Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce

Supporting Businesses ~ Supporting Our Community

ChamberNEWS

214 Fair Street Kingston, NY 12401 www.UlsterChamber.org

November 2026

Ulster County's Nonprofits In Spotlight

Community Foundations On Breakfast Agenda

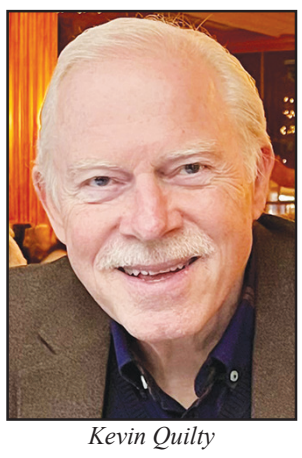
Ulster County's nonprofits go quietly about their business. Often flying under the radar and without much fanfare, nonprofits are the glue that holds a community together through the people they help.

Nonprofits also contribute mightily to the economy, and that will be the theme discussed by two representatives from Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley (CFHV) at the Chamber's next monthly breakfast meeting from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. on Nov. 10 at the Wiltwyck Golf Club.

The speakers will be CEO and President Laura Washington and Vice President Kevin Quilty. CFHV itself is a nonprofit philanthropic organization that connects local donors with charitable causes across Dutchess, Putnam, and Ulster counties.



Laura Washington



Kevin Quilty

The theme of the breakfast, sponsored by Normann Staffing, is "The Impact of Not-for-Profits on Our Economy."

"My remarks at the Chamber breakfast will focus on the important role nonprofits play in Ulster County's economy—not only through the services they provide, but as employers, purchasers, property owners, and partners in the local business community," Washington said.

The numbers tell a compelling story. Ulster County's nonprofit sector employs approximately 6,300 people, representing 14.3% of the county's workforce, and generates about $356 million in annual wages. Nonprofit organizations report nearly $650 million in annual revenue. Arts and culture are also a significant economic driver, with the county's first comprehensive Arts & Culture Plan estimating an annual economic impact of $814 million and 2,037 direct jobs.

"I'll discuss why the financial health of these organizations matters to the broader economy and how Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley is working to strengthen the sector," she said.

That includes LIFT (Local Impact Fund for Tomorrow), the organization's low-interest bridge loan program, done in partnership with Ulster Savings Bank to help eligible nonprofits manage cash-flow gaps while awaiting committed grant or contract funding.

Washington said she plans to share examples of how LIFT has helped Walkway Over the Hudson advance a lighting project and the Rosendale Theatre Collective move forward with building improvements.

Washington will also discuss the importance of Ulster County's revolving loan fund for businesses and non-profits and the THRIVE initiative, which has provided training and resources to 825 nonprofit leaders from more than 200 organizations in the past 18 months.

Quilty will share how philanthropy and business partnerships can help nonprofits remain strong and why supporting these organizations benefits the entire community.

"Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley works to support nonprofits through our grants process, but at the same time, it benefits the business community because those grants translate into money directly to the nonprofits," Quilty said. "That money goes to salaries, to buying new equipment, and to improving their footprint on the ground.

"Community Foundations is supporting the business community at the same time."

The Chamber boasts more than 100 non-profits among its nearly 1,000 members, including some of the more iconic organizations like Family of Woodstock, The ARC Mid-Hudson, RUPCO, People's Place and the United Way of Ulster County.

"We hope to highlight the nonprofit sector as an important part of Ulster County's economic infrastructure—and the opportunity for businesses, donors, and community partners to work together to sustain it," Washington said.

November Breakfast
November 10
7:30-9:00 am
Wiltwyck Golf Club
404 Steward Lane
Kingston, NY
Sponsor:
NS NORMANN STAFFING

Chamber Breakfast Meetings are a great way to stay on top of current events and connect with other local business leaders. Reservations are required. Tickets are $35 in advance and $40 at the door for Chamber members ($45 for non-members.) For more information, contact the Chamber at (845) 338-5100 or go online at www.ulsterchamber.org.

Normann Staffing is November's Breakfast Sponsor

For approximately forty-five years, Normann Staffing has helped organizations find the people they need and helped local residents find opportunities to work, grow, and support their families.

Founded by Rob and Lorraine Normann, the company built its reputation on relationships, responsiveness, and an understanding of our community. That founding chapter was Normann Staffing 1.0.

Twelve years ago, Tony Marmo purchased the business and began its second chapter. He carried those strengths forward while helping the company respond to changing employers, changing industries, and a changing workforce. That was Normann Staffing 2.0.

