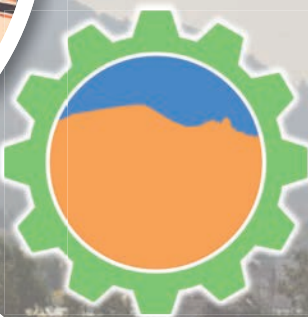




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HELENA
Area Chamber of Commerce

2020 Report^{to} the Community



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2020 Report ^{to the} Community

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR 2019 BOARD CHAIR

John McLaughlin

A Look Back

Chamber helped lobby more than 100 bills during the legislative session

Helena WINS program helps 30 individuals get internships with 17 companies

Helena Leaders Network more than doubles membership from 52 to 123

Seattle TV station produces videos promoting Helena

A record 115 new businesses joined the Chamber in 2019

I am extremely honored and humbled to have been chosen to lead the Helena Chamber of Commerce for 2019. I want to thank all the fellow board members for all their support this past year. We started the year off with the 2019 Awards Luncheon that was well attended with over 400 attendees. This year was the inaugural year of holding the ceremony at the Great Northern Town Center.

The Chamber worked hard to lobby over 100 bills during the 2019 Legislative session. We focused our efforts on securing funding for the Montana Historical Society museum. Thank you to Senator Gauthier and Representative Dooling for your efforts in this project. This new museum will not only bring millions of dollars in the Helena community during the construction of this facility but also promote annual tourism dollars as well. We also lobbied in favor of Medicaid expansion. We would like to thank Brent Rehm from D.A. Davidson for chairing this committee. He did a tremendous job, and we are proud of the outcomes of this session that will support our businesses and the Helena community.

The Helena Chamber also partnered with the Helena Independent Record for the 2nd year on the 20 Under 40 event that recognizes young leaders in the Helena community. We were honored to be able to recognize these leaders and their accomplishments.

In 2019, the Helena WINS (Workforce Attraction & Retention) Program held several successful events including Build Helena Days. We had bus loads of 8th graders who experienced large equipment as virtual reality on the construction process. We also partnered with Boeing on a Career Fair to work on attracting workers to Helena. Through the WINS program, thirty individuals were provided internships with 17 companies, and several companies have retained these individuals. We also started fundraising for a full-time Workforce Development staff member, and our goal was to raise \$50,000 for the program. Thank you to all businesses who contributed. We would like to thank Kelly Creswell for her continued work on this program.

The Helena Leaders Network met regularly throughout the year. This program is our rebranded young professionals group which provides fun activities and leadership events to help our future leaders. They held several successful events and increased their membership from 52 to 123. We would like to thank Beth Brown and Ali Mandell and welcome Rebecca Meyers as the new incoming chair.

In 2019, the Chamber started the Friday Job Postings, which is free to members. This is posted on the Chamber's, the HLN, and

the WINS Facebook pages. This allows job seekers to sign up to receive notification of new postings.

We also continued our Wisdom Wednesday information presentations where experts and chamber members meet every second Wednesday. The presentations have been well-attended, and we have had excellent presenters.

We are also extremely proud to have graduated our 35th Class of Leadership Helena. This program continues to be a premiere offering to our members because of the incredible job done by Mike Mergenthaler and Dean Mack. Unfortunately, we even have to turn away applicants due to the popular status of this program.

We had another top notch successful SWISH tournament with 110 teams. This event brings in close to \$500,000 to our local economy. Thank you to Mike Mergenthaler for your leadership and all the volunteers who make this so successful.

We had two Top Investors breakfasts where we meet with business leaders and discuss how the Chamber can enhance their businesses. We also discuss what problems local businesses face and ways the Chamber can help. Out of this meeting, the Chamber has created the WINS program. The first event was hosted by St. Peter's Hospital, and the second event was hosted by Payne West Insurance at Carroll College.

The Chamber was also busy with various projects around Helena such as hosting the King5 TV from Seattle. They produced several videos enticing visitors to come to Helena. This video is available for businesses to recruit or promote Helena. We also worked with MTN News to produce an ongoing series of clips about Helena to encourage Montanans to visit the Capital City. The Chamber was proud to advertise shopping locally over the holiday seasons.

2019 has proven to be a successful year with the Chamber. Our membership has grown to over 750 members with a record 115 new members in the past twelve months.

As you can see, I recognized several individuals for their volunteerism with the Chamber because without these individuals or businesses our programs wouldn't be as successful. I want to thank the Chamber staff for all their hard work. We would like to recognize Cathy Burwell for 20 years of service to the Chamber and Mike Mergenthaler for his 15 years. I look forward to working with Sara Medley as the 2020 Chairman and rest assured the Chamber is in good hands.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR 2020 BOARD CHAIR

Sara Medley

Writing this message on the eve of Martin Luther King, Jr., day, calls me to begin my message with a Dr. King quote, "Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree, to serve... You only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love."

Your Helena Chamber of Commerce board of directors believe in servant leadership. For that reason, I am ready to roll up my sleeves and serve our members as your 2020 board chair. What great opportunities lie before us! So much to do, so little time. Let's get to work!

Beginning with the end in mind and building on what past board chairs Jason Davis and John McLaughlin accomplished through the strong support of the greater Helena Chamber members, **the Helena WINS (Workforce Innovation NetworkS)**, a program whose objective is to help area employers attract, develop and retain workforce talent, will hire a director to help grow the program and make it sustainable.

Leadership Helena's number of applicants will continue to grow, making entry into the program even more competitive and the desire to participate and learn more intense. With a mission of developing business leaders who are informed, vigorous, skilled and effective, the leadership development, networking and Chamber and community involvement guarantee dynamic leaders for the next decade and beyond.

Helena Leaders Network (HLN), the Chamber program focused on young professional leadership development, is led by an energetic and talented group, whose passion for engaging those interested in making a difference in our community is inspiring. Their membership has increased by more than 200 percent over the last year and a half. The Chamber board enthusiastically stated its support of the program, setting a goal for 2023 of 500 members! Given the enthusiasm of the HLN executive committee, I know they can make it.

As directed by the board at our November retreat, and in line with the concept that what gets measured gets managed, we will be **revising the Chamber mission statement and developing a vision statement for the first time ever**. We will also improve

the board meeting agenda to foster more engagement around strategic targets, measurable goals, dashboard reporting and ACTION as opposed to report-out. These changes will be critical to the future direction of the Chamber and will all be in place by March.

Exceptional staff, led by Cathy Burwell, president and CEO, are working to improve the Chamber and looking for new ways to serve our members. Wisdom Wednesdays and other educational events are well attended and worth your time. Business before- and after-hour events provide a venue for member networking and social interaction while celebrating new and existing greater Helena businesses. Programs such as the SWISH basketball tournament, award luncheons and banquets and special opportunities such as out-of-state advertising to entice individuals and families to our beautiful area all provide an economic boon to our community. A bold goal of securing 1,000 members by 2023 has been set! Knowing the talent of the Chamber team, this goal will be surpassed.

A commitment to a **healthy relationship** with the members and city and county officials is another Chamber board goal. In addition, an informal group of past Board Chairs is forming. **The goal: To help drive more opportunities for growth and improvement in the greater Helena area.**

Another commitment for 2020 is to develop ideas for finding and **retaining employees through innovative solutions**, for example, establishing a childcare co-op for interested businesses.

Membership, your greater Helena Chamber is not about keeping it in business. Rather, it is about **helping you keep your business in business**. If you aren't yet a member, join. If you are a member, **get involved!** If you have young professionals, sponsor HLN and encourage your team members to join and participate. While your Chamber cannot solve every business problem and challenge, what it can do is help you find the resources, the expertise and, perhaps, the path for which you can take to become an active problem-solver.

