

# Lights, Camera, Action in Ulster County

## Local Film Industry in Breakfast Spotlight

You've seen the lights, large trucks and film shoots all over Ulster County, and now is your chance to hear about the industry that is changing our local economy.

The Chamber's next Breakfast meeting, scheduled for 7:30-9:00 a.m., Wednesday, June 22nd at The Venue Uptown at the Best Western Plus in Kingston, will focus on the impact film and movies are having on Ulster County.

Tim Weidemann, Director of Ulster County Economic Development, will introduce a trio of speakers from Upriver Studios and Stockade Works, two film-related initiatives founded by acclaimed actress, producer, and director Mary Stuart Masterson.

The speakers will be Beth Davenport, co-founder and Vice President of Upriver Studios and co-founder and Director of Programs for Stockade Works; Susie Sofranko, Executive Director of Stockade Works; and Shoshana Gray, Business Director of Upriver Studios.

Masterson, the star of such films as "Some Kind of Wonderful" and "Fried Green Tomatoes," is the founder and President of Upriver Studios and Stockade Works. Masterson moved to the Hudson Valley in 2006 after directing a movie in the area, and along with Davenport in 2016, founded Stockade Works, a crew training and mentorship non-profit. Stockade Works' focuses on creating



Beth Davenport

opportunities for local residents from diverse backgrounds to access quality jobs in the film and television industry.

In 2020, with the goal of bringing more productions into the Hudson Valley, Masterson and Davenport founded Upriver Studios, a large-scale, women-owned soundstage facility and jobs engine for Stockade Works trainees and local crew.

The breakfast speakers will talk about the founding of both Stockade Works and Upriver Studios, and last year's launch of Upriver's 101,000-square-foot film and television sound stage in Saugerties. Upriver's first client was the HBO Max series "Pretty Little Liars: Original Sin," which was based at Upriver for the past year and shot at various locations throughout the county and region.

Davenport said, "Ulster County is an incredible place to launch and run a business, with great collaboration and support from the community and local government.

"From the founding of Stockade Works in 2016, our focus and motto have been to 'Make Local Work' by creating pathways to good film and television jobs for local folks," Davenport said. "Stockade Works provides training for a variety of crew positions and skills, ongoing mentorship, and job referrals, with a focus on



Susie Sofranko

those who have been locked out of employment and training opportunities."

Sofranko added, "Stockade Works has trained almost 200 Hudson Valley residents and witnessed the remarkable opportunity productions provide the graduates of our programs. We help connect our trainees to job opportunities but more and more we are seeing them get hired and rehired again and again. This sustainable media ecosystem is forging a new creative community in ways the Hudson Valley has never seen, and we are just excited to be a resource to anyone interested in getting involved."

Davenport said, "Opening Upriver was the next step in making local work—large productions need large scale soundstage facilities, and we created Upriver to meet that need and bring television productions and their jobs and massive budgets into our towns."

Gray said the speakers will also talk about how local businesses can work with the film industry as they see more and more shoots in their communities. Gray shared that many local businesses do business with film and television productions, and there are several longstanding local businesses providing specialized services to the industry.

"There are a lot of opportunities for local businesses to work with productions," Gray said. "Productions have a lot of needs—clothing, hardware, food, cosmetics, electricians, antiques, paint, caterers—the list goes on and on—and our goal is to channel this business locally."



Shoshana Gray

**June Breakfast**  
**June 22**  
**7:30-9:00 am**  
The Venue Uptown at the Best Western Plus  
503 Washington Ave.  
Kingston, NY  
**Sponsor:**  
WMC Health | HealthAlliance Hospital

For more information on Upriver Studios, visit [upriverstudios.com](http://upriverstudios.com). Stockade Works can be reached at [stockadeworks.org](http://stockadeworks.org).

"We're all doing this because we think that the film and television industry is a great anchor industry for the Hudson Valley," Davenport said. "Creating film and television is an extraordinary mix of manufacturing, business, arts, and entertainment. We are so thrilled to be able to watch movies and shows shot here in Ulster County because it not only showcases our towns and landscapes but represents a growing creative industry that can change opportunities and our local economy."

