



Annual Business Meeting set for June 15

The keynote speaker this year for the Chamber's Annual Meeting and Business Luncheon is Governor Charlie Baker. The event is scheduled for Thursday, June 15, 2017 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Great Wolf Lodge in Fitchburg.

Join other business and community leaders and attend the annual meeting to celebrate business people working together for the future of North Central Massachusetts.

The program will include recognition awards and the commencement for the 2017 class of the Chamber's Community Leadership Institute. Premier sponsor is Workers' Credit Union along with supporting sponsors Apex Properties, Avidia Bank, Enterprise Bank, Fitchburg State University, Medical Arts Hearing Instruments, MWCC, and TD Bank.



Gov. Baker

Since taking office in 2015, Governor Baker has been striving to make our state a great place to live, work and raise a family while delivering a customer-service oriented state government that is as hard working as the people of the commonwealth. He is now considered the most popular governor in the United States according to approval ratings.

Upon taking office, Gov. Baker worked to close two budget gaps worth more than \$2 billion without raising taxes, while bolstering local aid for schools and communities, investing in a more reliable public transportation system and prioritizing funds to fight the opioid and heroin epidemic. He has supported robust business sectors by reforming the commonwealth's regulatory environment and holding the line on taxes.

To register for the Annual Business Meeting and Luncheon, please contact the Chamber at 978.353.7600 ext. 222 or ext. 235 or email chamber@northcentralmass.com or register online at northcentralmass.com/calendar. The cost is just \$40 per person for members and \$60 per person for non-members. Supporting sponsorships and tables of ten are also available. Please reserve by June 8th.

Members, residents invited to share love of region on social media



The North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce, the North Central Massachusetts Development Corporation, and the Johnny Appleseed Trail Association recently announced the launch of the new North Central Massachusetts Champions program to help promote the region through social media as a great place to live, work, visit and grow a business.

Anyone with a social media account who loves our region can become a North Central Massachusetts Champion. Whether they live here, work here, own a business here or just enjoy visiting here, they are invited to become a Champion

and show their civic pride and help advance the community by spreading the word about positive news and information about the region via their social media networks like Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

"We are rallying the entire community to get behind this

initiative," said Chamber President Roy Nascimento, "This is a great opportunity to help make a difference in promoting all the good things that people love about North Central Massachusetts!"

To participate and become a North Central Massachusetts Champion anyone can visit northcentralmass.com/champions to sign up. The process is easy and can connect any social network. Champions will then receive an email 2-3 times per month with new and exciting content about the region that they can share. Each email contains a status update and link to the content that is being shared with them. With a simple press of the button, Champions can share the status update automatically on their social networks.

Champions will never have content posted to their social networks without being explicitly notified. Even if they choose to auto-post content, they have the option to opt-out of each post before it is shared.

The website ChooseNorthCentral.com and the hashtag #ChooseNorthCentral were also recently launched to promote the region as a great place to grow or relocate a business. The Chamber also recently launched a social media campaign to promote the region as a great place to start, grow and operate a business.

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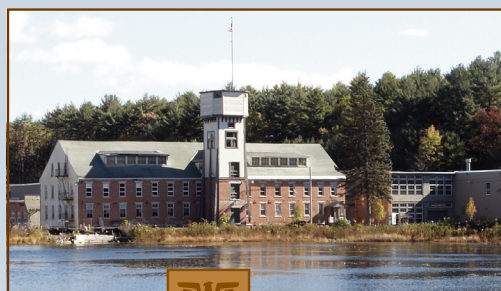


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Chamber bids farewell to Lawlor

The Chamber bids a fond farewell to Public Affairs Manager Patrick Lawlor, who recently left to pursue a new opportunity as management analyst for the Town of Andover. Lawlor finished his master's degree in public administration from UMass Boston during his tenure with the Chamber.

"We are saddened to lose Patrick, but also excited for him to pursue his career further," said Chamber President Roy M. Nascimento. "Patrick has been an important and dedicated member of our team and a contributor to our success. I want to thank him for his hard work and commitment to the Chamber and wish him well in his new position."

Get Connected... Sales Leads Group meets every 2nd & 4th Wednesday @ 8 a.m. at the NCM Chamber... There's coffee, and you may bring a guest.

