



PENNSYLVANIA
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

ASSOCIATION

2021 PEDA SPRING VIRTUAL CONFERENCE SERIES

Series Schedule | Session Overviews | Speaker Bios

2021 PEDAs Spring Virtual Conference Series – Schedule & Session Overviews

Agenda is subject to change

Thursday, April 1, 2021 / 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm / Keynote Presentation – The Biden Presidency: Politics & Policy

Dr. Madonna will address the beginning of the Biden administration, examining the congressional reaction to his agenda as well as what the voters think of the early days of his presidency. He will also discuss the political climate in Pennsylvania.

Thursday, April 1, 2021 / 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm / COVID's Impact on Cybersecurity

Session Sponsor: FirstEnergy

Ready or not, the coronavirus pandemic has forced public and private organizations into the widespread adoption of remote work and learning. But in the rush to get online, many schools, businesses and government agencies have failed to implement commensurate cybersecurity measures to secure their data. This is no trivial matter. Our infrastructure is at risk. As employees increasingly access critical systems from work, at home and in a mobile environment, sensitive digital information is now more susceptible than ever to security breaches and criminal attacks. The economic development community can play a role in getting this under control. Kevin Dellicker is the founder and owner of Dellicker Strategies, a Lehigh Valley based technology company focused on telecommunications infrastructure, technology management and cybersecurity. In this non-technical overview, Kevin will present the basics of cybersecurity for busy executives. He will describe the most likely threats to economic development stakeholders, explain the most effective means of defense, and offer ideas about working collaboratively with like-minded organizations to craft a unified response.

Thursday, April 8, 2021 / 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm / Doing the Deal

No one knows the ins and outs of economic development projects like the practitioners who put them together. From the earliest planning stages through project completion, this session will focus on “doing the deal”, exploring how economic development agencies partnered with anchor institutions to raise and assemble capital to spur development and business attraction in targeted industries. More specifically, the Erie Regional Chamber worked with Fortune 500 company Erie Insurance to facilitate an Opportunity Zone investment into homegrown videogame company, Whitethorn Digital. The investment allowed Whitethorn to create jobs and to purchase and rehabilitate a building in Erie’s downtown. Further, Erie Insurance and local Plastics company, Plastek, are now investing approximately \$10M to finance the construction and development of the world’s largest plastics recycling facility, which will be owned and operated by International Recycling Group. Join us for this session to see how one group of dedicated economic development professionals and key stakeholders were able to successfully do this deal.

Thursday, April 8, 2021 / 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm / Bouncing Back: COVID's Impact on the Restaurant Industry & the Challenges Facing Small Communities

While COVID-19 has been a global phenomenon, there is clear evidence that the restaurant industry has been among those hit hardest by the pandemic. Across the Commonwealth, tens of thousands of restaurants have worked to keep their doors open and their workers on their payrolls, while navigating evolving mitigation policies and pursuing any funding opportunities available to them. With the pandemic now stretching into its second year, and recognizing that many communities – particularly small and medium sized ones – will likely face challenges for the foreseeable future, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Vaccine-related developments have offered many a reason for optimism and economic development advocacy efforts to allocate additional funding to restaurants have been increasingly effective. Join PEDAs for this panel discussion which will highlight efforts undertaken to support the industry, what the path to recovery looks like, prospectively, and how one restaurant credits creativity and optimism, among other things, for having allowed it to endure during these challenging times.

Thursday, April 22, 2021 / 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm / Legislative Panel: Priorities for the 2021-2022 Legislative Session

During this interactive session, series participants will hear, firsthand, from leaders in the Pennsylvania Legislature about their priorities and the forces shaping legislation aimed at aiding the Commonwealth's recovery. With current economic conditions serving as a backdrop, panelists will share their outlooks regarding matters of policy, legislation, revenue and – a topic on everyone's minds – what can be expected with the development of the next state budget.

Thursday, April 22, 2021 / 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm / COVID & Industrial Real Estate in PA

Session Sponsor: PECO

A session overview is forthcoming.

Thursday, April 29, 2021 / 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm / Best Practices in Using Social Media for EDOs

As economic developers, we know that one of the key goals of marketing is to shine a positive light on our communities for business and talent attraction. Every day, though, it seems like there is a new social media platform or best practice – so how should EDOs prioritize resources and channels to make a splash online? This session will provide a tailored lay of the land and actionable tips to help you determine a realistic, attainable content plan for your EDO on social media, laddering back up to larger organization goals and key performance indicators (KPIs). You'll be able to make sure efforts don't go to waste by learning practical tips for branding on social as well as reporting back to internal and external stakeholders so that digital tactics are a continued pillar of campaigns.