Finally, there is so much more we can all do individually to help our friends, neighbors and families be safer and healthier. Let's make 2020 the year we embrace diversity and diverse opinions that challenge us to be more accepting, civil and open-minded.



A Look Forward

FOCUS ON:

Revising the Chamber mission statement and developing a vision statement for the first time ever

Develop ideas for finding and retaining employees through innovative solutions

Build healthy relationship with members and city and county officials

Embrace diversity and diverse opinions



HELENA

Area Chamber of Commerce

WHY JOIN THE CHAMBER?



CREDIBILITY

Raise your business reputation through membership. A Shapiro study indicated that nearly 70% of consumers would be more likely to do business with companies that they know were Chamber Members.



ADVOCACY

We work to inform, educate, and advocate on your behalf! Gain a say in what happens through our chamber's advocacy efforts. Keep "in the know" with our E-Advocate and City Commission reports.



COMMUNITY

Creating a strong, local economy means creating a quality of life that helps attract new talent & develops an environment that a growing workforce wants to live, play, and STAY in!



LEARNING & NETWORKING

You can access educational resources through the Chamber that will help you be a more informed employee.

The Chamber can connect you to training opportunities and mentors to assist your business needs. Connect with peers through BAH, Helena Leaders Network, and Leadership Helena.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Get on board with our Helena WINS program and help with Workforce challenges. Through the earn & learn talent pipeline employers can attract talent, develop talent, and retain talent in their business.



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Business Name: _____

Physical Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Primary Phone: _____

Business Email: _____

Website: _____

Main Contact Name: _____

Title: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Main Business Classification

One word to describe your business: _____

Sub-Classification(s) _____

Chamber Events That Interest You:

Sponsorships _____

Leadership _____

Educational Training _____

Government Issues _____

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Executive Board



Sara Medley
(2020 Chair)
**Mountain-Pacific
Quality Health**

What is the best benefit of the Helena Chamber for businesses?
"While there are a number of great benefits in being a member of the Helena Chamber, the best benefit for my company is a closer connection to the greater Helena community. This 'closer connection' has enabled Mountain-Pacific and its staff to be more recognized as a leader for driving innovation in health care."



John McLaughlin
(2020 Immed.
Past Chair)
Stockman Bank

Why are you serving on the board and what do you like about it?
"First, I was honored to be asked to serve. Secondly with my position at Stockman Bank, it is very important not only to know what is going on in the business community but to also support it to the fullest extent. I always believe what you get out of things is shown by the effort you put into them."



Bob Heberly
(2020 Chair Elect)
**Dick Anderson
Construction**

Why do you serve on the board and what do you like about serving?
"One of the things I love about Helena is that so many people volunteer, donate, serve on Boards, and give back to the community. I serve on the Chamber Board - and on other non-profit Boards - because it is my responsibility as a citizen of Helena to help make this the best community possible - and that means helping local businesses, schools, healthcare, government, and so many more aspects of what makes Helena a great place to live. I believe that the Chamber makes a difference for our community, and it's good to be a part of that effort."



Byron Stahly
(2020 Treasurer)
Stahly Engineering

What is your favorite event in Helena and why?
"My favorite event would have to be Intermountain's Festival of Trees because of the mission of Intermountain and their passion and commitment to betterment of children's lives. Second, because the event affords everyone in the community the opportunity to come and see the beautiful trees and wreaths and enjoy the wonderful Christmas spirit."

2020 Board of Directors



Craig Aasved
Shodair Hospital

Why do you serve on the board and what do you like about serving?
"I serve on the board as I want to continue assure the business community is represented adequately, and to assure major issues are dealt with in a timely manner."



Callie Aschim
Home 2 Suites

What is your favorite thing about Helena?
"Helena is incredibly welcoming which gives it a warmth of a small town but still has the amenities of a larger city. I love that Helena has maintained that "old town" charm but is focused on developing and improving the town. I think that the new breweries and restaurants that have opened give amazing options for the nightlife and we are so lucky to be so close to so much outdoor recreation."



Brenden Craig
First Interstate Bank

"What is your favorite event in Helena and Why?"
"My wife and I have thoroughly enjoyed the Chambers Big Night Out, Festival of Trees, and Paint the Town Pink events! It would be hard to pick just one!"



Reyna Cardenas
Boeing

What is the best benefit of the Helena Chamber for businesses?
"The best benefit of being a Chamber member is being part of a diverse and collaborative partnership with other businesses in Helena. It's been a great networking opportunity for Boeing and helped increase exposure that we are in the area. We have had great success aligning, developing and recruiting talent via Helena WINS (Workforce Innovation Networks)."



John Cech
Carroll College

What is the best benefit of the Helena Chamber for businesses?
"My two months so far on the Board of the Helena Chamber has shown me that the best benefit is the opportunity to network and develop new partnerships that wouldn't exist without this organization. I have already made some great connections through the Chamber, and I look forward to making even more."



Kelly Cresswell
Reach Higher Montana
Why I serve on the board?

"I was asked to chair the Education Committee when I first joined the board, which is a great fit for the work I do at Reach Higher Montana. As the committee evolved to be part of the Helena WINS initiative, my board involvement has become even more meaningful to me. I think Helena WINS is a great way to collaborate with business, education, and government to help students increase their awareness of education and career opportunities available in our community and to help local businesses meet their workforce needs."

2020 Board of Directors



Craig Jenneskens
Robert Peccia & Associates

"What is the best benefit of the Helena Chamber for businesses?"

"The Helena Chamber of Commerce provides an excellent network for local business people to understand and discuss challenges and opportunities being faced or realized by businesses throughout the community. The connections you make through the Chamber can result in new business clients and open doors to help grow your business. Equally as important, being active in the Chamber allows you to give back to the community and help other local businesses grow and succeed."



Julie Dooling
Sullivan Financial Group

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"My favorite thing about Helena is the diversity of activities for families and individuals. Helena has so many outdoor activities – hiking, biking, boating, skiing & snowmobiling in or near the valley and tons of Social and Cultural events."



Janet Hedges
Raymond James Financial

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"I love Helena because of the rich history that surrounds us. We have beautiful views in any direction. And most of all it's the people. The people are genuinely philanthropic and support our community."



Wade Johnson
St. Peters Health



Anna Kazmierowski
A2Z Staffing Solutions

What is your favorite event in Helena and why?

"The Mother's Day Pots and Plants Sale presented by West Mont Farm and Gardens and the Archie Bray Foundation has become a family tradition for us—we have been attending this event for ten years! It is a fun day for all ages where you can glaze pots and watch them get raku fired. You can shop for salsa and bedding plants from West Mont and purchase beautiful planters and vases produced at Archie Bray. There is also face painting, kid's clay and wood-fired pizza. It's no wonder this is such a popular community event!"



Dustin Lundstrom
Mt. City Plumbing & Heating

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"My favorite thing about Helena is the opportunity for so many outdoor activities. The Helena area provides hundreds of outdoor activities in the surrounding area and you can find something to do within a short drive."



Rebecca Meyers
Northbound Public Affairs

Where is your favorite place to take visitors in Helena?

"My favorite place to take visitors is the walking mall downtown because it always provides me with such a huge sense of community. Walking past the shops and restaurants really highlights just how livable and vibrant Helena is. It is full of local shop owners who are quick to welcome you and share their story, whether it be the Windbag Saloon, Ten Mile, or the Parrot."



Tyler Miller
Montana Radio Co.

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"I love the genuine kindness of the people who live here. The smiles and waves make me proud to live in such a great place. Combine that with the amazing weather and outdoors and Helena can't be beat."



