

Happy 250th America!

History Comes Alive At Next Breakfast



America is 250 years and you might not know it, but events right here in Ulster County played a major role in the nation's founding.

The Chamber's next breakfast, from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. on June 10 at The Venue Uptown at the Best Western Plus in Kingston, will feature a presentation on "Ulster County in the American Revolution" on the 250th Anniversary of our country. The breakfast sponsor is WMCHealth/HealthAlliance Hospital.

Speakers will include Taylor Bruck, the Ulster County Clerk and City of Kingston Historian, Ulster County Historian Eddie Moran, and Ulster County Archivist Jon Palmer, who will provide information about some of the remarkable people and events that shaped our region during that tumultuous era.

Bruck said he hopes everyone will learn why Ulster County was so important beyond being the first capital of New York State.

"We really played a pivotal role in the Revolution, and I think it's something people should be proud of, especially business owners," Bruck said. "I think one of the things the founders wanted and the folks fighting for our freedom at the time was free enterprise."

Moran said much of the public knows about the drafting of the New York State Constitution in Kingston in 1777 or the burning of the city in the fall of that same year, but many other pivotal local people and events are still not widely known.

"I hope to give a sense of these lesser-known aspects, such as the role Ulster County's elected representatives played before the war in pushing the future state toward independence, the intense guerrilla war fought on the western frontier of Ulster County between local militia and raiding parties of loyalists and Esopus warriors, and the sacrifice made



Taylor Bruck



Eddie Moran



Jon Palmer

by local militia men at the Battle of Forts Clinton and Montgomery," Moran said.

Moran said he is most excited to share the history of the Native people of Ulster County, the Esopus, in the American Revolution and how the conflict leads to their forced removal to Ontario, where their descendants reside to this day among the Six Nations of the Grand River.

After a century of alliance and friendship between Ulster County and the Esopus People from 1665 to 1776, the American Revolution broke this alliance and made enemies of these two sides. After years of brutal fighting on the western frontier of the county and after the 1779 Sullivan Campaign to push British-aligned Native Americans out of New York, the Esopus were permanently forced from their homelands to Ontario.

"I find this is a story still not widely known, and one I'm excited to share more fully," Moran said.

Bruck called the 250th Anniversary an exciting time and urged business owners to participate in local

community events being organized by historical societies, museums and municipal governments. The presentation will end with a schedule of events that business leaders can help support.

"There's going to be a lot going on this spring and summer to educate folks about the history, but also to make history," he said. "That's what our office is all about."

Bruck urged local business leaders to "be creative with it," similar to how some companies dress up their storefronts during the Burning of Kingston events. Moran said businesses can provide a venue or be a sponsor, service provider, or direct participant depending on the business.

"If you find there aren't commemorations planned in your area, consider brainstorming ways your business can directly honor this anniversary through your own offerings, which can also vary greatly depending on the type of business," Moran said.

Chamber President Ward Todd said the breakfast will also feature recognition of the organization's

June Breakfast

June 10
The Venue Uptown at the Best Western Plus
503 Washington Ave.
Kingston, NY

Sponsor:



2026 Corporate Sponsors and.

For Bruck, who serves on the Chamber's Board of Directors, this will be his third time addressing the Chamber, and he called it a unique opportunity because Moran and Palmer will also be there.

"It's a really good opportunity if people have questions about the history of the area," he said. "We'll all be in one place and hopefully we can teach folks something."

Chamber Breakfast Meetings are a great way to stay on top of current events and connect with other local business leaders and are open to Chamber members and the general public. Tickets are \$35 in advance or \$40 at the door for Chamber members, \$45 for non-members. Reservations are required. Call (845) 338-5100 or register online at www.UlsterChamber.org.

WMC Health | HealthAlliance Hospital is June's Breakfast Sponsor

HealthAlliance Hospital Brings Advanced 3D Mammography Technology to Kingston, Strengthening Healthcare Access in Ulster County

Businesses thrive when communities are healthy. That's why HealthAlliance Hospital, a member of WMCHealth, continues to make significant investments in advanced healthcare services that benefit local residents, employers, and the regional economy.

