

CREATING SUCCESS  
FOR A STRONG  
COMMUNITY



# The **BOTTOM** **LINE**



[www.southernsarotoga.org](http://www.southernsarotoga.org)

Volume 24 No. 2

February 2009

## **Use Your Chamber...Get Involved... Take Advantage of Member Benefits Today.**

### *When is the Last Time You or One of Your Staff:*

- **Gained valuable information at a Chamber Educational Seminar?**  
*Register now* for “Managing the Legal Risks of Electronically Stored Information”  
To be held in The Chamber Executive Education Center on 2/18 at 7:30am.
- **Used the Member-to-Member Discount Program exclusively for Chamber members?**  
*Check out the discounts* offered by fellow Chamber members at [www.southernsarotoga.org](http://www.southernsarotoga.org) and click on “Member Login” to view all available discounts.
- **Marketed a special promotion or new service you are offering to fellow members?**  
*Invest in a Membership Mailing List* on disk for \$250. (get free database updates for one year), insert a flyer in next months newsletter, or sponsor an email blast and start doing more business with fellow members today!
- **Joined a Chamber Committee?**  
A great way to *build your professional network!* Call your Chamber at 371-7748 to find out more.
- **Invited a potential client or a colleague to meet you at a Second Thursday Networking Mixer?**  
*Register now* for the February 12th Networking Mixer at Abele Builders/Winfield Group.
- **Compared Your Current Health Insurance Premiums to Health/Dental Insurance Plans Offered through your Chamber?**  
*Check out rates* online at [www.southernsarotoga.org](http://www.southernsarotoga.org) or call our health insurance administrators Bouchey & Clarke Benefits, Inc. at 518-272-9866.
- **Picked Up Your Chamber Membership Directory & Buyer's Guide (or used the online version) to purchase needed goods and services?**  
*Buy Local*—it's good to do business with fellow Chamber members!

*This is just a sampling of the many benefits and opportunities available to our valued members. Don't hesitate to call the Chamber at 371-7748 for questions and comments on what we can do to be of assistance to you. Your friendly Chamber staff is always here to serve you!*

**The Chamber of Southern Saratoga County**

## Chamber Seeks Donations for Annual Dinner & Chamber Golf Classic

Donating an item for a silent auction, raffle, or door prize is more than just a nice way to help an organization like The Chamber to raise funds - it also helps to generate business for your company!

Individuals bid on items they are interested in and therefore, if they bid on your item, they are potential customers for you! Get your product and your business card in a future customer's hand - donate an item for the Chamber's Annual Awards Dinner Silent Auction on Thursday, April 23th at Mohawk River Country Club and Chateau or The Chamber Golf Classic on June 12th.

### Helpful Hints when donating an item for any silent auction or raffle:

- 1) Donate an item that truly showcases what your company does best such as your top selling product or a gift certificate for services.
- 2) Include information on how to contact you, such as your business card or brochure. Send extra cards to put on the auction table.
- 3) Give the winner of your item an incentive to come in and purchase more goods or services by offering a coupon for a future purchase along with the silent auction item.

To donate an item to the Chamber Annual Dinner or Golf Classic, please contact Loretta Rankin at 371-7748 [loretta@southernaratoga.org](mailto:loretta@southernaratoga.org)

## Listen to Chamber Chat Every Friday

TALK 1300 radio has added another local show to its weekday line up called "Chamber Chat". The program features dialogue with executives from the Chambers of Commerce of Rensselaer County, Albany-Colonie, Schenectady and The Chamber of Southern Saratoga County each week. Chamber Chat (with each Chamber listed above) airs at 6:05pm on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday respectively.

"TALK 1300 has the most local talk," remarked Patrick Ryan VP of Sales for TALK 1300. "When you tune to 1300 you'll hear one of a kind local conversations on politics, local and national news, and lots of information about successful local businesses," Ryan continued. "Chamber Chat gives each of the major Chambers a powerful platform to share their good news about their members and events the Chambers are presenting," Ryan noted.

## Thank you...

The Chamber extends special thanks to Gold's Gym of Clifton Park General Manager Vincent Esposito and his super staff for hosting our January Second Thursday Networking Mixer.

For all the members that attended - it was a fun (and healthy) way to start off the new year, as Vinnie generously provided a complimentary one-month gym membership to everyone!

For further information on Gold's Gym, call them at 348-1500 or visit their website at [www.gotogolds.com](http://www.gotogolds.com)



# 2009 Upcoming Events

Mark your calendar now for these Upcoming networking events.