Brian Obert (Liaison)
MBAC

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"Helena is many things, but the best is that it is authentic. When I want a beer, I actually want a beer. Then I replace that word 'Beer' with a dozen different authentic things and I am very happy doing that authentic thing."

2020 Board of Directors



Maureen Oelkers
Big Sky Brokers

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"I would have to say my favorite thing about Helena is the quality of life here. From the mountains, to the lakes, to the rivers, to the central location in Montana, I think we have the best of all worlds here in Helena."



Col. Gregory Olson (Liaison)
Montana National Guard

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"I would have to say my favorite thing about Helena is the quality of life here. From the mountains, to the lakes, to the rivers, to the central location in Montana, I think we have the best of all worlds here in Helena."



Scott Patton
Walmart

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"The sense of community with the people that live here. That has always been the heart of what Montana is about. Genuine people who care about their neighbors and the community they live in."



Tyler Ream (Ex-Officio)
School District 1

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"I would have to say my favorite thing about Helena is the quality of life here. From the mountains, to the lakes, to the rivers, to the central location in Montana, I think we have the best of all worlds here in Helena."



Brent Rehm
D.A. Davidson

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"I would have to say my favorite thing about Helena is the quality of life here. From the mountains, to the lakes, to the rivers, to the central location in Montana, I think we have the best of all worlds here in Helena."



Susan Good Geise
L&C Co. Commissioner

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"I would have to say my favorite thing about Helena is the quality of life here. From the mountains, to the lakes, to the rivers, to the central location in Montana, I think we have the best of all worlds here in Helena."



Ron Whitmoyer
(Ex-Officio)
East Helena Schools

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"I would have to say my favorite thing about Helena is the quality of life here. From the mountains, to the lakes, to the rivers, to the central location in Montana, I think we have the best of all worlds here in Helena."



Steve Mergenthaler
Mergenthaler Transfer
& Storage

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"My favorite thing about Helena is the small homelike community that is full of hard-working people. When visitors come into town, I enjoy showing off our wonderful streams and lakes for fishing and drive to Marysville for a good steak and seafood!"



Dr. Monica Berner
Blue Cross Blue
Shield of MT

What is your favorite thing about Helena?

"Brings the best of both worlds together....small town and cosmopolitan. Great activities, arts, etc., while at the same time safe, comfortable, easy to navigate and friendly."



Sean Logan
(Ex-Officio)
City Commission

"What is your favorite event in Helena and Why?"

Parade of Lights/Lighting of the Firetower I like it because it is an event that brings our community together at a special time of year around something that has been central to Helena throughout history.

Thank you for your service!

The Helena Area Chamber of Commerce would like to thank the following individuals for their past service on the Chamber Board:



Stephanie Beckert
Great West Engineering



Beth Brown
Mountain-Pacific Quality Health



Jason Davis
SMA Architects



Kirk Lacy
Helena College



Jim McCormick
Lewis & Clark County



Tim Uribe
KLJ Engineering



Kali Wicks
City of Helena

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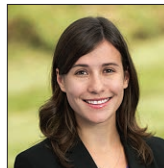
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Partnerships, Real Estate & Commercial
Transactions



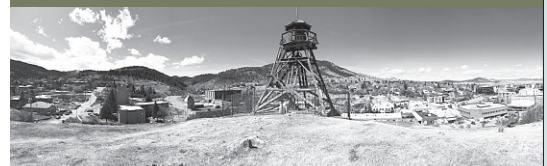
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**Shodair CEO
Craig Aasved**

2019 Chamber Business of the Year **Shodair Children's Hospital**

Shodair is creating a healthy and hopeful Montana through specialized psychiatric care for children and adolescents along with a nationally recognized genetics program providing care for all ages.

Shodair Children's Hospital became a Children's Miracle Network Hospital in 1987 and remains the only CMN hospital in Montana. Every penny of every dollar that is raised during a CMN fundraiser supports Shodair directly. Donated funds help cover costs for Montana families who cannot afford to.

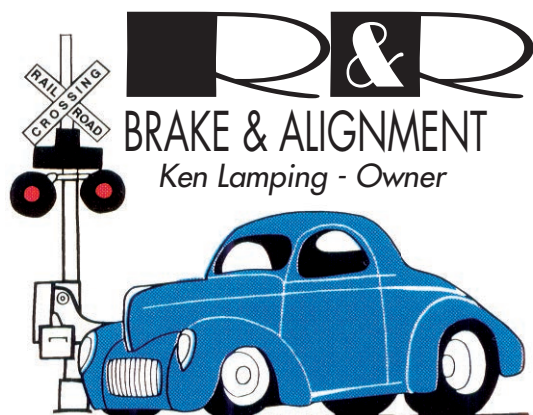
In addition, Shodair first received Joint Commission accreditation in 1992, and has been continuously accredited since that time. Shodair's education program is an accredited year-round school for elementary, middle, and high school students. Our team of educators are certified in special education and includes six teachers, six teaching assistants, a speech pathologist, a school psychologist, and a principal.

Shodair CEO Craig Aasved, a chamber board member, accepted the award on behalf the mental health hospital.

"Shodair has an incredibly rich history of serving Helena," Aasved said. "I feel privileged to get to a part of this organization."

The hospital served more than 1,800 patients in 2018 and is in the process of opening outpatient services in Missoula and Butte, according to the chamber's outgoing Board Chairman John McLaughlin, who is the president of Stockman Bank in Helena. McLaughlin characterized Shodair as a vital member of the Helena business community in his presentation during the Helena Chamber Awards luncheon in January.

Excerpts taken from Shodair.org and HelenaIR.com



Alignment • Shocks • Struts • CV Axels • CV Boots
Brakes • Drums • Rotors • Masters • Cylinders



1713 North Montana Avenue

2019 George D. Anderson Business Person of the Year **Dr. Bill Simons**

Dr. Bill Simons, owner of Montana Eye Care in Helena, graduated from Carroll College with a bachelor's degree in biology and continued his education at Southern California College of Optometry, receiving his doctorate degree in Optometry in 1982. He began practicing at Montana Eye Care in August 1986. In addition to being named the 2019 Helena Area Chamber of Commerce Business Person of the Year, Dr. Simons is past president of the Montana Optometric Association and the Great Western Council of Optometry. He has been named Optometrist of the Year three times and continues to be active promoting the profession he loves. Simons is Board Certified by the American Board of Optometry. Dr. Simons and his team at Montana Eye Care offer eye and vision services, corrective lenses, eye disorder treatment and LASIK support.



2019 Boss of the Year
Dick Anderson
Dick Anderson Construction



2019 Hospitality Hero
Mike Mergenthaler
Helena Area Chamber of Commerce



Outgoing Chamber of Commerce Board Chair John McLaughlin, center right, awards, from left, Mark Stahly, Teresa Lightbody and Maureen Oelkers, of Big Sky Brokers, the 2019 Small Business of the Year award January 16th during the annual Chamber of Commerce award luncheon.

2019 Chamber Small Business of the Year **Big Sky Brokers**

Big Sky Brokers started in 2001 and has since grown to a team of more than 34 Realtors with diverse expertise. From residential to land, ranches to developments, and commercial to exchanges, their reputation reflects an extremely high level of competence. The team is a solid, successful organization demonstrating their ambition through impressive statistics and a base of very loyal customers. When you choose Big Sky Brokers, you will be working with confident professionals in a comfortable environment.

The office has great synergy and a high level of mutual respect. Many of the team have worked

together for years; they collectively strive to promote awareness and keep this business positive and highly regarded.

