As I begin to address the upcoming 2021 opportunities and challenges for our Chamber, I was reminded of my opening paragraph in the 2020 Business Plan Overview: “What is more invigorating than a new year and a new decade? We at the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce cannot wait for the start of 2020. It’s hard to believe that this will be our 106th year of serving Canton/Stark County businesses and the community at large.”

Little did anyone know the challenges that new decade would present. Like many businesses throughout the region, our Chamber’s best laid plans were, literally, laid to rest in March 2020. From that point forward, and even now at the year’s end, we had to find new ways of providing value to our members and business community.

I want to think the Board of Directors, you, our members, volunteers and staff of the Chamber for being both resilient and adaptive to major changes in planning, programming and finances.

Although the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic all but eliminated our abilities to hold in-person meetings and events, we are still pleased to report continued growth in our region in certain sectors and on several major projects. These projects were able to continue with the tremendous resolve, innovation and work of many elected officials and business and community leaders.

This past year we even saw some of these projects come to fruition. These include Centennial Plaza, the Doubletree by Hilton Canton Downtown, the new gate expansion at the Akron-Canton Airport, and continued business development and completion of the amphitheater in Jackson Township. In addition, the Hall of Fame Village Powered by Johnson Controls made significant progress.

As you know the challenges of 2020 did not allow our community to host the annual Pro Football Hall of Fame Festival celebration. The cancellation of this event had a dramatic impact on our local economy.

It also greatly affected the Chamber, due to the diminished revenue that is important to our operations.

I am happy to report that through the great diligence of our Board and staff, we as an organization were able to bring value to our members. We were also able to weather the financial crisis because of many years of successful operations and living within our means, including smart financial investments.

As we begin 2021, the Chamber Board and staff have a renewed optimism and aggressive business plan that will increase in activity as the year progresses. We are hopeful that by mid-2021, the COVID-19 virus will begin to diminish due to vaccine availability.

I’d like to give a special thank you to you our members for your hard work, resiliency and support of our Chamber during a most challenging year. Please continue to let us know how we may be of service in 2021.

Dennis P. Saunier, President & CEO

CONTENTS
Welcome New Board Members | Utica Downstream | SCORE | Education Update | Spotlight Applications Due | Signature Applications Due | Young Professional Profile | SCSC January Webinar | New Members | BizBitz
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aultcare.com/healthandwellness
We are very pleased to welcome our newest board members. Their skills and experience will be an asset to our board. We look forward to working together in 2021!

Scott M. Zurakowski, Attorney at Law, Krugliak Wilkins
Leonard Stevens, CEO, Stark County Minority Business Association
Jim Porter, Chief Marketing & Communications Officer, Pro Football Hall of Fame
Joe Luckring, Regional President, PNC Financial Services Group

Due to a rapid increase in COVID-19 cases, and for the safety of our guests, speakers, sponsors and staff, we are postponing Utica Downstream to Thursday, Jan. 21, 2021. Attendees may choose to attend in-person or virtually.

The conference has always focused on Ohio’s reputation as being the polymer capital of the United States. But this year, the demand from plastics is greater than it has ever been as the result of the virus. Our conference will have experts that will discuss the outlook plastics nationally and in Ohio as well as the most recent initiatives on recycling.

Our conference will not be complete without discussing natural gas power plant construction. A number of power plant construction plants were shelved as the result of HB 6. With revelation of fraud and corruption attached to that bill, there is now a move to rescind it. If HB 6 is rescinded it, those cancelled natural gas power plants could see new life. The Utica Downstream Conference will provide the latest information on this topic.

Sponsorships are available: please contact Chris Gumpp at (330) 458-2055 or chrisg@cantonchamber.org. Due to COVID-19 event is subject to change. Please visit our website for updates.

Thursday, January 21, 2021 // Registration is now open: www.CantonChamber.org
During the pandemic, small businesses - both for-profits and non-profits - have been challenged to learn a new vocabulary and put it to use on a daily basis. That requirement applies equally to SCORE volunteer mentors.