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For more information, contact Dave Ginisi at 978-353-7600 x240, dginisi@northcentralmass.com



Owners Scott & Melissa Radford have recently opened Nutrishop Fitchburg. They are shown cutting the ribbon with Mayor Steven DiNatale and Mary Jo Bohart of the City of Fitchburg. Also celebrating their grand opening are Paul DiGeronimo and Laura O'Kane of Geronimo Properties, Chamber staff and Ambassadors.

The shop is offering a wide selection of nutritional & fitness supplements along with expert advice. It is located at 18 John Fitch Highway in the Dutch Kitchen plaza.

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- Board Member Profile -

Anne Leader

"Keep it local" is one Chamber mission that Anne Leader has always embraced, and for good reason. She is co-owner, with her husband Len, of Vision Payroll in Leominster, and she grew up in a family that truly "lived" the concept of customer service. Her father, the late Dr. Robert Fallon, founded the veterinary clinic in Lunenburg of the same name in 1963. It's all about empathy.



"As kids, we got used to people with sick pets showing up at that door at 1 a.m.," she notes.

Ms. Leader met her husband when they both attended the College of the Holy Cross, where she earned a B.A. in economics. She went from college to work and a managerial program at Jordan Marsh, eventually heading the store's women's fashion department and then becoming a buyer of domestic goods.

The couple are parents of three sons, and when they were young, she states, "I had to leave (retail) because of the traveling and crazy hours. During those years I helped my dad in the clinic, doing the books...." As Len is a CPA, the two had a broad network of business contacts, and Ms. Leader continues, "We saw a need (among them)... for a smaller, accessible payroll company." Their sons were growing up, so the couple wanted "to provide a payroll firm with more personal customer service."

They were able to "start very small, by word of mouth," about 15 years ago, and today, the company employs over a dozen people who focus on a broad range of industries--and are mostly within the local area.

Ms. Leader is passionate about growing the local economy. "I like the Chamber's economic development efforts," she notes. "The Chamber has been super at putting programs together. We regularly send our employees to these events. It is where local (business) people can meet other local people... and that's how you expand your local economy. I always give my business to my clients or other local business owners. It's about keeping money in Central Mass... Area business growth needs that."

Sports have been important in Ms. Leader's life. "I did youth sports for a long time, coaching soccer, basketball, Little League, track & field," and she played basketball in college. "Sport activities," she adds, "build great (team) unity and help (kids) deal with pressure and getting along with others. Those skills translate to all things in life--school, work..."

She and Len help out with the "Impact Melanoma" organization, which supplies education, prevention and support to skin cancer patients. When not at work, she and the family travel extensively--aiming for all 50 states and seven continents. Travel, she insists, "means always learning something new."



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Chamber Foundation announces annual scholarship winners

On May 12, Chamber members met the region's most accomplished high school seniors as they received scholarships from the NCM Chamber Foundation. A total of \$48,000 in 24 scholarships were awarded at the Good Morning Breakfast at the Doubletree by Hilton in Leominster. Special thanks go to HealthAlliance for sponsoring the breakfast.

The following students each received a \$2,000 scholarship, and are listed by their name, school and the specific scholarship:

Emily Buchanan of Westminster, Oakmont Regional High School, Roderick W. & Donna M. Lewin Scholarship; **Alivia Burns**, Leominster High School - Center for Technical Education Innovation, HealthAlliance Hospital Inc. Scholarship; **Sophia Goncalves**, Fitchburg High School, Elizabeth & Anthony DiGeronimo Family Scholarship; and, **Morgan DiPilla** from Sterling, Wachusett Regional High School, Barbara Silva Scholarship.

Also, **Shanina Ferreira** of Fitchburg, Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School, Chamber Foundation Scholarship; **John Gove**, Leominster High School, Enterprise Bank & Trust Scholarship; **Olivia Houle** from Leominster, Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School, Edward C.J. Healey Scholarship; **Laura Jenny** of Lunenburg, Leominster High School, HealthAlliance Hospital Inc. Scholarship; **Shanna**

Joseph from Sterling, Wachusett Regional High School, Salny Family Scholarship; **Keith Kidder** of Ayer, Ayer Shirley Regional High School, Elizabeth & Anthony DiGeronimo Family Scholarship; **Anneke LaPosta** of Lancaster, Nashoba Regional High School, Benjamin Asher Scholarship; **Kristen Maguy**, Leominster High School, David L. McKeehan Scholarship; **Mark McKew** from Ashby, St. Bernard's Central Catholic High School, M.Ruth Lee Scholarship; **Cameron Moylan** from Ashby, Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School, George R. Wallace and Alice G. Wallace Scholarship; **Kyleigh Olivier**, Leominster High School, M.Ruth Lee Scholarship; and, **Mark Pothier**, Leominster High School, Chamber Golf Tournament Scholarship.