**2009**

### 2nd Thursday Networking Mixers

February 12  
The Winfield Group/  
Abele Builders

March 12  
Curtis Lumber

April 9  
Edison Club  
(with Schenectady Chamber)

May 14  
The Lodge-at  
Saratoga Gaming & Raceway

June 11  
RAP Players Park, Inc.

July 9  
multiple Chambers mixer—  
Dutch Apple Cruises

August 13  
Shanes Rib Shack

September 10  
Location TBA

October 8  
Seton Health

November 12  
Ravenswood

December 10  
Holiday Mixer - Location TBA

*Call The Chamber office at 371-7748 for information on Sponsorship for these and other upcoming events.*

Design & Layout by  
**Velocity Print Solutions**  
370-1158

**T**he Seton Health Center for Smoking Cessation, creator of The Butt Stops Here Program that helps smokers quit, has received a one-year \$81K grant from the American Legacy Foundation®, the national public health foundation devoted to keeping young people from smoking and helping all smokers quit. The grant funding will help Seton Health establish new smoking cessation services for the homeless in Albany and Rensselaer counties. Seton Health is a comprehensive, not-for-profit, integrated healthcare system anchored by St. Mary's Hospital in Troy. For more information, please visit [www.setonhealth.org](http://www.setonhealth.org).

**T**he Albany Academies is pleased to announce that its new publication A2, The Albany Academies Magazine recently received an Honorable Mention in the Magazines (Independent Schools, 4-color) category in the prestigious 2009 CASE (Council for Advancement and Support of Education) II Accolades Awards. CASE District II is a regional organization of advancement professionals in the areas of alumni relations, communications and philanthropy.

**T**ech Valley Office Interiors, a local furniture dealership was recently named a Diamond level dealer for the Albany area by the HON company. The Diamond level assures the customer that the dealer has obtained the highest level of sales, receives the best discounting and represents a commitment to the customer for a quality buying experience. For more information, please visit them on the web, [www.techvalleyofficeinteriors.com](http://www.techvalleyofficeinteriors.com).

**S**EFCU is now offering its members tuition discounts at more than 225 private colleges. The Albany, N.Y.-based credit union has partnered with SAGE Scholars, a Philadelphia-based private college savings program. Members will be able to earn scholarships equal to up to one full year of tuition, based on the balance in their SEFCU accounts. "Members can earn tuition rewards similar to how they earn frequent flier miles," said John DeCelle, spokesman for SEFCU. SEFCU, which was formed in 1934, has more than \$1.6 billion in assets and 32 offices in the the Albany area, Binghamton, Syracuse, and Buffalo.

**S**aratoga Hospital is pleased to announce that Seth A. Capello, MD, urologist, has performed 100 robot-assisted prostatectomies, in addition to several other complex robotic surgeries, since the end of August, 2007. Dr. Capello is the only fellowship trained robotic surgeon in the greater Capital Regio. Saratoga Hospital first introduced its robotic surgery program in April 2007.



Jennifer Fortune  
Gras

**J**ennifer Fortune Gras, Sales Manager for the Clifton Park office of Veronica W. Lynch, Inc. has recently been elected to a three year term as a Director on the Board of the Greater Capital Association of Realtors and appointed the 2009 Vice President of Membership for Women's Council of Realtors.

**M**atthew Clarke, president of Bouchey & Clarke Benefits in Troy, has been elected chair of the Seton Health Foundation Board of Trustees. An expert in employee benefit planning, Clarke specializes in cost analysis, plan design, and risk management of benefit plans for clients and their employees. The Seton Health Foundation was established in 1981 to encourage and promote charitable giving and to raise, manage, and disburse funds to support Seton Health/St. Mary's Hospital. For more information, call (518)268-5503 or visit [www.southernsaratoga.org](http://www.southernsaratoga.org)

**E**ntrepreneur Magazine's January 2009 issue recently published it's 30th Annual Franchise 500 list. The Coffee News ranks #1 in the Advertising Services Category for the 5th year in a row and is #64 overall on the list of the top 500 Franchises in North America (up from #68 in 2008). The Capital Region Coffee News is published locally by R.Beck Associates LLC. Currently the free, primarily restaurant-based publication is distributed to over 175 locations throughout Saratoga County.