What words are included in that new vocabulary? Virtual. Zoom. Skype. Screen Share. Webinar. WhatsApp. Microsoft Teams. Face Time. Etc. How familiar are you with those words? Have they become part of your everyday conversations and operations?

Connecting with prospects or remaining in touch with customers or clients has required learning to effectively use online platforms. At SCORE since March we have been using Zoom for client mentoring meetings. In place of in-person workshops we have been using webinars. With continuing experience SCORE members and our clients have grown increasingly comfortable with using Zoom. And with practice our webinars have worked well as a substitute for in-person workshops.

Are these alternatives as effective as in-person counseling sessions or workshops? Perhaps. That said, when conducting mentoring meetings in our offices or conference rooms we have ready access to forms, files, templates, publications and records. Virtual workshop dynamics differ from in-person gatherings.

That said, Zoom mentoring is far more effective than telephone counseling. We are able to not only see each other but also to view designs, products and documents.

Along with counseling, SCORE’s other main mission is providing educational opportunities. Without webinars we would be unable to continue fulfilling that mission.

We are hoping to be able to begin using our new SCORE offices and conference rooms in space in the Jackson Township Community Center early in 2021. Meanwhile we will continue working to meet the needs of area small businesses and non-profit organizations by putting to use our new vocabulary.

You can remain apprised of SCORE doings at canton.score.org. In addition, you can email us at canton.score@gmail.com, we will add you to our chapter’s database, which will result in your receiving news of upcoming workshops/webinars.

The chapter serves small businesses in Stark, Tuscarawas, Holmes, Carroll and Harrison counties.

To learn more about SCORE go to www.canton.score.org or email cantonscore@gmail.com.
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Junior Achievement of North Central Ohio (JANCO) has strong programs in many of our Stark County schools in teaching financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and work-readiness. A new JANCO program is coming in the spring of 2021 that can accommodate 15,000 students. JANCO has strategically partnered with the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce to assist in promoting business participation in this new event which is available for free to all Stark County schools. The event is the JA Virtual Inspire Career Exploration Fair scheduled for March 10, 2021.

JA Virtual Inspire is more than a career fair; it brings together the business community and local schools. It is designed to help launch and connect middle and high school students to local businesses and present career pathways.

The program consists of three segments: (1) teacher led pre-event curriculum (2) virtual career expo experience; and (3) post event debriefing. VFairs, the online interactive platform, allows students while in the expo attend webinars and presentations, explore career booths, and interact with career speakers. The platform also has a video gaming aspect to encourage student interaction with participating businesses. JA staff will assist businesses in setting up their virtual booths. The virtual booths can accommodate pictures, downloadable pdf’s, videos and links to websites. Businesses are encouraged to include a section of “opportunities available to teens” if possible.

Over 2,000 students from the 7th-12th grades in Stark County are committed to attend with an overall attendance as of this writing of over 13,000 NE Ohio students. Students and parents can access the virtual expo up to three months after the event. Exhibit halls will be organized by career clusters such as manufacturing, healthcare, STEM, construction/trades, non-profits and others.

This is a fantastic opportunity for local organizations to start cultivating future workforce, promote your industry and build name recognition. For more information regarding sponsorship levels or to schedule a demonstration (it is REALLY cool BTW) contact Barb Bennett at 330-312-3267.

By: Barbara Hammontree Bennett, PE, PS, LEED-AP
Vice President of Education and Workforce
The Leadership Stark County Spotlight Program is now taking applications from young professionals in their 20s and 30s, who want to build leadership skills and dive deeper into their community engagement. Participants will identify and develop personal strengths, gain exposure to numerous community leaders and organizations, and explore issues and opportunities in our community. For Stark County to adapt and thrive, it is essential that young professionals work, play, & stay in our community. The Spotlight Program can be a key element to helping young professionals learn all that our community has to offer, make connections with a variety of people, and find their niche for meaningful service.

