

# 500+ Alumni and Counting: A Celebration Of Leadership and Impact

## Leadership Ulster 2026 Kicks Off Sept. 7

Calief Housen admits he was a little full of himself when he first attended the Leadership Ulster class in the fall of 2024.

“I had this preconceived notion. I thought a leader was someone who was the hardest-working and most disciplined person in the room, but as I went through the program, I learned that a leader is someone who can make space for other people to grow and feel comfortable. A leader is someone who is empathetic,” said Housen, the chief executive officer and founder of Career InTouch, Inc.

“I was humbled. I was considering more the hard skills of what leadership looked like, and this taught me more about the soft skills. If a classmate didn’t feel comfortable speaking in public or asking a question, I learned about how I could support them. It’s all about working with your team on projects and making everyone around you feel valued and supported.”

Housen, 24, became such a valuable voice in the Class of 2025 that he was elected vice president. “It really was a great experience and will inform my work with my students at Career InTouch going forward,” he added.

Housen was among 22 participants who graduated from Leadership Ulster, a nine-month program run by the Ulster Chamber Foundation that helps individuals from diverse backgrounds maximize their impact in their careers and communities. A celebration recognizing the graduates was held on June 10 at Wiltwyck Golf Club.

The presenting sponsors for 2025 were Ulster Savings Bank and M&T Bank—a longtime presenting sponsor.

Ulster Chamber Foundation Executive Director Su Marcy, who oversees the program, said this year’s class—one of the largest in years—was extraordinary in many ways.

“They impressed me with the way they bonded at the initial retreat, their commitment to learning and having fun, and the way they lifted each other up through many challenges throughout the year,” Marcy said.

“While each member of this cohort is a leader in their own right, or identified as a prospective leader by their employer, most were not used to taking the lead on a project or knowing how to ask for help. It was so rewarding to watch them work through several class projects and learn how to include each member in the process and figure out that even if you were the point person for one part of the project, you weren’t responsible for all of it, and that by melding each other’s strengths, their



projects were so much more successful.

“I saw many in the group who lacked some self-confidence in the beginning, reach beyond their comfort zones, volunteer to lead some aspect of the project, and achieve what they had set out to do. It was a privilege to witness their growth in confidence in themselves and their leadership abilities. Some words I would use to describe them would be persistent, brave, caring and competitive,” Marcy added.

After the kickoff retreat last September, participants attended 19 bi-weekly sessions, which helped them understand their strengths and weaknesses and develop team-building skills as well as their own leadership style.

They also heard about others’ experiences, including leaders in local government, banking, education, health care, nonprofits and business.

Class President Kari Jadrovski said those leaders taught participants valuable traits they could use in their careers.

“We have a lot of excellent leaders in our community, and we were lucky to meet and learn from 42 of them. I learned that there’s really no one way to lead. It really depends on the moment and being adaptable and making sure that you’re listening to your team,” said Jadrovski, vice president at KDD Marketing in Kingston.

“It’s wonderful to network with other leaders and get to know other people in our community and learn from their advice and hard-earned wisdom. We did pick up a lot of great tools, and now it’s a matter of putting them into practice.”

Ajee Anderson, a branch manager at TEG Federal Credit Union, agreed, adding that the program overall taught her about the different dynamics of leadership.

“It really comes down to being able to follow as much as you lead. That’s my big takeaway,” she said. “You have to be willing

to do that for the betterment of your team, and as a new branch manager, that’s going to guide me as I continue to grow in this role.”

Sarah Bittner of RBT CPAs said she walked away with the understanding that true leadership creates a collaborative work culture.

“At the end of the day, it’s about striving to lift other people up for the good of the whole company. The more you do that, the more your company thrives,” she said.

Since the Leadership Ulster (formerly Ulster Leadership Development Institute) program began 32 years ago, more than 500 people have graduated and gone on to become effective leaders, who have served on boards and contributed to the community in other meaningful ways.

