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THE CHAMBER Impact

JUL/AUG 2024

2024 AFRL honors Military Members of the Year



The Aurora Chamber of Commerce's Defense Council held its 48th Annual Armed Forces Recognition Luncheon on Friday, May 10, 2024 – to honor military serving in the Metro area. Awards were given to 11 military members from each branch of service, including Reserve and Guard components, and a civilian from the community.

"This luncheon is our way of recognizing members of the armed forces - Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Space Force, and Coast

Guard - throughout Northern Colorado including the Denver-Aurora area," said Chamber President and CEO Naomi Colwell. "They make a significant contribution to our community and to our nation."

This year's keynote speaker was former U.S. Navy Seal, Captain Michael P. Argo, who served on Seal Team Two, Seal Delivery Team Two, and Special Boat Team Twenty. He also was the Navy Reserve Center Commander on Buckley from 2002 to 2004.

Rick Crandall, executive director of the Colorado Freedom Memorial, was the master of ceremonies for the 19th consecutive year, and CSU Global was the title sponsor for the event.

"This event would not be possible without the tremendous support we receive each year from our community," said Jim Puscian, chair of the Chamber's Defense Council. "This is an opportunity for the civilian community to say **thank you** to the men and women in uniform for their service and sacrifice." ■

The Award Winners, left to right, and their sponsors (listed below):

Coast Guard	Petty Officer Third Class Riley Swigert	Ideas, Commitment, Results (ICR)
Navy Active Duty	Petty Officer First Class Zachary Dawson	Aurora Credit Union Alliance
Army National Guard	Staff Sergeant Michael Ramirez	Denver Springs
Air National Guard	Senior Airman James Alvarado	Philip Morris International
Navy Reserve	Petty Officer First Class Lindsay Pitts	Citywide Banks
Army Active Duty	Staff Sergeant Siana Collier	Denver International Airport
Air Force Active Duty	Technical Sergeant Stormy Guitierrez	Wagner Equipment
Space Force	Sergeant Octavio Castruita	Amazon
Air Force Reserve	Technical Sergeant Alejandro Sanchez	Community College of Aurora
Marine Corps Active Duty	Sergeant Sophia Moran	City of Aurora – Mayor and City Council
Marine Corps Reserve	Corporal Edgard Gonzalez (not pictured)	Leidos
Bob Cardenas Award	Paula Sarlls (not pictured)	Aurora Chamber of Commerce

To see upcoming Chamber meetings
as well as Chamber member events –
[go to the calendar!](#)

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Chair's Letter



Kristi Kleinholz
Chair

Summer is upon us, and I hope everyone has time planned for the outdoors and for enjoying all that Aurora and Colorado has to offer. I also hope we all take time to reconnect with friends and business colleagues not seen in a while; to continue growing the relationships that have started; and to foster new friendships and business relationships.

As one of the largest Chambers in Colorado and in the Denver Metro Area, I am excited to see where this next year takes us. The Chamber is well positioned under the leadership of Naomi Colwell with the growth plan to continually add members to the Chamber, and

I am honored to be the Chair again for this next year of 2024-2025. I am also excited for The Chamber's move to their new offices at the Aurora Federal Credit Union Building.

There were so many great meetings and memories made at the Alameda Ave. location, and I look forward to new memories and meetings at The Chamber's new home. Speaking of memories, The Chamber will be celebrating the move with their very own beer – a collaboration between Dry Dock and Launch Pad Breweries. Keep an eye out for the date!

The Chamber offers so many ways to connect and get involved with the community. I look forward to seeing you over the summer and at upcoming Chamber events. Thank you for being a member of the Aurora Chamber of Commerce.

