daily.

We learned about Atomic Design's Running and Fun Clubs that align with their value of "individuality;" and Pennsylvania's Auto Auction's work with St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Save a Warrior and river clean-ups that reinforce their "commitment to be good citizens of the communities they serve." To follow-up on this concept, I took to the streets and asked individuals to share what their company does to enhance internal culture. Check out how these companies are living out their corporate values by having strong internal cultures.



Nelson Longenecker,
Vice President - Business Innovation
Four Seasons Family of Companies

"Mission and Core Values in Action." These true life stories about associates are told within our organization as examples of our mission 'Growing Ideas, Producing Excellence' or our core values of

Integrity, Dynamic Leadership, Exceptional Partnerships and Winning Culture. The associate is given a copy of a certificate and a medallion to recognize that they exemplify an aspect of our culture that we want to preserve. The certificates are also posted in several places in our office to remind people of our enduring mission and values. We have continued this practice for the past 12 years, replacing older certificates with more recent examples as we award them."



Tim Wittman, Fulfillment Director
Nordstrom

"At Nordstrom we participate in several community events. For example, each year we encourage our employees to volunteer for the United Way's Day of Caring as a way to stay connected to the needs of the communities we work in. We also

pay them for their time to demonstrate our commitment to serving others."



Stacy Whisel, President
Godfrey

"Learning is a Godfrey core value. Marketing communications is a field that is constantly changing and evolving so we encourage our team members to be fascinated, to keep learning. We offer educational opportunities through Godfrey

University which has included training sessions around our industry and clients' key topics and trends. The classes are taught by our internal team and external partners. We also set aside a training budget each year, and team members can submit a request to attend a conference or outside training as long as they demonstrate how it will help us continue to advance in a particular skillset or area of expertise.

Teamwork is also a Godfrey core value. So we look for ways to enable our teams to become the strongest they can be. That means encouraging team members to get to know each other and have fun outside of the day-to-day work. We have a Happy Half Hour every Wednesday at 4:30 for socializing and we also have internal food days throughout the year like 'mater day (tomato sandwiches when everyone's gardens are overflowing with them), Thanksgiving sides day (no turkey, just sides) and Latin Food day."



Ethan Demme, President & CEO
Demme Learning

"One of our core values at Demme Learning is 'Shared Success' and that means sharing with our local community. One of the ways we reinforce this value is by giving every employee two days of paid time off, called 'Do Good Days,' to volunteer

in their local communities. It's one of the ways we can give back, and support our neighbors."



Michelle Rondinelli,
Co-Owner & President
Kitchen Kettle Foods, Inc.

"We are very big on fun and recognition at all levels. To make sure this is happening we have 'You've Been Caught' notes that team members can fill out to recognize anyone that they feel has gone above

and beyond. They write a short note to the person and the person receiving the note puts it in our fish bowl for a monthly drawing. When the winner is picked the person that wrote the note and the one that received it spin the Wheel of Recognition for some sort of prize - 30 minute massage, free lunch, movie tickets, etc. We take their picture together and display it at our reception area for everyone to see. They are also mentioned in our bi-weekly internal cue card (newsletter)."



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COMMUNITY: OUT ON THE STREET



Bo Barber, Vice President of Marketing & Business Development
Ecore

"At Ecore our mission is to transform reclaimed waste into unique performance surfaces that make people's lives better. How? By manufacturing surfaces that incorporate recycled rubber - the

treads of tractor trailer tires - into our products. In addition to making the environment better, we are also making the world better for the people interacting with our surfaces every day by providing floors that offer more: safety, ergonomic and acoustic benefits. However, in addition to improving our customers' lives, we also want to have a positive impact on our employees and make their lives better, too. We achieve this by offering good jobs and incorporating our core values of safety, health and wellness; customer advocacy; integrity; creativity; and accountability into our culture. As such, over the past five years, Ecore has worked very hard to create a culture that reflects these core values.