Big Sky Broker customers will tell you they are very committed to their profession, the community and to exceptional service. Allow the team the opportunity to assist you in your real estate transaction. At Big Sky Brokers, the sky is the limit!

The office serves Helena and extended areas including: Avon, Boulder, Clancy, Craig, Elliston, Jefferson City, Lincoln, Montana City, Townsend, and Wolf Creek.

Information from BigSkyBrokers.com



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partners within our communities
to provide solutions for better health.

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Mountain-Pacific
Quality Health

2019 Volunteer of the Year



Rex Walsh
Stockman Bank

*Award presented by Cathy Burwell,
Helena Area Chamber of Commerce*

2019 Board Chairs Special Recognition Award



**Sen.
Terry Gauthier**



**Rep.
Julie Dooling**

Awards presented by John McLaughlin, Stockman Bank

TOUR DATES 2020

Tintina Montana Inc.
17 E. Main
White Sulphur Springs, MT

FRIDAY, MAY 1	10AM
THURSDAY, JUNE 4	10AM
THURSDAY, JULY 2	1PM
FRIDAY, JULY 3	9AM
WEDNESDAY, AUG. 12	10AM
TUESDAY, SEP. 22	10AM
THURSDAY, OCT. 8	10AM



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2020 Chamber Staff



Cathy Burwell President/CEO
406-447-1942

cburwell@helenachamber.com

Committees: Government Affairs,
Helena Ambassadors, Military Affairs,
Air Services/Transportation, Helena WINS



Mike Mergenthaler Vice President
406-447-1941

mmergenthaler@helenachamber.com

Committees: SWISH, Annual Banquet,
Annual Golf Tournament, CVB, Helena
Hospitality Group, Leadership Helena



Katie Nichols

Communications & Marketing Director
406-442-4120

katie@helenachamber.com

Committees:
Helena Leaders Network



Joey Berndt

Membership Director
406-447-1945

joey@helenachamber.com

Committees:
Member Services



Kristin Chaney

Office & Events Assistant
406-442-4120

kchaney@helenachamber.com



Lori Nelson

Financial Director
406-442-4120

lori@helenachamber.com

Chamber Events

Every year, the Helena Chamber is excited to coordinate events that engage its membership and provide an enriching experience to those who attend. Whether it's the Business After Hours, the Chamber Annual Banquet or the Swish Basketball Tournament!

Volunteering your time is a great way to get involved! We are always in need of volunteers. So if there's an event where you can help, please contact the chamber at 406-442-4120.

Here are just a few events and activities Chamber members enjoy each year:

- Business AFTER Hours
– 3rd Thursday of the Month
- Wisdom Wednesdays
– 2nd Wednesday of every month
- SWISH Basketball Tournament
– March 7th & 8th
- Annual Golf Tournament
– May 17th
- Big Night Out
– October 11th
- Lunch with Local Government
– March 19 and October 29
- 20 Under 40
– August 20th

Want more information on these upcoming events?
Check out www.helenachamber.com/events
or helenaevents.com

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2020 Committees & Chairs



Government Affairs
Committee Chair: Brent Rehm
D.A. Davidson
406-442-9600
brehm@dadco.com



Golf Tournament
Committee Chair: Lyn Walker
Intrepid
406-495-6062
lynw@thecu4u.org



Member Services
Co-Chair: Shawna Swanz
Independent Record
406-447-4048
shawna.swanz@helenair.com



Member Services
Co-Chair: Arlene Flynn
Westmont
406-447-3100
aflynn@westmont.org



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Helena WINS
Co-Chair: Anna Kazmierowski
A2Z Staffing Solutions
406-443-7664
anna@a2zmontana.com



Helena WINS
Co-Chair: Kelly Cresswell
Reach Higher Montana
406-442-1275
kcresswell@reachhighermontana.org



Helena Leaders Network Committee
Co-Chair: Ali Mandell,
Anderson Zurmuehlen
406-447-3069
amandell@azworld.com



Helena Leaders Network Committee
Co-Chair: Rebecca Meyers
Northbound Public Affairs
303-704-7350
rebecca@northboundpublicaffairs.com

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SWISH

Committee Chair: David Jensen
406-438-1516
david.jensen.lwla@statefarm.com



Leadership Helena

Committee Chair: Dean Mack
State HR Division
406-444-3894
dmack@mt.gov



Annual Banquet

Committee Chair: Lacey Pickett
Pacific Source Health Plans
406-431-7745
lacee.pickett@pacificsource.com



Ambassador

Committee Chair: Ed Jasmin
edjasmin@bresnan.net
406-422-5616



Air Services/Transportation

Committee Chair: Jeff Wadekamper,
Helena Regional Airport
406-442-2821
jwadekamper@helenaairport.com



CVB (Convention Visitors Bureau)

Committee Chair: Jeff Kurtz
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Helena Chambers Helena Leaders Network

Supporting Our Up-and-Coming Community Leaders

Helena Leaders Network (HLN) spent 2019 building a foundation on which to develop an energetic, diverse and successful young professionals program. How?

Over the last year, HLN has certainly benefited from the support of the Helena Area Chamber of Commerce, its board of directors and its record-breaking number of business members, but a key component of the program's momentum has been its leadership.

In 2019, the HLN executive committee was led by co-chairs Ali Mandell (Anderson ZurMuehlen) and Beth Brown (Mountain-Pacific Quality Health) and is comprised of dedicated and energetic members who are committed to fulfilling the program's objectives:

- To encourage and empower new leaders in Helena to grow



personally and professionally through mentorship and learning opportunities

- To attract, retain, and develop young talent by showcasing Helena as a dynamic city where young professionals can live, work, and play

- To embrace diversity and inclusion to foster connections to our community "The Helena area has a lot to offer, and it is an amazing place to live, work, and play," says Stephen Walter (Wells Fargo), one of HLN's executive committee members. "That's why I want to encourage and help grow young professionals, so they can

be effective and successful as our community's future leaders."

Joe Mitchell (State Farm), another HLN executive committee member, agrees. "As a small business owner here in Helena, I'm extremely passionate about attracting, developing and retaining young talent. HLN provides the opportunity to connect, learn and grow with other young professionals. We made amazing strides in 2019, and I'm extremely excited to see what we can accomplish together in 2020."

HLN membership nearly tripled in 2019, and the executive committee has set the bold goal to reach 500 members by 2023. An important step in increasing the number of members is listening to the current ones and providing what they want in a robust, worthwhile program. In November, members attended





an open-dialogue event at The Wassweiler Dinner House & Pub, where they were invited to provide input for HLN's 2020 events calendar.

"The executive committee has worked hard to put events together that we feel are vital to the development of Helena's future leaders," says executive committee member Kristen McLaughlin (Stockman Bank). "We have some great events coming up in 2020, and I am excited for another year of connecting and growing with HLN."

The coming year's events will include educational programs on financial management and planning, improving interview skills, professionalism and effectively working with different generations; outreach projects to support local charities and community members in need; and networking opportunities that will not only bring members together but also support local businesses.

Through these events, members will meet new people and develop new business opportunities, expand their network of business and personal contacts, learn about and participate in local volunteer opportunities, strengthen their teamwork and leadership skills, broaden

their knowledge on a variety of topics, learning both from their peers and more experienced community members and business professionals.

"I am so excited to be part of a group driven by young, creative minds, all of whom are promoting leadership, professional development, and innovative opportunities that will continue to invigorate Helena and our surrounding communities," says 2020 HLN co-chair Rebecca Meyers (Northbound Public Affairs), who has served on the HLN executive committee for the last year and replaces Beth Brown. "HLN grew exponentially in 2019 because of these dedicated and passionate young minds coming to the table, and I look forward to seeing even greater success and momentum through 2020."

