The Buffalo Niagara region is on the cusp of a sustained resurgence. As the regional chamber of commerce and privately funded economic development organization, the Buffalo Niagara Partnership is proud to have played an important role in helping to bring about the region’s renaissance.

The Partnership’s work is critical to ensuring that our region continues to strengthen and grow. We are grateful to our members—especially the Circle members recognized on these pages—for their generous investment and support.

As the Partnership presents its 2018-2019 Annual Report to Members, we are looking ahead to the future and evolving to meet the most pressing needs of our members. We remain committed to our mission to grow private investment and jobs in the Buffalo Niagara region and we look forward to continuing this important work. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Arthur G. Wingerter
Chairman of the Board, Buffalo Niagara Partnership
President, Univera Healthcare

Dottie Gallagher
President & CEO, Buffalo Niagara Partnership

I think it is incumbent on all businesses in the area to get involved in creating a better place to live and work. We all gain from the work the Partnership does and we can all contribute to ensure they remain the leading forum for business in Buffalo Niagara.” - John Scannell, Chairman & CEO, Moog, Inc.
Special Thank You

We would like to extend special thanks to the following members for their investment in our programs and events throughout the year. Their support makes our work possible.

PRESIDENT’S CIRCLE

- [BN]
- The Buffalo News
- Independent Health
- National Fuel Gas
- RICH’S
- Tops Friendly Markets
- University at Buffalo

LEADERSHIP CIRCLE

- Bank of America
- Charter Communications
- HSBC
- Kaleida Health
- nationalgrid
- Northwest
- University at Buffalo

DIRECTOR’S CIRCLE

- Delmar
- Deltic
- Driftwood
- D’Youville
- Elderwood
- ECMC
- Ellicott Development Co.
- First Amherst Development Group LLC
- Frey Electric Construction Co., Inc.
- Buffalo Rising, Inc.
- buffalo State, State University of New York
- Citizens Bank
- ClearView Social, Inc.
- Eliott Development Co.
- Harlequin Distribution Center
- Harmac Medical Products, Inc.
- Harter Secrest & Emery LLP
- Hodgson Russ LLP
- Hotel Henry Urban Resort Conference Center
- Hunt Real Estate Corp.
- Hurwitz & Fine, P.C.
- JP Morgan Chase Bank, N.A.
- Lippes Mathias Wexler Friedman LLP
- McCullagh Coffee
- New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co., Inc.
- New York Power Authority
- NOCO Energy Corp.
- People Inc.
- Performance Management Partners, Inc.
- Power Drives, Inc.
- Software Solutions Group
- St. Bonaventure University
- The Community Preservation Corporation
- Tompkins Bank of Castile
- Try-it Distributing Co., Inc.
- United Airlines
- Walsh Duffield Cos., Inc.
- Waste Management of Western New York
- Wendel

PARTNERSHIP CIRCLE

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- ASG – Applied Sciences Group, Inc.
- Astronics Corp.
- Athenex
- AT&T Services, Inc.
- Barclay Damon, LLP
- Bene-Care Agency, LLC
- BestSelf Behavioral Health, Inc.
- Delta
- Dolpins & Company, LLP
- GCMC
- Hamister Group, Inc.
- Houghton College
- Key Video Productions
- Lamar
- Life Storage
- Lumsden & McCormick
- Lyrical
- Mechanics
- Northwest
- Nichols
- Niagara University
- Phillips Lytle LLP
- Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center
- Seneca Resorts & Casino
- Uniland
- Verizon Media
- Wegmans
- West Herr Automotive Group
- WKBW-TV - Scripps Media Inc.
- Zenger Group, Inc.

thepartnership.org
Effective advocacy, convening, and collaboration are among the many reasons why the Buffalo Niagara Partnership is the premier employer organization in our region. Like no other privately funded organization in the Buffalo Niagara region, the Partnership mobilizes its members, elected officials, community leaders, area colleges and universities, economic development agencies, and other groups around the common goal of building a more robust and competitive regional economy.

**SETTING THE AGENDA**

The Partnership’s annual Advocacy Agenda details the local, state and federal policy priorities of Buffalo Niagara employers. This year, we made the case against new state employer mandates, called for a robust federal infrastructure package, and pushed for an increase in local tourism funding, among other issues. NYS Assemblyman Robin Schimminger talked with members following the release of our 2019 Advocacy Agenda.

**TRADE TALK WITH MANUFACTURERS**

Neil Bradley, the Executive Vice President and Chief Policy Officer of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, delivered the keynote address during the Partnership’s Manufacturing Month Summit. During his talk, Bradley spoke with local manufacturing leaders about the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) and the impact of tariffs. 

**LAUNCHING VOTER VOICE**

The Partnership launched Voter Voice, an online platform designed to better connect Partnership members with elected officials at all levels of government. Now with a just click of a mouse, members can tell their elected officials how they feel about key issues impacting the Buffalo Niagara economy.

