

Sullivan County Partnership for Economic Development * Sullivan County Industrial Development Agency * Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce * Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association * Sullivan County Democrat

Flying higher at Sullivan County's airport



The shape of the new terminal, pictured at right, at Sullivan County International Airport is fully visible as of August 2024, with an opening set for summer of 2025. The general contractor is Holt Construction Corporation. Above, is the south entrance, and below, is the view from the apron of the new terminal building as supplied by the NYS DOT.

BY JOSHUA POTOSEK,
SULLIVAN COUNTY MANAGER

Just over 55 years ago, officials celebrated the opening of Sullivan County International Airport a few miles northeast of White Lake. The 6,000-foot runway was pressed into major service only a couple weeks later, when the Woodstock festival bands started flying in and the emergency choppers started flying out.

While the Airport has long played host to international stars performing at local hotels (or just jetting in



for their own relaxing getaway), the original dream of a vibrant, attractive aviation hub has – pardon the pun – never really taken off. Yes, there was scheduled airline service in the 1970s – even flights to Canada, so the Airport could earn the “International” part of its name.

And it continues to provide a haven

for pilots (who rent hangars from us), planes (propeller-driven and jet-powered), the Civil Air Patrol, Hatzolah Air, and our 911 Center. Aviation fuel sales are already well ahead of last year's total (12,698.7 gallons of 100LL sold to date vs. 10,013.4 gallons for all of 2023), and with an average of 72 takeoffs and landings every week, the Airport by no means goes unused.

But we know it's capable of far more – even perhaps one day being able to sustain itself, rather than rely on taxpayers (though the FAA pays the bulk of expenses, including upgrades and maintenance). So that's why we were thrilled when Gov. Kathy Hochul included us in her Upstate Airport Economic Development and Revitaliza-



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An artist's rendering of the new terminal lobby.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

TO THE PEOPLE

30 Years of Change

In 1994 a small group of business leaders met to create a business association that could help bring investment and jobs to our area.

More than a trade association or chamber of commerce, the entity had to proactively facilitate new business while helping existing business expand where possible. Modeled after other economic development organizations, but establishing its own protocols, the Partnership for Economic Development in Sullivan County was born. As with any fledgling organization there were challenges to overcome, like funding, purpose, vision, and objective, among many. It was driven out of pure necessity as our economy was devastated by the loss of the hotel industry sector which supported almost all of the business

community. For over two decades unemployment consistently hovered at double digits with little, if any, new opportunities to look forward to.

Do you remember when getting a Walmart was a big deal? The headline in the newspaper was "1,000 line up for Walmart jobs." The future looked bleak. Throw in a tech bubble, financial crisis, and a pandemic over that timeline and it is wonder how we could have overcome the challenges we did.

Once established, the Partnership worked with the IDA and the County on a variety of initiatives, most failing, but some successful that continue to positively impact our communities today. Through the Joint Economic Team (JET), an ad hoc committee of economic development and public leaders, the Sullivan County Visitors Association was formed, small business financing was created (which has helped open over 65 new small businesses),



CEO/President Marc Baez

and the Emerald Corporate Center was built, among a variety of priority projects. Bethel Woods gave us an extraordinary shot in the arm and still drives hundreds of thousands to our area today. The Partnership was a primary facilitator of Kohl's, Nonni's, Formaggio Cheese, Ideal Snacks (Now PepsiCo), the Monticello Motor Club, Resorts World Catskills Casino, and Kartrite Indoor Water Park, among a growing list of many other familiar projects. We have cultivated a now thriving small business community, providing technical assistance, and financing to businesses throughout Sullivan County.

The Partnership has grown from that fledging startup to one of the premier economic development associations in the region and in the state.

Today, thirty years later and battling through many headwinds, we can see the change. It is palpable and the

numbers show it. For over two years we have been the number one job producer in the region with unemployment remaining between 3% and 4%, despite fluctuations in the economy. Our western Sullivan County regions are thriving with year-round destinations now known throughout the nation and beyond. We have created a business ready, business friendly environment through our effort to develop an inventory of 'shovel ready' sites and our push for infrastructure improvements across all sectors. It may have taken a generation, but our resilience and perseverance are beginning to pay off. Here's to a significant milestone Partnership investors, and to another 30 years of positively impacting our business community.