Prospective members can join HLN two ways: through their place of employment sponsoring HLN, which secures a number of free memberships, depending on the level of sponsorship, or through an independent membership, which is \$50 per person or \$75 for a couple. For more information, visit helenaleadersnetwork.com.



Halloween Poker Run



Habitat for Humanity



Social Networking Event



SWISH Celebrates 25 Years

The Chamber's youth SWISH basketball tournament is the longest running tournament in the state and is celebrating its 25th consecutive year in 2020!! The tournament tipped off in 1996 with 44 teams participating. Now, the tournament exceeds 100 teams each year with 2016 setting the record for the most teams to ever play in the tournament with 132 teams participating.

The 2020 tournament welcomes the use of three brand new gyms for participants to compete in. Helena has always had great gyms in the past and with the addition of new gyms at Central, Bryant and Jim Darcy Elementary Schools, Helena now boasts some of the best gyms in the state. Having quality gyms to offer participants in a tournament this size is critical to the success of the tournament.

Last year saw the addition of the new Prickly Pear Elementary school and a new hardwood floor added to East Valley Middle School both located in East Helena. These, along with both great High School gyms and the large gym in Montana City, make Helena a must for traveling basketball teams.

With hundreds of participating athletes and thousands of volunteers, parents and fans, the Helena Area Chamber of Commerce's two-day Youth SWISH Basketball Tournament gives the area a significant economic boost.

The tournament also gives the participating boys and girls in grades 2-8 a chance to hone their skills in a friendly competition with their peers from across the state.

Last year's tournament included 110 teams averaging eight players each with 60 of those teams being from out of town. The roughly 900 athletes were spread out among 11 area gymnasiums and 220 individual games were played over the two days.

The 25th annual tournament is scheduled for March 7-8, and registration forms are available at helenachamber.com.

For more information or to volunteer, contact the chamber's Vice President Mike Mergenthaler at 406-447-1941 or email him at mmergenthaler@helenachamber.com.




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Silver City Stone Cabinetry & Tile
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Silver Level

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D.A. Davidson & Co.
Days Inn - Helena
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Farmers State Bank
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Intrepid Credit Union
J & D Auto Sales
KTVH
Lowe's
Montana City Grill & Saloon
Off the Wall Advertising/Lucky Bucky Bar
Reach Higher Montana

Remington Luxury Apartments
Rocky Mountain Credit Union
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Helena WINS

(Workforce Innovation NetworkS)



Addressing workforce shortages and talent attraction continues to be a major challenge for Montana businesses. A recent survey by the Montana Chamber of Commerce found that 86% of Helena-area businesses have tried to fill positions in the past 12 months (compared to 85% of businesses statewide). Nearly 70% of Helena-area survey respondents indicated the most difficulty filling entry and mid-level positions. Why are these positions so hard to fill? Businesses cited the following reasons as their main challenges:

- Low number of applicants
- Lack of interpersonal skills
- Lack of relevant experience, education, certification, or training

- Unwillingness to accept offered pay/compensation

The goal of the Helena WINS initiative is to build a robust talent pipeline for the Helena area that is responsive to employers' current and emerging workforce needs. Helena WINS has four industry sector partnerships (Healthcare, Information Technology, Manufacturing, and Construction) as well as several cross-sector projects to serve area employers, regardless of industry. Through several collaborative projects, Helena WINS brings together employers and community resources to help address the workforce challenges in our community.

2019 was the first full year of the Helena WINS program, and this collaborative, volunteer initiative achieved several significant milestones:

- **iGraduate Montana Grant:** Helena WINS received a second grant from iGraduate Montana, funded by the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, to expand the activities within Helena WINS.

- **Partnership to Advance Youth Apprenticeship:** Helena WINS partnered with Billings Works on a proposal to develop models for youth apprenticeships in Healthcare and Information Technology. The proposal was one of only nine funded throughout the U.S.

- **Building Helena from the Ground Up:** Led by Dick Anderson Construction, this successful event provided hands-on career exploration opportunities for hundreds of area 5th graders.

- **Intern Bridge Training:** Carroll College coordinated efforts to bring Dr. Robert Shindoll, one of the nation's leading experts in work-based learning, to work with area employers.

- **Helena Summer Jobs Program launched:** Led by American Jobs for America's Youth – MT, the inaugural Helena Summer Jobs Program was a hit! Seventeen employers hosted student workers for at least six weeks during the summer. Every student completed

employability skills training, and was matched with a mentor for the duration of the program. This program provided over 5,000 hours of on-the-job training for area students.

- **Carroll College Career Fair:** College students participated in a well-organized career fair, sponsored by Carroll College.



- **Manufacturing Day:** Led by Boeing, volunteers visited 5th grade classrooms throughout Helena and taught students how to build their very own robotic arms using Popsicle sticks, pipe cleaners, rubber bands, and ingenuity! Over 300 students participated.

- **Helena College STEAM Month:** Throughout the month, Helena College organized a variety of activities to help the community explore careers in science, technology, engineering,

art, and math. One of the events – the Welding Rodeo held on October 5 – paired high school and college welding students in a competition to design and create works of art. Celebrity judge Dave Turin, star of Discovery Channel's Gold Rush television show, scored the submissions. The winning school, Capital High, received a Miller welder for their efforts.

Plans for 2020

Thanks to the generous support of many Helena-area businesses, the Chamber will be adding a part-time workforce development specialist to support Helena WINS. Having a dedicated staff person to focus on Helena WINS will further advance the work of this initiative in the coming year. Current plans for 2020 include:

- **Manufacturing Career Night, January 28:** Building on last year's successful event, this year's career night will be open to area middle and high school students, and their parents, to learn about careers in manufacturing that are available right here in Helena. The event will be held at the Helena College Airport Campus.

- **REACH (Research and Explore Awesome Careers in Healthcare), March 18:** The purpose of REACH is to provide Montana high school students a chance to learn about careers within the healthcare field by offering an opportunity to explore and experience various healthcare careers. REACH is held throughout Montana, and this will be the first REACH event in Helena. Many thanks to Carroll College and the Helena WINS healthcare sector for bringing this opportunity to area students.

- **Intern Bridge Training for Employers, April 8:** Building on the success of last year's program, Helena WINS is bringing Dr. Robert Shindoll back to Helena. Intern Bridge is a nationally-recognized program that helps employers structure internships (or any other work-based learning program) for maximum effectiveness – both for the employer and for the worker.

- **Skilled Trades Career Fair, Spring 2020:** This new

event will highlight career opportunities currently available in the skilled trades. Helena College is taking the lead on this project and will be reaching out to businesses soon. Students graduating from Helena College this spring will be invited to attend, and the event will be open to anyone in the community interested in employment in the skilled trades.

- **Montana Youth Apprenticeship Partnership:** Helena WINS and Billings Works are collaborating on a grant-funded project to design and implement youth apprenticeships in Helena and Billings, in the information technology and health care sectors. We plan

to identify and place 2-4 youth apprentices in the Helena community by fall of 2020.

- **Building Helena from the Ground Up:** If you've attended Digger Days in Belgrade or Missoula Under Construction, you've seen the excitement young people (and the young at heart) have for exploring careers in the construction industry. We're excited to build upon last year's event, with even more student and employer participation. Want to get involved? Contact Annie Chase at Dick Anderson Construction to join the Helena WINS construction sector.

- **Helena Summer Jobs Program:** We'll soon begin recruiting employer participants for the Helena Summer Jobs Program. First year results were incredibly positive, and we look forward to having more employer and student participation in our second year.

