

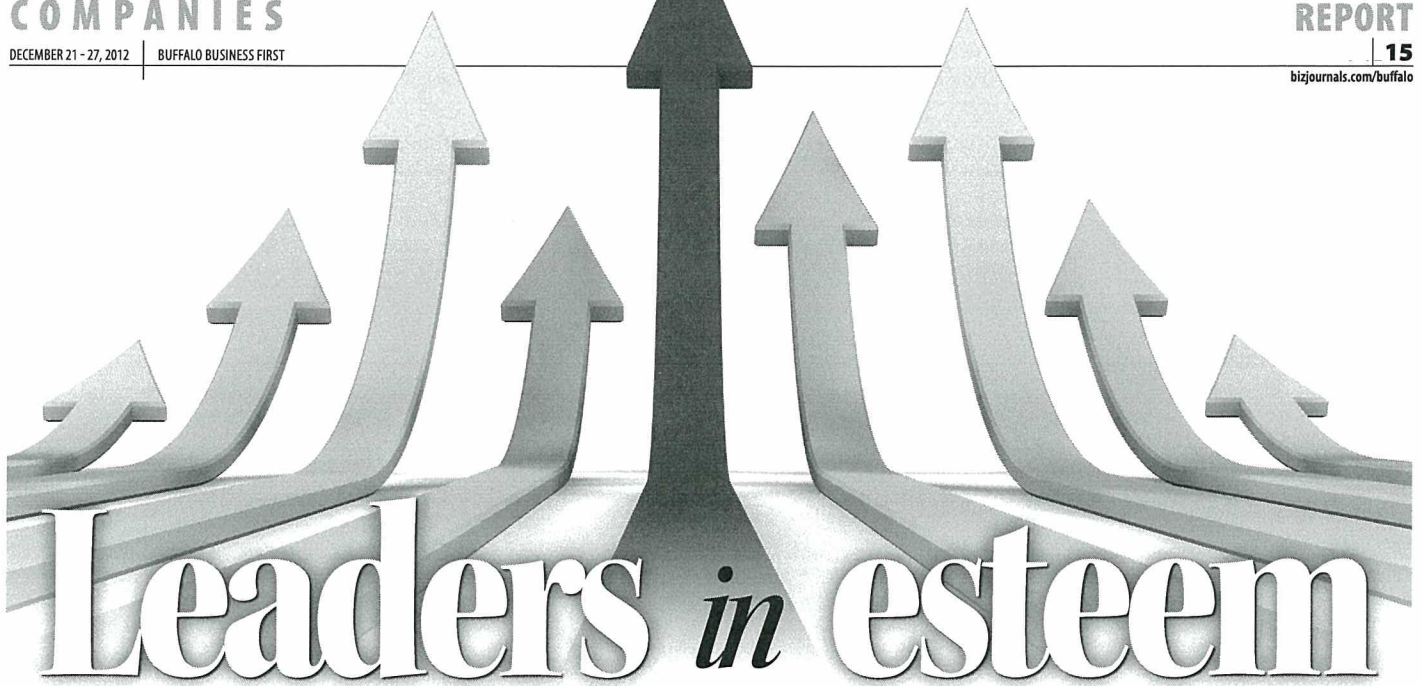
WNY's Most Admired Companies

DECEMBER 21 - 27, 2012 | BUFFALO BUSINESS FIRST

THIS WEEK'S
SPECIAL
REPORT

15

bizjournals.com/buffalo



We're lucky.

Western New York is blessed with countless talented and tireless individuals who do everything they can to maximize the potential of their individual workplaces and the community at large. These individual stars are the building blocks of successful, thriving companies – and we have hundreds, if not thousands, of those. Throughout the year, Business First recognizes those star companies through a variety of publications and awards programs, from our Book of Lists to Fast Track Companies to Best Places to Work and Top Private Companies.

Now, to close out the year, we're doing something different: We asked readers, businesses and our staff to make suggestions and nominations. We examined them all, considering each company's growth, its success as an employer, its work in promoting diversity, its connection with the local community, and more. And now, we're proud to share with you our list of Western New York's Most Admired Companies.

The information that follows was provided by officials from each company and edited by Business First for length and clarity.

Adoption STAR

CEO: Michele Fried
Address: 131 John Muir Drive, Amherst, NY 14228
Phone: 716-639-3900
Website: www.adoptionstar.com
Year founded: 2000
Employees: 15-plus
Revenue: \$1.5 million-plus

Overview: Adoption STAR (Support, Training, Advocacy Resources) provides highly individualized services to adoptive parents, birth parents and community professionals as they explore the adoption option. They offer the experience of adoption, a full training curriculum, advocacy assistance, and comprehensive resources on adoption.

Growth: Adoption STAR is flourishing. Revenue has consistently increased and the organization recently purchased a building twice the size of its previous location.

Success as an employer: From surprise outings for their staff, to providing continuous long term employment, generous 401k plan and a commitment to long-term staff training and continued education, Adoption STAR attracts the finest full- and part-time staff. Adoption STAR is often praised for the level of commitment of its staff.

Promoting diversity: CEO Michele Fried is the author of "Creating a Cultural Continuity Plan for Our Children,"

an article published in several adoption trade magazines. Fried is also a frequent speaker on cultural diversity, cultural competency and developing cultural continuity plans for families and organizations.

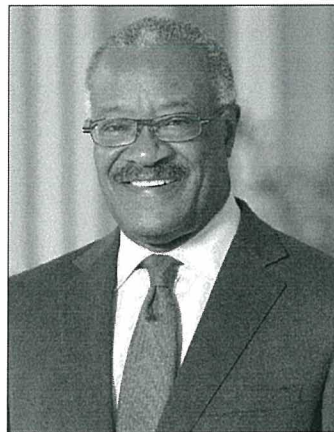
Contributions to WNY: The majority of the almost 600 children placed were born in Western New York and reside with their adoptive families here. Their commitment to adoptive families, birth families and adoptees are evident as they run support groups throughout WNY for clients and non-clients who are touched by adoption.

BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York

CEO: Alphonso O'Neil-White
Address: 257 W. Genesee St., Buffalo, NY 14202
Phone: 716-887-6900
Website: www.bcbstwny.com
Year founded: 1936
Employees: 1,500
Revenue: \$ 2.4 billion

Overview: Since 1936, we have helped millions of people gain access to quality, coordinated health care. We offer a full range of insured, self-insured, and government products and services covering businesses, families, and individuals.

Growth: We have been the number one health plan for over 75 years and continue to lead the market through effective



Alphonso O'Neil-White is the CEO of BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York.

strategy as well as leveraging our knowledge, experience, and talent.

Success as an employer: Named one of the healthiest employers in our region, we focus on attracting and retaining talented individuals to support our mission. Our building is LEED certified and features amenities including our fitness center, free parking ramp for employees, and a dining center.

Promoting diversity: We proactively practice and embrace diversity in the work-

place. Recognized as a premier place to work for women in technology in Western New York, we are an inclusive employer that relies on the most effective methods of recruiting a diverse employee base.

Contributions to WNY: We are passionate about our community and those we serve. We continue to strive toward improving individual and community health, strength, and well-being by spearheading initiatives and supporting organizations that seek to improve health and empower people.

Chef's Restaurant

Owners: Ann, Mary Beth, and Louis John Billittier Jr.
Address: 291 Seneca St., Buffalo, NY 14204
Phone: 716-856-9187
Website: www.ilovechefs.com
Year founded: 1923
Employees: 75-plus

Overview: Chef's has been a popular lunch, dinner and banquet destination for decades. Its signature sauce is also well known and available at Tops Markets, Wegmans, and other outlets. A promotion that stemmed from the sauce sales, which began in 1997, is the popular framed photos of celebrities holding a jar of the sauce.

Growth: Evans Bank helped the Billittier family see their dream of modernizing the kitchen and lobby facility, adding a special new "French Connection"

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The National Fuel Conservation Incentive Program offers money-saving rebates to small businesses in the Western New York area when specified appliances are replaced with new, energy-efficient models. Combined with the projected annual fuel savings that come with energy-efficient appliances, your business could see thousands of dollars in rebates—up to \$30,000!

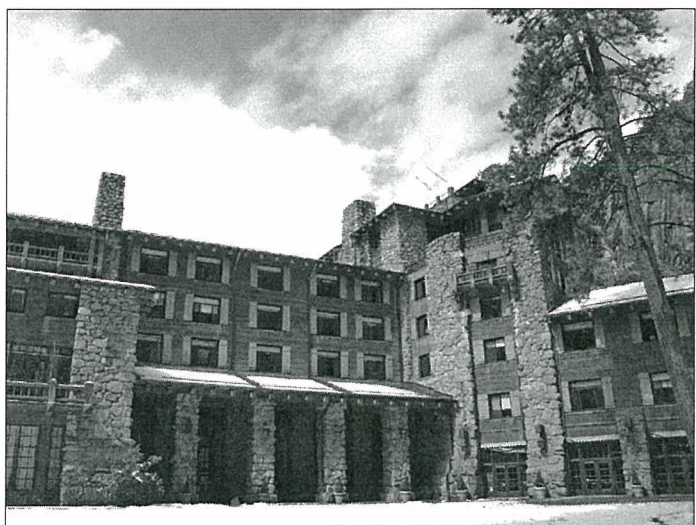
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Fixed rebates are available for qualifying equipment installed on or after November 1, 2012. All appliances must be installed by a contractor. Visit www.NationalFuelForThought.com for complete guidelines.



Delaware North's hospitality business reaches far and wide, including an operation in Yosemite National Park. Above is the Ahwahnee Hotel in Yosemite Valley.

CHEF'S RESTAURANT, *continued*

room, and the unique drive-up pick-up window for orders pre-placed.

Success as an employer: The company excels at being an employer in Western New York because the family creates a positive working environment. For instance, several of the waiters and waitresses employed at Chef's have been working there for 10 years or more.

Promoting diversity: Chef's brings people from diverse backgrounds into the restaurant to do everything from food preparation work, to baking and banquets.

Contributions to WNY: The Billittier family have been recognized by numerous nonprofits in Western New York for their philanthropic generosity, whether it is a donation to a special cause, hosting lunches and dinners, or simply being there for people. After Lou Billittier died, the family established the Louis J. Billittier Foundation to raise money for area charities. The family has donated close to \$1 million over the many decades.

CUTCO Corp.

Chairman/CEO: James Stitt
Address: 1116 E. State St., Olean, NY 14760
Phone: 716-372-6141
Website: www.cutco.com
Year founded: 1949
Employees: 700-plus
Revenue: \$200 million

Overview: CUTCO Corp. is the parent company of CUTCO Cutlery Corp., the largest manufacturer and marketer of high-quality kitchen cutlery and accessories in the U.S. and Canada; Vector Marketing Corp., the exclusive marketer of CUTCO Cutlery; KA-BAR Knives Inc., offering military, hunting, all-purpose utility and outdoor survival knives; and Syracuse-based Schilling Forge, manufacturer of precision forgings.

Growth: CUTCO has been committed to American manufacturing since 1949, and is an anchor business in Olean. In recent years it has invested in factory improvements that include the addition of robotics and adding new equipment to take on manufacturing of its stainless steel table knife. In 2012 CUTCO introduced five new products

to its line.

Success as an employer: More than 200 employees have more than 20-plus years of service to the company. CUTCO prides itself on making its employees feel part of the family. They are kept abreast of the company's progress during quarterly review meetings.

Promoting diversity: CUTCO is an equal opportunity employer.

Contributions to WNY: CUTCO employees and the company are known for their generosity in the community, supporting our local food banks, The Salvation Army, United Way, March of Dimes, Toys for Children, American Red Cross, Community Blood Bank, and Dresser-Rand Challenger Learning Center, just to name a few. A recent collection for hurricane Sandy relief resulted in employees donating \$6,300 to the efforts to add to CUTCO Corp.'s \$25,000 for a total donation of over \$31,000.

Delaware North Cos.

