



**MOVING
FORWARD.
EMBRACING
CHANGE.
FORMING
PARTNERSHIPS.**

**STRATEGIC PLAN
2021-2023**

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello fellow members, colleagues, and neighbors,

Like many of us in 2020, faced with the uncertainty of the pandemic, the Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce had to shift the way we conducted our business. We passed along policy and public health updates via our e-newsletter, hosted virtual community conversations with elected officials and public health experts, and provided important virtual webinars for our members regarding pandemic relief and reopening guidelines. We also handed out thousands of face masks and hundreds of gallons of hand sanitizer through the Saranac Lake Welcome Center for businesses and visitors, alike. When other Chambers across the country were cutting staff and programming, our small member-driven nonprofit was able to adapt to the circumstances and continue to provide value to our members and the community. Included here is a complete report summarizing the Chamber’s activities for 2020.

In 2018, we formulated a strategic plan which put into motion many of the great projects and activities that we have brought to the community. This past January, the Chamber’s Board of Directors and staff revisited this document and provided a new vision for the future of the organization. As part of the plan, we are continuing our laser focus on three main goals:

- Services** - Develop benefits and services that provide value to our members
- Promotion** - Raise the awareness of locals and visitors to the services and products the chamber and members provide through promotional and marketing strategies
- Convening** - Build fellowship through social functions and community events and convene conversations that are important to our members and the community

As the Chamber celebrates 100 years of acting as a catalyst for business and community development, we are optimistic in the future of our business environment and community. We look forward to building on the foundation created over decades of hard work and expanding our reach to include as many businesses and community members as possible.

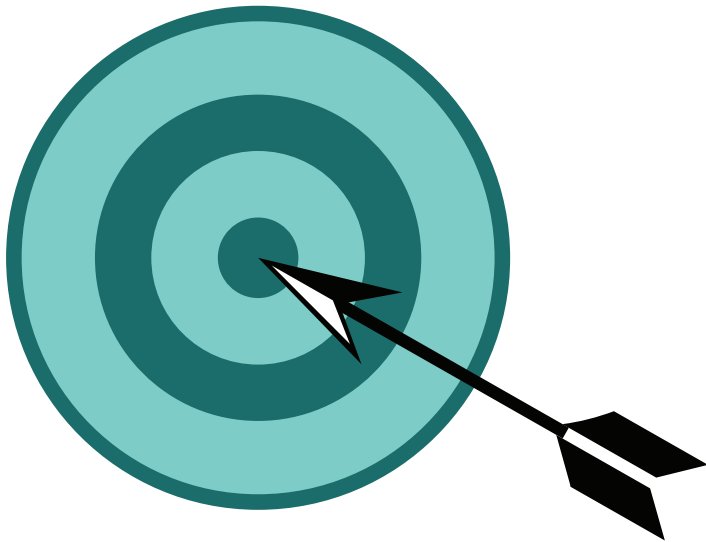
I am very proud of our Staff and our Board of Directors for continuing the Chamber’s great efforts in our community. We are looking forward to an outstanding 2021, and we look forward to continuing to be your strategic business partner going forward!

Kindly,

Joe Shoemaker
Fathom Recruitment
President, Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce

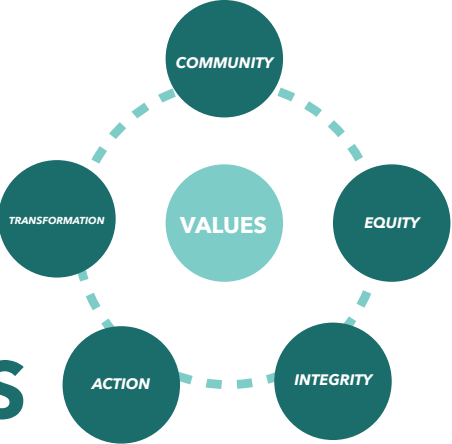
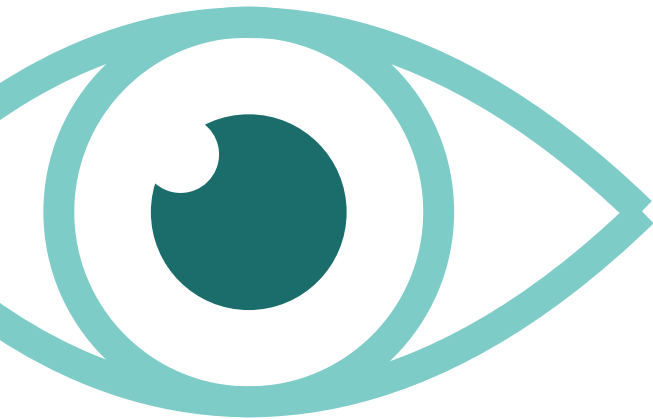
MISSION

Act as a catalyst for business and community development in the Greater Saranac Lake Area.