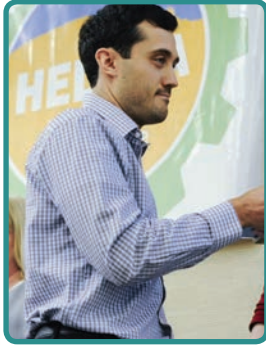
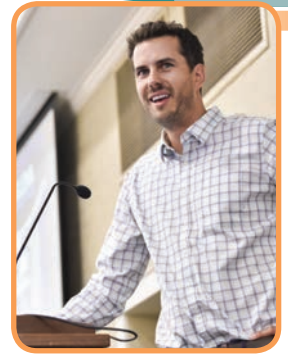


Through a combination of developing Helena WINS projects, to partnering with other workforce development efforts in the community, Helena WINS has made great strides over the past year and there is so much more that can be accomplished. Employer involvement is critical to the success of Helena WINS. If your business would like to get involved, or if you have ideas for building Helena's talent pipeline, contact the Chamber to find out more.



20 Under 40 Luncheon

The 20 Under 40 awards are meant to honor those under the age of 40 who, through their industry and hard work, are moving the Helena community forward. For the first time in 2018, the Helena area Chamber of Commerce co-hosted with the Helena IR a celebratory luncheon for 20 outstanding men and women who received the 20 Under 40 awards.



Below: Former Carroll College head football coach Mike Van Diest gives the keynote address during the 20 Under 40 luncheon.



Adam Clinch
Josh Romandia
Tyler Bryant
Kali Wicks
Katie Jerstad
Jeff Sealey
Allison Moon
Dan Barry
Dr. Niki Henricksen
Carrie Krepps


Deanna Johnson
Josh Talley
Sara Casey Taleff
Ross Marty
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Wisdom Wednesdays



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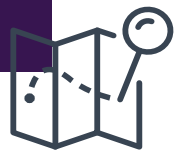
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the Community
VIA IR



5,000

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in Helena Leaders
Network



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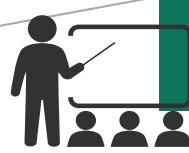
20,000
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Leadership Helena
- 36 yrs!



60
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with Chamber SWAG
bags in 2018



12
Business AFTER Hours
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Legislature



OVER
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membership in the
Chamber



48 CHARMS
At 40 businesses on
Helena Charm Trail



3,500-5,000
Business Referrals made
per year for members
by staff



Business After Hours



Lunch with Local Government



As a new Helena resident, my goal for Leadership Helena was to develop community ties while gaining insight into the local economy and community issues, enhance my leadership abilities and network with my peers. I can say with resounding confidence that this program was all of that and more! Highly recommend! Kami Stevenson, Stockman Bank, Class of 2018-2019

.....

CLASS OF 2019-2020

Leadership Helena Cruises into Another Decade of Leadership Training



As evidenced by its flagship Leadership Helena program, the Helena Area Chamber of Commerce is about much more than meetings and cocktail dinners.

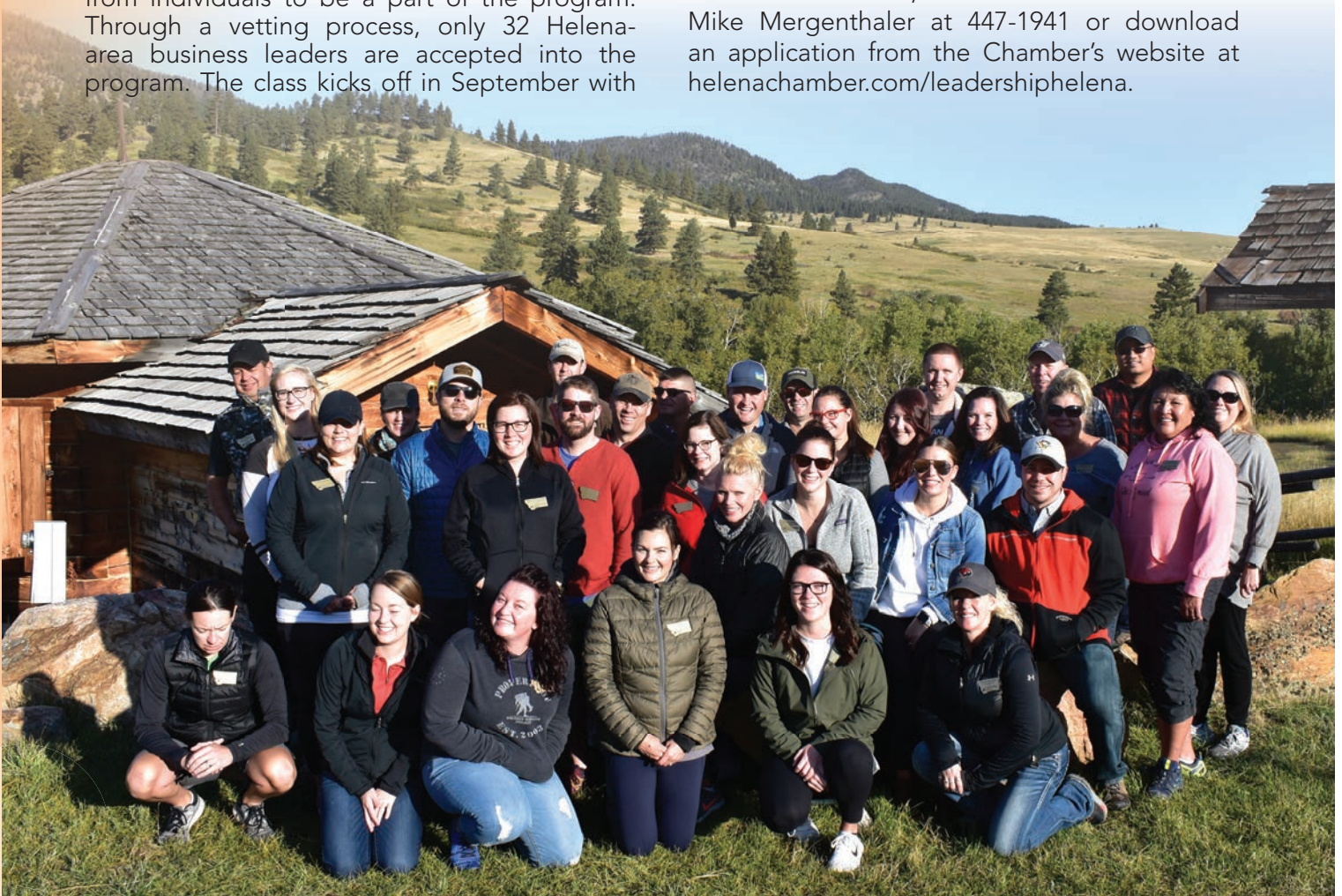
In fact, those selected to complete the nine-month program are more likely to end up engaged in an Escape Room game or singing karaoke in a stylish get-up as part of a training exercise.

Each year the chamber accepts applications from individuals to be a part of the program. Through a vetting process, only 32 Helena-area business leaders are accepted into the program. The class kicks off in September with

an overnight retreat at a secluded ranch north of town.

The participants then meet once a month for an all-day session that includes leadership training and visits to various locations throughout town that include tours and hands on experiences to learn more about what makes Helena tick.

The chamber will begin accepting applications for the class of 2020-21 in June 2020. For more information, contact Vice President Mike Mergenthaler at 447-1941 or download an application from the Chamber's website at helenachamber.com/leadershiphelena.



LH provides the vehicle for intentional growth both personally and professionally. It is much more than learning about leadership skills. The program also provides an opportunity to become more involved and educated about our community, the workings of the greater Helena Chamber, along with expanding your network of diverse and like-minded colleagues throughout the year.

