

AFRICAN AMERICAN



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Monthly News & Updates

February 5, 2026 |
Issue 13

▶ Business Institute Presents



BUSINESS INSTITUTE PRESENTS

How to do Business with UPMC Webinar

Wednesday, February 11, 2026
11:00am - 12:00pm

Join us and learn about the process of doing business with UPMC. Create new opportunities for your small business by becoming an approved supplier of goods & services for UPMC.

If your organization is interested in doing business with UPMC you will not want to miss this workshop.

This event is for Chamber Members Only!

Sponsored by: COMCAST Business

Click here to RSVP



BUSINESS INSTITUTE PRESENTS

Understanding Succession Planning Webinar

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

11:00am - 12:00pm

Join us for the first webinar in our three-part series featuring Orlando Houston, Managing Partner and Financial Consultant at Ohana Wealth Legacy. Orlando will cover what succession planning is, why it matters, the risks of not having a plan, common misconceptions and barriers, and an overview of key succession planning models.

[**Click here to RSVP**](#)



BUSINESS INSTITUTE PRESENTS

Navigating Your Cash Flow Webinar

Thursday, February 19, 2026

11:00am - 12:00pm

Join us for this special webinar as Tim Roseboro, Vice President and Senior Business Consultant for JPMorganChase discusses cash flow basics, how to increase cash in, how to decrease cash out, and how to make cash work for you to maximize your business success.

Don't Miss It!

[**Click here to RSVP**](#)



PowerBreakfast Meeting with Pittsburgh Public Schools

Friday, February 20, 2026

8:30am - 10:00am

Rivers Club

One Oxford Centre, 4th Floor

301 Grant Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Join us for a presentation by Dr. Wayne N. Walters, Superintendent for Pittsburgh Public Schools on how PPS is building a future-ready school district and learn how business leaders can play a meaningful role in supporting our schools.

[**Click here to RSVP**](#)



BUSINESS INSTITUTE PRESENTS

Building a Strong Succession Strategy Webinar

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

11:00am - 12:00pm

Join us for the second webinar in our three-part series featuring Orlando Houston, Managing Partner and Financial Consultant at Ohana Wealth Legacy. Orlando will share practical insights on identifying critical roles and future leaders, competency mapping and leadership development, key legal and financial considerations, and effective communication strategies for stakeholders.

[**Click here to RSVP**](#)

Simple Access to SBA Surety Bonds

Discover the Power of Surety Bonding:
How to Obtain SBA Surety Bonds and
Grow Your Bonding Capacity



19 March 2026

11:00 AM - 12:15 PM

AFRICAN AMERICAN



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Why Attend?

- ✓ Become bondable and qualify for more opportunities
- ✓ Access SBA surety bonds to help you compete and win
- ✓ Increase bonding capacity to bid larger projects



Register to Join

link to attend or scan QR code:
<https://aaccwp.com/event/simple-access-to-sba-surety-bonds/>



Peter C. Gibbs
President & CEO

Foundation Surety & Insurance Solutions, LLC



BUSINESS INSTITUTE PRESENTS

Implementing and Sustaining the Plan Webinar

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

11:00am - 12:00pm

Join us for the third and final webinar in our three-part series featuring Orlando Houston, Managing Partner and Financial Consultant at Ohana Wealth Legacy. Orlando will walk through how to implement a succession plan effectively, monitor and update it over time, manage resistance and cultural change, and use technology to support succession planning.

[**Click here to RSVP**](#)



Member Events

Upcoming GACO Webinars with "Go-To-Guy" Timberlake

"Find Needs, Not Opportunities." Strategy to Business Development: Jumping to the Front of the Line Webinar - February 24, 2026 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Session 2 (February 24): "Find Needs, Not Opportunities." Strategy to Business Development: Jumping to the Front of the Line

Most companies in federal contracting neglect a key competitive differentiator: talking to Customers, not just Buyers. Everyone joins the hunt when RFIs, RFPs, or RFQs drop. The trick is knowing about Customers, their objectives, and their current and future needs before those requirements reach the contracting office. Based on 40 years of practitioner-developed principles, this session shows what information develops leads, when business development happens, and how market research positions you ahead of competitors and opportunities. That's jumping to the front of the line.

About Our Speaker

"Go-To-Guy" Timberlake is the face and voice of The American Small Business Coalition (The ASBC) and is focused on creating and facilitating programs like Ethical Stalking for Government Contractors®, which has helped and continues to help companies thrive in federal contracting by changing their mindsets and rewriting their scripts.