**C**arol North is pleased to announce the addition of Patricia Griesau, Associate Broker, to the Malta Branch of C A North Realty, Inc. Pat has worked as a Realtor in the Capital Area since 2004 assisting home buyers and home sellers with their real estate needs. She resides in Malta, with her husband Jack. A member of the Malta Business Professional Association, Pat looks forward to continuing her career with CA Realty. Pat can be contacted at: 518-899-2222 (office); 518-588-2996 (cell).

**B**elmonte Builders said it has built the first house in the Albany, N.Y., region to be certified Gold under the LEED for Homes program. The 2,220-square-foot house, in the Arlington Heights development in Halfmoon, was designed and built to maximize energy efficiency. The Belmonte house is about 51 percent more efficient than a standard home built today, according to the company. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a program run by the U.S. Green Building Council to encourage sustainable products, recycled materials, and design standards that reduce waste and save money over the long term.

**P**auline Bartel, president and chief creative officer of Bartel Communications, Inc., has been re-appointed to serve as publicist for the Consulting Alliance. During her first term, Bartel generated more than 1 million positive media impressions for the organization. The Consulting Alliance is a key resource of expertise to businesses and organizations in the Capital Region and worldwide. Bartel Communications, Inc., is a Waterford-based corporate communications firm that builds the images of companies with words through writing and editing, public relations and marketing, training, professional development and corporate anniversary consulting services. The company's Web site is [www.paulinebartel.com](http://www.paulinebartel.com).

Continued on page 4

# Members IN THE News

(Cont'd) from pg 3

**V**elocity Print Solutions has been recognized as a featured customer on the Community Energy, Inc. website: [www.newwindenergy.com](http://www.newwindenergy.com) for its commitment to purchase Renewable Energy Certificates equal to 100 percent of its energy use. Velocity is also a Leadership Club member in the EPA Green Power Partnership Program. Velocity will purchase 1,368,000 kilowatt hours of Renewable Energy Certificates in 2009 for all 3 plant locations. The environmental benefit from this purchase is estimated to be the equivalent of preventing 846 metric tons of carbon dioxide from being released into the atmosphere, the impact of which is equivalent to planting more than 760 acres of trees each year or taking 177 cars off the road. Velocity provides a complete range of services which include digital and offset printing, promotional products, mailing, distribution and fulfillment.

**Saratoga Hospital and Saratoga Care Nursing Home**, affiliates of Saratoga Care, Inc., are a 243-bed community hospital and nursing home designed to serve as Saratoga County's community health resource.

**Sports are For Everyone** held a holiday party in January and brought cheer to many local children with disabilities. For more information of this organization, contact Director Jim Fitzgerald at (518) 383-8076.

**A**s the first race track in New York State to offer video gaming entertainment in January of 2004, **Saratoga Gaming and Raceway** just celebrating it's 5-Year Anniversary. The 5-day celebration included giveaways totaling over \$50,000 in cash and prizes. "This 5-Year Celebration is a true testament to Saratoga Gaming and Raceway's patrons and employees," describes Jamie Hartman, Executive Vice President and General Manager of Saratoga Gaming and Raceway. "We wouldn't be where we are today, without the continued support from our patrons, or the exceptional customer service of our dedicated and knowledgeable team members." For more information please visit [www.saratogagamingandraceway.com](http://www.saratogagamingandraceway.com)

## Save the Date!

The Chamber of  
Southern Saratoga County  
**Annual Awards Dinner**

Thursday, April 23rd, 2009

The Mohawk River  
Country Club & Chateau

## Have you taken advantage of these valuable member benefits?

**SCORE- Counselors to America's Small Business.** If you are looking for expertise to help develop your business or are a professional who would like to volunteer your expertise to help small businesses succeed, SCORE could be for you. SCORE, an affiliate of the Small Business Administration (SBA), is comprised of over 10,000 counselors nationwide. SCORE volunteers perform the function of counselor and mentor, free of charge, to a business for as long as the client desires.

The Chamber of Southern Saratoga offers SCORE counseling on a one-to-one basis and educational seminars for all in the area. If you are interested in talking with a SCORE counselor or are an individual interested in becoming a SCORE counselor, please contact The Chamber at (518) 371-7748 or visit the national website at [www.score.org](http://www.score.org).

Starting, expanding or need help with your business? Offered through the **Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at the University at Albany**; Business Advisor Kate Baker can provide you assistance on where to secure financing, business plan writing, required permits, marketing, record keeping and more. All in the comfort and convenience of The Chamber office. This free member benefit can be arranged by calling The Chamber office at 371-7748 or contacting SBDC directly at 518-485-7647.