Kristi Kleinholz
Chair

ChamberBoard

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

CHAIR OF THE BOARD
Kristi Kleinholz | *Mesa Moving and Storage*

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Tyrone Adams | *Colorado Association of Realtors*

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Joel Boyd | *Town Center at Aurora*

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DIRECTORS

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Jennifer Evans | *Advantage Security, Inc.*
Timothy Kunkleman | *Lumen*
David Levesque | *Launch Pad Brewery*
Karen Lovett | *UCHealth*
Liz Munn | *Jacobs*
Nathan Steele | *Xcel Energy*
Sanjay Tyagi | *Schooley Mitchell*
Yvonne Valdez | *Citywide Banks*
Jordan Dwyer | *The Medical Center of Aurora*

HONORARY DIRECTORS

Col. Thomas A. Banker | *Colorado National Guard*
Mike Coffman | *Mayor, City of Aurora*
Bruce Dalton | *Visit Aurora*
Bill Holen | *Arapahoe County Board of Commissioners*
Rebecca Kelley | *Plante Moran*
Steve O'Dorisio | *Adams County Board of Commissioners*
Col. Jamie Pieper | *140th Wing (Colorado Air National Guard)*
Donald Sheehan | *City of Centennial*
Michael Sheldon | *The Aurora Highlands*

STAFF

Naomi Colwell | *President & CEO*
Rene J. Simard | *COO and Chief of Military Affairs*
Penny Krueger | *Director of Finance and Office Manager*
Sophia Bibbey | *Director of Events*
Steve Phillips | *Director of Membership Development*
Mitzi Schindler | *Vice President of Communications*
Caitlyn Minty | *Sales Intern*

ASSOCIATES

Colorado Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC)
Six & Six, inc. | Incredible Newsletter Design
Great Western Printing, Inc. | Newsletter Printer

DON'T FORGET: "Every employee of a Chamber member is a member of The Chamber"
Please route this issue to your sales reps, account managers, marketing directors, HR and PR departments. You can also access each month's newsletter online at our website, www.aurorachamber.org, so you can forward it to every employee in your company!

**THE CHAMBER'S
MISSION**



*Our Mission is to serve and represent
our members so their businesses
and our community will prosper.*

Leadership Aurora Graduates its 40th Class



It was a festive graduation celebration for the 2024 Leadership Aurora class - which also happened to be the 40th class of the program! The event was held at The Lake House at Cherry Creek on Thursday, June 6, Congratulations to the Best 40th Class Ever! [Applications](#) for the 2025 Leadership Aurora class are due by July 15, 2024.

Emerging Leaders Graduates its Second Class



Following six months of intensive leadership development training, the 24 members of the Emerging Leaders Class of 2024 graduated on Tuesday, June 11. Sessions encompassed leadership qualities, traits, and skills; emotional intelligence and conflict resolution; ethical behavior; organizational leadership and management; and community relations. Members of the Leadership Aurora Board and recent Leadership Aurora graduates, along with Program Director Rene Simard, are responsible for the curriculum – which is then evaluated after each session by class members.

ChamberCommittees

An Inside Look

ARTS + BUSINESS CONNECTION

ABC did not meet in May 2024.

The Art and Business of Hair

Tuesday, June 4, 2024

By Mark Smith, PhotoSmith Colorado and ABC Chair

At the June 4 Arts + Business Connection meeting, attendees were enlightened to hear how Floyd's Barbershops fit so well into the mission of the ABC committee.

Floyd's Franchise Owner Peter Vercellin said that the first Floyd's Barbershops were opened in 2001, with a concept of creating services between a discount barbershop and a high-end salon. The shop in Parker, CO, has a fun, rock and roll theme, with music, as well as the colorful backdrop of rock and roll posters on the walls. All Floyd's Barbershops share the theme, but each of the backdrops are custom made.

On the business side, he shared that there are two revenue streams; services offered and branded retail products. Floyd's business model also supports the community, as flags of local sports teams hung from the ceiling and high school logos adorned the walls.

General Manager Jason Brandon said that the stylists must be licensed, and their creativity is tested by how they are able to please the client with their desired cut/styling/color. He said that some clients bring a picture of the desired cut and then the stylist must determine if the style can be done, based on type of hair, and the shape of their face. Stylists employ questioning, such as the reasons for choosing that style and what they dislike about their current style. Brandon,

whose background includes art, also said that prospective employees are evaluated via a social media type of portfolio, for their abilities using cuts done previously.



TRANSPORTATION

DRCOG Promotes Active and Micro-Mobility Transportation

Wednesday, May 4, 2024

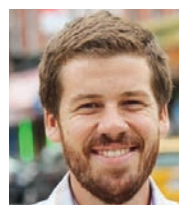
By Tim Harris, Horrocks Engineers and Transportation Vice-chair



Aaron Villere, a senior active transportation planner at the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) presented on efforts by DRCOG and local governments to promote more active transportation or micro-mobility efforts in the metro region.