Thursday, April 29, 2021 / 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm / Get Some Help!

We need to know. What best practices would you like others to share? Are external items affecting your work? What is troubling you at work or keeping you up at night? Is there anything that you need help sorting out? In short, this session will be built upon thought-provoking questions, ideas and opportunities for collaboration. The goal is to have a lively discussion, provide potential solutions and get / give some help. The authors of all questions and topics submitted will be kept confidential in session.

2021 PEDA Spring Virtual Conference Series - Speaker Bios



The Honorable Amanda Cappelletti, Minority Chair, Community, Economic & Recreational Development Committee, Pennsylvania Senate

Senator Amanda Cappelletti is a born and raised advocate for Pennsylvania. Through her upbringing and career, Amanda has put helping others first. Whether it was a service project in junior high or stepping up to protect reproductive rights in Pennsylvania, Amanda will lend a hand to those who need it most.

An attorney with a Master's in Public Health, Amanda has worked in Harrisburg to advance progressive policy. She worked with Representative Donna Bullock and as a Fellow for the ACLU of Pennsylvania. She was a member of the first group awarded the William Penn Fellowship through the Governor's office: first as an advocate for children at the Office of Child Development and Early Learning, and then at the Department of Human Services as a policy specialist tracking legislation to assess implementation. Most recently, Amanda served as Director of Policy for Planned Parenthood advocating for proactive reproductive legislation. In 2017, Amanda was elected to East Norriton's Board of Supervisors, where she led the conversation in police reform and successfully decriminalized marijuana.

As a Senator, Amanda will work tirelessly to introduce and support legislation to address funding for our public schools, defend access to healthcare, and protect our environment. At home, she will be out in the community, listening to the people in our neighborhoods, ensuring their voices are heard in Harrisburg.

Amanda will advocate for progressive values while working across the aisle towards shared values. She'll be a Senator who will restore integrity and refocus the conversation on the issues.

A life-long resident of Pennsylvania, Amanda grew up in Boyertown with her parents where she graduated from Boyertown Area Senior High. She attended Chestnut Hill College for her undergraduate degree, and received her Law Degree and Master's in Public Health from Temple University. She currently resides in East Norriton with her husband, Gregory McQuiston, a U.S. Navy veteran and her dog Luna, a new rescue puppy.



Jack Cohen, President, Butler County Tourism & Convention Bureau

After growing up in the Stanton Heights neighborhood of Pittsburgh, Jack Cohen moved to Cranberry Township in 1991. Noted as one of the fastest growing communities in the country, Jack was originally drawn to the area seeing it as an ideal place to live and the perfect place to raise a family. Discovering all the beauty and recreational treasures in the area soon followed and Jack fell in love with Butler County. Ever since, Jack has been committed to the promotion and betterment of the county.

In 1994, Jack opened Safari Sam's Family Entertainment Center on Route 19 in the heart of Cranberry Township. The business grew over his 10 years of ownership and Safari Sam's quickly became one of Butler County's most successful family destinations. Becoming an active member of the community was important to Jack and joining the Cranberry Area Chamber of Commerce in 1995 launched what was to become his impressive list of board and association memberships. In 2001, Butler County Tourism & Convention Bureau (BCTCB) was founded as the first official tourism promotion and development organization for the county and Jack jumped in with both feet as an active board member and board chair.

In 2003, Jack stepped in as President of BCTCB. Since 2003, Jack's dedication and vision have been instrumental in the growth of the Bureau. BCTCB started as a three employee organization with an annual revenue of \$500,000 and

under Jack’s leadership has grown to 15 full-time staff members, an annual revenue of over \$2 million and is one of the most successful and respected convention bureaus in the state and the country.

Perhaps one of Jack’s most notable contributions to Butler County is the conceptualization of the Bantam Jeep Heritage Festival. Upon discovering that the Jeep was invented in Butler County, Jack jumped on the opportunity to create a community event celebrating and acknowledging the phenomenon that is the Jeep culture. Since its conception in 2009 and the first event in 2011, the Bantam Jeep Heritage Festival has become one of the most anticipated events of the year and attracts Jeep enthusiasts from all over the continent. In 2016, The Bantam Jeep Heritage Festival was named “Pennsylvania Event of the Year” by the Keystone Society for Tourism.