**Lauren  
Carpenter**

*New Chamber Staff Member*

The Chamber is pleased to announce that Lauren Carpenter has joined the team at The Chamber as our new Account Executive. Lauren is responsible for expanding our membership numbers through recruitment as well as overseeing a comprehensive retention effort with members. Email Lauren at [Lauren@southernSaratoga.org](mailto:Lauren@southernSaratoga.org).

# StartUP Smart

*Troubled economic times can bring a wealth of opportunities for small businesses in the community, but education and knowledge are the keys to developing a solid business and avoiding costly mistakes.*

*To better prepare local entrepreneurs for their dreams of starting their own business, the Start-Up Smart Program at The Chamber of Southern Saratoga County is designed to help take ideas and develop them into sound business models.*



Sponsored by

StartUp Smart features seven seminars taught in Clifton Park by area market experts including the Small Business Development Center and SCORE. Participants will also be paired with a business counselor for one on one business counseling at no additional charge. Program is limited to 20 individuals!

**SEMINAR SCHEDULE:**

- April 2 Business Planning
- April 9 Legal Issues and the Small Business Panel Discussion
- April 16 Marketing 101
- April 23 Cash Flow, Budgets and Profitability
- April 30 Evaluating the Competition and Product/Service Development
- May 7 Financing a Small Business and Return on Investment
- May 14 Wrap-Up Session and Graduation Ceremony

All seminars are from 7:30 AM - 9:00 AM and presented by professionals with years of experience in their fields.

**Location:**

The Executive Education Center  
at the Chamber Offices, Clifton Park

**Investment:**

\$79 per person for the complete series

Interested individuals can join the StartUp Smart Group on LinkedIn or call 371-7748, or email: [info@southern-saratoga.org](mailto:info@southern-saratoga.org) for more information

## Member's Spotlight

### Veterinarians/ Pet Supplies/Services

(ALL AREA CODES ARE 518)

ACME Pet Services, LLC .....	526-2263
Animal Care Hospital .....	383-6254
Bensons Pet Center .....	373-1007
Homestead Animal Hospital .....	664-2122
Liberty Canine Care Center, LLC.....	899-5098
Muttley Crew Pet-Sitting, LLC.....	331-5744
Pet Lodge of Clifton Park.....	275-6040
The Pink Dog Parlor, LLC .....	371-5118

*Remember—*

*It's good to do business with Chamber members!*

## Managing the Legal Risks of Electronically Stored Data

Electronic information is critical to any organization, however it also creates serious legal risks! Protect your company by learning about the 6 steps to effective data management, the increasing use of electronically stored information as evidence, acceptable use policies and intellectual property policies.

**Presenter:** Christopher Meyer, Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna, LLP

**When:** Wed. 2/18, 7:30am – 9:30am

**Where:** Chamber Executive Education Center

**Cost:** General Admission, \$20.

Chamber Members: \$15.

Includes continental breakfast

**Register:** Online at [www.southern-saratoga.org](http://www.southern-saratoga.org) or call 371-7748

Sponsored by:





## The Chamber Salutes our 2009 Leadership Circle Members



Being in the Leadership Circle is an exclusive and unique opportunity for members. The Leadership Circle provides business leaders with direct and exclusive access to programs and benefits only available at this membership level.

Leadership Circle Trustees are provided frequent and regular access to other business, political and community leaders in Tech Valley. Just some of the exclusive of the exclusive benefits include:

- Invitations to private, small group meetings/luncheons/power networking events with elected officials, business and community leaders

- Complimentary admission to all Chamber events, including an exclusive Leadership Circle reception at the Chamber's Annual Dinner Gala
- Unlimited Use of The Chamber's 1600 plus mailing list
- Individual staff liaison who will act as your concierge to provide personal support
- Special recognition in the Chamber office
- First choice of Corporate Marketing, Opportunities and Sponsorships
- Banner ad on the Chamber website

As a trustee of the Leadership Circle, your membership demonstrates your commitment to our organization and our mission. It is an added investment in our success, which can only lead to greater success for you, your business and the future of our community.

To find out how to be part of this exclusive membership level, please contact Chamber President Peter Aust at [peter@southern-saratoga.org](mailto:peter@southern-saratoga.org) or Vice President of Membership Development Denise Romeo at [denise@southern-saratoga.org](mailto:denise@southern-saratoga.org) or 371-7748.