Active transportation is defined as walking, bicycling, or scooters. Over the last five years there has been an approximately 35 percent growth in bicycling, with much of that growth attributable to the increase in e-bikes. In 2023, there were more than five million trips on shared bicycles and scooters! Unfortunately, there has also been an increase in the number of fatal and severe injury crashes involving bicyclists and pedestrians.

DRCOG and local governments are working to create an active transportation network to increase safety for users and to encourage more use of active transportation for short trips (less than four miles) to improve air quality in the region.



Aaron Villere

Annual Arapahoe County Transportation Update

Wednesday, June 5, 2024

By Tim Harris, Horrocks Engineers and Transportation Vice-chair



ARAPAHOE COUNTY

The Arapahoe County Transportation update by Director of Public Works and Development Bryan Weimer drew an in-person and online audience of nearly 60 attendees. Weimer began his presentation by reminding attendees of the mission of Arapahoe County's Public Works Department to "Serve our community with vital infrastructure and professional government services." He shared impressive numbers of miles of roads maintained in the county (1,265), tons of de-icing materials used (2,000), along with other statistical information about all the department is responsible for. He also talked about current pavement conditions and the maintenance costs of other assets, such as bridges, snow fences, guardrails, stop signs (needing to meet reflectivity standards), and pavement line markings.

Part of Weimer's presentation was dedicated to helping attendees understand the 2025 Budget Shortfall that Arapahoe County is facing, because of increased costs, deferred maintenance, and shrinking federal funding – that could cause cuts to every department in the County. He discussed three options under consideration: County Property Tax; County Sales Tax, and cuts to essential services. For detailed information: <https://acbudget.com/>

He followed that harsh reality with the long list of construction projects, studies, project development, and design plans currently scheduled for 2024-2025.

To close his presentation on a positive note, Weimer invited attendees to attend the Arapahoe County Public Works and Development's "Play Date" at Dove Valley on June 7 – where kids interact with trucks, microchip a stuffed animal, plan a city, and become a junior building inspector.

[continued on page 5]



No one got a haircut, but attendees learned much about the art of hair – and that all Floyd's Barbershops are decorated with a large montage of colorful posters.

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, EDUCATION, AND ENERGY (PUBLIC ISSUES)

On May 2, 2024, the Government Affairs, Education, and Energy committee had their final meeting of the 2024 Legislative session. The Chamber's Lobbying firm, Husch Blackwell Strategies, wrote a Session Wrap-up – [view the PDF](#).

Government Affairs, Education, and Energy did not meet in June 2024

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Paying Tribute to Peace Officers

Wednesday, May 15, 2024

On May 15, 2024, the Women in Business Committee hosted a Peace Officers Memorial Day event, with guest speaker Officer Judy Lutkin of the Aurora Police Department (APD). The annual event pays tribute to the local, state, and federal peace officers who have died, or who have been disabled in the line of duty. Lutkin also talked about her time with APD, challenges of her



APD Officer
Judy Lutkin

career, and her time as one of the 10 percent of women in the force.

The luncheon was sponsored by the Denver Airport Marriott at Gateway Park and was held at the Aurora Federal Credit Union – which will become the new home of The Chamber in mid-July 2024!

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

In the Company of Heroes

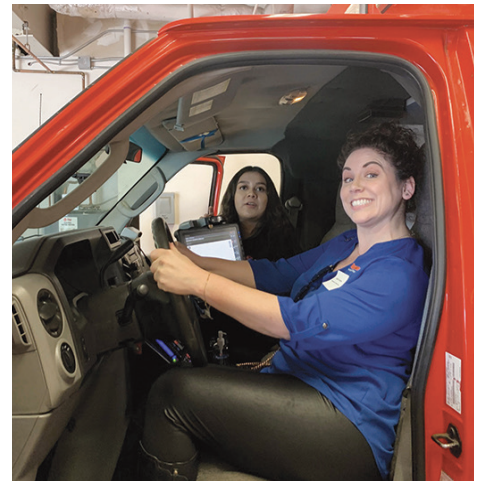
Wednesday, May 8, 2024

On May 8th, the Young Professionals invited membership for a tour of Falck Rocky Mountain - Aurora, Colorado. Attendees experienced a Stop the Bleed training to help them feel more inclined to help during an emergency if responders have not yet made it to the scene. Presenters discussed scenarios such as hiking, family gatherings, and community events where these skills could be helpful to know. The group then visited an off-duty ambulance, and were shown the supplies most commonly used, as well as efficient ways of organizing the space to best help patients quickly.