VISION

Providing services and representation for its membership and generating economic development through promotional and marketing strategies.



VALUES

THE SARANAC LAKE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND ITS MEMBERS AGREE THAT:

COMMUNITY:

- 1. We create a space for everyone. We actively build an environment where everyone of any race, ethnicity, class, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, accessibility needs, or country of origin feels welcomed and seen
- 2. We welcome and encourage energetic conversations across diverse perspectives and challenge each other respectfully
- 3. We take time to get to know each other as individuals
- 4. We support each other to learn and to grow
- 5. We have a good sense of humor and find fun and joy in our work
- 6. We are thoughtful of everyone’s needs when coordinating events and activities. We consider accessibility challenges and strive to accommodate everyone
- 7. We are thoughtful of our impact on the environment as we do our work

EQUITY:

- 1. We are thoughtful about our privileges and how they affect our interactions with others
- 2. We create environments that allow for voices that are often less heard to be heard, including checking in with those who tend to be quieter, and asking more dominant voices to step back and do more listening
- 3. We acknowledge and celebrate the strengths and differences in others, and do not assume that the ways we are used to doing things are the only correct ways to do things

INTEGRITY:

- 1. We do everything with our values in mind
- 2. We assume the best of intentions in people, and give everyone the benefit of the doubt
- 3. We do what we say we are going to do
- 4. We do everything thoughtfully and with high quality
- 5. We give feedback directly, respectfully, and with a focus on solutions
- 6. We communicate our needs and expectations openly, and do not get angry at others’ failures to fulfill expectations we never clearly set
- 7. We actively listen and are open to feedback and improvement
- 8. We take responsibilities for our mistakes and learn from them
- 9. We acknowledge our roles in conflicts and participate in finding and implementing solutions

ACTION:

- 1. We plan to the best of our abilities and take timely actions using available information
- 2. We take calculated risks and view failures as learning opportunities
- 3. We are not afraid to change course as more information becomes available

TRANSFORMATION:

- 1. We support each other and give everyone a chance to learn and to improve because we believe individuals are the key to societal transformation
- 2. We are not afraid to have courageous, sometimes even painful conversations that may lead to the positive transformation of our organization, of Saranac Lake, and of the wider community
- 3. We recognize our role of supporting leaders and organizations to transform policies and systems
- 4. We encourage and create opportunities for diverse communities to support each other and build solidarity across identities

2020 OUTCOMES: SERVICES

Striving to develop benefits and services that provide value to our members.



Community Education and Outreach Partner

- 1 Successfully Transitioned Business
- 7 Businesses Actively Transitioning
- 3 Entrepreneurs Supported

Co-hosted "Marketing Your Available Business" session with 30 participants

Co-Founding partner with Point Postive and Franklin County Economic Development Corporation

Providing a co-working and business incubator space in Saranac Lake

- 8 Freelancers and entrepreneurs supported
- Co-hosted 2 networking sessions





Business Builder Series

A series aimed at providing resources to our members

- 2 Federal Relief Webinar with SBA with 40 participants
- 4 Sector-specific Covid Reopening Webinars

Provided a Back-to-Business Checklist

Resources Guide for memebbers



250 Gallons of Sanitizer



5,000 Masks

Distribution Center for PPE

Over 200 area businesses served



Halloween Drive-In Movie - 52 families attended

Event Support Program

Saranac Lake Artworks ArtMarket - 24 Artists & 800 Visitors



Chamber Job Board

25 participating businesses * 50 positions promoted

1,718 page views

A VISION FOR PROVIDING SERVICES

GOAL #1

Facilitate continuing education opportunities for members and their employees

OBJECTIVE
Improved workforce skills for owners, staff, and employees

OBJECTIVE
Increased awareness of updates to federal, state, and local policies related to our members' operation

PROGRAMS
*Develop Our Business Builder Series
Maintain Weekly Updates Thru e-Newsletter*

Future Outcomes

- Business Builder Series hosts at least 3 continuing education programs a year
- 80% of members find Business Builder content informative and useful
- 15 businesses and 10 entrepreneurs connected to CBIT and The Carry resources a year

GOAL #2

Sustain and develop technical assistance and operational support programs

OBJECTIVE
Increased access to discounted services/products for our members

PROGRAMS
*Continue to Offer Member Specific Health Insurance Policies
Promote Open Positions Thru Chamber Job Board
Continue Our Event Support Program
Develop Our Business To Business Network
Continue One-on-One Consultations*

GOAL #3

Foster entrepreneurship, business expansion, and retention

OBJECTIVE
Strengthened local business environment

PROGRAMS
*Continue Participating in the Center For Businesses In Transition
Continue Support for The Carry*

Goals = WHAT we want to do

Objectives = WHY we are pursuing our goal

Programs = HOW we are going to do what we set out to achieve

Outcomes = the RESULTS of our actions

2020 OUTCOMES: PROMOTION

Implement strategies to promote and market the services of the chamber and its members to locals and visitors.

