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2016

Wunderkinds

24

Of Westchester's
Best Under-30
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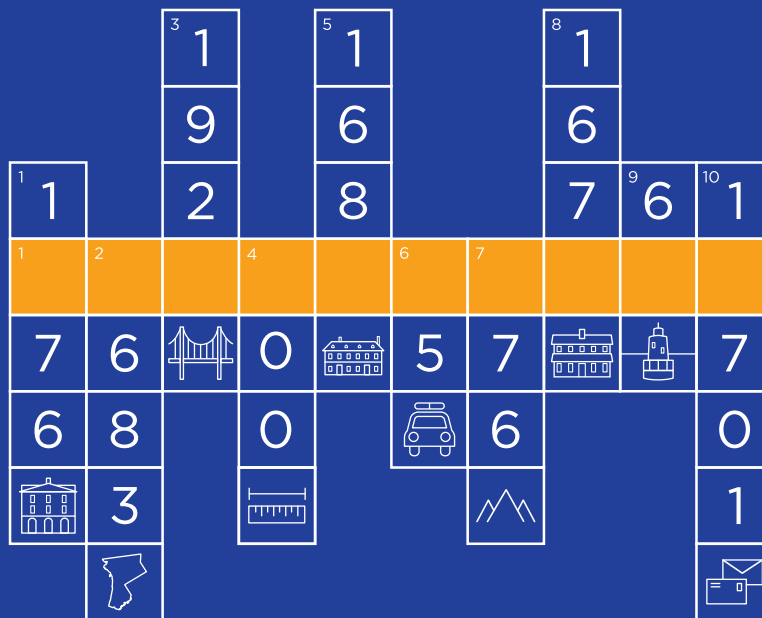
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1. The year when Kykuit was designated as National Historic Landmark
2. The year when Westchester was founded
3. The year Bear Mountain Bridge was completed
4. Size of Westchester in Square Miles
5. The year when Philipse Manor Hall was built
6. The number of local police agencies in Westchester
7. The highest elevation in Westchester County in feet
8. The year when Rye's Timothy Knapp House was built
9. The height of Tarrytown Lighthouse in feet
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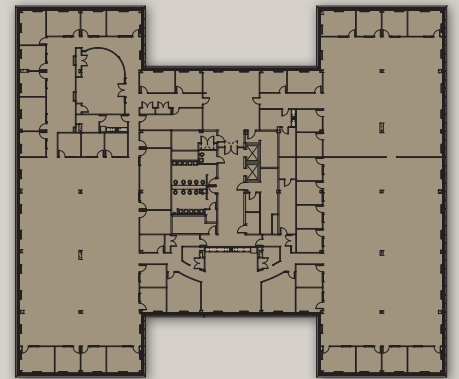


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Wunderkinds 2016

Meet 24 of Westchester's most successful under-30 professionals: These driven, talented, fun, and fearless up-and-comers may just be the next crop of county business leaders.

By Mary Sue Iarocci, Tanya Klich, Jerry McKinstry, Ken Valenti, and Gina Valentino



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Area Hospitals Compete to Win

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By Bonnie Dresner

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Edited by Amy R. Partridge

(From L to R) Wunderkinds Nick Canzano, Alexa O'Rourke, Lia Taylor Schwartz, and Dylan Gambardella

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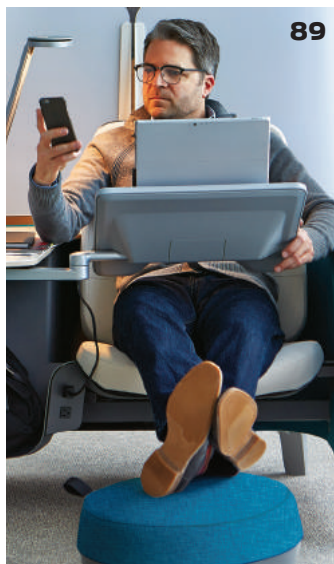
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The Wunder Years



Smartphones. eBay. The Toyota Prius. *Harry Potter*. AOL. The sitcom *Friends*. These are just some of the things that, while new-ish, have still been around longer than this year's youngest Wunderkinds—Carly Rose Sonnenclar, a successful pop singer, and Jake Roth, a philanthropist for golf organization The First Tee of Metropolitan New York—both of whom are just 17 years old. So, yes, they were in diapers when you were charging up your first smartphone, worrying about impending Y2K doom, and watching Ross and Rachel's ongoing trials and tribulations. But what they lack in age (and in understanding of-century technology and pop culture), they make up for in talent and drive—as do the 22 other under-30 professionals we've selected for our sixth annual Wunderkinds story, which starts on page 58.

This year's crop of Wunderkinds includes everything from rising stars at some of the county's most well-known organizations (HEINEKEN USA, NewYork-Presbyterian/Hudson Valley Hospital, Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, Mercy College, and Jefferson Valley Mall, among others) to a group of entrepreneurs that includes an artisan fashion designer, the inventors of a potentially life-saving medical device, a trio whose app seems poised to revolutionize the music industry, and a nonprofit exec whose mission to protect children has taken her all the way to a war zone in Iraq. Clearly, the level of young talent here in Westchester runs deep. We hope you'll toast their success with us at our upcoming 914INC. Wunderkinds cocktail event, on May 24, at the Mamaroneck Beach & Yacht Club, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Also running deep in Westchester is the reach of the health-care industry on our business scene. If you've been paying even nominal attention to local business news, you're well aware that our area hospitals have been through an unprecedented amount of change recently (consolidations, mergers, and affiliations; the aftermath of the Affordable Care Act; and shifts in patient-care approaches, to name a few). More astute observers of the county healthcare scene may also know that as a result, competition among Westchester hospitals has never been fiercer. As such, hospitals seem to be touting, almost daily, their plans for new, specialized treatment centers, ambulatory-care facilities, advanced technologies, and high-profile medical-staff acquisitions.

We asked veteran healthcare writer Bonnie Dresner to sort this all out by taking a closer look at how the 12 acute-care hospitals in our region are managing to survive, and even thrive, in this increasingly competitive environment. See what she found out on page 74.

And, lest you think we're *all* business here, take a look at the product extravaganza that is our work/LIFE section this issue (starting on page 89): designed-in-Westchester wardrobe accessories, splurge-worthy office desks, the coolest outdoor tech gadgets, healthy Happy Hour drinks (kale juice, anyone?), and more.

Hey, if you've aged out of Wunderkinds eligibility (as most of us have, sadly), at least you can still channel that Millennial cool with trendy style, tech, and beverage choices!



Wunderkind
Zeshan A.
Chaudhry, 24

Amy R. Partridge
Executive Editor

Contributors

Bonnie Dresner



A freelance journalist, EMS educator, and paramedic, Bonnie was a natural fit for this issue's story on competition among Westchester Hospitals ("Area Hospitals Compete to Win," page 74). She has witnessed the evolution of hospital care while bringing patients through the doors of many facilities over the years. "It's good to see industry leaders embracing a model that manages people's health instead of only treating them when they're sick," Bonnie says.

Mary Sue Iarocci



Though the under-30 age requirement to be a Wunderkind made this 33-year-old feel like "a spinster," Mary Sue enjoyed

taking the lead in writing our 2016 Wunderkinds story (page 58), having profiled seven of our winners. The freelance writer and former staff reporter for both Westfair Communications and the *Journal News* also penned this issue's Money Talk department on White Plains-based Hospitality Resources Group ("Putting Heart Into Hospitality," page 32).

Stefan Radtke



A frequent 914INC. contributor, Stefan is responsible for the stellar images in our

Wunderkinds cover story; it's the third year in a row that the photographer and Rye resident has captured our under-30 superstars. Stefan, who lived in England, Italy, and Germany before moving to Westchester in 2002, studied photography at the International Center of Photography in Manhattan.



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Photos by John Vecchiolla

Business Council of Westchester

Business EXPO, Rye Brook

Many of the area's top companies were at the Business Council of Westchester's annual Business EXPO on March 17 at the Hilton Westchester in Rye Brook. More than 1,500 businesspeople attended the event, which is the largest business-to-business trade show in the Hudson Valley. The EXPO featured products and services offered by more than 180 local vendors and merchants. *Pictured Left:* Ron Jacobson, associate VP of continuing education and professional development, and Grant Grastorf, academic operations administrator, Fordham University Westchester. *Below:* former New York Giants running back Ottis Anderson with Vincent Mutarelli of CapitalOne Bank.



Business Council of Westchester

Westchester-Putnam Youth Summit, White Plains

On March 23, more than 250 young people received expert insight and motivation for finding success in the workplace at the fifth annual Westchester-Putnam Youth Summit at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in White Plains. The summit featured interactive activities and workshops aimed at providing attendees with employment skills and advice. *Pictured:* Thompson & Bender Senior Account Executives Sean Mayer and Hope Salley.



Concordia College

Business Breakfast, Bronxville

Concordia College held its Business Breakfast on February 23 at the Krenz Academic Center, on the college's Bronxville campus. Gil Alba, president of the Associated Licensed Detectives of New York State (ALDONYS) and a nationally recognized private investigator and security consultant, served as the keynote speaker. Selected as the ALDONYS "2004 Investigator of the Year," Alba is a frequent guest on FOX News, MSNBC, and CNN. *Pictured:* Gil Alba with Joyce Kennedy, director of community relations at Concordia College.



Business Council of Westchester & Freshdesk

Customer Happiness Tour, Rye Brook

BCW members received advice about how to better relate to consumers at Freshdesk's Customer Happiness Tour on March 16, at the Hilton Westchester in Rye Brook. *Pictured:* Marsha Gordon, president and CEO of the Business Council of Westchester, with Elaine White, VP of student services at The College of New Rochelle.



Photo by John Vecchiolla



If you want to see expertise and precision you should see how well his hip moves.

As captain of the 2016 US Olympic Fencing Team, Francisco Martin knows a thing or two about finding the most talented fencers. He looks for expertise and precision. So it was no surprise when he chose the orthopedics team at Phelps Memorial Hospital to replace his hip. He was confident in their excellence – from top surgeons and superior diagnostics to outstanding inpatient and outpatient physical rehab, including aquatic therapy. With the orthopedics team at Phelps on his side, Francisco Martin was soon back doing what he does best – coaching the US Olympic Fencing Team.

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Volunteer New York!

2016 Corporate Networking Reception, White Plains

More than 50 business leaders and associates from companies that support Volunteer New York! gathered for a celebratory networking reception hosted by Reckson on February 23 at the Reckson Metro Center in White Plains. *Pictured left:* Bill Merz, VP of lending at The Westchester Bank, with Maxine Elkins, manager of VIP and Steppingstone at Volunteer New York! *Below:* Marjorie Lang, regional manager of business banking, M&T Bank; Ed Forbes, consumer experience director at the *Journal News & Lohud*; and Maria Pastilha of New York Life Insurance Company.



League of Women Voters of Westchester

Fix It: Healthcare at the Tipping Point Forum, White Plains

The League of Women Voters of Westchester held a forum titled “Fix It: Healthcare at the Tipping Point” at the White Plains Public Library on April 3. *Pictured:* Elizabeth Rosenthal, MD, from Physicians for a National Health Program; Madeline Zevon, healthcare chair for the League of Women Voters of Westchester; and New York State Assemblywoman Amy Paulin.



New York Medical College

William Cullen Bryant Exhibit & Reception, Valhalla

The Basic Sciences Building lobby at New York Medical College in Valhalla was the setting for the William Cullen Bryant Exhibit & Reception on March 22. *Pictured:* Jonathan P. Harding of The Century Association; Harrison Hunt, M.A., The Friends of Cedarmere, Inc.; Jay Tartell, MD, New York Medical College Alumni Board of Governors; Edward Halperin, MD, M.A., chancellor and CEO of New York Medical College; and John B. Dawson, Jr., president of The Friends of Cedarmere, Inc.

Public Relations Society of America Westchester/Fairfield Chapter

Content Marketing Panel, Rye

On March 30, the Public Relations Society of America Westchester/Fairfield Chapter held a panel titled “Content Marketing Explained” at the Rye Grill and Bar in Rye. *Pictured:* Donovan Malloy, marketing director at transFORM; Nick Simard, chief marketing officer, InspiriaMedia; and Samantha Hochman, media and public relations coordinator, TransFORM.



Photo by Mike Dardano

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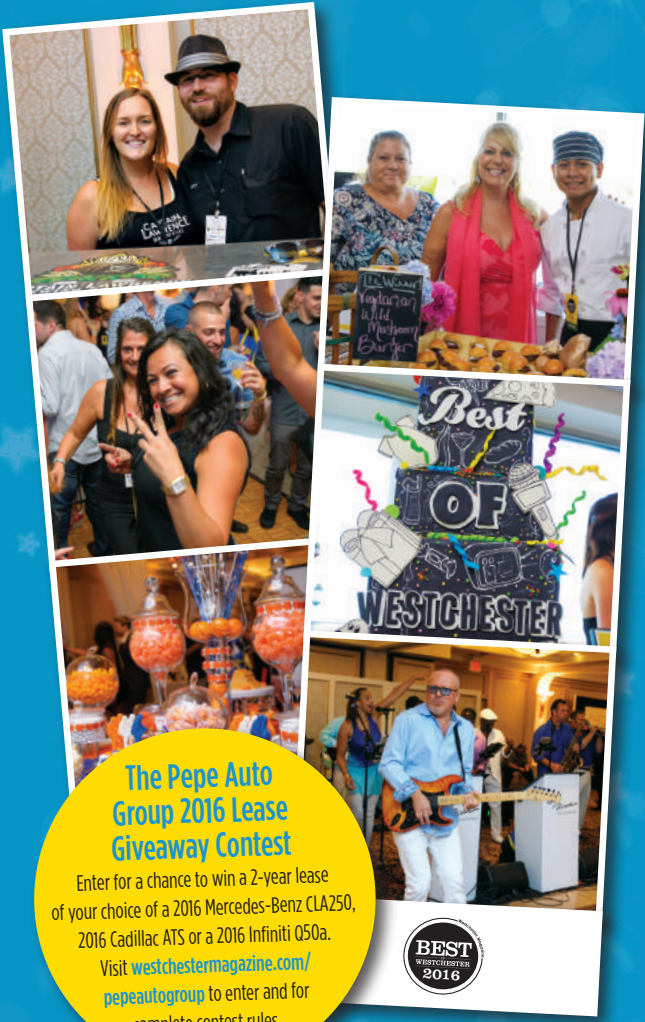
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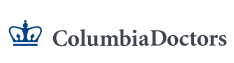
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Meet the Mayor

Richard Thomas, the youthful new Mayor of Mount Vernon, has big plans for his city—and its businesses.

Photograph by Kenneth Gabrielsen

Plus:

Four local apps finding success

page 21

Why are gun sales up in Westchester?

page 23



INC.quiry

The “CEO” of Mount Vernon

Get to know Mayor Richard Thomas, who swept into office earlier this year promising much-needed economic growth for his city. **By William Garrity**

At just 33, Richard Thomas is the youngest mayor in Mount Vernon’s history. The lifelong resident began his political career working for New York governor David Paterson, subsequently becoming the youngest person to sit on the Mount Vernon City Council, at age 29. Many have interpreted his landslide victory in last year’s general election (he received 78 percent of the vote against three challengers) to be a mandate for a new direction in the embattled municipality, yet he’s off to a contentious and controversial start with this mission. Part of his platform was a comprehensive plan to revitalize Mount Vernon as a center for business and job growth. We sat down with Thomas to discuss some of these plans.

You’ve earned an MBA from the NYU Stern School of Business and held various jobs in finance. How will your background in economics influence your administration?

I have a vision to operate City Hall like a small business. The current practice is to have 32 commissioners and deputy commissioners for Mount Vernon; my hope is to pare this down to around 12. We can use these savings to invest in the business of the people of Mount Vernon. In putting approximately \$1 million back into the city, there can be a 2 percent tax reduction on our residents. I plan to run the city using a cost-benefit analysis. We will try to present the values, the math, and the methodology to show people that we are making decisions based on data. The numbers will really drive my opinion.

“I speak finance, and many companies will appreciate the fact that I will move at the speed of capital.”

You are hoping to attract new business to Mount Vernon, especially startups or businesses that have been priced out of other areas. How do you plan to do this?

Resources in Mount Vernon are significantly less expensive. We have very cheap water rates. If you’re a tech company, you need water to cool your servers; if our water rates are 25 times less than in New York City, that’s a significant savings. Our electricity costs are lower than New York City’s, too. Also, we can work with tax abatements pegged to job creation or revenue generation for potential startups and developers. I speak finance, and many companies will appreciate both my understanding and the fact that I will move at the speed of capital.

Another issue you’ve mentioned is your desire to bring higher education to Mount Vernon. How will this benefit the city?

I would love to establish higher-education facilities in the city. I’ve been reaching out to universities in New York City to consider creating dormitories here in Mount Vernon for graduate students. I believe that higher education is important for the city to attract. It brings both investments and the people that come with those investments—more people in our downtown area that will patronize our businesses. You see this happening in New Rochelle with Monroe College. New dorms, new buildings have been built, and that activity is really a major benefit.

Is the city's infrastructure prepared to deal with an increase in traffic if all these new businesses come to fruition?

Mount Vernon's transit system is a major strength. We have three Metro-North train stations, two subway stations, six highways, and countless buses—this comprises the county's strongest transportation system. Not only that, but we have 11 bridges that cover MTA tracks. We hope to collaborate with the MTA through the \$26 billion MTA Capital Plan. They have not invested in any of those bridges over the past 100 years, and they have an obligation to fix that.

Why is targeting "zombie homes" so important?

There are around 700 foreclosure actions in various stages within Mount Vernon, with 54 properties under control of the city. We have drafted legislation designed to empower Millennials and middle-class families to participate in auctions for these properties. It is important that we make decisions with the future in mind. Our goal is to take these zombies and use them to help bring people into the city without pushing anyone out.

You're a golfer. What have you learned from the game?

I grew up on the streets of Mount Vernon, but I was raised on the greens of golf courses. I lied about my age to start carrying golf clubs at Siwanoy [Country Club] when I was 10 and caddied throughout college. I was able to spend time on the course with Mike Bloomberg; I got my first real job in high school assisting [billionaire investor] Mario Gabelli's team on the trading desk after caddying for him. It was great just being around these executives—seeing how they play, how they move, how they think, or negotiate. I learned that you can tell a lot about somebody by how they play golf: Are they honest or dishonest? Do they play by the rules, or do they constantly blur them?

Have you brought that way of thinking into the mayor's office?

For the past 20 years, you had a patronage model, where you had 32 jobs to give out: 16 commissioners and 16 deputies for 16 agencies. I'm not doing that, and there are many people that are not pleased. I'm going to whittle that down and make people more accountable for the work.

Tech

Download Local

Four new Westchester-area apps are finding success.



point pickup
Local delivery. Professionally run.

POINT PICKUP: Same-day package delivery

Seeking to be the Uber of package delivery, Greenwich-based Point Pickup offers Westchester residents easy, safe, same-day package delivery via its "pickup partner" network of vetted drivers. Launched in November 2015 by CEO Tom Fiorita, the app lets users input items that need to be picked up and delivered locally; Point Pickup drivers see the input, and the first one to say, "I'll do it" gets the gig.



QUADJOBS: Hire college students, fast

Greenwich-based QuadJobs, which was launched as a website in November 2014 and is now also an app, pairs college-age students with local employers seeking to fill a wide range of positions, from tutoring and babysitting to catering and retail. Founders Bridie Loverro, Betsy O'Reilly, and Andra Newman say Westchester is the ideal market for this app, thanks to the county's wealth of high-performing students.



YARDHUB: Yard work made easy

Somers resident James Albis and Bill Ralph of White Plains are tapping into the \$75 billion outdoor-home-care market with YardHub, a just-launched app that allows homeowners to easily find and schedule outdoor services such as snow plowing, lawn care, pool cleaning, and tree removal. Users are connected with YardHub's pre-screened and insured contractors, who execute the service.

▼ ZOOTLY: Hassle-free moving

New Rochelle resident Rudy Callegari started Zootly out of his frustration with the traditional, slow-paced moving industry. The app, which launched in October 2015, gives customers 24/7 access to a stable of qualified, professional movers, allowing them to track their belongings during a move. It also helps local moving companies profit from underutilized vehicles. After a recent round of roughly \$10 million in funding, Zootly is expanding outside the New York Metro area.



Workforce

“Returnships” Gaining Favor

The post-career-break internship isn't just fodder for Hollywood comedies; it's a growing trend. **By Gale Ritterhoff**



Anyone see Robert De Niro in *The Intern*? Hilarious, right? But what is it really like to work as an intern when you aren't, shall we say, the youngest person in the room? “Not nearly as uncomfortable as I thought it would be,” says Pelham Manor resident and attorney Kathleen Veteri, who recently completed an internship on her way back to a full-time job after a 10-year career break. The experience served perfectly as a “dry run for the real thing,” she explains, and practicing law came to her back “like riding a

bike.” An added plus, potential employers “get a good look at you” through the internship, she points out, “more than just a 30-minute job interview.” No doubt with that in mind, Rye resident and lawyer Cynthia Wells, who interned after 20 years off, took her bottom-of-the-totem-pole position so seriously, her coworkers followed suit and accepted her without hesitation. At first intimidated by the thought of new technology, she quickly adapted, finding that “all the computers simply made the office seem much quieter than I remember.”

Welcome to the age of the “Returnship”—the respectable, post-career-break internship. Many highly educated and experienced individuals who'd left the workforce are being lured back to restart careers in programs specifically designed by companies to bring them up to speed.

“These programs are a great way to get people back into the talent pipeline,” says Michelle Friedman, founder of Advancing Women's Careers, a career-coaching and organizational consultancy in Scarsdale. Employers want to “recapture qualified people who are already trained and experienced,” she explains.

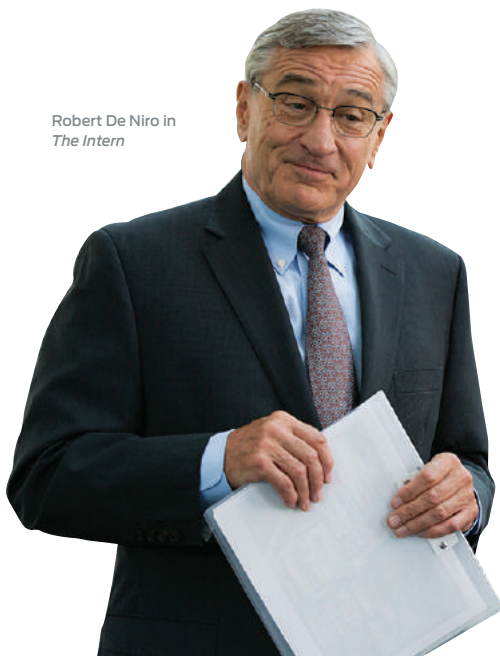
Like Wells, some “career breakers” might need a moment to catch up with changes in technology, but most of them quickly embrace new work-

place research and communications methods. Carrie Hart, also of Rye, who'd completed a Credit Suisse Real Returns internship after an eight-year hiatus, said appreciated the “refresh activities,” which included honing presentation skills, business writing, and Microsoft Office Suite. She now works with Credit Suisse.

