

Tech, Films on Breakfast Agenda

Learn About Ulster County's New Economy

The tech and film industries are helping revitalize Ulster County's economy, and you can get a behind-the-scenes look at local economic development efforts at the Chamber's next breakfast meeting on June 19.

"These are growing industries and they're industries that we want. They represent the future, along with tourism and agriculture," says Suzanne Holt, director of the Ulster County Office of Economic Development.

Holt will be the featured speaker for the breakfast meeting which is scheduled for 7:30-9 a.m. at the Best Western Plus in Kingston. The sponsor is Pattison, Koskey, Howe and Bucci, CPAs.



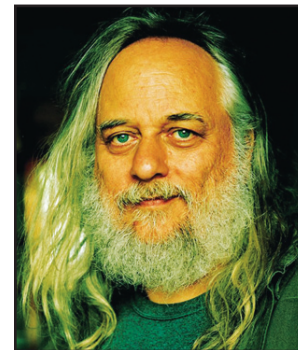
Suzanne Holt



Sage Ramadge



Matthew Harrigan



Laurent Rejto

Joining Holt as speakers that morning will be Sage Ramadge, the social impact director at Grand Central Tech, and Matt Harrigan, the company's co-founder and managing director. Also speaking will be Laurent Rejtwo, Director of the Hudson Valley Film Commission.

"We're going to talk about the services provided by the Office of Economic Development, and specifically efforts we're making to attract new businesses to the county,"

Holt said. "Two of the sectors we're working hard to attract are tech entrepreneurs and the film industry."

"People want to come to Ulster County for the quality of life and the natural beauty we have here, from the farm-to-table food and everything great that we have," Holt said. "So it's a natural fit for the tech sector in New York City, along

Continued on page 5

**June
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 June 19
 7:30-9:00 am
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 503 Washington Ave.,
 Kingston, NY**

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Continued on page 4

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Mixer
**The Saugerties
 Stallions**
 June 27 • 5-7 pm

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June 11 | 5:30 - 8:30 pm

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June 19 | 7:30 - 9:00 am

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June 27 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Networking Mixer

The Saugerties Stallions

Cantine Field | Saugerties, NY

There is no cost for Members and Prospective Members.

Reservations are required.

Sponsor: Sawyer Motors

July 23 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Networking Mixer

Hudson River Cruises Rip Van Winkle

1 East Strand Street | Kingston, NY

There is no cost for Members but advanced registration is necessary. Due to limited space early registration is encouraged.

Sponsor: Murphy Realty Group

Register for all Events (845) 338-5100
www.UlsterChamber.org

We're Going Out to the Ballgame

Saugerties Stallions Host Mixer

The Chamber is expecting a homerun at its June 27 Business-After-Hours Mixer.

Business leaders will become spectators following the networking event hosted by the Saugerties Stallions at Cantine Field from 5-7 p.m. The event will provide fans an opportunity to enjoy complimentary refreshments and also meet the players and coaches—and even the team mascot.

In addition, everyone attending will also be given a ticket to that night's 7 p.m. game between the Stallions and Elmira Pioneers.

Sawyer Motors is sponsoring the June Mixer.

"I think it's a great opportunity for businesses throughout Ulster County to understand what we have going on in Saugerties as far as the Stallions," says team owner and local businessman Kevin Hinchey.

"We want to show Chamber members the marketing opportunities that are available. I'd also like to show them how great a family atmosphere the games are. It's a great night out for little investment."

That's for sure. Compared to a trip to a major league game, a night with the Stallions is a downright bargain. Kids 12 and under are free, and just \$5 gets adults through the door (\$3 for seniors). You also won't get held up if you want food or drink.

"We keep all the beverage and concession costs very low for great food," Hinchey said. "We're a not-for-profit. The other ballparks that you go to, they have to get top dollar for everything. We, on the other hand, don't have to do that."

Hinchey said he plans to talk about the team's Facebook live feed, where fans can watch the games and enjoy six different camera angles. Past games are also archived on Facebook.

