

Above & Beyond

2 Businesses, 1 Nonprofit Leader To Be Feted At May Breakfast

Every good business owner knows that the key to success lies in building a positive relationship with customers. When you exceed their expectations, they're more likely to stick around and tell others.

On May 14, the Ulster Chamber will recognize two businesses that have set the bar high at its second annual Customer Experience Lifetime Achievement Awards breakfast at The Venue Uptown at the Best Western Plus Hotel, 503 Washington Ave., Kingston. Mid-Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union is sponsoring the breakfast from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m.

The honorees are Emily Fisher, owner and co-founder of the Emerson Resort and Spa in Mount Tremper, and Bill Kennedy, owner of Kenco Outfitters in Kingston. Each will receive the Customer Experience Lifetime Achievement Award.

This year, the Chamber will also honor longtime Family of Woodstock Executive Director Michael Berg with the Legacy of Service Award for the impact he has had in leading the agency for 55 years.

Fisher, who co-founded the Emerson in 1996 with the late developer, Dean Gitter, became the sole owner of the luxury resort in 2013. The property, which was once the Riseley Flat dairy farm, includes lodging, the Catamount restaurant, award-winning, full-service spa, specialty shops and the "World's Largest Kaleidoscope."

Fisher said she is honored to accept the Chamber award, particularly since good customer service is a priority at the popular tourist destination.

"We want our guests to be happy with the cleanliness of the rooms, with the tasty meals and the welcoming and efficient spa technicians," she said. "We are able to get good reviews from our guests because the members of our team are warm, friendly, smart and well-trained people. They say that they enjoy their jobs and interacting with our guests, and I'm grateful for each one of them for their commitment to making the Emerson a welcoming retreat."

"One of the unique aspects of the Emerson is our structure," she added. "We are not beholden to a



Bill Kennedy



Emily Fisher



Michael Berg

big hotel chain. We don't need to wait for answers to questions from an outside group that may not know how we work. I am the sole owner, and with the help of my CEO, Naomi Umhey, and the input from our managers and staff, we are able to make quick and thoughtful decisions. I love the Emerson. I love working with Naomi, and I admire and cherish our staff. I believe that the good energy of all these people is what makes the Emerson a special place."

Kenco Outfitters is another special place in Ulster County that has long put customers first. The business opened in the basement of a Woodstock home in 1982, filling a niche for locals and tourists looking for gear and apparel suited for the outdoors.

Kayakers, mountain climbers, hunters, snowboarders, campers and fly fisher-men-and women now had a place to shop for all their recreational outings.

Over the decades, Kenco became known for its huge inventory, high-quality products and exceptional personal service. Employees are themselves outdoors-types, who take the time to show customers how to use their gear.

"The customer is the most important part of operating a business and should be the focus of all our attention when they come into our store," Kennedy said. "That person came here. They've

made it a point to shop here, and they deserve to be treated well. It's a philosophy that has worked well for us for 44 years."

At the breakfast, both Kennedy and Fisher will share ways they've made their customers feel valued and heard over the decades.

Michael Berg will also get a well-deserved moment in the spotlight, as he's awarded the Chamber's Legacy of Service Award. Michael founded Family of Woodstock when throngs of music lovers descended on Woodstock, NY, in 1970, thinking they were going to the site of the 1969 Woodstock Music Festival in Sullivan County. Berg became the agency's Board President and Treasurer and then was hired as a fulltime paid Executive Director in April 1981.

Family of Woodstock, is today a multi-program human service agency, running one of the oldest continuously operating 24-hour emergency switchboards in the nation.

Other programs include affordable housing initiatives, court advocacy, suicide prevention, childcare, restorative justice and adult and youth case management. Family also runs shelters for domestic violence victims and the homeless and emergency food pantries in Woodstock, New Paltz and Ellenville.

May Breakfast

May 14
The Venue Uptown at the
Best Western Plus
503 Washington Ave.
Kingston, NY

Sponsor:

MID-HUDSON VALLEY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

"I am really honored to receive this award and take it as an acknowledgement of all that the agency has achieved under my leadership," said Berg, who will be retiring at the end of September. "I am particularly proud of the fact that all the major programs we have created over the years are still running and continue to serve many of those most in need in our county."