Tammy Copenhaver, Mountain Pacific Quality Health, Class of 2018-2019



**CLASS OF
2019-2020**



I cannot say enough good about Leadership Helena! We all started out as strangers to one another and 9 months later, became a group of good friends! I really enjoyed spending the day with one another every month, while learning leadership principles and getting to serve our community through service projects. The things I learned in Leadership Helena, plus the relationships I formed, will be with me for a very long time!

Tyler Redden,
Anderson ZurMueheln Technology
Services, Class of 2018-2019

I was fortunate enough to have Farmers State Bank put me through this amazing program. Leadership Helena provided a great opportunity for networking. However, the best part of LH was the leadership training that I received. The training sessions from both Bret Romney and Dean Mack were very valuable. Learning how to approach different situations as a leader has not only been beneficial in my career but has proven itself in my personal life. Other facets of Leadership Helena include learning more about the history of Helena, learning about different business and government entities, and the opportunity to meet and make new friends. I have made some very good, lifelong friends and will always feel a strong connection with everyone from my class. I highly recommend the Leadership Helena program to anyone looking to build and develop their leadership skills and make new friends. In the words of a previous class member: "You get out of it what you put into it." If you do decide to be a participant, go into it with an open mind. Do this, and your experience will be filled with fun as well as personal and business growth!!

Ricky Entenmann, Farmers State Bank, Class of 2018-2019

Big Night Out



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Farm Bureau Insurance
– Tom Schulke
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Staggering Ox
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Jolley Builders
Cherry Creek Mortgage
– Gwen Williams
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In the News ...

Several area Chamber members and business leaders were featured in news articles produced by the Independent Record. Here is a sampling of some of the highlights of the year.

Published May 12, 2019

After first year, Helena WINS celebrates efforts to address local workforce challenges

Maria L. Kirkpatrick, Independent Record

The Helena Workforce Innovation Networks, also known as WINS, celebrated its first anniversary with success stories and plans for the year ahead Tuesday afternoon.

"All of you here are an example of why workforce development is so important," said Helena Area Chamber of Commerce President Cathy Burwell, addressing a standing-room only crowd in the Power Room at Lewis & Clark Brewing Co.

A year ago, the chamber asked area businesses for their key issue and overwhelmingly heard "workforce development" as the No. 1 concern.

In an employer survey, 94% of the respondents reported that they had worked to fill a position in the last year. Of those, 80% had difficulty finding qualified applicants. As a result, 73% reported lower overall productivity and 73% either did not fill the position or hired a less qualified applicant than they wanted.

In the next year, 82% planned to hire due to growth, retirements and turnover. Respondents planned to hire more than 700 workers in the next year.

In response, the chamber, Helena College, and Reach Higher Montana organized a team of business, education, government, and community workforce development partners to launch Helena WINS.

"Since our launch in May last year, this has really taken off," Burwell said.

Helena WINS is working to develop cross-sector strategies to benefit all businesses, attract workers from other areas and leverage existing community resources and partnerships to address workforce needs.

Businesses looking for information about the program can visit the new Helenawins.com website, which recently went online to keep up with the program's success.

Helena's Gulch Distillers wins national acclaim for Guardian Gin

Maria L. Kirkpatrick, Independent Record

Published April 14, 2019

Helena microdistillery Gulch Distillers entered its small batch gin in the American Distilling Institute's Judging of Craft Spirits competition and pulled out a silver medal, receiving national acclaim.

This was the first competition co-owners Tyrrell Hibbard and Steffan Rasile had entered their Guardian Gin.

"It's validating," Hibbard said of the award. "We've been working pretty hard on our spirits, our process and our product. We put out a product we like and that's up to our standard. The competition gives us honest feedback from industry professionals."

This has been an exceptional year for Gulch Distillers. The nearly 4-year-old business has entered only two competitions and taken great recognition at both. Earlier this year, Gulch Distillers won gold, best in class and best in

show for its Burrone Fernet at the 2019 American Craft Spirits Association's competition.

Hibbard describes the gin as "a simple, five-botanical structure, including juniper, coriander and angelica root, yield a big body and bold flavor through pot distillation that set Guardian apart from the many other gins in the ADI Judging."

Gulch Distillers is a grain-to-glass microdistillery located at 790 Front St. Their handcrafted spirits include Triple Divide Vodka, Guardian Gin, Guardian Reserve Gin, Flintlock Spiced Rum, Fruition Apple Brandy and Burrone Fernet. The distillery tasting room is open 4 to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 2 to 8 p.m. Saturday. Learn more at gulchdistillers.com

Published June 9, 2019

Campaign pitches Helena as Seattle's tourist destination

Tyler Manning, Independent Record

Capturing the local flavor and experience of Helena is the goal of a new marketing campaign in Seattle. The Helena Convention and Visitors Bureau is using rollover funds made available from last year's bed tax to fund the initiative, which will pitch Helena as a tourist destination for Seattle residents. Seattle and Helena are connected by a hour-and-a-half flight via Alaska airlines.

Produced by King5 TV, an NBC affiliate in Seattle, the campaign will feature video segments, blog posts, Facebook posts and more pitching various aspects of Helena. Fly-fishing, microbrews, mountain biking, Helena's history and dining options will be major selling points. Additionally, the content will include interviews with local experts on these topics and shots of iconic Helena locations like the Downtown Walking Mall and Cathedral of St. Helena.

"We have a direct flight with Seattle," said Convention and Visitors Bureau Director Mike Mergenthaler, who is

also vice president of the Helena Area Chamber of Commerce. "That makes them a target market for us." Mergenthaler said the choice to use King5 was based on the station's influence in the Seattle market. "It would have been cost prohibitive for us to produce and purchase the ad space in the Seattle market," Mergenthaler said. "That is what they do as professionals and they shared examples of their work with us prior to us making the decision."

"When tourists come they not only eat in our restaurants and buy gas, but they shop in our stores," Mergenthaler said. "A lot of our retailers rely on that. It puts money into the pockets of our locals, which goes back into the community."

The new project will be presented to the state's tourism advisory council as part of Helena's budget and marketing plan Monday, June 10. The Seattle marketing campaign is set to roll out in late June.

Published May 5, 2019

Mountain View Co-op to open Helena convenience store with gas stop

Maria L. Kirkpatrick, Independent Record

Some convenience stores are anything but convenient. However, Mountain View Co-op in Black Eagle is constructing a convenience store and gas station in Helena that will be easy for motorists to access on W. Custer Avenue.

The convenience store has been situated so that traffic can easily get in and out, said Art Schmidt, general manager for Mountain View Co-op. While Custer may be a busy street to turn left onto, there will be an exit to Riverrock, making it an easy place to stop and go for residents in the area.

The nearly 6,500-square-foot building on 4 acres is a new concept for Mountain View, Schmidt said.

The gas station and convenience store will not include

a casino, as so many do. Instead, it will offer motorists a BluTaco restaurant. BluTaco is Southwest Mexican food. Every taco starts with a blue corn tortilla. Customers pick from tacos, burritos or bowls and build their own meal. Fillings include cilantro lime rice, black beans or pinto beans, barbacoa, carnitas or citrus pollo. Topping selections are salsas, chiles, cheese, sour cream and lettuce.

Mountain View is a farmer-owned cooperative and has been in Helena for several years through propane and helping alfalfa farmers. This will be the company's first gas station in the area. The company has 12 convenience stores and gas stations in the state, as well as several farm stores.

Lewis & Clark Brewing makes special beer with custom label for Great Falls air show

Maria Kirkpatrick, Independent Record

Published July 14, 2019

Lewis & Clark Brewing Co. is celebrating this weekend's air show at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls by satiating those 21 and older on the ground.