"Last year, the coverage of our baseball games at home reached over 1.1 million people," he said. "We plan on doubling that this year."

The Stallions play in the Perfect Game Collegiate Baseball League (PGCBL), which is similar to the famous college-level league at Cape Cod, Mass.

"We recruit the highest-ranking college players from all over the country to come here and play in our 13-team league," Hinchey said.

The league's other teams are from Albany, Amsterdam, Glens Falls, Oneonta, Adirondack, Mohawk Valley, Utica, Watertown, Elmira, Geneva, Jamestown and Newark.

Saugerties opened the season at home against Glens Falls on June 1 and will play 48 games from June through July.

The team includes a few local players coming back for their second season with the Stallions: Saugerties native Nick Teitter, who attends the College of Saint Rose, and Kingston's Tyler Kelder, who plays for St. Bonaventure.

The team's manager is Colin Martin, the son of Charlie Manuel, a former major league player who managed the Philadelphia Phillies to a World Series title in 2008.

"That's a helpful draw for some of the players to understand they have a direct connection to Major League Baseball," Hinchey said.

Hinchey said the Stallions have drawn as many as 2,100 people for a game. Average attendance is around 800.

The team also employs around 30 people, including interns. The Stallions this year will have three interns from the Penn State University Communications Department on staff.

The Stallions are also a team with a social conscience, and you might see players around the community or at Albany Medical Center, giving out souvenirs and stuffed animals.

"We're a non-profit and we try to give back everything that we bring in," Hinchey said. "We do that in a number of ways. The ballplayers have a schedule that they have to keep off the field—whether it's food-bank distribution, senior center visitation ... we represent our community on a much larger scale."

"The Saugerties Stallions are more than just a baseball team. It's really a springboard for so much more in giving."

Hinchey, who owns H&H Environmental in Saugerties, took over as owner in 2015, convinced that Sawyertown is a "baseball community."

"We're a baseball family and we know about the baseball community, so we rolled the dice."

Hinchey said the Saugerties Dutchman, a former adult baseball team, used to draw well.

"Once we lost the Dutchmen, I think the community wanted something back," he said. "They wanted a high level of baseball. We've found the perfect fit."

"It wouldn't work unless the community made the ball club their own, which they did for sure."

Any business that would like to partner with the Stallions should contact him at (845) 707-0265 or connect with the team

on Facebook.

Chamber mixers are a great way to network and promote your business. Be sure to bring plenty of business cards. This free networking event is open to Chamber members and prospective members. Reservations are a must and can be made by calling the Chamber office at (845) 338-5100 or by registering online at www.ulsterchamber.org.

Mixer

Wednesday, June 27, 5-7 pm

The Saugerties Stallions

Cantine Field, Saugerties, NY

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Continued from page 1

with the films to come and film here.”

Holt will discuss the plans by Grand Central Tech, one of the country's leading tech incubators, to open an office in Kingston this summer at the Senate Garage in Uptown. The project will introduce more than 150 tech entrepreneurs to the Hudson Valley at “Grand Central Tech North.”

“It's huge,” Holt said. “Anyone who comes to the Catskills for the weekend, they don't want to go back to New York City on Monday morning. So Central Park Tech had this idea that they should have an outpost in the Hudson Valley, where people can stay and work over the summer.

“We expect them to go back to New York City and be kind of brand ambassadors, to go back and tell their colleagues and friends how great it is up here,” Holt said. “We expect some of them to relocate up here and some of them to keep coming back on weekends and summers and some to just tell people how great it is here.”

Ramadge said his company is “excited” to be launching the summer outpost in Kingston.

“From the warm welcome we've received in Ulster County, to the excited response from our members and the New York City startup community, we're hopeful that this is just the beginning of a longstanding relationship,” he said.

Ramadge said GCT North's goal is to expose NYC-based entrepreneurs and startups “to a different context and mode of operating their companies that embraces a change of environment and interaction with communities away from the urban setting.”