Session 2 - Register by February 23, 2026: <https://cupgaco.ecenterdirect.com/events/932>

For more information, contact Valerie Kachur at kachur_v@pennwest.edu or 412-237-6098

CARNEGIE MUSEUMS CELEBRATES

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Saturday, Feb. 7

11 a.m.–3 p.m. | free with museum admission

Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History
4400 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh PA



- *Envisioning A Just Pittsburgh* Program and Performance, 11 a.m.
- Community Archivist Talk, Noon
- Docent Guided Tour: Black Artists and Connections to Pittsburgh, 1 p.m.
- Step Performance by The National Pan-Hellenic Council, 1:30 p.m.
- Drumming and Dancing by Sankofa Village, 2 p.m.

 CARNEGIE
MUSEUMS

UNDERSTANDING & OBTAINING DIVERSITY CERTIFICATIONS

ATTENTION SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

STAY CURRENT AND BE PREPARED FOR THE 2026 NFL DRAFT AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

New, existing and upcoming supplier diversity opportunities are a certification away. Check your certifications and stay current and prepared for the next big opportunity!

MBE Certification of Minority-owned Businesses (Pennsylvania - DBE Certification Management System)
Go to:

paucp.dbesystem.com

WBE Certification for Women-owned Businesses (Pennsylvania - DBE Certification Management System)
Go to:

paucp.dbesystem.com

MWBE Certification for Minority & Women-owned Business Enterprise (Pennsylvania - DBE Certification Management System) Go to:

paucp.dbesystem.com

DBE Certification for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (Pennsylvania - DBE Certification Management System) Go to:

paucp.dbesystem.com

WBENC Women's Business Enterprise National Council; Go to:
www.wbenc.org

NMSDC National Minority Supplier Diversity Council; Go to:
www.nmsdc.org

EMSDC Eastern Minority Supplier Diversity Council; Go to: emsdc.org

DGS Pennsylvania's Department of General Services; Go to:
dgs.pa.gov

City of Pittsburgh; Go to:
pittsburghpa.gov

Allegheny County; Go to:
www.alleghenycounty.us

▶ Spotlight Your Business

Spot on Business 1

Put Your Business In The Chamber's '2026 Spotlight'

Learn more about this opportunity to showcase your business by sponsoring a Chamber Business Institute Program. 2026 sponsorships are available.

Learn more at 412-392-0610 or:

▶ Share Your News

Share Your 2026 News, Events, and Hiring Opportunities

Are your sales up, have you opened a new office, are you hiring new staff members, or have an upcoming event? Your Chamber wants to share your 'Good News' with other Members in our monthly Newsletter.

email us

SCAM ALERT

If you receive an email that says the following it is a scam!

Are you interested in obtaining the latest Distribution/Members List.

- African American Chamber of Commerce of Western Pennsylvania 2025
- Pennsylvania, USA

This list includes 1,000+ valuable Contacts that can enhance your outreach and networking efforts.

Please let me know if you would like to proceed, and I'll share the pricing and further details.

Looking forward to your reply.

Chamber Social Media Sites

The African American Chamber of Commerce of Western Pennsylvania has a new social media sites.

- Please [click here](#) to follow us on Facebook!
- Please [click here](#) to follow us on Instagram



Miscellaneous News

For the seventh year in a row, the Pirates and PNC are teaming up to highlight small businesses in our community through Going to Bat for Small Business, presented by PNC. Six (6) small businesses will receive a marketing package valued at \$100,000 with the goals of driving business and highlighting the positive things these small businesses are doing in their communities. We are accepting applications now through February 10th at www.pirates.com/smallbusiness. This website also includes information about the recipients from past years.

Business owners will be able to nominate their business online, and a selection committee will meet to review the submissions and select the six (6) businesses.

The selection committee will be made up of past small business recipients, media organizations, community organizations, and chambers of commerce.

We are excited to continue to celebrate small businesses, and we would love to have your assistance in the selection process. Please let me know if you have any questions!

Thanks!

Katie Shockey

Director, Corporate Partnership Activation

412-325-4949

katie.shockey@pirates.com



Introducing: AI Essentials for Small Business Success

The Chamber has partnered with YMUai™, a people-first AI consultancy, to bring you a practical series on using artificial intelligence to save time, cut costs, and grow your business, no tech degree required.

