Message from the Chairman and President & CEO

The pandemic has tested employers and their employees in ways almost unimaginable.

During this unprecedented time, the Buffalo Niagara Partnership’s work became a critical lifeline – providing employers with vital information and resources, connecting members to each other to share best practices and key insights, and advocating for programs and policies to support our community.

COVID-19 has rocked our economy and threatens to erode Buffalo Niagara’s progress. Also standing in the way is our community’s ongoing racial inequity that, left unaddressed, will prevent our region from ever reaching its economic potential. The challenges ahead make the BNP and our mission more relevant and necessary than ever before.

That is why we are so grateful to our members – especially the Circle members recognized on these pages – for their generous investment and support.

As we present our 2019-2020 Annual Report to Members, we look to the future with steady resolve, renewed focus, and determined optimism.

"Thank you for the tremendous job BNP has done over the last several months helping our community navigate a global pandemic, while at the same time taking a leadership position on racism, diversity, and inclusion. BNP is executing an ambitious agenda and has provided unquestionable value. You and your team should be very proud of what has been accomplished."

- Dave Uba | CEO, Excelsior Orthopaedics
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.
As the region continued its cautious reopening amid the coronavirus pandemic, the BNP joined forces with several local organizations to encourage Western New Yorkers and local businesses to do their part to keep the economy running and ensure the safety of their neighbors through an initiative called It’s Our Job.

Developed in partnership with Crowley Webb and sponsored by local organizations like Univera Healthcare, The Buffalo News, WGRZ, Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority (NFTA), Zenger Group, Adpro Sports, and TOPS Friendly Markets, It’s Our Job is focused on two major tenets:

1. Encouraging consumers to do their part to keep local businesses open by buying local
2. Asking consumers and business owners alike to practice COVID-conscious habits that curb the spread of the virus like social distancing, washing hands and wearing a mask

I delivered my first “It’s Our Job” kit to one of my customers today, and he could not have been more appreciative and thankful! It was great to be able to help one of my customers with something so simple and show support to our local businesses.”

-Brittany Cheney
Vice President, M&T Bank

SMALL BUSINESS KITS

Through the support of a grant from Univera Healthcare, BNP produced 2,500 small business kits which include tools such as signage, floor markings, and masks to help business owners operate safely and welcome customers in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Representatives from Bank on Buffalo, Evans Bank, KeyBank, M&T Bank and Northwest Bank delivered the kits to their small business clients.

Richard C. Hamister and Nancy Schmidt of Northwest Bank drop of a kit to Hanzlian Sausage.
Annette Tomlin and Josiah LeRoy give a kit to Taylor’s Tap and Grill.

Novi Paluch, owner of Sasmita Batik, holds her small business kit from M&T Bank.

Rene Rebmann from Evans Bank gives a kit to Cozy Cafe and Catering.

Kartika Carr and Jack Quon of Khari’s hold up their small business kit.
Meeting the Moment

COVID-19 forced businesses to close their doors to the public, workforces to pivot to remote operations, employers to redesign manufacturing floors and office layouts to keep people safe, and small business owners to question their economic viability moving forward. The Buffalo Niagara Partnership worked around the clock to inform, guide, and mobilize employers when they needed it most.

The BNP organized a series of roundtables with NYS Lt. Governor Kathy Hochul as the state developed reopening guidance. More than 250 leaders from the construction, development, manufacturing, professional services, restaurant, retail, and tourism/hospitality industries shared their perspective on how to safely reopen and resume business operations.

The BNP kept our members and policy makers connected throughout the pandemic as government action or inaction mattered more than ever. Events with U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer, Congressman Brian Higgins, and NYS Comptroller Tom DiNapoli offered timely insights and allowed members to ask questions directly to people in power.

I want to congratulate the work of BNP. Your webinars and information provided to partners has been extremely helpful, timely and outstanding in content! They also yielded significant cost savings for the university.”

- Lorrie A. Clemo, PhD.
  President, D’Youville College

“ The calls were very helpful and really helped navigate through some confusing situations.”

- Rupa Shanmugam
  President & CEO, SoPark Corporation
COVID-19 brought countless legal, human resources, and compliance questions to the forefront and the BNP was there every step of the way hosting dozens of virtual programs to provide members with the information and understanding they needed to navigate the pandemic.

You are doing an amazing job in this crisis. Your communications have been most helpful and timely.”