**FINGER ON THE PULSE**

Talent issues shot up to the top concern in our Member Pulse Report, which summarizes the findings of our annual member survey. Fifty percent of respondents said workforce is a significant pain point right now for their organization, jumping 12 points from the previous year. As a result, the Partnership deepened our commitment to helping members meet their workforce needs by investing in staff and training to deploy proven talent pipeline strategies locally.

"I don’t know any group in Western New York that can speak more effectively for the business community and for economic opportunity than the Partnership. They have so many members across so many different businesses and industries that can exact a higher order of influence in their advocacy work.”

Richard Gold, President & COO, M&T Bank
ADVOCACY IN ACTION: ALBANY
Grant Loomis, the Partnership’s Vice President of Government Affairs, traveled to Albany with members of Unshackle Upstate to meet with NYS Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart Cousins and discuss issues critical to Upstate New York.

ADVOCACY IN ACTION: WASHINGTON
The Partnership traveled to Washington, D.C. with the Great Lakes Metro Chambers Coalition (GLMCC) to meet with White House staff and members of Congress to fight for Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funding and discuss trade, infrastructure, and workforce development priorities. The Partnership is a founding member of the GLMCC.

MAKING THE TAX CAP PERMANENT
The Partnership achieved one of its top advocacy priorities when lawmakers made the state’s property tax cap permanent as part of the state budget. Dottie had the honor of introducing Gov. Andrew Cuomo at a Buffalo event where he pushed for a permanent cap.

FIGHTING PREVAILING WAGE EXPANSION
The Partnership joined other Unshackle Upstate leaders in pushing back against the expansion of prevailing wage on private development projects at a press conference in the New York State Capitol. The Partnership is a founding member of Unshackle Upstate.

ACCESS
"The Partnership carries the ball as the advocate on issues that affect our business community. If not them, who? It’s hard for small businesses and large companies to have an impact on their own. Investment in the Partnership gives us the connections necessary to make a difference for area businesses.”

Art Wingerter, President, Univera Healthcare
Addressing the talent challenge

A full 75% of Buffalo Niagara Partnership members say that workforce is a significant pain point now or that it will be in the next couple of years.

The Partnership serves as the backbone of the Employ Buffalo Niagara coalition. The 180-member group, led by employers, is comprised of education and training, workforce, and non-profit organizations that seek to build talent pipelines to help low-wage workers upskill into meaningful careers. The coalition’s mission is to remove the barriers to full employment for these important members of the workforce.

Additionally, the Partnership manages employer collaboratives, which are a demand-driven, employer-led approach to closing the skills gap. These collaboratives build talent supply chains aligned to dynamic business needs.

The Partnership would like to thank these members for their involvement in our employer collaboratives:

- Applus
- Dunn Tire
- Eastman Machine Co.
- IIMAK
- International Paper
- Modern Disposal Services
- National Fuel
- NOCO Energy Corp.
- Pegula Sports & Entertainment
- Rosina Food Products
- Sealing Devices, Inc.
- SoPark
- Switzer
- Tapecon, Inc.
- Wegmans
- Zehnder Rittling

Dottie Gallagher, our President & CEO, was invited to speak at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York’s Investing in America’s Workforce conference on improving outcomes for workers and employers. She was joined by, from left, Stuart Andreason of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta; Julie Gehrki, the Vice President of Philanthropy at the Walmart Foundation; and Dave E. Altig, the Executive Vice President and Director of Research at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta.

The Partnership received $374,000 in grant funding to advance employer-led workforce development.

- **$199,000**
  - **Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative**
  - Convene and organize employers to connect with THRIVE Buffalo participants

- **$150,000**
  - **New York State Job Pathways Demonstration Grant**
  - Upskill the underemployed and create a training model for incumbent workers that increases wages and job retention

- **$25,000**
  - **U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation**
  - Implement a work-based learning program to connect students with academic and experimental learning opportunities

“The work of the Partnership has a major impact on the community and its future. It is the one organization steering the agenda of what we need to be talking about for our future. If we did not have the Partnership, I am not sure where the business community’s collective voice would come from.”
CREATING A DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE REGIONAL BUSINESS CLIMATE

The Partnership’s Diversity & Inclusion Council provides employers with the insight and information they need to attract a more diverse workforce and increase talent retention by creating inclusive corporate cultures.

The Council’s work focuses on:

- **Human Resources** | Increasing diversity in management through enhanced attraction, retention, and development practices
- **Community Outreach & Philanthropy** | Raising awareness of organizations that serve diverse populations and offering opportunities for greater impact
- **Communications** | Assisting companies in establishing communication plans that promote belonging

1,700+ individual members
54% increase in membership over 2017-18
59 corporate members
18+ events and programs annually

A FULL 20% OF OUR REGION’S WORKFORCE IS EXPECTED TO RETIRE IN 10 YEARS

That’s why recruiting and retaining young professionals is more important than ever. BN360, the Partnership’s young professional engagement and development program, is foundational to the Partnership’s work in talent retention and workforce development.