Sincerely,

Marc Baez
President and CEO
Sullivan County Partnership



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FLYING

Continued from front page

tion Program, giving us \$18.5 million to construct a new, energy-efficient terminal.

The 15,000-square-foot, timber-supported building is already under construction, and when it opens next year, its two stories will feature six leasable business offices, two conference rooms (one large, one small), a pilot's lounge, and a second-floor dining area (which we aim to lease to a restaurateur) with an outdoor deck overlooking the runway. Sustainably built with glue-laminated wood, the terminal will be heated and cooled with a geothermal system, powered in part by a photovoltaic array, and have electric vehicle charging stations right outside its doors.

On its own, that will be an incredible new asset for the Airport. But we are not stopping there. A marketing campaign will be launched to promote the Airport as the most attractive business jetport within a 100-mile radius of New York City. After all, we already have more room and less expensive lease terms than any



This is a view of what the new dining area and lobby will look like when complete.

of the airports closer to the City (from which we're only a 15-30-minute plane ride).

The intent is not to bring back scheduled airline service, for which we can't generate enough demand to interest companies, especially with Stewart International Airport close by in Newburgh. Rather, we're

seeking to promote Sullivan County International Airport to business aviation companies as a convenient, attractive, cost-effective alternative to the far more congested and expensive NYC airports.

Here in Sullivan County's Catskills, they can store and fuel their planes, ship cargo in and out, and set up

offices for their pilots and ground crews. We've already demonstrated the feasibility of this with Hatzolah Air, a nonprofit goodwill that flies around the world from our Airport. With a new terminal almost ready to dazzle, we're aiming to substantially increase the utilization of this too-long-hidden gem.

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Sullivan Catskills sees continued growth in tourism

The Sullivan Catskills region continues to flourish as a premier destination, with recent data from Tourism Economics highlighting our area's impressive economic growth driven by tourism. In 2023, visitor spending surged by 7% in Sullivan County at \$969 million, a remarkable growth highlighting the Sullivan Catskills' growing appeal and the success of local initiatives to attract travelers.

New Business Openings and Attractions

The Sullivan Catskills continues to expand its offerings with exciting new businesses and attractions. Grizzly Bagels, a beloved local establishment, has relocated and reopened in Trout Town USA, AKA Roscoe, NY, bringing its delicious bagels to a new location. Liberty Blooms Florist has also opened its doors, adding a touch of beauty to Liberty's local business scene. In a significant development for the area, The Shops at Narrowsburg celebrated its grand opening,



The dove at Butternut Grove Campsites in Roscoe offers a relaxing feel and wonderful vista that many campers will enjoy.

featuring a diverse array of businesses. La Cigogne offers a unique and delicious French bistro dining experience, while 2 Queens Coffee brings tasty coffee brewed in house to Narrowsburg. The Velvet Maple 2 is a lifestyle and interior design shop, and Herbal Scoop introduces health focused herbal teas to the town. These businesses contribute to the

vibrant and diverse ecosystem of the Sullivan Catskills, offering visitors even more reasons to explore the area.

Adding to the region's beauty, the Sullivan Catskills welcomed our 77th dove on the Dove Trail in the past month. This Dove found its home at Butternut Grove Campsite, providing another point of interest for visitors exploring

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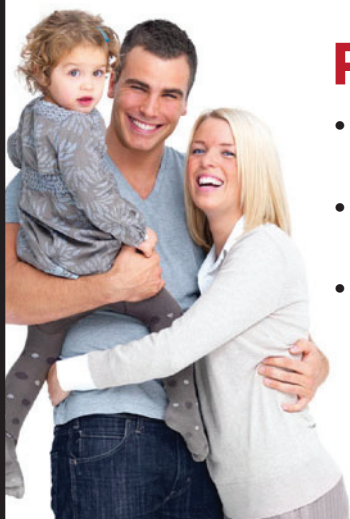
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The Sullivan Catskills Visitors Assn. Dove Trail continues to be a popular attraction, with the 77th dove, pictured above, unveiled earlier this summer.

the Sullivan Catskills. These doves not only contribute to the region's unique charm but also encourage tourists and locals alike to explore different parts of Sullivan County, supporting a wide range of our beloved businesses.

The Sullivan Catskills Visitors Association remains committed to promoting the region's natural beauty, rich history,

and diverse attractions. Visitors are encouraged to explore the expanded Dove Trail, experience the local culinary scene, and take advantage of the numerous things to do in the fall. Whether its leaf-peeping, hiking, or exploring one of our charming small towns, the Sullivan Catskills offers something for everyone as we enter a new season.