In addition, **Sashealy Rivera** of Fitchburg, Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School, HealthAlliance Hospital Inc. Scholarship; **John Shelton**, The Bromfield School, Rollstone Bank & Trust Scholarship; **Amy Sjoberg** from Groton, Groton-Dunstable Regional High School, Ronald Ansin Scholarship; **Madeleine Steele**, The Bromfield School, HealthAlliance Hospital Inc. Scholarship; **Bryson Tang** of Pepperell, Nashoba Valley Technical High School, Chamber Foundation Scholarship; **Brendan Tobin**, Lunenburg High School, Adams Family Scholarship; **Chloe Wespiser** of Townsend, North Middlesex Regional High School, Chamber Golf Tournament Scholarship; and, **Peyton Wirtz**, Fitchburg High School, Workers' Credit Union Scholarship.



This year's Chamber Foundation Scholarship winners are shown (above) at the May 12 Good Morning Breakfast. For more information about the scholarship program, call Lauren Goulet at 978.353.7600.

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Twenty-one graduates of Community Leadership Institute to be recognized at June 15th Annual Business Meeting



Shown above is the the 2017 class of the Chamber's Community Leadership Institute, joined by nine CLI alumni and state Representatives Jennifer Benson and Stephen Hay, visited the House Chambers as part of their recent trip to Beacon Hill.

The Community Leadership Institute (CLI) is a nine-month long program featuring monthly sessions that focus on the resources of North Central Massachusetts. These resources include cultural and educational institutions, businesses and manufacturing plants, government centers and the justice system. With on-site visits and personal interactions, the program helps prepare emerging leaders with the tools for success, for their communities and their respective businesses.

Chamber members are encouraged to sponsor a member of their staff to experience this unique and enriching program. The application period for CLI for the Class of 2018 opens July 1st.

Contact Maria McCaffrey at 978.353.7600 ext. 235, or mmccaffrey@northcentralmass.com for more information.

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Thursday, June 22: Take to the air at the next Business After Hours event on June 22 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Fitchburg Airport. Flights will be offered on a first-served basis, for a birds-eye view of the Twin Cities!



Bring a partner or business associate, make new contacts and get the word out for your company.

Guests will be treated to food and beverage samples and a cash bar. Cost is \$15 for members; \$25 for nonmembers.

Register online today at NorthCentralMass.com/calendar or call 978.353.7600 for information.

At the Chamber's Annual Business Meeting on June 15, the 21 members of the 2017 CLI graduating class will include the following, listed with their sponsoring employers:

Glena Borst, Loan Operations Representative at Avidia Bank; **Robert Courtemanche**, AVP, Branch Manager for Rollstone Bank & Trust; **Tanya Crowley**, Director of Annual Giving at Fitchburg State University; **Tara DeBoer**, HSA Coordinator with Avidia Bank; **Stefan Dodd**, Manager, OneCard Operations at Fitchburg State University; **Denise Fernald**, Branch Manager, Leominster at Avidia Bank; **Ashley Johnson**, Clinician at LUK, Inc.; **Kimberly Kunce**, Catering Sales Manager with DoubleTree by Hilton; **Tracy Lafleur**, Branch Relationship Manager at Enterprise Bank & Trust Company; **Susan Landry**, Project Manager with Leominster Credit Union; **Amanda Landry**, Community Outreach Specialist at UMass Memorial - HealthAlliance Hospital, Inc.;

Also, **Jennifer Leger**, VP, Cash Management Operations Manager at Fidelity Bank; **Bob Lockett**, Chief Strategy Office at Workers' Credit Union; **Heather Mazzaferro**, Program Manager at Transitions Shelter; **Corie Keddy**, Telephone Customer Service Rep. with Avidia Bank; **Lauren Mountain**, Director for United Way Youth Venture at Mount Wachusett Community College; **Nikki Paglieroni**, Branch Relationship Manager at Enterprise Bank and Trust Co.; **Adriana Pereira Silva**, Retail Coordinator for Avidia Bank; **Jennifer Prouty**, Asst. Branch Manager at Workers' Credit Union; **Stacy Quinones**, Asst. Branch Manager at Family Federal Savings F.A.; and, **Heather Storme**, Commercial Lender, AVP, at Enterprise Bank.