In addition to his role as President of BCTCB, Jack dedicates his time to several other associations that over the years have assisted him in the positive promotion and growth of Butler County. Jack was the Chair of the Pennsylvania Destination Marketing Organization for the Pennsylvania Tourism and Lodging Association. He now serves as President of the Community Development Corporation of Butler County and has done so since 2012. He served as the President of the Moraine Preservation Fund for many years and the President Cranberry Township Sister Cities Association with Haiyang, China. He also served on the Butler County Park & Recreational Board, and the board for the Japan American Society of Pennsylvania.

In addition to all of Jack’s current leadership roles, he was previously the president of the International Association of Family Entertainment Centers and also Pittsburgh & Its Countryside, served on the board of the North Country National Scenic Trail. He spent six years on the board of Cranberry Township’s Parks and Recreation department. Jack also served as President on the Executive Board for Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association. Currently Jack serves on the Rotary International District 7820 as Membership Director and in 2023 Jack will be taking on the role of District Governor for this district. He is also the past President for Cranberry Sunrise Rotary. Jack’s prominent position has given him the opportunity to travel across the country and all over the globe for the betterment of Butler County. He’s visited countries such as China, France and Germany by invitation from government leaders and was even an International Ambassador for Hard Rock Hotels.

Jack resides in Cranberry Township with his wife of 40 + years and enjoys spending time with his ever-growing family of three children and six grandchildren.



Kevin Dellicker, Owner & Manager, Dellicker Strategies

Kevin Dellicker is owner and manager of Dellicker Strategies. He founded the company with his wife, Susan in 2005. Kevin has twenty-six years of leadership experience in business, government and the military.

Kevin and his team developed a process that improved broadband access to thousands of underserved citizens, ultimately connecting 56 percent of all school districts in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Kevin's team pioneered the use of technology tools to improve academic achievement in K-12 classrooms. His company's "hybrid learning" solution helped eighty-one schools achieve a 93 percent success rate in improving student performance, and their online learning platform became one of the most successful public "cyber school" consortia in the mid-Atlantic region.

Most recently, Kevin developed a collaborative approach to cyber security that helps schools and municipalities work together in the fight against dangerous cyber criminals.

Kevin is a twenty-five year veteran of the U.S. armed forces with four combat zone deployments. He and his wife Susan are the authors of *Twenty Percent Soldiers*, the true story of life in the National Guard during the Global War on Terrorism.



Ron Habursky, Senior Vice President & Chief Investment Officer, Erie Insurance

Ron Habursky serves as Senior Vice President & Chief Investment Officer of Erie Insurance (ERIE). He is responsible for setting and implementing optimal strategies, policies, and procedures for the various ERIE investment portfolios, as well as leading a team of investment professionals. He also serves on the Investment Committees for the ERIE's Retirement Plans and the Erie Community Foundation, which is a collection of over 800 charitable endowments operating under the administrative umbrella of a single public charity.

Ron joined ERIE in 1999 as a Fixed Income Analyst in the Investment Division. He later took on additional responsibilities including serving as Vice President & Senior Portfolio Manager for the fixed income, common stock, and alternative investment portfolios at different times during his career.

Prior to joining ERIE, he worked at GE Transportation Systems for three years as a Financial Analyst. He received a Bachelor's Degree in finance from Gannon University and a Master's Degree in applied economics from the University of Central Florida. He is also a CFA Charterholder.



Mitch Hecht, Founder & Chairman, International Recycling Group, LLC

Former Chief Financial Officer of International Steel Group, a start-up steel company that within 12 months of formation became the second largest integrated steel manufacturer in North America with sales of \$5 billion. Within 18 months of funding, the company executed a \$2.7 billion IPO, and within 12 months of its IPO was sold for \$4.5 billion. Responsible for three major acquisitions and a \$5 billion P&L. Previously 15 years on Wall Street, much of that time covering the metals and mining sector as Managing Director, investment banking, for Deutsche Bank and PaineWebber Inc. BA, MBA in Finance from New York University; Juris Doctor from Fordham University School of Law. Member of the New York State Bar. Past Board Member of the National Association of Manufacturers.