Because we believe creativity is so important, over the past two years we renovated our offices to create an open office environment, so employees can concentrate on their work, while not being isolated. This atmosphere yields many benefits, including collaboration, camaraderie, transparency, and integrity and accountability, two more of Ecore core values.

All of these attributes create a synergy, which leads me to a cultural attribute I believe sets Ecore apart from other companies: Our employees truly feel like they are part of an incredible team. This starts at the top with our CEO, Art Dodge III. He shows respect, compassion, and caring for each of our employees. An example of this is sending a personally handwritten birthday card to his nearly 400

workers every year. This caring nature permeates through the culture and is, in turn, reflected by our employees. They express their care and support for one another by championing each other's causes and pulling together when employees or their family members are sick or experiencing a hardship. Some recent examples of this include, supporting an account manager that has Multiple Sclerosis (MS) by holding a bake sale and paint night fundraiser to help her raise money for her MS Walking Team, in addition to joining her team and raising their own funds to participate in the walk. When employees or family members have fallen ill or passed away unexpectedly, employees have expressed support by organizing donation drives for food, childcare items, and money.

When it comes to Ecore's core number one value of safety, health and wellness, Ecore really shines. In 2014, we launched the Be Fit Movement, an online petition for wellness that our employees were encouraged to sign (<http://befit.ecoreathletic.com/>). Through the Be Fit Movement, Ecore has hosted many fitness and wellness events throughout the past three years. This includes holding competitions for weight loss, offering 3 months of free yoga sessions at Evolution Power Yoga, offering employee discounted family fitness memberships to Spooky Nook Sports, and hosting employee sporting events at Spooky Nook, where we have played basketball, volleyball and soccer games.

When it comes to core values and creating a culture where your employees follow through, most companies fall short, because of a lack of focus. By being authentic, practicing what we preach, and having a mission statement that so clearly aligns with our core values, we, at Ecore, truly believe we have created an awesome environment, in which our employees thrive, while striving to make people's lives better."





Melissa J. Landis, Partner
Beers + Hoffman Architecture

"At Beers + Hoffman we believe in working hard, all while having fun and enjoying the process. For example, the last Friday of each month we hold Bullseye Lunch Friday - staff get together, sometimes incorporating a group lunch, and we have a friendly,

competitive game of team darts during lunch. Additionally, after-hours events such as movie nights and bowling are organized for the combined staff at all of our locations.

We also know our employees have lives outside of the office, and we respect that - offering flex time during work hours for personal and family items that come up (attending school or extra-curricular items with their families, volunteering, etc.).

We believe in both supporting our community and encouraging the career of architecture. Our company supports these values by holding a LEGO building night, free to the public every 2nd Friday in Lititz, where we open our doors and fill the office with LEGOS and other building toys and hold contests, with judging by one of our architects. A number of our employees join in on the fun for these nights."

Glenda Conover, Human Resources Manager
Land Grant Surveyors

"At Land Grant Surveyors, we have an Annual Employee Picnic and Christmas Party; employee outings, such as golf and the Escape Room; employee of the month and year recognition; and educational accomplishment recognition, flexible schedules, lunch supplied on a daily basis. Our company outings gives each of us a chance to see each other in a different environment while learning something new about each other. All of our employees are very hard workers, so the recognitions are just to confirm that they know we appreciate all they do."



BY ALLISON BUCHER,
Communications Director,
Lancaster Chamber
Contact Allison at
abucher@lancasterchamber.com