“Where Kingston is especially interesting for us, is the thriving and diverse local community, coupled with the natural beauty of the surrounding region,” he said. “Where this creates opportunities to engage with creatives and technology professionals in the Hudson Valley, we are thrilled. But we are just as excited for the opportunity to learn from people in the local agricultural, maker, and artistic industries.”

During his portion of the morning's presentation, Rejto said he will share some of the more successful projects that have filmed locally.

“I'll talk about what we've been doing for 18 years and how it creates jobs,” Rejto said. “That's always been our ultimate goal: To keep things local. Our mission has been to create local economic development through local film production. I like to use real stories and facts to back up what we are doing and what we've done, so we'll be talking about specific productions.”

Holt said a state tax credit has made a huge difference for local filming. Productions that film in Ulster County were already eligible for a 30-percent tax credit for certain expenses. But last year, the state extended an additional 10-percent credit to Ulster and 11 other upstate counties.

Holt said the filmmakers shooting the movie “Departures” were ready to go elsewhere before the tax credit was approved, but they ended up staying in Ulster County.

“They were literally about to get on a plane and fly everyone to South Africa because it was so much cheaper,” she said. “It's a game-changer for this region.”

Meanwhile, the movie “A Quiet Place,” part of which was shot in New Paltz, contributed \$21 million to the New

York economy, according to the Motion Picture Association of America Inc.

“It has that kind of impact,” Holt said. “We wouldn't have it without the tax credit. That's what has made such a huge difference.”

A Hallmark Channel Christmas film was being shot last month throughout Kingston.

“That's enormous,” Holt said. “The film crews and everyone are shopping in all the local stores, they're eating in the restaurants and they're staying in our hotels.”

Holt said Chamber members can go to UlsterforFilm.com and register their business.

“It's a place where Ulster County businesses can sign up so that the film industry knows they're here,” Holt said. “So whether it's hairdressers or landscapers or engineers or accountants or

any kind of business that the film industry will hire, the industry can go to our website or the Hudson Valley Film Commission website and find what they need.”

Chamber Foundation Executive Director Ingrid Kulick will also be introducing members of the Ulster Leadership Class of 2018, along with information about the upcoming 2018-19 session. Registration for the next Leadership Ulster class is now open at www.UlsterChamberFoundation.org.

Chamber breakfast programs are a great way to network with other local business leaders and stay on top of current events. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged. For more information or to register, call the Chamber at (845) 338-5100 or go online at www.ulsterchamber.org.

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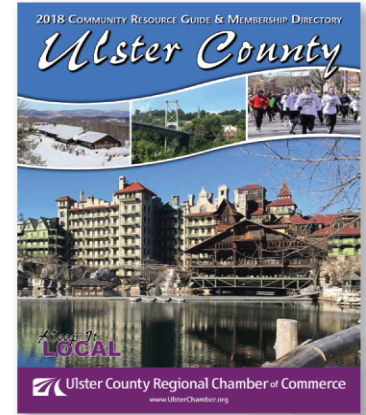


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A Sign Of The Times

FASTSIGNS Makes Lasting Impression

Todd Fitzgerald and his team's handiwork is just about everywhere you go these days.

A trip to the Hudson Valley Mall in the town of Ulster shows just how busy the crew at FASTSIGNS has been. They recently installed more than 400 vertical panels to help showcase the community at the property owned by the Georgia-based Hull Property Group.

The murals display snapshots of Hudson Valley landmarks like Kingston City Hall and the Ulster Performing Arts Center as well as landscapes such as the Shawangunk Ridge and Ashokan Reservoir.

"That was a large project," Fitzgerald said. "Hull has been a wonderful partner, and I think one of the big advantages with this project is they're trying to bring community back to the mall."

Hull Properties represents one of many large companies or national chains in the region that Fitzgerald has serviced with custom signs and graphics.