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Drone Racing League selects North Central Massachusetts for 2017 Allianz World

Fitchburg will be hosting the Drone Racing League (DRL) as the official New England site of one of its six 2017 Allianz World Championship races that culminate in a winner-take-all World Championship event.

"It's very exciting that Fitchburg was selected by DRL to host their 2017 drone racing series," said Mayor Stephen DiNatale. "This selection is testament to the strong partnerships that we have in place here in North Central Massachusetts and our region's strengths in the robotics and video gaming industries."

DRL discovered the Fitchburg site after meeting with the Johnny Appleseed Trail Association at a national trade show for sporting events. North Central Massachusetts is an emerging sports tourism location, so strategic investments have been made to attract events and exhibitions in this region.

"We looked around aggressively for a community to host our New England race site," said Ashley Ellefson, director of operations for DRL. "Fitchburg was the ideal location and the Johnny Appleseed Trail Association, the North Central

Massachusetts Chamber and the City of Fitchburg were all amazing in support of our efforts."

Given its rapidly growing worldwide audience, the biggest benefit of securing the DRL race will be the national and global exposure for Fitchburg and the region. DRL's first season reached millions of fans around the world, including more than 30 million broadcast viewers on the major sports channels and more than 43 million views of its digital content. The region will also benefit from the hotel rooms booked for staff and media, and the new direct spending in the region by the visitors associated with DRL.

DRL joins a growing list of companies that have recently selected North Central

Massachusetts, including Great Wolf Lodge that selected Fitchburg for its New England location; AIS that recently moved its operation to Leominster; Nypor that chose Devens for the expansion of its medical device manufacturing operations; and most recently the developers of Game On Fitchburg that selected West Fitchburg as the site of their major indoor sports complex scheduled to open in 2018. North Central Massachusetts also recently received national recognition for its efforts by industry professionals who plan sporting events.



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Partnerships aim to grow more small businesses



The North Central Massachusetts Development Corporation (NCMDC) and the North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce have created a new partnership to bring additional micro lending resources closer to young companies in the North Quabbin area of Massachusetts.

"We're really pleased to be able to partner with the NCMDC on this loan program," said Mark Wright, executive director of the North Quabbin Chamber (shown above, left). "The NCMDC's track record and commitment to growing new and existing businesses in North Central Massachusetts is an important part to our expanding regional renaissance."

NCMDC President Roy M. Nascimento stated, "We are excited to partner with the North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce to continue to expand our lending and help support the small and emerging businesses that help drive the economy forward."



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Monday, June 5th – 31st Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament at
Sterling National Country Club

Wednesday, June 7th – Women's Leadership Institute at the Chamber

Wednesday, June 14th – Sales Leads at the Chamber

Thursday, June 15th – Annual Business Meeting & Luncheon at
Great Wolf Lodge

Tuesday, June 20th – Small Business Lunch 'n Learn at the Chamber

Wednesday, June 21st – Human Resource Council at the Chamber

Thursday, June 22nd – Business After Hours at the Fitchburg Airport

Wednesday, June 28th – Sales Leads at the Chamber

Wednesday, July 12th - Sales Leads at the Chamber

Wednesday, July 26th - Sales Leads at the Chamber

Wednesday, August 9th - Sales Leads at the Chamber

Wednesday, August 23rd - Sales Leads at the Chamber

Wednesday, August 30th – Business After Hours at the 110 Grill

Save the Dates:

September 14th - Annual Legislative & Candidates Reception

September 22nd – Good Morning North Central Breakfast

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Annual Economic Outlook Survey Results Released

Businesses & consumers consider economy under President Donald Trump

Over 250 guests joined the North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce and Fidelity Bank at the DoubleTree in Leominster in April to get an idea of what the future holds for the economy under the current administration. The Economic Forecast Breakfast featured the results of economic outlook surveys, one of local business leaders and one of consumers from across North Central Massachusetts. The breakfast sponsor, Fidelity Bank, conducted the surveys.

The event also featured presentations from two experts in the field. Dr. J.D. Foster, vice president, Economic Policy Division and chief economist of the US Chamber of Commerce, provided keynote remarks with his presentation: "What a Trump Economy Means for Us." Foster noted that burdensome regulations,

review periods and negative perceptions that businesses held of the last administration have been a boon to feelings about the economy, according to Foster's analysis.