Today, Tony is introducing the next chapter: Normann Staffing 3.0.

Its direction rests on three priorities.

First, helping clients succeed through a broader range of services. Filling an opening remains essential, but employers also need help improving recruiting, planning their workforce, strengthening productivity, developing employees, and retaining good people. Through expanded services and partnerships, Normann is becoming a more valuable resource for the businesses it serves. The philosophy is straightforward: helping clients succeed creates success for Normann, too.

Second, connecting with today's applicants in ways that reflect their lives. People bring different skills, ambitions, schedules, and responsibilities to a job search. Normann is strengthening its outreach, including video and social media, while preserving the personal guidance that helps someone take the next step with confidence.

Third, embracing what comes next. Normann is becoming AI forward, putting new tools to work to reduce administrative demands, improve efficiency, and give recruiters more time to understand employers and applicants. Technology supports the relationships at the heart of the business.

Tony understands those relationships extend beyond the office. As a longtime Chamber member and former board chair, he knows that business leadership includes showing up, serving the community, and helping others move forward.

NS NORMANN STAFFING

Normann Staffing 3.0 brings those commitments together: more support for employers, greater understanding of applicants, and a willingness to keep learning and evolving.

The company's message, "Good work starts with kindness," captures the human purpose behind that progress. Every placement represents an opportunity for a business, a person, and often a family.

Unwind & Relax!

Kingston Nord To Host November Mixer

The newest hot spot for dining in the Kingston area will be the site of the Chamber's monthly Networking Mixer in November.

Step into Kingston Nord at 63 North Front St., for the Chamber's Nov. 24th Mixer from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. The event, being sponsored by Royal Carting, a Casella Company, will not only showcase samples of the new restaurant's farm-to-table Nordic cuisine, but allow Chamber members to meet the gregarious owners, Chef Steffan Bailey and Tash Berlyne, the front-of-the-house manager and mixologist.

Shortly after she and Bailey met in New Paltz, they decided to start a business and learned about the turnkey restaurant and bar opportunity in Uptown Kington.

The pair, along with restaurateurs Ryan Speier and Zi Lin, and Berlyne's sister, Lauren, met with the owners of Front Street Tavern and signed the lease in April.

They opened Kingston Nord in the summer, which was an ideal time, given that the restaurant is known for its spacious rooftop bar.

Together, Bailey and Berlyne have created a space that feels perfectly suited before the big-time holiday jitters kick in.

"We can't wait for everyone to get to know us and our mission and feel a sense of community," said Berlyne. "Food connects us together. I want people to feel that they've connected with each other and have some of their anxieties leave them. I want them to feel that hygge (a Danish term pronounced "hoo-gah") coziness."

Berlyne said Chamber members will be treated to a festive spread that features Bailey's gastronomic prowess. The Culinary Institute of America graduate has lent his talents to several local restaurants over the years as well as five-star resorts.

An Oklahoma native, Bailey said he's enjoyed introducing Scandinavian cuisine—hard to find in the Hudson Valley—to a new audience in Ulster County.

While some of it may be unfamiliar to local palates, the restaurant has been hopping with curious customers who've been raving about the dainty but hearty Swedish meatballs; the famous sausage plate featuring grilled Bratwurst, weisswurst and knackwurst; Skagen, shrimp salad; Bergen fish soup with creamy broth and Gravlax with locally sourced salmon served on Danish rye bread.

Bailey is committed to supporting local growers and meticulously handpicks produce, microgreens, game meats like elk, fish and poultry from local farms in Highland, Germantown, Ferndale, Woodbury and Riverhead for flavors that burst with freshness and vibrancy.

In addition to the one-of-a-kind dishes, the atmosphere at Kingston Nord stands out as neighborly and welcoming, something that was intentional on the part of the owners. Going back to the word hygge, it's all about enjoying the good and simple pleasures in life with friends and family in a place that doesn't feel rushed.

The Viking dining hall in the back encourages that kind of lingering, Berlyne noted, and is the perfect place for the upcoming winter holidays, including parties and special events.

As far as the November Mixer, Berlyne said she and Bailey look forward to getting to know their fellow business owners.

"I've heard absolutely wonderful things about the Chamber Mixers, and this feels like a valuable opportunity to let our space shine," she said. "It's so cozy, and you can lean into that with the warm, hearty dishes we offer.