Brian Knowles, Principal, Lee & Associates

Brian Knowles, CCIM, SIOR is a founding Principal and acting President of Lee & Associates of Eastern Pennsylvania LLC, where he also serves as a member of the firm's Board of Managers. His transactional focus includes site selection, tenant representation and the disposition and leasing of industrial real estate for clients on a national level with a concentration throughout the Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware markets.

Brian provides industrial clients with expertise and best practices in evaluating real estate portfolios and supply chain initiatives to uncover cost saving opportunities. Brian has completed in excess of 50+ million square feet of transactions for his clients and sold over 3,100 acres of industrial land. Additionally, he has represented many companies on their consolidation projects, build-to-suit initiatives, site selection and disposition projects throughout the local and many other US/global markets.



John Longstreet, President & CEO, Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association (PRLA)

John Longstreet is president & CEO of the Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association. The PRLA represents Pennsylvania's 25,000 restaurants and 1400 hotels. With nearly 3000 members, PRLA is among the largest hospitality associations in the United States.

Prior to taking the helm of the PRLA, Mr. Longstreet was president & CEO of the Quaker Steak & Lube restaurant chain. He was also executive vice president of ClubCorp USA, which operates more than 160 golf and business clubs around the country. Mr. Longstreet served as senior vice president at Bristol Hotels & Resorts, the largest independent hotel management company in North America, and was vice president of Intercontinental Hotels Group. While at both Bristol and ClubCorp, Longstreet spearheaded the development of and oversaw the HR functions for the organizations, each of which had about 18,000 employees.

Mr. Longstreet has been a featured speaker about customer service at Lakewood Publications' Closing the Service Gap Conference and the Planning Forum's Strategic Management Conference and has addressed management groups from numerous Fortune 500 companies. He has served on panels at numerous industry conferences including the Restaurant Leadership & Finance Conference, MUFSSO, the Southwest Food Expo, and the International Franchise Association Emerging Franchisor Conference. Mr. Longstreet also appeared on the Fox Business Network's Neil Cavuto show. He has served as The Executive in Residence at Cornell University, where he is a periodic lecturer, and is a member of the Cornell Council.

He has a longtime record of community service, including serving two terms as Mayor of Plano, Texas, a city of more than 250,000 residents. Longstreet has served on the Executive Board of the Plano Chamber of Commerce and was appointed by Texas Governors Bill Clements and George W. Bush to statewide commissions. Longstreet has served on the executive board of the North Texas Commission and the Dallas Regional Mobility Coalition. He was President of the Metroplex Mayors Association. Additionally, he served on the Attorney General's Municipal Advisory Committee.

Longstreet has been Secretary and Treasurer of the United Way and is a past President of the Plano Rotary Club, where he was named an Honorary Paul Harris Fellow. He has served as a director of the Penn Northwest Development Corporation and on the Board of the National Restaurant Association. Longstreet is currently on the Board of the Council of State Restaurant Associations and the Advisory Board at Penn State's School of Hospitality Management.

A Cornell University graduate with distinction from the School of Hotel Administration, John and his wife, Brenda have two children, John & Liz, also Cornell grads.



Dr. G. Terry Madonna, Senior Fellow in Residence for Political Affairs, Millersville University

Following his 16 year tenure at Franklin and Marshall College – during which he served as Director of the Center for Politics and Public Affairs, Professor of Public Affairs and Director of the Franklin and Marshall College poll – Dr. G. Terry Madonna recently accepted the opportunity to serve as Senior Fellow in Residence for Political Affairs at Millersville University where, prior to joining Franklin and Marshall College, he served as Professor and Chair of the Government Department and headed the Center for Politics and Public Affairs. He has also been recognized as Director Emeritus of the Franklin and Marshall College Poll.

For more than 30 years, Madonna has taught and written about his two academic specialties: the American presidency and American political parties and political behavior. As a pollster in recent years, he has written extensively about voters and voting behavior.

In 1992, Madonna founded the Keystone Poll, the oldest survey produced exclusively in Pennsylvania. In 2008, the Keystone Poll was renamed the Franklin and Marshall College Poll.

Madonna is also the host of Pennsylvania Newsmakers, a weekly statewide news and commentary program. Along with Michael Young, he writes a bi-weekly political commentary column, “Politically Uncorrected,” originally for Capitolwire.com and later for Politicspa.com. The column appears in many state and national newspapers and also appears frequently on two national websites: stateline.org and realclearpolitics.com.

