

SUNY New Paltz Prez Reflects On Career

Dr. Christian Speaks At Holiday Breakfast

Don't expect SUNY New Paltz President Dr. Donald Christian to dwell on himself much when he appears at his final Chamber breakfast on Dec. 10. His love for the college he has led for the last 12 years is too deep for that.

"I'll certainly talk about some of the progress in our educational offerings during the last dozen years or so," said Christian, who is retiring next June. "I don't want to navel-gaze about my presidency, but I thought it would be useful for the community to learn about



Dr. Donald Christian

some of the strengths and some of our progress the last dozen years that position the college for continued success and certainly for success in attracting a top-notch next leader."

The breakfast is scheduled for 7:30-9:00 a.m. at Wiltwyck Golf Club, 404 Steward Lane in Kingston. The sponsor is Rondout Savings Bank.

Making this truly a festive event, Holiday Carols will be sung by Maria Todaro, Founder of the Phoenicia International Festival of the Voice.

"I'm going to try to focus on aspects of the college and what we do that I think may be of particular interest to business and civic leaders," Christian said. "So, I'll talk

about the way we engage the region, including the caliber of educational offerings, but also some of the ways that we share expertise and capability to enrich the Hudson Valley."

Christian said he would also tell business leaders about how SUNY New Paltz students are below the national average in student loan debt and default rates. SUNY New Paltz routinely ranks as one of the most affordable college educations in New York and the nation by prestigious publications like U.S. News &

World Report.

"I'll speak a little bit about some of the rankings," Christian said. "I think some of it is inside baseball that's primarily of interest to the college, but I'll share some of where we stand on rankings of social mobility and the extent to which colleges and universities have positive impacts on the social and economic mobility of their graduates. We are in the top 3 percent in the nation on one of those rankings.

"I'll share also the progress we've made in our programs and services for veterans and military students. We're nationally ranked in that realm, and that's certainly a very different profile for the college than was here a dozen years ago."

Christian also plans to discuss the "dramatic changes" and physical improvements of the New Paltz campus, including both the picturesque grounds and new and renovated buildings.

"Many people tell me that the campus looks very different now than it did 12 years ago," he said. "That's certainly my experience, and we're really proud of that. It's a big asset in our ability to recruit students and to serve the region.

"I will also make the point that the progress that we've made during my presidency has a lot of fingerprints on it. They're collective accomplishments of other campus leaders and deans and faculty and staff and alumni and our donors. I'll also talk about some of our success in increasing our fundraising capability and impacts."

Now in his 70s, Christian said it's "time to turn to some other things" in his life. Christian and his wife, Sandy, a retired psychotherapist, will remain in Ulster County.

"We love the Hudson Valley, so we we're going to stay here in the Hudson Valley and I'm going to grow a garden, which I haven't done since I've been in the president's office. It's one of my latent passions. I'll be able to fish more often. I have a grandson who I hope to spend more time with when I'm retired and just a number of hobbies and interests like that."

Christian, the eighth president of SUNY New Paltz, was appointed in 2011 after serving

**December
 Breakfast
 December 10**

**7:30-9:00 am
 Wiltwyck Golf Club
 404 Steward Lane**

Kingston, NY

Sponsor:



as interim president, provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Chamber Breakfasts are a great way to stay on top of current events. Reservations are required. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door for Chamber members (\$35 for non-members.) For more information, contact the Chamber at (845) 338-5100 or go online at www.ulsterchamber.org.

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DAILY FREEMAN

UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

December 10 | 7:30 - 9:00 am

Holiday Breakfast Meeting
Dr. Donald Christian, President SUNY New Paltz
Wiltwyck Golf Club
404 Steward Lane | Kingston, NY
\$25 Members-Advanced Pay • \$30 Members-At The Door
\$35 Non-Members

Sponsor: Rondout Savings Bank

December 14 | 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Lunch & Learn: How to Keep Your Business Safe
When Employees are Working From Home

Holiday Inn Express & Suites
1835 Ulster Avenue | Lake Katrine, NY
There is no cost for Members to attend. Reservations are required

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While you're out shopping, look for these 'Shop Small & WIN BIG' signs posted throughout the region. To be eligible to win some great prizes... head on over to any Ulster Chamber Business...

1. Take a selfie or a photo of that business displaying the SHOP SMALL sign
2. CHECK-IN to that business from your Facebook Page
3. Include #UCChamber2021 in your post
4. Be sure to make that post PUBLIC

Between 11/15-12/19 create as many FB posts as you'd like (the more the better!)