1,700+ individual members
54% increase in membership over 2017-18
59 corporate members
18+ events and programs annually

ENCOURAGING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The 2019-20 Young Professional’s Guide to Networking & Development doubled in size to include more than 50 professional development groups and opportunities for community involvement. Nearly 300 young professionals attended the event at which the 2019-20 Guide was released, a 65% increase over attendance at last year’s event.

CREATING A CAREER DESTINATION

The Partnership surveys young professionals to understand their perceptions of the region and advise community and business leaders on the action needed to ensure that the Buffalo Niagara region becomes a career destination for young professionals. More than 880 young professionals took the 2018 survey, doubling participation over the 2017 survey.

Michael Keating, Senior Vice President, Wegmans Buffalo Division

“\[quote\]

The Partnership helps lead the conversation on issues such as workforce development, diversity, and other topics of importance to today’s business. Those issues are critical to the future of Buffalo Niagara. The Partnership’s role in collaboration and convening gives us the opportunity to work together toward a better future.”
Engaging members and building relationships

Each year, the Partnership hosts more than 60 events that draw approximately 5,400 attendees. Our events bring members together for learning and networking opportunities and for the relationship-building that is so critical to our region’s economic well-being.

**BRINGING MEMBERS & DECISION MAKERS TOGETHER**

The Partnership’s Government Affairs series connects members to elected leaders at all levels of government and helps inform the debate on key issues critical to our economy. The series features several sold-out events including our annual Advocacy Agenda Rollout and Public Officials Reception, which is attended by dozens of elected officials such as Buffalo Mayor Byron Brown.

**ENABLING MEMBERS TO MAKE CONNECTIONS**

The Partnership hosts a variety of events throughout the year to give our members the opportunity to build their circles of influence. More than 400 people attended HobNob and spent a memorable evening enriching their business relationships.

**TACKLING PRESSING REGIONAL ISSUES**

The Partnership brought more than 125 people together for a two-part series that explored the opioid epidemic, its impact, and how employers and community leaders could respond. Dr. Howard Hitzel, the president and CEO of BestSelf Behavioral Health, joined Erie County Health Commissioner Dr. Gale Burstein and Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz at an event designed to help employers better understand the opioid epidemic and its effect on the region’s workforce.

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“There are a lot of bright, energetic people running companies across Western New York. It is important that there be a forum for them to share ideas and best practices. The Partnership is that forum that brings together complementary ideas that otherwise may not intersect. That strengthens local business, which in turn benefits the entire region.”

Stewart Haney, President & CEO, Wendel
BUILDING CROSS-BORDER RELATIONSHIPS

Members of the Partnership’s Economic Councils, as well as our associate members from the Hamilton and Greater Niagara chambers of commerce, set off on a boat tour of the Buffalo River and the Outer Harbor. The annual event is one way in which we convene business leaders with the goal of building and enhancing the cross-border relationships that ensure the economic health of our bi-national region. All three chambers renewed their membership agreement for another three years.

HONORING WOMEN LEADERS

The Partnership is proud to showcase the valuable contributions made by women leaders. Their work is critical to the advancement of the Buffalo Niagara region.

PowerUp brought nearly 200 women together for an afternoon of celebrating, learning, and networking. JoAnn Falletta, the music director of the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, delivered the keynote address and shared the leadership lessons she has learned from 20 seasons leading the BPO.

An at-capacity crowd filled the Buffalo Niagara Convention center for the 29th Annual ATHENA Awards Luncheon, the region’s most prestigious event recognizing the professional accomplishments of exceptional individuals who are dedicated to the advancement of women.

MAXIMIZING THE VALUE OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Recent studies have linked innovation, profitability, and talent attraction to diversity and inclusion. In June 2019, the Partnership and the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo hosted a day-long Diversity & Inclusion Symposium to help employers develop strategies to hire and retain a diverse workforce. Mary-Frances Winters, the President & CEO of The Winters Group and a renowned expert in the field, delivered the keynote address to a crowd of nearly 250 attendees.

