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THE CHAMBER SEP/OCT 2025

Chamber Summer Mixer Makes a Splash!



The Chamber's Summer Mixer - a sizzling hot time!

The Chamber's Summer Mixer on July 17, 2025, was the perfect way to celebrate two things we love - sunny summer days and the one-year anniversary of The Chamber's move to the Aurora Federal Credit Union Building at 610 S Abilene St, Aurora, CO 80012!

It was a sizzling hot July afternoon, but that didn't stop nearly 250 attendees from joining in the fun. With 33 booths showcasing businesses, non-profits, and plenty of tasty food and drinks, there was something for everyone. And the highlight? A dunk tank where members got to 'splash' Chamber President & CEO Naomi Colwell.

The day was filled with laughter, connections, and cool summer vibes. From networking under the sun to cheering on the dunk tank challengers, this lively celebration brought Chamber members together for an unforgettable afternoon of fun.

Visit Aurora's President and CEO Bruce Dalton tries to dunk Chamber President and CEO Naomi Colwell at the Summer Mixer.

A New Chapter: Women in Business Conference

This year marks an exciting expansion of the annual Unsung Heroes Luncheon into a full-day Women in Business Conference. The event will celebrate resilience, inspiration, strength, and empowerment. In addition to the presentation of the Unsung Hero Award, the conference will feature breakout sessions, a panel discussion with local leaders, and opportunities for professional growth and connection.

By broadening the scope of this important

recognition event, The Chamber seeks to amplify the voices and stories of women whose leadership and service continue to shape the community in powerful ways.

Nominations for the 2025 Unsung Hero Award are now open and will be accepted through September 12, 2025. Community members are encouraged to submit nominations to recognize those whose dedication and service have made a meaningful difference. Nomination Form.



President's Letter



Naomi Colwell President & CEO

Dear Chamber members,

As the new fiscal year begins, I am excited to kick it off with renewed energy and fresh perspectives.

A warm welcome to the newly appointed Board of Directors. Their diverse experiences and commitment will be invaluable as the Chamber navigates opportunities and challenges in the year ahead. Members are encouraged to get to know them and their vision for the future of the business community.

This new fiscal year introduces several exciting initiatives designed to empower businesses and strengthen our local economy. Highlights include expanding membership to broaden partnerships, launching a new Women in Business Conference in October (see page 1), enhancing outreach for military affairs through active duty and veteran engagement, and continuing to create meaningful networking opportunities.

Above all, The Chamber remains dedicated to providing members with the tools, resources, and advocacy needed to thrive. Networking events, educational workshops, marketing opportunities, and access to business resources are just a handful of the benefits available.

Together, we can build an even stronger and more vibrant business community. I encourage you to participate in upcoming events, join committees, and share your insights - your feedback is essential in shaping The Chamber's future.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment. We look forward to an impactful and prosperous new fiscal year with you!

ChamberBoard

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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!

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

Chamber Committees An Inside Look

NOTE: Chamber committees did not meet in July 2025.



DAM Curator of Native Arts John Lukavic

ARTS + BUSINESS CONNECTION

Kent Monkman: History is Painted by the Victors at DAM Tuesday, July 5, 2025

On Tuesday, July 5, members of The Chamber's Arts + Business Connection were treated to an extraordinary cultural experience at the Denver Art Museum: a private viewing of Kent Monkman: History is Painted by the Victors, led by DAM Curator of Native Arts John Lukavic.

History is Painted by the Victors challenges traditional Western art history, confronting colonial legacies and amplifying Indigenous voices. Monkman is known for his bold reimagining of history, using art to question and reclaim stories shaped by Western

European and American traditions.

The exhibition is a compelling reminder of the power of art to spark conversation and inspire change. It's a celebration of Indigenous culture, resilience, and the importance of re-examining history through a more inclusive lens.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation Innovation and Funding

Wednesday, August 6, 2025

By Tim Harris, Transportation Vice-Chair, Horrocks Engineers

On Wednesday, August 6, The Chamber's Transportation committee heard about innovation in signal analysis and got an

overview of a study about transportation funding in Colorado.

Nick Borrego (CEO) and Calvin Tran (CFO) of Atlas Traffic Technologies showcased their cutting-edge Al-driven traffic management solution — using existing infrastructure + smart Al layers to enhance safety, reduce congestion, and deliver measurable ROI.