*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 \$30 in advance and \$35 at the door for Chamber members (\$40 for non-members.) For more information, contact the Chamber at (845) 338-5100 or go online at [www.UlsterChamber.org](http://www.UlsterChamber.org).*



Upriver & Hudson River - CREDIT CHRIS FAMELETTE

## The Breakfast Sponsor for June is HealthAlliance Hospital

Ulster County Executive Pat Ryan and the Westchester Medical Center Health Network (WMCHealth) announced an agreement to maintain 20 inpatient mental health beds, which will be located in the soon-to-open expanded HealthAlliance Hospital on Mary's Avenue in Kingston, NY. The agreement, if approved by New York State, will be the latest action by WMCHealth to advance its comprehensive plan to enhance behavioral and mental health services available in Ulster and Dutchess Counties – while preserving local access for patients and their families.

In addition, WMCHealth will maintain all emergency access and outpatient mental health services in Kingston and expand inpatient behavioral health beds at WMCHealth's MidHudson Regional Hospital in Poughkeepsie from 40 to 60, giving Ulster and Dutchess Counties a comprehensive array of services that includes a total of 80 inpatient beds available for mental health services.

The agreement for the inpatient mental health beds at the new HealthAlliance Hospital came after WMCHealth evaluated available services as well as feedback from the New York State Department of Health (DOH), County Executive Ryan, frontline healthcare workers, mental health professionals, elected officials, patients, families, and more. At the height of the pandemic, WMCHealth transitioned HealthAlliance Hospital inpatient mental health services temporarily to MidHudson Regional Hospital to bolster resources and capacity for COVID-19-related care, under an announced New York State plan.

"During the pandemic, we saw suicides in Ulster County double and fatal opioid overdoses up 93%; now more than ever, we must guarantee that all residents have ample access to vital local mental health and addiction recovery services and come together to ensure our community is receiving the

support it desperately needs and deserves," Ulster County Executive Pat Ryan said. "I am so proud that our community came together and advocated tirelessly to ensure these services are available; and appreciative that WMCHealth truly listened, worked collaboratively with us, and stepped up to make it happen."

"This agreement is an investment in the Kingston community that will benefit the entire region and reflects our continued commitment to delivering the best behavioral health care," said WMCHealth Executive Vice President & Chief Strategy Officer Josh Ratner. "This announcement is a testament to the collaboration with County Executive Ryan who was instrumental in both meeting the behavioral health needs of Ulster County and helping WMCHealth execute on its larger strategy that will enhance and expand treatment in the entire region."

## Tour The New HealthAlliance Hospital

### Get A Sneak Peek At June 7 Chamber Mixer

The new WMCHealth HealthAlliance Hospital, scheduled to open later this year at the site of the former Benedictine Hospital in Kingston, is opening its doors for a private tour. Business leaders can see the progress of the \$92.9-million construction project at the Chamber's next Mixer from 5-7 p.m. June 7 at 105 Mary's Ave.

"We are inviting Ulster Chamber members to visit and get a sneak peek of the new hospital before it opens later this year," said Michael Doyle, MD, Executive Director and Chief Medical Officer for HealthAlliance of the Hudson Valley. "It's going to be a very exciting event."

"We will be able to provide guided tours through a good portion of our construction."

Doyle said the 79,000-square-foot expansion and renovation project is nearing completion and Chamber members and business leaders can take tours, ask questions and meet with hospital and clinical leadership. In between, guests will be treated to delicious food, beverages, desserts and music.

"Come meet our team and ask questions," Doyle said. "We're going to have our physicians available to provide insight into their new space and what it means to the community. Our operations team, which oversees construction, will also be available to answer questions. HealthAlliance Hospital leadership team will be your tour guides."

The new 150-bed hospital will provide best-in-class medical care with a full suite of services. It will include a new and technologically advanced 25,000-square-foot emergency department with emergency behavioral health care; critical care unit; Family Birth Center; surgical center; advanced imaging suites; and a caregiver's center.

Doyle said the project, which has been under construction

since a 2019 groundbreaking, has been tucked away out of public sight on Mary's Ave., a few blocks from Broadway in Midtown Kingston and within the confines of the former Benedictine Hospital facility.