So, who's getting involved? Area financial institutions such as Goldman Sachs (which recently trademarked the term Returnship), JPMorgan Chase, Credit Suisse, and Morgan Stanley have such programs. In White Plains, Pace Law School's New Directions for Attorneys program includes classwork and a 10-week externship at one of more than 100 employers linked to the program. (Both Wells and Veteri are New Directions “grads.”) Meanwhile, iRelaunch—a career-relaunch organization cofounded by CEO Carol Fishman Cohen—recently joined forces with the Society of Women Engineers to form the STEM Re-entry Task Force, which establishes internships for women with science- and technology-related degrees. Companies involved include IBM, Caterpillar, GM, and Intel.

Internships are certainly not the only route back, but many participants consider their combination of tech support, career counseling, and networking potential to be a great launch pad for success.

Robert De Niro in
The Intern



INTERNSHIP INTEL

Tips for success

- To find an internship program, the iRelaunch website is a great place to start: www.irelaunch.com/CareerReentry
- Don't fight the dreaded “reverse mentorship.” Those who have stepped away from the office for more than a decade might need a little coaching from someone younger.
- Do teach yourself when possible: YouTube tutorials are a great way learn basic tasks such as importing graphics into a PowerPoint presentation.
- Internship programs fill up fast, but there's “no reason not to try a do-it-yourself one,” says Scarsdale career coach Michelle Friedman. Simply offer your services to a prospective employer on a project basis.
- Keep a sense of humor, and don't let ego get in the way. If you're open and friendly, coworkers will soon be turning to you for advice.

Hey, it worked for Robert De Niro!—GR



Trending

Bullet Points

Gun sales are up around the nation—and in Westchester. Local firearms dealers tell us what's behind the boom. **By Nick Brandi**

Foreign and domestic terrorism. Natural disasters. Deranged assailants. Embattled police. Pandering politicians. Increased gun restrictions. All of these have been cited as key reasons that Americans are seeking to arm themselves like never before. “Barack Obama is the best gun salesman this country has ever seen,” asserts Ben Rosenshine, co-owner of Blueline Tactical Supply & Shooting Sports in Elmsford. “Every time the president talks about guns and how to restrict them, we see an uptick in sales and application requests.”

The trend Rosenshine refers to seems to be more than anecdotal. Recent estimates cite a 40 percent increase in the legal sale of handguns in New York State in the last five years alone, and Westchester appears to be following suit. “Forty percent sounds about right for this area, too,” says Rosenshine, whose gun-safety classes have seen a more than 50 percent increase in enrollment in the past two years. (“We used to have empty seats; now we have waiting lists,” he reports.)

Mike Timlin, proprietor of RT Smoke N Gun Shop in Mount Vernon—who says that in the past three to four years, home-defense shotgun and handgun applica-

tions at his store are up approximately 25 percent and 20 percent, respectively—points out there are many factors other than politics that are stimulating a heightened interest in gun ownership. “The effect of the shootings in places like San Bernadino, Paris, and Newtown cannot be overstated,” Timlin says, adding that natural disasters like Katrina and Sandy also have a discernible impact on sales. He further points to “the immediacy and sophistication of social media, which have transformed what used to be regional stories into global ones.”

And it's not just men who are increasingly looking to pack some heat. “By far, the fastest-growing demographic is women,” says Rosenshine, whose wife, Dawn, is an instructor at Blueline. “Women ages 25 to 45 are where most of the new [sales] activity is occurring,” adds Timlin, “and it's married women just as much as single women.”

“Women these days don't feel entirely comfortable relying on a man, the government, the police, or anyone else to protect them in this increasingly dangerous world,” says Caren Landis, a retired schoolteacher from Clarkstown and avid gun-rights advocate.

Meanwhile, Rosenshine advises Westchesterites looking to purchase handguns to be patient, as there are only four law-enforcement officers in the county currently processing pistol-permit applications, so waiting times are close to a year.

So, what are people buying? Timlin (whose wife, Denine, also partners with him at RT) says the best sellers are defensive shotguns (which feature a shorter barrel), conventional 9mm and .45 caliber 1911 handguns (especially Rugers, Glocks, and Smith & Wessons), and pocket pistols, which offer the stopping power of larger handguns but are more easily concealed.

“But make no mistake, what's been driving people into the store the past few years are the assault rifles,” says Timlin, “but the laws that have been put in place by federal, state and local government drive them back out again, as it's almost impossible to buy a traditional AR at this point.”



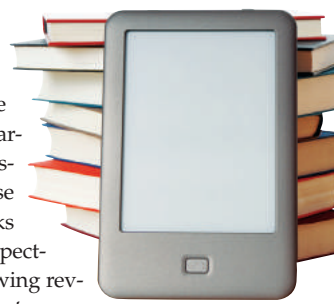
Sales

Word Wars

Westchester booksellers benefit from uptick in physical book sales.

By Paul Adler

Last year, for the first time since Amazon's Kindle hit the market nearly a decade ago, physical book sales rose as sales of e-books slumped. This unexpected boom means growing revenue for Westchester's own booksellers, each of whom has a theory on just why paper books have been raking in so much paper lately:



“When it comes to e-readers, the luster is a bit off the rose, and more people are finding that they like reading an actual book. It doesn't mean they are going to give up their e-readers, but certain books they want to have, touch, feel, and read.”

—Eugene Sgarlata, owner, Womrath's Book Shop, Bronxville

BY THE NUMBERS

2.5% rise in physical book sales over 2015

11% slump in e-book sales over the same period

\$11.17 billion physical book sales in 2015

\$10.89 billion physical book sales in 2014

2007 last year that book sales rose against e-books

“Sales have been good, and I have been surprised how enthusiastic the community has been. So many people come in and say, ‘I am so relieved to just be able to buy a book.’”

—Laura Schaefer, owner, Scattered Books, Chappaqua

“The growth of electronic readers was enormous, and it seemed that if things stayed along that curve that physical books were going to disappear. But electronic reading has become more steady, and, as I've discovered, there are a lot of people who read both ways.”

—Roy Solomon, owner, The Village Bookstore, Pleasantville

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POWER POINTS

Startup Spotlight

An Unsinkable Business?

Port Chester-based Neversink Spirits is poised to capitalize on growing interest in craft distilleries. **By Robert Selwitz**



Year two of operations at Port Chester-based Neversink Spirits finds its founders anticipating the 2017 debut of their estate-branded apple brandy.

Created from special rare varietal apples planted in an orchard at Camps Road Farm in nearby Kent Hollow, Connecticut, the new distilled product will join Neversink's increasingly popular 80-proof apple brandy, which is made

a distributor that will give them access to New Jersey and Connecticut buyers.

Neversink also is part of the Food Cycle, a partnership in which Braunstein and Rabino are two of five members actively involved in producing and distributing various consumables. Besides Neversink, Food Cycle partners run the Kent Falls Brewing Company, manufacture whiskey, and oversee operations at the 48-acre Camps Road Farm, where Neversink maintains an apple orchard.

However Braunstein and Rabino spend the vast majority of their time at Neversink, especially their 3,000-square-foot Port Chester distillery. Neversink's product roster, which features the "eau de vie" brandy now in production, plus a limited volume of pear brandy, will hopefully be joined next fall by the estate-branded apple brandy. Neversink's brandies are produced by fermentation and double distillation. What emerges is a clear spirit, a fragrant eau de vie that, Braunstein says, is ideal for sipping by itself or as a key cocktail ingredient.

Such craft spirits are just starting to gain ground, according to Braunstein. "People are aware of craft brews; there's less awareness of craft distilleries, at least here in New York State," he notes. "But I'm confident we'll see many more craft-distilled beverages coming to market to meet consumer demands."

As for the origins of the Neversink name, it references a tributary of the Delaware River and a Catskills-based reservoir. Plus, as Braunstein explains, "It's also where, before our business was launched, Yoni and I used to spend a lot of time birdwatching." ●

"I'm confident we'll see many more craft-distilled beverages coming to market to meet consumer demands."

from New York State apples and just won the 2016 gold medal at the San Francisco World Spirits competition. The craft distillery's cofounders, Noah Braunstein and Yoni Rabino (pictured above, L to R), are old Mamaroneck High School friends who launched the business in mid-2015.

Why apple brandy? "Growing up in New York State, we wanted to do something that reflects the best of our agricultural output. Passionate about fruit spirits in general, we decided to focus on apples, which are so important to the State," explains Braunstein.

While initial funding for Neversink came from friends and families, growth has been impressive. They now have in excess of 120 accounts that are a mix of restaurants and retailers. And, as Braunstein explains, this number will expand shortly, since they are working with



WUN•DER•KIND

[wuhn-der-kind] -noun. plural.

1. a person who succeeds, especially in business; at a comparatively young age.

2016 Honorees



Sarai Bartels



Laura Belkner



Michael Buonassisi



Nick Canzano



Zeshan Chaudhry



Donvil Collins



Matthew Demeo



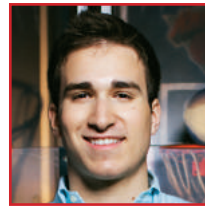
John DiCapua



Christopher DiCapua



Tracy Engel



Dylan Gambardella



Keshav Garg



Connor Lawrence



Jesse Antonio Lopez



Shawn Nagpal



Alexa O'Rourke



Matthew Pavia



Sam Pezzullo



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Nick Spano



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Francesco Vittorini

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New developments like 120 North Pearl Street in Port Chester are geared toward Millennial renters.

Trending

Millennials Spark Apartment Boom

County real estate developers aim to combat Westchester's youth drain.

By Dave Donelson

What happened to all the young folks?

A confluence of demographic trends, lifestyle changes, and economic realities has squeezed the county's population of young people in the critical career- and family-starting stage, causing many of them to leave Westchester for cheaper, hipper pastures. From 1990 to 2010, US Census data for Westchester shows a 21 percent decline in the 25- to 34-year-old age group. Some of this is attributable to the aging of the baby boomers, but nationally the decline was only 5 percent. Our Millennials are definitely leaving, and a key reason is that they have a tough time finding a place to live that isn't their parents' basements.

Martin Ginsburg, perhaps the county's most successful multifamily residential developer, points out the cold, hard truth. "We just didn't provide anything for Millennials in Westchester. There are a substantial number of them in New York City because it has an environment there that appeals to them. The same in Stamford."

Local Millennials seem to agree.

"Buying a house isn't even a consideration right now," says Robbie Scott, a 25-year-old research operations manager at a local equity research firm. "I'd like to [buy a house] in the next 10 to 15 years, but the trends in Westchester are working against me. A lot of people in my age group would rather pay rent than

a mortgage. The cost of living here makes it difficult for younger people to save." Scott recently moved into an apartment at One City Place in White Plains with his girlfriend, who works in Manhattan.

Aimee Hirsch, a Millennial copy editor who recently found an apartment in Ossining after an exhausting search, points out another big money problem for her age group: "My boyfriend and I both have student loans, so that doesn't leave a lot of [financial] wiggle room. We just don't have a lot of savings." She adds, "If you have to have the first and last month's rent, security deposit, and a broker's fee on top, it's almost impossible."

Developers like Ginsburg have seized this opportunity to build thousands of new rental apartments with the Millennial market in mind. "Anybody who doesn't take [Millennials] into account is missing an important part of the market," he says. "I think they are 35 to 40 percent of the apartment market in Westchester."

Ginsburg has three projects, totaling 584 total units, coming to fruition in the county this year: Harbor Square in Ossining, River Tides in Yonkers, and The Lofts in Hastings-on-Hudson. While rents across the developments start as low as \$1,495 for a studio and range up to \$5,400 for two bedrooms, he's providing a wealth of amenities—concierge service, swimming pools, fitness centers, club rooms, yoga studios, spas—to match the lifestyles of his prospective Millennial (and other) tenants.

While keeping Westchester's Millennials here is one goal of these developers, attracting them from New York City is another opportunity. "In White Plains, we're getting a lot of people from Brooklyn and Queens who are getting priced out of those markets," says Houlihan Lawrence broker Gino Bello. "Their rents shot up to \$4,000 to \$5,000 per month, whereas here we hover around \$2,500 to \$3,500." He adds that it's not that big of a lifestyle adjustment, either. "White Plains gives them that urban feeling, where they have restaurants, shopping, and 24-hour city life." Ultimately, he adds, "The number-one factor for all renters is being close to the train."

"Anybody who doesn't take [Millennials] into account is missing an important part of the market."

Easy transportation from Westchester to Manhattan is a big draw for tenants of AvalonBay, one of the county's largest landlords, with 1,529 apartments in five buildings in the county. The company is breaking ground on a sixth, Avalon Somers, this spring and has announced a seventh property at the Metro-North station in Harrison. The company has been successful attracting Millennials to Westchester, according to Matthew Whalen, the company's senior vice president, who explains, "The majority of our Westchester residents come from within the county, though we do have a sizeable number that come from other places, including Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York City. Our renters are generally a mix of professionals, empty nesters, and people in transition. Over 55 percent of our Westchester residents are between the ages of 25 and 44."

Other factors impact the Millennials' choice of rental rather than purchased housing, according to developer David Mann, who has built five rental buildings in White Plains in recent years, all filling up almost immediately. He's also building in Port Chester and Harrison. "In this employment market, they want to be nimble," he points out. "If I save \$50,000, am I going to put that into a home? What if I get a different job?" At La Gianna, his 56-unit building in White Plains, "We had 12 tenants either get new jobs, lose jobs, or get divorced in a single year!"

Hot Spot

Dobbs Ferry Thrives

From the Saw Mill River Parkway to the Hudson River, economic growth booms in Dobbs.

Once a downscale, sleepy Rivertown squeezed between Hastings-on-Hudson and Irvington, Dobbs Ferry has taken a giant leap to the forefront with a wave of commercial, residential, and lifestyle improvements.

The biggest news in the village is the expected completion this fall of Rivertowns Square, a \$150 million mixed-use development next to the Saw Mill at Lawrence Street. The project will turn an abandoned research laboratory into a 17-acre shopping center with a unique movie theater, upscale boutiques, restaurants, a 138-room hotel, and an apartment complex with 203 rental units.

"It's a very positive development for Dobbs Ferry," says Rand Realty broker Scott Rosasco. "The tenants are upscale, and it's a substantial improvement of the site." The retail portion of the site is reportedly 80 percent leased.

Rivertowns Square surrounds the existing Chauncey Square complex, where Bruce Schoenberg owns Oasis Day Spa. He's anticipating an influx of customers both from the hotel and the residential development.

Maggie Segrich, owner of Alice & Chains bespoke jewelry on Broadway, believes Rivertowns Square will also help residents stay in town to shop. "A lot of what it offers we currently have to get in White Plains," she says. "Now, we'll be able to stay here."

Traffic concerns put a bit of a crimp in the euphoria at the moment, although it's temporary. The Ashford Avenue Bridge, which connects Ardsley and Dobbs Ferry and car-



Mrs. Green's, Ulta Salon, and several restaurants have signed leases at Rivertowns Square.

ries more than 20,000 vehicles daily, is being replaced, which will impact area traffic for three years.

A few miles away on the other side of town, the village recently completed the second phase of a \$7 million waterfront park—part of the 51.5 mile Westchester RiverWalk—building a new fishing pier, boat dock, and playground along with a walkway that connects to the county trailways system.

Among other projects, CCI Properties is building an eight-unit apartment building with 1,800 square feet of retail space on the ground level at 78 Main, not far from another 16-unit building that's replacing a long dilapidated building at 66-68 Main. Also under consideration is the controversial redevelopment of 75 Main, the former Oceana Publications building, where the developer proposes 24 residential units with street-level retail in the existing building as well as a multi-story addition on top of the existing warehouse.

The newly revitalized Dobbs Ferry Chamber of Commerce, which has attracted more than 75 members since the first of the year, hopes to capitalize on the village momentum. "Dobbs Ferry is becoming more of a destination spot," says Chamber president Matt Kay, owner of Cedar Street Grill. —DD

Managing Multiple Skills with:

Carmelo Milio

President, Trion Real Estate Management



It takes mastery of multiple skills to succeed in real estate management. Carmelo Milio's success in the field—and his election as president of the Building and Realty Institute of Westchester and the Mid-Hudson Region (BRI)—indicates he has them all. Milio, 36, also holds a demanding "day job" as president of two companies, Trion Real Estate Management and Trion Holdings, LLC, which invests in multi-family properties. "Every day is different," says Milio, who lives in Armonk with his wife and two young daughters. "You're always troubleshooting issues and helping people. There's a sense of accomplishment when you know you're improving the quality of life for 1,700 families."

Those families reside in the 31 buildings Trion manages; they are split between Westchester, New York City, and Dutchess County. Milio entered the real estate business after college. In addition to managing his own buildings, he represents condo and co-op boards, as well as rental properties for other owners, a business he added in 2002.

"It's a business with many different areas where you need knowledge and experience," Milio points out. He says necessary skill sets include, among others, accounting, customer relations, and real estate law.

Milio was elected president of the BRI, the largest county real estate organization, earlier this year. Among the 1,500 members are landlords, condo and co-op boards, building managers, builders, and remodelers.

Juggling the interests of landlords, tenants, and condo boards is rewarding, Milio says, but adds: "I take great pride in creating growth for the people who work for me." —DD



The Empress of Housing

With vast industry knowledge, boundless energy, and a tough-as-nails persona, Rella Fogliano is succeeding in the high-stakes world of local real estate development. **By Elaine Pofeldt**

Ask Pelham-based real estate developer Rella Fogliano what a typical day is like for her in the notoriously tough real estate development industry, and she'll tell you in her straight-shooting style: "I don't go to work every day. I go to war."

But it's clear that the high-energy entrepreneur doesn't flinch from maneuvering her team across the battlefield. A blond dynamo, Fogliano is the force behind a number

of well-known buildings in the New York Metro area, as founder of two related companies, MacQuesten Development LLC and MacQuesten Construction Management, which employ 15 people.

You've probably driven past some of her local projects. Those in Westchester include the firm's corporate headquarters at 438 Fifth Avenue, a three-story, 10,000-square-foot space in Pelham, which her team moved into in 2013 after gutting and rede-

signing the existing office space on the first floor. Her company is also developing The Modern, an 11-story, \$30 million affordable-housing/retail complex that broke ground in 2015 at 130 Mount Vernon Avenue in Mount Vernon. It has a target completion date of December 2016.

Fogliano also has put down stakes in the Bronx and Manhattan. In the former, MacQuesten has built complexes such as Palmer Court Homes, a 135-unit middle-income garden apartment, while Manhattan has the Tony Mendez Apartments, a project that encompasses two six-story buildings with 130 affordable units at

"I pride myself on giving a fast 'yes' or 'no.' We can't really waste time in this business. Time can be your worst enemy."

116th and 117th Streets. Her two companies work in tandem on financing, designing, and construction management of both multi-family and commercial properties.

Fogliano isn't one to dally when she sees a good opportunity and is known for making rapid-fire decisions.

"I pride myself on giving a fast 'yes' or 'no,'" she says. "I don't usually sit on the fence, and I usually don't regret having said 'no' or 'yes' quickly. We can't really waste time in this business. Time can be your worst enemy."

She has used her fast-on-her-feet decision making skills to successfully navigate the complex transactions involved in the affordable housing sector, where developers must be both politically savvy and knowledgeable about relevant tax credits.

Growing Up in the Business

Fogliano, 55, learned the unwritten rules of the business early. From the time she was a 6-year-old growing up in the Baychester section of the Bronx, she often tagged along with her father, general contractor

Sabino Fogliano, to the construction sites where he built residential homes. When she was 17, she joined his business as a part-timer. "I was always working there during time off from school, holidays, summers," says Fogliano. "I guess I was a very low-paid intern."

Graduating from Fordham University with a double major in communications and French, Fogliano considered pursuing her interests in architecture and interior design. But when she graduated, the pull of working in her father's business proved too strong, so she decided to join him full-time in 1983.

It was in 1988, when her father retired, that Fogliano formed her original company, MacQuesten General Contracting, in Mount Vernon, where she continued to serve many of the clients she'd gotten to know at his firm. By the early 1990s, she began developing properties in the Bronx that her father's company owned. Aware that there was a shortage of affordable housing, she embarked on an existing 63-unit project at Hughes Avenue Crescent in the Bronx that she completed in 1996. By 2003, she had formed her current companies.

Fogliano started out with an insider's knowledge of the business, but she still had many obstacles to overcome, such as the discomfort some business associates felt working with a female developer.

"She is a woman in an industry with a dearth of women," says Joseph Apicella, who joined MacQuesten Development last year as managing director of development after 20 years at Cappelli Enterprises, a developer of properties such as The Ritz-Carlton, Westchester in White Plains. Fogliano's innate understanding of when to show strength and when to build others up has helped her get things done, he says.

She is also persuasive. Apicella remembers one recent meeting in which Fogliano needed government officials to give her the go-ahead for an affordable-housing project. She spoke with unflappable confidence about how it would benefit needy people in the community, he recalls.

"I'll never forget watching her performance that day," he says. "She won everyone over."

Fogliano also has to contend with

the many vexing situations that are part of the job for any developer. One of her most difficult challenges came while her company was building Claremont Park Apartments, on a site between Webster Avenue and Clay Avenue in the Bronx, she says. After breaking ground on the 98-unit apartment complex, her team discovered the sloping terrain included

not for the faint of heart."

Nevertheless, Fogliano's team was able to finish the project, which includes a daycare center and other amenities, in December 2007. "I always see completion—no excuses," she says.

The local business community has been taking note of what she's accomplishing. In 2014, Fogliano was named Developer of the Year by the



Fogliano started out with an insider's knowledge of the business, but she still had many obstacles to overcome, such as the discomfort some business associates felt working with a female developer.

both bedrock and water—features not usually seen at one location.

To continue the project, they had to build a costly 300-foot-long, 30-foot-high retaining wall on both avenues. Pulling that off required Fogliano to break the bad news about the site to her bank and an investor—and to pour more of her own money into the project. "You have to be very transparent with people," says Fogliano of her approach to dealing with such crises. "There's no hiding. This business is

New York Housing Conference and the National Housing Conference. The Business Council of Westchester selected her for its Women in Business Success Award in 2015.

Family, Food, and Inspiration

Outside of work, Fogliano spends a lot of time with family and friends. She and her husband, Joseph Breda, a former x-ray technician who is now a special-projects manager at MacQuesten Development, live a

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block from her mother in Eastchester. (Her father passed away last year.)

To relax, Fogliano enjoys working out in her home gym, doing Pilates, and weight training. She also loves curling up with a pile of industry magazines to get inspired with design ideas to discuss with the architects on her projects. "That's the kind of stuff that relaxes me. It's usually related to business," she admits. "I'm so grateful; I wake up every morning loving what I do."