4 Weekly Drawings: \$100 Gift Cards

Weekly Prizes Courtesy of Emerson Resort & Spa & Bop to Tottom

Grand Prize Drawing: \$500 Gift Card

Grand Prize Courtesy of Ulster Savings Bank

Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce #UCChamber2021

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Nov. 15 - Dec. 19, 2021

Register for all Events (845) 338-5100
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'Shop Small, Win Big' In Ulster

Fun Campaign Bolsters Local Business

Ham it up and show us your pearly whites this holiday season. After all, you'll be doing our local businesses a huge favor when you take a selfie in their stores and share them on social media to show your support.

It's all part of the 'Shop Small and Win Big' initiative by the Ulster Chamber to promote buying locally, especially during the holiday season. The social-media campaign has been ongoing since Nov. 15 and runs through Dec. 19.

The way it works is simple. Shoppers are encouraged to visit and check into our local Chamber businesses, take selfies or photos there and then share them on Facebook with the hashtag "UCChamber 2021."

By doing so, you'll be helping local merchants get exposure and potentially more sales during this gift-buying season. Participants also will get something in return by being entered to win four weekly drawings for \$100 worth of gift cards, courtesy of the Emerson Resort and Spa and Bop to Tottom and a \$500 Mastercard gift card, compliments of Ulster Savings Bank.

"Obviously, shopping small keeps our local businesses alive and thriving during these difficult times," said Miriam Gibbons, Chairperson of the Shop Small Committee and a member of the Chamber Board. "It's helping these businesses keep their names in the forefront of people's minds."

The Shop Small campaign has been lengthened from previous one-day and one-week events to a full month to help local merchants increase sales as they recover and rebuild from the pandemic. It's also a boon for shoppers, who often need more time to find treasures for everyone on their lists.

"The bottom line is that this is the community we live in, and we need to show our support," Gibbons said. "We've made a promise in my family that we're going to support local businesses only, whether it's a gift card to a restaurant or actual goods. I want to keep my local community businesses vibrant."

Karen Clark Adin, who owns Bop to Tottom in Uptown Kingston, appreciates the buy-local initiative and said it keeps the money circulating in the community.

"When you buy locally, 70 percent of your purchase stays in the local economy. For example, I go to Catskill Art Supplies for my office needs. I go to Timely Signs for my signage. I buy as much as I can from small, local vendors as opposed to the big-box stores," she said.

"The chances are pretty good that when you go to your kid's Little League game, you're more likely to see a local business on that sign supporting the team than you are a non-local business. When you're a micro-business, you do not have a large advertising budget, so the Chamber is helping us advertise. It's absolutely priceless that the Chamber is doing this."

And while many shoppers are concerned this year about inventory shortages and supply-chain disruptions, the buy-local experience offers some assurance, according to Clark Adin.

"In reality, these supply-

chain issues are very real, even for us small micro-businesses. It's not necessarily the product. It could be other components to the product like the label or the jar, but when you're a small vendor, you're able to pivot much faster and adapt much quicker," she said, adding that she has a wide selection of merchandise at her one-of-a-kind boutique.

"Most people do leave with something in their hands and a smile on their faces," Clark Adin said. "We have holiday shoppers from places like Saratoga and Pompton Lakes, N.J., who come up every year to do their holiday shopping with us. That's absolutely wonderful to me. It's all about relationships with your vendors, customers and staff."

Jess Davis, Director of Membership at the Chamber, encourages holiday shoppers to think outside the box this year.

"Pick up a car wash gift certificate. Get a treat for your pet from Peace, Love JERKY Treats or a gift certificate to Kingston Candy Bar. Surprise someone with dance or martial arts classes or a gym membership," she said.

"What's really special is that a lot of our shops have locally made and locally sourced items like honey or artisan crafts. You can stop in at the Culinary Warehouse and get make-your-own pizza kits. There are gifts at all different price points. It's a great feeling to walk into your neighborhood store, pick up an item and have it gift-wrapped, and there are no shipping costs or the risk that it will get lost in the mail."

Tamara Murray, the Marketing and Sales Director at the Emerson Resort and Spa in Mount Tremper, and a Chamber Board Member, said there is nothing like that local-buying experience. The Shops at Emerson, housed in a 19th-century barn, features unique merchandise from home furnishings and clothing to nostalgic toys and food products.

"Gift cards are always a gift that keeps on giving," she said. "Gift card purchases bring in additional income while allowing the person on the receiving end to shop for exactly what strikes their fancy at any time."

"Holiday shopping can be stressful, even without pandemic-related issues. Give yourself a break and shop with local owners who are happy to see you and eager to help."

Clark Adin concurred and said shoppers have the power to make a difference in their local community by shopping locally.

"If folks want to see those small businesses—whether it's a pizzeria or a juice bar or gift shop—around next year, they need



Miriam Gibbons, Tamara Murray and Jess Davis

your help. It's your chance to lift them back up," she said.

The sponsor for this year's 'Shop Small and Win Big' campaign is Ulster Savings Bank. Community Partners include 92.9 WBPM, The Shops at Emerson and Bop to Tottom.