The experience was life-altering for many of the attendees – grasping the incredible life-



Falck



Kaitlin Cordova with Restoration 1 takes a turn at the wheel of a parked ambulance.

saving knowledge and skills provided by the dedicated employees of Falck.

.....

The Young Professionals did not meet in June 2024.

DEFENSE COUNCIL

May 2024 - See the Armed Forces Recognition Luncheon story and photo, beginning on page 1. ■

RibbonCuttings & OpenHouses

*Ribbon cuttings
mean business: 45 Jobs*



Nana's 外婆家
Dim sum & Dumplings

Nana's Dim Sum & Dumplings – 2495 S Havana St, Unit F

Nana's Dim Sum & Dumplings celebrated a grand opening and ribbon cutting on May 10, 2024. Owner Jack Lu cuts the ribbon, surrounded by friends and family, as well as Chamber members, Aurora Ward IV City Councilwoman Stephanie Hancock, Terrell Horton with Congressman Jason Crow's office, and Chamber Ambassadors: Chartashia Miller, TT Coaching with Results; Sanjay Tyagi, Schooley Mitchell of Denver; Kristine Minty, Rex Environmental; and Phil Gibson, Unity Group at Keller Williams, Oma Mohamed; and Farouk Mohammed. The restaurant offers an extensive menu, including vegetarian and gluten free options. (5/10/24)

<https://nanasdumplingsaurora.com/> (720) 923-6145

[continued on page 6]



Taaza Mart - 15405 E Briarwood Cr, Ste A

Congratulations to Taaza Mart owner Gopi Kakarla and his family and staff, on their new store at the Cornerstar Shopping Center at Arapahoe & Parker. Taaza Mart is a South Asian grocery store, café, and bakery offering fresh fruits, vegetables, and groceries, as well as bakery treats, halal meats, and a tempting food court. Along with community members and other Taaza enthusiasts, the event was attended by Chamber President/CEO Naomi Colwell, and staff members Sophie Bibby and Steve Phillips, as well as Chamber Ambassadors: Oma Mohamed; Farouk Mohammed; Katie Anthony, ADP; and Brian Weiher, Colorado Insurance Broker. (5/16/24)
<https://www.denver.taazamart.com/> (303) 568-9145

BOK Financial

7900 Northfield Blvd

On April 11, 2024, BOK Financial celebrated a ribbon cutting for a new banking center in Central Park's Northfield. This 4,390 square-foot new location offices consumer, commercial and mortgage banking teams. The space also features two conference rooms and two drive-up ATMs.

BOK Financial is a regional financial services company with 14 locations in the Denver metro area. (4/11/24)

<https://www.bokfinancial.com/> (303) 322-6461



Jaxon's Closet

14200 E Alameda Ave, Unit 132

(lower level of Town Center at Aurora)

Congratulations to Jaxon's Closet owner Erica Malone for her first Colorado retail location at the Town Center at Aurora. Malone is a major advocate for the mental health and self-expression of young boys, and her clothing line is a harmonious blend of inclusion, self-expression, and fashion. In attendance, along with Malone and many of her fans/customers were Chamber President/CEO Naomi Colwell, Town Center at Aurora General Manager Joel Boyd, Chamber staff Sophie Bibby, Steve Phillips, and Penny Krueger, and Ambassadors: Sanjay Tyagi, Schooley Mitchell of Denver; and Kristine Minty, Rex Environmental. Miles from the Denver Broncos was also in attendance. (5/23/24)

<https://jaxonscloset.com/> (720) 726-7719

Are you a Proud Leadership Aurora Graduate?

The 40th Anniversary celebration of the Leadership Aurora program is Tuesday, October 8, 2024, at the Arapahoe County Fairgrounds and Park, 25690 E Quincy Ave, Aurora, CO 80016, 5-9 pm.