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The first Carbon-Neutral Community in the Catskills;

a new residential development constructed using Passive House design principles situated on more than 90 acres in Livingston Manor, NY.



The homes are situated on 3 to 6-acre lots and buyers can choose from 4 unique floor plans.

The Catskill Project is a 90-acre community of beautifully crafted, next-generation homes that actively contribute to residents' health and well-being. The project was initially conceived in 2018 by a team of passionate experts who shared the same goal: to bring



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Greg Hale and Peter Malik, colleagues at NRDC (Natural Resources Defense Council), forged a unique bond over their shared commitment to environmental stewardship. Hale, a former real estate lawyer/business owner turned energy efficiency advocate, and Malik, transitioning from investment banking to environmentalism, united in their vision for a sustainable future. Together, they acquired 90 acres near Livingston Manor, where Malik had long held property, with a shared goal: to honor the land while pioneering eco-friendly living.

In their quest to redefine carbon-neutral living in a rural setting, Hale and Malik enlisted architect Buck Moorhead, a certified passive house designer since 2011, and his team at Buck Moorhead Architect for The Catskill Project. Moorhead's

vision extends beyond typical passive house standards, emphasizing meticulous carbon tracking, renewable energy sources, and master craftsmanship. Together, they aim to set a new benchmark for efficiency and comfort in sustainable homesteads, encapsulating their collective aspiration to pioneer eco-friendly living in Sullivan County.

After purchasing the land in late 2018, the first home was built in 2021. Today, three homes have been built, two more are in contract, and one spec house is under design/construction. The construction process takes 12-18 months from contract closing. Homes cost an average of \$630-705 per square foot, about \$1.5 million for a 2300 square-foot home. Costs can vary depending on the lot's proximity to privacy, water features, views, or a combination. Phase 1 includes eleven homes, with Phases 2 and 3 on the horizon, eventually

offering 25 homes in the community on 155 acres, all with varying topography. Hale recently purchased and moved into a Catskill Project home full-time.

The Homes:

Each of the 11 customizable, single-family residences is situated on a 3 to 6-acre lot selected by the buyer. Buyers can choose from 4 unique floor plans (2 or 3 bedrooms), each sustainably designed to coexist with and complement its surroundings. The building systems provide constant fresh and filtered airflow free of pollutants, dust, and other allergens and regulate temperature and humidity, resulting in a higher level of indoor air quality. Triple-glazed windows, super-insulation, a continuous air barrier, and the carefully designed absence of thermal bridges significantly reduce annual energy requirements. The Project

sources some of the materials for home construction from the very land the homes occupy, when possible.

The Benefits:

As the region's first carbon-neutral community, The Catskill Project offers environmentally conscious homeowners the added benefit of dramatically lowering heating, cooling, and home maintenance costs, resulting in a reduced environmental footprint. Each custom-built home meets Passive House principles, reducing annual energy requirements by up to 90 percent compared to a standard home. As a result, The Catskill Project will become one of the greenest, most energy-efficient single-family residential developments in the Greater New York area. The Catskill Project is a proud partner of NYSERDA's Build Better Homes Initiative.

Please see GREEN page 8E



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GREEN

Continued from page 7E

The Property:

Over 40 acres of stunning woodlands will remain an untouched nature preserve, accessible via a network of hiking trails, including forests, meadows, wetlands, and waterfalls. The surrounding area features thousands of acres of Forever Wild Forest land, anchored by the vibrant village communities of Livingston Manor, Callicoon, Narrowsburg, Parksville, and Roscoe.

“The Catskill Project is as ambitious as it is humble. While each homeowner will carve out their own lifestyle here, the common denominator is the same: stewardship and respect for nature, a desire to live responsibly and meaningfully,



Homes cost an average of \$630-705 per square foot, about \$1.5 million for a 2300 square-foot home.

and to cherish simple values that feed our bodies and souls,” said Peter Malik, principal, The Catskill Project. “It is a community of fellow dreamers/ explorers and good neighbors, all in the vanguard of a life led in

harmony with the environment that sustains us.”

The Catskill Project aims to foster a symbiotic relationship between the natural, built, and regional environment, uplifting both people and place.