"I am very confident that Family will continue to play a huge role in serving the county's citizens in the coming years," he added. "We have a strong new leader in Paul Rakov and the rest of our management team."

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.

Mid-Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union is May's Breakfast Sponsor

Building What Matters. Together.

At Mid-Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union (MHV), we don't have shareholders. We have members. And that single fact changes everything about how we show up in the Hudson Valley.

Because we're a member-owned cooperative, every dollar we earn is reinvested right here — in better products, smarter technology, and the neighborhoods where our 95,000+ members live and work. Decisions that matter to your business are made by people who live next door — neighbors who shop at the same farmers markets, send their kids to the same schools, and care about the same Main Streets you do. In 2025 alone, MHV returned \$23.2 million in interest directly to our members. That's the value of staying right here in the Hudson Valley economy.

That's how we build what matters. Together.

In 2025, we also helped local businesses access more than \$49 million in new commercial loans, supporting real estate projects,

growth plans, and new housing developments across the region. When business owners needed faster access to capital, we launched the Flex Business Line of Credit: pre-approved funding for the next opportunity, without the wait.

But our work doesn't stop at the loan closing.

Last year, MHV employees gave 1,874 volunteer hours back to the community — preparing meals at the Ronald McDonald House of the Greater Hudson Valley, sorting food at the Regional Food Bank, building alongside Habitat for Humanity, and championing causes like People's Place in Kingston. With iHeartMedia, our members and local businesses helped collect more than 2,000 toys for the Greater Hudson Valley Toy Drive. Through our new MHV Giving Center, members donated over \$4,500 in December alone to 20-plus local organizations.

In total, MHV invested \$271,682 in 190 community organizations, partnered with 95 local businesses and nonprofits, and held 120 financial

education seminars across the seven counties we call home: Ulster, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, and Westchester.

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Visit mhvfcu.com or stop by any of our 14 local branches.



More Than Golf At Apple Greens

See Course, Event Venue At Next Mixer

Spring has sprung and that can only mean one thing—Ulster County's many picturesque golf courses will be teeming with players.

Apple Greens Golf Course in Highland is one of the area's most beautiful and unique courses. Chamber members can get an up-close look at the next Networking Mixer on May 26th from 5:00-7:00pm. The Mixer, sponsored by TEG Federal Credit Union, will feature complimentary food, beer and wine, courtesy of The Barn at Apple Greens.

Apple Greens is owned by Dave and Judi Roehrs, who are excited to show business leaders a completely new golf hole and their private event venue.

Last year marked the company's 30th year in business.

"I'd love for the community to see our improvements, expansions and additions to the course," Judi Roehrs said. "In the last six years we have had the opportunity to build an entire new hole, repave our whole property and create a private event venue many have not seen. The Barn at Apple Greens can be utilized for private and corporate events, weddings and celebrations of all kinds. It's a beautiful space we hold close to our heart. I truly look forward to sharing it with our local business members."

The Barn at Apple Greens, which is a popular wedding spot, is a rustic, refurbished barn on the golf course that can cater up to 200 guests.

The golf course's website calls the barn "simple yet remarkably beautiful." The versatile space transforms to accommodate any aesthetic from quaint and quiet to large and luxurious.

Apple Greens Golf Course, which opened in 1995 and includes beautiful views of the Shawangunk and Catskill mountains, is a family-owned 27-hole championship course known for its manicured fairways,

scenery and welcoming atmosphere for all skill levels.

While most golf courses feature only nine or 18 holes, Apple Greens is unique in offering 27 holes.

"That doesn't mean that people play those 27 holes, but it means there is this continuous availability of play and challenge for the golfer that I think keeps play interesting."

The course is built on an apple farm going back several generations. A love of farming combined with a love of the great outdoors and true grit, transformed the land into the business it is today.

While the course plays a little shorter than some courses, Roehrs said Apple Greens makes up for it with its turf.