Chairman/CEO: Jeremy Jacobs Sr.
Address: 40 Fountain Plaza, Buffalo, NY 14202
Phone: 716-858-5000
Website: www.delawarenorth.com
Year founded: 1915
Employees: 55,000
Revenue: \$2.6 billion

Overview: Delaware North Companies is one of the largest privately held hospitality companies in the world. Founded in Buffalo and owned by the Jacobs family for nearly 100 years, it is a global leader in hospitality and food service. Delaware North operates at some of the world's most iconic destinations, including sports stadiums, entertainment complexes, national parks, resorts, casinos and airports.

Growth: Delaware North has had record breaking growth over the last decade, growing to \$2.6 billion in annual revenue in 2011 and on track for another record year in 2012. Since 2009, Delaware North has purchased five Australian resorts, one regional gaming destination and three hotel properties in West Yellowstone, Mont. The company also has several additions in the works for 2013, including taking over as the primary food, beverage, lodging and retail partner at Shenandoah National Park.

Success as an employer: Awe-inspiring national parks, luxury resorts, gaming

destinations, show-stopping sporting and entertainment venues, and bustling travel hubs create the backdrop for unrivaled career opportunities across all of Delaware North's businesses. The company prides itself on being a cool place to work, as associates help create special moments for guests at such places as the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone National Park, Yosemite National Park, Soldier Field, Busch Stadium, and Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex.

Promoting diversity: Goodwill Industries of Western New York recently named Delaware North Cos. Travel Hospitality Services at Buffalo Niagara International Airport as its 2012 Employer of the Year. The award is given out annually to a business that has demonstrated outstanding dedication toward assisting individuals with barriers to employment.

Contributions to WNY: Delaware North has focused a great deal of time, money and energy to such groups as the Special Olympics, United Way, and Boys and Girls Clubs, along with youth and sports community groups. Over the last five years, Delaware North has raised and donated more than \$25 million to these and a variety of other community efforts.

wood Avenue facility.

Growth: In 1980 the company had a staff of 25. As Hadley's reputation grew so did the size of its staff to nearly 100.

Success as an employer: Employment at Hadley typically means "long-term." One of the core reasons for employees spending so much of their working careers at Hadley is because of the specialized nature of the work. For the special craftsmen that love this type of work, Hadley may be one of the few opportunities to turn a special avocation into a well-earning vocation.

Promoting diversity: Over the years Hadley has focused on making sure women achieve key positions within the organization, and several have accomplished that. In addition, some senior operational positions are filled by individuals with disabilities.

Contributions to WNY: Hadley provides time, resources and skills to The Chil-

den's Growth Foundation, The Martin House, Olmstead Parks Conservancy, Buffalo & Erie County Public Library, Buffalo Naval Park, Meals on Wheels, Corporate Ski Challenge, Buffalo Zoo and more.

The Hamister Group, Inc.

CEO: Mark Hamister

Address: 6400 Sheridan Drive, Suite 120, Williamsville, NY 14221

Phone: 716-839-4000

Website: www.HamisterGroup.com

Year founded: 1977

Number of employees: : 750

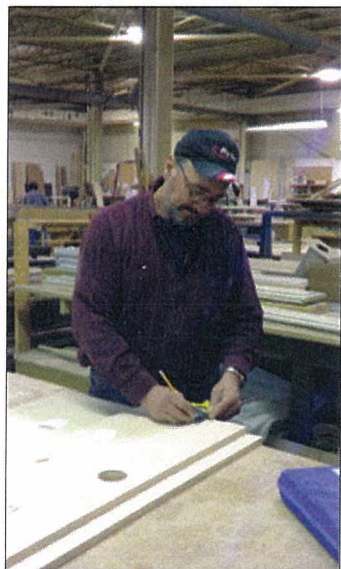
Revenue: \$47 million

Overview: The Hamister Group, Inc. is a recognized leader in healthcare and hotel management. With over 35 years of experience and a solid management portfolio in the eastern United States, the Hamister Group, Inc. has a proven

record of superior management results.

Growth: This year The Hamister Group was once again named to the Inc. 500/5000 list of the country's fastest growing companies. With a 9 percent growth rate over the last three years, they were ranked number 370 of fastest growing healthcare companies, according to Inc. magazine. The Hamister Group is expanding their hospitality footprint into Mississippi, and has plans to build two mixed-use buildings in Buffalo and Niagara Falls which will include hotels in the next few years.

Success as an employer: The Hamister Group, Inc. was named as a Best Place to Work in 2011 (large company category), and was a top-three winner in 2012. One of the Hamister Group's four main goals as an organization is to hire, promote and keep only exceptional people, and there are continuous opportunities to learn and advance



Peter Paulnits working in the shop at Hadley Exhibits, which counts several major corporations among its clients.

Hadley Exhibits

CEO: Ted Johnson

Address: 1700 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14207

Phone: 716-874-3666

Website: hadleyexhibits.com

Year founded: 1949

Number of employees: 90-plus

Revenue: : \$13.2 million

Overview: Hadley, one of the nation's oldest exhibit companies, designs, builds and installs temporary and permanent exhibits. Half of that business is servicing the trade show and exhibit needs of its many business-to-business customers and clients. The other half is designing and fabricating permanent exhibits for museums, zoos and visitors centers all over the country. These exhibits can vary in size from a piece that can rest on a table to giant multi-story projects, all done at Hadley's Elm-

Thank you Western New York for your business and support.

The people, resources and opportunities in this area have been instrumental in helping us thrive. We are proud to be a Buffalo based company.



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COURTESY OF THE HAMISTER GROUP

Colleen Roy, admissions director at The Hamister Group's Orchard Heights facility, takes residents on an outing.

THE HAMISTER GROUP, INC., continued

throughout the organization.

Promoting diversity: The Hamister Group has a variety of demographics represented at the corporate office and properties.

Contributions to WNY: The Hamister Group, Inc. is involved in many non-profit and charitable organizations. Members of the management team are on several boards of directors, including the Buffalo Zoo, the UB 2012 Scholarship Gala, the Buffalo Schools Foundation, and others.