**Spotlight young professional class members will receive:**

- Personalized GallupStrengths Assessment
- Programming founded on the six Leadership Competencies
- Professional headshot (digital file)
- Community service opportunity
- Introduction to non-profit leaders and causes
- Exposure to community arts & culture
- Downtown development & historical background
- Opportunities to explore local economic development initiatives
- Diversity and inclusion-focused sessions
- Networking opportunities with like-minded young professionals

The Spotlight Program is a great option for employers to enhance leadership potential and build competencies of young professionals. The course includes six sessions that meet (mix of in-person and virtual programming) from 4-6 p.m. beginning on Wednesday, March 24, and ending on Wednesday, May 26.

Tuition for the six sessions is $550 per person. Scholarships may be available to non-profit organizations, entrepreneurs, and/or minority candidates. Company group applications are welcome. Class size is restricted due to social distancing requirements. Apply now at www.LeadershipStarkCounty.org.
Applications Are Now Available

Leadership Stark County Signature Program

In the Signature Program you’ll join a multi-generational team of community activists from all professional walks who will spend more than ten months together developing your leadership ability and delving into the assets and challenges present in Stark County. This group is selected from highly qualified applicants to form a class that is rich in professional, cultural, and ideological diversity.

**Signature Program members:**

- Learn more about themselves as they Discover their Strengths through Gallup curriculum
- Learn more about the community through ten interactive program days that span the county and a range of critical themes
- Learn more about how to Strengthen Stark County through active participation in the Civic Ideation Sprint, Building Better Boards seminar, and Board Matching event among other experiences
- Learn more about leading teams in their careers and community endeavors through examination of leadership competencies

The program begins with an overnight retreat and meets for 10 full-day sessions once per month. Tuition is $2,950 all-inclusive and tuition assistance is available for non-profit or small business participants. Apply online at LeadershipStarkCounty.org. Applications are due April 16. If you have more questions about our programs, please call Stephanie Werren, director, at 330-458-2093.

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Here’s what some of last year’s graduates have to say about their Signature Program experience:

“It’s the most impactful, professional experience. The fantastic information you receive about the community is only surpassed by the friendships made with outstanding community leaders.”

– Tracy Brewer

“Through the Signature Program, I met and learned from community leaders from all walks of life who work diligently and passionately strive to understand and address the challenges we face.”

– Steve Edgehouse

“As a minority, I saw Stark County aspects I never knew existed! I was able to meet and share bonds with diverse, like-minded classmates committed to community and personal growth.”

– Sandra Pyles
GET TO KNOW THE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS WHO WILL SHAPE THE FUTURE OF CANTON/STARK COUNTY! EACH MONTH, WE’LL INTRODUCE YOU TO A YP WHO IS LIVING OR WORKING, BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, THRIVING IN STARK COUNTY!

Name: Alex Steinmetz

Occupation/Title/Place of work:
Principal Compensation Analyst at The Timken Company

Age: 29

Why are you interested in Stark County’s Young Professionals initiative?
I think Stark County has a lot to offer young professionals. One way to encourage other young professionals to decide to work, play and stay here in Stark County is by raising awareness of how great of an area we have here.

What would you share to encourage other people to join?
There are so many opportunities here in Stark County and I would encourage other young professionals to make the connections here in Stark so they can see all of the great opportunities.

Did you grow up in Stark? If so, where? If not, where did you move from and why?
I did not grow up in Stark County. I grew up in Willard, Ohio which is in Northwest Ohio. I moved here to attend Malone University for my college education and enjoyed my time so much in Stark County that I decided to stay and start my career here.

Why do you stay in Stark County, from both a personal and professional point of view?
Stark County has been such a great fit for me both personally and professionally. Personally, I have enjoyed all of the great people that make up such a great community as well as the things to do here (from the Pro Football Hall of Fame to museums to enjoying a night out in the community with friends). Professionally, I feel as though I have had plenty of opportunity to work on challenging projects here in Stark County as well as make the connections that have helped me grow my career quickly.

What do you like MOST about Stark County?
The great people that live in Stark County and the food. So many great people that make up the community that I choose to be a part of and so many delicious places to eat!