Jeff Fuhrer, executive vice president and senior policy advisor at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston also spoke about the state of the economy and its outlook specifically for Massachusetts.

Survey results for both consumers and business leaders pointed to the political climate playing a significant role in the economy. The two groups differed somewhat on President Donald Trump's impact on the economy, as

53% of consumers felt it would be negative, while 58% of business leaders feel that the president will have a positive impact on the economy.

Consumers did not have overwhelmingly positive feelings about a rising economy, with 76% of respondents indicating that the economy would be the same or only somewhat better in a year.

Although the survey revealed that consumers believe that the high cost of living will be a threat to economic growth, only 22% of consumers believe that in 2017 they will be spending less money, while 44% believe they will not make any change to their spending habits.

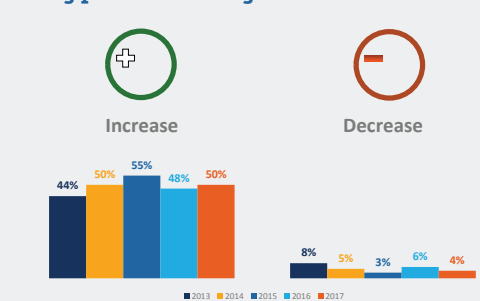
The availability of skilled labor in the region was a major concern for business leaders. Workforce issues were the top challenge that businesses expect to face in the next two years, and was high among the greatest threats to economic growth for respondents.

"You can see from the survey that consumers have leveled off on Trump's impact to the economy," said Chris McCarthy, President and COO of Fidelity Bank. "In comparison business leaders have a more positive outlook on the upcoming year."

Half of business leaders surveyed did indicate they would be increasing capital investments in their business in the next year. Investment priorities for business in 2017 include equipment, new hires, training, and expansion.

Complete results of the economic outlook survey are available online at www.NorthCentralMass.com/Research.

Which of the following best describes your hiring plans for this region in 2017?



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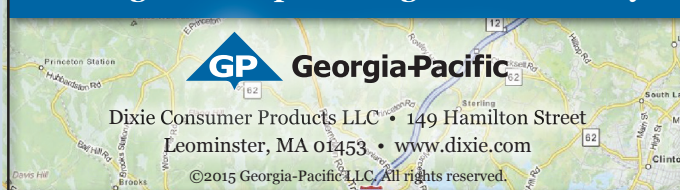


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Newest guide highlights region's manufacturing firms and industrial space

The Chamber along with the North Central Massachusetts Development Corporation (NCMDC) have released a 2017 edition of the Manufacturers Directory & Industrial Parks Guide for North Central Massachusetts. The publication is designed to promote and connect manufacturers with suppliers as well as serve as a resource for companies looking to relocate or expand throughout the region.

Working with multiple sources, the NCMDC confirmed the operating status and primary product line of each company listed in the directory. In addition to listing local manufacturers, the publication also includes a section on life science companies, a listing of suppliers and a guide to the region's business and industrial parks.

"We hope that this publication will be a resource in connecting manufacturers with their peers and helping them find local suppliers," said Chamber President Roy Nascimento.



In addition to this directory, the NCMDC has recently expanded its loan programs to include a new Express Loan program, a Second Chance loan initiative and has grown its technical assistance offerings for new and established small businesses in the region. To reach out, partnerships have been created with the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, the Assabet Valley Chamber of Commerce, and the North Quabbin Chamber of Commerce.

The North Central Massachusetts Development Corporation also recently launched the new website ChooseNorthCentral.com and the hashtag #ChooseNorthCentral to promote North Central Massachusetts as a great place to grow or relocate a business. Also, the organization has been engaged in new workforce development initiatives to improve the pipeline of skilled workers for local employers.

The 2017 edition of the publication was supported by advertising and is being circulated to manufacturers throughout the region. For more information, please contact the North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce at 978.353.7600.



The NCM Chamber welcomed Messages From Heaven, a new studio that's just opened at 272 Central Street by Bonnie Page, a medium, empath, and Reiki Master formerly based in Winchendon. Participating in the festivities, from left, are Realtor Yasmin Loft; Chamber Ambassador Christian Reifsteck; Mayor Dean Mazarella; Bonnie Page; Melissa Tasca of the City of Leominster; David Ginisi of the Chamber.



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