Fogliano is emphatic when asked what her design sensibilities are. "Modernist, modernist, modernist," she says. "I don't believe in going back to the past. We live in 2016." She has a current outlet for her interior-design passion working on the lobby of The Modern in Mount Vernon. "We're working to give it a very industrial, cool look," she says.

Whipping up specialties like roasted chicken, ragù, and homemade chicken soup is another passion of Fogliano's. "My father taught me to cook," she says—though she admits that Sergio's Ristorante in Pelham makes a soup that can compete with her own.

Fogliano is also an avid restaurant buff, according to Rita Wyatt, a financial consultant at Wyatt & Co in Armonk, who has worked with Fogliano for 20 years and considers her a good friend. When the two women and their husbands dine out together, Fogliano always picks the restaurant.

"I say to her, 'Make reservations, and tell me where we're going,'" says Wyatt. "She loves to take the lead. She's always reading magazines and finding new restaurants she wants to try."

Another passion for Fogliano is the General Society of Mechanics and Tradesmen, a New York City-based nonprofit that does workforce development. She is a governor at the organization, which runs a tuition-free trade school for 400 students. "I feel good about giving back to a nonprofit," she says.

Like many of the important things in her life, Fogliano learned about the need to give back from her father. "It's funny how life is one big loop," she says. ●

Elaine Pofeldt is a freelance writer whose work has recently appeared in Money, Fortune, CNBC and many other publications. She is author of the upcoming book The Million-Dollar, One-Person Business (Ten Speed Press).

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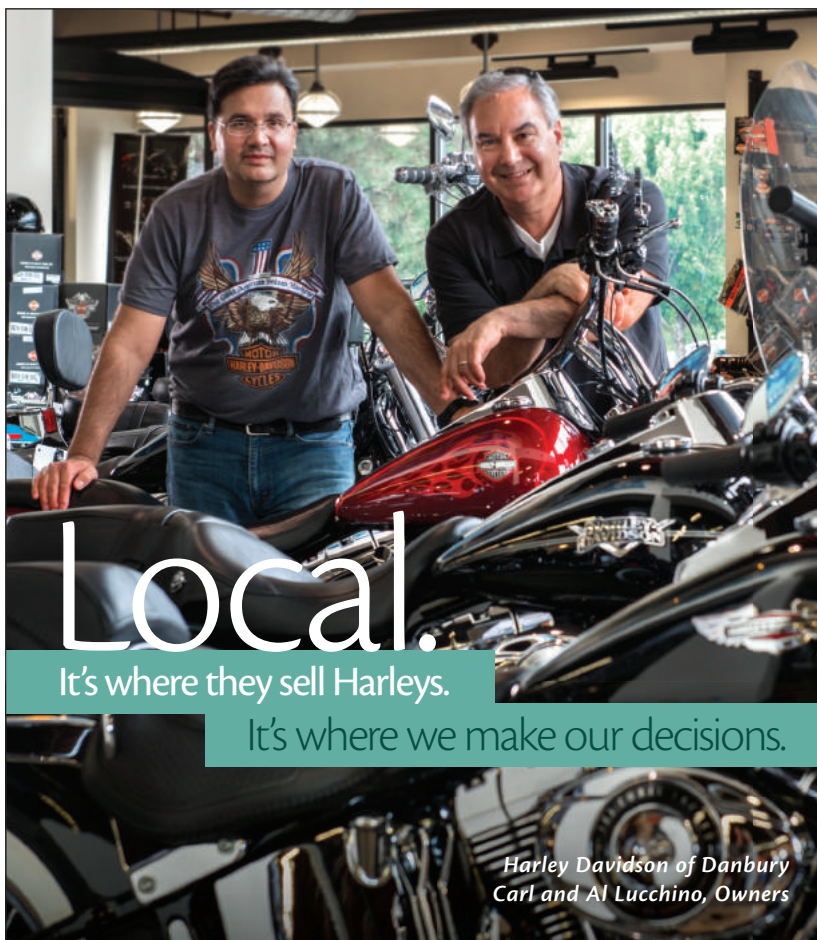
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Putting Heart Into Hospitality

Event planning, training, and marketing firm Hospitality Resource Group has grown steadily by combining a personal approach with a flair for technology.

By **Mary Sue Iarocci**

▲ At HRG's White Plains headquarters, staff members work to plan, execute, and market events for some of Westchester's top corporations and nonprofits.

By the late 1990s, Robert O. Sanders Jr.'s successes in the hospitality industry included planning and managing high-profile events, like the Daytime Emmys, and working at one of New York City's largest hotels. His career game changer, however, turned out to be a charity fundraiser at the Rye Town Hilton (now the Hilton Westchester).

It was 1998, and the American Red Cross hired Sanders to plan its annual "Touch of Red" fundraising gala. It marked Sanders' first big event as an entrepreneur, and the positive response and ensuing referrals ended up sparking the growth of the company that is today Hospitality Resource Group, Inc. (HRG) in White Plains.

Currently celebrating its 19th anniversary, with 16 employees in Westchester and Manhattan, and

three divisions under its wing (Event Solutions, which manages and produces corporate and nonprofit events; Strategic Training Solutions (STS), which offers training, organizational development, and HR consulting; and Allegis Communications, a marketing and branding firm), HRG's evolution is a classic story of organic growth and word-of-mouth advertising.

"Referrals are like gold to us, and we mine that gold every day," says Sanders, who now serves as HRG's chairman. "Eighty-five percent of our business comes from referrals. That's a huge number, and that's something we take very seriously." He notes that clients often serve as HRG's most ardent cheerleaders, recommending the company at board meetings, client meetings, and other events where someone needs a service that HRG provides.

A Storybook Journey

Like many successful companies, HRG's roots are typical start-up/bootstrap material. "I started HRG back in 1997, in my garage," says Sanders, who grew up in Chappaqua and now resides in Mahopac. "It's a classic story. I had a two-car garage, and I literally built a wall and a door and had an office. The journey began at that point."

Before that journey, were experiences that put Sanders on the path to entrepreneurship. After graduating from the University of South Carolina in 1984 with a degree in hotel/restaurant management, Sanders got a job with Marriott, where he worked in a variety of cities en route to becoming director of catering sales for the Marriott Marquis in Midtown Manhattan in 1993.

In 1995, after years of working 100-hour weeks to put together "huge events for thousands of people," Sanders, then a married father to two small children, decided it was time to spend more time with his family. He left Marriott and took a job at wedding- and event-catering firm Abigail Kirsch at Tappan Hill in Tarrytown.

It was there Sanders learned about the nuances of being an entrepreneur and running a small business. Three

years into his tenure, Sanders wrote up a business plan, and, with \$100,000 he'd saved, launched HRG. In its first year—while still focused only on the Event Solutions division—the fledgling company nearly made back its initial capital investment.

Today, the corporate events managed by Event Solutions run the gamut, from nuts-and-bolts-type meetings to conferences and outings. In the nonprofit sector, HRG is involved in all of the logistics for fundraising galas and event outings for clients such as Guiding Eyes for the Blind and the Boys & Girls Club. Event Solutions' client roster is 60 percent corporate, 40 percent nonprofit. For the past seven years, HRG has also managed the meetings-and-events division of Manhattan-based Ovation Travel Group, which holds 250 meetings a year. HRG has six employees working on that account alone.

Naturally, when managing live events, preparation is crucial. "When it comes to events, we're making things happen on the fly. It can be difficult because you don't have control of the environment. We always have a Plan C," notes Sanders, adding that this aspect is a competitive advantage for HRG. "A lot of companies in our space don't have a

make things more convenient, but some of it takes away the people-to-people interaction," says Lattari. "Certainly, there's an age factor: The younger generation is more apt to use the technology than some of the more senior folks, so you have to adapt to different ways of using it and determine if it's appropriate for that particular audience."

HRG invests about \$25,000 a year to use software from online events-management platform Cvent, which includes offerings like event websites, online check-ins, and even management of special dietary requirements of event attendees.

Going In New Directions

By 1999, once the events side of the business was established, a fortuitous meeting propelled the company to expand in a new direction. Sanders gave a sales presentation at Doral Arrowwood's hotel-and-conference center in Rye Brook that was so successful, it led to subsequent sales presentations and corporate training, culminating with the formation of Strategic Training Solutions. According to Lattari, STS' team-building exercises are not "off the shelf" but tailored to a company's or nonprofit's specific needs and goals.



"Eighty-five percent of our business comes from referrals. That's a huge number, and that's something we take very seriously."

—Robert O. Sanders Jr., founder and chairman, HRG

Plan C or often even a Plan B," he says.

HRG's CEO, Michael Lattari, says management technology is key for both corporate and nonprofit events, with online registration sites becoming "almost mandatory." However, using online-based technology to do things like check in for a meeting can have its drawbacks.

"The growing rise of technology can

"We customize everything we do based on the group and what they are looking to do," says Lattari. "It can be something classroom-based, or it can be a scavenger hunt, or cooking; any activity that is done in a group where you can analyze how everyone's personalities work together."

As more and more clients started asking for help spreading the word about their

Sanders Says!

Five tips from Robert O. Sanders Jr. on how companies and nonprofits can get the most from their events:

1 You do not need a huge budget, but you need a direct purpose.

"That is the biggest thing I give guidance on. Organizations should have a desired outcome in mind and should ask themselves: *If we do this, what benefit do we get as a company? Do we get exposure? Do we get clients?*"

2 Engage the team.

"Identify the key stakeholders in the company who can help determine how to get things done with limited resources. Look at who your superstars are within the company; a lot of the time, people want to get involved if they are asked."

3 Find sponsors and donors to help cut costs.

For nonprofits, securing sponsorships to underwrite the costs associated with the event—such as food or music—can be the key to a successful fundraiser. "Often, people you deal with on a regular basis, whether it's your bank or your insurance carrier, want to be involved; they'd be thrilled to put their name on your event."

4 Get the word out.

It's important to have a clear strategy on how to promote the event. Is it the Web? Social media? Direct mail? E-blasting? All of the above? "I recommend a written marketing plan for the event, but it must have focus and direction."

5 Follow up.

Not scheduling post-event meetings with key clients, sponsors, and staff, can lead to missed opportunities for valuable feedback. "So many times people don't follow up with the clients and ask, 'Hey, what did you think? Should we do something else?' There is no follow-up to bring it to the next level. So, you had the event, and it was fantastic, but what was the outcome?"

events, the company began to offer public-relations and marketing services, ultimately resulting in HRG's third division, Allegis Communications, which was formed in 2004. This last expansion was a natural progression, since, Sanders says, his company was continually hiring other companies to do the PR, marketing, branding, and website design for the events it was managing. "We were just talking one day," he says, "and decided to start a division under the HRG

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brand that captures all that business and makes us a one-stop shop.” In 2003, HRG eclipsed the million-dollar mark in annual revenue. Today, the company is valued at almost triple that, with Event Solutions accounting for roughly 61 percent of company earnings, compared with STS’ 28 percent and Allegis’ 11 percent.

Getting Through Tough Times

Though Sanders estimates the company has experienced a steady growth of about 6 to 10 percent each year, there have been lean periods along the way.

The aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the stock market crash of 2008 were some of the worst times to be in the events business—but neither was enough to crush HRG. The business stayed afloat through both tragedies, with Sanders able to retain his entire staff.

“After 9/11, all the training we had on the books was cancelled,” Sanders recalls. “People were afraid to fly, and they weren’t sure if they should have a black-tie gala while this was going on in the country. They didn’t want to send the wrong message.”

As for the stock market crash, “It was a big deal for us,” says Sanders, who estimates HRG lost \$100,000 in revenue during that time. “A very different scenario than 9/11, but all corporate spending was being scrutinized, and companies started cutting back, especially on the training side.”

Interestingly, it was the strength of the nonprofit business that allowed HRG to weather those economic storms, and Sanders says the lost revenue was gained back within six to eight months. “Even in uncertain times, nonprofits still have to do fundraising events,” he explains.

Now, with more than 200 clients around the country and the world—including places like France and Belgium—HRG is looking at various digital initiatives it considers key to its continued success, including making its website more interactive and interfacing for clients, starting a blog, working on search-engine optimization and expanding its presence on social media.

While Sanders is proud of his company’s evolution, he wants to keep HRG a small business with a commitment to excellence and personal, strategic partnerships with clients. “Over the last 19 years, we’ve had exponential growth,” he says. “We are constantly growing, but it’s controlled growth, because we want to keep the company small and boutique. We have a great team, and we have fun.” ●

Freelance writer Mary Sue Iarocci is a former staff reporter for Westfair Communications and The Journal News.

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Sat | June 11

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Sat | June 11

Connoisseurs Tent at Grand Tasting Village

Kensico Dam Plaza
 Valhalla, NY
 12:00PM - 5:00PM
 (Includes access to all Grand Tasting Village events)

Gain exclusive access to the finest wines and gourmet food in the private Connoisseurs Tent lounge area. (Ticket includes access to all Grand Tasting Village events.)



Sat | June 11

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Clear Skies Ahead for Private Aviation

Comfort, convenience, safety, and time savings await private-aviation customers. **By Dave Donelson**

This is a tremendous time to be in aviation," according to Cory Rossi, who, with his wife, Shari, owns Eagle Air, a charter operator based at Westchester County Airport (HPN) in White Plains. He joins a chorus of executives in the local private-aviation industry who say business is booming due to several factors.

"It's a very large business in this area," says Linda Schiavone, charter sales manager for White Cloud Charter, which is also based at HPN. "Just think about the number of major corporations and wealthy individuals; this is the area for it." According to Rossi, HPN is the third-busiest airport in the country in terms of non-airline flights. Only Teterboro Airport in New Jersey and Van Nuys Airport in California boast more private traffic.

According to the FAA, there were about 125,000 charter, air taxi, and private flights at HPN in 2014, which

represented 82 percent of the total takeoffs and landings there. What's more, they carried more passengers than did the scheduled airlines.

It's not hard to see why private aviation is growing in popularity: Anyone who suffers the agitation of flying commercial from LaGuardia Airport (LGA)—which Vice President Joseph Biden once described as reminiscent of something in a Third World country—could attest to that. Much the same holds true for JFK and Newark. "The all-day hassle with a two-hour flight in-between is becoming more and more common," Rossi points out. "Our clientele recognizes this and says: 'First class isn't at the level it once was.'"

Eagle's customers, like those of other charter companies we spoke with, experience something entirely different. Rossi describes the charter experience like this: "Let's say you live within a 20-minute drive to Westchester airport. Your car drives right on the tarmac to the aircraft; the

red carpet is rolled out; your catering is on board; and you have WiFi on the plane. The ground crew will handle your bags and park your car, and the plane will depart within 10 minutes of boarding. At your destination, you will have the same experience on the ground." Sure, it costs more, but what is your time and comfort worth?

The private-aviation business isn't monolithic. Some companies, like White Cloud, charter only their own planes, which are also at the (occasional) call of the company's corporate parent, Conair Corporation. Others, like Aircraft Services Group, operate and manage planes owned by others, providing everything from crews to maintenance, as well as charter service for the aircraft, much like a vacation-home owner who rents out a condo when they're not using it. Eagle Air does both, as does Tradewind Aviation, which is based in Oxford, Connecticut, but offers flights from HPN.

Then, there are strictly private planes owned by individuals and corporations for their own use. They, along with the charter operators, support another big part of the business, fixed-base operators. FBOs, as they are known, provide hangars, fuel, and on-site maintenance, as well as ground amenities like passenger lobbies, parking, and rental cars, to planes going and coming through the airport. HPN has five FBO facilities.

Tradewind, meanwhile, serves yet another part of the market. "We're best known for our Nantucket shuttle," explains Tradewind president Eric Zipkin. "It is a shared charter, where people buy individual seats on the flights." The service started with Friday-through-Sunday flights only but has grown to seven days a week. They fly a similar service to Boston and Martha's Vineyard. The scheduled service is a good business on its own, Zipkin says, but it also serves another purpose: "Our shuttle service is a good marketing concept because people learn about us, then come back and charter individual flights."

Tradewind operates 18 aircraft, up from 12 just two years ago. The company owns 11 planes, with the balance owned by others. "Our business was up almost 30 percent in 2015, and it's full steam ahead for this year," Zipkin says. "Margins in this business run the gamut. Boutique aircraft management companies like ours are in the 20- to 30-percent range. It's also a high-risk business: If you lose management of an aircraft or two, there goes your profit."

White Plains-based Wings Air Helicopters represents yet another variety of local private aviation: helicopter service. Wings' president, Javier Diaz, says his five helicopters serve three distinct markets, including

Westchester Aviation by the Numbers

371,988 Non-airline passengers

367,529 Airline passengers

12,028 Airline flights

52,474 Charter and air taxi flights

72,788 Private* flights

295 Aircraft based at HPN

*private, non-commercial flights including personal use by aircraft owners and business use by corporate owners of their own planes

Source: 2014 FAA data



personal travel. "We do up to seven flights a day to the Hamptons," he says, adding that Saratoga Springs and other locations upstate are popular, too. "We also have a strong business with the Atlantic City casinos, as well as Mohegan Sun and Foxwoods."

Business travelers take advantage of the versatility and convenience of helicopter service, especially out of Manhattan. "If you want to fly from NYC to Pittsburgh," Diaz points out, "all you have to do is go to one of the heliports, and you'll be in the air 90 minutes before you could even get on an airplane from LGA." About 65 percent of his passengers fly from one of the three heliports in Manhattan. Then there is the aerial-movie-and-photography business, which is so good, Diaz is a member of the Screen Actors Guild.

"As people become busier and wealthier," Diaz says, "their time becomes more valuable. They need to get to places 'now,' and that's why the demand [for private aviation] is good. The demand will be there for the foreseeable future."

Speaking of the future, does it hold tailwinds or headwinds for the private-aviation industry? Not sur-

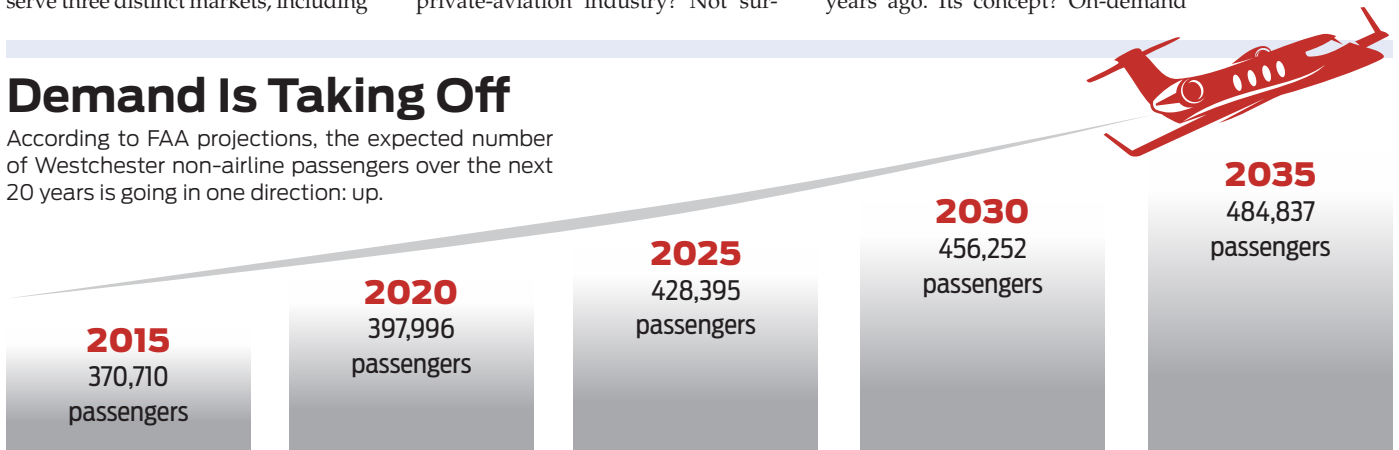
prisingly, regulation and technology may well be the determining factors. Google "air charter Westchester," and you'll get about 154,000 results. Almost all of them are for charter brokers—unregulated companies that don't own, fly, or manage planes and may not even have an office. Brokers aren't new, but their numbers mushroomed as instant worldwide communication enabled anyone with a cell phone and email address to open shop. Good ones, who can be reached 24/7 and have strong relationships with the charter companies, add value to the experience for both their customers and the airplane owners—but it pays to shop around.

A wave of new private-air-service concepts is rising along with demand in the market. As with anything new, some succeed and others don't. Beacon Air debuted a Netflix-like subscription service in which passengers paid a flat monthly fee for unlimited flights from HPN to Boston last year, but it has already ceased operations.

ImagineAir, headquartered in Atlanta, started service in 2007 and entered the Westchester market two years ago. Its concept? On-demand

Demand Is Taking Off

According to FAA projections, the expected number of Westchester non-airline passengers over the next 20 years is going in one direction: up.



Source: FAA projections

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THE BUSINESS OF: Private Aviation

private jet service at sharply reduced rates. Its service is aimed at business travelers who might be tempted to drive to their destinations. "We basically turn a three- to eight-hour drive into a one- to two-hour flight," says President and CEO Ben Hamilton, who adds, "Our average price point is around \$1,200, whereas a private jet might be \$7,500."

ImagineAir is able to offer the service because they fly a fleet of Cirrus SR22s, a three-passenger craft that's very efficient, Hamilton explains. "We do mostly business trips, and the majority of them are three people or fewer. We have enough scale in our fleet of 11 aircraft to mix and match flights and fill dead legs, passing those savings on to the customer." The company also handles bookings online rather than through a call center and, like a scheduled airline, uses demand-pricing models. "Our average customer books about four days in advance. You can book the same day if it's available, but the price gets a little more expensive as the time gets closer," Hamilton explains.

Any number of companies have been hailed as the "Uber of private aviation," although none have (or probably will) been able to get past the FAA prohibition against selling



seats in personal planes flown by amateur pilots. The safety requirements that charter operators have to meet are a major factor. That's not to say there aren't companies getting closer. "There are companies who have partnered to market empty seats," White Cloud's Schiavone points out. "If you're in Chicago and want to get back to White Plains, there's an app for that now. If there's an aircraft flying empty on a leg, it just makes sense."

Blue Star Jets, a NYC-based jet broker, recently launched an app that includes 24/7 personal telephone contact, to follow-up on the booking you make on your smartphone. Their business is designed to fill the 30 percent of business aircraft they estimate fly empty to or from their charter destination. The company claims that within four hours of booking a flight, you'll be in the air. "We like Blue Star Jets very much," Rossi says. "We like that model and have worked with them several times."

Still, the industry does face some headwinds. "The uncertainty of the regulatory environment is a long-term obstacle," Zipkin explains. Potential changes in secu-



"As people become busier and wealthier, their time becomes more valuable. They need to get to places 'now,' and that's why the future [of private aviation] is good. The demand will be there for the foreseeable future."