"We hear quite frequently that the turf is the quality of a private course," she said. "This is certainly an ode to the design of the land but more so to our incredible staff. From our turf team to the front of the house, we operate as friends and family not just co-workers. We are so lucky to have a team that takes such pride in its work. Everyone feels connected to this land, which is what makes it so special."

Roehrs said the course tries to keep greens fees affordable so even beginners can take up the sport.

"We try to keep the product fair and professional, while remaining humble and accessible," she said.

Apple Greens donates six figures a year to local charities and has provided many people with their first job.

"When we say we're family-run, we're family-run," Roehrs said. "We have fathers and daughters, fathers and sons, grandfathers and grandsons, mothers and daughters who are all on staff."

Roehrs said she is upbeat about the Highland and southern Ulster County area, which features the Walkway Over the Hudson and the

May Mixer
Tues., May 26
5-7 pm

APPLE GREENS GOLF COURSE

The Barn at Apple Greens Golf Course
140 South Street
Highland, NY

Sponsor:

Mohonk Mountain House.

"It's been very exciting to see new commerce coming into the area, especially since the pandemic," she said. "People have really started to find this region. The industry of recreational activities, specifically outdoor ones, is growing and thriving in this community. It is an honor to hold space for so many who have such a passion for the game of golf. But, at the end of the day, we're not just a business. We are a home. It is our mission for everyone who joins us here to feel at home, too."

Apple Greens Golf Course, located at 161 South St. in Highland, can be reached at (845) 883-5500 or applegreens.com.

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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It Takes Passion

Downtown Café Built On Love, Friendships

Local culinary wizard Graziano Tecchio has pleased the palates of some pretty important people, including King Charles, Princess Diana, Jay Leno, Joan Jett, the Beach Boys, and members of the rock band Los Lobos.

While the owner and chef of the Kingston-based Downtown Café got a kick out of that, he says it's the local people who have given him the greatest pleasure. After all, it was Kingstonsians who embraced his relatives when they left Venice and settled in Kingston in the 1970s.

His father, Tarcisio, an accomplished businessman, bought several buildings on lower Broadway and ran the legendary Mary P's restaurant on the Rondout from 1985 to 2002.

The whole family eventually joined him in Kingston, including his 20-year-old son, Graziano, after he had served in the Lagunari, the Italian Army's special amphibious force.

Graziano hopped aboard a Pan American flight in October 1987 with the aim of testing the waters to see if he found Kingston agreeable. His father told him he could go back to Italy if he didn't.

When he arrived, he was greeted with hugs, kisses, and food after a long flight. He sensed that the people in this community cared. "I'll never forget the first time I came," Graziano said. "Everyone was warm. It was very homey. I had an intensely good feeling about Kingston. If you find love, you build on that."

Tecchio has just done that. Aside from working with his father at Mary P's and the family's other business ventures, opening a restaurant of his own was an easy decision.

Drawing from his memories of growing up in the Venetian countryside and learning to cook at an early age, he opened Graziano's Downtown Cafe at 1 West Strand in 1998.

"The idea was always on my mind because of the lifestyle I had," he said. "My family-owned grocery shops and hotels. We grew vegetables. We went fishing and raised, slaughtered, and butchered our own livestock."



Graziano Tecchio

The café featured farm-to-table Northern Italian cuisine with freshly made pastas and inventive dishes that burst with flavor and artistry.

After a personal challenge, Graziano was forced to close the restaurant in 2011, but he continued catering for the clientele he had steadily built over the years.

In the summer of 2017, he debuted his second Downtown Café at 91 Broadway, a cozy and quirky dining space known for its fresh, generous portions. Guests rave about the vibe and the authenticity of the food and often comment about watching Tecchio work his magic behind the counter.

Appetizers range from stracciatella to baked crab cakes. All the entrees spotlight his hand-rolled pastas paired with proteins (chicken or veal) and rich, zesty sauces. His meatballs are also the talk of the city. Vegan and gluten-free options are also available.

Tecchio is also known for his decadent desserts, such as his chocolate truffle, which placed among the Best of the Hudson Valley in a 2002 New York Times article. Among his other signature sweets are tiramisu—something he's been making from a family recipe for 40 years—apple strudel, lemon tart, and pecan pie.