### REMEMBER:

Visit [www.southern-saratoga.org](http://www.southern-saratoga.org) for secure online payment of your annual membership investment and Chamber events, to download copies of the newsletter and to check the most up-to-date calendar of Chamber and community events.

## Protecting Social Security Numbers

To counteract the growing threat of identity theft, New York State updated requirements of the New York Social Security Number Protection Law in 2008:

Changes to section 399 of New York's general business law restrict the use and communication of Social Security numbers and impose penalties on companies that fail to protect the confidentiality of Social Security numbers in their possession.

The statute makes it illegal to intentionally communicate, either oral or written, a social security number to the general public. Its also prohibits making the access to services, benefits, or products contingent of the use of access cards printed with an individuals social security number. Also prohibited is a requirement that an individual transmit their social security number over the internet unless the number is encrypted. Finally, the requirement that a social security number be used as a password or to access a website is prohibited.

The law requires employers to limit access to social security numbers in their possession. Employees accessing them must have a legitimate business reason for doing so. Employers must store records with social security numbers in a manner to ensure confidentiality and security.

Penalties can be imposed even if the individual whose number was compromised did not suffer any harm. Penalties can range from \$1,000 up to \$250,000.

—*Courtesy of Tom Minnick,  
The Business Council of New York State, Inc.*

## Display your Chamber Membership Plaque Proudly

When consumers know that a business is a member of the local chamber, they are 44% more likely to think favorably about it.

Consumers who are told that a business is a chamber member are 51% more likely to be highly aware of it and 57% more likely to think positively of its local reputation. Consumers are 63% more likely to buy goods and services in the future from a company that they believe is a member of the local chamber of commerce.

Based on these findings, be sure to proudly display your membership plaque and also your membership door decal. As you renew for 2009, you will receive both a 2009 plaque, as well as door decal. If you are interested in offering a member-to-member discount, please contact Loretta at the Chamber for further information. Your door decal will indicate that you are a member offering a special discount to your fellow members. Never hesitate to contact the Chamber for additional copies and don't forget your website, which is your "electronic doorway." Ask for an electronic version of your membership decal to put on your website!

## Job Postings on Chamber Website

Another benefit to members is the Job Postings section on the Chamber website- [www.southernSaratoga.org](http://www.southernSaratoga.org). Members only are able to post job openings at their businesses as well as shop themselves for new positions available at fellow chamber businesses!

To take advantage of the Job Postings section, log on to [www.southernSaratoga.org](http://www.southernSaratoga.org) and go to the Members Only section and click on either "Add a New Job" or "View Job Posting".

If you have any questions regarding this member benefit, or need assistance, please call the Chamber at 371-7748.

## Baskets of Hope

*Baskets of Hope* is The Women in Business Committee's (WIB) ongoing project to benefit The Saratoga County Domestic Violence Shelter. This worthy program provides essential personal care items to women and their children who are currently seeking refuge at the shelter. The committee is actively seeking donations for Baskets of Hope and is in need of all personal care items including hair care products, toothpaste, toothbrushes, razors, etc., household items and children's school supplies. Donations may be dropped off at The Chamber office during regular business hours or at Expressions of Gratitude, 331 Ushers Road in Clifton Park. If you have questions, please call Liz at 371-7748 or email her at [liz@southernSaratoga.org](mailto:liz@southernSaratoga.org).

Thanks to our  
2009 Women in Business Committee  
& Baskets of Hope

Sponsor



## Chamber Angels

The Chamber Angels committee extends special thanks to

G.A. Bove & Sons for their sponsorship of four children in the 2008 Holiday Season.



The 2009 Chamber Membership Ambassador Committee from left (front row): Patti Montgomery, NBT Bank, Committee Chairperson Stacie Peugh, Southern Saratoga YMCA, Amy Domurad, Saratoga Gaming and Raceway, Denise Romeo, The Chamber of Southern Saratoga County, Adam Barrett, New York Long Term Care Brokers, Ltd., Rhonda Parker, Virtually Yours 9-2-5. Back row from left: Justin J. Spraker, Ameriprise Financial, Jayme McRee, Sage Computer Associates, Inc., David Pitaniello, Bouchey & Clarke Benefits, Inc., Brandon Kot, Berkshire Bank, Craig Gould, Hopmier Evans Gage Agency and Lauren Carpenter, The Chamber of Southern Saratoga County. Ambassadors missing from photo: Dee Pangburn, Capital Bank, Stephan Scribner, Ballston Spa National Bank and Nick Zullo, The Affinity Group.