**—Javier Diaz, president,
Wings Air Helicopters**

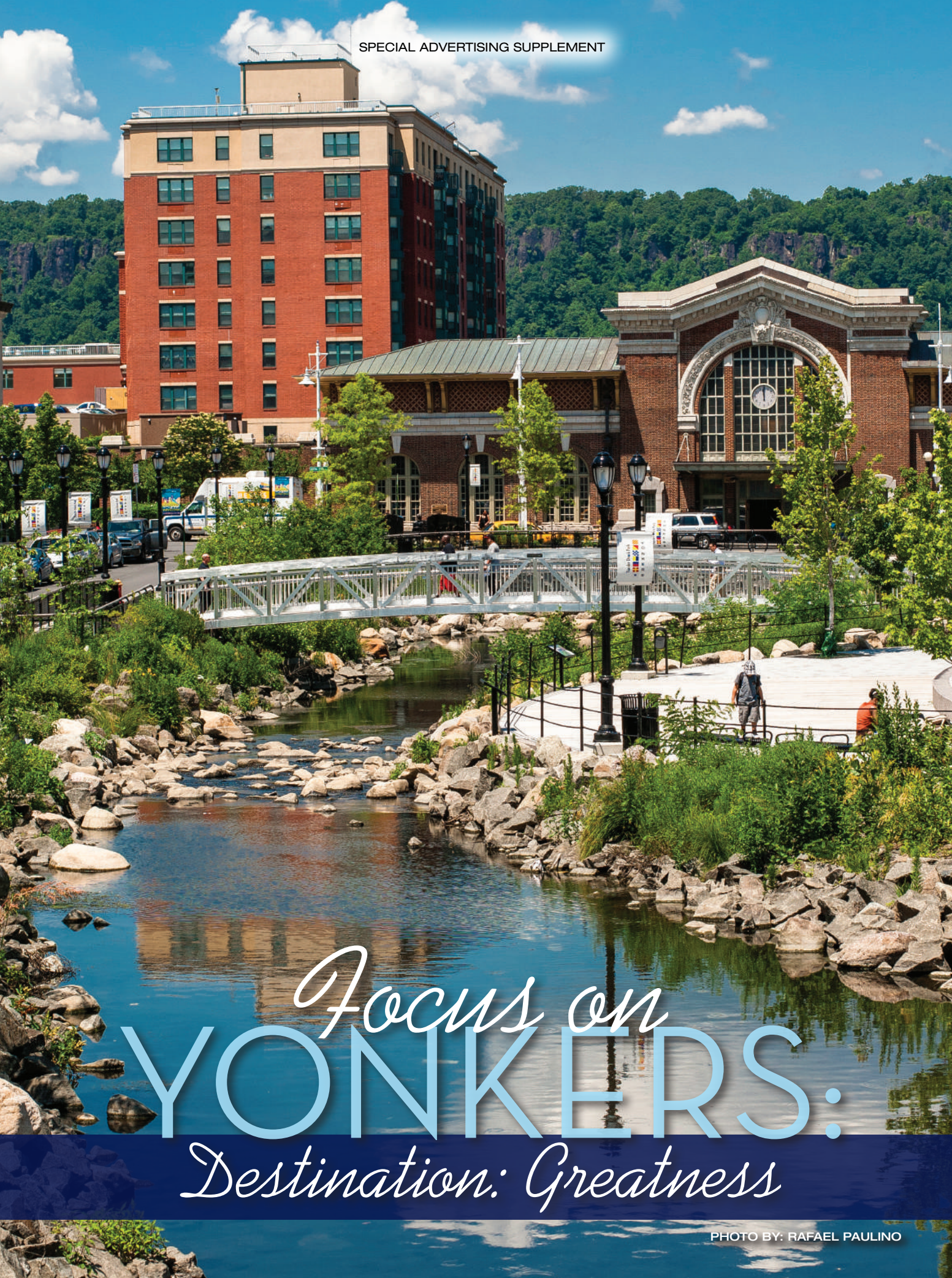
rity procedures, for example, could put a crimp in the private-aircraft experience. "We have internal security, but not the stand-in-line, take-your-shoes-off type of thing," he says.

Another problem area is a shortage of pilots, according to Zipkin. "The FAA changed the rules for airline requirements for copilots, and that has had a ripple effect throughout the industry," he says. "We used to pay twice what an entry-level airline pilot would make, because we wanted to attract the best candidates. The airline had trouble filling those seats, so they started raising their pay, which has set off a sort of race."

Rossi adds one more industry-wide threat: budget constraints on air-traffic control. "The federal government has threatened to shut down operations at a number of small airports around the country," he says. The ability of private-flight passengers to land at small airports, like Hilton Head Island Airport instead of Savannah International, is a big attraction for the business. "I'd hate to see that becoming a limiting factor on growth of the industry," Rossi notes.

Overall, however, the private-aviation business in Westchester is strong. As Zipkin says, "The challenges we face are those faced by any business that's growing. Our product has been very well received, and the market is growing here, so it's onward and upward." ●

Dave Donelson flies from HPN frequently, although not on private planes nearly as often as he'd like.



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YONKERS:
Destination: Greatness

YONKERS:

Westchester's Great Urban Frontier

Looking for a smart investment?
You'd be wise to bank on Yonkers.

When complete, River Tides at Greystone will feature 330 luxury rental apartments.



Implausible as it might have seemed several years ago, Yonkers is in the midst of a spectacular revival. Business is booming and housing and dining options are multiplying and diversifying. It's a city where cuisine, culture, and the arts are being embraced with renewed vigor. As more and more people are discovering, Yonkers truly is the next great urban frontier, one full of promise and possibilities.

ROLLING OUT THE WELCOME MAT

The driving force behind the city's renaissance is Mayor Mike Spano, who is transforming the city's image.

He has encouraged and incentivized development of the downtown and waterfront districts. And he rolled out the welcome mat to millennials and artists, touting Yonkers as a perfectly positioned transportation hub, providing access to 10 Metro-North train stations, a 25-minute ride to Grand Central Station, superb dining and shopping options, and captivating views of the Hudson River.

As evidence of the city's renaissance, there are more than \$1 billion in commercial and residential projects currently under development in Yonkers, a number that continues to grow. "The development activity underway in Yonkers is unprecedented," says Mayor

Spano. "The fact that the private sector is investing over a billion dollars in Yonkers undoubtedly demonstrates that our city is one of the most dynamic and exciting urban centers in the tri-state region."

GENERATION YONKERS

Yonkers, the largest city in the county and the fourth largest city in the state, also invested in an aggressive marketing campaign known as "Generation Yonkers." Created by ad agency Thompson & Bender, the first phase of the campaign, which launched in April 2014, included print and digital advertising in local and regional media,



YONKERS



Patricia Simone
PRESIDENT
Simone Management Group
Boyce Thompson Center
Yonkers, NY

“The pro-business climate in Yonkers is remarkable.

We’re thrilled to be part of the economic renaissance underway in Yonkers.”

Simone Development is investing \$35 million to transform the former Boyce Thompson Institute property in Yonkers into a modern 85,000 sq. ft. mixed-use complex of offices, medical space, restaurants and retail. Before even breaking ground, Simone leased 15,000 sq. ft. That’s a testament to the business-friendly environment in Yonkers.



GENERATION
YONKERS
GENERATIONYONKERS.COM
BE PART OF IT



Currently under construction, River Tides at Greystone overlooks the Hudson River.

as well as extensive use of social media, search engine marketing, and a new website, www.generationyonkers.com.

Last October, Mayor Spano unveiled Phase II of the Generation Yonkers marketing campaign. The campaign featured television spots that ran on targeted channels, as well as a dedicated CBS radio sponsorship tailored to business professionals. It also highlighted testimonials from prominent business leaders whose companies had recently moved to Yonkers, opened new start-ups or expanded their operations in the city.

BUSINESSES BENEFIT

Here's what some leading business leaders are saying about Yonkers:

» “The pro-business climate in Yonkers is remarkable,” says Patricia Simone of Simone Development Companies, which is transforming the historic Boyce Thompson Institute property—vacant for 40 years—into a \$35 million, 85,000-square-foot mixed-use center on North Broadway that will feature offices, medical space, retail shops, and restaurants. “We’re thrilled to be part of the economic renaissance underway in Yonkers.”

» “There is a transformation going on in Yonkers that mirrors how we transform

lives through education,” states Judith Huntington, President of The College of New Rochelle, which opened its new School of New Resources—the first undergraduate degree program offered in downtown Yonkers—on Ashburton Avenue last September.

» “Yonkers is on the cusp of becoming the next Hoboken or Williamsburg,” notes Joe Cotter, President of iPark, which is converting a building in the iPark complex into 100 micro-unit, loft-style apartments in an effort to appeal to millennials. “It’s got everything young people are looking for.”

» “We’re happy to be in Yonkers and a big part of the city’s economy for the last 100 years,” says Kelly DeAngelo, Refinery Manager at American Sugar Refining, with more than 250 employees—more than a third

of whom come directly from Yonkers—at its downtown facility.

» “People are rushing to Yonkers now,” explains lifelong resident Peter Kelly, renowned Chef and Owner of X20 Xaviars on the Hudson, which provides waterfront visitors with world-class cuisine and sensational sunsets over the Palisades. “They’re discovering what I’ve known for a lifetime.”

PROJECTS IN MOTION

The residential and economic development in Yonkers has run the gamut. Here’s a look at some of the major projects:

» Collins Enterprises has broken ground on the third and final phase of Hudson River Park Club, an \$85 million, 230,000-square-foot waterfront residential building.

Grants in the neighborhood of \$3 million received from Governor Andrew Cuomo and his Regional Economic Development Council will go largely to the funding of arts and cultural projects.

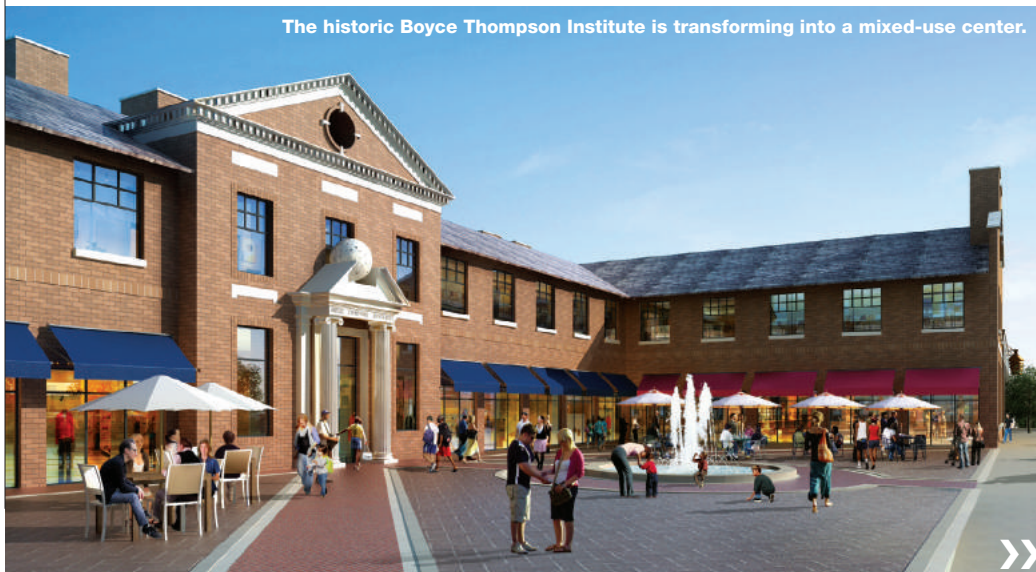
» Ginsburg Development is nearing completion of River Tides at Greystone, a \$100 million, 330-unit luxury rental complex overlooking the Hudson. A second Ginsburg luxury rental building just north of River Tides at 1177 Warburton will be breaking ground soon.

» Avalon Bay is planning to transform industrial land into a new housing complex featuring prime waterfront homes on Alexander Street.

» RXR Realty and Rising Development are planning a \$197.4-million project at Larkin Plaza, featuring market-rate residential apartments and retail space. The project overlooks Van Der Donck Park.

» Construction has begun on Hudson Park Phase III, which will result in another 222 residential units.

» A new Hampton Inn hotel on Tuckahoe Road is under construction, on the heels of the new Courtyard by Marriott in north Yonkers and the new Hyatt at the Cross County Shopping Center. Once the Hampton Inn is completed, Yonkers will have six nationally branded hotels. In addition, a new Yonkers Tourism Alliance has been announced to connect hotels with the city’s museums, attractions and other points



The historic Boyce Thompson Institute is transforming into a mixed-use center.





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CASINO

Baccarat, Craps and Roulette are video lottery games operated by the New York Lottery. Must be 18 years of age or older to play New York Lottery games or wager on horses. Please play responsibly. If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, help is available. Call the 24-hour toll-free help line at 1-877-8HopsNY.

of interest in an effort to drive regional and national promotion.

» Two new distribution centers are being developed—for Cintas (off Executive Boulevard) and for FedEx (on Tuckahoe Road).

» Construction has begun on Westchester's first Lowe's home goods store at Ridge Hill.

CENTER FOR CULTURE AND CUISINE

Yonkers isn't just a hub for commerce and business-related development. In recent years, it also has become a burgeoning center for culture and cuisine, conjuring images of Brooklyn a decade ago. In fact, Yonkers was recently crowned "hippest town" in the Hudson Valley in voting on *The Journal News'* website, www.lohud.com.

Perhaps no finer example of this emerging trend exists than the transformation of the old Yonkers Jail on the waterfront. The derelict jail was purchased by Maya Lin—best known as the designer of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington—and her art dealer husband, Daniel Wolf, to create gallery and studio space.

Grants in the neighborhood of \$3 million received from Governor Andrew Cuomo and his Regional Economic Development Council will go largely to the funding of arts and cultural projects. The money will go toward expansion and enhancement of the downtown waterfront esplanade, development of an urban heritage sculpture on the waterfront and creation of an arts and technology center at the site of the old Alexander Carpet Mills.

Yonkers has plenty of other cultural, entertainment, and dining options to offer, with more on the way. Here's a sampling:

» One of the first tenants at Simone Development's new Boyce Thompson Center will be destination eatery Fortina.

» The third annual Yonkers Arts Weekend will be held May 14 and 15 at locations across the city.

» The Yonkers Film Festival—YoFi Fest—will take place October 20 through 23. Now in its fourth year, the event continues to expand.

» Organizations such as Blue Door Gallery, Youth Theatre Interactions, SUNY Purchase, and Urban Studio Unbound have contributed to Yonkers' artistic appeal.

» Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway remains a hot spot for gambling and racing enthusiasts alike.

» Ridge Hill is now home to the first and only i-Fly skydiving attraction along the eastern seaboard.

» The city will begin construction on the Yonkers Rail Trail, which will feature a bike, jogging, and walking path that begins in the Bronx and extends through Yonkers. The Rail Trail plan also calls for a new playground at Lawrence Street and the installation of a public sculpture and mosaics.

» Chicken Island Brewing will open a new 11,000-square-foot craft brewery on the waterfront. Another brewery, Yonkers Brewing Co., opened last year downtown.

» Yonkers is preparing to welcome popular eatery Shake Shack to the Cross County Shopping Center.

GO-TO DESTINATION

From businesses eager to invest in reasonably priced office space, to artists who have added welcome splashes of color and flair, to millennials seeking affordable dining and entertainment options, Yonkers has become an attractive destination—one with vast potential. Add in the easy access to mass transit, including a fast track in and out of Manhattan, and it's no wonder so many are bullish on Yonkers.

EMPIRE CITY CASINO:

Game on at Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway!

Westchester is home to one of the largest entertainment destinations in the northeast—Empire City Casino. The dance scene is as hot as the casino floor, which is larger than most you'll find in Vegas and boasts over a dozen six-figure jackpots. A big winner recently hit the largest slot score in state history with a whopping \$1.4 million jackpot.

High-tech electronic Blackjack and Three Card Poker offer state-of-the-art gaming with the best odds. The advanced technology allows for a faster pace of play without the intimidation of live tables, yet plays exactly as traditional casino tables, sans handheld cards and chips. With a minimum bet of \$10 and maximum of \$2,500, denominations welcome recreational players and high rollers.

Comedy Night gets you up close and personal with some of the nation's top stand-up comedians, and that's no joke. Nightly entertainment on the Main Stage brings you the hottest bands performing live, including today's music hits, tribute nights, salsa, and more.

Witness your favorite sports teams in action on over 40 TVs while enjoying comfort foods taken up a notch at Dan Rooney's Sports Pub, or enjoy traditional Italian fare at Nonno's Trattoria. Fridays and Saturdays, burn it all off while you dance to the beats of the hottest DJs, bowl on retro lanes, and enjoy a few cocktails in Alley 810.

"If you live anywhere near the tri-state area and enjoy blackjack, poker, slots, comedy, or music, you no longer need to drive for hours," says Ryan Munroe, Director of Slot Operations. "We're just minutes away."

Check out Empire City. They take fun seriously.



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HAMPTON INN & SUITES YONKERS



Looking for a comfortable home base while you're in Westchester? Look no further than the brand new Hampton Inn & Suites Yonkers hotel. Conveniently located in the heart of Westchester County,

it puts you within easy reach of fantastic shopping, and delicious dining options in Ridge Hill Mall and complimentary shuttle service to and from Tuckahoe's Metro-North Train Station. You'll also have easy access to New York City and its countless attractions, including Times Square, Yankee Stadium, the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, and all three main airports.

After an amazing, stimulating day in Manhattan, return to a haven of comfort and serenity appointed with a clean and fresh Hampton bed® and free Wi-Fi. Wake up each morning to a free, hot breakfast with fresh baked waffles and hearty oatmeal with toppings. You can also count on friendly, helpful service and so much more. Guaranteed. Nothing short of your satisfaction will do. If you're not satisfied, you're not expected to pay—that's the Hampton Inn & Suites commitment and your

guarantee.

Whether you come for a fun-filled family vacation, a relaxing weekend getaway, a special event, or a productive business meeting, you can count on great value and modern amenities. That includes 150 guest rooms and suites with a 43-inch flat-screen HDTV; a spacious meeting room; a 24-hour Business Center; round-the-clock Fitness Center; convenience store; an on-site laundry facility; indoor pool; outdoor patio with a grill; and complimentary parking.

Come and visit—the Hampton Inn & Suites Yonkers is ready to welcome you!

X20 XAVIARS ON THE HUDSON:

*Divine Dining on
the Waterfront*

X20 Xaviars on the Hudson Restaurateur and award-winning chef Peter X. Kelly couldn't be more proud of his native Yonkers—the city he calls a “suburban community



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with an urban heart.”

Revisiting his Yonkers roots (where he grew up as the 10th of 12 children) is one of the reasons he selected the Yonkers waterfront as the site for X20 Xaviars on the Hudson, his fifth Hudson Valley Restaurant, now entering its 10th year. “In a sense, this was a project to see if a restaurant could have a significant impact on a community.”

Kelly’s gamble to open his upscale restaurant at the beginning of the city’s revitalization effort has been a resounding success. Set at the historic Yonkers Pier, the highly acclaimed elegant, glass-walled fine-dining destination with 25-foot vaulted ceilings, stunning panoramic views of the Hudson River and the Palisades, and Kelly’s signature gourmet fare has been attracting visitors from all directions, including New York City.

“Yonkers is so wonderfully situated—a short 18-minute commute to Manhattan by train and waterways with dramatic breathtaking views of the Palisades that the Rockefeller’s have ensured will remain protected,” he says.

Kelly is equally proud to be playing a part in attracting young professionals who are drawn by the proximity to New York City, its diversity, and more reasonable cost of living. “We have to make sure we offer them a hospitable welcome. This administration is also working hard to invite people to Yonkers to see what’s new.”

Yonkers is a city Kelly believes in deeply. He appreciates every single inch of it and is unabashedly optimistic about its future: “In my heart I believe that Yonkers is poised for great things. As a community, we have to support each other. We’re near the finish line.”

CROSS COUNTY SHOPPING CENTER

Summer Fun Arrives at Cross County Shopping Center

Calling all Westchester residents! It’s time to enjoy musical concerts under the stars, delicious “Bites and Brews,” a new art show, fun activities for kids, and more—all at one location. Cross



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MIKE BRADY, President & CEO
Greyston Bakery, Inc.



Mike Brady
President & CEO
Greyston Bakery

John Tolomer
President & CEO
The Westchester Bank



The Westchester Bank

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County Shopping Center is the premier destination for summertime entertainment in the Hudson Valley with another season of SummerFest beginning in May 2016! The summer series brings new programs this year, including a preview of Yonkers Arts Weekend and a series of free DJ dance parties for kids.

“SummerFest is one of the biggest events in the region and attracts residents from Westchester County as well as the surrounding areas,” says Liz Pollack, Senior Manager of Marketing. “Whether looking for family fun, a girls’ night out, or the chance to enjoy live music, this year’s SummerFest will include all of the familiar events our shoppers have grown to enjoy, as well as a number of new components that will take our summer series to the next level.”

Rapidly becoming known as a cultural hub for artisans, Yonkers celebrates the arts with a series of exhibits, performances, and demonstrations during the Yonkers Arts Weekend. As a preview to this experience, the new Cross County Art Show will feature displays and unique pieces by local crafters and artists on Saturday, May 7, for shoppers to enjoy and purchase. Kids will create their own works of art at the Arts & Crafts Zone from 1 pm to 3 pm.

Also new for kids this year are the Thursday night DJ Dance Parties, hosted by WPLJ DJ, Mike Allan. Kids (accompanied by parents) are invited to put on their dancing shoes and head to the main SummerFest stage to listen to their favorite top 40 tunes, participate in dance-off contests, and more.

The new Bites & Brew Food

Fest will showcase the many new eateries and restaurants that have opened at Cross County Shopping Center, including Shake Shack, which opens their first Westchester location at Cross County this summer! Shoppers can enjoy samples and tastes under a festive tent with live music from the Royal Khaoz band on Thursday, May 19, from 6 pm to 9 pm. The \$20 admission will be donated to local non-profits.

SummerFest wouldn’t be complete without Wednesday night concerts and our Independence Day fireworks on July 1. For a complete list of SummerFest events and other mall activities, from new stores to sales and promotions, please visit www.crosscountycenter.com or like us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Don’t forget, parking is free year-round!

THE WESTCHESTER BANK:

Business Banking Made Personal

It’s been almost eight years since The Westchester Bank opened its doors. John M. Tolomer, President & CEO, is more enthusiastic than ever about The Westchester Bank’s position in the marketplace and its continued growth. The Westchester Bank is the leading community bank in

Westchester and one of the fastest growing in the nation.

“We have been fortunate to have record-breaking years in 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015 with no signs of slowing down,” says Tolomer. “Outpacing even our most optimistic growth plans, we continue to expand the brand’s footprint throughout Westchester County and surrounding areas, having recently opened a new branch in Mamaroneck with expectations of further branch expansion later this year. We also continue to broaden financial products to meet varied customer needs and have transitioned into both the Wealth Management and Insurance Services arenas.”

The bank’s recent industry accolades include:

► **TOP 25 National Ranking** in Business Lending for Community Banks with \$500 million+ in assets by *Independent Banker Magazine*.

► **Business Hall of Fame Induction** by the Business Council of Westchester in the Small Business category.