Independent Health

CEO: Dr. Michael Cropp
Address: 511 Farber Lakes Drive, Buffalo, NY 14221
Phone: 716-631-3001
Website: www.independenthealth.com
Year founded: 1980
Employees: 1,000-plus
Revenue: \$1.8 billion

Overview: Independent Health is an innovative, health solutions company with a passionate dedication to achieving its mission of providing health-related products and services that enable affordable access to quality health care. Independent Health is one of the largest companies in the region and provides health benefits and services to nearly 400,000 individuals in Western New York and throughout the U.S.

Growth: Independent Health initially served 2,785 members. Today, the company is recognized as an innovative health care plan with an extensive provider network and a comprehensive portfolio of more than 120 health plan offerings and benefit services. Over the

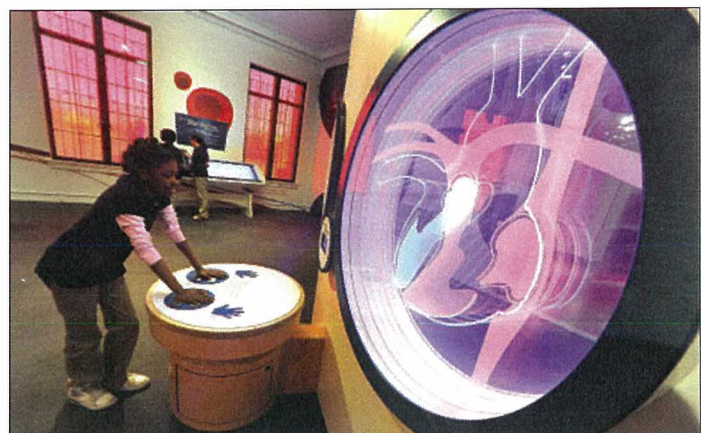
Liazon Corporation

CEO: Ashok Subramanian
Address: 737 Main St., Suite 200, Buffalo, NY 14203
Phone: 716-803-6190
Website: www.liazon.com
Year founded: 2007
Employees: 79
Revenue: \$4.5 million

Overview: Liazon Corporation operates the market-leading Bright Choices private benefits exchange for small and mid-sized businesses. Bright Choices is an online benefits store that is changing the way employers and employees buy employee benefits. It helps employers save money on their benefits costs by setting predictable budgets while guiding employees to purchase better coverage of health, dental, vision, life and disability benefits, among others. Liazon works with top national and regional insurance providers and supports more than 2,000 businesses nationwide.

Cheers!
 ...to all those who are a part of
 Western New York's Most Admired Companies

Hadley Exhibits • 1700 Elmwood Ave • Buffalo, New York
 716.874.3666 • www.hadleyexhibits.com



COURTESY INDEPENDENT HEALTH

Schoolchildren participate in the Independent Health-sponsored "Explore Your Heart" exhibit at the Buffalo Museum of Science.

Growth: Liazon has grown by 2,417 percent over the past three years and achieved revenues in excess of \$4.5 million in 2011. The company was recognized by Inc. magazine as one of the top 500 fastest growing companies in the U.S. in 2012 and by Buffalo Business First as one of the 50 fastest growing companies in Western New York.

Success as an employer: Subramanian, CEO and co-founder, started the company with a goal to build a workplace that we would be excited to come to work every day. To a great extent, Ashok has accomplished this goal and as a result, the company continues to attract the very best and brightest in the insurance and benefits industry. Liazon's team is united around a common purpose which gives them a great deal of satisfaction and fulfillment from their work. One of the keys to Liazon's success is a company culture based on trust and accountability. Company-wide events such as monthly potlucks, organized community service events, and regular celebrations including board game afternoons, bring Liazon employees together.

Promoting diversity: Liazon creates an environment that fosters and promotes diversity awareness inclusion. As a standard practice the company posts position vacancies in various community organizations that target diverse populations.

Contributions to WNY: Liazon participates in the United Way Day of Caring and the Chase Corporate Challenge.



New Era Cap Co.'s global expansion is happening under the leadership of President Pete Augustine, left, and CEO Chris Koch.

Website: www.neweracap.com

Year founded: 1920

Number of employees: 1,590 globally; 721 in WNY

Overview: New Era is an international lifestyle brand with an authentic sports heritage that dates back over 90 years. Best known for being the official on-field cap for Major League Baseball and the National Football League. The brand is worn as a symbol of self-expression by athletes, artists and some of the most interesting people around the globe. The company is headquartered in Buffalo and operates facilities in North America, Europe, Asia and South America and 14 flagship stores across the globe.

Growth: New Era has grown exponen-

tially over the past few years. Since 2006, we've opened eight flagship stores in North America, with plans to open more doors in the upcoming years. In the last year we've added around 90 employees total in our North American offices with almost 90 percent of those jobs being at our world headquarters in downtown Buffalo. The 2012 NFL season marked the start of a long-term partnership between New Era and the league.

Success as an employer: New Era is dedicated to finding the right professionals who will foster the organization's continued 90-year evolution. We are a casual work environment and encourage self-expression and having a healthy work-life balance. We offer

competitive paid time off, holidays, a summer hours program, community volunteer opportunities and tuition reimbursement. For those employees who go above and beyond or exude our brand values in their work, we have a reward and recognition program as well as a yearly awards ceremony where two rookies and two veterans are spotlighted for their contribution to the company.

Promoting diversity: New Era encourages individuality – it's one of our four brand values. We want our employees to be their true selves both inside and outside of work and to show us what's unique about them.

Contributions to WNY: Each employee in North America is offered one workday off during the year to volunteer at an organization of their choice. In 2012 alone (May – November), Over 150 employees volunteered for a combined total of more than 820 hours in the Western New York community at organizations. In November, New Era announced in November 2012 a \$1.5 million donation to Roswell Park Cancer Institute to help put them over the top for their fundraising efforts to construct a new building on their campus.

Niagara Tourism Convention Corp.