"At Kingston Nord, it's all about bringing people fresh, quality food at affordable rates and connecting with our local community. We want people to feel that they just walked away from a real good Thanksgiving meal, stuffed and satisfied."



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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The Perfect Chemistry

Teacher Loves 2nd Career As Owner Of The Perfect Blend

Changing careers just before retiring is unthinkable for most people, but for Jodie Kimbrough, transitioning from a 28-year career as a high school chemistry teacher to business ownership clicked easily.



Jodie and Craig Kimbrough

As the new owner of The Perfect Blend Yarn and Tea Shop at 50 Market St. in Saugerties, Kimbrough possessed all the skills needed for success. Organization and planning abilities? Check. Scheduling? Check. Computer proficiency? Check. Communication skills? Check. Multi-tasking? Absolute check.

"We also host classes for knitters and crocheters, so, as a teacher, I have absolutely no problem here. That one is a slam dunk," she said. "This has been a big change, but at the same time, it really hasn't been. My 28-year career as a chemistry teacher has prepared me for this."

Kimbrough, who purchased the business from Mary Ebel last summer, also happens to love knitting and crocheting—treasured skills she learned years ago from her grandmother and aunt.

Though she lives in Guilderland, she would often make her way to Saugerties during vacations to soak in all that The Perfect Blend had to offer.

"I just always enjoyed the vibe that Mary created at that space as well as the selection she carried," Kimbrough said.

While visiting the shop with a friend two years ago, she learned that Ebel was considering retirement.

"I said to her, 'That would be my dream because I'm looking forward to what I will be doing after I retire. When I do, it will look like this.'"

With the encouragement of her husband, Craig, and family, she left teaching (just shy of her 30-year retirement plan) and made it happen. Kimbrough said she couldn't be happier with the way things are going at the shop, which sells a host of different types of yarn, including animal fiber, plant fiber, wool, alpaca, cotton, blends and silks.

She also carries hand-dyed yarns from New York artisans and a wide selection of hooks, needles and different accessories sought by yarn crafters.

And because knitting and a cup of hot tea just seem to go together, The Perfect Blend sells teas from Harney and Sons in Millerton, Saratoga Tea and Honey and a few blends crafted by Ebel. Kimbrough is especially proud of the blend she created—"Signature Steep"— a black tea with hints of cranberry and orange.

Kimbrough said her customers come from all walks of life and range from retirees to teenagers. She's even teaching crochet lessons to an eight-year-old girl, whose mother drives her to the shop every weekend.

And though some may think of knitting and crocheting as dying arts, Kimbrough said that's not necessarily the case.

In the last three years of her teaching career at Shaker High School in Latham, she served as the adviser for a stitch club and taught students how to crochet.

"They would then teach their friends and bring other kids to the club," Kimbrough noted. "In the last five years, there's been a big uptick in crocheting, especially among the younger generation.



"I think since COVID, all sorts of mindful crafts have had a resurgence, including needle point, cross stitch, weaving, woodworking or anything that involves slowing down and taking the time to make something with your hands," she added.

The colder seasons are the ideal time to do that, Kimbrough noted. As fall turns to winter, The Perfect Blend is ready for its busiest time of the year, especially as gift makers plan for the holidays.

"When somebody takes the time and energy to make something for somebody else, those types of gifts are always the best," Kimbrough said, adding that knitting and crocheting "relax the mind."

"There are so many things that happen during the day that are out of your control, but this is something you can control. It settles the mind. For me, it's one of the most relaxing things you can do."

To learn more about classes, private lessons and events at The Perfect Blend Yarn and Tea Shop, go to yarnandteashop.com or call (845) 246-2876.

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UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

Tuesday November 10 | 7:30 - 9:00 am

Chamber Breakfast Meeting
The Impact of Not-for-Profits on our Economy
Laura Washington & Kevin Quilty
Community Foundations of the Hudson Valley
Wiltwyck Golf Club
404 Steward Lane | Kingston, NY
$35 Members-Advanced Pay • $40 Members-At The Door
$45 Non-Members
Sponsor: Normann Staffing

Tuesday November 24 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Networking Mixer @
Kingston Nord
63 N. Front Street | Kingston, NY
There is no cost for Members and Prospective Members.
Reservations are required.
Sponsor: Royal Carting, a Casella Company

Wednesday December 2 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Networking Mixer @
The Cornell Restaurant + Bar
100 Rondout Landing | Kingston, NY
There is no cost for Members and Prospective Members.
Reservations are required.
Sponsors: Normann Staffing and UHY Advisors