Sustainable features

- Designed to meet Passive House principles.
- Super-insulated, airtight construction means a 70-90% reduction in annual heating and cooling demand and energy costs.
- Substantially lowers home maintenance costs.
- Provides constant fresh airflow, regulates temperature and humidity.
- Dust and other allergens are consistently filtered out, moisture is controlled, pollutants are removed.
- Increases air quality and thermal comfort, even during power outages.
- Owners have the option of installing solar panels on their houses/

sites or purchasing a subscription to a community solar provider. (This option costs 5-10% less than getting one’s power from NYSEG.)

• Partner of NYSEDA’s Build Better Homes Initiative.

Building materials

- Exterior – Green untreated hemlock
- Unilux triple-glazed windows
- Sustainably sourced, highly durable FSC® certified Richlite black diamond countertops
- All-electric, smart appliance package supporting a fossil fuel-free lifestyle (GE Base model/ Bertazoni upgrade)
- Floating open shelves and custom cabinetry in finished oak
- Fireclay tile: Herringbone pattern ceramic wall tiles, glass-enclosed shower
- Bathrooms feature Kohler fixtures and hardware
- Duravit soaking tubs
- Baseboards, wood trim, and some ceiling and other wood paneling are sourced from wood harvested on the property and milled locally when possible.

Livingston Manor, NY

In Sullivan County, 100 miles from New York City, Livingston Manor is a special place that describes itself as “a small town with a big backyard.” The hamlet of Livingston Manor has emerged as the new poster child of bohemian Catskills living, joining a local scene whose concentration of eating, drinking, lodging, and shopping options



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make it a perfect, not-too-far destination from the city. The small town is a draw for nature enthusiasts, a highlight being its world-famous fly fishing on its rivers and miles of hiking trails through its big backyard of forest, waterfalls, lakes, and ponds. Livingston Manor is also home to a vibrant community of artisans, designers, and entrepreneurs, featuring some of the best upstate boutiques, breweries, farm-to-table restaurants, and bars. At the heart of its cultural scene lies the Catskill Art Society (CAS), a non-profit multi-arts venue. Here, the gallery showcases captivating exhibits while fine arts classes enrich the community's creative spirit, further cementing Livingston Manor as a vibrant hub of artistic expression and natural beauty in the Catskills.

About The Catskill Project Development Team

The Catskill Project is designed and developed in partnership with Buck Moorhead,



The construction process takes 12-18 months from contract closing.

Architect and Certified Passive House Designer; Greg Hale, senior advisor to the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) on building decarbonization policy; and Peter Malik, an environmentalist with recently held senior roles at the Natural Resources Defense Council and The Nature

Conservancy. Christin Hale, who has substantial experience building timber-framed houses in the Northeast, is TCP's on-site construction manager. Remy Moorhead, a licensed architect and Certified Passive House Designer, rounds out the project's core design and project management team.

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Resorts World Catskills is nestled in the foothills of the Catskills, nearly a mile off Monticello Exit 106 on I-86.

As you round the last bend of the mile-long entrance the casino comes into full view, and you are greeted by the tallest building in the Hudson Valley – a 13-story hotel complex.

“This resort is unique,” Meghan Taylor, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs and Public Relations, said. And in true Catskills Hospitality fashion, Taylor will tell you all the offerings at Resorts World Catskills.

“For the community we wanted to create a true destination resort that would capture people for a longer period of

time,” Taylor said. “We have the Casino Tower Hotel and the Adler. That’s 430 hotel rooms. Whether you’re gaming or not, our backdrop is second to none.”

And with hotel rooms must come restaurants and Resorts World Catskills does not disappoint.

Inside the resort, visitors can indulge in a succulent steak from Celebrity

Chef Scott Conant’s Cellaio, experience authentic Chinese delicacies at Lotus, enjoy a great drink at Empire Lounge or Butterfly Beach Bar, or dine on your favorite comfort foods at the 24/7 Bistro.

“We also have Dos Gatos, a Mexican cuisine restaurant located at the Adler,” Taylor said. “We are filled with amenities for all walks of life.

“Resorts World Catskills is a place where people can come and go home, or stay for two or three nights,” Taylor said. “This is a destination resort that offers something for everyone.”

Great Employer

“We currently have around 1,200 employees – 64 percent of them are Sullivan County residents,” Taylor said. “And 19

percent are from Orange County. That’s extremely significant. We have created over 1,000 very good paying jobs.

