

THE CHAMBER


The Columbia Montour Chamber of Commerce

ANNUAL REPORT

2024/2025

Mission statement:

“To represent local employers in supporting vibrant, sustainable communities in Columbia and Montour counties.”



Message from the President

Dear Members,

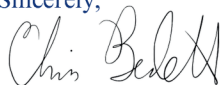
Since April 2023, your Chamber has met face-to-face with more than 215 members to gain critical feedback on the quality of our programs, benefits, events, and focus areas. We're taking special pride in this work, as we say with certainty that the Board of Directors, Ambassadors, committees, and staff are more tuned in than ever to you, our members.

We heard you loud and clear and brought some big changes to our offerings such as the inaugural "Municipal Officials' Night", which fostered connections between members and local leaders, a redesign of our publications so that they inform you about issues that impact business, and give you an inside-track on member news. A growing awareness of our benefits program led members to significant savings through partners MyBenefit Advisor, Penn National Insurance, and World Kinect Energy Services, and the Chamber's Low-Interest Loan Program issued more than \$35,000 to small businesses for capital improvements. We're especially proud of the advocacy efforts and partnerships that developed in response to your comments, and how our work has played a role in improving regional transportation.

In 2025, you may expect more of the same – member benefits that work for you, meaningful advocacy that represents you while you run your business, and a Chamber committed to making positive connections to help you grow. 2025 will be a breakout year for an increasingly vibrant and sustainable community, and we hope you'll stay tuned for all the things happening in our region that don't fit in this report. In the meantime, I invite you to peruse the Chamber's accomplishments from the past year, as highlighted in this report and encourage you to become an even bigger part of our shared progress in the next fiscal year.

Thank you for your investment in the Chamber.

Sincerely,



Chris Berleth, President
Columbia Montour Chamber of Commerce



Membership Snapshot

2024-2025 New Members: 31

Total Members: 403

Five Focus Areas of Member Value



Financial Information

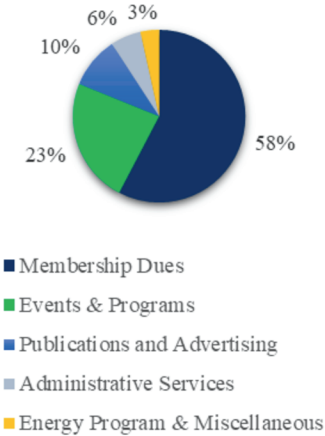
Balance Sheet

Assets	12/31/23	12/31/24*
Cash & Equivalents	\$382,461	\$587,882
Loan Receivables	\$61,733	\$69,114
Fixed Assets	\$193,136	\$123,973+
Other Current Assets	\$3,000	\$1,088
Total Assets	\$640,330	\$782,057

Liabilities & Equity	12/31/23	12/31/24*
Current Liabilities	\$2,790	\$7,510
Long-Term Liabilities	\$45,286	\$45,286
Equity	\$592,254	\$729,261
Total Liabilities & Equity	\$640,330	\$782,057

*December is the end of the third quarter of the Chamber's fiscal year.
+Closing on Mulberry Mill office projected Spring 2025.

Chamber Revenue



2024-2025 Program Highlights



ADVOCACY

- Worked with community partners to secure critical transportation funding via local match from Columbia and Montour County Commissioners to continue StopHopper, rabbittransit's regional micro-transit solution.
- Advocated for an expansion of StopHopper services to Berwick, and adjustments to the Bloomsburg service map to secure access for PA CareerLink.
- Actively opposed the 2024 Amusement Tax Ordinance in Cleveland Township
- Partnered with the PA Chamber of Business & Industry and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce to advocate for pro-business policies concerning regulations, permitting reform, the Corporate Transparency Act, Corporate Net Income Tax, childcare, the PA skills gap, workforce development, long-term transportation and infrastructure planning, energy, responsible state spending, healthcare and healthcare staffing shortages, and more, and communicated regular updates on these issues with members
- Hosted and provided testimony to the PA House Policy Committee Briefing on Pro-Business Tax Reform
- Hosted 65 guests for the Chamber's inaugural "Municipal Officials Night", connecting local elected officials with members to promote solutions for community-wide issues
- Advocated for \$25 million in state budget spending for downtown revitalization grants, which became the Main Street Matters program
- Met with local leaders to discuss new challenges facing recreation hotspots, long-term recreation and quality-of-life concerns



BENEFITS PROGRAM

- Staff and Ambassadors met face-to-face with more than 215 members in 2024 to discuss Chamber benefits and to hear about their top concerns
- Loaned \$35,000 to member small businesses for capital improvements via the Chamber's Low-Interest Loan Program in 2024
- Coordinated members' use of the Chamber's Mulberry Mill Conference Room and Board Room for offsite meetings throughout the year
- Partnered with Geisinger to offer "Rise & Thrive" workshops, providing expert professional, personal, and business health connections
- Reaffirmed partnership with ChamberChoice programs, including electricity, natural gas, and liquid fuels brokering, business insurance, and employee benefits
- The Chamber's Penn National Business Insurance offered members a dividend for a sixth straight year
- Published *Business Matters* (quarterly) in partnership with the Press Enterprise, promoting member businesses and their stories across the region
- Distributed six editions of bi-monthly mailer *ChamberPack*, featuring updates from members and the Chamber