COLLABORATE

Sometimes organizations get stuck in their own world, whether business or not-for-profit, but we have some very common goals and issues we need to agree on. The Partnership is very powerful in enabling the collaboration necessary among these organizations, large and small, so that we can work together for the benefit of the entire region.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title and Company/Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David Anderson</td>
<td>President &amp; CEO, BlueCross BlueShield of WNY</td>
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<td>Douglas Bean</td>
<td>Vice Chairman, Chief Brand Officer, Mower</td>
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<td>Paul Bonaro</td>
<td>VP, Data Center Operations, Verizon Media</td>
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<td>Warren Colville</td>
<td>Publisher &amp; President, The Buffalo News</td>
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<td>Michael Cropp</td>
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<td>Frank Curci</td>
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<td>Jonathan Dandes</td>
<td>Vice President of Governmental Relations &amp; Special Projects, Rich Baseball Operations</td>
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<td>Steven Davis</td>
<td>President, Tapecon, Inc.</td>
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<td>Donna DeCarolis</td>
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<td>Clotilde Dedeker</td>
<td>President &amp; CEO, Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo</td>
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<td>Jim Dentinger</td>
<td>President, McGuire Development Company</td>
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<td>Partner, Barclay Damon, LLP</td>
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<td>Julie Dotton</td>
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<td>Ann Evanko</td>
<td>President &amp; Managing Member, Hurwitz &amp; Fine, P.C.</td>
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<td>Lynne Marie Finn</td>
<td>President &amp; CEO, Aleron</td>
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<td>Rhonda Frederick</td>
<td>President &amp; CEO, People Inc.</td>
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<td>Kent Frey</td>
<td>CEO, Frey Electrical Construction Co., Inc.</td>
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<td>Holly Gagnon</td>
<td>President &amp; CEO, Seneca Gaming Corporation</td>
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<td>Dottie Gallagher</td>
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<td>Robert Gioia</td>
<td>President, The John R. Oishei Foundation</td>
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<td>CEO, Irish Companies</td>
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<td>President &amp; CEO, Invest Buffalo Niagara</td>
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<td>Regional Director, National Grid</td>
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<td>Member, Bond, Schoenbeck &amp; King, PLLC</td>
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<td>Jody Lomeo</td>
<td>President &amp; CEO, Kaleida Health/Great Lakes Health</td>
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<td>James Maher, C.M.</td>
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<td>Executive Director, Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority</td>
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<td>Vice President, Development, Uniland Development Company</td>
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<td>Kevin Murphy</td>
<td>Northeast Regional Executive, Business Banking Bank of America</td>
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<td>Ram Ramanujam</td>
<td>Plant Director, General Motors Powertrain Tonawanda Engine Plant</td>
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<td>Sharon Randaccio</td>
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<td>President, Univera Healthcare</td>
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*Board of Directors as of publication*
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Cool perks, low prices, and a lot of love for small business.

When you find the right health plan, you just know. Your employees are taken care of. The rates are affordable. And it comes from someone committed to supporting small business in WNY. Here’s how we stack up:

- Low small business rates starting at just $319/month
- Unique perks, like up to $200 just for going to the dentist and a $300 wellness debit card
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Choose the partner who looks out for your people and your business as if they were our own.

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*Specifíc to Univera Preferred Access Bronze 4 single plan. Dependents covered until age 26, no Pediatric Dental.
Up to $200 per family. Dental Rewards payment is $100 for the subscriber.
An additional $100 can be claimed by the subscriber’s spouse.
Up to $300 per family. Wellness Rewards payment is $100 for the subscriber.
An additional $150 can be claimed by the subscriber’s spouse.

KeyBank thanks Buffalo Niagara Partnership for making a difference.

The strength of our community is its greatest asset.

When people work together, anything is possible. It’s why we support organizations that bring people within our community closer. They reinforce the bonds we share and help us celebrate the traditions we hold dear. It’s just one part of our investment in our neighbors and the community.

KeyBank thanks Buffalo Niagara Partnership for making a difference.

KeyBank +
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Committed to our customers. Nonstop.

Proud member of the Buffalo Niagara Partnership.

fly the friendly skies®
The Buffalo Niagara Partnership’s economic councils offer Partnership members the opportunity to participate in efforts to grow private investment and jobs. Council members are also afforded the opportunity to network with like-minded business leaders.

The Partnership works closely with council members throughout the year to identify regional priorities and concerns. Then collaboratively, across all Councils, we come together to communicate them in our Action Plans.

We would like to thank the following companies for their support of our economic development councils. THEIR SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

SUPPORTING SPONSORS:
- ARC BUILDING PARTNERS, LLC
- CBRE BUFFALO LLC
- CONSTRUCTION EXCHANGE OF BUFFALO & WNY
- LABELLA ASSOCIATES
- LECHASE CONSTRUCTION SERVICES, LLC
- MODERN DISPOSAL SERVICES, INC.
- NATIONAL GRID
- T.Y. LIN INTERNATIONAL

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PRESENTING SPONSORS:
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- Buffalo & Erie County Public Library
- Evergreen Health
- Hurwitz & Fine, P.C.
- Independent Health

TITLE SPONSORS:
- Bank of America
- KeyBank
- M&T Bank
- verizon
- Wegmans

TITLE SPONSOR:
- Bank on Buffalo

PRESENTING SPONSOR:
- nationalgrid