Wednesday December 16 | 7:30 - 9:00 am

Chamber Breakfast Meeting
Alison Buckley, SUNY Ulster President
The Venue Uptown at the Kingston Regency Inn
503 Washington Avenue | Kingston, NY
$35 Members-Advanced Pay • $40 Members-At The Door
$45 Non-Members
Sponsor: Rondout Savings Bank

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

ChamberNews
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That Holiday Feeling

Herzog's Home & Paint Center Gears Up For The Season

Halloween is over. That means it's time to haul out the holly from storage as we step into November. Note to self: It's perfectly OK to admit that you're feeling a bit "Christmasy."

So are the folks at Herzog's Home and Paint Center at 151 Plaza Road in Kingston. The Holiday Shop, in the center of the store, is opening this week. It offers everything you need to deck your halls, walls, windows, porches, tables and everything in between.

From trees dripping in gorgeous ornaments to elegant faux greenery and a wide assortment of holiday-inspired decor and scented candles, Herzog's is your one-stop shop to get an early start on the season.

Julie Jordan, Herzog's marketing director, personally selects all the merchandise for the Holiday Shop as well as the store's gift department, featuring unique items at reasonable price points.

And just before Thanksgiving, Herzog's Garden Center will transform into evergreen heaven, offering fresh-cut Christmas trees (part of the proceeds support the Boys & Girls Club of Kingston), handmade wreaths and fresh garlands.

It gets even better. On Sunday, Nov. 22 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Herzog's is holding its annual Friends and Neighbors community event with 25 percent off purchases over $25, raffle prizes, a holiday craft for kids, photos with Santa and refreshments. During this one-day sale, the store is also offering 10 percent off on power tools, grills and firepits.

Herzog's, which recently partnered with the Ace Hardware family, is a good starting ground for buying locally, Jordan said.

"Shopping locally is about so much more than making a purchase—it's about building relationships and being part of a community," she said. "At Herzog's, our knowledgeable employees take pride in providing outstanding customer service, helping customers find the right products, and sharing the expertise that comes from truly knowing what we sell. We strive to create a personal experience, and we love seeing familiar faces walk through our doors.

"At Herzog's, you're more than a customer. You become part of the Herzog community. That personal connection is what makes shopping locally so special, and it's an experience that simply can't be replicated by shopping online or walking the aisles of a big-box store. When you shop locally, you're not just supporting a business. You're supporting the people, relationships and community that make our hometown special."

Aside from holiday décor, Herzog's gift department offers a gorgeous selection of unique merchandise—from bath and body to apparel and accessories— for everyone on your gift list.

Got a new baby in the family? Check out the eco-friendly Viverano Organics, a soft, comfortable, premium clothing line for babies.

Looking for one-of-a-kind personal items? Browse the selection of La Lavande French Soaps or stylish, vegan-leather purses and apparel by Katie Loxton.

Gourmands will drool over the array of teas, spreads, locally made honey and syrups, pancake mixes and dessert sauces.

And for the nesters on your list, you'll find an impressive selection of glassware, charcuterie boards, vases, aprons, napkins, dish towels, table mats and just about anything you can think of to prettify your homestead.

To make the whole shopping experience even sweeter, Herzog's offers free gift-wrapping services—a throwback to that one-on-one experience.

Of course, Herzog's is widely known as the hometown store that sells building supplies, as well as Benjamin Moore paints, power equipment and everything needed for home improvement.

"For generations, we've believed that taking care of our customers is at the heart of what we do," Jordan said. "At Herzog's, it's about more than finding the right gift. It's about the people who help you find it. We want folks to walk through our doors feeling welcome and leave knowing they've received personal attention. That's what local shopping is about."

Herzog's Home and Paint Center is located at 151 Plaza Road in Kingston. For more information, visit herzogs.com or call (845) 338-6300.



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Mixer

Wed., Oct. 14
Keegan Ales
20 St. James Street
Kingston, NY

Sponsor: Naccarato Insurance



Our Mixer Host Keegan Ales, owner Lisa Hantes (center), with staff and members of Keegan Army.