► **Bauer Financial 5-Star Rating** for a 4th consecutive year, representing financial strength, stability, and consistency.

► **Top Workplace in Westchester** for 2016 as through the *Journal News*.

Tolomer attributes the bank’s ongoing success to the Board of Directors, shareholders, loyal customers, and in large

part, to a close-knit staff with a “can do” attitude and consistent ability to execute the bank’s model of Business Banking Made Personal. “We’re able to differentiate ourselves from the competition by giving our customers the same products and services offered by larger institutions, but delivering them in a highly personalized, genuine manner,” he explains. “We get to know our customers by visiting them at their place of business to better understand their banking needs whether it’s loan solutions, cash management solutions, or local service issues. The great advantage of being a community bank is that we make all our decisions right here, locally, not in other states like most larger banks.”

The bank’s community efforts continue to expand. “We’re committed to being an integral part of the community we serve. We believe in being a good corporate citizen and frankly, it’s good business,” Tolomer explains. “Our not-for-profit banking model helps organizations by simplifying their banking, reducing their fees, and allowing them to focus on their own initiatives rather than their banking.” The Westchester Bank continues to attract high-quality companies from the small to mid-size business sector to help drive the bank’s growth and profitability. Tolomer concludes, “We pay special attention to understanding our customer’s banking needs. Combine that customer focus with a knowledge of Westchester’s business conditions and we’re able to tailor products and services to meet specific requirements.” ●



Resource Directory

City of Yonkers

40 S Broadway
Yonkers
(914) 377-6300
www.cityofyonkers.com

Cross County Shopping Center

8000 Mall Walk
Yonkers
(914) 968-9570
www.crosscountycenter.com

Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway

810 Yonkers Ave
Yonkers
(914) 968-4200
www.empirecitycasino.com

Hampton Inn & Suites Yonkers

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www.hamptoninnyonkers.com

The Westchester Bank

2001 Central Park Ave
Yonkers
(914) 337-1900
www.thewestchesterbank.com

X20 Xaviars on the Hudson

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www.xaviars.com

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BCW's Conversation Series Featuring Million Air CEO



Million Air CEO Roger Woolsey

The BCW's People's United Bank Leadership Conversation Series will be soaring to new heights on May 17 with a lively and insightful conversation with Roger Woolsey, seasoned aviator, branding expert and CEO of Million Air.

A visionary and charismatic entrepreneur, Woolsey started his first business venture – Prestige Touring -- at the age of 19. At the time he was the youngest commercial pilot in the nation, and still holds the title as the youngest air carrier operator in U.S. history. Prestige Touring catered to flying rock & roll bands on music tours including Billy Joel, Sting, Grateful Dead, Stevie Nicks, U2, Peter Frampton, Reba, Garth Brooks and Elton John.

Million Air, which has operations at Westchester County Airport, is the third largest fixed-based operation chain in the world, providing upscale private aviation services to airports, individuals and corporate flight depart-

ments. The company provides aircraft charter, fuel, aircraft maintenance and support services across the U.S., Canada, South America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia.

"We are absolutely thrilled to have Roger Woolsey as our featured guest for the next Leadership Conversation Series. The remarkable story of his business career is truly inspiring. We all look forward to what is sure to be a fascinating interview with one of today's most interesting business leaders," said Marsha Gordon, President and CEO of The Business Council of Westchester.

The May 17th event, which is presented by People's United Bank, will be held from 5:00 - 7:00 pm at the Castle Hotel & Spa in Tarrytown. For more information, visit thebcw.org.

The BCW's Leadership Conversations Series has featured some of the region's top business leaders.



Youth Summit Keynote Speaker Lucinda Cross gave an inspiring address to the young people attending the event.

Summit Helps Youth Achieve Workplace Success

More than 250 young people ages 16-24 received expert insight and motivation for finding success in the workplace at the fifth annual Westchester-Putnam Youth Summit, held March 23 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel.

The Youth Summit, presented by The Business Council of Westchester, Westchester County, Putnam County and the Westchester-Putnam Workforce Development Board, featured a full day of interactive activities and workshops aimed at providing attendees with employment skills and advice.

Among the highlights of the Youth Summit was the keynote address by Activate Movement Founder and President Lucinda Cross, who delivered a stirring message of hope and inspiration. Ms. Cross discussed the importance of positive influences and perseverance in her transformation from federal prisoner to motivational speaker and best-selling author.

Other highlights of the day-long program included a team-building exercise facilitated by Monique Peretti of the LEGOLAND Discovery Center and a Shark Tank Team Competition.

Message from the president...



Marsha Gordon
President and CEO
The Business Council of Westchester

One of the fastest growing sectors of the NY Metro area economy is something many people have never heard about. It's called TAMI, which stands for Technology, Advertising Media and Information.

According to the New York City Economic Development Corp., the TAMI industry currently employs over 330,000 people in New York City alone and the

numbers keep growing. The demand for TAMI industry jobs is also booming with annual salaries averaging more than \$125,000.

TAMI is also growing in Westchester with young companies such as IAC Applications (formerly Mindspark) as well as more established tech giants like IBM. Recognizing this important emerging trend in our economy, The Business Council of Westchester is pleased to be partnering with Manhattanville College on an exciting new program called TAMI Talks which debuts June 20 at Manhattanville College from 5:00- 7:00 pm.

The inaugural program will feature an interview with Don Callahan, Head of Global Operations and Technology at Citi Group. He is the Executive Chair of the Chief Information Officer Council, which sets global standards for all technology throughout Citi, and leads the Digital Governance Office, which drives digital transformation across Citi's businesses. He is also responsible for developing and implementing Citi's global information security strategy.

This is sure to be a fascinating and timely program on a topic that impacts all sectors of our information-based

economy.

And speaking of timely programs....

With the 2016 Presidential campaign heating up, the BCW is presenting an enlightening panel discussion on the "The Business of Politics". The breakfast program, which is part of the BCW's ongoing Political Leadership Series, will be held May 5 from 8:00 – 9:30 at Pace University in Pleasantville.

We have assembled an impressive panel of political pundits and practitioners who will provide an insider's look at politics from a business perspective. Our panel includes Evan Stavisky of The Parkside Group; Bill O'Reilly of The November Team and former U.S. Congressman Tim Bishop. Co-moderators are BCW Executive Vice President and COO John Ravitz and Laurence Gottlieb, President and CEO of Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation (HVEDC). This program is presented in partnership with HVEDC.

For more information about these and other upcoming BCW programs, please visit us at thebcw.org

BCW Takes Legislative Agenda to Albany

In what has become an annual tradition, members of the Business Council of Westchester's Government Action Council led by BCW President and CEO Marsha Gordon and BCW Executive Vice President and COO John Ravitz traveled to Albany on February 24 for the BCW's Lobby Day.

The BCW delegation met with key lawmakers including Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul to lobby for legislation vital to the interests of the business community including fiscal reform, unfunded mandates and regulatory reform to name a few. They also presented copies of the BCW's 2016 Legislative Agenda to lawmakers and state officials.



From left, BCW Chairman Anthony Justic; Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul and BCW President and CEO Marsha Gordon.

BCW EXPO Scores Another Big Success

The Hilton Westchester was buzzing with activity as more than 1,500 people got an up-close look at the products and services provided by some of the area's elite vendors and merchants during The Business Council of Westchester's annual Business EXPO.

The Business EXPO, which is the largest and most influential business-to-business trade show in the Hudson Valley region, featured more than 180 exhibitors, "experience stations" and "Ask the Expert" booths. Visitors mingled with representatives of leading brands in education, healthcare, hospitality, insurance, real estate, banking, not-for-profits, law, marketing and more.

And when they weren't milling about the booths, attendees could be seen sampling pulled pork, Italian ices and other delicacies from the ample food stations. There was a bonus for New York Giants fans – photo opportunities with former running back and Super Bowl XXV MVP Ottis



From left, John Flannery of Wilson Elser; Elizabeth Bracken-Thompson of Thompson & Bender; EXPO co-chair Peter Herrerro of N.Y. Hospitality Group; BCW Chairman Anthony Justic; EXPO co-chair Bridget Gibbons of Gibbons Digital; Deputy County Executive Kevin Plunkett; BCW President and CEO Marsha Gordon; BCW Executive VP and COO John Ravitz; Keynote Speaker Lorraine Santoli; County Executive Chief of Staff George Oros; Mercedes Garcia of MasterCard Worldwide; Brian Avallone of ARC Document Solutions.

Anderson, who was available at the Steiner Sports booth.

Keynote speaker for the March 14th event was Lorraine Santoli, the former Director of Corporate Synergy for The Walt Disney Company, kicked off this year's EXPO with a

passionate address about the importance of collaboration among teams within an organization. "Done well, synergy works," said Santoli, who offered anecdotes detailing wildly successful marketing campaigns she developed around Disney favorites.

Mayors Tout Their Booming Cities at KeyBank Series



From left, New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson; Mount Vernon Mayor Richard Thomas; Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano, and White Plains Mayor Thomas Roach.

The renaissance under way in Westchester's four largest cities was the focus of a lively and highly informative program presented by the Business Council of Westchester's KeyBank Speaker

Series.

The event, held January 22 at Tappan Hill Mansion, featured a distinguished panel that included New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson, Yonkers Mayor Mike Spano, White Plains

Mayor Thomas Roach and Mount Vernon Mayor Richard Thomas.

Among the major projects discussed were LCOR's \$250 million transit oriented residential development under construction in downtown White Plains; the more than \$1 billion in projects in development in Yonkers; and RDXR Realty's redevelopment plan for downtown New Rochelle.

Roach noted that White Plains is becoming a more walkable city and stressed the need to increase connectivity between downtown projects. Spano said that Yonkers with its scenic waterfront and budding arts community is attracting residents from New York City. Bramson discussed how New Rochelle is implementing flexible zoning to create a more predictable approval process. Mayor Thomas said Mount Vernon is focusing on improving the quality of life in the city especially improvements to its infrastructure.

Business in Action

Reception for County Legislators

March 1, C.V. Rich Mansion, White Plains



From left, County Legislator Vice Chair James Maisano; County Legislator Chair Michael Kaplowitz; BCW President and CEO Marsha Gordon; Roger Woolsey, CEO, Million Air; and County Legislator Lyndon Williams.

County Executive Meeting with BCW Board

January 29, 800 Westchester Avenue, Rye Brook



From left, BCW Executive Vice President and COO John Ravitz; BCW President and CEO Marsha Gordon; County Executive Robert P. Astorino and BCW Chairman Anthony Justic.

Youth Summit, March 24, Crowne Plaza, White Plains



From left, Donovan Beckford, Executive Director, Westchester-Putnam Workforce Development Board; Westchester County Executive Robert P. Astorino; BCW President and CEO Marsha Gordon; Putnam County Executive Mary Ellen Odell; BCW Chairman Anthony Justic; and William M. Mooney III, Director, Westchester County Office of Economic Development.



More than 250 young people attended the all-day program.

Annual Business EXPO, March 17, Hilton Westchester, Rye Brook



Dani Glaser and Scott Fernqvist of the Westchester Green Business Challenge greet visitors at their booth.



Welcoming visitors to the NewYork-Presbyterian booth are from left, Tasha Green and Nancy Objay, Columbia Doctors Tarrytown; Jessica Moffa, NewYork-Presbyterian Medical Group/Hudson Valley; Alissa Kosowsky and Jennifer Gilkie, NewYork-Presbyterian Regional Hospital Network.



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2016

Wunderkinds

Meet this year's crop of fresh-faced, forward-thinking phenoms: 24 under-30 professionals racing to the top in Westchester.

By Mary Sue Iarocci, Tanya Klich, Jerry McKinstry, Ken Valenti, and Gina Valentino

Photographs by Stefan Radtke

Makeup and Hair by Ashley Lauren, Gabriella, Samantha of Ashley Lauren Beauty Lounge

Shot on location at Grand Prix New York, Mount Kisco





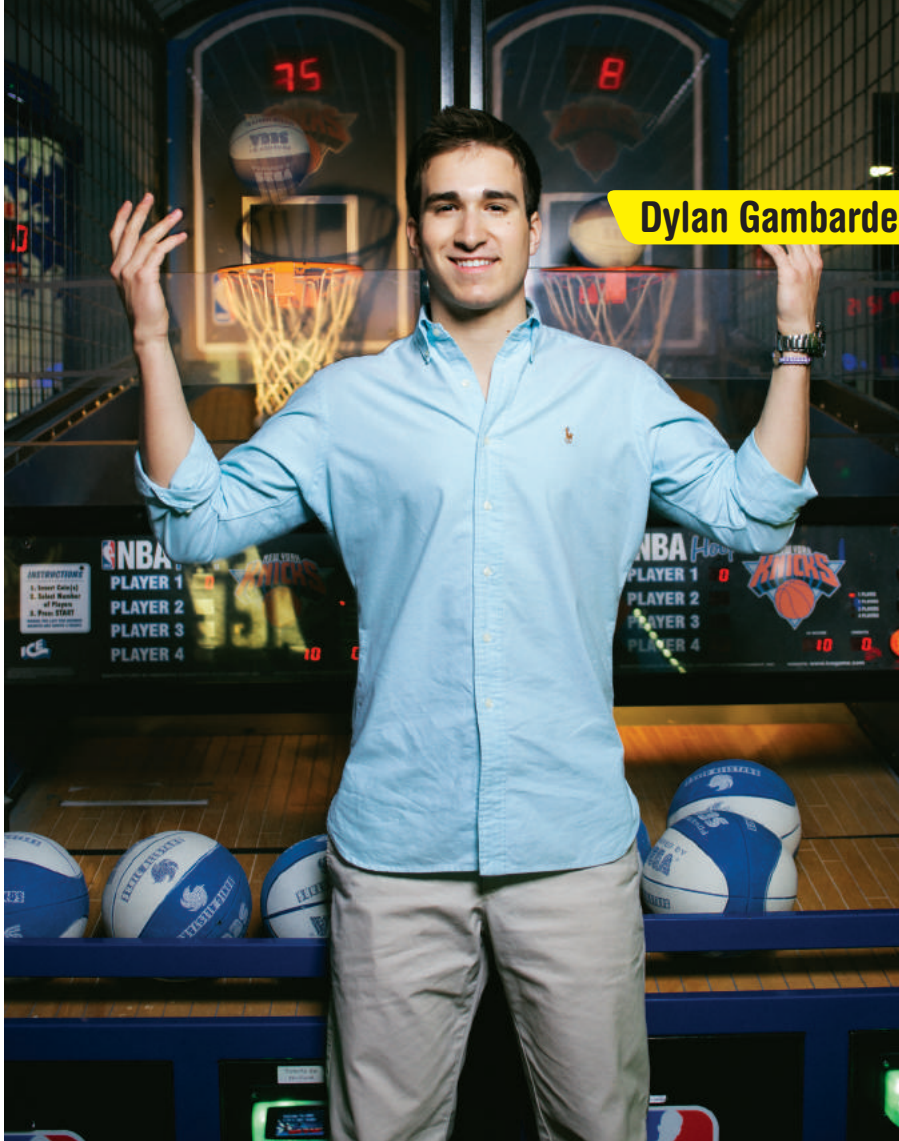


Laura Belkner, 29 Attorney, Law Office of Kevin H. Cohen

Attorney Laura Belkner joined the law office of Kevin H. Cohen in White Plains four years ago, when she was in her mid-20s. A decade from now, odds are she'll be running the joint. Cohen says that between her work ethic and her unique ability to quickly grasp the strengths and weaknesses of a case and formulate a strategy, he expects Belkner to be leading the firm within a few years. In 2014, she began managing the firm's trusts-and-estates-litigation department, responsible for depositions, court appearances, preparation of documents, negotiations, client contact, and appeals. As many as five people report to her, depending on workflow, and lawyers twice her age seek her advice, Cohen notes. Says Belkner: "I try to be the most prepared person in the room. There are times when I would be up all night thinking about a case." That preparation has paid off: The firm has had unprecedented success with cases, motions, and appeals since Belkner took over the department.

—Ken Valenti

West Harrison residents Francesco Vittorini (*left*) and Nick Spano had one simple goal when starting their company: to "take all the passionate sports fans and get them talking and vibe-ing in one place." From there, they created uSTADIUM, an increasingly popular iPhone app, website, and social-media brand for football fans. With 25,000 downloads and more than three million posts from fans throughout the country since 2014, uSTADIUM is a place where fans can talk football 24/7, posting opinions, reactions, and news. "Think of it like a Reddit meets Twitter," they say. And with a to-date total of nine "live" events in New York City, featuring more than



Dylan Gambardella, 20 Co-Founder, Next Gen Summit


Dylan Gambardella was not yet out of high school when he formed his first company, Students4Students College Advisory. In his senior year at Hendrick Hudson High School in Montrose, the Cortlandt Manor resident and his best friend, Justin Lasazan of Long Island, began matching high school students with students at top colleges that could offer advice on their applications. That led the partners to the enterprise that is making headlines now, the Next Gen Summit. Gambardella and Lasazan got the idea when their Students4Students project was a semifinalist at a *Forbes* Under 30 Summit. “Everything just inspired us and we thought, ‘Why not create something like this for younger people?’” says Gambardella, now a sophomore at Duke University. Their summit is aimed at budding entrepreneurs about 15 to 25 years old. The summit connects these young achievers and introduces them to “people who were in their shoes and made it happen,” he explains. The first summit, in Austin, Texas, last summer, drew 350 people. The next one will take place in June in New York City; Gambardella expects to draw 500 attendees. —KV

Francesco Vittorini, 28 & Nick Spano, 26 Founders, uSTADIUM

30 NFL players, uSTADIUM bridges the gap between everyday fans and their favorite players, with the likes of Victor Cruz, Muhammad Wilkerson, and Khalil Mack in attendance. The in-person gatherings always coincide with a football event—like the NFL Draft or Super Bowl—where fans can come together and eat/drink/party while watching. “We wanted to take the relationships fans were making online and bring them to reality. Messaging someone online about football is cool, but doing it in person is so much cooler,” say Spano, the company’s CMO, and CEO Vittorini. So far, uSTADIUM is exclusively targeting football fans, but Spano and Vittorini plan to expand to include all sports. —Mary Sue Iarocci



Matthew Demeo, 26 Founder, Designer, and Fabricator, Mateo Mattia

A full-page photograph of Matthew Demeo, a man with a beard and dark hair, wearing a dark blue button-down shirt and black pants. He is in a bowling alley, captured in the middle of a bowling motion. He is holding a large, bright red bowling ball with his right arm extended forward. The bowling lane is polished wood, and the background shows a large window with a view of a city skyline at night, with many skyscrapers lit up. The bowling pins are visible at the end of the lane. The lighting is warm, and the overall atmosphere is casual and fun.

Most artists tend to flock to Brooklyn and Manhattan. But Matthew Demeo is intent on building a fashion brand—as well as a lively network of local artists—right in his hometown of New Rochelle. The Fashion Institute of Technology graduate is founder of the handmade leather accessories line Mateo Mattia, which he launched in 2015. He's also the mind behind the New Rochelle Arts Collective, which seeks to activate the arts within the Queen City. Demeo designs, sews, and stitches each item in his collection, including wallets, watchbands, and tote bags. He sells from his appointment-only showroom near downtown New Rochelle, at nearby craft shows and pop-up shops, and online via Etsy, among other places—all of which have resulted in a quadrupling of sales since last year. People often suggest that he produce in greater volume, to reach a global audience, but Demeo says this goes against his desire to build a sustainable fashion brand. "I want my customers to know where their product is coming from, to know how it's made and under what conditions it's being manufactured," says Demeo.

—Tanya Klich

Jesse Antonio Lopez, 29

Director, Strategic Business Intelligence, HEINEKEN USA

As a natural-born leader, Jesse Antonio Lopez says it's in his DNA to take on challenges and "build from the bottom up." In 2015, after a solid strategy and marketing career in the consumer packaged-goods industry at leading global companies—including PepsiCo, Frito-Lay, and Mondelez International—Lopez, an MIT graduate, was recruited to lead the newly formed Strategic Business Intelligence (SBI) team at HEINEKEN USA. Within a short period of time, Lopez leads a highly effective team that guides strategy generation and implementation for one of the largest operating companies in the Heineken Group. One of the most challenging and rewarding responsibilities of his current role, Lopez says, "is to drive strategic business decisions by building strong cross-functional partnerships across the organization and translating vast amounts of data into meaningful insights and actions." His SBI team regularly collaborates across regions (Western, Southeast, Central, and Northeast regions); brands (including Heineken, Dos Equis, Tecate, Strongbow, Amstel Light, and Newcastle); and functions (working on sales, marketing, finance, and operations). —MI



Lia Taylor Schwartz, 29 Chief of Staff, Children's Village

Between her full-time job as chief of staff for Children's Village (CV) in Dobbs Ferry, volunteering with her therapy dog at local libraries, mentoring teens, running marathons, and blogging for the *Huffington Post*, Lia Taylor Schwartz wears many hats. In her role at CV, she is responsible for overseeing agency-wide projects and strategic initiatives for the 1,000-employee charity, which helps 10,000 children and families in the New York-Metropolitan area in obtaining education, jobs, and life skills. Thanks to her digital- and social-media skills, along with her efforts to keep CV "in the forefront of significant issues in child welfare and juvenile justice," she was named a 2015 "40 Under 40 Rising Star" by New York Nonprofit Media. Her work for CV has brought her all over the world; last year, she traveled to Dubai and Baghdad at the invitation of the Iraqi government, to serve as a liaison to the Iraqi Children Foundation. "The stories and faces of children, families, colleagues, and neighbors are what make me want to get out of bed every morning and do my absolute best," she says. —MI

Gleb Sagitov, 27 **Manager, Commercial Analytics, Regeneron Pharmaceuticals**

Gleb Sagitov wasn't sure he wanted to go into pharmaceuticals. But Regeneron, the Tarrytown-based biotechnology company that develops, manufactures, and markets life-saving medicines, has a prescription for go-getters like Sagitov: opportunity. "A lot of my success is due to the environment," says Sagitov. "I love the company; I love the culture." As manager of commercial analytics, Sagitov identifies markets and opportunities for drugs that treat eye disease, colorectal cancer, heart disease, and rare inflammatory conditions, among others. He started as a lab intern and was later hired in the finance group. The bosses liked Sagitov's outside-the-box thinking and quickly learned he was a problem-solver. Sagitov loves that he is at the intersection of science and business. A common question—and primary motivator—for him and his colleagues is, "How do we most effectively get life-saving medicines and treatments to those who need them?" What, asks Sagitov, "can we do to get drugs commercialized and to the patients? We speak a common language."
—Jerry McKinstry



Jake Roth, 17 **Philanthropist, First Tee of Metropolitan New York**

There are more holes in a round of golf than there are years in Jake Roth's life. But that hasn't stopped the 17-year-old from establishing himself as one of Westchester's youngest philanthropists, with golf education as his cause. Over the past three years, he's raised more than \$30,000 for First Tee of Metropolitan New York, an organization that provides young golfers with affordable golf instruction and teaches life lessons along the way. Ever since volunteering as a golf instructor for the First Tee when he was 12 years old, Roth wanted to find a way to raise money for the program. So, in 2013, he created the Tee It Up fundraiser, hosted by his family's golf club, Quaker Ridge Golf Club in Scarsdale, which takes place every year on Columbus Day. Roth, who plays on his high school's varsity golf team, begins planning for the annual event during the summer; he attends meetings with golf pros and club staff, organizes the prizes and competitions for the event, and helps collect donations. "I have learned how rewarding it can be to give back, how to plan for an event from beginning to end, and, mostly, how fortunate I am to play golf," he says.
—Gina Valentino



A full-page photograph of Carly Rose Sonenclar performing on stage. She is wearing a black long-sleeved crop top with a geometric pattern, a black belt, and a short, patterned skirt. She is holding a microphone to her mouth and singing, with her arms outstretched. The background is a dark stage with blue lighting.