As someone who has come from a long line of successful entrepreneurs, Tecchio often tells anyone who will listen that it takes passion to pull it off.

"It's fantastic to be an entrepreneur and make things happen for yourself, but don't take it lightly," he said. "You have to put a lot of time and passion into it. Most of the time, it's what customers see. You have to give them a piece of your heart."

"You can't fake it. You need to

be sincere in what you're doing and have a good relationship with your customers," he added. "I saw that in my case. After I closed my first location, people would call and ask, 'When are you coming back?' It was about my relationships. It's not complicated. You just have to be a good friend."

Downtown café is open Wednesday through Saturday from 5-9 p.m. and Sunday from 1-8 p.m. For more information, visit grazianosdowntowncafe.com or call (845) 338-3380.

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 25 S. Partition Street, Saugerties, NY
 Contact: Allison Costanzo | 845.338.5100 | Allison@UlsterChamber.org

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UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

Thursday May 14 | 7:30 - 9:00 am

**Chamber Breakfast Meeting
 Customer Experience Awards
 Honorees/Speakers - Bill Kennedy; Emily Fisher
 Legacy of Service Award - Michael Berg**
 The Venue Uptown at the Best Western Plus
 \$35 Members-PrePay • \$40 Members-At Door
 \$45 Non-Members
Sponsor: Mid-Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union

Tuesday May 26 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm

**Networking Mixer @
 Apple Greens Golf Course**
 140 South Street | Highland NY
 There is no cost for Members and Prospective Members.
 Reservations are required.
Sponsor: TEG Federal Credit Union

Thursday May 28 | 9:00 - 10:30 am

New Member Meet & Greet
 Courtyard by Marriott
 500 Frank Sottile Blvd. | Kingston, NY
 There is no cost for Chamber Members.
 Reservations are required.
Sponsor: Hudson Valley Credit Union

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

**Leadership Ulster Graduation Celebration
 Alumni Hall of Fame Ceremony**
 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

Everyone is Invited to Join in the Celebration!

Ulster County BLACK BUSINESS Community Celebration
 PAST PRESENT FUTURE

Thursday, June 18, 2026
 4:30-6 pm Awards
 6-8 pm Community Celebration

Ulster Savings Bank
 Corporate Headquarters
 180 Schwenk Drive
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2026 BLACK BUSINESS HONOREES

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

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

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

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Nominate a business, business person,
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www.UlsterChamber.org

For a nomination to be valid, the Nomination Form
must be complete and submitted no later than
12 noon on Friday, July 24, 2026.



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Mixer



Our Mixer Host The Ashokan Center with Managing Director Peter Cook, Founders Jay Ungar and Molly Mason (all seated bottom center) with staff.

The Ashokan Center
477 Beaverkill Road
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Our Mixer Sponsor Mid-Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union staff.



Sherry Brochhausen (Phoenicia Diner), Scott Pasch (DCxPC Live), and Baljeet Singh (Olive's Country Store & Café).



Erin Keating (Catskill Art Supply), Cynthia Kane (Woodstock Film Festival), and LaToya Reed (The NetSys Group).



Noe Del Cid (Taproot CLT), Liz de Nesnera (Reservoir Road Productions), and Pauline Palkovic (Acorn Hill Associates).



Maureen Brevitt (Women's Enterprise Development Center), Anna Claire Sainsbury (Acadia HR), and Maryann Bohlen (Women's Enterprise Development Center).

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901 Joyce Kilmer Ave.
North Brunswick, NJ 08902
Ian Witt - CEO
www.ait-co.com
Category: Recycling
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480 Albany Avenue
Kingston, NY 12401
Kimberly Dean - Owner
www.calibergranite.com
Category: Home Improvement
Description: *Caliber Granite, Inc. is a local stone fabricator in the City of Kingston, New York. They specialize in granite, marble, soapstone, quartzite and man-made quartz. Their portfolio ranges from countertops, stone sinks, shower walls and floors etc.*

CHRISTMAS WISHES ULSTER COUNTY, INC.