Issue 1: AI Demystified: What Small Business Owners Actually Need to Know
You've heard the buzz. AI this, AI that. But between serving customers, managing cash flow, and wearing every hat in your business, who has time to figure out what's real and what's hype?

Here's the truth: AI isn't just for tech giants anymore. And you don't need to become a tech expert to benefit from it.

So what exactly is AI?

Think of it as software that learns patterns and helps you work faster. When your phone filters spam or suggests a text reply—that's AI. Now, free tools like Claude put that same power directly in your hands.

Why should small businesses care?

The owners adopting AI today aren't replacing their teams—they're freeing them. Less time on repetitive tasks means more time on what actually grows revenue: relationships, strategy, and service.

At YMUai, we call this "people-centered intelligence." Your mission leads. The technology follows.

Three free tools to try today:

- Claude (claude.ai) – Draft emails, brainstorm ideas, summarize documents
- Canva AI – Create professional graphics and marketing materials in minutes
- Notion AI – Organize notes, projects, and documents with built-in AI assistance
- 💡 Try the R.O.L.E. Prompting Method:

Get better results by telling AI four things:

- Role – Who should it be? ("Act as a marketing consultant...")
- Objective – What do you need? ("Write an email announcing...")
- Length/Format – How should it look? ("Keep it under 150 words...")
- Extra Context – Who's the audience? What's the tone? ("Professional but warm.")

Want to practice? [Try our free R.O.L.E. Prompt Builder tool →](#)

[Delvina Morrow](#)

Founder, Gleea & YMUai

Where kindness meets intelligence.

These businesses each won \$10,000. *Will yours be next?*



POSE EXPERIENCE
2025 WINNER

MONTVILLE FLORIST
2025 WINNER

DURYEA ELECTRIC
2025 WINNER

Enter to win a Citizens Small Business Community Champion Award*

Spreading joy in their community. Celebrating their neighbors. Creating the next generation of workers. Small businesses positively impact our communities in countless ways and, if yours does too, we want to know about it.

Tell us how your small business supports your community, and you can be one of 20 winners to receive \$10,000 and a 1-year Luminary membership for access to resources, tools and networking. Entering takes only a few minutes and is exclusively for Citizens Business Banking customers. Scan the QR code or go to the website to get started.



citizensbcc.com

Share how your small business supports your community for
a chance to win \$10,000! Entries accepted January 20–February 10.

*No purchase necessary. The Small Business Community Champion Award is sponsored by Citizens Bank, N.A. Open to legal residents of the 50 U.S. states and D.C. who are 18 years of age or older and employees or owners of an Eligible Small Business that is a Citizens Business Banking account holder. See Official Rules for details. Begins at 10 am ET on 1/20/25 and ends at 5 pm ET on 2/10/25. Void where prohibited. For details and Official Rules, visit citizensbcc.com. 3294696_0015_205BCCA_CCT





Open For Business

FREE EXPERT HELP FOR YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

Feeling overwhelmed by your business? Need help but don't know where to turn?

We're here to help.

The Open for Business program connects you with experienced consultants in marketing, accounting, legal services, and more.

You get one-on-one business guidance, access to proven strategies, and the opportunity to join a 12-month mentorship cohort.

Services are tailored to meet your actual needs and are **completely free**.

Who Can Apply?

Eligible existing small businesses and nonprofits located in Allegheny County.

- **Accounting**

Payroll, Tax Strategy & Document Prep, Bookkeeping, Projections

- **Credit Counseling**

Personal Credit, Business Credit

- **General Consulting**

Strategic Planning, Business Plan, Expansion Plan, Pivoting, Processes

- **Legal**

Entity Formation, Contract Review, Operating Agreement, Commercial Leases

- **Marketing**

Marketing Plans, Logos & Graphic Design, Digital Marketing & Social Media Strategy

- **Digital Skills Training**

Google Business Profile, Social Media Audit, Technology Tools

Visit www.paramountpursuits.com/OFB to apply



Pennsylvania Needs Teachers

Pennsylvania is in the midst of a teacher shortage crisis, which threatens our students' futures, along with the future well-being and prosperity of our commonwealth. That's why we're proud to stand with [PA Needs Teachers](https://www.paneedsteachers.com), a statewide coalition working to address this issue. By taking a moment to visit the link below, you can easily email your elected officials and encourage them to invest at least \$40 million in the Student Teacher Stipend Program — a proven, cost-effective, bipartisan strategy to rebuild our educator pipeline. Together, we can address the root causes of the shortage and build the excellent and diverse teacher workforce that every student deserves. <https://www.paneedsteachers.com/take-action>

Small Business Benefits That Deliver Big Impact

Many small businesses assume competitive benefits are out of reach due to cost. The reality is that some of the most effective benefit programs aren't the most expensive...they're simply the most intentional. For employers with limited budgets, the goal shouldn't be to match Fortune 500 benefit plays, but to focus on offerings that employees genuinely value and use.