Carly Rose Sonenclar, 17 Musician/Actress

With her own Wikipedia page and a huge social-media fan base, Carly Rose Sonenclar isn't your average high-school student when it comes to career success. The Mamaroneck teen rose to fame after the audition video of her singing Broadway hit "Feelin' Good" on *The X Factor* aired four years ago and quickly went viral worldwide. Sonenclar, who was 13 at the time of the competition, went on to place runner-up on the Fox network hit. Nowadays, the 17-year-old high-school junior is carrying a full school schedule (including two AP classes) and taking the SATs, writing and recording her own music for her debut release and performing at functions all over the US and Canada. Sonenclar is already a seasoned actress, having made her Broadway debut at age 7, in the revival of *Les Miserables*, and appearing as a series regular on the PBS show *The Electric Company*. What has all this early success taught her? "I have learned so much over the past few years about the music business, about managing my time, and how to find balance, and also about how important it is to give back," she says. "Being a well-rounded person makes me a better performer and helps my songwriting." —MI

Michael Buonassisi, 28

Portfolio Manager, Altium Wealth Management



Michael Buonassisi is proof that investing in young employees can yield high returns. He started at Purchase financial firm Altium Wealth Management five years ago as a summer intern. Today, he's the firm's top portfolio manager for total assets under management, as well as growth. He's also the youngest employee in the company's history to serve as vice-chair of the investment committee, which, he says, "is where the high-level portfolio decisions are made." Since joining Altium, the company's base portfolio has ballooned from \$75 million to more than \$450 million, and management says Buonassisi's dedication has played a role in this rise. While robust mathematical, analytical, and problem-solving skills are essential to a career in portfolio management, colleagues say Buonassisi's ability to respond quickly and build trusting relationships with clients is what helps him grow Altium's footprint. According to Buonassisi, who manages a team of six, it's all about passion: "You have to truly enjoy finance and [ensure] you are not entering the field solely for the paycheck. You have to be passionate about your work."

—TK



Alexa O'Rourke, 25

Director of Marketing & Business Development, Jefferson Valley Mall

It takes commitment to transform a mall into more than just a place for retail therapy and window shopping. As director of marketing for the Jefferson Valley Mall, Alexa O'Rourke's long-term goal is to leverage hyper-local partnerships in order to turn the Yorktown retail center into a community hub. Last June, for instance, the shopping complex hosted the 2015 Yorktown Community Day, featuring carnival games, nonprofits, local emergency teams, rock-climbing, and food trucks. While it required a ton of coordination, O'Rourke found it rewarding—so much so, she's currently gearing up for this year's Community Day, which will take place at the mall again in June. Securing community partnerships like these are just part of her day-to-day responsibilities, which also include planning mall events, kids programs, wellness workshops, senior expos, fashion shows—and, of course, prepping the place for the busy holiday shopping season. October through December, O'Rourke's days go into holiday overdrive. "It's all about work/life balance to get through those extra work hours," says O'Rourke, who makes it through the hectic shopping season by carefully outlining her priorities each morning. —TK



Zeshan A. Chaudhry, 24 CEO, Royale Car & Limousine Service

Zeshan A. Chaudhry always knew what he wanted to be when he grew up: a successful businessman. In August 2014, at age 23, after four years of putting in 60-hour workweeks as a car salesman in Scarsdale, Chaudhry decided to pursue that long-term goal. Taking advantage of his sales and marketing skills, he used the money he saved from working at the car dealership and launched a luxury-car-service company, Westchester-based Royale Car & Limousine Service. The small startup has gone from generating a few hundred dollars to more than \$250,000 in annual revenue within a year, with projections to double sales in 2016. What makes Royale stand out? "I want our clients to have a personal touch with our company and not just feel like another 'customer,'" Chaudhry says. Today, the company has 17 employees and vehicles, including full-time independent operators and their vehicles, which consist of Chevy Suburbans, Cadillacs, Mercedes-Benzes, and Lincoln Town Cars. With more than 350 accounts—which include major corporations and professionals throughout Westchester (clients include CitiGroup, PepsiCo, and Clear Channel)—Chaudhry keeps busy making his childhood dream a reality. —MI



Donvil Collins, 29 CEO, VeeKast & Debo Media Inc.

With a team of 20 and more than 70 clients—including such notables as YWCA, TD Bank, United Way, Girl Scouts, and Malibu Rum—29-year-old self-described “tech head” Donvil Collins already has more than a decade of entrepreneurship experience in the hospitality/entertainment field. His teenage days mentoring peers in video production eventually led to the formation of his two White Plains-based companies: Debo Media, founded in June 2006 to provide video production and website design and development for small businesses, and VeeKast, a fundraising-technology company founded in March 2013 under the Debo Media Inc. parent company. Nowadays, Collins is most proud of his ability to help nonprofit clients put on high-quality fundraising events on a tight budget. He says one key is to find sponsors to donate in as many ways as possible, noting that nonprofits often miss opportunities to raise money that people are willing to give. “They are just not asking or presenting their needs in a way that demands natural desires to want to help,” he says, “and VeeKast provides a unique tech service that does that really well.”

—MI

Nick Canzano, 29 Associate Director, PACT (Personalized Achievement Contract), Mercy College

Ask Nick Canzano about his accomplishments, and he'll talk about the success of others. That is, he'll tell of the Mercy College students he's mentored who have gone on to achieve their academic goals despite considerable personal challenge. “I look forward to commencement every year, because I get to see my students walk across the stage and see the pride in their faces,” he says. Canzano is associate director of Mercy's PACT (or Personalized Achievement Contract) program, which provides each student with a personal mentor experienced in academic advising, student life, career preparation, financial services, and leadership training. As head of the largest of the program's four teams, Canzano manages two assistant directors and eight counselors, and carries a caseload of up to 105 students per year. One of the original mentors for PACT, he began with the program in 2009 and is credited with being one of the reasons for its success. From 2014 to 2015, for instance, student retention at Mercy College increased a “phenomenal” 10 percent, he says. And last year, Canzano was voted PACT Advisor of the Year from among more than 25.

—KV



Sam Pezzullo, 29

Producer, Thinkmodo; Founder, 28twelve Productions

When a young woman disrupted a coffee shop with a telekinetic rampage, causing another patron to sail up a wall and tables to scatter, the New Yorkers who jumped back and gasped had Sam Pezzullo to thank for the jolt. The New Rochelle resident, working for the viral video marketing company Thinkmodo, produced the prank and the video that came from it to promote the 2013 horror flick *Carrie*. The only permanent Thinkmodo staffer other than its two founders, Pezzullo's videos have been viewed more than 200 million times on YouTube and have reached hundreds of millions of television viewers with worldwide news coverage. He also runs his own video content firm in New Rochelle, 28twelve Productions. Eventually, he wants to move into traditional moviemaking, but for now he's happy to ride the crest of the current wave in marketing, even if that sometimes means scaring the wits out of bystanders. The "victims" generally love a good joke once they're let in on it, he says. "Everybody is always enthusiastic afterward," Pezzullo explains. "It is ultimately a fun experience for them, as well."

—KV





Sarai Bartels, 27 Art Director, Thompson & Bender

Flashback to the early 2000s: Most young students were just learning how to use the Internet, while middle-schooler Sarai Bartels was coding her own websites. Now, some 15 years later, Bartels is the art director and manager of the creative department at Westchester’s powerhouse public-relations agency, Thompson & Bender. “Because we’re a small agency, we all have to wear a lot of hats,” says Bartels of her typical day, which can include creating websites using computer-programming languages she taught herself, designing brochures and advertisements for local organizations, and working closely with designers, photographers, and videographers on a wide range of projects. Bartels has helped the agency launch more than 20 websites for some of the county’s biggest establishments and brought previously outsourced web development in-house, helping to increase total revenue for Thompson & Bender. Some of her creative projects include the “Generation Yonkers” campaign, Iona Preparatory School and Pace University brochures, and web design for the Archdiocese of New York. “By striving for a caliber of creative excellence that I’ve set for myself, I am constantly pushing myself to become a better designer and to continue learning,” Bartels says.—GV



Shawn Nagpal, 27 President, Nagpal Restaurant Group

As president of the Nagpal Restaurant Group, Shawn Nagpal owns contemporary Indian restaurant: Coriander Modern Indian, which has locations in Larchmont and White Plains. What makes his places unique? Not only does he use the freshest local ingredients, he incorporates a variety of cooking techniques that reflect the ethnic diversity of the communities he serves. “You can’t stand out unless you’re different,” says Nagpal, who was born in Punjab, India. Nagpal’s family emigrated to the United States when he was a baby, settling in New Rochelle, the city Nagpal still calls home. Between the two restaurants, the entrepreneur saw revenue increase more than 30 percent in 2015, and expects to double revenue this year. But he insists, it’s not about the money. “I love the business, and I love the food,” he says. “I love the concepts and love the people.” Also a motivational speaker, Nagpal has been invited twice to the Forbes Under 30 Summit and has been a speaker at events that include Growthcon, World Domination Summit, and the Global Organization of People of Indian Origin. —JM



**Christopher Di Capua, 20 &
John Di Capua, 23** Co-Inventors, DiCapua MBO Partners, LLC



You could call it the mother of all high school science projects. In 2007, when they were students at Byram Hills High School, Armonk brothers John (*right*) and Christopher Di Capua started work on a medical device (as part of the Intel Science Talent Search) that could one day save tens of thousands of lives. Called AVAC—short for Automatic Ventilation with Assisted Compression—their now-patented medical machinery is designed to deliver oxygen to a person receiving cardiopulmonary resuscitation following cardiac arrest. And the research is telling: The survival rate from sudden cardiac arrest is only 10 percent when CPR is delivered by a lay person or bystander, compared with more than 50 percent in hospitals where patients are given oxygen during treatment. Given that sudden heart attacks are a leading cause of death in the United States, the Di Capuas' invention has the potential to save many lives, which is what drives them. "Even if we can improve the survival rate by one percent, that's 10,000 people," John says. The brothers are currently in talks with venture capitalists and commercial-engineering companies to commercialize their product and obtain FDA approval.

— JM

Connor Lawrence, 22, Keshav Garg, 22 & Matthew Pavia, 23
Founders, *indify*



Upon graduation from college, three friends with a shared passion for music banded together to form a business with one objective: to use online data to identify future music icons. Founded in 2015 by Keshav Garg, CEO (*center*); Connor Lawrence, CCO (*left*); and Matthew Pavia, CTO (*right*), proprietary-data platform indify uses listener data, social metrics, and online trends—with a collection of extensive data points from SoundCloud, YouTube, and Twitter—to rank and analyze up-and-coming artists. After winning a \$10,000 grant from Colgate University last spring via a *Shark Tank*-like mock competition featuring a group of panelists, including Jessica Alba and MC Hammer, the three 22-year-olds, all Scarsdale High School grads, have developed a fully functional data platform that ranks more than 100,000 emerging artists based upon their chances of future success. The fledgling service has drawn the interest of more than 150 industry contacts, from major record labels and streaming services to media agencies. “By taking into account key modern metrics, indify has the potential to turn any DIY artist into a superstar, and the platform has the unique ability to connect artists with the opportunity to be heard by the masses,” says Lawrence. —MI

Tracy Engel, 29 Assistant Director, Human Resources,
NewYork-Presbyterian/Hudson Valley Hospital

Even though Tracy Engel just wrapped up her first year at NewYork-Presbyterian/Hudson Valley Hospital, she’s already gone way above and beyond simply screening résumés. She’s played an instrumental role in modernizing the hospital’s HR operations, including its payroll systems, communication plans, and new-hire orientation programs. But talent acquisition is the real bread and butter of Engel’s job. “It’s a really important function for any organization to make sure the new talent are high-quality, driven individuals who will enhance our functions,” says Engel. She’s learned that the key to identifying good talent means interviewing for behavioral fit. It’s essential to look at the full package (acquired skills, background, personality, etc.) instead of just individual segments of their résumé, she says. Engel also consults management on how to continually foster talent and keep employees engaged in the hospital’s mission to serve the community. “Those working in HR know we are sometimes the guidance counselors to our staff,” says Engel. “Especially to those working in an entry-level role.” —TK ●



AREA HOSPITALS COMPETE TO WIN

Specialized treatment centers, ambulatory-care outposts, slick advertising, physician outreach—and a quest to keep patients out of their facilities—are just some of the measures local hospitals are using to survive in an increasingly competitive industry.

BY BONNIE DRESNER



As part of a growing trend, Westchester Medical Center is currently planning a new \$230 million ambulatory-care pavillion, set to open in 2018.



After polishing off an organic turkey, red quinoa, and crimini mushroom salad, you can mosey over to the boutique and inspect the offerings, which include a \$125 handmade beaded necklace and a \$46 artisan wood bowl. The two-story floor-to-ceiling windows, dark wood, gray sofas, and vibrant blue-butterfly sculptures gracing the walls evoke the lobby of an upscale hotel. Yet, this is the newly renovated lobby of White Plains Hospital, one of several medical institutions in the county aiming to increase its market share in the coming years.

Within Westchester's environs are 12 acute-care hospitals (11 lie within county lines, plus Greenwich Hospital, which draws 52 percent of its inpatients from New York, sits just over the border). That's a lot of competition, say many of the people whose mission it is to fill hospital beds—and coffers. Despite the abundance of local hospitals, the new affiliations and acquisitions that have transpired among them, and the angst over declining insurance reimbursements, none of these institutions intend to flatline. People in our region incur more than \$1 billion in costs at these hospitals annually. Westchester's hospitals are vying for their share of that business by ramping up their presence. They've invested millions in new services, buildings, equipment, technology, and hotel-like amenities in the dual quest to improve patient care and lure patients to their facilities and away from their rivals down the parkway.

"What many people forget is that hospitals are big business," says Michael Spicer, CEO of Saint Joseph's Medical Center in Yonkers. "Healthcare is becoming very, very competitive. Not only the community hospitals; it's the big guys, too."

The Shift to Outpatient Care

Ironically, as hospital administrators develop plans to increase revenue, keeping people well and out of the hospital is a critical piece of the plan. Why? Hospital overhead is expensive, and studies from the country's largest health insurers over the last decade have determined that many patients didn't require all the services and associated expenses of a hospital setting for their ailments. Medicare and Medicaid, the nation's largest health insurers, began cutting back insurance reimbursements and penalizing hospitals for readmitting patients within 30 days of discharge. Hospital leaders searched for ways to make up the shortfall while still offering quality care. What they realized was that with equipment becoming more portable and many procedures becoming more routine, they had other means to provide treatment. Those who needed a hospital bed in the past could get their doctoring in another setting.

"The advances in medicine have made it possible to shift more and more health services from inpatient to outpatient care," says Anthony Ferreri, executive vice president and chief affiliation officer of Northwell Health, formerly known as North Shore-LIJ Health System. (Phelps Memorial Hospital Center and Northern Westchester Hospital in Mount Kisco recently joined the Northwell family.) "Hospitals and health systems are opening up urgent-care centers, ambulatory services, and medical office buildings. You can go into a building that's like a medical mall. As we move into ambulatory settings now, the hospitals are competing more than ever."

This trend is evident throughout Westchester. Northwell opened urgent-care centers this winter, in partnership with GoHealth Urgent Care, in both Tarrytown and Yorktown Heights, where patients can check wait times online before heading over. This adds to Northwell-GoHealth's existing location in New Rochelle, where Montefiore Health System operates the 242-bed Montefiore New Rochelle Hospital, as well as an outpatient clinic. White Plains

Hospital, a Montefiore Hospital partner since 2015, opened a satellite practice, White Plains Hospital Physician Associates, in New Rochelle in 2013. It has also put down roots farther north, with a medical-and-wellness center in Armonk (White Plains Hospital Medical & Wellness), about a 10-minute drive from Northern Westchester Hospital's ambulatory-care center in Chappaqua. And Phelps increased its physician presence in Dobbs Ferry and Croton-on-Hudson with new and expanded office spaces. (Even more doctors are taking up residence in the county this spring as ColumbiaDoctors, a NewYork-Presbyterian/Columbia University Medical Center medical practice, moves into a 20,000-square-foot space in Tarrytown.)

It may seem like there's a lot of redundancy of services in a small geographic space, but the New York State Department of Health doesn't see it that way. The state agency requires hospitals to substantiate the need for medically related building or services in a community. The CON, or Certificate of Need, process gives the state DOH "oversight in limiting investment



NewYork-Presbyterian/Lawrence Hospital opened its new, state-of-the-art cardiac-catheterization laboratory last year.

in duplicate beds, services and medical equipment which, in turn, limits associated health care costs," according to its website. As long as the DOH stamps its approval, medical institutions may continue to embed themselves within the same towns and cities.

Providing primary care in a community whose patients they covet is a key way hospitals expect to increase their volume. These new standalone facilities are built for appeal; they don't carry the doc-in-a-box stigma once associated with retail medical care. A clinic, urgent-care, or wellness center is often the first line to establishing a connection to a hospital brand, particularly among a younger generation of patients who eschew the "single-source, primary-care-physician model favored by older generations," according to a survey commissioned by PNC Healthcare last year. The survey found that Millennials prefer retail and acute-care clinics nearly twice as often as baby boomers and seniors.

Beyond the exceptional care these outpatient facilities pledge to everyone, they tend to distinguish themselves through the details. In some cases it's the availability of late-night or weekend appointments; in others, it's a variety of specialists or the convenience of getting x-rays, physical therapy, or minor surgery close to home. Northwell's New Rochelle facility advertises "highly competitive same-day pricing" for patients who may be comparing costs among clinics. Others offer wellness options, such as support groups and nutrition counseling, to draw new patients.

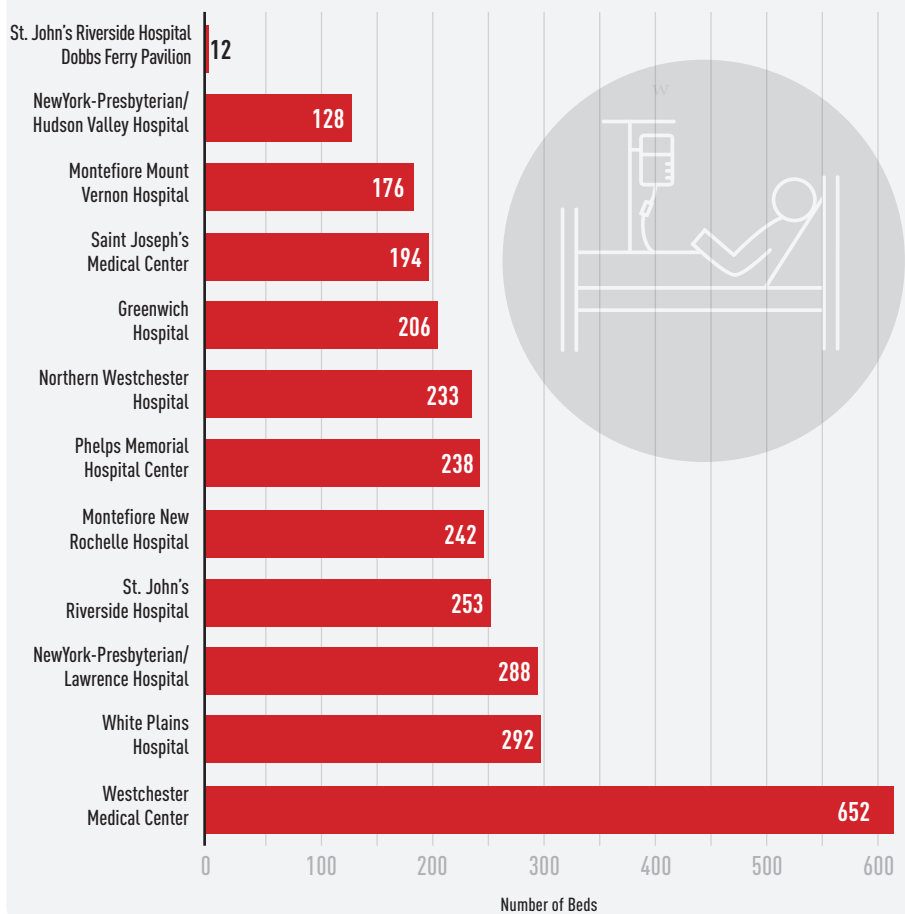
The overarching intent is to keep people healthy, which administrators believe will result in fewer hospital stays, bolstering the bottom line. "One of the goals of healthcare reform is prioritizing hospital care for the sickest patients," explains White Plains Hospital CEO Susan Fox, who notes that her hospital has responded by creating new facilities and additional advanced programs to be able to provide "the right level of care in the right setting."

"That's our strategy here," she adds.

Focusing on the Most Prevalent Diseases

Another strategy for local hospitals is to focus on diseases like cancer, whose prevalence, unfortunately, presents myriad business opportunities. White Plains Hospital recently renovated its Dickstein Cancer Treatment Pavilion and added a new six-story pavilion, which opened in February, doubling its original space for cancer care. Nine miles away, NewYork-Presbyterian/Lawrence Hospital officials have been busy constructing their three-story cancer center scheduled to open

NUMBER OF INPATIENT BEDS AT AREA ACUTE-CARE HOSPITALS



later this year. And in April, administrators at Phelps Memorial Hospital began the process of bolstering their cancer program by filing a certificate of need with the state Department of Health for a \$7.1 million 27,000 square foot oncology facility. These are business decisions based on the realities of the disease.

"There are 5,500 new cases of cancer diagnosed each year in Westchester," says Maureen Killackey, MD, clinical director of the NewYork-Presbyterian/Lawrence Hospital Cancer Center. "One out of two men, and one out of three women, will get cancer [nationwide] by age 85. Eighty-five percent can be treated in a community-based comprehensive cancer center."

White Plains Hospital and NewYork-Presbyterian/Lawrence Hospital both have a substantial stake in assuming people will accept that notion. Each has invested more than \$50 million in its respective cancer center. White Plains Hospital added 35,000 square feet of additional space with its new tower, which is connected to the existing center. NewYork-Presbyterian/Lawrence is housing its 40,000-square-foot unit—including new,

state-of-the-art operating rooms—on the site of a former garden. Other than the color schemes and square footage, they are, on paper, providing similar services: new infusion suites and a linear accelerator for enhanced radiation oncology capabilities, among others. Each boasts renowned on-staff physicians, clinical trials, cutting-edge equipment, and the ability to teleconference with additional specialists who may be in the Bronx or Manhattan or anywhere in the world. Both units are designed with an eye toward comfort for people undergoing the harsh treatment regimen cancer patients often endure.