Calvin Tran, Tony DeVito, and Nick Borrego



Ben Stein and Tim Harris

Ben Stein, Transportation Fellow at the Common Sense Institute Colorado, shared insights from his recent study on Colorado's shifting transportation funding. His key point being that as dollars move from roads to environmental mitigation, challenges in funding core transportation needs are growing.

ABC Leadership Update

Jason Balakier with Executech has accepted the role of vice-chair of the Arts + **Business Connections** (ABC) committee. as Mark Smith of PhotoSmith Colorado has stepped down after serving as chair and vice-chair of the



Jason Balakier

Jason, a tech enthusiast and selfproclaimed pop culture nerd, also has a strong passion for the arts - which brought him to the ABC Committee. He has been on Committee include Valles, Balakier, Smith, the ABC Executive Committee for two years Roberta Bloom with COA Art in Public and has made significant contributions to finding speakers and planning meetings.



Mark Smith

We appreciate Jason's willingness to take on this key role and help lead ABC into the future - with ABC Chair Ana Valles with Fitzsimons Credit Union.

Mark will remain on the ABC Executive Committee and has

been appointed to the Leadership Aurora Board. Heartfelt thanks to Mark for his ABC leadership and continued commitment.

Members of the ABC Executive Places, and Daniel Sandoval with Pickens Technical College. ■

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS. EDUCATION, AND ENERGY

Aurora City Council Candidate Meet and Greet Tuesday, August 19, 2025

In August, The Aurora Chamber hosted a Meet & Greet with several of Aurora City Council candidates. The reception was about creating space for business and community leaders to connect directly with those wanting to serve Aurora. It was inspiring to see Chamber members, local leaders,

[continued on page 4]

MemberNews

Fitzsimons Credit Union Awards \$5,000 in Scholarships

Fitzsimons Credit Union (FCU) believes that education has the power to transform communities and is pleased to announce the 2025 recipients of the Sandra B. Neves Scholarship, named after former FCU CEO Sandra Neves.

FCU's current President & CEO, Robert M. Fryberger Jr., announced the scholarship recipients. The scholarships are based on academic achievement, career aspirations, community service, extracurricular participation, and financial need. Recipients received equal amounts, totaling \$5,000 in awarded scholarships.

The awardees are:

- Nydia Ruiz: a degree in Dental Hygiene at the Community College of Denver
- LeAnn Anderson: a degree in Accounting at Metropolitan State University of Denver.



FCU Scholarship recipient Ciara Andrew and FCU VP of Marketing Ana Valles.

- Ciara Andrew: an accelerated dual-degree program in Operations Management at the University of Alabama
- Stephen Asante: a degree in Business Administration at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor
- Megan Pohs: a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at the University of Colorado Anschutz.

PMI's Invested in America Campaign

Philip Morris International's U.S. affiliate, PMI U.S., launched its "Invested in America" campaign in July 2025,

highlighting over \$800 million in nationwide investments to expand smoke-free manufacturing, create jobs, and drive economic growth. A central focus is the \$600

million Aurora, Colorado facility - an advanced site producing FDA-authorized, smoke-free alternatives for the nearly 30 million American adults who smoke. The Aurora project alone is expected to generate about 500 high-paying jobs, reinforcing PMI U.S.'s role in revitalizing local economies.

With operations in Colorado, Virginia, North Carolina, and Kentucky, PMI U.S. is building sustainable partnerships and contributing to community development. Since 2022, the company has donated approximately \$25 million to charitable causes, including \$10 million in 2024. ■

COMMITTEES [continued from page 3]

and engaged residents come together for conversations about Aurora's future.

Huge thanks to the candidates who joined us:

Councilman Steve Sundberg, Ward II; Marsha Berzins, Ward III; Amy Wiles, Ward II; Gianina Horton, Ward I; Reid Hettich, Ward I; Stephen Elkins, Ward I; and Lea Steed, Ward I.

There will be a second Meet & Greet with candidates on Tuesday, September 16, 3:30 - 5:00 pm at The Chamber office.

WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Clothing, Community, and Connections

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

For their August meeting, The Chamber's Women in Business committee hosted

a clothing exchange and donation drive for Goodwill of Colorado, and the generosity was overwhelming! Guests brought professional clothing for both men and women, enjoyed a delicious lunch, and heard an inspiring presentation from Tamara Berkman about the incredible work Goodwill does in our community.