This year’s graduates include:

- Ajee Anderson, TEG Federal Credit Union
- Leah Baxter, Rondout Savings Bank
- Sarah E. Bittner, RBT CPAs
- Taylor Craig, MHVFCU
- Danielle Crossen, MHVFCU
- James Dyer, Jr., Ellenville Regional Hospital
- Heather Eckardt, Community Foundations HV
- Juan Garrote, Howmet Aerospace
- Calief Housen, Class Vice President, Career InTouch
- Keri Jadrovski, Class President, KDD Marketing
- Moriah Keir, Ulster Savings Bank
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- Bethany Marciszyn, Ulster Savings Bank
- Rachel Morgan, RBT CPAs
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- Meghan Pellicane, Hudson Valley Credit Union
- Kira Rabiner, Bank of Greene County
- Leanna M. Sorrentino, M&T Bank
- Robert Sykes, Simply Gone Mobile Dumpsters
- Maria Tellez Burgoa, Ulster Savings Bank
- Krista Usko, Ellenville Regional Hospital

*The next Leadership Ulster class opens with a retreat at Diamond Mills Hotel in Saugerties on Sunday, Sept. 7, and Monday, Sept. 8. For more information, go to [ulsterchamberfoundation.org](http://ulsterchamberfoundation.org), or contact Su Marcy at [Su@UlsterChamber.org](mailto:Su@UlsterChamber.org).*

## Enjoy A Night High Above The Hudson Mount Academy Hosts July Mixer

There’s almost no better place to hold a summer Mixer than a sprawling granite castle perched 200 feet above the Hudson River. That’s especially true because the former Mount St. Alphonsus had such a long and revered history in our region.

The Mount Academy, a private school owned and operated by the Bruderhof since 2012, expects a large turnout as it hosts the July 15 Networking Mixer from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Community Products, along with The Chateau, is sponsoring the event at 1001 Broadway in Esopus.

As the latest stewards of the picturesque property, the Bruderhof, a Christian-based community, is anxious to showcase the magnificent 440-foot-long main building and verdant grounds—something the group did in the summer of 2014 at a Chamber Mixer.

“The Mount Academy holds happy memories for many people and families in the Mid-Hudson Valley from the days when it was a seminary to today as The Mount Academy,” said Meghan Zimmerman, who works in the school admissions office.

“It’s also timely. Now that The Mount’s academic and experiential learning programs have developed sufficiently, The Mount school community is enthusiastic about finding ways to make The Mount campus a wider community asset,” she said.

Zimmerman added that Chamber members will be able to tour the facility and get a good look at the classrooms and grounds. That includes the rooftop for a spectacular river view and the ornate Mount Academy Chapel with original features like stained-glass windows, a marble altar, decorative arches and a life-sized Nativity statue.

The Rifton-based Church Communities Foundation purchased the 411-acre property in May 2012 from the Redemptorist Fathers of

New York. The Mount, a seminary for 75 years and later a retreat center for 26 years, belonged to the Redemptorists of the Baltimore Province, a Roman Catholic order. During that time, more than 1,300 young men were ordained for the priesthood.

Since acquiring the property, the Bruderhof has restored many of the building’s original features, including the chapel, pipe organ and four bronze bells in the north and south towers.

Other renovations included a new roof, flooring, classrooms, new kitchen facilities, installation of an environmentally friendly heating system, and replacement of most utilities systems such as electrical, fire detection, water and sewer.

The Mount Academy, a four-year high school, offers a “rigorous academic program designed to challenge and inspire students while fulfilling the New York State Department of Education diploma requirements,” according to its website, [mountacademy.org](http://mountacademy.org).

In addition, the curriculum emphasizes “rigor, depth, and mastery of fundamentals,” and all classroom instruction “seeks to instill respect, self-discipline and a strong work ethic,” the website notes. Students are further encouraged to serve and care for others.

A low student-faculty ratio and small class sizes create an environment where students can succeed, the website adds.

A lot has changed since The Mount Academy hosted a Mixer 11 years ago, Zimmerman added. The school is now a day and boarding high school for local, out-of-state and international students as well as youth who have attended Bruderhof-affiliated K-8<sup>th</sup> grade schools.

“Chamber members who attend this summer Mixer will enjoy a lovely evening on one of Ulster County’s truly remarkable campuses,”



she said. “Education of youth in our wider community is an investment we all care about.”

The Chateau will be providing hors d’oeuvres and beverages with a Mediterranean flair, and special organ music from the chapel will fill the halls during the event, Zimmerman said.

“For those who can visit The Mount Academy for the Chamber Mixer, this summer evening gathering will be an excellent opportunity to network, socialize, and enjoy an uplifting, refreshing evening.”

*Chamber Mixers are a great way to network and promote your business. Be sure to bring plenty of business cards. Mixers are open to Chamber Members 21 years of age and older. There is no charge for Chamber Members to attend but reservations are required. Call (845) 338-5100 or register online at [www.UlsterChamber.org](http://www.UlsterChamber.org). Prospective Members interested in attending, please contact Jess Davis (845) 338-5100 x4 or [Jess@UlsterChamber.org](mailto:Jess@UlsterChamber.org).*

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At AGS Deliveries, a family-owned interstate moving service, Sinagra is the guy who is with you from start to finish, and he’s as honest as the day is long.