- *Reconnect with your classmates*
- *Compete with other classes for the "most talented class ever" award*
- *Enjoy great entertainment, food, and drinks*
- *Visit exhibit area of organizations that have been impacted by Leadership Aurora class projects*

The theme is 1984 – and in keeping with the theme, individual tickets are \$84, and sponsorships are available. Proceeds from tickets and sponsorships support the Leadership Aurora program by providing scholarships and keeping tuition low and affordable. ■



MemberRenewals

Advance, Inc
Academy Roofing, Inc
Action Appliance, Inc
Adams 14 Education Foundation
Adams County Board of Commissioners
Adobe
Advantage Security, Inc
Ames Construction
Arapahoe Libraries
Aurora AutoPros
CMG Home Loans
Cold Stone Creamery
Community College of Aurora Foundation
Denver South
DoubleTree by Hilton Denver International Airport
Edward Jones - Jake Sinderman
Encore Electric
ENT Credit Union
Expeditors International
Fairfield Inn & Suites - Aurora/Parker
Fitzmartin Consulting
Guardian Storage
Hyatt Regency Aurora-Denver Conference Center
ICR (Ideas, Commitment, Results)
Judi's House/JAG Institute
Koelbel and Company
Leading Edge Commercial Capital, LLC

Living Water Christian Center Church
Mo Barker
Movie Tavern by Marcus
Music Go Round
Our Community Broadcasting Network
Publication Printers Corp
Radish Accounting
Ready to Work Aurora
Red Rocks Self Storage
Renaissance Denver Central Park Hotel
Rocky Mountain Mechanical
Contractors Association
Shelter Insurance - Mary Jackson
Spalding Rehabilitation Hospital
SpyderSec
Stanley Marketplace
State Farm Insurance - Corinne Hawkins
Stipple Print LLC
The Weather Changers Heating & Air Conditioning
Town Center at Aurora
Unite Private Networks
Unity Group @ Keller Williams DTC
Veritas Funding
Wave Audio Visual, Inc
WaveMAX Laundry Aurora

NewMembers

Blue Team
Empowering Ability Today
Golden West Plumbing, Heating,
Air Conditioning & Electrical
Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Aurora
Home Safe Claims
Innovate Commercial Real Estate
Jax Kids LLC
LaborMax Staffing
MAXX Properties
Nana's Dim Sum & Dumplings
Real FIG Advertising + Marketing
Shamrock Foodservice Warehouse
Taaza Mart
Top Tier K9, Aurora - Co
Westword Newspaper I V Digital Services
Where My Dawgs At

Advertisers: Chamber members can use the IMPACT to advertise products and services to other members. Advertising space only available to members. The IMPACT also accepts preprinted inserts. Contact The Chamber for details.

14305 E. Alameda Ave Ste. #300
Aurora, CO 80012
303-344-1500 • Fax 303-344-1564
website: www.aurorachamber.org



DISCOVER THE **Southeast Recreation Center** AND **Fieldhouse**

YOUR ULTIMATE INDOOR SPORTS DESTINATION!

Aurora's Premier Indoor Fieldhouse Awaits You!

WELCOME TO AURORA'S FIRST INDOOR FIELDHOUSE!

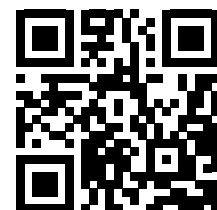
Explore the city's first indoor fieldhouse at Southeast Recreation Center and Fieldhouse! Spanning 23,200 square feet, our facility boasts an impressive 85' x 185' field. Perfect for a variety of activities, this versatile space can accommodate youth and adult soccer, lacrosse, flag football and fitness courses.

VERSATILE AND MULTI-FUNCTIONAL

This is your premier location for indoor camps, clinics, leagues and rentals for adults and youth. Think a fieldhouse is just for soccer? Think again! Our facility is perfect for softball, lacrosse, field hockey, flag football and more.

PERFECT FOR CAMPS AND CLINICS

Looking for activities for the kids? Registration is now open for a variety of camps hosted at the fieldhouse. Rain or shine, it's always playtime in Aurora!



Book the Space Today! Visit AuroraGov.org/Fieldhouse for more information on rentals and camps.