Then, after browsing through an estimated 800 pounds of clothing, attendees found treasures to take home, and the remaining clothing was off to Goodwill to support their amazing work.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Navigating Workforce Growth Wednesday, August 13, 2025

On August 13, members of the Young Professionals Committee gathered for *Talent & Trends: Navigating Workforce Growth* – an insightful session that unpacked the latest economic data, workforce trends, and talent development strategies impacting the region.

Attendees explored what employers need most in today's competitive labor market, identified current workforce gaps, and learned practical strategies for strengthening the talent pipeline. The session also sparked valuable discussions among business leaders, HR professionals, and community partners on how to prepare for the future of



the conversation.

Attendees of the August Women in Business clothing exchange and Goodwill donation drive were able to find treasures before the remaining clothing was taken to Goodwill.



NEW! Non-Profit Committee

The Chamber has introduced a new committee – the Non-Profit Committee - to strengthen the ties between local non-profits, businesses, and the community. Meetings are open to all members and held on the fourth Tuesday of each month, 9-10:30 am. (unless otherwise posted on The Chamber calendar)

Introducing the Leadership Aurora Class of 2025-2026

The Chamber is proud to welcome 34 outstanding individuals who have been selected for the Leadership Aurora (LA) Class of 2025-2026. Following a competitive interview process, these leaders are ready to embark on a transformative journey of growth, connection, and community impact:



Tara Bell - Cherry Creek School District Nathen Berry - Nelnet Jan Boldt - Advantage Security Sarah Bremmer - CareerWise Colorado Esther Clark - Aurora Mental Health & Recovery Adriana Cordova - Community College of Aurora Stacey D'Angelo - Community College of Aurora Tiffany Erspamer - Aurora Mental Health & Recovery Ashlev Gehrke - Cherry Creek School District Joe Hill II - Aurora Fire Rescue Jordan Ivey - Aurora Public Schools/Vista Peak Prep Penny Krueger - Aurora Chamber of Commerce Jess Leitch - Advocates for Children CASA Matt Lewandowski - Adolfson & Peterson Construction Mardochee Mafuana - Superb Corp. LLC Casey McAndrew - Adams County Health Department Nakia McCowan - Benefits in Action Adrian Morris - City of Aurora David Newsom - Nelnet

Will Niermann - Amazon

Megan Quinn - UCHealth

Andrew Onken - Colorado Air National Guard

Erick Ortiz - Aurora Police Department

Desiree Rothenberger - Sunny Homes and Associates
Xiomara Sanchez - UCHealth
Maribel Sandoval - Latinas365
Kendra Schurich - Aurora Public Schools
Kristin Smith - Downtown Aurora Visual Arts
Stephani Tackett - Falck Rocky Mountain
Jennifer Tamayo - FirstBank
Chris Tombari - Community College of Aurora
Madison Turcu - Space Base Delta 2, Integrated Resilience Office
Emily Wilkinson - HCA HealthONE Spalding Rehabilitation
Jackie Zvejnieks - Community College of Aurora

Their 10-month Leadership Aurora experience will kick off with the Class Retreat in Breckenridge, CO, on Thursday, September 11, 2025, where they will begin building the relationships and skills that define the Leadership Aurora program.

Since its founding 42 years ago, Leadership Aurora has helped shape nearly 1,500 business and community leaders, preparing them to better serve the region through collaboration, service, and vision.

For more information about Leadership Aurora and the Class of 2025-2026, visit The Chamber website. ■

Ambassador Spotlight: Phil Gibson

Whether he is helping a first-time buyer find their dream home or perfecting his famous smoked mac 'n' cheese, Phil Gibson's energy, dedication, and genuine love for connecting with people shines through. That passion for connecting has been the hallmark of his journey - from a successful 30-year career in healthcare sales and management to building a top-tier real estate business alongside his wife, Beth.

Born and raised in Littleton, Colorado, Phil graduated from Littleton High School and Colorado State University (Go Rams!), where he met Beth. After seven years in Houston, the couple returned to Colorado, raising their three children in southeast Aurora.