Brewery owner Max Pigman was approached last winter by someone who is part of the 341 Force Support Squadron on the base and was interested in doing something special for the big air show.

"She was wondering if we would be open to creating a can for a beer," Pigman said. "At that time it wasn't really possible to make a small canning run. Over the last several months, it has become more possible. You pay more for it so it will be one of those beers we don't really make money on, but it's fun to do in support of what they are

doing."

The marketing department on base created the label and description that goes on the can.

This batch of beer is not large enough to be a fundraiser or money maker, Pigman said. "It's just to give more exposure and to honor and commemorate the military in general and specifically the Minuteman program."

The cost for cans on a limited batch is about three times the cost of a big batch, and the labels are a shrink wrap sleeve instead of paint. While his small batch capability is limited, Pigman said he is building a cold storage building where he can store more cans. This will enable him to do more small runs in the future.

Published April 21, 2019

A-1 Rentals celebrates 60 years in Helena community

Maria L. Kirkpatrick, Independent Record

What began as a provider of vending machines, juke boxes, pinball games and pool tables, has morphed into the largest inventory of construction, homeowner and party rentals in Helena. A-1 Rentals, a family-owned business, is celebrating 60 years in business.

"In the beginning, they would rent anything that would take a quarter," said Dan Jacques, who took over the business from his father, Ernie Jacques.

Ernie and his partner, Bob Walker, started the business in April of 1959 on South Main Street as a United Rental franchise.

"They were operating cigarette machines in the bars and state agencies," Dan said.

The business moved in 1963 to 222 E. Lyndale. There, they had room for more equipment and added tractors and air compressors to their inventory. The business became independent of the franchise and the name was changed to A-1 Rentals. Family recollection is that Ernie changed the name so that the business would be listed in the front of the phone book.

In 1978, the business moved again to larger accommodations on Argyle Street, where Eagle Tire & Auto Repair currently resides. Again, the

business added equipment and, in 1992, started the party supply rentals out of the front of the building.

Party Plus was Dan's idea. He said he got the idea at a trade show and, since nobody else in town was doing it, he incorporated napkins and tablecloths into the rest of the business.

Sixty years of success comes from paying attention to community needs and being there for customers, Dan said.

Dan bought his father out and in 1993 built the business' current location at 1400 Cedar Street. Today, Party Plus operates in 40% of the building and A-1 Rentals has the rest, as well as the outside lot.

Dan's daughter, Callie, manages the party side of the business. She came on in 1993 and added to the retail options. When she first began, there was a small room of retail party supplies. She added balloons and grew the rental options, growing it from a business that could accommodate a party of 200 people to accommodating up to 1,800. Staff went from two people to eight. As for the future, Callie's nephew is the fourth generation currently working in the business.

Published June 30, 2019

Helena's newest food truck serves up 'Greekish' sandwiches and sides

Maria L. Kirkpatrick, Independent Record

Helena's new Mediterranean restaurant can be found in various locations at different times of the week around town.

You'll know when you've found it when you see boatloads of steaming, fragrant sandwiches and fries being passed through the window of a bright yellow and blue truck sporting a lightning bolt.

Eat Greekish is a food truck six months in the making and years in planning, born from the minds of food lovers John and Carrie Wolf.

John is from North Dakota, Carrie is a Helena native. The couple moved to town about a year and a half ago after living for 20 years in Michigan. They have

long had the dream of opening a restaurant but were too afraid to try. The food truck is their answer and John's passion.

The idea for a food truck came about nine years ago. John and Carrie were watching food TV and saw a food truck race. It struck John that it would be fun to do something like that.

"What we're trying to do is take the base elements from Mediterranean food in general," John said. "We went with the word Greek because it's readily identifiable as Mediterranean and good, interesting, unique food. And we put the 'ish' on the back of it to let people know we're not really a Greek restaurant. We're Greekish."

Helena's Mergenthaler Transfer and Storage acquired by Mesa Moving and Storage

Published in the Independent Record May 19, 2019

Mergenthaler Transfer and Storage, headquartered in Helena, has been acquired by Mesa Moving and Storage, a privately-held, U.S.-based provider of moving, transportation, and logistics services.

The announcement was made by Mesa.

Under the terms of the agreement, Mesa will acquire the Mergenthaler household goods hauling business and their moving business, including location-based assets in Bozeman, Helena and

Whitefish, as well as Salt Lake City, Utah, according to a press release.

"Partnering with Mergenthaler offers an outstanding opportunity for Mesa to add great people, increase our scale and capacity to better serve our customers across the Mountain States Region," Kevin Head, CEO at Mesa, said in the statement.

Mesa is the largest United Van Lines agent in the western United States.

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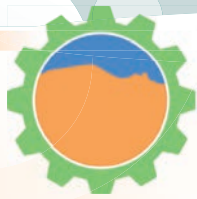
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HELENA
Area Chamber of Commerce

2020 Priorities/Mission

Promoting Business Quality Of Life And Economic Development Through Local Business Alliances.

BUSINESS

Lead efforts to unite, inform and advocate for the business community:

- Advocate at the local and state levels – informing members via our e-Advocate.
- Produce and distribute economic trends report

Address workforce development needs through:

- Helena WINS Workforce Development Program – Hire Development Staff Person, complete Fundraising, continue to help employers to attract, develop and retain workforce talent. Goal is to grow this program and make it sustainable.
- Develop ideas for finding and retaining employees such as a childcare co-op, and affordable housing.
- Helena WINS Workforce recruitment efforts to encourage relocation to Helena to work. Create an online “welcome packet” for new residents promoting our business members.
- Professional development (Helena Leaders Network - HLN) Use the Chamber Board to grow and enhance the HLN program.
- Education Training such as Wisdom Wednesday, workshops, luncheons
- Leadership development (Leadership Helena)

Strengthen ties with City and County Governments

- Continue to sponsor Lunch with Local Government
- Meet with key officials on critical business issues

Support economic growth by assisting/supporting MBAC.

- Utilize our relocation publication and trends booklet for both the Chamber and MBAC in recruitment of workforce and businesses.

Reinforce Keep Dollars Local promotion program:

- Continue to work on promotions to drive shopping local and include promotions to encourage Helena Businesses and Community members to use Helena Businesses for services, professional services and products.

- Promote the Helena Charm Trail to encourage visitors and residents to shop at our local retail store

MEMBERS

- Work to better inform members of all the Chamber does and can do for their business.
- Provide programming and training that impacts and addresses member needs
- Work to implement a text messaging system to further our ability to connect with members.
- Demonstrate and communicate value to membership to achieve an annual retention rate of 95%
- Achieve a membership of 800 members by FY 2020 year end and 1000 members by 2022.

COMMUNITY

- Visitor center functions maintained at the Chamber Building as technology continues to drive traffic to that location. Maintain Airport Visitor Center location.
- Promote the Helena Area through our Convention & Visitor Bureau efforts and the Helena Vacation Guide, plus the Helena maps.
- Convene business and community leaders/elected officials as advocates for support on issues and topics impacting business and the quality of life for the Helena Area

THE CHAMBER

- Analyze and work to optimize our board structure and size.
- Ensure fiscal and organizational excellence
- Encourage more participation and involvement from 21-40-ish members through HLN.
- Refresh and energize our board agenda and work for optimal engagement.
- Develop and produce a relevant and current mission and vision statement.
- Have a strategic plan that has measurable goals and objectives.



Influences & Trends

- Keep the Chamber relevant and on top of specific business trends
- Serve as Catalysts for growth, Convener of Leaders and influencers, and a Champion for a thriving community.



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