Todd and his brother, Shawn, became FASTSIGNS franchisees in 2013. The siblings employ 12 and occupy two buildings—one at 520 Albany Ave. in the town of Ulster and the other at 1839 South Road in Wappingers Falls.

The 3,500-square-foot Ulster facility is used primarily for sign production, heavy fabrication and installation work, while the 2,400-square-foot Dutchess store is a full-service sign shop that serves as a light install and production hub for Kingston.

One of the ways the brothers have made their mark is through eye-catching vehicle wraps that transform business cars, trucks and vans into mobile billboards.

In fact, just about every local radio station with formats ranging from classic rock and pop to country and contemporary Christian has turned to FASTSIGNS for creative mobile advertising solutions, Fitzgerald said.

"I would say we do 90 percent of the Hudson Valley's radio stations' vehicle wraps. They need visibility, and they're always going to and from events. That was one of the first relationships that we were able to secure with our vehicle wraps, and that has aided our business growth," he said.

Though it's only been five years since the Fitzgeralds signed on to become two of the 675 independently owned and operated FASTSIGNS franchises, they've already earned a stellar reputation helping customers across all industries effectively communicate their messages.

Fitzgerald said one of the more rewarding ways they have done that is working with area non-profit organizations like Family of Woodstock. As in past years, the company also provided signage this spring for annual running races like the Shamrock Run and Kiwanis Kingston Classic.

Fitzgerald said the most gratifying thing they do is working with small businesses, whether it's branding help,

installing an exterior sign or putting the finishing touches on a new office. The satisfaction comes from watching them evolve with the right visual marketing solutions, he added.

"When we go for a consultation, what we're really doing is trying to figure out what the problem is—whether it's a problem communicating with their clients, a branding issue or getting their message out about their new product or service."

"Maybe they can't get somebody to turn into their parking lot because of line-of-sight issues. Once we figure out what the problem is, we can provide solutions, visual aids that will help them solve their problem, tell their story or bring their brand to life."

The Fitzgeralds are apparently doing it right. They are experiencing substantial growth year after year and are connecting now with educational, medical and financial institutions as well as large construction companies.

"We're really starting to break ground in those industries," Fitzgerald said. "The relationships are starting to develop on a larger scale. Although, we work closely with many small businesses in the Hudson Valley, we've also been experiencing a shift where larger clients are seeking us out."

"Even though we are known best for our vehicle wraps that are seen throughout the Hudson Valley, we have also been working on custom-fabricated signs, graphics and way-finding projects for medical facilities, colleges and businesses alike. Those are projects that are challenging and fun."

For those out of the loop, the Fitzgerald brothers further handle the permitting process for their clients. That includes procuring and obtaining permits to ensure that all their signage is in compliance with local laws, codes, regulations and ordinances.

"A lot of people don't realize what goes into that," Fitzgerald said. "We have to make sure we get the permitting for them through the various boards. Sometimes, it does slow it down, but we have been working with these boards long enough that we know what the laws are, so we can save our customers a ton of time when it comes to the types of signs that are allowed and what they can or can't put up."

Fitzgerald said he and his brother owe much of their business sense to their father, Glenn, a longtime local entrepreneur, but they also are quick to credit their skilled staff for the company's accelerated growth.

"The best asset we have is people," Todd said. "I can say that's part of the reason why we decided to start our sign company. We had the right people with the right skills, and it's the same reason we're growing today."

If all of that is not enough, the company also partners with the Chamber to offer new members a free 2-foot-by-4-foot banner, welcoming them aboard.

"We want them to show their support of the Chamber.



It's a giveback from the Chamber and ourselves, but it also allows them to promote themselves and their own branding. It's a great backdrop if they're going to do a trade show or event," he said.

FASTSIGNS is located at 520 Albany Ave. in the town of Ulster and 1839 South Road in Wappingers Falls. The Fitzgeralds can be reached at (845) 331-5800 in Ulster County and (845) 298-5600 in Dutchess. The website is www.fastsigns.com/638-kingston-ny.

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For Information/Application Contact Ingrid Kulick
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