“We offer career opportunities for the residents of Sullivan County,” she said. “That was the goal of siting the casino in Sullivan County. We are a true economic driver.”

Please see **RESORTS WORLD** page 12E

Resorts World Catskills offers great fun, great jobs and a sense of community

BY FRED STABBERT III



Clockwise from upper left: The main entrance to Resorts World Catskills brings visitors right into the casino area and also the main desk, where they can check into their room.

Every part of the property is designed to be welcoming and relaxing.

EVP of Government Affairs and Public Relations Meaghan Taylor.

The 13-story Casino Tower Hotel is the tallest building in the entire Hudson Valley.

The newly-redesigned Concord Monster Golf Course, with the hotel in the background, offers beautiful vistas and a fair test of golf for any level player. The course opened for play in August of 2023.



RESORTS WORLD from page 11E

Taylor said that Resorts World NYC offers a six-week program through York College entitled “Intro to Gaming,” which introduces attendees to the many different job functions at Resorts World Catskills.

“We are working on having a similar program in the Hudson Valley,” she said. “The opportunities are endless. We also like to promote from within.”

Gaming Fun

Of course, Resorts World Catskills has a 100,000 square foot casino floor that showcases over 150 live table games, including Blackjack, Craps, Baccarat, Roulette, Pai Gow Tiles, 1,600 slot machines, a poker room, luxurious private player’s lounge and high limit salon privets.

“Our gaming floor is always changing,” she said. “From new slots to reorganizing the floor, something is always new. From private gaming salons to great floor games, we have the ability to cater to what the customer wants.

“Our dynamic and responsive sales team is there for you,” Taylor said. “I’m confident we can deliver.”

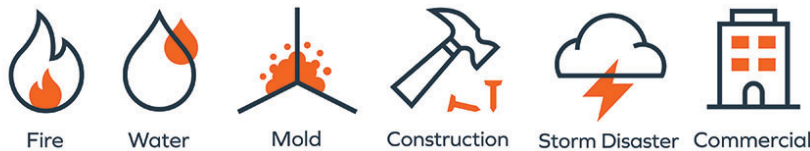
The views of the foothills of the Catskill Mountains is spectacular and gives every guest the chance to enjoy the great outdoors from the comfort of their room.



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"I'm confident we can deliver. And we offer live entertainment every Friday and Saturday," Taylor said.

"We also have on-premise sports betting," Taylor said.

Resorts World offers online sports betting at ResortsWorldBet.com or you can go to the Monticello Casino in person to wager on your favorite sports team or event.

"We host watch parties for the Super Bowl and playoff parties," Taylor said. "We also offer really convenient kiosks to make your wager."

A lot of history

Although Resorts World Catskills just opened its doors in February, 2018, its location is steeped in history.

"One of my favorite nights here was when 150 people came to celebrate the history of our area," Taylor said. "It was so touching. [Former owner of The Concord Resort hotel] Jimmy Parker came and told his story."

Resorts World Catskills is actually built on the former Concord property and that history is something the resort embraces.

Recently a Borscht Belt Historical Marker was unveiled on the property,



Visitors can indulge in a succulent steak from Celebrity Chef Scott Conant's Cellaio restaurant. The casino also has several other restaurants to enjoy.

employer but a community partner as well.

Angela Rein, the Manager of Government Affairs and publicity, said, "We host a lot of community events at Resorts World Catskills, including the Heart-a-thon and the Monticello Rotary's Monster Run."

"We always want to be in tune with the community," Rein said.

Taylor agreed.

Established in 2011, Resorts World Gives, the corporate philanthropic program, encompasses all charitable giving by Resorts World New York City, Resorts World Catskills and Resorts World Hudson Valley.

The mission of Resorts World Gives is to invest in the economic and social progress of the communities the properties operate in. To date, over \$3 million has been donated, supporting more than 200 local organizations.

"We have so many components to helping the community," Taylor said. "We are always looking for new organizations."

highlighting the rich history of the resort industry.

And 2023 marked the re-opening of the Monster – the fabled championship golf course located on the Resorts World Catskills property.

In fact, Resorts World Catskills currently sits on a large portion of the land where the original Monster course sat.