Madonna has served as a frequent political analyst and public affairs commentator, served on numerous governmental boards and commissions, moderated high profile debates, contributed to political websites, and received numerous awards and honors. Specifically, he is the recipient of a Distinguished Professor award by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the President’s Medallion at Millersville University, and a special commendation for scholarship and leadership from the Board of Governors of the State System of Higher Education.

Madonna has been named an “Outstanding Speaker of the Year” by the Speech Communication Society of Pennsylvania, has served as a Commonwealth Speaker by the Pennsylvania Humanities Council and was given the Daniel Roselle Award by the Middle States Council for the Social Studies. He holds a B.S. from Millersville University and an M.A and Ph.D. in political history from the University of Delaware.



Chris Marsh, Chief Community & Economic Development Officer, Erie Insurance

Christina Marsh serves as Community and Economic Development Officer at Erie Insurance. Chris and her team are responsible for the organization’s community engagement and economic development activities in ERIE’s hometown and across its footprint. She serves as management liaison to the Company’s Charitable Giving Committee of the Board. Early on in this role, Chris worked with ERIE’s CEO and community leaders in establishing the Erie Downtown Development Corporation (EDDC). The EDDC’s mission is to spur economic development through real estate investment in downtown Erie.

Chris transitioned to her current position after serving as ERIE's senior vice president of the Enterprise Portfolio Management Office. In this role, she strengthened ERIE’s competency in executing its business strategy through prioritizing and implementing project-based work. Prior to the EPMO, Chris served as ERIE’s senior vice president of Human Resources where she developed and executed ERIE’s People Strategy. She also acted as management liaison to the Company’s Executive Compensation and Development Committee of the Board.

Chris has been with the Erie Insurance Group since 1994 where she first joined as a corporate accountant. She is an advocate for women’s professional growth and leadership and currently serves as Sponsor of the Women’s Affinity Network at ERIE. Prior to joining ERIE, Chris spent almost six years at Ernst & Young in the audit practice, where she earned her CPA.

Chris holds a Bachelor’s Degree in accounting from Mercyhurst University, where she now serves as a Board Trustee. She currently serves as Chair of the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership, is a Board member of the PA Chamber, and was appointed to the PA Early Learning Investment Commission in 2018 as a regional Commissioner advocating for quality early learning in her community.



Hanna Porterfield, Director, Content & Social, Development Counsellors International (DCI)

Hanna Porterfield is Director, Content & Social at Development Counsellors International (DCI). She first joined DCI in 2014 and worked in the firm's economic development division for five years before a brief stint in healthcare/pharma social media. Hanna returned to DCI in 2021 to lead the content and social team.

Throughout her career, Hanna has helped places from Baton Rouge to Orlando and Michigan to the Netherlands to tell their story to potential investors, talent and travelers online. While her specialty lies in social media and content marketing, Hanna's attention to detail allows her to connect the dots across broader integrated marketing communications programs.

Based in Chicago, Hanna earned her B.A. from Michigan State University in Advertising and Public Relations. She frequently guest lectures at the college and at industry conferences.



Alex Rahn, Vice President, Wanner Associates

Alex Rahn has over twenty years of experience in the association, corporate, government, non-profit and political sectors. Currently, he provides government affairs advocacy for a diverse array of clients, including the transportation industry, technology firms, chambers of commerce, child abuse prevention and child welfare advocates. Among the legislative issues on which Alex focuses extensively are appropriations, budget, human services and business, as well as those related to economic and workforce development.

Prior to joining Wanner Associates, Alex owned his own government relations firm, which focused on the state, municipal and federal levels. He also served as the Southeast Political Director for Senator Arlen Specter and spent more than six years working as both the District Director and Campaign Manager for Congressman Curt Weldon. Alex is former Vice President of Government Affairs for the Rajant Corporation, Government Affairs Manager for Galaxy Scientific and Executive Director for the Delaware County Transportation Management Agency.

A member of the PA Association of Government Relations, Alex serves on the Board of Directors for several organizations, including the American Red Cross, United Way, and CASA/Children's Advocates of Delaware County. Alex is a former Councilman of Ridley Park Borough, former member of the PA Army National Guard, and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science.



Bruce Reddock, Economic Development Specialist, The Scranton Plan

Bruce Reddock joined The Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce in July 2015 as part of *The Scranton Plan*, the industrial marketing arm of the Chamber.