"Our community deserves the best and will be impressed with the advanced technology and the advanced care they're able to receive once this building opens," Doyle said. "Our construction project is off the beaten path behind Mary's Avenue Campus, so this is a perfect opportunity to view the project and see the great progress."

Once the new hospital is open, HealthAlliance will turn its attention a few blocks away to the former Kingston Hospital, now the HealthAlliance Broadway Campus, which will be transformed into a walkable health village. In the future Broadway Campus Healthy Village, WMCHealth will collaborate with community partners to deliver preventive and primary healthcare services, as well as healthy lifestyle counseling, all in one convenient location.

The cost of the new HealthAlliance Hospital project is \$92.9 million, a figure that jumps to \$134.9 million when the Healthy Village is added. Doyle said \$88.8 million is coming from the New York State Capital Restructuring Financing Program, with the balance coming from WMCHealth, the parent company of HealthAlliance, and HealthAlliance's capital funding campaign.

Chamber members attending the Mixer should follow the signs to the new front entrance of the hospital.



**June Mixer**  
**Tuesday, June 7**  
**5-7 pm**

**WMCHealth HealthAlliance Hospital**  
**105 Mary's Avenue, Kingston, NY**

**Sponsor:**



*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](http://www.ulsterchamber.org).*



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# Honoring Black Business Achievement

## Inaugural Event June 15 At Ulster Savings Bank

Tia Ashe is all about staying true to her beliefs, promoting diversity, building community and, of course, making women feel beautiful inside and out.

Maybe that's why the owner of Love Hair Salon at 460 Broadway in Kingston is being recognized, along with several other local Black business and community leaders, on June 15 at the Inaugural Black Business Achievement Awards and Community Connect, a joint project of the Ulster Chamber and Ulster County Tourism.

Past, present and future Black business owners and community groups and leaders will be heralded at the event from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. at Ulster Savings Bank's corporate headquarters, 180 Schwenk Drive in Kingston. Ulster Savings Bank is sponsoring the event.

The idea of honoring Black-owned businesses and organizations grew out of a conversation between Chamber President Ward Todd, Jess Davis, the Chamber's Director of Membership and Lisa Berger, Director of Ulster County Tourism.

The Chamber then formed a committee that planned the event, which will feature local Black food vendors and caterers; a spoken word presentation; P.O.O.K. and Energy Dance Co. performing dance and drumming; and a Community Gospel choir from local churches. MyKingstonKids will also be on hand offering interactive activities. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet Candice Van Dyke, SUNY Ulster's Chief Diversity Officer, and Mark Rumnit of SUNY New Paltz.

Davis said the planning committee wanted to "highlight and elevate our local Black businesses and Black leaders."

"We brought in a diverse committee so we could make sure we were hearing the voices from the right people and that we were elevating those voices," Davis said. "Most of the ideas

came from our committee members that represent our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) community.

"What we learned is that there are so many individuals and organizations and businesses in this community that should be recognized," Davis added. "This should be an ongoing celebration to elevate Black businesses and Black leadership here in Ulster County."

"Ulster County Tourism is pleased to be a part of this," Berger said. "The reason we're happy is we know this is a reflection of the values this business community holds dear. As an organization that encourages people from outside the area to come to Ulster County to visit, anything that we can do to elevate and promote and enhance that which is inclusive and reflects our diversity as a community, we would like to make sure we're a part of that."

"We know that the spirit being celebrated at this event is what makes this a great place for people to come visit, start a job, or start a family."

Ashe, who opened her salon in the summer of 2010 in Midtown Kingston, said she was genuinely surprised to learn that she had won an award for her business.

"Winning this award feels great," she said. "It's the first award I've ever won, and I was not expecting it. I've always been content being who I am and staying in my own lane. I've never needed awards or anything to validate myself or my business, but this feels great. I appreciate it and am honored."

Ashley Knox, the founder and director of the educational consulting firm Go Beyond Greatness, Inc., said serving on the planning committee was an eye-opener for her.

"One of the things being on the committee that stood out for me was becoming aware of the number of Black businesses that are here in Ulster County," she said. "I was born and raised in Ulster County, and I was not familiar with the majority of the roster of Black-owned businesses. I just thought that was fantastic."