*The purpose of the Membership/Ambassador Committee of The Chamber of Southern Saratoga County is to develop programs & initiatives to attract, recruit, mentor and retain members.*

This committee also provides hospitality at events and helps to distribute welcome packets and plaques to new members.

Ambassadors also participate in grand opening/ribbon cutting ceremonies for new members, anniversary celebrations, expansions, etc.



## **Are you LinkedIn to The Chamber Yet?**

*LinkedIn.com is one of the leading professional social networking sites and provides you with an exciting new way to connect, communicate, and do business with your fellow Chamber members!*

### **What is LinkedIn?**

Like other social networking sites such as Facebook and My Space, LinkedIn is made up of profiles that include important information about you and your company. Think of it as an extensive, electronic business card. You connect your profile (pass your electronic business card) to clients, colleagues, and fellow Chamber members who are also using LinkedIn to build your personal network. You can also join groups of LinkedIn users who are interested in a certain industry or topic.

### **How to make LinkedIn work for you:**

Just as you might ask a Chamber staff member to introduce you to someone you'd like to meet at a mixer, you can ask a LinkedIn contact to "introduce" you to someone they have on their network. You can also connect and communicate with fellow Chamber members by joining the Chamber's LinkedIn group. It's like a 24/7 online networking mixer with members sharing resources and building relationships.

### **Using LinkedIn for media relations:**

You should always know what local reporters are covering your specific industry. Search for those reporters on LinkedIn and see if they are users. Ask to add them to your network. Some reporters will use LinkedIn to post what stories they are currently working on. You may find that you can provide them with valuable resources, opinions, and information and establish yourself as a local expert with the media!

*Visit [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com) for more information.*



# 2009 Chamber Sponsorships

## Great Opportunities are Available for Your Business

*Chamber Sponsorships* are an excellent investment of your marketing dollars- and a smart choice for your 2009 marketing plan:

- Are you looking for long range impact? **The Chamber Supporter Sponsorship**, available at both a \$2,000 and \$1,000 level, offers high impact exposure at major Chamber events.
- Do your potential clients frequent a specific Chamber event such as the Annual Dinner or the Golf Tournament? Event specific sponsorship levels starting at only \$100 to give you great opportunities to get in front of the people you want to do business with.
- Not sure what the right sponsorship is for you? Chamber staff can customize any sponsorship level in order for you to get the best results possible.

For more information please email:  
Loretta@southernssaratoga.org or visit the website at  
www.southernssaratoga.org/sponsorships

## 2009 Membership Directory & Buyer's Guide

The Chamber's premiere publication- the annual Membership Directory and Buyer's Guide will be coming to your mail box soon!

This all around resource guide should be at handy on your desk top to reference again and again throughout the year!

If you would like additional copies of the guide, please drop by The Chamber office.

Use Your Buyer's Guide – and Buy Local!

### The Bottom Line

## Advertising Opportunity

Many of our members have taken advantage of advertising with an insert in the Chamber's monthly publication, *The Bottomline* newsletter and got great results. Now, your insert will appear both in the hard copy newsletter - sent to over 1,000 businesses and in the pdf version on the Chamber website: [www.southernssaratoga.org](http://www.southernssaratoga.org) at no extra cost!

Simply provide the Chamber with 1,150 (8 1/2x11") flyers and an electronic file of the flyer and we'll take care of the rest. Cost is only \$175.00 for one month. Materials must be received by the 20th of the month prior to the issue you want to be in.

Increase the impact of your insert by following up with a ChamberTip. Buy both an Insert and a ChamberTip sponsorship and save \$25.

Contact [Liz@southernssaratoga.org](mailto:Liz@southernssaratoga.org)  
or call 371-7748 to reserve your space.

## 2009 IRS Standard Mileage Rates

Beginning last month, the standard mileage reimbursement rate for business use of a personal vehicle dropped to 55 cents per mile. The new rate is lower than the 58.5 cents per mile rate established for the second half of 2008 due to higher gasoline prices at that time. Additional information on IRS standard mileage rates may be found in Revenue Procedure 2009-72.

Go to

**[www.southernssaratoga.org](http://www.southernssaratoga.org)**

to download a copy of this newsletter...

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# The State Report

A look at issues important to Employer Associations from The Business Council of New York State, Inc.