- Clotilde Perez-Bode Dedecker
President & CEO, Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo

KEEP BUFFALO NIAGARA WORKING

We created Keep Buffalo Niagara Working so employers could turn to just one place to access the latest information, guidelines, and resources to find answers to their questions and recommendations for how to safely reopen and operate their business to protect their employees and customers during the pandemic.

WNY COVID-19 BUSINESS IMPACT SURVEY

More than 1,600 regional employers took part in the WNY COVID-19 Business Impact Survey to better gauge the true effect of the pandemic on WNY’s businesses and economy. The BNP organized and joined with the cities of Buffalo and Niagara Falls, the counties of Erie and Niagara, and nearly 20 local chambers and economic development organizations. The responses were shared with regional leaders and decision makers to best focus and prioritize assistance programs and legislative efforts.

KEY FINDINGS

93% experiencing revenue decline

3 OUT OF 5 businesses postponing investment

>1/3 reducing staff

thepartnership.org
Making an Impact

As the voice of WNY employers, the BNP continues to set itself apart through effective advocacy and collaborative economic development initiatives. At the local, state, or federal level, the BNP is engaged - making sure elected officials know what will boost or blunt job creation and private investment in our community. We also connect the region’s employers to both each other and regional policy makers to share best practices, key insights, and timely data to support WNY’s established and emerging industries.

RAISING THE BAR

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce awarded the BNP with 5-Star Accreditation - its highest recognition - for our sound policies, effective organizational procedures, and positive impact on the Buffalo Niagara community. After a rigorous, months-long review looking at our operations, governance, and technology capabilities, we join only three other chambers throughout New York State to be accredited by the U.S. Chamber. This 5-Star Accreditation is a badge of honor as we continue our mission to connect and mobilize the region’s employers, and advocate for economic growth and opportunity in Buffalo Niagara.

Members of the BNP’s Development Advisory Council joined Sinatra & Company and People, Inc. for a hardhat tour of their new joint development project on Jefferson Avenue in Buffalo. Now open, the new buildings provide affordable housing options and act as a community anchor to help revitalize the surrounding neighborhood.

“Accreditation validates a chamber as having programs that benefit its local economy and positively influence its community. We applaud you for advancing the principles of free enterprise.”

- U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Moog CEO and Chairman John Scannell spoke at the BNP’s Advocacy Agenda rollout event to highlight the need for commonsense federal immigration reform to support our region’s workforce and talent attraction efforts. The BNP’s Advocacy Agenda outlines our key advocacy priorities for the year and guides our advocacy on behalf of WNY employers.

A capacity crowd attended our 2020 Legislative Luncheon to discuss the NYS Budget and hear from legislative leaders about their priorities for WNY. The BNP honored retiring Assemblyman Robin Schimminger for his 43-year career in the State Legislature and his support of Buffalo Niagara employers.

The BNP traveled to Albany along with other Unshackle Upstate members to speak with NYS Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins about our state legislative priorities including providing small business tax relief, stopping new employer mandates, and opposing new healthcare taxes. The day included productive conversations with legislators throughout Upstate.

The BNP’s Manufacturing Council toured Safetec on Buffalo’s eastside to celebrate National Manufacturing Day. The goal of the day was to dispel common misconceptions about manufacturing and expose people to the opportunities associated with today’s manufacturing industry.

Moog CEO and Chairman John Scannell spoke at the BNP’s Advocacy Agenda rollout event to highlight the need for commonsense federal immigration reform to support our region’s workforce and talent attraction efforts. The BNP’s Advocacy Agenda outlines our key advocacy priorities for the year and guides our advocacy on behalf of WNY employers.
Driving Progress

The BNP is committed to creating awareness around the benefits of having a diverse and inclusive regional business climate. By creating programs designed to advance best practices, we enable employers to leverage diversity for a competitive advantage and promote a workplace culture of inclusion and engagement.

WNY D&I Community Assessment

The BNP and its partners asked employers to participate in an assessment to evaluate the state of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the WNY business community. The report is essential to better understand what steps WNY employers are currently taking to build diverse and inclusive workplaces, how employers are measuring progress, what roadblocks organizations face, and what resources employers need to assist with this important work.

ROBUST D&I Programming

Diversity & Inclusion Executive Exchange
Small, peer-to-peer, professionally facilitated groups for Senior Level Executives who are actively implementing D&I programs in their organization.