Knox said she also appreciates that the event aligns with the state economic development goals for promoting more diversity.

"I think it's a wonderful addition to the services that the Chamber provides to the community of Ulster County," she said. There is no charge for admission. For more information

or to register, call the Chamber at (845) 338-5100 or go to [ulsterchamber.org](http://ulsterchamber.org).

The full list of honorees include:

- Business Awards**
- Past **Everett Hodge (posthumously)—Everett Hodge Funeral Home**
- Present **Tia Ashe—Love Hair**
- Future **Kamir Hylton-Jackson—Benny's Tropical Ice Community Awards**
- Past **NAACP Highland, Kingston, Ellenville**
- Present **Tay Fisher Fundamental Basketball Camp**
- Future **Kingston YMCA Farm Project**
- Black Business Leadership Award**
- Martin & Tamika Dunkley—Seasoned Gives**
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## UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS

Tuesday June 7 | 5:00 - 7:00 pm

### Networking Mixer @ HealthAlliance Hospital

105 Mary's Avenue | Kingston NY

(follow the signs to the new front entrance)

There is no cost for Members and Prospective Members.

Reservations are required.

Sponsor: HealthAlliance Hospital

Monday June 13 | 5:30 - 8:00 pm

### Ulster Leadership Celebration Ulster Leadership Class of 2022 Graduation

This event is open to the public

Diamond Mills Hotel & Tavern

25 S. Partition Street | Saugerties NY

Tickets: \$60 per person

Wednesday June 15 | 5:00 - 8:00 pm

### Ulster County Black Business Achievement Awards and Community Connect

Ulster Savings Bank

Corporate Headquarters Main Conference Rooms

180 Schwenk Drive | Kingston NY

There is no charge for admission but space will be limited.

Reservations are required.

Sponsor: Ulster Savings Bank

Wednesday June 22 | 7:30 - 9:00 am

### Chamber Breakfast Meeting "Lights, Camera, Action In Ulster County!"

The Venue Uptown at the Best Western Plus

503 Washington Avenue | Kingston, NY

\$30 Members • \$35 Members at the Door • \$40 Non-Members

Sponsor: HealthAlliance Hospital

More Info and Registration [UlsterChamber.org](http://UlsterChamber.org)  
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Online Nomination Form @ [www.UlsterChamber.org](http://www.UlsterChamber.org)

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# Mixer



Our Mixer Host, The YMCA of Ulster County with Heidi Kirschner, CEO (6<sup>th</sup> from right), and staff.

May 17, 2022

YMCA of Kingston & Ulster County

507 Broadway, Kingston, NY

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Heidi Kirschner, Kamora Houser, Kristyn Keller (all with the YMCA).



Juan Gonzales, Erin Hennessy (both with The Pink Elephant Café), Mia Farmer-Howard (Scrub Masters Plus Corporation).



Anrika Colbourne (One N Only Cakes), Leah Baxter (Rondout Savings Bank), Jennifer O'Donnell (Stone Dock Golf Course).

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**Donna Virga** - Management  
Category: Retirement Communities  
Description: *Coming soon Life plan development for 62 and older adults.*

### THE YMI GROUP

2014 Route 9W  
Milton, NY 12547  
www.theymigroup.com  
**Jay Soma** - Project Manager  
Category: Plumbing  
Description: *The YMI Group provides award-winning mechanical construction, HVAC and plumbing service to a variety of clients through their construction and service companies located in NY. From new builds, renovations, additions and upgrades to HVAC system repairs and maintenance, The YMI Group's commitment to service and developing long-term relationships with their customers positions them as one of the best mechanical construction companies in the area.*

### THE YOGA HOUSE

785 Broadway  
Kingston, NY 12401  
www.theyogahouseny.com  
**Joyce San Pedro** - Co-Owner  
Category: Health & Wellness  
Description: *The Yoga House is a Kingston, NY yoga studio for over 10 years, built upon the foundational belief that yoga should be enjoyable, accessible, and available to every body! Our studio is home to people of all different backgrounds, ages, and experience. We offer a full variety of classes, from gentle to active, including Vinyasa, Yin, Accessibility-Focused, Restorative, Meditation, and more.*