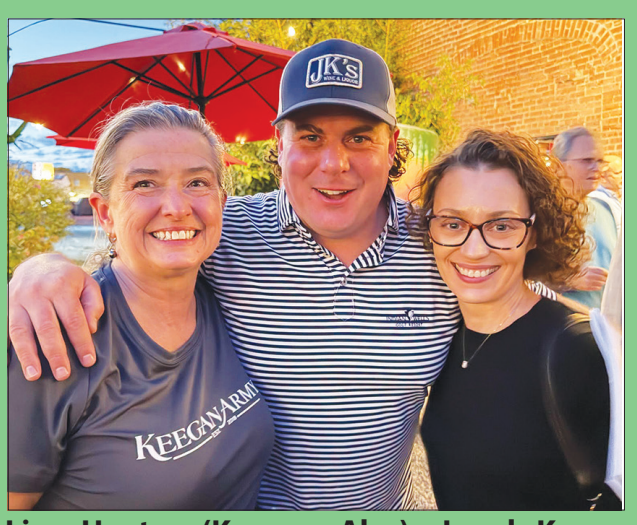
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John Naccarato (Naccarato Insurance), Lisa Hantes (Keegan Ales) with Ulster Chamber Vice President Jess Davis.



Alicia Hallam, Ryan Hallam (both with Ulster County SPCA), Caroline Garland, Karen Prince (both with The Reis Group Insurance Agency), Lindsey Morano, John Valesio (both with Keegan Army).



Lisa Hantes (Keegan Ales), Jared Kross, Nicole Digillio-Kross (both with JK's Wine & Liquor).



Luis Rueda, Antione Hepkins (both with Ulster Literacy Association), Jim McCann (Jim McCann Photography - Pix-Inmotion), and Sierra Shepard (Living Kingston).

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Asmeret Mekonen - Owner/Operator
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Chatham, NY 12037
Sierra Shepard - Publisher
www.bestversionmedia.com/ny/livingkingston
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Description: *Living Kingston is multi-channel marketing company working with targeted print & digital advertising, as well as back-end business tools for organic search ranking, reputation management, & action-driven websites to form a total market saturation solution for local businesses. We believe everyone has a story, and our hyperlocal private magazine is the only completely submission-based platform of its kind for residents to share those stories with their neighbors in Kingston, Woodstock, & Saugerties - for free to them, in a full-gloss, color publication full of good news & smiling faces.*

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Poughkeepsie, NY 12601-1952
Joe Ciardi – Company Officer
Category: Dumpster Rentals
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PERRY GOLDSCHEIN, FINANCIAL ADVISOR - MERRILL LYNCH

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PINE STREET PAWS

Kingston, NY 12401
Jacqueline VanDusen - Owner & Pet Care Provider
Category: Pet Care Services
Description: *Pine Street Pets provides dog walking, pet sitting, and private in-home boarding for cats and dogs in Uptown Kingston, NY. Locally owned and operated, the business offers personalized care in a comfortable home environment, with a focus on keeping pets happy, safe, and well cared for while their owners are away.*

RED'S TALLOW & HOME GOODS

Kingston, NY 12401
Anna Sainsbury - Owner
Category: Shop Small
Description: *Hi! My name is Anna. I create small batch, nourishing skincare. Everything is made with love and care, originally with the intention of healing and nourishing my own skin, and now I'm excited to share that with you! I currently sell direct to clients and ship or deliver depending on your location. In addition I'm looking for local shops to partner with that would like to include tallow products in their offerings.*

SONDER KINGSTON

346 Broadway
Kingston, NY 12401
Daniel Bagnall – Co-Owner
www.sonderkingston.com
Category: Restaurants
Description: *Upscale casual restaurant in Midtown Kingston.*

ST.LAWRENCE VALLEY ROASTERS

1920 County Rte. 35
Potsdam, NY 13676
Tim Obrien - Co-Owner
stlawrencevalleyroasters.com/
Category: Coffee Break Services/Supplies
Description: *Family-owned specialty coffee roastery*

THE PARLOUR ON 1 MAIN

1 Main Street
Kingston, NY 12401
Kristabelle McDermott – Owner
www.theparlouron1main.com
Categories: Bars/Lounges; Coffee Houses; Restaurants
Description: *The Parlour is an atmospheric coffee-cocktail lounge designed to be a creative hub in uptown Kingston. We aim to bridge the gap between traditional coffee shop & neighborhood bar, offering espresso drinks, a curated cocktail menu, thoughtfully crafted low ABV & N/A drinks, food, designed for sharing or settling in (sandwiches, nosh plates, soup), local art & vinyl turntables with a selection of rotating music. We have an outdoor patio & bar, a community table for business meetings or gatherings. Think of us for holiday parties, girls' night out, dates, or a fun night on the town!*