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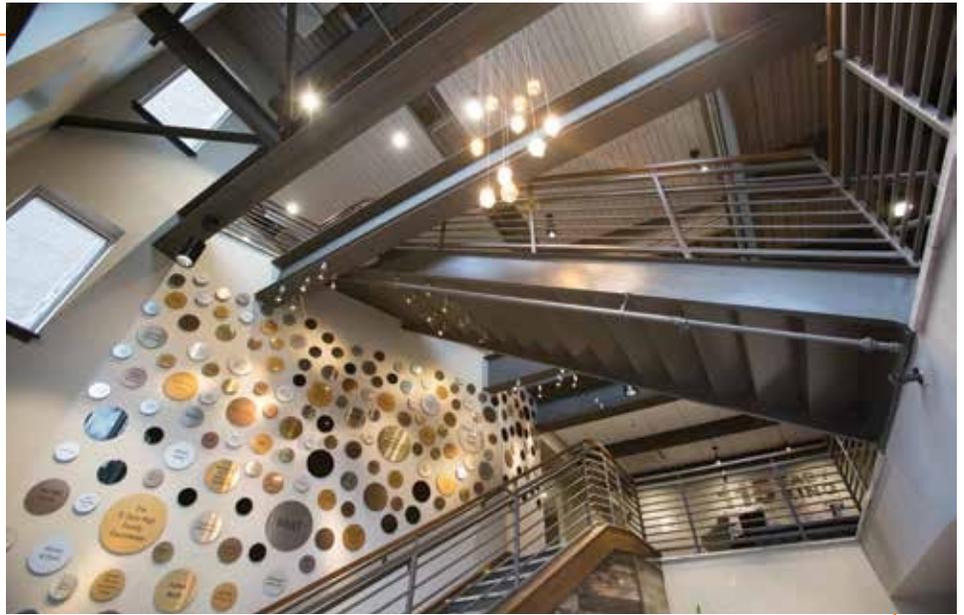
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Building for Greater Impact Donor Reception

In April, The Foundation of the Lancaster Chamber held a Donor Reception and Open House for its Capital Campaign to recognize and thank donors to date and to announce being awarded New Market Tax Credits from Community First Fund. The Tax Credits will be used for the substantial renovations of our new headquarters at 115 East King Street, which serves as a hub for all people to thrive, businesses to excel and our community to prosper.

To learn more about this exciting initiative and how you can be part of its success, visit lancasterchamberfoundation.org or call 717.397.3531.



WORKFORCE CRISIS: How Lancaster County is Responding

Talk with any Lancaster County business owner about their opportunities for the future and it won't be long until the subject of workforce comes up.

Be it through surveys, anecdotal evidence and/or flat-out facts, there is no denying that the broad topic of workforce is top of mind with the vast majority of our local businesses. From lamenting the lack of "soft skills" (showing up on time; working effectively in teams; problem solving) to the need for engineers, physicians and researchers, Lancaster County's workforce challenges run the spectrum of job and industry needs.

In simplest terms, the immediate scope of the challenge is reflected in our unemployment rate of 4.0%, a rate that most equate with full employment for an area. Yet, the issue is far larger than that simple statistic.

Consider the fact that the High Companies alone see a need



for more than 1,000 new hires across all job descriptions in the next 10 years; consider that the average manufacturing employee is 46 years-of-age; consider that, according to Tri-Starr Staffing, temporary employment requests are up over 10% in the past year, in a county that has grown by less than 1% in population; consider the fact that virtually every single graduate of Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology gets hired upon graduation, with many employer requests left unfilled year-after-year; and, the list goes on and on.

Lancaster County is facing a workforce crisis. Yet, as usual, Lancaster County employers and educators are working hard to get ahead of it.

For starters, the Lancaster Chamber's new building and new business model has set the stage for a renewed commitment to provide relevant professional development and training to the incumbent workforce in a space conducive to learning. From the long-popular New

Managers Academy to some new offerings around Project Management, Creativity and Innovation, Public Speaking and Sales Training, opportunities exist to ensure your current workforce gets the local training they need to succeed and progress at their jobs. Free Professional Development Fridays; specialty courses on negotiating, compensation and other topics; and best practice sharing through Excellence Exchange, company tours and other methods ensure a full array of experiences to develop, retain and promote your employees.

Other programs such as Harrisburg Area Community College's "Professionally Yours," Millersville University's "Corporate University" and a long list of adult education programming at the Career and Technology Center are also a part of the local offerings designed to assist with workforce development.

The Workforce Development Board, as its name would





imply, is also a tremendous source for workforce training, with an emphasis on the un- or under-employed worker and a placement program aimed at getting employers the workers they need.