CEO: John Percy

Address: 10 Rainbow Blvd. Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Phone: 716-282-8992

Website: www.niagara-usa.com

Year founded: 2003

Employees: 13

Overview: The mission of the NTCC is to expand the economic prosperity of the Niagara USA communities by generating individual and group visitation. NTCC is designated as the

New Era

CEO: Christopher Koch

Address: 160 Delaware Ave., Buffalo, NY 14202

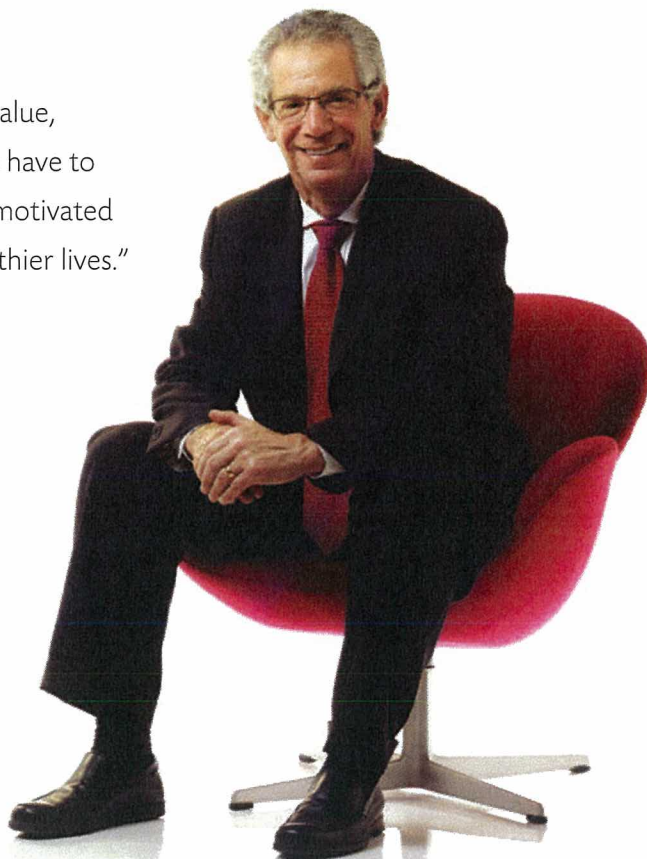
Phone: 716-604-9000

Taking Action.

"In order to transform our area into a high-value, high-performing health care community, we have to create a culture of health where people are motivated and able to make better choices to lead healthier lives."

Michael W. Cropp, M.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer

Learn about the promising initiatives that Independent Health is leading through innovative partnerships at independenthealth.com/2012report



NIAGARA TOURISM CONVENTION CORP., *continued*

tourism promotion agency for Niagara County and Niagara Falls, responsible for all marketing, advertising and promotion of the destination as a whole. NTCC spearheaded the marketing and communications campaign for the Wallenda Walk at Niagara Falls, in the summer of 2012.

Growth: While the tourism industry nationally has experienced growth, the increase in our destination has exceeded the national rate. While NTCC can't claim full credit for all of the increase, we have positively impacted that number. This DMO (destination marketing organization) has full marketing communications, convention and sales departments, along with a thriving internship program. There is also an outdoor sports specialist on staff who works to promote the world-class fishing, birding, hiking, boating and other sports activities in Western New York.

Success as an employer: Situated behind the official Visitors Center, in downtown Niagara Falls, the staff is involved in producing collateral that all constituents in Niagara County use to help promote tourism and travel to the region. Although it is a small staff of 13, a lot is accomplished, including numerous trade show visits, and hosting group tours, meetings and all journalists and media that come to Niagara County.

Promoting diversity: On the heels of the passage of the same sex marriage bill in New York State, in the summer of 2011, Niagara Tourism and Convention Corporation held the first same sex, group wedding in Niagara Falls, NY. We



Univera Healthcare employees are encouraged to spend time volunteering in the community. Above, Cathy Lambert works at The Buffalo Zoo.

are also a EEO employer and welcome diversity when reviewing candidates for open positions within our agency.

Contributions to WNY: Throughout the year we adopt one charity per month and help bring attention or aid to it. From the Niagara County SPCA, to selling newspapers for the United Way, the staff has reached out to numerous charities in the area. Also many staff serve as board members on organizations and heavily involved in philanthropic activities.

John R. Oishei Foundation

CEO: Robert Gioia
Address: One HSBC Center, Suite 3650, Buffalo, NY 14203
Phone: 716-856-9490
Website: www.oishei.org
Year founded: 1940
Employees: Six full-time; two part-time
Revenue: The Foundation's revenue is derived from the investment of its assets. In 2010, the Foundation's revenue totaled \$31,028,000. In 2011, the Foundation did not earn revenue. Assets in 2010 and 2011 respectively were \$284 million and \$266 million.

Overview: The John R. Oishei Foundation is a private, charitable foundation that strives to be a catalyst for change to enhance economic vitality and the quality of life for the Buffalo Niagara region. John R. Oishei established the Foundation with the mandate to concentrate support on medical research, healthcare and education in the Buffalo area along with cultural and social needs. The Foundation focuses on well-informed grantmaking; community leadership and leadership development; serving as a neutral convener in order to build collaboration; and acting as a driving force behind positive change in the region.

Growth: Based on the Foundation's five-year strategic plan, which was finalized in 2007, the Foundation added two shared staff positions: a knowledge management officer and communications director, who both held joint positions with the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo. The Foundation's goal was to begin sharing learnings, outcomes and best practices with other foundations, non-profits and the community in general.

Success as an employer: The leadership of the Foundation believes in autonomy, fairness and growth for its employees. Employees are trusted implicitly to excel at their work, leading to high job satisfaction and extremely low employee turn-over. They are also given the opportunity to learn about the regional and national philanthropic trends and best practices, the community and other topics of relevance. In addition, because the Foundation focuses on improving the quality of life in the Buffalo Niagara region, employees feel a significant sense of fulfillment.

Promoting diversity: The composition of the Foundation's staff and board directly illustrates a commitment to diversity. In addition, the numerous programs that the Foundation supports are wide-reaching and extremely inclusive. The Oishei Leaders program, a leadership development and networking initiative created by the foundation, embraces diversity fully.

Contributions to WNY: Examples of some of the Foundation's recent activities include the awarding of \$10 million to support the new John R. Oishei Children's Hospital; the creation of a Mobile Safety-Net Team that supports individuals in need by bolstering basic human needs agencies at the community level; leadership and support for the new Buffalo Arts and Technology Center and Say Yes Buffalo; and the continuation and expansion of the Oishei Leaders Program, a uniquely unstructured leadership development and networking initiative.