The latest example is the addition of state-of-the-art 3D Mammography technology at HealthAlliance Hospital, providing women throughout Ulster County and beyond with access to advanced breast cancer screening close to home.

This new technology represents more than a healthcare upgrade—it is an investment in the long-term health and well-being of the workforce, families, and communities that drive our local economy.

Advanced Technology, Better Outcomes

Unlike traditional 2D mammography, 3D Mammography creates highly detailed three-dimensional images of breast tissue, helping physicians identify abnormalities with greater accuracy. The technology is clinically proven to increase the detection of breast cancers while reducing the number of patients who are called back for additional testing.

For women with dense breast tissue—a condition affecting nearly half of women over age 40—3D Mammography can provide a clearer view and improve the likelihood of early detection.

Earlier detection often leads to more treatment options, less invasive care, improved outcomes, and peace of mind for patients and their families.

"This investment reflects our ongoing commitment to delivering world-class, patient-centered care right here in Ulster County," said Elissa Chessari, Executive Director of HealthAlliance Hospital. "By expanding access to advanced screening technology, we are helping reduce barriers to care and improving health outcomes for the women and families we serve."

Women interested in scheduling a 3D Mammography screening at HealthAlliance's Breast Health Center can call 845.338.4248 or visit wmchealth.org for more information.

Building a Stronger Healthcare Infrastructure

The addition of 3D Mammography is part of a broader strategy by WMCHealth to strengthen healthcare services throughout Ulster County.

Since opening the new HealthAlliance at Hospital Mary's Avenue in 2022, WMCHealth has continued to invest in innovative technologies, expanded services, and enhanced patient access. Recent advancements include:



The first da Vinci Robotic Surgical System in Ulster County, enabling minimally invasive procedures with greater precision and faster recovery times.

A renovated Inpatient Behavioral Health Unit, restoring critical mental health services for the community.

A state-of-the-art Cardiac Catheterization Laboratory, which has provided life-saving cardiac care to more than 2,500 patients since opening.

WMCHealth's Medical Village in Kingston, bringing together healthcare, educational, and community services in a centralized, easily accessible location.

These investments ensure that residents can access sophisticated healthcare services without traveling outside the region, while also supporting economic development and quality of life across Ulster County.

Why This Matters to Local Businesses

Access to high-quality healthcare is an important factor for employers seeking to attract and retain talent. Advanced preventive services like 3D Mammography help employees prioritize their health, potentially reducing time away from work and improving long-term wellness.

As healthcare continues to evolve, investments like these strengthen the region's infrastructure, making Ulster County an even better place to live, work, raise a family, and do business.

Bonding At The Bank

Uptown Rondout Savings Branch To Host June Mixer

Rondout Savings Bank's 2026 theme, "We Are Rondout," revolves around people and relationships, so it makes perfect sense that the revered financial institution would host a Mixer, where professionals meet, exchange business cards, enjoy complimentary refreshments and connect meaningfully.

Mark your calendar for the Chamber networking event on June 24 from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at 267 Wall St. in Kingston, Rondout's Uptown branch.

It's been two years since Rondout Savings Bank first welcomed Chamber guests to its new Uptown location for a Mixer, showing off the state-of-the-art banking facility in the heart of Kingston's historic district. The design, which features plenty of glass to unify the space as well as original features, focuses on being welcoming and collaborative.

That same community-forward vibe is expected at the Chamber's first Mixer of the summer.

According to bank officials, the "We Are Rondout" theme "brings light to the all the people behind Rondout Savings Bank" and the relationships it has built in the community over the years.

As Kingston and the Mid-Hudson Valley continue to grow and change, Rondout remains a "true local community bank where customers can still walk in, know the people helping them and feel connected to a team that genuinely cares about their success," bank leaders said.

One of the distinguishing factors about Rondout Savings Bank is its locally focused and highly responsive team. Led by President and CEO Cheryl Bowers, the staff prides itself on being accessible and connected to its customers and community.

