



**GREATER
BINGHAMTON**
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**17
18**

A YEAR IN REVIEW



The Chamber has a lot to celebrate as we come together for our 2018 Annual Dinner! We closed 2017 with membership growth that we have not seen since 2010 and continued to see record attendance at our events. The YP Summit was created as a brand-new event, designed to connect and empower our young professionals in the Southern Tier. As you look through the pages you will see this team packed a lot in one year.

I believe that at the heart of this momentum, and what the Chamber has experienced like never before, is the power of collaboration. Connecting all of the enormous resources, knowledge and ideas to solve the challenges and capture the opportunities that lie before us. Over the past 12 months, the Chamber has worked in collaboration with businesses, government, education, non-profits and other strategic partners locally and across the state to see what solutions we can bring to the table. We all want the same thing – our organizations and ultimately the community to be prosperous and flourish. We do have some issues facing Broome County and we are only going to resolve them together.

My challenge to all of us, as leaders in Broome County, is to continue strongly and boldly along this path. Do not let traditional barriers get in the way and stop this progress. The Chamber is committed to bringing the business voice to the table. Our message is clear, our community benefits when businesses are allowed to grow. When businesses and organizations have access to the capital, people and knowledge, they flourish. It just happens naturally. Then they can pay their people more, provide more services at a lower cost and give back to the community.

Thank you to each of our members for your continued commitment to the Greater Binghamton Chamber of Commerce. We continue to work for you, building a Greater Binghamton.

Jennifer Conway
President & CEO

CHRISTINA BOYD

Vice President, Community Relations, UHS

JB BUMP

General Manager/Owner,
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Regional Manager Community
Outreach & Development,
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MATT SIEGEL

VP of Sales, National Pipe
& Plastics, Inc.

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Terry Wood,
Willow Run Foods

The following sponsors partnered with the Chamber in 2017 to offer a broad array of business programming and networking opportunities. On behalf of our over 800 Members, the Chamber gratefully acknowledges their support.



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 American Food & Vending/The McKinley
 Antonio's Bar & Trattoria
 Army National Guard, NYS
 Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment (AVRE)
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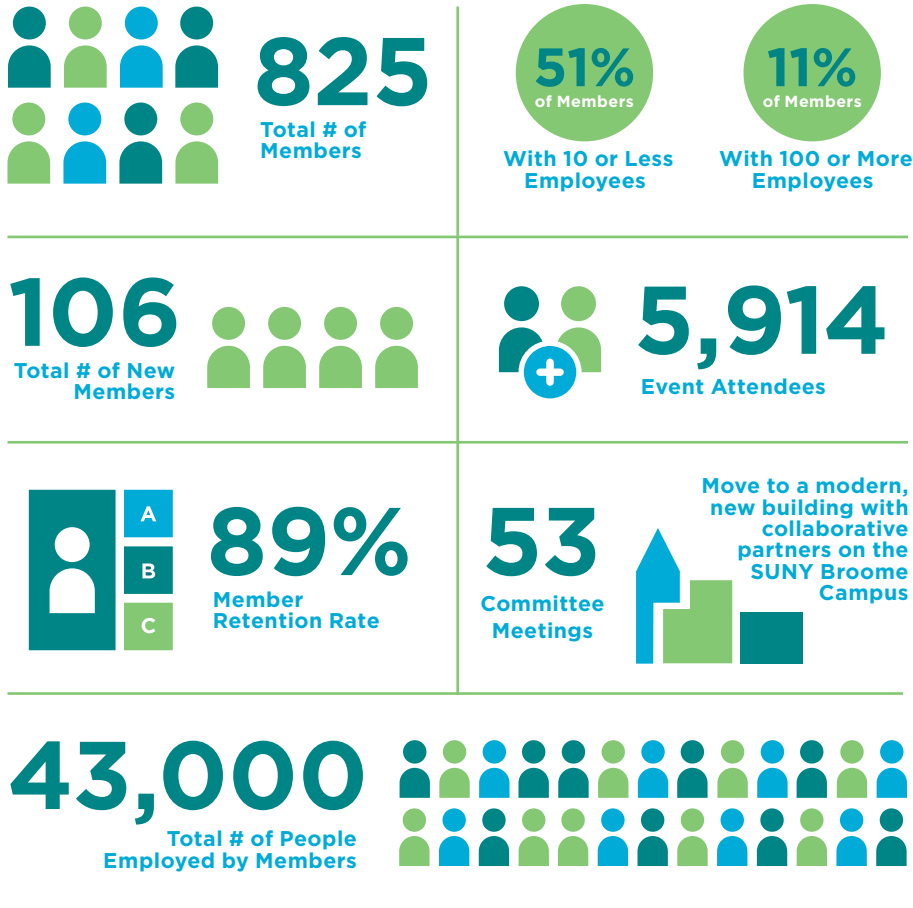
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 Vestal Wine and Liquors
 Volunteers Administrators of the Southern Tier
 Warren Real Estate of Greater Binghamton
 Wegmans Food Markets
 Worldwide Sport Supply
 WICZ-TV Fox 40
 WSKG Public Media