Diversity & Inclusion Academy
Designed for business leaders and their staff who understand the benefits of a D&I strategy and are interested in starting a program within their organization.

Diversity & Inclusion Virtual Learning Series
This 3-part virtual series featured nationally recognized diversity and inclusion experts as well as local business leaders and provided expert insight into timely D&I topics.

Diversity & Inclusion Symposium
Save the date for the second annual D&I Symposium: June 8, 2021 in the Buffalo Niagara Convention Center.

Racial Healing Circles
Facilitated, Safe & Engaging Conversations About Race - During This Crucial Time for Our Community.

"We truly believe we are a stronger, more innovative company because we are diverse. Our work in this area will never be done – knowing there is so much more we can learn and accomplish, together."

- Yexi Liu
Chief Information Officer, Rich Products
Creating Opportunities

Designed and executed with the goal of helping our members succeed in business, BNP events feature industry experts and thought leaders that enable our members to stay up-to-date on a variety of topics related to running a business and tackling pressing business issues, all while providing a forum to connect with other businesses.

Because of the variety and robustness of these events, there is relevant content for businesses of all sizes and employers of all industries.

NEW MEMBERS-ONLY EVENT PORTAL

Members can now access a growing repository of members-only events that BNP has via a portal on our website.

thepartnership.org/blog/members-only-content/

NEW CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The BNP has officially been named an authorized Recertification Provider by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). With this certification, participants in our qualified educational trainings and other HR-related programming can receive Professional Development Credits (PDCs).

[SHRM Certification Logo]
During these challenging times, many of our members have stepped up and solidified their dedication to the work and mission of the BNP. We want to acknowledge these members for their generous commitments to the Buffalo Niagara Partnership Foundation to help bridge the funding gap created by COVID-19 and ensure the strength and vitality of the BNP for years to come. Thank you.

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation • Walmart Foundation

M&T Bank • BlueCross BlueShield

Independent Health • Tops Friendly Markets • Moog

Wegmans • Life Storage • Hodgson Russ • Try-it Distributing

Dopkins & Company • NOCO • Walsh Duffield • Zenger Group • Hunt Real Estate • Rich Products • West Herr • National Grid

The success of our It’s Our Job community campaign would not have been made possible without the generosity of the following companies that have provided over $700,000 of promotional support. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to Buffalo Niagara and its economic recovery.

• The Buffalo News
• Crowley Webb
• Univera Healthcare
• WGRZ
• Tops Friendly Markets
• Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority
• Zenger Group
• AdPro Sports

Media Partners: WGRZ and The Buffalo News

Arthur G. Wingerter, President, Univera Healthcare presenting the funding for the small business kits to Dottie Gallagher, President & CEO, BNP
### 2019–20 Board of Directors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title and Company</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Frank Curci</strong></td>
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<td>Corporate VP Government Relations and Special Projects, Rich Products Corporation</td>
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<td><strong>Gregory Duval</strong></td>
<td>Regional Executive &amp; Managing Director, Great Lakes Region, HSBC Bank USA, N.A.</td>
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<td><strong>Thomas Emmerling (Treasurer)</strong></td>
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<td>President &amp; CEO, Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus, Inc.</td>
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<td><strong>Ann Evanko</strong></td>
<td>Member, Hurwitz &amp; Fine, P.C.</td>
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<td>CEO &amp; Founder, Whose Your Landlord</td>
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<td><strong>Lynne Marie Finn</strong></td>
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<td>President &amp; CEO, Zoological Society of Buffalo, Inc.</td>
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<td>President &amp; CEO, Buffalo Niagara Partnership</td>
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<td><strong>Candace Johnson, PhD</strong></td>
<td>President &amp; CEO, Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center</td>
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<td>Group Vice President, Government Affairs, Charter Communications</td>
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<td>Senior Vice President, Buffalo Division, Wegmans Food Markets, Inc.</td>
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<td>Regional Director, National Grid</td>
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<td>Member, Bond, Schoeneck &amp; King, PLLC</td>
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<td>President &amp; CEO, Kaleida Health/Great Lakes Health</td>
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<td><strong>Kimberley Minkel</strong></td>
<td>Executive Director, Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority</td>
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<td>CEO, Uniland Development Company</td>
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<td>Northeast Regional Executive, Business Banking Bank of America</td>
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<td>Partner, Phillips Lyttle LLP</td>
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<td>President &amp; CEO, Evans Bank, N.A.</td>
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<td><strong>Benjamin Obletz (Secretary)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Susan O’Sullivan</strong></td>
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<td>President and CEO, Erie County Medical Center Corporation</td>
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<td>Upstate New York Regional Executive, KeyBank</td>
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<td>Executive VP of Licensing &amp; Branded Merchandise, Pegula Sports &amp; Entertainment, LLC.</td>
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<td>Plant Director, General Motors Powertrain Tonawanda Engine Plant</td>
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<td>CEO, Life Storage®</td>
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<td>CEO &amp; Chairman of the Board, Moog Inc.</td>
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<td><strong>Rupa Shanmugam</strong></td>
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<td>President, Univera Healthcare</td>
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<td><strong>Robert Zak</strong></td>
<td>President &amp; CEO, Merchants Insurance Group</td>
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<td><strong>Stephen Zenger</strong></td>
<td>President &amp; CEO, Zenger Group</td>
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**Board of Directors as of publication**