Rich Products Corp.

CEO: Bill Gisel
Address: One Robert Rich Way, Buffalo, NY 14221
Phone: 716-878-8000
Website: www.richs.com
Year founded: 1945
Employees: 9,000
Revenue: \$3 billion

Overview: Rich Products is a family-owned frozen food manufacturer. We are the founder of the non-dairy segment of the frozen-food industry, and a top supplier to the foodservice, in-store bakery and retail marketplaces. A global leader in non-dairy toppings & icings, we have a strong international presence characterized by a variety of innovative products that satisfy unique local tastes and are specifically customized for each region of the world.

Growth: Rich's continued growth and success in recent years have been driven by acquisitions and product innovation. We've completed 16 acquisitions since 2000, which includes this week's announcement of our acquisitions of Gogolian Bakeries and Freal foods and establishment of our Twin Star Bakery joint venture. Product innovations during this phase of our company's growth and great success include sheeted pizza doughs, blended beverages, dairy-blended whipped topping, and Bettercream icing featuring the first-ever icing flavors to incorporate particulates and variegates. We also continue our aggressive global expansion strategy with the opening of multiple manufacturing facilities and regional corporate offices in Asia, Latin America, Europe and South Africa. As we close 2012, our company currently operates 37 manufacturing plants, including 15 outside our US and Canada business region.

Success as an employer: We live by "The Rich Promise" – to treat our customers, our associates and our communities the same way...like family. Being part of Rich's "associate family" gives meaning to our work and to our lives and it offers opportunities for growth and a satisfying career. It also sets the tone for every interaction we have with our customers, our communities and our colleagues around the world. Rich's is committed to the highest standards in our employment policies and practices. In addition, Rich's career opportunities stretch around the world.

Promoting diversity: Rich Products promotes diversity through a variety of

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programs including leadership development training, mentoring programs, manager in training programs, Our Women's Network team and professional administrative development. These programs offer a variety of development opportunities for associates and encourage collaboration among our diverse team of associates that span six continents.

Contributions to WNY: All decisions made at Rich's are guided by a set of core family values. One of the five values, "Better Our Communities," is demonstrated by the actions taken by the company and its associates to better our community in Buffalo. For example, Rich's provides millions of dollars annually in cash and product donations to WNY-based charitable causes and organizations. Additionally, through monetary donations and volunteer time from associates – in excess of 100,000 volunteer hours per year – Rich's focuses on many important causes at the local level, including education, health and wellness, nourishment, business development, child welfare, social services, the environment, sports, the arts, veterans and the elderly.

Rupp Baase Pfalzgraf Cunningham Coppola LLC

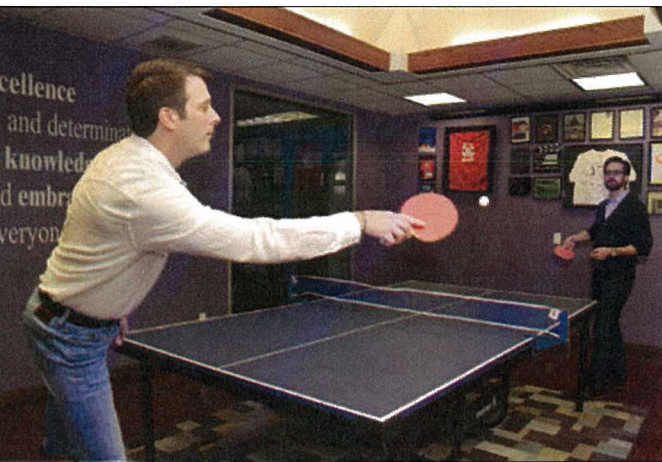
CEO: Tom Cunningham, Managing Partner
Address: 1600 Liberty Building, Buffalo, NY 14202
Phone: 716-854-3400
Website: www.ruppbaase.com
Year founded: 2000
Employees: 70

Overview: Our attorneys offer specialized assistance in a wide variety of practice areas including corporate law, commercial finance real estate, construction development law, trusts estates, commercial litigation, insurance coverage defense litigation, labor employment law, education law, property litigation, products liability subrogation, and Native American law.

Growth: Rupp Baase was formed in April 2000 by three of the named partners. Since that time, the firm has grown to its current complement of 35 attorneys, including 13 partners, with a staff of over 30. In addition to having offices on the entire 16th floor of the Liberty Building, we recently expanded to the 17th floor to accommodate our growing team. As a young, growing firm, we are excited to offer employment opportunities to new graduates. We recently added five 2012 graduates, which will bring us up to 40 attorneys when they are admitted to the state bar in February. We have offices in Buffalo and Rochester and in 2012 opened a Lockport office.

Success as an employer: Through our firm's mentoring program, we match new attorneys with experienced attorneys who have been through the transition from law school to the firm. We emphasize the development of good organizational and time management systems so that a successful work-life balance can be achieved. We have created a work environment that promotes the value of family, encouraging attorneys and support staff to become involved in the community, whether it be by serving on a board or by supporting an organization of their choice.

Promoting diversity: Rupp Baase seeks to diversify its support staff and attorneys each and every day. The Firm regularly recruits minority and disadvantaged applicants to fill a variety of positions. Members of the firm are



The culture at VoIP Supply encourages having fun at work. Playing ping pong above are Ben Sayers, CEO, and Nathan Miloszewski, communications manager.

also actively involved in numerous community organizations that help to promote diversity throughout Western New York.