He decided to transition from healthcare to join Beth in real estate seven years ago, so they could grow a business on their own. Together they have consistently



Beth and Phil Gibson

ranked among the top 5% of their 400+ agent office. Phil says that "It's been extremely rewarding helping individuals, couples, families, and investors accomplish their goals of homeownership and building a wealth foundation."

Already familiar with Chambers of Commerce, Phil joined the Aurora Chamber eight years ago, impressed by its great reputation and connections through Rotary. As an ambassador, he thrives on supporting fellow business owners, learning their goals, and connecting them to valuable resources. Involvement in committees like BRMAC, Arts+Business Connection, Transportation, and the Achieve Leads group he is a member of, has deepened his community insight and expanded his network.

And when he's not working, at a Broncos game, volunteering, or involved in the Chamber? You might find him by the grill or smoker, turning out BBQ, signature sauces, and his award-worthy smoked mac 'n' cheese!

Ribbon Guttings & Open Houses

Ribbon cuttings mean business: **5,020 Jobs**



Texas Roadhouse - 2380 S Blackhawk St, Aurora, CO 80014

It was a fun celebration at the grand opening and ribbon cutting of Texas Roadhouse's new Aurora location at 2380 S Blackhawk St. The celebration marked the official move from their previous E lliff Ave location — just across the parking lot — into a brandnew, purpose-built space. Managing Partner Don Plymell led the ribbon cutting with enthusiasm, joined by Texas Roadhouse team members, loyal customers, Aurora Chamber staff, and Ambassadors: Brian Weiher, Trucordia; Chartashia Miller, TT Coaching with Results; Phil Gibson, Unity Group at Keller Williams; Adam Kemper, Adam Kemper Sales and Marketing; Rob Mathes, Mathes Insurance Agency; Oma Mohamed; and Farouk Mohammed. The restaurant opened to the public at 3 pm, after the ribbon cutting, with a full team ready for a packed evening of service. (8/14/25) https://www.texasroadhouse.com/locations/71-auroraco (303) 745-3838.



Century Communities at Windler – 48th Ave and Tibet Rd, Aurora, CO 80019

Congratulations to the team at Century Communities on their development at Windler, with new construction homes for sale in Aurora, CO. The ribbon was cut by Community Sale Managers Aaliyah Johnson and Fathi Hanish. The development has new homes and a range of trails and parks, play structures, art, and more. There's a dog park, too! Attendees toured professionally designed model homes and enjoyed a fun afternoon with complimentary bites from Barbed Wire Reef Mexican Cuisine, sweet treats from Kona Ice, A live DJ, yard games, and a Backyard Bundle Giveaway. Aurora Chamber Ambassador Brian Weiher from Trucordia Insurance was present as well as numerous Chamber members and guests. (7/12/25) https://www.centurycommunities.com/find-your-new-home/colorado/denver-metro/aurora/windler/ (303) 268-8364.



STRIDE Fitness Southlands - 6290 S Main St, Ste M-102, Aurora, CO 80016

It was an energizing start to the weekend on Saturday, August 9 at 8:30 am, with a high-energy ribbon cutting at the grand opening of STRIDE Fitness Southlands. STRIDE brings the heat with a powerful fusion of treadmill cardio and full-body strength training, all led by elite coaches in a vibrant, music-fueled atmosphere. Guests enjoyed giveaways from local vendors, great networking, and contagious energy from the STRIDE team, Chamber President & CEO Naomi Colwell, and Chamber Ambassadors: Chartashia Miller, TT Coaching with Results; Phil Gibson, Unity Group at Keller Williams; and Brian Weiher, Trucordia. (8/9/2025) https://www.stridefitness.com/location/stride-southlands (720) 745-5786.



Nothing Bundt Cakes

Aurora City Center 14261 E Cedar Ave, Ste D, Aurora, CO 80012

It was a sweet grand opening event at Nothing Bundt Cakes - Aurora City Center, with Bakery Manager Aidyn Jones cutting the ribbon, accompanied by 'Bundt Cake enthusiasts,"including Chamber Ambassadors BK Martin, Ent Credit Union, and Rob Mathes, The Mathes Insurance Agency, and Chamber Director of Events Sophia Bibbey. Nothing Bundt Cakes has over 600 locations in the U.S. – serving a variety of flavors and sizes, and their signature cream cheese frosting. (7/11/25) https://www.nothingbundtcakes.com/find-a-bakery/co/aurora/bakery (720) 523-3220.

FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers

15051 E Mississippi Ave Aurora, CO 80012

Johneen Buffard, President and COO of FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers, proudly cuts the ribbon celebrating the grand opening of the Center in Aurora. To Buffard's right is Office Manager Malou Mukendi, and to her left are Doctor of PT Susan Woodruff, and Doctor of OT Abbie Dickman. FYZICAL offers evidence-based physical therapy with a focus on balance and vestibular therapy, fall prevention, sports medicine, and orthopedic care. Attending the event were Chamber members and staff, and Chamber Ambassadors: Brian Weiher, Trucordia; Phil Gibson, Unity Group at Keller Williams; Anne Overstreet, Minuteman Press-Aurora; Adam Kemper, Adam Kemper Sales & Marketing; and Jason Balakier, Executech. (7/9/25) https://www.fyzical.com/citycenter-aurora-co (720) 659-3100.



MemberRenewals

18th Judicial District - Office of the District Attorney

Abilene Awards & Logos, Inc

Advantage Security, Inc.

Advocates for Children - CASA

Aurora Symphony Orchestra

Beck, Payne, Frank & Piper, PC

Bliss Spa and Wellness

Bluefish Designs, LLC

Cherry Creek School District #5

Colorado Association of Realtors

Comparion Insurance Agency

CrossPurpose

CSU Global

David Evans and Associates, Inc.

Del Mar Family Eye Care

Development Pathways

DoubleTree by Hilton Denver International Airport

Edward Jones - Kendra Thibault

Empowering Ability Today

Executech

Fairfield Inn & Suites - Aurora/Parker

Fidelity National Title

FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers

George & Barbara Peck

Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Aurora

Graebel Relocation

Grease Monkey

Hampton Inn & Suites - Aurora South Denver

Havana Business Improvement District -

On Havana Street

HCA HealthONE - Aurora

Hope Ignites Colorado

Horrocks Engineers

Hyatt Regency Aurora - Denver Conference Center

ICR (Ideas, Commitment, Results)

Innovate Commercial Estate

Joana Brown

Johnson Controls

Ka-Ko Jo's

Koelbel and Company

La Cueva Restaurant

Law Office of Anna L Burr

Lending Quarters, LLC

Les Schwab Tire Centers - Tower Road

Metropolitan Building Maintenance, Inc.

Mile High United Way

Music Go Round

New-Ride Enterprises (dba New-Ride Design)

Paragon Loans

Philip Morris International

Pickens Technical College

Ready to Work Aurora

Redwood Medical

Rocky Mountain Regional VA Medical Center

RTB Technologies

Schooley Mitchell of Denver

Springhill Suites Denver at

Anschutz Medical Campus

Staybridge Suites Denver International Airport Hotel

The Learning Experience

The Meadows at Dunkirk,

by Pedcor Management Corp

by I cacor Management Corp

The Weather Changers Heating & Air Conditioning

Three Birds Alliance

Top Tier K9 - Aurora CO

University of Colorado / Anschutz Medical Campus

University of Colorado Medicine

University of Denver, GSPP

V-Espirit Active Adult Community



NewMembers

Ace Pickleball Club

Advent Health Aurora Highlands

Aslan Home Lending Corporation

Aurora Fire Foundation

AXL Academy

BuildStrong Academy of Colorado

Carbon Health Urgent Care - Aurora

Caring Transitions of North Aurora

Cenco Roofing

Cottonwood Institute

Element Ultra Audio/Visual Experts

Elevations Credit Union

Firestarter Marketing

G.A.T.E. (Games And Trivia

Entertainment)

Hampton Inn

Aurora Medical Center Denver

III D Electric Service

JMT

Kings of CO LLC - dba The Halal Guys

Mattress by Appointment - Aurora

Omnex Solution

Paint Wizard LLC

Platinum Roofing

Regal Restoration, LLC

Romero Mexican Wedding Cookies

Second Chance Center, Inc.

Silver Tsunami Aging Info

STRIDE Fitness

Texas Roadhouse

That 1 Painter Denver - Aurora

The Holistic Accountant

UB Code Roofing

Visualanties

ZenBusiness

Pro Paint Co LLC

Recovery Friendly Leader

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