What would you change about Stark County if you could?
I would change the perception of the area. I usually hear a lot of negative talk about the area and how there is nothing to do in Stark County, but I have had the opposite experience and have found lots of fun and exciting things here in Stark.

What do you see as valuable opportunities for YPs in Stark County when it comes to career opportunities, cultural access, leadership or community involvement opportunities?
With the number of large employers here in the area, young professionals have a lot of different opportunities to find a company with a culture that fits their needs. There are also a number of non-profit organizations that can help young professionals get involved in the community as well as take different leadership roles. As far as cultural access, downtown Canton has a really great art and music scene to get involved with.

What would attract more YPs to Stark County?
Awareness would be a great way to attract more young professionals to Stark County. I think the opportunities are here, young professionals just need to be aware.

What do you do in the evenings or on the weekends for fun in Stark County or NE Ohio?
In the evenings or weekends, I typically find some time to hang out with friends. We either go out to a local restaurant, find an event in downtown Canton or find our way on a short drive up to Cleveland to catch an Indians or a Cavs game.

Could you see yourself spending your lifetime in Stark County and if not, what would cause you to leave?
Without a doubt I could see myself spending my lifetime here in Stark County. I enjoy the community that I have become a part of and look forward to continuing to deepen my roots here in Stark County.
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Join us for the January Safety Council Webinar featuring Kevin West, Founder and CEO of Invisible Insights Inc.

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Every new year is an opportunity to clear our heads, build our confidence and focus strongly on our goals in order to move forward safely.

During these challenging times, many leaders find themselves overwhelmed and unable to see beyond tomorrow. As a result, we fail to bring our best selves to the game and struggle to problem solve.

Successful leaders set time aside each quarter to analyze their goals, game plan and results. The Goal Getter framework will transition you from goal setting to goal getting. You will learn how to achieve the clarity and focus which is needed to move safely forward in 2021.

Thursday, January 14
11:00 a.m.
Safety Council Webinar
Cost: FREE, but please register by Wednesday, Jan. 13 at 3 p.m.
www.CantonChamber.org

Kevin West
WELCOME to our newest members, who joined Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce in November. We encourage you to patronize their businesses. If you know of other businesses that would benefit from Chamber membership, please contact Molly Romig, Director of Membership and Retention at (330) 833-4400.

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**Premier Bank** is pleased to announce that **Bill Cook** has joined the bank as Vice President, Senior Commercial Lender serving the northeast Ohio market. Cook brings with him more than 40 years of commercial lending experience. He most recently served as Executive Director at a national bank headquartered in New York, NY. His specialties include assisting and finding solutions for companies looking to expand, acquire, sell or grow in the U.S. and beyond. In his new role, Cook will focus on the development and growth of the bank’s commercial loan portfolio partnering with clients to provide customized solutions for their business as well as creating new business relationships.

Like Premier Bank, Cook believes that it is important to give back to the communities where we live and work. He is a lifelong Supporter, Campaign Chair and Retired Chairman of United Way of Greater Stark County. He is very active in the community, serving on the boards of North Canton Medical Foundation, Arts in Stark, Stark Community Foundation, Stark Economic Development Board & Children’s Dyslexia Center of Canton.

**The Sisters of Charity Health System and Cleveland Clinic** have signed an agreement for **Mercy Medical Center** to become a full member of the Cleveland Clinic health system. Mercy Medical Center will maintain its Catholic identity through sponsorship by the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine. The transaction, which follows a letter of intent signed Sept. 27, 2019, is expected to be finalized on Feb. 1, 2021, subject to regulatory approval.

All services at Mercy Medical Center, including COVID-19 response, will continue without interruption throughout the regulatory approval process.

This agreement brings many benefits including expanding high-quality services while maintaining Mercy Medical Center’s Catholic identity; improving technology at Mercy Medical Center; providing support and investment to address additional needs in the community; building physician synergies; and increasing the ease of access to the most highly specialized services for patients in Stark County.