Contributions to WNY: Rupp Baase is committed to building a better Buffalo. Many of our attorneys donate their time and talents by serving on local not-for-profit boards, including the Buffalo Renaissance Foundation, Kaleida Health Foundation, Ronald McDonald House, Aspire of WNY, Unyts Donate Life Foundation, and WNY United Against Drug Alcohol Abuse. They also volunteer their time at organizations such as the SPCA of Erie County, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Erie County, and Literacy Volunteers of Buffalo. Recently, ten of our attorneys participated in the Charter School for Applied Technologies Celebration of Reading event in which they were invited into classrooms to read books to students in grades K-6. Our firm's Legal Weapons for the Working Woman seminar series charges a \$15 registration fee and 100 percent of the proceeds from the series are donated to Girls on the Run, a local non-profit prevention program that prepares girls in grades 3-8 for a lifetime of self-respect and healthy living. Lastly, in just two short years of our firm's involvement with the Ride for Roswell, our team has raised over \$100,000 for cancer research and patient care. In 2012, we placed third in team donations and boasted a team of 221 riders. We hope to break that record in 2013.

Univera Healthcare

CEO: Art Wingerter
Address: 205 Park Club Lane, Buffalo, NY 14221
Phone: 716-857-4410
Website: univerahealthcare.com
Year founded: 1976
Number of employees: 510
Revenue: : \$223 million

Overview: Univera Healthcare is a non-profit health plan that is part of a family of companies financing and delivering health services for more than 1.8 million upstate New Yorkers. Based in Buffalo, the health plan serves more than 145,000 members across the eight counties that comprise Western New York. The health plan offers high-quality health insurance products (Commercial, Medicare and Safety Net products) to meet the needs of most every segment of the population. Last year it paid \$4.9 billion in health care claims payments to local hospitals, physicians and pharmacies. As of Dec. 31, 2011,

the health plan reported total enrollment of more than 1.8 million members for its business. Dental enrollment represented another 646,000 members. In addition, the health plan processes claims for more than 400,000 members of other plans who live within the service territory in upstate New York.

Success as an employer: Univera Healthcare employs 510 at its headquarters in Williamsville, placing it among Western New York's largest employers. Our employees here in Western New York have kept us at or near the top of Business First's annual ranking of Best Places to Work in WNY for several years. We are proud to be a local organization that adds to the vitality of our state and quality of life.

Promoting diversity: Our Office of Inclusion, which promotes diversity and inclusion practices throughout the organization, incorporating those practices into the corporate mission and business objectives. With support from senior leadership, our employees have established Employee Resource Groups including African-American, Latino, LGBT, Vegetarian Wellness, We Are One, Women Empowerment, and Veterans.

Contributions to WNY: In 2012, Univera Healthcare sponsored more than 80 local nonprofit organizations and initiatives. In addition to these smaller sponsorships, we made substantial investments and formed strong partnerships with several community organizations. We also offer each employee paid volunteer time off so that they can volunteer in the community. Univera Healthcare staff used their company paid volunteer time to spend a day planting, weeding and generally cleaning up the pedestrian entrance to Buffalo's historic South Park, part of the city's 19th century living landscape masterpiece designed by the pre-eminent landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted and his partners.

VoIP Supply LLC

CEO: Benjamin P. Sayers
Full address: 80 Pineview Drive, Buffalo, NY 14228
Phone: 800-398-8647
Website: www.voipsupply.com
Year founded: 2002
Employees: 37
Revenue: \$20.3 million

Overview: VoIP Supply is a division of Sayers Technology Holdings and sup-



Univera Healthcare is pleased to be recognized as one of

WNY's Most Admired Companies

and would like to thank our hard working employees and our valued members who share in this honor.

univera
 HEALTHCARE
 an excellus company

VOIP SUPPLY LLC, continued

plies VoIP equipment and integrated communication systems for businesses of all sizes, service providers and resellers.

Growth: 17 percent year-over-year growth for the last two years

Success as an employer: Business First recently ranked VoIP Supply among Western New York's top 50 privately-held companies for the eighth year in a row. VoIP Supply was recognized as the fastest growing company in WNY for 2006 by winning the Business First Fast Track 50 Award and was honored as a Best Place to Work in WNY in 2008. In addition to the company awards, what makes VoIP Supply excel as an employer is the employee benefits, which range from a "Get Out of Jail Free Card" (employees are encouraged to make a difference and take action and can use this card to if it doesn't work out, despite their best intentions) to a lounge and workout room and more, employee rewards, flexible scheduling, and more.

Promoting diversity: VoIP Supply employees are encouraged to display their unique personalities and the company hires people from a diverse set of lifestyles. The best-qualified candidates get hired regardless of their background. For example, the owner, Ben Sayers, is a college dropout and the CMO, Garrett Smith, graduated from Canisius College with a teaching degree.

Contributions to WNY: VoIP makes numerous contributions to the community. Examples include a Thanksgiving 2011 donation of 1,000 meals to Buffalo City Mission and a Christmas 2011 donation of an additional 2,000 meals; annual \$5,000 sponsorship of Camp Good Days Gala; and many more. Ongoing efforts by VoIP Supply's Sustainability Team focuses on improving company recycling efforts, efficient use of resources, seeking out volunteer opportunities, and exploring options like adding solar panels to the office building.

Walsh Duffield Cos. Inc.

CEO: John Walsh, III
Address: 801 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14203
Phone: 716-853-3820
Website: www.walshins.com
Year founded: 1860
Number of employees: : 70
Revenue: \$11 million