“I always tell everyone, ‘You’re not just customer No. 7. You’re important to us.’ You’re trusting me to move your memories. You’re trusting me with your kids’ baby pictures. All the insurance in the world isn’t going to replace those special items. It’s your belongings, and if you’re taking them to your new home, they’re important to you.”

Sinagra, a 50-year Kingston resident with deep roots in Ulster County, cofounded AGS (Anthony G. Sinagra) Deliveries with his wife, Wendy, 27 years ago. In the early days, it specialized in household and commercial moving and then grew to servicing interior designers and making deliveries to and for Christie’s and Sotheby’s auction houses, among others.

Then COVID happened, and that changed everything, Sinagra said.



Anthony and Wendy Sinagra

“The East Coast business went through the roof. I started doing a lot more trips to states like Florida because New York had basically shut down, while Florida remained open,” he said. “We ended up buying a place in Florida, closing our Kingston office and opening an office here, and now, 99 percent of our work is moving families up and down the East Coast.”

AGS offers professional and affordable residential and commercial moving as well as business and office relocation services throughout the states of New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Florida and beyond.

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deliveries for the finest names in home and office furnishings make us uniquely qualified to move your most prized possessions,” Sinagra said.

AGS is fully insured and offers both threshold services, meaning basic pickup and drop-off, as well as white-glove delivery service, where Sinagra and his team do everything from packing at the origin to unpacking and setting up at the destination.

“I’m the guy at your house. I pack your stuff. I drive the truck. I deliver your belongings. I place them where you want them and remove all the debris afterward. It’s full service.”

While Sinagra has moved countless families and retirees to Florida, the Carolinas and Tennessee, he’s also dealt with the reverse in recent years, particularly in the wake of hurricanes and flooding in the southern states.

“After all those severe storms in the past couple of years, I’ve actually moved some of the same people back up North. Some people just don’t like the weather down here.”

As for Sinagra and his wife, they’re loving life in St. Augustine, Fla. “I was never a big winter person. I couldn’t stand the cold and the snow. Wendy loves it, too.”

Sinagra, who comes from a prominent Kingston family, previously worked for the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency.

# New Store, Same Soul

## Tetta’s Market Reinvented By Original Owner’s Great-Grandson

Primo Stropoli has brought his great-grandfather’s 73-year-old convenience store back to life in a big way.

Since assuming stewardship of Tetta’s Market in 2019, Stropoli has been busy modernizing the store at 2082 County Road 3 in Olivebridge.

He’s also fired up the dormant pizza oven, introduced Italian imports and developed the outdoors, known as Tetta’s Biergarten, with a custom-made firepit and stage that comes alive from May through October with outdoor concerts.

“If you look at how far we’ve come, you’d be amazed,” Stropoli said. “I have pictures on my phone of Tetta’s from five years ago, and it’s unrecognizable. It’s a whole new place but with the same soul.”

This summer, he’s cranking it up even more with the launch of Tetta’s Italian Pilsner, which is expected to hit store shelves this month. Stropoli has partnered with Old Klaverack Brewery in Hudson to develop a crisp, snappy Italian pilsner that is dry hopped.

“It’s a golden, refreshing beer,” said the 35-year-old Stropoli, who’s been hyping up the rollout on social media. “When you take a sip on a hot summer day and close your eyes, you’ll feel like you’re walking through the wheat fields of Tuscany.”

While Stropoli has additional plans to reinvent the store founded by his great-grandfather, Joseph Tetta, in 1952, he has been careful to preserve the store’s long legacy.

“My great-grandfather came up from the Bronx and originally rented a one-car garage up the road,” Stropoli said. “He operated Tetta’s out there for almost a decade before buying the property on which it currently stands. It was a bartering agreement between him and the property owner. In exchange for the property, she got an allowance of about \$100 a week in groceries. It was like a trade.”

Stropoli’s grandparents, Fred and Anna Tetta, took over the store in the early ‘70s and expanded it. His grandfather also opened a tire garage on the one-acre property. While the original sign still stands, the family shut down that part of the business 10 years ago.

After his grandfather’s health declined, Stropoli and his cousin, Natalie Somma,



Primo Stropoli

stepped in and convinced the family to close the store in July 2018.