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February 2009

## Governor will use stimulus to eliminate tax increases

"The Business Council strongly supports Governor Paterson's plan to use federal stimulus money to eliminate proposed new taxes and fees in his budget," said Kenneth Adams, president & CEO of The Business Council of New York State, Inc.

State and local per capita spending is nearly 50 percent above the national average and well above states we compete with for jobs.

"New York taxpayers simply cannot afford the level of government spending that has become a tradition in New York," said Adams. "The Governor is right when he says we must change the culture of spending."

"The best stimulus for New York would be to make our state more economically competitive," added Adams. "Using federal dollars to prevent increased taxes and fees is a good first step."

## The Business Council provides testimony on DEC budget

The Business Council made a call for restraint on fees and regulation in testimony to the Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means Committees' hearing on the Department of Environmental Conservation budget.

"The Business Council supports the continuation of the cap on Title V air permit fees," said Ken Pokalsky, senior director of government affairs. "New York's existing air permit fees are already higher than other states."

"Manufacturers and power utilities would have to shift resources from other investment to accommodate these increased charges, further damaging the competitiveness of the manufacturing sector by adding to the state's already high electric power prices."

The Business Council also expressed opposition to the expanded bottle bill.

"Touted as an environmental measure, the expanded bottle bill is really a hidden tax on New York state manufacturers, bottlers, distributors and ultimately consumers," said Pokalsky.

The Business Council voiced support for a high-level, multi-discipline review of major regulatory proposals.

"This approach would be especially appropriate for environmental rulemakings that have a significant impact on business competitiveness," said Pokalsky.

The complete text of the testimony is at [www.bcnys.org](http://www.bcnys.org).

## Budget needs to reflect State of the State message

The Business Council supports Governor Paterson's call for government reform to provide taxpayers relief, specifically

the property tax cap, mandate relief and reform to make local governments more efficient.

"Overall, Governor Paterson's State of the State message outlined an ambitious agenda to spur private sector investment in New York, including investment in our energy infrastructure. While we agree with many of the Governor's ideas we are concerned that his budget proposal creates roadblocks to that plan," said Kenneth Adams, president & CEO of The Business Council of New York State.

Among the most damaging proposals are the retro-active changes to the Empire Zone program that will damage companies in the program and have a chilling effect on future economic development efforts. Taxes on insurance products, consumer goods and other economic sectors will also make New York a more expensive place to live and do business.

Well-intentioned but burdensome regulations drive up the cost of doing business in New York and discourage investment. The Business Council urges the Governor to create a process to evaluate the real costs of new and existing regulations.

"The state needs to focus first and foremost on controlling government spending. The budget proposal does not restrain spending enough," said Adams.

## New pollution rules may hurt state's competitiveness

"New state air pollution rules could make New York less competitive for businesses compared to other states," said Kenneth Adams, president & CEO of The Business Council of New York State. "These new rules will impede efforts by New York manufacturers and power generators to become more productive and energy efficient."

Adams' comments were in response to the state's revised "new source review" (NSR) regulations, given final approval today by the State Environmental Board.

NSR is a program mandated by the federal Clean Air Act that was intended to require major air emission sources to install state-of-the-art pollution controls when they make major renovations.

The new rule will make it difficult for businesses to make routine repairs to equipment and processes. It will also subject changes that result in small emission increases to new recordkeeping and reporting requirements.

Rather than tracking recent federal NSR reforms, this rule-making will result in a program more stringent and more costly than those implemented in other states, making New York less competitive.

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*Material from The Business Council of New York State, Inc. For more information, contact [chambers@bcnys.org](mailto:chambers@bcnys.org).*

## **Legislation Alert: Action Needed!**

**Employee Free Choice Act – Card Check – EFCA – H.R. 800:  
These are the names being used to describe this proposed legislation  
that will potentially seriously impact your business!**

*Your action is needed to stop this bill in the new Congress.*

EFCA would allow union organization of your employees through the successful collection of authorization cards from a simple majority of employees and takes away the fundamental and democratic right of a secret ballot process in union organizing.