10,000 copies distributed



40 sponsoring businesses



Window Decals

14 participating businesses



Support Local Saturdays

6,550 people reached via campaign



#SupportLocalSL Campaign



Downtown Banners

SARANAC LAKE



ICE PALACE

Saranac Lake GIFs

6 interactive GIFs created for the community



Social Media Campaign

3,420 people reached

A VISION FOR PROMOTION

GOAL #1

Encourage a “support local” ethic with residents and visitors in the Saranac Lake Area

OBJECTIVE

Increased awareness of area businesses, services and products

PROGRAMS

Create Saranac Lake Area Visitor Guide Collateral
Maintain the #SupportLocalSL campaign
Conduct ribbon cuttings as requested
Promote every member through a “Member Spotlight” campaign

GOAL #2

Communicate the Chamber’s vibrancy to members and the community

OBJECTIVE

Improved brand identity within the community

PROGRAMS

Initiate a Did You Know? chamber promotional campaign
Provide routine updates to the membership and board

Goals = WHAT we want to do

Objectives = WHY we are pursuing our goal

Future Outcomes

- Every member is promoted at least once a year
- At least 50% of membership participate in #SupportLocalSL campaigns
- At least 5,000 visitors interact with Saranac Lake Area Visitor Guide content

Programs = HOW we are going to do what we set out to achieve

Outcomes = the RESULTS of our actions

2020 OUTCOMES: CONVENING

Build fellowship through social functions and community events, and convene conversations that are important to our members and the community.



Community Conversations

Tele-Town Hall with Congresswoman Stefanik, Assemblymen Stec and Jones, State Senator Little - **83** participants

Business Roundtable with Assemblyman Stec - **12** businesses participate

Welcome To Town Virtual Event with Paul Smith's College and North Country Community College

Informational Covid Session with Adirondack Health - **75** participants

Business Roundtable Discussion with new businesses in the area

Light Up The Town holiday decoration contest had **32** decorated residences/businesses and **550** recorded votes

Awarded H.S. Scholarship to Olivia Bell (\$1,000)

Virtual Sparkle Village Craft Show



Community Events

2020 Holiday Gathering at Grizzle T's



Networking Events

3 Virtual Networking Sessions

2020 Chamber Awards



Citizen of the Year
Tom Boothe

Business of the Year
Trudeau Institute and Adirondack Health

Volunteers of the Year
Local Mask Makers and Crafters

A VISION FOR CONVENING

GOAL #1

Encourage members to network through member-to-member events

OBJECTIVE

Increased awareness of the services and products provided by fellow members

PROGRAMS

Host networking sessions for members to communicate with each other

GOAL #2

Facilitate conversations on issues that affect our members and community

OBJECTIVE

Improved member support services provided by the chamber

PROGRAMS

Host new community conversations relevant to the community and membership

GOAL #3

Foster initiatives that build community and placemaking

OBJECTIVE

Strengthened connection between people and the places they share

PROGRAMS

Continue sponsoring and hosting community events
Expand reach of scholarship fund

Future Outcomes

- Convene at least 3 community conversations a year
- 60% of members attend at least 1 community conversation
- Support 4 community events and co-host at least 3 chamber initiated events a year

Goals = WHAT we want to do

Objectives = WHY we are pursuing our goal

Programs = HOW we are going to do what we set out to achieve

Outcomes = the RESULTS of our actions

2020 OUTCOMES: SARANAC LAKE WELCOME CENTER

VIRTUAL WELCOME CENTER



Community/Business updates via website



2,100 unique visitors, 3,200 sessions in March/April/May alone



516 phone calls over 150 pandemic days



Participated in the inaugural “Welcome Wagon” Program with Adirondack Diversity Initiative to provide a kind reception to new community members who are black, indigenous, and people of color

WALK-UP WELCOME WINDOW



2,556 visitors over 140 days



654 phone calls over 140 days

*Operation of the Saranac Lake Welcome Center is an ongoing collaboration that is not possible without the financial support of the Town of Harrietstown, and the Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism. We look forward to our continued partnership with Harrietstown and ROOST in the years ahead.