2017-2018 CHAMBER HIGHLIGHTS

The Greater Binghamton Chamber achieved great success with some record-breaking numbers in 2017. Here is a snapshot of what our year looked like:



In 2017, we designed “three pillars” to represent our core values: champion business growth, be the voice of business and inspire a healthy and vibrant community. Our programming goals in 2017 aligned perfectly within these three areas.

We Promote Business Growth

- **Total # of Events for Business Growth** - 26
- **Total # of Ribbon Cuttings** - 41
- **Breaking Down the Silos** - The Chamber and our members actively participated in this monthly networking event with other community partners, bringing



together the business community with start-up entrepreneurs in a networking forum in order for them to connect and collaborate on future endeavors.

- **On-the-Job Training** - The Chamber awarded \$112,000 in OJT money to 34 local businesses for the purpose of hiring new employees.
- **Economic Forecast/Building BC Awards** - Our Economic Forecast gave business owners and entrepreneurs an inside look at industry trends in the year ahead. In addition, we celebrated outstanding achievement in community economic development through our Building BC Awards. Our 2018 event saw significant growth in attendance over 2017 by 25%.
- **Energy Alliance** - 59 Chamber members participated in our electricity and gas programs in 2017 and realized a savings of \$70,000. Since this program’s inception in 2002, our members have saved over \$1.8 million.

- **Launch of baBing/Digital M2M Discount Program** - Thanks to our new partnership with baBing, a locally developed app, we launched a new digital version of our Chamber Member to Member (M2M) Discount Program. It allows our 800+ member businesses and their employees to better display and access discounts from other members.

We Are The Voice Of Business

- **Total # of Events for Voice of Business** - 11
- **Workers Compensation Reform** - The Chamber partnered with Senator Akshar and statewide business associations Unshackle Upstate and The Business Council to fight for much needed Workers’ Compensation reform. Our voice was heard and major reforms were made, having an estimated impact of over \$8 million to businesses.
- **Unshackle Upstate** - The Chamber worked with Unshackle Upstate and several other employer



organizations to reform the state's budget, including fighting off over \$1 billion dollars of proposed new taxes on businesses.

- **Candidate Debate** – The Chamber hosted the fall's first City of Binghamton Mayoral Debate. Forums like this give the business community an opportunity to hear who will be leading the city's economic and community development for the next four years before they make their decision at the polls in November.
- **FLY BGM & Business Partner Program** – The Chamber held roundtable discussions with businesses and attended airport

conferences to communicate the importance of air service to airlines and the commitment of the business community to BGM. In addition, the Chamber launched an incentive program that recognizes businesses and organizations that support the future sustainability and growth of the Greater Binghamton Airport with a travel policy that considers a commitment to fly BGM.

- **Eggs & Issues** – The Chamber tackled bi-monthly topics on real estate and housing, recreational development in Broome County, benefits of spending the day in Albany, attracting new business development in Greater Binghamton and the regulatory challenges for business in NYS.
- **Business Voice Well Represented in Important Community Topic Discussions** – The Chamber represented the business voice on REDC Workforce Development, United Way Anti-Poverty Initiative, The Agency's BC Talent Task Force, Binghamton University Town Gown Advisory Board and the Binghamton Business & Arts Alliance.

We Build A Vibrant Community

- **Total # of Events for Vibrant Community** – 6
- **YP Summit** – Thanks to the work of our YP Alliance, the inaugural Southern Tier YP Summit was a huge success with a powerful line-up of dynamic, local and regional speakers, break-out sessions and networking with over 200 young professionals in downtown Binghamton.