PO Box 4152
Kingston, NY 12402
Melissa Harshberger - Founder & Board President
www.ChristmaswishesUC.org
Category: Non-Profit Organizations
Description: *Local 501(c)(3) non-profit that assists low income families with various programs and events throughout the year including Easter, birthdays, school supplies/backpacks, summer reading program, Halloween event, Christmas gift drive and more as needed.*

DONE IN RIGHT TIME

444 Old Neighborhood Rd.
Kingston, NY 12401
Gail Benson - Managing Director
doneinrighttime.com
Category: Screen Printing
Description: *Proudly trusted in the Hudson Valley since 1986. Always done right, on time. Done In Right Time delivers custom apparel and branded merchandise for businesses, organizations, corporations, and events across the region. We have built our reputation on dependable service, quality products, and on-time delivery. For more than 40 years, Done In Right Time, formerly DIRT T Shirts, has grown through strong relationships and a hands-on, start-to-finish approach. With expanded production capacity, advanced apparel embellishment technology, we are better equipped than ever to serve our customers.*

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Highmount, NY 12441
Eric Rubin - Partner
ebrconstruction.net
Category: Contractors - General
Description: *We are a full-service construction company specializing in roofing, framing, and exterior and interior work. With 30 years of experience, we are as comfortable performing renovations as we are with new builds. We are the guys you call when the job wasn't done right the first time.*

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1 Old Route 299
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farmerschoicedispensary.com
Category: Cannabis, Hemp, CBD
Description: *Farmers Choice Dispensary's flagship second location. A place where cannabis is demystified, and our local community is celebrated. We stand out by treating cannabis retail less like a transaction and more like an experience. Located just off Route 299 near the Thruway, our expansive, purpose-built space blends a modern retail environment with the warmth and familiarity of a farmers market, creating an approachable and engaging destination for both locals and visitors.*

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71 Main Street
New Paltz, NY 12561
Sara Walton - Owner
www.HudsonValleyGoldsmith.com
Category: Jewelers
Description: *Hudson Valley Goldsmith has served New Paltz and the Hudson Valley since 2013 as a destination for handcrafted fine jewelry, expert repairs, & personalized design experiences. We specialize in one-of-a-kind custom jewelry, including custom engagement rings, wedding bands, gemstone pieces, & redesigns of sentimental heirlooms. Our team works directly with you through every step of the design process: from concept & stone selection to sketches, renderings, & final fabrication, using recycled precious metals & conflict-free diamonds sourced with care.*

JERSEY MIKE'S

1204 Ulster Ave.
Kingston, NY 12401
James Liotta - Franchisee
www.jerseymikes.com/34131/kingston-ny
Category: Restaurants
Description: *Fast Casual Sandwich Shop.*

KEYSTONE MANAGEMENT SERVICES LLC

PO Box 47
Gardiner, NY 12515
Michelle Pascarella - Managing Member
www.keystonemanagementsvcs.com
Category: Accounting Services
Description: *Keystone Management Services LLC provides daily money management and professional bookkeeping support for busy professionals, seniors, and families in the Hudson Valley. Services include bill paying, expense tracking, financial and tax organization, mail management, Power of Attorney support, and property management assistance (from mail pickup to subcontractor coordination). We also offer personal assistance services and remote small business support. As a New York State commissioned Electronic Notary Public, we provide both in-person and remote notarization services.*

LATIN FUSION, LLC

284 Plaza Rd
Kingston, NY 12401
Galo Mera - Owner
Category: Restaurants
Description: *Located right here in the heart of Kingston, NY, Latin Fusion is where Hispanic heritage meets American spirit—creating dishes that feel familiar yet thrillingly new. Our welcoming, lively space is ideal for family gatherings, casual hangouts with friends, quick lunches, or relaxed dinners. Complement your meal with handcrafted cocktails inspired by tropical vibes, ice-cold beers, or our signature margaritas. Come experience the fusion for yourself; we're thrilled to welcome you!*

SUNNY NAILS

900 Ulster Ave.
Kingston, NY 12401
Jia Ou - Owner
Category: Beauty Products
Description: *A welcoming nail salon conveniently located on Ulster Avenue in Kingston, offering professional nail care services.*

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