BUSINESS CONNECTIONS

- Organized and hosted 41 events with more than 1,500 guests. Events included Business After Hours, Nonprofit Mixer, ribbon cuttings, and more
- Redesigned annual Leadercast event to serve small businesses under the name “Business Leadership Forum”, featuring local business leaders and experts. This event brought nearly 100 local business leaders together to discuss leadership concepts
- 3,202 Facebook followers (+400 since April 2024)
- 20% increase in web traffic to www.columbiamontourchamber.com year over year.
- Kept members informed through the *E-Biz Weekly* newsletter which boasts a 47% open rate, and 15 % click-through rate.
- Launched a second weekly newsletter, *Member News*, which features a 52% open rate and 18% click-through rate. (The industry standard for Chamber newsletters is a 20 % open rate and 2.5 % click-through rate respectively.)
- Published *2024-2025 Annual Chamber Directory*
- Developed 2025 Thriving Communities Map Project



EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

- The Chamber welcomed a full-time Foundation Director, who immediately began implementing Talent Pipeline Management strategies for youth and adult workforce programs, including Leadership Central Penn, CareerReady Central PA, Scouting’s Career Exploring program, and an inaugural K-12 Educators Summit
- The Chamber Foundation hosted the Manufacturer’s Council, a workforce collaborative consisting of local manufacturing businesses
- Sixty employees completed the Management & Leadership Certificate program in partnership with Commonwealth University - Bloomsburg.
- Developed and marketed updated youth programs for STEM, career exploration, and financial literacy through the Foundation of the Columbia Montour Chamber
- Served on school committees across all eight school districts to promote career and technical education, career pathways, and workforce development. Coordinated recruitment of new committee members to Local Advisory, Occupational Advisory, 339, and Perkins Committees across



STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITIES

- Supported the efforts of Berwick: The Next Step and its transition into the Berwick Blueprint Community project
- Supported Downtown Bloomsburg, Inc., with administrative services and support
- Hosted and grew the Montour County Task Force, in support of efforts in Montour County in collaboration with member businesses and partner organizations, including the Danville Business Alliance, Columbia Montour Visitor’s Bureau, Montour Area Recreation Commission, and regional officials
- Facilitated discussions to address funding opportunities for local issues, including grant opportunities through Main Street Matters and Liquid Fuels grants
- Engaged with BIDA ThinkTank and Employer Roundtable groups to promote the attraction of workers to the region and support Berwick-area employers

Connect with Your Chamber

2024-2025 Board of Directors

Officers

CHAIR

Bob Stoudt, Montour Area Rec. Commission (MARC)

VICE-CHAIRS

Renee Gerringer, Ronald McDonald House of Danville
Aaron Stagliano, McKonly & Asbury

TREASURER

Dr. M. Holly Morrison, Lead EZ Solutions

PRESIDENT

Chris Berleth, Columbia Montour Chamber

DIRECTORS

Jeff Cerminaro, Walker's Jewelers

Chris Hill, Pine Barn Inn

Jason Huff, Autoneum

Jon Littlewood, First Keystone Community Bank

Adrienne Mael, Susquehanna Valley United Way

Jessica McNamara, Great Dane

Mike Morgan, Geisinger

Noah Naparsteck, Esq. Luschas, Naparsteck and Crane

Josh Nespoli, Community Strategies Group

Bruce Schlichter, Kawneer/The Foundation of the CMCC

Deb Shade, Elmdale Inn Bed & Breakfast

Dr. Todd Shawver, Commonwealth University

Denise Stone, Bloomsburg University Foundation

David Utt, Journey Bank

Tim Wagner, Downtown Bloomsburg, Inc.

Chuck Wood, PPL Electric Utilities

Chamber Resources

- *E-Biz Weekly*
- *Member News*
- *ChamberPack (Bi-monthly)*
- *Business Matters (Quarterly)*
- *2025-2026 Annual Membership Directory*
- *2024-2025 Annual Report*
- *Quality Living in Columbia & Montour Counties*



www.columbiamontourchamber.com

Visit the Columbia Montour Chamber and our subsidiaries at the Hub at Mulberry Mill:

160 W. 6th Street, Suite 103
Bloomsburg, PA 17815
(570) 784-2522

STAFF



Chris Berleth
President



Taryn Crayton
Director of Member Engagement



Brenda Flanagan
Admin. Assistant



Tonya Smith
Foundation Director



Deb Sokol
Finance Assistant



POWERING A **BRIGHTER** TOMORROW



The Columbia Montour Chamber of Commerce is proud to offer you access to the My Benefit Advisor program



How Can We Help

- Medical Insurance
- Vision Insurance
- Dental Insurance
- Medicare
- Live Call Center
- Discounted Programs
- HR Support Resources
- PEO Partnership

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