Though the Bronxville and White Plains centers are the most recent additions to the arena, nearly every hospital in the county, including the 12-bed St. John's Riverside Dobbs Ferry Pavilion, have oncology offerings, underscoring how pervasive a disease—and business opportunity—cancer is. While many people have excellent odds of winding up in remission, most cancer diagnoses necessitate years of monitoring. Attracting patients to their cancer centers ensures a long-term relationship between patient and hospital.



Northern Westchester Hospital recently completed a \$36.6 million surgical suite renovation; (below) Westchester Medical Center's new eHealth program increases the hospital's geographic reach.

It is the same situation with heart disease. "If you are a true community hospital, you have to treat the most prevalent diseases, and that's cancer and heart disease," says Ferreri.

The quest to be the cardiac-care provider of choice for Westchester residents has also expanded. White Plains and NewYork-Presbyterian/Lawrence Hospitals have upgraded or added to their cardiac-catheterization capabilities recently. (Among the treatments available in a cardiac-catheterization lab are stents, biopsies, internal pacemaker implantation, and emergency angioplasty for people having heart attacks.) Northern Westchester Hospital has an application on file with the state DOH to establish its first cardiac-catheterization lab. Saint Joseph's Medical Center recently opened a freestanding cardiac-care facility in Yonkers, and Westchester Medical Center keeps adding to its extensive list of cardiac-care capabilities.

"The things we focus on are the advanced services," explains Michael Israel, Westchester Medical Center Health Network president and CEO. "We used to be the only hospital that did cardiac cath. Then the technology improved, and it became widely available in many hospitals. Now, we do much more advanced things, like TAVR," he says, explaining that transcatheter aortic valve replacement at WMC is a new approach to replacing heart valves, one that vastly shortens a patient's recuperation time and hospital stay.

Westchester Medical Center, the largest hospital in the region, differentiates itself by focusing on industry-leading treatments and bringing its services to communities farther



north, say hospital leaders. Its joint venture, announced last year, with Bon Secours Charity Health System, added community hospitals, several other medical facilities, and a network of more than 80 physicians to its fold. It also recently announced a new partnership with Kingston-based HealthAlliance that will further expand its reach in the Hudson Valley. Westchester Medical Center now has networks and affiliations in eight counties: Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Dutchess, Orange, Sullivan, Ulster, and Delaware, as well as a \$500 million, 15-year joint venture with Phillips which, among other benefits, en-

hances its telemedicine capabilities. This new eHealth Program allows ICU staff in Valhalla to monitor vital signs, note status changes and connect with patients and family members through in-room cameras in Poughkeepsie's MidHudson Regional Hospital's ICU. The program increases the hospital's geographic reach and connects their specialists to people many miles away who wouldn't otherwise have access to those doctors.

While Westchester Medical Center is covering more ground outside the county, Bronx-based Montefiore Health System is asserting itself within county lines. Its acquisition of Mount Vernon

Hospital and Sound Shore Medical Center in 2013 added significantly to its Westchester patient base, one of its major objectives.

“Our vision is to have a million people we are caring for,” notes Montefiore’s Susan Green-Lorenzen, RN, senior vice president, operations. “We want to provide them with the best care in the right location.” This idea of “population health management” is a trend healthcare organizations are employing to ensure the patients in their networks stay well at home. It’s targeted largely toward people with chronic conditions, such as diabetes, COPD, or congestive heart failure, who wind up admitted to hospitals in disproportionate numbers. Studies have shown that patients fare better, and it’s more cost-effective, if they keep their symptoms under control. Frequent monitoring from caseworkers via phone or home visits can be part of that process.

One local hospital, just-over-the-border Greenwich Hospital, is competing by investing in numerous areas. In addition to the millions it has allocated toward a new Stamford outpatient facility, a linear accelerator for radiation oncology, and the latest generation of the da Vinci robot for surgery, Greenwich Hospital has recently redesigned its maternity wing with some special touches, which were rewarded with a record number of new babies.

“Known as the region’s destination hospital for prospective parents, Greenwich Hospital welcomed a record 2,814 newborns in fiscal year 2015,” notes Marc Kosak, Greenwich Hospital’s senior vice president of administration. For

patients who want additional luxury after they’ve finished laboring, the hospital has luxurious comfort wear and massage services available for an extra charge.

Standing Out in a Crowded Market

As the large health networks with advanced-care offerings move in, residents have many more places to turn for their procedures than they’ve had in the past. As a result, capturing their attention in a crowded market with overlapping services has gotten more complicated. Traditional advertising methods, like slick brochures in the mail and ads splayed across buses, are not enough. Increasingly important—and effective—are recommendations from physicians.

Hospitals recognize the influence primary-care physicians have on steering patients their way. Courting large physician networks, retaining the doctors who trained on their floors, and using research opportunities as incentives help keep those referrals coming.

“We graduate 10 residents a year,” says Spicer of Saint Joseph’s. “When those 10 graduate, we look to assist them by placing them with some of our physician practices. We look to hire them in hospital-affiliated primary-care practices.”

Besides referrals, doctors have assorted roles in hospital advertising campaigns.

“When we first got the Mako robot for partial knee and complete hip replacements, our surgeons actually went out into the

A PROFUSION OF PROJECTS

Area hospitals have embarked on a plethora of expansion and renovation projects in recent years:

Greenwich Hospital: A \$500,000 redesign of the maternity department in 2014. Includes nurseries, a level-3 neonatal intensive-care unit, labor and delivery and operating rooms, and perinatology and mother/baby family-centered patient rooms.



▲ Montefiore New Rochelle Hospital:

Recently received a \$44.2 million state grant; funding will go toward renovation and expansion of the emergency department, technology updates, and an outpatient ambulatory clinic.

NewYork-Presbyterian/Lawrence Hospital:

New state-of-the-art operating rooms and a \$65 million comprehensive cancer center are opening later this year.

NewYork-Presbyterian/Hudson Valley Hospital:

A \$4.2 million emergency-department renovation is currently underway and expected to be complete by spring 2017.

Northern Westchester Hospital:

A \$36.6 million surgical-suite renovation, which opened in April. Includes six state-of-the-art operating rooms, a 14-bed recovery bay, a new elevator, and an upgraded sterile supply suite.

Phelps Memorial Hospital Center:

A just-completed \$4.5 million new entry and lobby. Also, a new \$4.7 million MRI center opened in December 2015.

Saint Joseph’s Medical Center:

Received an \$8.9 million state grant for the “Saint Joseph’s Transformation Project.”

St. John’s Riverside Hospital:

Recently received a \$15.3 million state grant for the creation of a new medical village and renovation and expansion of the emergency department.

Westchester Medical Center:

Just announced a \$230 million, 280,000-square-foot ambulatory-care pavilion that is slated to open in 2018. It includes plans for advanced imaging, ambulatory surgery, heart-and-vascular institute, physician office space, and expansion within the hospital for more private rooms.

White Plains Hospital:

Recently debuted a \$50 million comprehensive cancer center, with new infusion suites and enhanced radiation-oncology capabilities.



A 2014 redesign of Greenwich Hospital’s maternity wing helped it welcome a record 2,814 newborns in fiscal year 2015.

community and met patients face to face at senior centers and churches to talk about it," says Fran Davis, vice president for nursing at St. John's Riverside Hospital in Yonkers. St. John's invests a lot of time in cultivating relationships with the people in the city, she notes; connecting their doctors with residents is one way the hospital secures those ties.

If you don't find them at a community center near you, look for physicians online. You can watch them earnestly explain illnesses or promote procedures within hospital websites or on YouTube. For those hospitals willing to spend the cash, there is also television advertising.

NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, parent to Lawrence and Hudson Valley Hospitals locally, bought 60 seconds of notoriously expensive airtime on Super Bowl Sunday this year to run a colorful, animated ad explaining its research on immunotherapy in cancer.

Plugging their own merits may not sway increasingly savvy consumers, however. Sorting through the hyperbole and deciphering numerous accreditations and certifications is difficult. It isn't clear to the average consumer whether it's more impressive for a hospital to be a *U.S. News & World Report* designee or recommended on Healthgrades.

HELP FROM HCAHPS

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services developed the HCAHPS (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) to provide a means for measuring patients' perspectives on different aspects of their hospital care. It can be found at: www.medicare.gov/hospitalcompare/search.html



Since 2008, with improvements implemented in 2015, there has been a more impartial avenue to compare hospitals: HCAHPS scores. The Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems is a standardized survey measuring patient satisfaction on a number of issues. Among the items assessed are how well the hospital staff communicates and how responsive they are to patients' needs. It also asks for an overall rating of the hospital and whether they would recommend it to family and friends.

Not surprisingly, hospitals are keenly aware of the importance of being competitive when it comes to HCAHPS scores.

"We look at our patient-satisfaction scores daily here," says Davis. "It's also something that patients now look for; they are educated



At White Plains Hospital, a lounge in its cancer treatment area (above) and the brand-new lobby of the main building both evoke an upscale hotel-like feel.



At Phelps Memorial Hospital Center's SurgiCenter, each patient has a private room in the admission and recovery area.

AFFILIATION MANIA

Your cheat sheet to the frenzy of hospital mergers and affiliations that have occurred over the last few years.

Greenwich Hospital: Joined Yale New Haven Health System in 1998.

Montefiore Mount Vernon Hospital: The former Mount Vernon Hospital was acquired by Montefiore Health System in 2013.

Montefiore New Rochelle Hospital: The former Sound Shore Medical Center was acquired by Montefiore Health System in 2013.

NewYork-Presbyterian/Lawrence Hospital: The former Lawrence Hospital was acquired by NewYork-Presbyterian in 2014 after more than 10 years of affiliation.

NewYork-Presbyterian/Hudson Valley Hospital: The former Hudson Valley Hospital Center was acquired by NewYork-Presbyterian in 2015.

Northern Westchester Hospital: Joined Northwell Health in 2014.

Phelps Memorial Hospital Center: Joined Northwell Health in 2014.

Saint Joseph's Medical Center: Remains independent with a clinical affiliation to Montefiore Health System.

St. John's Riverside Hospital: Remains independent with a clinical affiliation to Montefiore Health System.

St. John's Riverside Dobbs Ferry Pavilion: The former Community Hospital at Dobbs Ferry was acquired by St. John's in 2002.

Westchester Medical Center: Acquired six hospitals within the past three years, in Poughkeepsie, Suffern, Warwick, Kingston, Margaretville and Port Jervis.

White Plains Hospital: Became a member of the Montefiore Health System in 2015.

consumers. HCAHPS scores play into their decision about what hospital to choose. We are really cognizant of that here."

What makes those surveys more important than simply the happiness of their patients is that hospitals receiving Medicare or Medicaid money can be either penalized or rewarded a percentage of their reimbursements based on those scores.

"It's made everyone very focused on the quality of care," says Elisabeth Wynn, senior vice president for health, economics, and finance at the Greater New York Hospital Association, of how seriously hospital administrators regard their scores.

Still, no matter what the scores suggest or the ads promote, a strong sentiment persists among many Westchester residents that you need to head south, to New York City, to find the best medical institutions.

Refuting that contention is another battle hospitals here have to face if their plans to win over patients are to be successful. A recent spate of promotions on television, radio, in print, and online emphasized both the great care to be had close to home, as well as the NYC

connections that local hospitals have to big names, like NewYork-Presbyterian, Montefiore, or Lenox Hill (a Northwell affiliate).

To paraphrase the film *Field of Dreams*: If you build it, they will come. Hopefully. Nine of the 12 area hospitals are nearing or have surpassed the century mark, numbering them among the oldest businesses in Westchester. In addition to caring for sick residents and their longstanding histories, these hospitals are vital to the local economy. Thousands are employed within their walls, and hospital entities own large swaths of Westchester real estate. There's a lot riding on their success, while the continuing evolution of health-care creates an uncertain future. Thus, the competition shows no sign of abating.

Says Northwell's Ferreri, "Survival is based on volume, efficiency, quality, and service." ●

Bonnie Dresner is a local freelance journalist, EMS educator, and paramedic. She's witnessed the evolution of hospital care while bringing patients through the doors of many facilities over the years.

Jason Metzger

Vice President, Region Executive,
PURE Insurance



The Business of
THE ARTS
HOUR FUN (AND HANDY!)
OFFICE APPLIANCES

Nancy Kennedy

Lynn Bagliebter

EVP & Westchester
Market President,
Sterling National Bank



Mike Ryan

VP, Sales Strategy &
Shopper Marketing,
HEINEKEN USA



Nancy Kennedy

*Associate Real Estate Broker,
Houlihan Lawrence*



Anthony Panarella

*President, Nissan of
New Rochelle*



**914INC.
ROUNDTABLE**

MAKING THE SALE

We convened a panel of local sales professionals to talk shop on all things sales—from tips and trends to strategies and skills. During a one-hour discussion at our offices, they shared their in-the-trenches wisdom on what it takes to succeed in this constantly changing field.

Edited by Amy R. Partridge

Photography by Ken Gabrielsen

Robert Schork, 914INC.: Do you think that sales skill can be taught, or is it something you either have or you don't?

Anthony Panarella, Nissan:

There's no question some people have a natural gift for sales. But what is more important is having the innate personality traits that will put you in a position to excel at sales. I see it as a three-legged stool: one, talent and capability; two, work ethic; three, competitiveness.

Lynn Bagliebter, Sterling National Bank:

I agree that there are certain personalities that are a more adaptable fit to a sales environment. But, I also believe it can

be taught. If you are confident and knowledgeable about what you are selling, that will shine through.

Nancy Kennedy, Houlihan Lawrence:

I've been in sales for 31 years, yet I never felt I sold anyone anything. I feel my job is to educate and inform, ask lots of questions, and not offer my opinion. I carry myself confidently and with an intense passion and a very strong work ethic.

Jason Metzger, PURE Insurance:

I think everybody is in sales today, no matter what role you play in your company. There used to be information asymmetry, where the seller had all of the information, but today you have this world of information that everybody can get to. So now you have to come to the table as more of a consultant, a trusted advisor, someone who can lead them down the path to a decision.

Mike Ryan, HEINEKEN USA:

At Heineken, we actually have a mantra, a rallying cry: "You either sell beer or you help sell beer." And it's a mindset: Some people are really good at it, and they learn on the job; other people are taught. Some people are just naturally gifted at sales, but you have to have drive to win. You have to have that passion.

Listing Service [when we first] put all our listings on Realtor.com, and I actually had threatening phone calls from brokers, saying, "What are you doing? You are putting us out of business!" because we were the gatekeepers. No one else knew what was on the market. So that idea of becoming a more trusted advisor and a guide to help people through the process is really a big transformation in my business.

Schork: What does it take to be a great salesperson?

Bagliebter: I don't think that, in the banking world, we consider ourselves salespeople. We are developing relationships. We become their trusted advisors, delivering all the capabilities of the bank to them. And sometimes we say no, if someone is not creditworthy. That's all part of that advisory role that we play. And for us, it's an ongoing long-term relationship... In banking, you live with the loan for many years to come, so it's a very complicated type of sale in that respect.

Metzger: I think it's the same characteristics that are just great to have in business: being very curious, wanting to understand how things work or why people do the things



"I've been in sales for 31 years, yet I never felt that I sold anyone anything. I feel my job is to educate and inform."

—Nancy Kennedy, Associate Real Estate Broker, Houlihan Lawrence

Amy R. Partridge,

914INC.: Does the access to information that consumers have now make it more challenging for a salesperson, or is it actually helpful?

Metzger: I think we used to hear that salespeople have this bad rep. It's because they were the keepers of the information. It's only fair now that everybody has it; you just have to change the way you go about it.

Kennedy: I was president of the Westchester-Putnam Multiple

they do; having some sense of entrepreneurialism, where you feel like if your ideas are good, you are going to go out there and that you have the empowerment to make things happen. It also helps to be emotionally intelligent and be passionate about what you are doing. You also need to have some sense of purpose.

Ryan: You also have to love challenges. Love the unknown; love the ambiguous; love the tall order that seems almost insurmountable. That's the drive that I think good salespeople have. But they also have to be humble enough to know that they are not going

to win all the time. And when they lose, they need to be able to get right back on that horse. Also, they have to have great follow-through.

Kennedy: I think also you have to realize that not everybody should be your client. You have to figure out who you can help, and help those people and really build those relationships. But if people don't respect you and your knowledge and your advice and your advisement to them, just move on. There is always someone else to help.

Panarella: Having people skills is definitely the number-one priority to even remotely think about getting into sales. If you're not that people person, and you're not able to handle the good times with the bad, you need to find something else to do.

Metzger: If you are in a sales role, you face a lot of rejection, and so you have to have buoyancy—resiliency, too, because you have to be willing not to win every time. And if you don't have that, you're going to just beat yourself up every night.

Bagliebter: In the banking field, it's critical to have some specific technical skills [to succeed in sales]—analysis of credit and things like that. But, I also agree that it comes down to being a very good people person and being responsive, developing relationships, and knowing how to become that trusted advisor.

Ryan: And, of course, communication is really important. But, the other side of effective sales is someone who can listen well and is able to translate: *This is what they are saying, but this is what they might have meant.* I think active listening and asking questions can often make a sale or [can lead to] an even more powerful sale.

Schork: Is a sale just a sale, regardless of what you're selling, or does it require a customized approach, based on the specific industry you're in?

Kennedy: I think if you're a successful salesperson, you could jump into another industry, as long as you really educated yourself and you had access

to all the tools that will make you the most informed person in that particular field. When people ask me why are you so successful as a real estate broker, I say I'm a businessperson and that my product happens to be real estate.

Panarella: I feel that if you're good at sales, you could definitely uproot yourself and go into another business selling just about anything, with the proper education and leadership behind you. Given the right tools, I don't think it's a problem at all.

Ryan: I agree that the skills are very transferable, but the selling could be very different. Selling a \$14.99 12-pack of Heineken or Dos Equis is a certain type of sale, with a low-risk/reward profile. Whereas, with insurance policies or houses, cars or banking services, the duration of the sale, the duration of prep work, the relationship management, the time to close the sale, is so different for different industries.

Metzger: I would agree, generally. If you're good at sales, you can translate that into other businesses. But, I don't know if I personally could, because I go back to what I was saying earlier about purpose and passion. We recently became a purpose-driven organization, and I've 100 percent bought into that. Maybe I could sell houses or sell Heineken, but I don't think I would be as good at it.

Schork: How much of sales is a team effort versus an individual effort?

Bagliebter: Definitely, it's a team effort. We have to involve a number of different people who have different aspects of bringing our products to the client.

Panarella: Of course it's a team. In the car business, there are so many steps, with so many individuals touching that one customer. It's only a smooth process if you have everybody on the same page to help the customer.

"You have to love challenges. Love the unknown; love the ambiguous; love the tall order that seems almost insurmountable. That's the drive that good salespeople have."

—Mike Ryan, VP, Sales Strategy & Shopper Marketing, HEINEKEN USA



Ryan: There's no such thing as one-person selling. And I would go so far as to say it's not only the team, but sales are also generated by the customer. The customer is actually selling while you are selling to them. Example: Whether it's a husband or a wife or a family, discussions and input from those members helps drive a sale and drive the differences in the level of the sale, the size of the sale.

Metzger: It's 100 percent team effort. We've embraced this "World Café" concept of knowledge sharing. You get a group of people together and sit around a table and share all of your ideas. But imagine there are 30 other tables in the room also—all trying to figure out how to become better at sales or lifting top-line revenue. By the end of this exercise, we have all these ideas that you never would have thought about on your own. Employing the team concept makes your end result, your ultimate product, that much stronger.

Kennedy: While I'm sitting here today, my team is running my business. Everybody knows every single client, and we all have a role. My role is to be face to face with clients, getting listings and selling properties. Then, I have staff who support the listings side and support staff on the buyer's side and an assistant who does things like getting taxes and property cards and putting out signs. I would never be able to succeed without [my team].

Bagliebter: [We have a] single-point-of-contact approach in our bank. But that is still a team. If you're working with a client, and one person is the lending expert, and that same

client needs deposit accounts, we have other people who will help the client with that. Your team has to be as responsive as you are, because unless those people deliver what they are supposed to, your whole effort may fail. So, it's making sure that you have a really confident group and that everyone follows them.

Schorck: But assuming it's still a commission-based model, isn't there some point at which tension arises from the inherent conflict between a team approach versus the individual competition for sales?

Metzger: You are seeing less and less of commissions or commission-based sales for a variety of reasons. In financial services, it's because of [the need for increased] transparency. It's also because of alignment with your clients—people don't want to think that you are [getting one] over on them because you're selling them a product and getting rich off of it. So, a lot of companies are going to fee-based models.

Kennedy: Real estate is typically 100 percent commission; that's how it works. But I decided to build a different model. The way that I have my team structured is that everyone is an employee. They get salary and, based on our performance, bonuses for the team, which are given out quarterly.

Bagliebter: We're not commission-based, but there are sales goals, and there are bonuses. So, the team has certain goals, and if the team makes its goal, the pot is divided [by percentages] based on the positions of people within the team. It works really well because everyone is pulling together; everyone gets monthly reports to see how they are doing against their goals, so we are all in the same effort together.

Ryan: At Heineken, we have a salary-plus-bonus commission structure. And it is by team, so people have to support each other in their respective sides of business.

"We recently became a purpose-driven organization, and I've 100 percent bought into that. Maybe I could sell houses or sell Heineken, but I don't think I would be as good at it."

—Jason Metzger, Vice President, Region Executive, PURE Insurance



Schorck: What other interesting trends are you seeing in sales today?

Metzger: One trend is this concept of emotional intelligence. For salespeople especially, the better their ability to put themselves in somebody else's shoes, the better they reflect your brand, your company, your product—whatever it is you're trying to sell. So, I see my firm and other firms investing a lot in emotional intelligence. A second trend is around transparency and alignment. It's hard to get anything past anybody, and you don't want to. You want to be an advocate [for the people you are selling to]; you want to lead them down the path of making good decisions. One of the ways you do that is by being very clear on what you're about, what your propositions are, how all of that compares to the market, and sharing those pieces of information that [potential clients] may not have had to help them make a decision. If you can hit on all those things, you're much more successful.

Schorck: What about business-to-business (B2B) sales versus business-to-consumer (B2C) sales? Do they require a different set of skills and/or approaches?

Ryan: I've done both sides, and I think the skill sets are transferable, and they get applied on both sides. The fundamental distinction with B2B is that it's really about partnerships and helping each other for mutual gain. Whereas, on the consumer side, it's really about: "Are you delivering the right product with the right need for the right solution at the right time?"

Partridge: B2C sales are much more transactional, aren't they?