GBEOP has laid the groundwork for business-education initiatives, and with workforce development at the forefront of discussion in our community, we realized how important it is to increase our resources, our collaboration and our impact. We are adopting a comprehensive approach to workforce development that includes retaining and strengthening our existing workforce, attracting talent, growing our own workforce with a K-12 pipeline and retaining graduates.

This past year was a building year to position GBEOP as the navigator for K-12 workforce development programming in partnership with The Agency's Broome County Talent Taskforce. The vision is to expose every student in the Greater Binghamton region to a career pathway that sets them up for success and a good life in Broome County.

GBEOP Signature Program highlights for 2017-18:

- Graduated 20 individuals in the 31st class of the Broome Leadership Institute
- Reached over 800 students grades K-12 and engaged 50 business



professionals through junior achievement

- Exposed over 200 students grades 7-12 and their families to STEAM careers in our area

New GBEOP initiatives for 2017-18:

- Hired a full-time Executive Director in October 2017.
- Partnered with Modern Marketing Concepts for the 2018 Greater Binghamton Scholastic Challenge, a program where students grades 9-12 develop and pitch business plans to business professionals. Winners receive internship offers and scholarships.
- Design "Your Future Pathway to Success," a career night event targeting high school students and their parents/guardians to communicate career opportunities and pathways in Broome County. These will be held in several districts in 2018.
- Launch "Your Future" career exploration website to streamline business-education connections.
- Participation in school district career days.



**Southern Tier Welcome Center
Taste NY Store, I-81, NYS/PA Border**

In 2017, the “Gateway” renovated and unveiled the magnificent Southern Tier Welcome Center at the grand opening on October 5, 2017.

New Features Include:

- Dedicated tourism ambassador assigned to help travelers with any tourism questions they may have.
- Brand new interactive kiosks for travelers including:
 - *Map Your Love kiosk* for searching destinations in the state.
 - *Trivia kiosk* to test your knowledge of NY State for kids and adults.
 - *Departmental Environmental Conservation kiosk* to connect with info related to hunting, fishing, camping, and making reservations!
 - *What Kind Of Traveler Are You kiosk* - answer some quick questions and a travel profile is created just for you with NYS destinations.
 - *Welcome to the Finger Lakes kiosk* that gives access to all things Finger Lakes.
- Expanded Taste NY Store - The Taste NY initiative was launched by Governor Andrew Cuomo in 2013 to promote New York State’s food and beverage industries. Overseen by NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, Taste NY creates opportunities for local producers to showcase their goods. In 2017, Taste NY saw steady growth in Broome County, expanding New York’s food



- and beverage industry, to make NY products available state and nationwide.
- Other amenities and upgrades include:
 - A carousel themed dining area
 - I Love NY selfie wall for travelers to take photos
 - Free Wi-Fi available to travelers
 - HUGE 4K video running non-stop featuring attractions throughout the Southern Tier
 - Large regional map displaying the NYS vacation regions
 - Playground for children
 - Electric car charging station
 - Pet comfort area

Number of Visitors: 230,000

Number of Brochures Distributed: 197,584

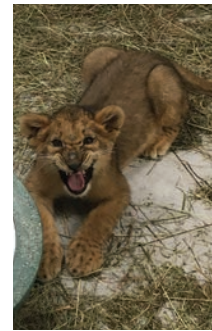
Taste NY Sales: \$220,760.93

Taste NY Products Sold: 34,820



Visit Binghamton is the official destination marketing organization for Broome County. Our mission is to bring regional, national and international business and leisure visitors to Greater Binghamton for the economic benefit of the County, the community and our tourism partners.

- Hosted 159 events which drew 59,696 visitors, generating \$19.2 million.
- Sold over 1,200 newly created packaging programs involving our hotels, restaurants and attractions.
- Launched an online hospitality training program so our partners and their employees can experience our training right from their desks.
- Our website, **VisitBinghamton.org**, saw an increase of 20% in overall traffic and 15% increase in unique visitors.
- Created six videos that tell stories of the restaurants, businesses and attractions that make up our community
- Visit Binghamton staff & our tourism partners landed the Future Business Leaders of America Conference for April 2018 & 2019.



Our biggest Facebook reach for the year was in July, drawing over 981,000 people when going live at Animal Adventure to see their new baby camels, as well as talking with the owner about what is to come!

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