As Economic Development Specialist, Mr. Reddock is responsible for attracting new industries and assisting in the expansion of local businesses within Lackawanna County, as well as implementing the marketing initiatives set forth by *The Scranton Plan*. Through prospect visits and tours, this initiative generates economic development projects that assist in the creation and retention of jobs in Lackawanna County.

After graduating from Misericordia University in 2013 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Government, Law and National Security, Mr. Reddock relocated to New York City to begin his professional career, taking a job in the education and technology industry.

Prior to his role at the Chamber, Bruce held several marketing positions with multi-national companies dealing in both the B2B and B2C channels. He was the Graduate Program Territory Manager for The Princeton Review of NYC and most recently held the role of Market Development Manager for Coca-Cola Refreshments.

In 2015, Bruce was recognized by the Northeast Pennsylvania Business Journal as a Top 20 Under 40 business professional. He also serves on the board of directors for Scranton Tomorrow and the Downtown Revitalization Task Force, as well as the Equitable Transit Planning Council, which is facilitated by the Scranton Area Community Foundation and the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia.



The Honorable Brad Roae, Chair, Commerce Committee, Pennsylvania House of Representatives

Brad Roae was first elected to the state House of Representatives from the 6th Legislative District in Northwestern Pennsylvania in the Nov. 7, 2006, General Election.

Roae serves as chairman of the House Consumer Affairs Committee. He also serves as a member of the House Health Committee.

Roae in 2019 was appointed to a position on the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) Board of Governors.

Prior to serving in the state Legislature, Roae from August 1992 to November 2006 was a commercial underwriter with Erie Insurance. He earned numerous professional accreditations and designations, and taught as an instructor at the insurance institute.

He graduated from Maplewood High School (Guys Mills) in 1985 and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from Gannon University in 1990.

Roae has served for more than 20 years as a volunteer firefighter and 18 years as an EMT with the East Mead Volunteer Fire Department. Roae currently serves as assistant scoutmaster with Boy Scout Troop 231. He earned the rank of Eagle Scout.

He is a member of Saint Agatha's Roman Catholic Church in Meadville.

Roae resides in East Mead Township with his wife, Dana, and their three children.



Jake Rouch, Vice President of Economic Development, Erie Regional Chamber

Jacob A. "Jake" Rouch was born and raised in Erie, Pennsylvania. Jake earned a Bachelors of Arts in Political Science at Gannon University and a Masters in Urban Planning with a specialization in economic development from the University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign).

Following his graduation from the University of Illinois, Jake worked for two years as an Economic Development Planner for the Economic Development Corporation of Erie County (Pennsylvania). Jake left EDCEC to become the Executive Director of both the DuBois (Pennsylvania) Area Economic Development Corporation and DuBois Area Chamber of Commerce. Jake moved back to Erie in 1994 to serve as the Executive Director of the Erie Conference on Community Development, a CEO-only membership organization. Jake remained with the Erie Conference until November 2002 when he helped form the Erie Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership – a corporation created through a merger of the Erie Conference, Erie Area Chamber, and Erie Insight. Jake has been with the

Chamber since 2002 and presently serves as the Vice President of the Economic Development Division which is responsible for leading and coordinating implementation of Erie County's activities in business retention & expansion, business attraction, workforce development, and entrepreneurial development.

Jake is married to Jordan Johnson, proud father of twins Jack Andrew and Elizabeth Ann Rouch, and proud stepfather to Findley and Taylor Lincoln. (The family cat, Pepper Johnson, periodically acknowledges Jake's role as his father.) In his leisure time, Jake enjoys watching his four kids compete in sports, running, golf, outdoor activities, entertaining, travel, cooking, yard work, home organization, and hopelessly cheering for the Cleveland Browns.



Joseph J. ("Trip") Ruvane, III, Owner, Barley Creek Brewing Company

Trip is co-founder, with his wife Eileen, of the Barley Creek Brewing Company. They operate a restaurant - micro-brewery - micro-distillery - Tasting Room- catering and event business. Opened in 1995, Barley Creek has grown into a unique Pocono Mountain attraction. A graduate of Pocono Mountain High School in 1979 and Hartwick College in 1983, Trip's first "real" career began in NYC as a corporate banker for NatWest PLC. While at NatWest, Trip garnered the financial skills to launch the first brewpub in NEPA since prohibition. A fraternity brother and "Mentor" of Trip's - Ed Stebbins, who opened Gritty McDuff's - the first Brewpub in Maine, encouraged Trip to leave banking and take the leap! Eileen and Trip created a Limited Partnership, secured financing, bought a bankrupt property near Camelback Ski Area, and built and opened Barley Creek. The company's 25+ years in the brewing, distilling, hospitality industry is based on constantly reinvesting in their staff, facilities, and their community.