Swag bags, a new addition to the campaign this year are compliments of John Burlingham at American Solutions for Business. They can be picked up, while supplies last, at Ulster Savings Bank, Bop to Tottom, The Shops at Emerson, Hamilton & Adams, Next Boutique, Dietz Stadium Diner, Village Pizza and Village Bagels in Saugerties and Village Pizza in New Paltz.

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“When you’re hungry, we rule.”

That’s Michael Katz’s tried-and-true motto for his restaurant delivery service that seriously upstages the national online food-ordering platforms.

“I love that we’ve got the trademark on that motto,” said the owner of Carry Out Kings, the New Paltz-based version of DoorDash, Uber Eats and Postmates. “We’ve been rocking here in New Paltz since 2013 and are rulers of your gastronomical universe.”

While Carry Out Kings is centralized in New Paltz, its drivers deliver food from about two dozen participating restaurants to customers in Gardiner, Rosendale, Tillsen and Highland. Katz hopes to launch in Kingston in the coming months.

“What sets us apart from our competition is having incredible people, knowing our restaurants and having a great team. I am

1,000 percent about customer service, and the quality control is beyond compare,” he said.

A big part of that is holding his 15 employees to high standards, including drivers.

“They are your servers, and because they’re working for me and not DoorDash, it’s got to be service with a smile,” Katz said. “I place great emphasis on protecting the integrity of the product.

“I’ve been in the restaurant industry forever. Customers



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at home should get the same level of service as if they were going out to eat, and we represent all the restaurants and make sure the products look as wonderful as they do when they leave the restaurant. It’s a tight-run ship, where our drivers are our employees, and that sets us apart from those other services that use independent contractors,” he said.

That said, Carry Out Kings works the way the more familiar online platforms do. You simply place your order online at carryoutkings.com or its mobile app. The menus from participating restaurants are all laid out. After ordering, you track it until the driver delivers the meal to your doorstep.

Carry Out Kings is open seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 11 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Katz said the company can deliver from up to three different restaurants at a time. The waiting period for most orders is about an hour, although that can vary due to inclement weather, peak hours or larger orders.

Demographically speaking, the platform appeals to the college crowd, but Katz said families also use his service regularly.

Continued on page 5

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Continued from page 4

“Soccer moms love us,” he said. “We’re pretty spread out. A lot of it is the convenience of having your favorite meals from your favorite restaurants delivered hot to your door.”

Katz, who also owns Village Pizza in New Paltz, said he got the idea for Carry Out Kings from a business in his hometown of East Meadow (Long Island) called Takeout Taxi.

“It was the same concept. You could order from a bunch of different places, but there was no fancy app. I thought New Paltz needed something like that,” said Katz, who was the general manager at another restaurant at the time.

“I knew that businesses like this existed, but I did jump in with the local restaurant scene as the focal point. I called my business partner, Eric Cichinsky. We’ve been best buddies since we were 14. I said, ‘Dude, I’m going to start this business,’ and he said, ‘Heck, yes. Let’s get this thing going.’”

While Carry Out Kings has been around for eight years, it reached its pinnacle during the pandemic when the state banned indoor dining at restaurants.

“It was pretty nuts,” Katz said. “We just started getting busier and busier. It also shined a spotlight on us as a community business., even though we’ve always been very community-oriented and give to various organizations.”

The way Katz sees it, online delivery services like Carry Out Kings have a good future, even in a post-pandemic world.

“I feel the whole landscape has just shifted in a monumental way,” he said. “There are some people who may never go back out to eat or who feel more comfortable eating outdoors. Whatever, I feel that more restaurants should, from here on out, consider the importance of the revenue stream from delivery and takeout. A bigger percentage of sales will likely come from that going forward.”

That’s why he tries to visit area restaurants at least once a month to drop off his business

cards and encourage partnerships with his service. He said for those restaurants that offer delivery, it is more cost-effective to deal with companies like his, which are invested in the area and care more.

“Customer service is everything to me,” he said. “I’ll be 40 next year, and I’m a lifelong restaurant guy. It’s all about taking good care of people. That’s where value is created.”

Carry Out Kings, P.O. Box 155 in New Paltz, can be reached at (845) 256-6542 or carryoutkings.com.

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IT'S TIME FOR BALANCE

INTRODUCING

Ulster Strong

Partners for Growth and Opportunity

New investor and developer interest in Ulster County presents a unique opportunity for growth and renewal. Our community stands at a crossroads on how this interest can be encouraged and focused in ways that are smart, sustainable, and facilitates broad-based opportunity.

Ulster Strong has formed to engage the public on development issues, and encourage discussion and support for smart investment and growth opportunities.

To learn more and explore how you can support our mission visit

UlsterStrong.com



Ulster Strong is a partner of
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