**Lemmon Development** recently appointed **Tony Perez** to the position of President effective December 1st, 2020. This role was previously filled by Bill Lemmon who will remain on as CEO of the company. Tony has been with Lemmon Development for 8 years. His background in construction and development range from senior living to multifamily to retail projects. Tony’s ability to work closely with owners, designers, contractors, and government officials has helped him excel with Lemmon Development so he was a natural fit to fill the role of President.

Lemmon Development, a North Canton based developer, has been trusted with development projects across Ohio for over 40 years. Their projects range from land development, retail, multi-family apartments, and senior living.

New technology will go online soon at the **Pro Football Hall of Fame** that further will enhance the Hall’s ability to meet and exceed safety protocols amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Johnson Controls** (NYSE: JCI), the global leader in creating smart buildings and architect of OpenBlue connected solutions, is installing two of its state-of-the-art thermal scanning units at the Hall’s entrance as the company helps buildings stay open as part of today’s “new normal.” These cameras, the Tyco Illustra Pro Thermal EST, will allow members of the Hall’s Operations Team to record employees’ temperatures in a contactless manner with highly accurate readings.

Every Hall employee, including volunteers and docents, has received a temperature screening upon entry to the building since the Museum reopened to guests June 10. Implementing the technology from Johnson Controls will streamline this process, improve reliability and remove the screening area from the aisleway between the entrance and the Hall of Fame Store.

**The Canton Museum of Art** is now offering both in-person and virtual online classes! De-stress and take some much needed time for yourself to learn something new, have fun, and meet new people safely.

“**Our virtual classes will have the same hands on, educational, fun, and relaxing experiences, just in a different way and in some ways even better! For our new in-person classes, there are many new changes we will be implementing based on current health and safety guidelines to ensure a fun and creative, yet safe, environment. We have decreased class sizes to only 8-9 students per instructor with 6 ft spaced out individual seating. All CMA staff members and students are required to wear masks and art materials/tool kits will be made for each individual student whenever possible.**” - Erica Emerson, CMA’s Education Director.

The **Canton Regional Chapter of SCORE**, a member of the area’s business community for 40 years, has moved to new quarters.

The move comes after the chapter had been located for 15 years in the Conference Center on the campus of Kent State University at Stark. SCORE chapters usually are located on college campuses, in government-owned or leased buildings, or in chamber of commerce spaces and pay no rent. Recently, Kent State had an opportunity to rent space in the Conference Center to a unit of the State of Ohio.

The chapter has moved to the Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce satellite space in the Jackson Township Administrative Offices building at 5735 Wales Avenue, N.W. – near the intersection with Fulton Road, N.W. The move was made possible through the generous cooperation of the Jackson Township Trustees, who approved the use of space for SCORE at no cost. The arrangement includes two offices plus conference space. Ample free parking adjoins the building.

The chapter serves for-profit businesses and non-profit organizations throughout five counties – Stark, Tuscarawas, Holmes, Carroll and Harrison. SCORE serves both start-ups and existing businesses and organizations.

Have business news you’d like to share via Biz Bitz? Send your news release to Collyn Floyd, director of marketing, at collynf@cantonchamber.org.
Telehealth Visits

MERCY MEDICAL CENTER

STATCARE Telehealth

Online steps for a virtual visit for minor injuries and illnesses:
1. Visit: CantonMercy.org/Telehealth
2. Register your information
   - You will be contacted to complete the registration and provided with information on your virtual visit.
   - Available: Monday–Friday (8 a.m.–8:30 p.m.) Saturday & Sunday (9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.)
   - Please note this is a medical service billed to your insurance and co-pays and deductibles do apply.

ProCorp Primary Care

Steps to make a virtual appointment:
Call 330-489-1DOC (1362) and request a virtual visit.
   - Our representative will assist you in completing the registration process and provide information on your virtual visit.
   - Available: Monday–Friday (7 a.m.–5 p.m.) *Hours may vary by office location.
   - This service is offered to existing patients. New patients are also being accepted.
   - Please note this is a medical service billed to your insurance and co-pays and deductibles do apply.

A virtual visit requires use of a Smart Phone, tablet or computer.

Enhancing your safety as we continue to serve our patients and the community.