"We believe community banking works best when people can have real conversations, ask questions, share ideas and know there are experienced banking professionals willing to listen, offer guidance and do what they can to help local businesses and families succeed," said Bowers, the first female president in the bank's 158-year history.

"We never take for granted the trust our customers place in Rondout Savings Bank," she added. "Many local businesses have chosen to grow with us for years, and that means something to us. Gratitude isn't just something you say, it's something you show through your actions, your service and simply being there when your customers need you."

Anthony Trocchia, the assistant vice president of business development, said the staff at Rondout takes the time to get to know customers and their goals and dreams.

"Every day, we work with local business owners taking risks, families building their future, nonprofits strengthening our neighborhoods and new people discovering everything this region has to offer," Trocchia said. "That's what community banking means to us — being present, approachable and invested in the people and businesses that make this area special."

The "We Are Rondout" campaign highlights the employees, customers and stakeholders who are part of the community—not just during business hours, but every day, Trocchia added. "They volunteer, support local organizations, attend community events and build relationships that go beyond banking."

"We believe there's real value in being a community bank that has remained rooted here for generations, while continuing to grow alongside the communities we serve."

He said events like the Chamber Mixer are another way for the bank to bring people together, support local businesses and strengthen the relationships that continue to move Kingston and Ulster County forward.

During the Chamber Mixer, Rondout Savings Bank will recognize a few of its food and beverage customers, including Blue Duck Brewing Co., co-founded by father-and-son duo Rich and Ryan Gillette.

Trocchia said Blue Duck is "a great example of the type of community-minded startup contributing to the energy and growth taking place throughout the area."

June Mixer
Wed., June 24
5-7 pm

Rondout Savings Bank
267 Wall Street
Kingston, NY

Sponsor:
RONDOUT SAVINGS BANK

Mixer attendees will get a chance to try the brewery's newest craft release, "Lighthouse IPA," part of Blue Duck's craft beer series.

"We're incredibly grateful when new and growing businesses choose Rondout Savings Bank as their banking partner," Bowers said. "Starting or relocating a business takes vision, hard work and commitment, and we take great pride in supporting entrepreneurs who are investing in our community and helping Kingston and Ulster County continue to grow."

"Businesses like Blue Duck Brewing Co. represent exactly the kind of community spirit and entrepreneurial energy that makes this region special," she said. "We're proud to support local business owners like Ryan and Rich Gillette, who are building something meaningful here, while helping strengthen the local community along the way."

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. Prospective Members interested in attending, please contact Jess Davis (845) 338-5100 x4 or Jess@UlsterChamber.org.

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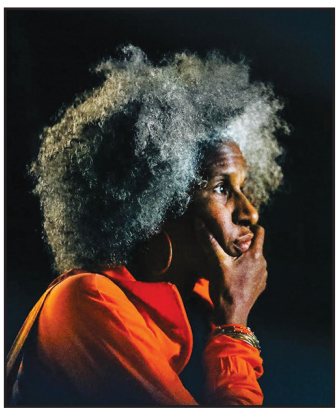
Spotlighting Excellence

Chamber To Fete Best Of Ulster's Black Business Community

Oftentimes, accomplished people purposely shun the spotlight. That's because their aim in life is to uplift and push others to greatness. It's not at all about self.

That's the case with the Black business owners and community leaders set to be honored at the Ulster County Black Business Community Celebration on June 18 from 4:30-8:00 p.m.

The event, hosted by the Ulster Chamber in partnership with Ulster County Tourism and Black History Kingston, will be held at Ulster Savings Bank, 180 Schwenk Drive, Kingston.



Erica Ford

It's the 5th year the Chamber has hosted the event and t'ie first year to include a featured speaker, Erica Ford, known as The Peace Doctor, who is a leader in Community Violence Intervention and Prevention. She's also the founder and CEO of LIFE Camp, Inc. and an architect for Anti-Gun Violence. She is widely recognized for creating

New York City's Crisis Management System.