CHAMBER’S DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION VISION

STEP 1: ESTABLISH A FOUNDATION FOR FUTURE WORK

- ☒ *Form SLACC DEI Working Group to guide the planning process for the organization that includes board members, staff, and at-large-members*
- ☒ *Review and share resources among committee members to understand basic concepts that are central to the working group’s mandate*
- ☒ *Affirm organizational values to act as a foundation to improve upon*
- ☒ *Establish an improved board member recruitment process grounded in inclusivity*
- ☒ *Identify a step-by-step planning process and share with the board, members, and the community*

STEP 2: GATHER INFORMATION AND CONDUCT SELF-ASSESSMENT/READINESS

- ☒ *Partner with Adirondack Diversity Initiative on DEI organizational self-assessment pilot project*
- ☐ *Aid in development of DEI organizational self-assessment pilot project*
- ☐ *Staff and board members participate in self-assessment*
- ☐ *Review and reflect on data collected from self-assessment*

STEP 3: DEVELOP VISION - SET GOALS, STRATEGIES, METRICS

- ☐ *Source a facilitator to aid the chamber board in analyzing the self-assessment*
- ☐ *With the facilitator develop a plan with concrete goals, strategies, and metrics for the next 3 to 5 years*
- ☐ *Conduct a DEI strategic retreat with the chamber board to review plan and assess implementation action items*

STEP 4: REVIEW PLAN WITH THE DEI COMMITTEE, BOARD AND MEMBERS

- ☐ *Share goals, strategies, metrics, and implementation action items with the membership and stakeholder groups for input*
- ☐ *Finalize plan complete with goals, strategies, metrics, and implementation action items after receiving external feedback*

STEP 5: IMPLEMENT LAUNCH PLAN

- ☐ *Develop an internal work plan with benchmarks, deliverables, organizational and partnership support*

**This plan is a working document and is subject to change after further discussion, exploration, and learning*

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As I am writing this note, we have passed the one year mark since the World Health Organization officially declared the Covid-19 public health emergency a global pandemic. As a community, we have collectively shared in the struggles and difficulties related to this crisis. While businesses were shuttering operations, and families were faced with unemployment, this community rallied around a support local ethic that underscored the enormous capacity for compassion our community sustains.

The chamber board and staff were committed to aiding our members and community in any way possible. From hosting sessions with medical experts, to providing resources to local businesses, to liaising with local, state, and federal officials, we strived to get our members and community the resources and information they needed. But, the outcomes shared in this annual report are only some ways to measure the impact an organization achieves. From something as simple as calling to check-in on a colleague to tracking down hand sanitizer and face masks for fellow members, there are countless ways in which our board, staff, and members provided an immeasurable amount of support to one another that are just difficult to quantify.

There are a number of local, state, and federal officials far too many to mention and list here, for fear of leaving someone off the list, that went above and beyond the call of duty to provide the chamber and its membership support. Nevertheless, please know that the chamber network is immensely proud and thankful of your assistance and support.

After a year of crisis, the chamber is ready to chart a new course. This strategic plan is the culmination of months of conversation and deliberation by chamber board members and staff. We are excited about the opportunities before us and wanted to share with you our vision for the future.

Special recognition is reserved for our past-President Keith Braun and current President Joe Shoemaker for their dedication to the organization, as well as, former chamber Welcome Center and Engagement Coordinator, Emma MacPherson. I would not have survived this year without your support and friendship. The membership and myself owe you our unending gratitude. Also, a special thank you to Sydney Schmidt of Saranac Lake for your assistance in generating this report.

With gratitude,

Patrick Murphy
Executive Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JOE SHOEMAKER,
PRESIDENT
Fathom Recruitment
1st Term Ends 2021

DANI DELAINI,
1ST VICE PRESIDENT
Adirondack North Country Association
1st Term Ends 2021

JODI GUNTHER,
2ND VICE PRESIDENT
Adirondack Premier Properties
2nd Term Ends 2023

RENEE DARRAH,
TREASURER
Champlain National Bank
1st Term Ends 2021

BRITTANY STERNBERG,
SECRETARY
ADK ArtRise
1st Term Ends 2021

KEITH BRAUN,
PAST-PRESIDENT
Braun Consultations
2nd Term Ends 2021

DIANE LEIFHEIT
Point of View Studio
2nd Term Ends 2021

KATIE KIRKPATRICK
St. Joseph’s Treatment Center
1st Term Ends 2021

JACOB WRIGHT
Skyward Hospitality
1st Term Ends 2022

KIRK SULLIVAN
Bing Bang Boom, Inc.
1st Term Ends 2022

CHRIS KNIGHT
North Country Community College
1st Term Ends 2023

CYNTHIA MARTINO
Bionique Testing Laboratories
Completing An Open Seat Til 2022



Photos by ROOST and SLACC