Kennedy: I only know the consumer side, and yes, it is a transactional relationship. But you want to have a really great ongoing relationship [with clients]. Even when the house closes, you want to stay in touch with that client because they are a source of referrals. It's really rewarding when you're selling to the children of people who bought from you 30 years ago.

Ryan: The other fundamental difference I see is that there are fewer options in B2B than on the consumer side. There are only so many real estate agencies and so many car dealers, and it's a high-cost, high-transaction, high-reward [sale] but an infrequent occasion. However, when you are looking at consumables, it's endless. There are so many options. One day, consumers are buying your product; the next day they're buying someone else's, and you just have to be comfortable with that. There are so many more transactions; it's a different type of selling.

Baglietler: In the B2B world, it's very visible and highly competitive. You know that every bank is calling on your clients all the time—and there are only so many of them. So you have to stay close to that client. That's another aspect that I think is different.

Panarella: Though I'm in a B2C environment, I do have businesses soliciting me and telling me how I'm going to get more people in my door. So, I think that B2B approach is definitely based on relationships and about working together to analyze what the return on investment is and how to move forward with those business partners.

"Our money is as green as every other bank's money, so it really comes down to having certain unique selling propositions: Become very knowledgeable and network within those industries."

—Lynn Baglietler, EVP & Westchester Market President, Sterling National Bank

Schorck: What are the peculiarities of Westchester from a sales perspective? How do sales here differ from another market?

Kennedy: In my business, the challenge to Westchester is Westchester. Each of the towns and villages and municipalities and hamlets is completely different from the others, and there are so many school districts. Also, people are very particular about where they want to be and how far away they are, from a commuting standpoint. So, the challenge is knowing all of those ins and outs, and knowing how to direct people to the right place for their needs.

Baglietler: In Westchester, most of the bankers all know each other and tend to have worked at a number of competitors over the years. We are all after the same thing, so it makes for competition, but it can also bring a very good working relationship, as we sometimes need other banks as partners. There's a real local community and presence here. I've worked in banking in New York City, as well, and you do not know your competition as well there as we know ours here in Westchester.



Metzger: I would say for my business, Westchester is a microcosm of what we do, because we are selling insurance to high-net-worth individuals, and Westchester is a huge market. The way affluent individuals often want to buy is through referrals. We are taking market share year after year [from competitors] because of those relationships and those referrals.

Panarella: I've only been in Westchester for 18 months, so I'm not an expert, but one advantage of being here is that we're so close to

New York City. We get that melting pot of customers walking in the door. We get a lot of foot traffic, too. So, I haven't seen any disadvantages yet to being in Westchester, but there are a lot of advantages.

Ryan: [Westchester's] proximity to New York City means the resources are strong. The education base, the professionalism, the major companies in the Westchester area are all fantastic. But, recruiting talent is a double-edged sword. We can recruit great talent, but the high cost of living that is associated with all the great benefits of Westchester [can be challenging].

Hudson Gateway Association of Realtors, we have just under 10,000 members who have access to all the properties on the market. I think there's also a statistic that one in nine Americans hold a real estate license... It's not always competent competition, but there is competition.

Ryan: I think the biggest challenge in our industry is driving organic growth. There are only about three ways [to do that]. First is by penetration or population gain—as the population grows, there will be new consumers of legal drinking age available to sell to. The second is growth from “shared stomach”; when we grow our market share of that little pie, it's at the expense of someone else. So, that's great for us, but the retailer doesn't like that. The third thing is how do we grow organically from a revenue base and from a margin base in a market that has a fairly consistent level of food-and-beverage intake? No one is getting up tomorrow and saying, “My goal today is to drink more beer than I did yesterday.” That's one of the challenges in the food-and-beverage industry that a lot of people don't realize.

“[Sales success is] a three-legged stool: one, talent and capability; two, work-ethic; and three, competitiveness.”

—Anthony Panarella, President, Nissan of New Rochelle

Schork: What are the biggest challenges or barriers to making a sale in your respective industries?

Bagliebter: The competition we face can be a significant barrier. If a client is an attractive client, and they are out looking for proposals, they are often going to multiple banks. Right now, we are in a low-interest-rate environment, and there is always some bank that is bidding really low, so we have to decide if it's worth trying to go down to meet that competition or not.

Panarella: In the car business, only 1 percent of the population in the Northeast region is in the market to buy a car each month. So for us, it's a fight to capture that little piece of the pie. We're also fighting against other Nissan dealers and the Internet.

Kennedy: The biggest challenge is the level of competition. In the

Metzger: Our customers don't know what great looks like. Insurance is one of the products you pay for and hope you will never have to use; when you do have to use it, you just kind of want to get through it. In our niche, where we are after that high-net-worth client, there is a level of expectation that is raised. The result is a lot of misinformed perception that we have to struggle with, such as: “PURE is new; they can't possibly be as good as Chubb or AIG.” Or, because we are new, “PURE is small, so their balance sheet can't possibly support a catastrophic event like [Superstorm] Sandy or [Hurricane] Irene.” It's about fighting those misperceptions day after day.

Bagliebter: Our money is as green as every other bank's money, so it really comes down to having certain unique selling propositions. [For us, that proposition is] become very knowledgeable and network within those industries. ●





Privacy meets productivity in the Brody Worklounge.

Desk Job

Westchester's coolest workstations—from retro to functional and everything in-between.

Plus:
Stress-relief spa treatments
page 91

INC.redible Indulgences

Desk to Impress

When seeking a lavish desk for the workplace or home office, look no further than these stunners from some of Westchester's best design firms and outlets. **By Paul Adler**



CONTEMPORARY
Avalon Desk

This contemporary gem features warm-toned African ebony veneers and side panels of clear acrylic accented with polished stainless steel. Both sleek and modern, the desk has a "floating" letter-size file drawer and three separate top drawers highlighted by jewelry-like ring hardware, as well as a "soft close" feature.

\$4,120, Mitchell Gold + Bob Williams, Greenwich; www.mgbwhome.com



FUNCTIONAL
Brody Worklounge

This futuristic and functional workspace creates a shelter from visual distractions while offering ample comfort and style. The Brody features patented LiveLumbar™ technology, along with an adjustable work surface that holds media at eye level, to reduce neck-and-shoulder strain.

\$4,000 and up, Waldner's, Rye; www.waldners.com



CLASSIC
Buckley Leather-Top Pedestal Desk

Timeless styling and classic elegance come together in this storage-laden desk featuring a hand-tooled leather top and traditional pedestal design. The desk boasts a decorative plinth base in provincial cherry tones, along with hanging file drawers, extensive interior storage, a removable pencil box, and a keyboard drawer.

\$3,449, Ethan Allen, Hartsdale; www.ethanallen.com

RETRO
20th C. Iron Vault Desk

A retro take on office chic, this stalwart throw-back draws inspiration from turn-of-the-century iron safes. The desk is crafted from steel sheet and fitted with heavy-duty metal wheels and latching doors.

\$2,895, Restoration Hardware, Greenwich
www.restorationhardware.com



Wellness

De-Stress From Head to Toe

Stressed out by work? Indulge in an ultra-relaxing spa treatment.
By Laurie Yarnell

Spending long days cooped up in a cubicle, hunched over a keyboard and/or held hostage in interminable meetings can leave you with a tsunami of stress. Looking for some relief? Pamper yourself with one of these indulgent spa treatments, especially crafted to reduce stress and its negative effects on your overall wellbeing.



Lava Stone Deep-Tissue Massage (60 minutes, \$160; 90 minutes, \$220)

The use of especially soothing warm basalt and cool marble stones helps make this invigorating deep-tissue massage the ultimate in relaxation experiences while releasing stored-up bodily tension.

Oasis Day Spa, Dobbs Ferry (914) 409-1900
www.oasisdayspany.com/oasis-westchester

Moor Mud Full-Body Wrap (50 minutes, \$125)

Gently eliminate aches and pains while restoring your skin with this luxurious



treatment featuring natural black magma, an ancient healing element rich in natural vitamins, minerals, and enzymes.

Bellava MedAesthetics & Plastic Surgery Center, Bedford Hills (914) 864-2140
www.bellavaspa.com

Summer Solstice (90 minutes, \$245)

Prepare for and enjoy warmer days with this deluxe package, including a salt-and-oil exfoliation, invigorating massage, and revitalizing moisturizer, designed to de-stress while making your skin firmer and more vibrant.

The Ritz-Carlton Spa, Westchester, White Plains (914) 467-5888
www.ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/new-york/westchester/spa

Total Revitalizing Facial (70 minutes, \$145)

Nourish, revitalize, and repair damaged skin with this luxurious facial, including deep cleansing, a gentle lymphatic massage, and an oatmeal face scrub, plus a clay mask, serum, and cream featuring botanical extracts.

Thann Sanctuary at Castle Hotel & Spa, Tarrytown (914) 524-6392
www.thannsanctuaryspany.com

Happy Hour

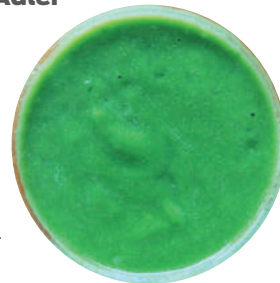
Beneficial Beverages

Skip the after-hours cocktail and get healthy with one of these salubrious smoothies. By Paul Adler

Lean Green Organic Pharmer, \$9.66

This inventive smoothie, produced by one of Westchester's most popular juice bars, blends kale, avocado, cucumber, banana, lemon, ginger, and apple juice, producing a drink that is at once surprisingly rich and slightly spicy, with distinct vegetal undertones.

15 Rye Ridge Plz, Rye Brook (914) 481-4300
www.organicpharmer.com



One

Andy's Pure Food, \$8.95

An out-of-the-box take on vegetable juice, this unique offering by the strictly organic Andy's Pure Food is a sweet symphony of carrot, orange, and apple enlivened by a subtly spicy punch of ginger.

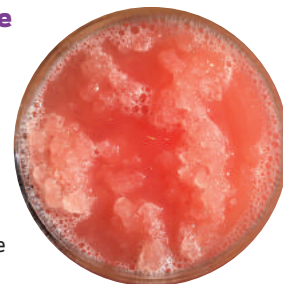
46 Purchase St, Rye (914) 967-2332



Watermelon Lime o2Living, \$5.95

While undoubtedly lighter on the veggies, this deceptively simple smoothie blends watermelon, ice, and lime juice to great effect. One of the most refreshing drinks in the county, this is a much simpler take on the classic juice-bar offering.

792 NY-35, Cross River (914) 763-6320
www.o2Living.com



Berry Boost

Organic Pharmer, \$9.66

This is an all-around classic smoothie for those who aren't exactly in love with the whole kale-based beverage concept. A foundation of strawberry, raspberry, and banana is enhanced by the complex flavor and eye-popping color of açai berry.

15 Rye Ridge Plz, Rye Brook (914) 481-4300
www.organicpharmer.com



Dressed 4 Success

Accessorize The Westchester Way

Add some county pride to your work wardrobe with these fab designed-in Westchester accessories.



Local Leather

Designer and 2016 914INC. Wunderkind Matthew Demeo (see page 58) turns out his signature collection of handcrafted leather goods from his New Rochelle studio. We love this Weekender Watch Strap (\$28) for work; his Mateo Mattia line also includes wallets, money clips, key chains, and iPad cases.

Mateo Mattia

www.mateomattia.com



Bespoke Bags

Radiating a classic-with-an-edge look, White Plains-based handbag designer Lauren Morris' line includes clutches (from \$375), a unique oversized wristlet (\$300), and a perfect carryall (\$395), which holds everything without being bulky. Preorder bags directly through Morris (you can customize the color of some styles) with about six weeks' lead time.

Lauren M. Designs
(914) 281-4393
laurenmorris@yahoo.com



You Need These Knots

Finish off your workweek look with a tie (from \$88) or bowtie (from \$68) from Bedford design duo Ann and Andrew Payne's General Knot & Co. Their collection of limited-edition accessories made in America from rare and vintage fabrics have your neckwear needs covered. The brand also makes pocket squares, bandanas, and totes.

General Knot; www.generalknot.com



The Perfect Flat

For that polished casual-Friday look, slip on one of these ballet flats from Very Lovely Soles by White Plains resident Vanessa L. Seide. The flats come in an array of colors, prints, and fabrics (\$165 to \$195), and all boast sneaker-like foam for comfort, plus a two-part leather sole for longevity. Find her shoes online, or at LOLA New York in White Plains, and Love Shoes in Larchmont.

Very Lovely Soles
www.verylovelysoles.com



Eye Candy

Looking for stylish specs with celebrity pedigree? Try one of Port Chester-based Zyloware Eyewear's designer brands, which include celeb collections from Sophia Loren, Randy Jackson, Shaquille O'Neal, and Daisy Fuentes, among others. Prices vary; available at various optical retailers throughout the county.

Zyloware Eyewear; www.zyloware.com

Plugged In

Smarter Ware for Warmer Days

Presenting the latest and greatest in high-tech gizmos, gear, and gadgetry **By Steve Ditlea**



Shoot even farther out with a hyper-zoom lens

Capture spectacular views—from panoramic earthscapes to craters on the moon—with **Nikon's Coolpix P900**, which boasts the farthest-ranging twist-adapting lens ever made for consumer digital cameras. In a zoom ratio no phone-cam could dream of, this model covers an 83-to-1 range (133-to-1 with digital zoom)—allowing for optimal framing of your scene without physically having to move in or out. Then, conveniently offload your crisp 16-megapixel stills and HD video via built-in WiFi.

Available at Best Buy, \$599



Tan, don't wrinkle: Don a UV-sensing wearable

Designed for time outdoors, this **JUNE bracelet** lets you pick up a healthy glow from the sun—without turning your skin to leather (or worse). Strap this Bluetooth-connected device to your wrist and, using its personalizing app, monitor exposure levels to harmful solar rays via any iPhone-compatible screen. The chic bauble comes from France, *naturellement*, where skincare is practically a religion. Innovative Paris-area startup NetAtmo lets you customize JUNE to offer specific SPF-level recommendations.

Available in gold, gunmetal, or platinum finishes
shop.netatmo.com, \$129



Listen easier over a snagless wireless headset

Wherever you look, neckband-style wireless stereo headsets are gaining cred due to the unplugged comfort of Bluetooth-connected audio reproduction in an easy-to-wear configuration. The top-of-the-line **Tone Infinim** model, from ear/neckwear trailblazer LG, offers first-rate Harman Kardon Signature Sound quality and notably long battery life (up to 14 hours of play), with convenient push-button retractable earpieces.

Available in gold, black, red, silver, or white finishes at WalMart, \$99-\$114

Ride safer wearing a brain-cushioning helmet

Proof that the latest high-tech gear isn't always electronic comes with the reboot of a classic motorcycle helmet, the Bell Star, introduced in 1968. The **Bell Pro Star**, today's highest-end incarnation, incorporates advanced materials and refined design for greater safety. Suction-cup-like "dampers" and three layers of state-of-the-art cushioning guard against rotational injury to the brain from a spill—a first. A thinner carbon-fiber weave reduces helmet weight, while a new inner liner could drop skin-surface temperatures by 10 degrees F.

Available soon at Hudson Valley Motorcycles, Ossining, \$1,199

UPCOMING 914INC. EVENTS



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MasterCard's Girls4Tech program nurtures local STEM talent.

Embracing STEM

To prepare for a 21st-century workforce, Westchester schools and businesses are focused on STEM training. **By Kevin Zawacki**

Ask a handful of local high-school or college students what career advice they hear most, and they'll likely cite this refrain: "Want a good job? Study STEM."

In recent years, a background in STEM—an acronym for science, technology, engineering and mathematics—has been heralded as the ticket to a secure, rewarding, and high-paying job. It's hardly empty talk: Last year, President Obama pledged to invest more than \$3 billion in federal STEM education programs across the country. But while not every student may heed the advice, Westchester County is definitely paying close attention.

Across the region, local schools and nonprofits are increasingly investing in STEM-oriented curricula and training, with the goal of creating science-savvy, career-ready graduates. And they're not alone: Local industry is investing in STEM, too, training residents and employees with the goal of shaping a capable, cutting-edge workforce.

Westchester's commitment to building STEM skills is a sound bet, but it's also one driven by necessity,

says Laurence Gottlieb, president and CEO of Hudson Valley Economic Development Corporation (HVEDC).

"[STEM] is permeating literally every type of job," Gottlieb notes. "It's been an amazing transformation. Where Westchester industries weren't necessarily dependent upon STEM skills, now every employee must have background in science, technology, engineering, or math.

"If you want to be part of the economy, you have to have at least an appreciation for STEM," he continues. "You can't just say, 'I wasn't very good at science in school.' It's not an excuse anymore."

These days, Westchester students hardly have a reason to shrug off science. A growing number of school districts and nonprofits are partnering to make STEM education lively, engaging, and ubiquitous. At Girls Inc. Westchester, a nonprofit dedicated to empowering local young women, STEM education is a top priority.

"We want to dispel the notion that only men do STEM," says Heather Apollonio, development coordinator at Girls Inc. "There's a huge gender gap in STEM fields."

To empower budding female scientists, Girls Inc. runs programs at local middle and high schools within nine Westchester school districts. One program, titled Operation SMART, invites female scientists from IBM, PepsiCo, and elsewhere into classrooms to explore subjects ranging from computer science to agriculture.

"These women not only talk about their current careers but also how they got to that point, why they got interested in science, [and] what their education paths were," Apollonio says.

Girls Inc. also helps organize coding parties that teach the basics of computer programming. In 2015, the group held over a dozen coding parties, reaching about 300 Westchester students. "We anticipate doing the same, if not more, this year," says Vanessa Santiago, director of programs for Girls Inc. Westchester.

Apollonio says that Girls Inc.'s investment in STEM is largely driven by the opportunity it creates. "The number of STEM jobs continues to grow every year, and they seem to be exceeding the workforce," she says. "We want to make sure our girls know about these opportunities."

Gottlieb believes it's programs like these, and the students they create, that will keep marquee corporations in Westchester for the long haul. "The more the school systems in Westchester County turn out top-flight students, the better it is for local companies like Regeneron, PepsiCo, and MasterCard," he says.

MasterCard itself is nurturing local STEM talent, with initiatives like Girls4Tech in a Day, a nascent program inspired by MasterCard's global Girls4Tech initiative. MasterCard may not seem like a STEM company at first, but "MasterCard is all about algorithms, digital convergence, and cryptography," says Susan Warner, vice president of worldwide communications. "If that's not STEM, I don't know what is."

Warner has been instrumental in bringing these subjects into local classrooms. In January, as part of a pilot program, Girls4Tech in a Day visited Anne Dorner Middle School in Ossining, commandeering the library for hands-on STEM education. Warner notes that the program eschews lectures for more dynamic lessons, like cracking codes and analyzing data, all alongside MasterCard

"If you want to be part of the economy, you have to have at least an appreciation for STEM. You can't just say, 'I wasn't very good at science in school.' It's not an excuse anymore."

— Laurence Gottlieb, president and CEO, HVEDC

employees. Since then, Girls4Tech in a Day has also expanded into schools in Port Chester. “[We’re] hopefully inspiring girls to become more passionate about STEM,” Warner says.

Another locally headquartered organization giving a boost to promising STEM talent is Acorda Therapeutics. Based in Ardsley, the biotech company develops therapies for individuals diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and other neurological disorders. Acorda has also developed the Acorda Scientific Excellence Award, in collaboration with WGCH radio personality Lisa Wexler. The award is doled out weekly to high-school students in Westchester and neighboring regions who are carrying out independent STEM research. Winners are rewarded with a plaque, bragging rights, and on-air recognition at WGCH.

“We continue to be impressed with the level of scientific research being done by high-school students in our area,” says Tierney Saccavino, executive vice president of corporate communications at Acorda. “By encouraging and supporting the next generation of scientists, Acorda Therapeutics can play a role in helping to create the future researchers who go on to discover the next generation of medicines.”

A little further up the Hudson lies Regeneron Pharmaceuticals in Tarrytown, a linchpin in Westchester’s STEM landscape and the largest biotechnology company in New York State. A peek at their career website gives a sense of who they’re hiring: “Scientific Data Architect,” “Flow Cytometry Operator,” “Oncology/Angiogenesis Intern.”

When it comes to investing in STEM locally, Regeneron has a range of approaches, says Hala Mirza, the company’s vice president of corporate communications. “We want to make sure people who show scientific promise at various points in their careers...[have] the support they need.”

In doing so, Regeneron hopes to cement Westchester as a scientific hub and create a pool of local STEM talent. “The region really has a lot of interest in positioning the Hudson Valley as a hotbed of science and technology,” Mirza says.

Regeneron is the presenting sponsor for the Westchester Science and Engineering Fair (WESEF), an annual event that engages hun-



Regeneron supports a number of STEM education programs; (below) Girls Inc. of Westchester runs programs to empower budding female scientists.

dreds of students across the region. Participants from Yorktown, Sleepy Hollow, Pelham, and beyond explore topics that range from breast cancer to wind turbines.

Regeneron also offers training for adults, particularly local teachers, says Potoula Gjidiya, Regeneron’s senior manager for community relations. The biotech company has developed a fruitful relationship with the STEM Leadership Center, a Westchester nonprofit that provides professional development for local science educators. The two collaborate on the STEM Teaching Fellowship program, now in its second year. The fellowship initiative began when Executive Director Lawrence Perretto—a sixth-grade science teacher at Hommocks Middle School in Mamaroneck—reached out to Regeneron with a novel idea.

“Most science teachers do not have any professional scientific background at all,” Perretto says, discussing the program’s genesis. “There is a profound disconnect between what happens in the science classroom and what professional science actually looks like.” That disconnect, he adds, “is failing to encourage young people to pursue science and engineering in college and in careers.”

The fellowship seeks to provide a solution. It’s an ambitious program: Regeneron furnishes funding for 10 local science educators to receive hands-on training (and a \$2,500 stipend) over the course of 16 months. Participants complete graduate coursework in STEM pedagogy, receive a graduate certificate from the Teachers College of Columbia University and spend two weeks working side-by-side with Regeneron professionals in the laboratory. “We think it’s an



“There is a profound disconnect between what happens in the science classroom and what professional science actually looks like.”

—Lawrence Perretto, executive director, STEM Leadership Center

innovative way to show teachers real laboratory skills and give them the opportunity to transfer that into their teaching experience,” Gjidiya says.

The STEM Leadership Center also seeks to make science education more engaging for Westchester students. The Center’s staff—“seven full-time teachers, all working in part-time roles,” Perretto says—run informal after-school science programs for youngsters. Students design and test wooden planes, to learn about aerodynamics; build model roller coasters, to unpack kinetic and potential energy; and launch rockets, to grasp the nuts and bolts of engineering.

“It’s all project-based, experiential and discovery learning,” Perretto says.

While the Center’s classes can be fun and explosive, there’s an end-game, as well: preparing Westchester’s youngsters for a changing workforce here at home. ●

Freelance writer Kevin Zawacki is a frequent 914INC. contributor.



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Theresa Motko
Nuclear Engineer

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