Designed by the legendary Rees Jones, the 18-hole championship golf

course is a true work of art. Water hazards come into play on seven of the 18 holes, providing an extra challenge for players of all levels. The course is renowned for its large undulating greens, which can be both a challenge and an adventure for golfers.

"We invested over \$40 million to complete the golf course project," Taylor said.

Community Support

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Steve Dubrovsky, George Kinne named 2024 SC Partnership award recipients

The Sullivan County Partnership for Economic Development announces that Steve Dubrovsky, Founder of The Chapin Estate and President of Chapin Construction, LLC will be honored as the 2024 Walter A. Rhulen Award recipient at this year's Annual Meeting on October 3 at Resorts World Catskills in Monticello.

Additionally, the Partnership will recognize George Kinne, CEO of Jeff Bank, a director and active member, as its Distinguished Service Award winner.

The Annual Meeting will be held on Thursday, October 3 at Resorts World Catskills from 5:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m.

To RSVP or to become a sponsor, call 845.794.1110 or email Jen Cassaro at cassaro.jen@scpartnership.com.

Walter A. Rhulen Award

The annual Walter A. Rhulen Award recognizes an individual or individuals for business excellence, community commitment, and service to humanity.

Long-time Sullivan County

business owner and former rodeo star, Steve founded his company in 1985 under the name Chapin Construction. In 1998 he and his partners purchased 5,600 acres of land formerly owned by NYC railroad magnate Chester Chapin, and called it The Chapin Estate.

To market the project they advertised it as an environmentally sensitive gated community on 2,500 acres surrounded by forever wild forests and boating reservoirs right here in the Sullivan Catskills.

Steve became the face of the project, selling lots ranging from 5-40 acres and building over 150 handcrafted retreats ranging in price from \$500,000 to \$16 million dollars.

"With Steve and his cowboy charm at the helm, Chapin Estate has had an extraordinarily positive financial impact on Sullivan County, accounting for millions of dollars in economic growth, including jobs in the construction and trades fields, and local spending by second and primary homeowners from Chapin Estate,"



Steve Dubrovsky



George Kinne

Karen Fisher, Partnership Board Chair, said.

The project was instrumental in pioneering the Sullivan Catskills as a high-end travel destination and a location for luxury living.

His belief that Sullivan County could attract discerning travelers with a sophisticated taste and affection for our natural beauty helped lure the Dream Hotel Group (now the Hyatt Hotels Corporation) to the Chapin Estate. Steve helped the company design and build the Chatwal Lodge, and its 11-key destination resort marketed as an escape from the hustle and bustle of NYC.

Distinguished Service

Distinguished Service Award

recipient, George Kinne, CEO of Jeff Bank, has served on the Partnership's Board of Directors for 18 years.

He has served on a number of committees, most notably the Finance and the Revolving Loan Committees.

Jeff Bank has been a valued Partnership member since the Partnership's founding 30 years ago.

"George has provided service to the Partnership with the utmost integrity and professionalism, always with an eye toward the Partnership's mission to promote investment and job creation for the betterment of Sullivan County businesses and the economy," Marc Baez, President and CEO of the Partnership, said.

"George represents a growing population of home-grown professionals that have come back home to Sullivan County, bringing with them their community commitment and expertise to help Sullivan County continue to grow and prosper," Baez said.

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Feedback and Improvement: Essential for Business Success

BY ASHLEY LEAVITT,
PRESIDENT AND CEO, SULLIVAN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

In today's competitive market, continuous improvement is crucial for business success, and feedback is the key driver of this improvement. Feedback provides valuable insights into what a business is doing right and where it needs to improve, ensuring that companies stay aligned with customer needs and market trends.

The Importance of Feedback

1. Customer Feedback: Customers are the end-users of your products or services. Their feedback reveals pain points and opportunities for enhancement, directly impacting customer satisfaction and retention.

2. Employee Feedback: Employees offer insights into operational efficiency and customer interactions. Listening to them not only drives improvement but also boosts morale and engagement.

3. Market Feedback: Staying aware of industry trends and competitor strategies ensures your business remains relevant and competitive.

The Feedback Loop: Continuous Improvement

To benefit from feedback, businesses must collect, analyze, and act on it. This process involves:

1. Collecting feedback through various channels like surveys, social media, and direct communication.

2. Analyzing feedback to identify patterns and prioritize issues.

3. Taking Action to implement changes based on feedback.

4. Evaluating the impact of these changes to ensure effectiveness.

5. Iterating the process to maintain continuous improvement.

How to Start Collecting Feedback

Starting the process of collecting feedback is essential for any business looking to improve. Here's how to get started:

1. Identify Key Touchpoints: Determine the best times and places to collect feedback, such as after purchases or customer service interactions.