Trip serves on the Board of Directors and as Northeast Chapter President of the Pennsylvania Restaurant & Lodging Association (PRLA), is a member of the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau Board of Directors (and Strategic Planning Committee) and is a Board member of the Monroe County Workforce Development Board. His philosophy is "Work, Play, Ski, Golf, Fish, Drink – Repeat", though not always in that order. Eileen and Trip have three terrific adult children.



Andrew Skrip, VP, Industrial Development, Scranton Lackawanna Industrial Building Company

Andrew Skrip has held the role of Vice President of Industrial Development for the Scranton Lackawanna Industrial Building Company (SLIBCO) since 1983. He oversees the planning, financing, construction and marketing efforts of SLIBCO and The Scranton Plan.

Mr. Skrip joined The Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce in March of 1980 as Sales and Marketing Manager for SLIBCO and administered SLIBCO's industrial marketing programs for job attraction and retention. In July of 1980, he was promoted to Manager of Industrial Development and managed SLIBCO's land, building and construction projects.

His major responsibilities included the management and expansion of the Keystone and Stauffer Industrial Parks and the General Dynamics facility.

Before joining the Chamber, Mr. Skrip was Director of Operations for the Eastern Distribution Center, Inc. and Foreign Trade Zone #24 for five years. Mr. Skrip assisted in the financing and development of a 265-acre industrial park adjacent to the Wilkes-Barre / Scranton International Airport. Since joining the Chamber, Mr. Skrip has helped numerous companies locate and expand their production, office and distribution facilities in Lackawanna County. He has managed the design, financing and construction of the Glenmaura Corporate Center, Office Park at Montage, Mount Pleasant Corporate Center, Valley View Business Park, Valley View Professional Plaza, Jessup Small Business Center, Scott Technology Park, Stafford Avenue Business Park, Benton Park and Old Forge Industrial Park.

He has also worked on the expansions of Keystone Industrial Park, Stauffer Industrial Park, Valley View Business Park and Scott Technology Park.

He has also supervised multi-million dollar build-to-suit projects for Bank of America, The Prudential, J.C. Penney Company, Northrop Grumman and General Dynamics. In 1999, he oversaw the renovation of the former Globe Building into the new corporate headquarters for Diversified Information Technologies. He managed the design, financing and construction of the 64,000 square-foot Scranton Enterprise Center, and the 45,000 square-foot TekRidge Center office / incubator buildings. During his professional career, Mr. Skrip has managed the development of seventeen local business, office and technology parks, totaling 2,558 acres, and the construction or renovation of nine buildings, totaling one million square feet.

In 1999, the Pennsylvania Economic Development Association named Mr. Skrip Pennsylvania's "Economic Developer of the Year."

Mr. Skrip graduated from Penn State University with an associate's degree in computer science and a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration, with concentrations in marketing, management and international business.



Brett Wiler, Director of Outreach & Investment, Erie Regional Chamber

Brett Wiler joined the Erie Regional Chamber team in 2012, and has held various positions focused on business retention and expansion, new business development, workforce development, capital formation, and entrepreneurial ecosystem building. He currently serves as the Director of Business Outreach and Capital Formation.

Brett took a quick detour away from the Erie Chamber in 2018 to serve as the city's first ever Business Development Officer. In that role, he helped develop and manage the city's first ever micro-grant program and was the primary architect of the city's Opportunity Zone Investment Prospectus. Upon his return to the Chamber in 2019 he managed the newly formed Flagship Opportunity Zone and was the project manager for the Chamber's signature event, Erie Homecoming. Brett serves on the Loan Review Committee for the Erie County Redevelopment Authority, is a member of the Radius CoWork Advisory Committee, is an Erie Ambassador and was recognized in the Erie Reader's annual 40 Under 40 issue in 2019.

Brett was born and raised in Erie. He attended John Carroll University where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration and later attended Gannon University and received his master's degree in Public Administration. Brett lives in the city of Erie with his wife Gretchen and his two children. When he's not fully-focused on raising two spirited and rambunctious children, Brett enjoys playing golf with his friends and family, reading as many books as possible, gardening, cooking, and listening to music louder than his wife would prefer.