The proposed bill would also undermine long standing principles of workplace democracy and fairness and would harm your company's ability to survive. It would make union organizing of any business much easier than it is today. Once a union is in place it would require an initial contract to be negotiated within 120 days from union certification or be submitted to binding arbitration. That means an arbitrator could determine the wages and benefits you must provide your employees regardless of your ability to pay. This has the potential to put incredible cost pressures

on your bottom line. This is not a 'big business' issue. In 2005, the National Labor Relations Board conducted 2649 union representation elections. More than 20 percent of those elections involved bargaining units of fewer than 10 employees and a full 70 percent of them involved bargaining units of fewer than 50 employees

**Contact Senators Schumer and Gillibrand and urge them to vote NO on this onerous legislation! An EFCA Advocacy page is located on our website that will provide you with contact information and a sample letter template that you can use to contact these elected leaders. Please take a moment to be proactive on this proposed bill before it becomes law. For more information on EFCA, please contact Peter Aust at the Chamber.**

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## **Empire Zone changes**

The Governor's Executive Budget proposal calls for retroactively applying new criteria for qualification to existing Empire Zone participants. These would change the investment standards and employment thresholds that were agreed upon in the original program contracts. It is estimated that dozens of businesses in our region that met all of the original State requirements to receive benefits could be removed from the program and effectively put them in jeopardy of survival. These companies employ thousands and in our area approximately 380,000 throughout New York State. Imposing new requirements on companies already participating in the Empire Zone program will have a chilling effect on future economic development efforts. Your Chamber is proactively urging legislators for compromises in the Governors proposal.

## **Paid Family Leave Act**

Paid Family Leave will hit hardest small and medium sized businesses which are currently not under the federal Family Medical Leave Act requirements. This legislation would impact all employers, regardless of size, by mandating a paid family leave policy to provide payments for 12 weeks to workers to care for a child or a sick relative. The benefit will be paid for by expanding the state mandated temporary disability insurance program, and allowing employers to increase the premium withheld from employee's paychecks to help cover the cost.

No provisions are made to cover the costs to employers – for increased overtime, staffing gaps, etc. The impact of this one-size-fits-all mandate would be a huge burden on New York's businesses and on many workers. Even in the best of times this proposal would make doing business and creating jobs in our region more difficult.

The Chamber has been making the voice of opposition known on this issue and will keep you informed of the progress of this in future communications.

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## Upcoming Events Calendar

### February

- 4 Wednesday**  
**7:30 am-9:30 am** *Keeping the Balls in the Air: Balancing Work & Family Discussion Group* — Chamber Executive Education Center. Chamber Members: No Charge.  
Sponsored by: Justin J. Spraker, A Financial Advisory Franchise of Ameriprise Financial
- 12 Thursday**  
**3:45 pm** *Board of Directors Meeting* — Chamber Office  
**5:30 pm** *2nd Thursday Networking Mixer— Host: Abele Builders & Winfield Group.* General Admission \$10. Chamber Members \$5. Sponsored by: Capital Bank
- 18 Wednesday**  
**7:30 am-9:30 am** *“Managing the Legal Risks of Electronically Stored Information” Seminar* — Chamber Executive Education Center. General Admission: \$20. Chamber Members: \$15. includes continental breakfast.  
Presented by: Whiteman, Osterman & Hanna  
Sponsored by: Justin J. Spraker, A Financial Advisory Franchise of Ameriprise Financial

**LOG ON TO [www.southernsaratoga.org](http://www.southernsaratoga.org)**  
TO REGISTER ONLINE FOR ALL EVENTS or CALL THE CHAMBER OFFICE at 371-7748

### March

- 3 Tuesday**  
**7:30 am-9:30 am** *Positioning Yourself with the Media as a Specialist/Expert* — Chamber Executive Education Center. General Admission: \$20. Chamber Members: \$15. includes continental breakfast.  
Presented by: Pierce Communications  
Sponsored by: Justin J. Spraker, A Financial Advisory Franchise of Ameriprise Financial
- 12 Thursday**  
**3:45 pm** *Board of Directors Meeting* — Chamber Office  
**5:30 pm** *2nd Thursday Networking Mixer— Host: Curtis Lumber.* General Admission \$10. Chamber Members \$5. Sponsored by: Capital Bank
- 18 Wednesday**  
**7:30 am-9:30 am** *Labor Law: Employee vs. the Independent Contractor* — Chamber Executive Education Center. General Admission: \$20. Chamber Members: \$15. includes continental breakfast.  
Sponsored by: Justin J. Spraker, A Financial Advisory Franchise of Ameriprise Financial
- Noon** *Women in Business Brown Bag Seminar—“Girls Going Green”* — Chamber Executive Education Center. General Admission: \$15. Chamber Members: No charge.  
Sponsored by: Seton Health/St. Mary’s Health

Log on to [www.southernsaratoga.org](http://www.southernsaratoga.org) to register for all events

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