The awards themselves include a broad spectrum of community leaders.

Eddie Parker, owner of EAP Productions DJ Service, said while he is thrilled to be receiving this year's Black Business Excellence Award, he was surprised and humbled.

"I'm not awards guy," said Parker, a lifelong Kingston resident. "I just want to make people happy and get their minds off politics and all the bad things that are going on in the world. I love music, and I've been deejaying since I was 14. It's been a real blessing in my life."

Parker is among five local luminaries to be recognized at the upcoming event. Sharon Williams, director of the Ulster County Office of Employment and Training, will receive the Black Business Leadership Award, while Mia Howard, Chief Executive Officer of Scrub Masters Plus Corp., will get the Maude Bruce Community Impact Award.

Naimah Armstrong, an entrepreneur and licensed clinical social worker at the Kingston City School District, was tapped for the Young Black Leader Award, and Frank Waters, founder and Executive Director of MyKingstonKids will receive the inaugural Ripple Effect Award.

Parker, the father of four, was a football legend at Kingston High School. He went to Temple University on a four-year football scholarship and later played professionally for the Green Bay Packers, San Francisco 49ers and in the World Football League.

He spent the bulk of his career working for the state office of Children and Family Services, where he was a

juvenile corrections officer at Brookwood Secure Center for Youth in Claverack.

Now 61, Parker said he has built lasting relationships and been a part of many family and corporate milestones by deejaying at area events and parties. "Music brings people of all ages together. It's such a joy," he said. "This is a phenomenal

place to live and raise kids, and I'm very proud of our community."

Sharon Williams is a lot like Parker when it comes to not wanting to be in the spotlight. While she said she's proud to be receiving the Black Business Leadership Award, she is also a tad "uncomfortable with recognition."

"Leadership doesn't mean you're the loudest or the one who captures the most of attention," she said. "A true leader leads from behind and pushes their team forward and lets them shine. When they shine, that's when I know I've done my job right."

"I was truly surprised and humbled when I learned I would be getting this award. Recognition is not my thing. It definitely knocked me off my feet."

As the Director of the Ulster County Office of Employment and Training, Williams and her team help people looking for work find jobs, among other services. On the business side, they help employers fine-tune their hiring processes to ensure they get the best candidates.

Williams, who is from New York City, graduated from Brooklyn Law School in 1999. She moved to the Hudson Valley 20 years ago and has held several jobs, including regional director of the Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition and director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County.

"My path has been pretty winding," she said. "It wasn't straight or even intentional, but it made me who I am and I love that."

Nominated by her employees, who noted her extraordinary motivational and team-building skills, Williams said that is her purpose in life.

My greatest joy is really watching people find their passion and discover that they are exceptional," she said.

Mia Howard, Chief Executive Officer of Scrub Masters Plus, likewise lives to transform lives. She founded the commercial cleaning company in Kingston a decade ago and makes it a point to acknowledge and reward her employees, creating a proud and engaged workforce.

Getting the Maude Bruce



Frank Waters

Community Impact Award has special meaning for Howard, who, as a child, witnessed the ugliness of racism.

"I was sitting on the train with my dad, who was always so well-dressed. When we got off, the police asked him what his name was. He said, 'What for?' Then they physically hurt him, and the look in his eyes branded my soul. I was left alone as if I wasn't a worthy child to care for, and it changed me. Later, my dad said to me, 'We must do better.' I knew then I had work to do."

"This award means I'm being recognized for what I've done and what I stand for," she added. "I am defined by our history, our culture and our resilience. I stand fully in that identity and the responsibility that comes with it. I'm committed to that work, and I'm not done. I'm not receiving it as a recognition, but as a reminder to me to keep showing up. Thank you for seeing me and my work."

The Black Business Community Celebration begins at 4:30 p.m., with the awards presentation at 5:00 p.m. and a community celebration to follow from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

"The Chamber would like to congratulate our 2026 honorees and acknowledge those who provided the nominations and the independent panel for the final selections," said Chamber Vice President Jess Davis. "These awards recognize the best in Black-owned businesses in Ulster County."