One of the highest impact benefits is flexibility. Flexible scheduling, hybrid work options, and generous PTO policies consistently rank among the top drivers of employee satisfaction, often at little to no direct cost. For many employees, flexibility can outweigh higher salaries elsewhere.

Another powerful option is financial wellness support. Benefits such as student loan repayment assistance, emergency savings programs, or access to financial coaching help employees manage real-life stressors. Even modest contributions or educational tools can significantly improve engagement and retention.

Mental health resources are also increasingly important. Expanding Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), offering virtual counseling, or providing mental health days sends a clear message that employee well-being matters. These programs are often affordable and widely appreciated. Small businesses can also benefit from offering voluntary benefits, such as accident insurance, critical illness coverage, or pet insurance. While these benefits are typically employee-paid, they enhance the overall benefits package and give employees more choice without increasing employer costs.

Finally, clear communication can amplify the value of every benefit offered. Simple benefit summaries, short videos, or manager talking points help employees understand and appreciate what's available to them.

In today's competitive labor market, small businesses don't need the biggest benefits budget to compete. By focusing on flexibility, well-being, financial support, and communication, employers can build benefits programs that punch well above their weight.

The African American Chamber of Commerce offers its members access to My Benefit Advisor as a solution for employee benefits, including voluntary offerings. For more information about My Benefit Advisor, visit our website at aacc.mybenefitadvisor.com or contact Craig Pritts at (800) 377-3539.



In the New Pittsburgh Courier

New Pittsburgh Courier Sales Director Ashley Johnson presents a proclamation from Congresswoman Summer Lee to Mary Cooper-Ali.

Thank you to member Dr. Nosakhare Griffin-El for his article "Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, speaks to today's children."

Congratulations to member Dr. Nosakhare Griffin-El for being a member of the Men of Excellence, Class of 2025.

Congratulations to Jennifer Thompkins for being named the President and CEO of the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh.

In the Pittsburgh Business Times

Thank you to members Jenn Beer, Kenya Boswell, Ann Flynn Schlicht Kate Murphy, and Patriece Thompson for being mentors for Mentoring Monday.

S&T plans on opening a retail branch in Pittsburgh's North Side neighborhood.

Congratulations to Jennifer Thompkins for being named the President and CEO of the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh.

Congratulations to Karen Hanlon, Mark Sevco, Michael Sexauer, newly minted top executives.

In the Pittsburgh Magazine

Congratulations to member Jeremy Waldrup for being named Pittsburgher of the Year.

Congratulations to member Tammy Thompson for her recognition for strong leadership.

Career Opportunities

Pittsburgh Regional Transit

Assistant Manager – Bus & Rail Operations

To provide support and assistance to the Director – Bus and Rail Operations with regard to administrative services such as payroll and monitoring and analysis of operating budgets and programs, at the Port Authority of Allegheny County d/b/a Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT). Manages and monitors dispatcher work assignments and scheduled absences to ensure system coverage.

Essential Functions:

- Directly oversees the dispatch personnel in the department.
- Manages the dispatcher extra-board to assure work assignments are filled consistently with the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement and departmental guidelines. Monitors the overtime assignments made by dispatchers at the operating locations and coordinates the filling of work assignments that cannot be filled within a given location. Conducts and coordinates picks for dispatcher work assignments and vacations.
- Works with the Payroll Department and system users to research payroll discrepancies and/or errors between the Dispatch-Bid system and PeopleSoft. Performs corrective adjustments within the Dispatch-Bid system. Communicates daily with system users to provide support and troubleshooting assistance for PAAC's Dispatch-Bid system.

Job requirements include:

- BA/BS Degree in Business Administration, Public Administration, Accounting, Economics or directly related field from an accredited school. Directly related experience may be substituted for the education on a year-for-year basis.
- Minimum of (3) years experience in public transit operations.
- Demonstrated ability in the use of Windows, Microsoft Word and Excel.
- Effective and professional communication skills.