Stropoli purchased the business from his grandmother the following year. He then began a series of renovations that included replacing the roof and installing a new floor. Stropoli reopened the store in May 2020.

Tetta’s Market, which sells sandwiches, pizza and a variety of products like snacks, produce, meat, coffee, lottery tickets and newspapers, did remarkably well during the COVID-19 pandemic, Stropoli noted, particularly as Ulster County became a haven for New York City residents during the shutdowns.

In the years since the pandemic, Stropoli has been pouring his heart and soul into Tetta’s, relighting the pizza oven that his grandfather had installed years ago. He also added an EV charging station and obtained a liquor license to serve and sell beer.

“And that’s where the biergarten was born,” he said. “We had this great outdoor space with

Today, he often collaborates with the Kingston-based Allways Moving and Storage, and the companies refer customers when needed.

Sinagra’s wife also has Ulster County roots. She grew up in Stone Ridge, graduated from Rondout Valley High School and worked at Ulster County Family Court and KBH Laboratory at the former Benedictine Hospital. The pair met in 1991 and has been married for 27 years. They have two daughters, Gillian, 26, and Toni Anne, 22.

Sinagra describes his wife as the “brains” of the operation, while he represents the “brawn.” The couple has intentionally kept AGS Deliveries small enough to offer more personalized service. They have a handful of employees and two 26-foot-long moving trucks that reach a height of 13 1/2-feet.

“For all the long-distance moves, which is 99 percent of our work, I’m with your belongings from when it leaves your house to when you arrive at your new location. We try to keep it tight, where we can watch everything,” Sinagra said. “We always strive to save you money while providing convenient and reliable moving and delivery services. We even post our mover’s tariff on our website, so you know you’ll never be overcharged.”

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mountain views, so I thought it would be cool to have a place for bands to play music and a fire pit nearby. It just happened naturally, and we went with it.”

Tetta’s, which last year hosted 12 outdoor events, kicked off its season this year in May with something Stropoli has coined “Tettapalooza,” a block party with live music, animals, inflatables and vendors. His next big event is a summertime bash on July 12 followed by “Oktettafest” on Oct. 4.

And while Tetta’s Market remains a convenience store and deli, Stropoli has a lot planned for his family’s longtime business, including developing the cafe more and opening Tetta’s Athletic Club, which will offer yoga, jujitsu, pilates and boxing, at the commercially zoned property the family owns across the street.

“My whole personal mission has always been to preserve what my grandparents started, while also making sure the business operates in a modern capacity. We’ve had some growing pains, but I believe everything will fall into place,” he said.

**Stop by Tetta’s Market and Pizzeria at 2082 County Road 3 in Olivebridge, NY. For more information, call (845) 657-2338 or visit [www.tettasmarket.com](http://www.tettasmarket.com).**

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**More Info and Registration [UlsterChamber.org](http://UlsterChamber.org)  
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Mixer



June 25, 2025

Wiltwyck Golf Club

404 Steward Lane

Kingston, NY



Mixer Host Wiltwyck Golf Club Managing Partner, Mike Beck, with Ulster Chamber President Ward Todd.



Michael Squires (Pink's Window Services Hudson Valley), Claudio Perazzelli, and Sarah Kopczynski (both with The Designery Hudson Valley).



Laura Walsh, Katie Banks, Megan Vedder, Kortney Markle (all with Advanced Dermatology).



Emmet Spiegel (Hudson Valley Lumber), Lu Delgado, and Dan Salvatore (both with PC Construction).



Ann Dippel (Ryan & Ryan Insurance Brokers), Makayla Merrihew (Emery & Webb), Nichole Bivens, Kim Whelan, and Theresa Scull (all with Ryan & Ryan Insurance Brokers).



Calief Housen (Career InTouch), Ajee Anderson, Danielle Gatto (both with TEG Federal Credit Union), and Jodi Klun (Hudson Valley Credit Union).

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**Peter Kiernan** - Co-Founder  
thebeatgen.com  
Category: Music Publishing/Production  
Description: The Beat Generation is a NYC-based record label and live events business. The Company focuses on artist development and live music showcasing via concerts and music festivals.

**TREMPER**  
PO Box 86  
Phoenicia, NY 12464  
**Mathew Pokoik** - CEO & Creative Director  
www.tremper.org  
Category: Arts Organizations  
Description: Tremper is a mission-based sanctuary in New York's Catskill Mountains that celebrates the integration of art, ecology, and hospitality.

For information on Chamber Membership, email Jess Davis at Jess@UlsterChamber.org

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