[thepartnership.org](http://thepartnership.org)
Rates as low as $319/month? Now we’re talking. 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
• Great care from the doctors your employees already know and trust

Choose the partner who looks out for your people and your business as if they were our own. Compare because you care.

UniveraForBusiness.com

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

Businesses in Western New York work differently.
We know, because we work here too.

At Univera Healthcare, our job is getting your business the best possible health insurance, keeping your costs down and caring for your employees in so many ways.

- 24/7 access to telemedicine for non-emergency conditions and for mental health support
- A large network of doctors, pharmacies and hospitals you know
- Access to behavioral health specialists, nurses, pharmacists, nutritionists and clinicians through the free Wellframe® app
- Up to $300 in annual wellness rewards

Learn more at: UniveraForBusiness.com

We’re putting our energy behind Buffalo.

National Grid values and respects the strength and diversity of our employees, customers and communities. And we take pride in our employees who volunteer their time and talents to enrich the places where we live, work and play.

nationalgridus.com

Connect with us on...
The power of community and working together makes all the difference to our residents, their families, and our staff.

Elderwood is proud to be part of the WNY community and a member of the Buffalo Niagara Partnership.
Since 1825, we’ve built our business on knowing the communities we serve. We’re not surprised to see you pulling together to help our neighbors, but we are inspired by it. And as neighbors ourselves, we’re right here with you.

We’re helping to make sure the future is still bright for the people, small businesses, local restaurants, and non-profits that help our communities thrive.

Tomorrow will come, and when it does, we want everyone to be ready to hit the ground running.

key.com/ReadyForTomorrow

Ready for tomorrow.

As of 9/21/2020.

$18 Million

Key’s philanthropic commitment for COVID-19 response in our most vulnerable communities.

$1.9 Million

Donated to more than 1,200 area nonprofits through our 2:1 COVID-19 Response Employee Matching Gift program.

$550 Thousand+

Given back to our communities through #KeyBankAssists, surprising 4,840 families with gift cards to local restaurants and thanking more than 50 essential worker and first responder teams with gift cards, supporting 38 charities and 105 small businesses.

$8.1 Billion+

In loans secured for nearly 43,000 small businesses nationwide through the Paycheck Protection Program.
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.

Thank you to the following companies who sponsor our councils. THEIR SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

**MANUFACTURING COUNCIL**

**TITLE SPONSOR:**

Bank on Buffalo

**INDUSTRY SPONSORS:**

Harris Beach

nationalgrid

**SUPPORTING SPONSORS:**

IGNITION LIFE SOLUTIONS

REMEDIY INTELLIGENT STAFFING

**DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL**

**INDUSTRY SPONSORS:**

cpc

Construction Exchange

First Amherst

Harris Beach

**SUPPORTING SPONSORS:**

ARC BUILDING PARTNERS, LLC

THE BONADIO GROUP

CBRE BUFFALO LLC

LABELLA ASSOCIATES, D.P.C.

LECHASE CONSTRUCTION SERVICES, LLC

MILLINGTON LOCKWOOD

NATIONAL GRID

**D&I EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**PLATINUM SPONSORS:**

BANK OF AMERICA

M&T Bank

**GOLD SPONSORS:**

BlueCross BlueShield

Northwest

**SILVER SPONSORS:**

Delaware North

KeyBank

**SUPPORTING SPONSORS:**

BOND SCHOENECK & KING

EVERGREEN HEALTH