This year's event sponsors include Ulster Savings Bank (Presenting Sponsor), Ulster County Tourism and Central Hudson (Welcoming Sponsors), KDD Marketing (Platinum Sponsor), CDPHP, Hudson Valley Wine & Food Fest, JK's Wine & Liquor, Keegan Ales, Northwestern Mutual, People's Place, Resource Center for Accessible Living (RCAL) and Ulster Federal Credit Union (Diamond Sponsors), Mid-Hudson Energy Transition and Scrub Masters Plus Corp. (Bronze Sponsors).

Everyone is invited to join the celebration. There is no charge to attend, but registration is required. To register, go to ulsterchamber.org.



Eddie Parker



Naimah Armstrong

UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

Tuesday June 9 | 5:30 - 8:00 pm

Leadership Ulster Graduation Celebration Alumni Hall of Fame Ceremony

Honoring Hall of Fame Inductees

Tina Dierna | Nancy Clark | Samantha Awand-Gortel

This event is open to the public

Novella's | 2 Terwilliger Lane | New Paltz, NY

Tickets \$75 per person | Cocktails 5:30 pm | Dinner 6:30 pm

Wednesday June 10 | 7:30 - 9:00 am

Chamber Breakfast Meeting Ulster County in the American Revolution Speakers: Taylor Bruck, Eddie Moran and Jon Palmer

The Venue Uptown at the Best Western Plus

\$35 Members-PrePay • \$40 Members-At Door

\$45 Non-Members

Sponsor: WMCHHealth | HealthAlliance Hospital

Thursday June 18 | 4:30 - 8:00 pm

2026 Black Business Community Celebration

Ulster Savings Bank Corporate Headquarters

180 Schwenk Drive | Kingston, NY

There is no charge for admission but registration is required.

Presenting Sponsor: Ulster Savings Bank

Wednesday June 24 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Networking Mixer @ Rondout Savings Bank's Uptown Branch

267 Wall Street | Kingston, NY

There is no cost for Members and Prospective Members.

Reservations are required.

Sponsor: Rondout Savings Bank

More Info and Registration UlsterChamber.org
Questions (845) 338-5100

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Thursday, June 18, 2026
 4:30-6 pm Awards
 6-8 pm Community Celebration
 Ulster Savings Bank
 Corporate Headquarters
 180 Schwenk Drive
 Kingston NY

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2026 BLACK BUSINESS HONOREES

Black Business Leadership Award Sharon Williams (Ulster County OET)	Maude Bruce Community Impact Award Mia F. Howard (Scrub Masters Plus)
Black Business Excellence Award Eddie Parker (EAP Productions DJ Service)	Young Black Leader Award Naimah Armstrong (Crowned From Ashes)
Ripple Effect Award Frank Waters (MyKingstonKids)	

Registration is required. There is no charge to attend but space is limited.
 For more information or to register for this event
 call 845.338.5100 or visit www.UlsterChamber.org

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Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce

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Nominate a business, business person,
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 12 noon on Friday, July 24, 2026.

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The Daily Freeman has partnered with the Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce to bring you a monthly publication with specific content from the Chamber President, Board and Members. Support this section while marketing your business to consumers and local business owners!

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 Category: Florists
 Description: *Flower Grow and Sell, Florist, Bloom Bar, On-site Floral Arranging Classes*



A national survey indicates that chamber membership has consistent and powerful benefits for small business members. If respondents know that a small business is a member of its local chamber, the business enjoys a 73% increase in consumer awareness.

RESERVE YOUR BOOTH TODAY!
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Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce

Presenting Sponsor: **Naccarato INSURANCE**

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Expo Mixer

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2026
 4:00 - 7:00 PM | FREE REFRESHMENTS | FREE ADMISSION | FREE PARKING
Diamond Mills Hotel & Conference Center
 25 S. Partition Street, Saugerties, NY
 Contact: Allison Costanzo | 845.338.5100 | Allison@UlsterChamber.org