Preferred attributes:

- Minimum of three (3) years' experience as a bus/rail division dispatcher in public mass transit.
- Prior experience with HASTUS Daily modules. Prior experience with PeopleSoft.

Annual Salary \$78,300 - \$117,400

We offer a comprehensive compensation and benefits package. Interested candidates should forward a cover letter (with salary requirements) and resume to:

Missy Ramsey
Employment Department
345 Sixth Avenue, 3rd Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-2527
MRamsey@RidePRT.org

Project and Budget Analyst

Pittsburgh Regional Transit is seeking a Project and Budget Analyst to provide budget, invoicing, and project support for AIS and agency initiatives. Provides project coordination activities such as planning, communications, implementation support and training. Manage invoice process and renewal activities. Assists in developing contract specifications for a variety of office equipment and supplies for Port Authority of Allegheny County d/b/a Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT). Research products for price quotes according to specifications, developing requests for bids, ordering office supplies, furniture and equipment, and reconciling invoices and resolving invoice discrepancies. Analyzes equipment and supply costs and provides input on proposed capital and budget expenditures.

Essential Functions:

- Coordinates and executes project support tasks including project planning, inventory preparations, event support, activity tracking, project delivery preparations, communications preparations, project reports, implementation support, training, and other project support as needed.
- Manage purchasing vehicles for information technology services and equipment, including RFPs, RFQs, Bids, work orders, and invoices, ensuring adherence to all federal and state procurement regulations and PRT processes. Track budgets for technology lines of business and provide recommendations for future budget adjustments and requests.
- Lead tracking and timeline of information technology bid and service renewals, ensuring that bids and RFPs are prepared and released in a timely manner.

Job requirements include:

- High school diploma or GED.
- Associate's degree or two (2) years of college in business administration, finance, information technology, data analytics or a related field from an accredited college or university. Related experience may substitute for education on a year-for-year basis.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills
- Highly effective and professional communication skills with a customer-centric mindset.
- Excellent writing skills Excellent detail-oriented organizational skills
- Proven fiscal management skills.
- Proven history in customer facing role.
- Project management, coordination, and/or execution experience related to communications, implementation, and/or training
- Demonstrated ability in the use of Microsoft Office 365, including Teams, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and SharePoint.

Preferred attributes:

- Project Management certification
- Process improvement experience.
- Proven experience in vendor coordination
- Minimum of one (1) year experience in writing Bid and RFP specifications for information technology or other technical products and services. No certifications or licenses required.
- Experience evaluating, implementing, configuring, and managing information technology systems and services, or related technical and application management experience.
- Experience leading projects from a coordination, analysis, definition, implementation, and training perspective.
- Demonstrated ability in the use of project management methodologies and software for tracking tasks and outcomes.
- Experience managing RFP and bid processes in the government sector.
- Experience writing bid and RFP specifications, preferably with technology-centric requirements.
- Customer-centric approach to both use of technology services for internal optimization and ultimate end-result for patrons.

We offer a comprehensive compensation and benefits package. Interested candidates should forward a cover letter (with salary requirements) and resume to:

Glenn Huetter
Employment Department
345 Sixth Avenue, 3rd Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-2527
GHuetter@RidePRT.org

Advance Sourcing Concepts

We have a position open for an Inside Sales

Representative: <https://apply.appone.com/job/695d4ce556526a5e9ab6daca>

Executive Assistant to Real Estate

President: <https://apply.appone.com/job/695c11fc56526a5e9ab6da42>

▶ FYI



The NFL has listed their opportunities to do business. Please click this link in order to submit a form of interest <https://2026nfldraftsuppliers.com/>. Please scroll to the bottom of the page a click submit an interest form.

FYI

Interested in Business Property in Allegheny County? Learn about property for sale in Allegheny County, property taxes, and property assessments. Go to: **realestate.alleghenycounty.us**

Did You Know

The upcoming 2026 NFL Draft in Pittsburgh is just over 100 days away. Get updates and learn about the activities planned for the 2026 NFL Draft at www.visitpittsburgh.com



New Members

REGULAR MEMBERS

Delvina Morrow

YMUai, Your Mission Unstoppable

<https://www.ymuai.com/>

SUPPORTING MEMBERS

David Ombres

T-Mobile for Nonprofits

<https://www.t-mobile.com/>

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Darla Poole

Auberle

<https://www.auberle.org/>

Is your Chamber Membership up for renewal?

Renew Your Membership Now at:

information@aaccwp.com



412.392.0610