2. Choose the Right Tools: Use online surveys, feedback forms, and website widgets to gather insights. Tools like SurveyMonkey and Google Forms are user-friendly options.

3. Encourage Direct Communication: Create open channels through email, phone, and live chat for customers to share their thoughts directly.

4. Leverage Social Media: Monitor social platforms for feedback and use polls to engage customers and

gather quick insights.

5. Incentivize Feedback: Offer discounts or entry into a giveaway to encourage feedback participation.

6. Utilize Customer Reviews: Actively manage reviews on platforms like Google and Yelp, and encourage satisfied customers to share their positive experiences.

7. Employee Feedback: Regularly conduct surveys and open forums to gather insights from employees.

8. Pilot Test Feedback Methods: Start small with pilot tests to determine the most effective feedback collection strategies.

9. Regularly Update Methods: Continuously refine your feedback collection methods to adapt to changing business needs.

Feedback and ROI: From a Consumer Standpoint

For consumers, feedback-driven improvements enhance their return on investment (ROI). When businesses act on feedback:

1. Customer Satisfaction increases, leading to loyalty and repeat business.

2. Product and Service Quality improves, reducing returns and complaints.



3. Trust and Transparency are built, strengthening customer relationships and encouraging long-term engagement.

Conclusion

Feedback and improvement are essential for business success. By continuously refining products, services, and customer experiences based on feedback, businesses can enhance their own ROI and maximize the ROI for their customers. This proactive approach fosters long-term growth, competitiveness, and customer loyalty in a dynamic market.

The Chamber of Commerce is directly working on this new cycle of feedback and implementation as we speak. We encourage all businesses within the local area to provide us with their feedback to help us grow and sustain a better working relationship with our customers. Your insights are invaluable as we strive to build a stronger, more responsive business community.



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SUNY Sullivan provides quality education and training

BY JAIME SCHMEISER,
DIRECTOR OF
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
SUNY SULLIVAN

SUNY Sullivan is more than just a college; it's a promoter of economic growth and a beacon of opportunity for the region.

By offering a diverse range of programs that align closely with local industry needs, SUNY Sullivan is taking a proactive approach to workforce development. One of the key factors contributing to this approach is the College's commitment to providing relevant and practical education.

The college offers a variety of technical and vocational training programs and associate degrees that equip students with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in today's competitive job market. In addition to its academic offerings, SUNY Sullivan is also dedicated to fostering partnerships

with local businesses and industries.

These partnerships allow the college to stay informed about current industry trends and ensure that its programs meet the evolving needs of our region's employers.

An example of new programming SUNY Sullivan is now offering is our new microcredentials program, which consists of a short-term, focused course of study that provides immediate workplace value that can be completed in months, not years.

They provide in-demand skills, know-how, and experience to help you get a job or advance. Microcredentials can also provide a pathway to a certificate, an associates degree, or an advanced degree. These programs are designed to be affordable and accessible with many of them supported by scholarships and financial aid.

They are ideal for busy profes-

sionals who need to balance work and education.

Our new 3-tiered Direct Support Professionals microcredential program provides a clear path to earning national certification from the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP).

Funding is available through a partnership between the State University of New York (SUNY) and the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), covering tuition, books, and course materials. Additionally, a \$750 incentive is available for eligible students who complete each micro-credential and earn the corresponding NADSP certification.

The college also offers a variety of classes in business, computer science, construction technology, criminal justice, culinary arts, digital media and creative art, education, health sciences, hospitality and tourism, math and

science, psychology, human services, sports fitness, wellness and sustainability.

Another new scholarship opportunity is full funding for a degree in Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counseling. This program introduces students to careers working with individuals struggling with addiction while offering them the opportunity to pursue their New York State Credentialed Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Counselor (CASAC). The Opioid Settlement Fund is providing full scholarships for students interested in the field.

By providing quality education and training, SUNY Sullivan is helping to create a skilled workforce to drive economic growth and innovation in the region. The college's commitment to workforce development is a testament to its dedication to serving the community and ensuring a bright future for its students.



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