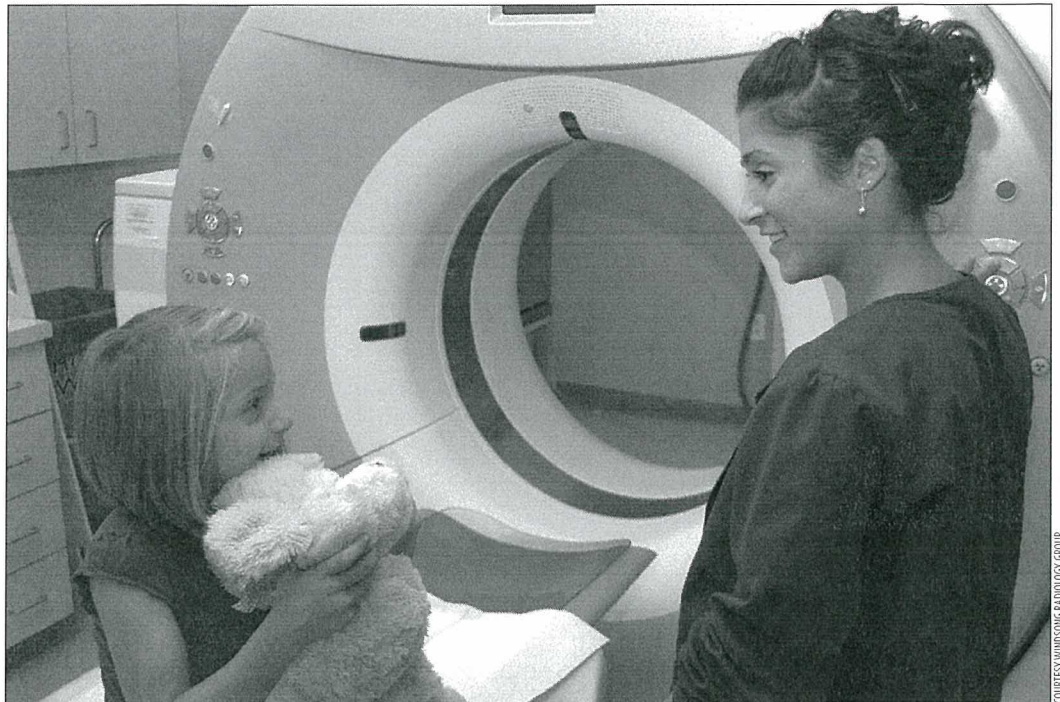
Overview: We are an independent insurance agency owned by the fourth generation of the Walsh family.

Growth: Walsh Duffield has grown from just a few employees in its earliest days to over 70 professionals representing the full WNY community and doing business in multiple states.

Success as an employer: The company is proud of its employee retention, of tributes from the community, of its sense of family closeness throughout the organization. Our recent 150th anniversary-trip with employees and their families and planting of 150 trees was a terrific bonding experience for all of us.

Promoting diversity: Walsh Duffield supports community projects that enrich WNY diversity with its time, leadership and money. More than 100 organizations have benefited from their philanthropy and board service.

Contributions to WNY: Employees of Walsh Duffield see community service as an obligation of and opportunity



Kelly Russo of Windsong Radiology Group assures a pediatric patient, "This won't hurt a bit!"

for proper citizenship. Such service is broad, generous and a lifelong tradition in the company. In no way is such service seen as a "tactic" for business development. Rather it is an opportunity to benefit those communities in which we live and to give back mindful of our good fortune. The United Way's Volunteer of the Year Award was established in honor of the Walsh family and countless recognitions from university, hospital, cultural and social service organizations have followed.

West Herr Automotive Group

President: Scott Bieler
Address: 3448 McKinley Parkway, Blasdell, NY 14219
Phone: 716-649-7711
Website: www.westherr.com
Year founded: 1950
Employees: 1,450

Overview: West Herr is New York State's largest automotive retailer with 18 locations representing 20 vehicle brands, and more than 1,200 pre-owned vehicles. We are dedicated to absolute excellence in customer service provided by honest, responsible and respectful people. We strive to be the auto dealer of choice for our customers, the employer of choice for our co-workers and a model of integrity and excellence for our industry and our community.

Growth: We have added three new locations in the last three years, including our newest location, West Herr Chevrolet of Williamsville. Our total sales have increased more than 30 percent since 2009.

Success as an employer: Our first priority is our employees. This is driven by the belief that if our employees are taken care of, they will exceed the expectations of our customers. We provide many different career paths for our employees tailored to each person's individual goals. Family events, medical emergencies, and personal time are all accommodated whenever possible. We provide excellent benefits to our

employees such as health care coverage, retirement savings plans, and paid time off. In addition, we also have many unique benefits available including company discounts, various community volunteer opportunities, and flexible working schedules.

Promoting diversity: We believe that diversity inspires new ways of thinking which supports our drive towards continuous improvement and being an employer of choice.

Contributions to WNY: As a company, we donate time and resources to many local charities including Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Child and Family Services Buffalo, and Hospice of Buffalo. We also sponsor numerous local organizations through fundraisers, gift donations, and volunteerism. For example, in 2012, our West Herr Wishes program will help 500 families in Western New York have a better holiday through toys and gifts donated to families in need through our local school districts.

Windsong Radiology Group

CEO: Dr. Thomas Summers (president) and Deanna Schiller (administrator)
Address: 55 Spindrift Drive, Williamsville, NY 14221
Phone: 716-631-2500
Website: windsongradiology.com
Year founded: 1987
Number of employees: 225

Overview: We are a diagnostic radiology center of excellence where personalized care, world-class imaging and all compassion meet. Our team of board certified and fellowship trained radiologists have served the community for over 25 years, living the motto, "Where patients come first." We were the first facility locally to achieve full diagnostic accreditation from the American College of Radiology and we are the only NAPBC certified breast center in the area.

Growth: We have added 50 full-time positions in the last five years. We are very fortunate to have very low turn-

over, and over 45 percent of our team members have been with Windsong for seven years or more. People come here to contribute to the team, dedicating their entire career to patient care, many now retired from Windsong over the last 25 years.

Success as an employer: We try to put ourselves in the shoes of our team members, providing a competitive wage and benefit packages; including 401(k) and profit sharing, investing in team member training – individually and professionally, providing a culture of wellness and offering opportunities to train on and work with state of the art medical equipment. We invest in team building, truly celebrating the value of team members and recognizing them through several annual events and individualized incentives.

Promoting diversity: In the spirit of being devoted to overall excellence, we seek self-motivated, compassionate individuals who reflect our core commitment and values. We encourage team members of all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds to bring ever increasing levels of patient service, treating each person as if they were a member of our own family. We want our team to be reflective of the communities we serve.

Contributions to WNY: Our focus has always been consistent: We make every effort to provide only the highest quality, medically necessary imaging with immediate results. We strive to be accessible for patients from anywhere in the region. Our goal is to provide a high service level in a safe and calming environment and to ensure that we have the image management down pat. Beyond metrics and teamwork, we know that medicine is not standardized science; it is an art form. The bottom line is that networks of high-quality care yield better outcomes and lower costs. That's where we want to be, and we believe that's where all medical practices need to be.