One recent program added to their menu is specific to “soft skills” training - an oft-mentioned concern of local companies. The program, available through an on-line, interactive tool, assists individuals in identifying current shortcomings and offers customized training to “fill-in-the-gaps.”

The significance of the issue in our community is also driving unique partnerships, such as the one that has resulted around the SkillUp Lancaster program, an initiative sponsored by the Chamber, the Workforce Development Board and the Community Action Partnership.

The program offers more than 4,500 on-line courses to employers, employees and the unemployed on topics from computer programming to English as a second language; from manufacturing credentials to customer service; and from LEAN training to human resources support.

The partnership around this program enables individuals the opportunity to directly access the training through the WDB and other Community Based Organizations throughout

A WORD FROM **YOUR CHAMBER**

PEOPLE **BUSINESS** COMMUNITY

Lancaster County; and invites companies to participate by purchasing licenses from the Lancaster Chamber for any and all of their employees to address training needs.

Finally, in that the workforce challenge facing Lancaster County is, by all accounts, a long-term problem, the need to look beyond the here-and-now is critical.

An example of that is happening this August when the High Companies, in collaboration with the Lancaster County STEM Alliance and the Chamber, will be hosting a three-day comprehensive training program for up to 50 teachers and counselors from all local school districts wherein they will learn, first-hand, about local job opportunities. The intent of this pilot program is to provide educators with the information they need to prepare our children for jobs of the future. The STEM Alliance is hopeful that this pilot program can be replicated in other industries throughout the county.

Rest assured, the above just scratches the surface on the programs and services underway to alleviate the workforce challenges that stand to threaten our economic success. So you can take some comfort in the fact that if you have a unique workforce need, there is likely help in the county to come to the rescue.

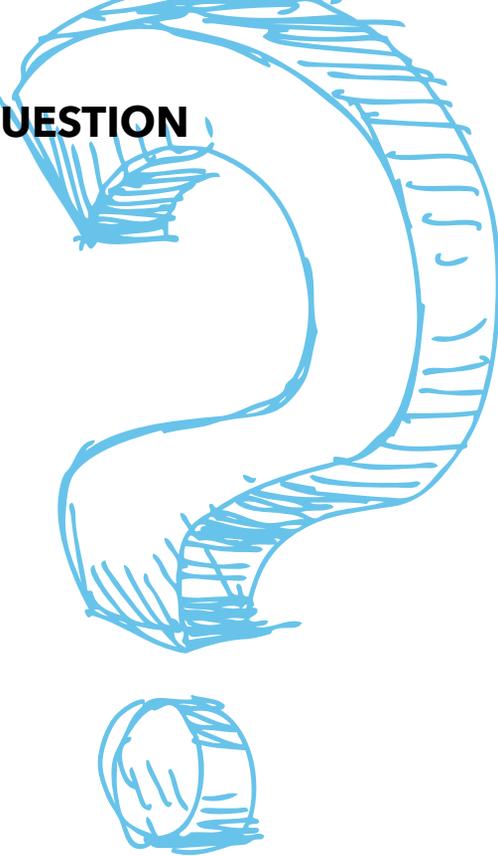
Look to the Chamber as a resource to make the connections you need to solve your unique challenges. And, keep us informed as to how we can be the best partner possible to assist.



BY TOM BALDRIGE, C.C.E.,
President & CEO
Lancaster Chamber
 Contact Tom at
tbaldrige@lancasterchamber.com



E POLL QUESTION



How do you anticipate the business climate for your business being in the next six months?

Share with us how you anticipate the business climate for your business being in the next six months at **thriving@lancasterchamber.com**, post to the Chamber's social media channels - **Facebook: Lancaster Chamber** or **Twitter: Lanc_Chamber** using **#LCThriving** or **take the survey found in the digital edition of Thriving!**.

In the next six months, do you see the business climate for your business:

- A. Improving
- B. Declining
- C. About the Same
- D. Not Sure

What factors do you feel will most contribute to it improving or declining?



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