

Contact the Chamber office at  
724-465-2511

# The Chamber Connection

[www.indianacountychamber.us](http://www.indianacountychamber.us)

APRIL 2024, ISSUE 4

Editor Sydney Bower



## BOARD MINUTES

### Call to Order

Chamber Chairman Dave Reed with First Commonwealth Bank started the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. The February 2024 board meeting minutes and financial reports were reviewed and approved.

### College of Osteopathic Medicine

Dr. Miko Rose, founding Dean of the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Proposed College of Osteopathic Medicine (Applicant status— seeking accreditation), was a guest of the board and provided updates on the progress being made with the school. Dr. Rose focused on one of the goals of the proposed new school, being to help address the critical shortage of physicians in rural populations.

### WHAT'S INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- *March Board Minutes*
- *Levity Brewing Business After Hours Article*
- *March Ribbon Cuttings*
- *KCAC Upcoming Events*
- *Renewing Members*







# BOARD MINUTES

*Continued*

Dr. Rose informed the board that once allowed to recruit students, she plans on working with Indiana County school districts to help identify students with target characteristics that could help them to develop the skills necessary to be successful in the healthcare industry

“Thank you for inviting me to join this meeting. I am excited about many future collaborations and could not be more excited to join the Indiana community.”

## **Chamber Update**

Chamber President Mark Hilliard began his report by discussing the reaction to the recent announcement that First Commonwealth Bank has donated its downtown Indiana branch at 600 Philadelphia Street to the county to be the new home of the Indiana County Chamber of Commerce, the Indiana County Tourist Bureau, and Downtown Indiana. The location will also serve as a welcome center for Indiana County. Hilliard said that a lot of work went into the planning and development of the donation.

“This was a project that had to make sense for the county, had to make sense for the residents of our county, and had to make sense for our individual organizations, so a lot of time went into ironing out all of the details to come to arrangement that made sense for everybody and truly would create an opportunity to benefit the county,” Hilliard stated.

While further details will become available soon, Hilliard informed the board that the reaction thus far has been overwhelmingly positive.

“People seem genuinely excited about what this collaboration will mean and what opportunities it will present for our county,” Hilliard said. “There are still some challenges to work out, but we all feel so strongly that the end result will be a product that our county is proud of and an asset that will help advance us forward.”



# BOARD MINUTES

*Continued*

Hilliard continued the Chamber report by discussing some education initiatives in the coming months that the Chamber is involved in. Tickets are now on sale for the Excellence in Education awards banquet on May 13 at the Kovalchick Convention and Athletic Complex in Indiana. Last year's event was attended by nearly 600 individuals. This event will see 56 students of the month chosen from each of the Indiana County public schools recognized, with one student ultimately being awarded a brand-new vehicle from Colonial Motor Mart. It will also see 8 teachers from the county school districts recognized with one of them also winning a brand-new vehicle. Hilliard stated that this is an event not just for the education community, but one for the entire region to support.

"We are working on details that will make this one of the most fun, exciting, and motivating events that anyone will attend all year," Hilliard said. "And it is absolutely not just for individuals in the education field as this is something that the entire community could and should get behind and will walk away feeling glad that they did."

According to Hilliard, they are looking for businesses to sponsor the event to help provide the scholarships. A limited number of sponsorships will be available, and Hilliard said that many businesses have already expressed interest. If your business would like to be a part of the Excellence in Education event, please contact the Chamber office at 724-465-2511.

Hilliard concluded his report by announcing that this spring the Chamber will once again partner with ARIN IU 28 in conducting a soft skills challenge in Downtown Indiana for students. The event will see each high school send juniors and seniors into the downtown on their scheduled day with the students splitting up into small groups and travelling around the Downtown to various locations to partake in challenges geared towards enhancing soft skills. Skills such as teamwork, communication, and critical thinking will be needed at each location with places such as the Jimmy Stewart Museum, the Indiana County Courthouse, and retail locations highlighted throughout the day.







# BOARD MINUTES

*Continued*

## County Government

Indiana County Commissioner Mike Keith began the county update by informing the board that the Commissioners have begun to work closely with all of the county departments in an effort to create more efficiency overall.

Commissioner Keith explained that the commissioners are asking the department directors to take a close look at the operations and attempt to identify deficiencies that may exist. In addition, Commissioner Keith stated that the commissioners are also working closely with all of Indiana County's municipal governments in an effort to help move the county forward.

"There are 67 counties in Pennsylvania and they all work differently," Commissioner Keith explained. "We need to focus on these collaborations and finding ways to work together to provide a better future for our county."

Commissioner Sherene Hess added to the county update noting that outdoors season is about to begin and the County Parks and Trails department is busy making repairs and addressing deferred maintenance at the many facilities throughout Indiana County that the department oversees. There is a need for maintenance workers.

Hess continued her report acknowledging that the Indiana County Conservation District has received an exceptional rating from the State Conservation Committee for its Dirt and Gravel and Low Volume Road Quality Assurance/Quality Control report. An Exceptional rating is a notable accomplishment because of the hard work and dedication to detail of the District employee team, and the District's municipal partners.



# BOARD MINUTES

*Continued*

Hess noted that as chair of the District she is particularly proud of all the employees, especially those who are marking significant longevity in years being employed there, and of the support the District provides for the community, including the Youth Envirothons, conservation and recreation development project support such as the Tide Trail project in Center Township, and the Agricultural Conservation Assistance Program, which will infuse hundreds of thousands of dollars into conservation projects that will save producers money and enhance their operations. Hess invited all interested to attend the public board meeting of the District where a representative of the State Conservation Committee will present commendations for the QA/QC report accomplishments. District board meetings occur the third Tuesday of the month at 9:30 am..

## University/Education

Dr. Michael Driscoll, President of Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), reported to the board about Governor Josh Shapiro's recently announced blueprint for higher education which aims to increase accessibility and affordability and to further align degree programs with Pennsylvania's workforce needs.

Governor Shapiro's plan also recognizes the need for Pennsylvania to better fund public higher education

Right now, Pennsylvania is 49th in the country for per-student funding. The plan would start by building a new system for higher education consisting of the State System universities and the community college. Implementing the blueprint will take multiple years. Currently the State System Board of Governors requested a 6.5% increase in state appropriations for fiscal year 2024-2025, which would allow them to not increase tuition for another year.

The University report concluded with Dr. Driscoll announcing that on March 22, IUP will hold a kick-off for its Build Back Better (BBB) Collaboration with Cambria and Armstrong Counties for an entrepreneurial makerspace ecosystem. The \$1.5 million grant was part of the Southwestern Pennsylvania New Economy Collaborative BBB regional grant awarded by the United States Economic Development Administration in September 2022. The kick-off will take place at the IUP Northpointe campus in Armstrong County.







# BOARD MINUTES

*Continued*

## County/ICDC

Byron Stauffer, Jr., Executive Director of the Indiana County Development Corporation (ICDC) and the Indiana County Office of Planning & Development began his report by discussing the commitment that Indiana County is making to improving the broadband service. The county is working with a number of companies including REA Energy/In the Stix Broadband (REA/ITXBB) and Salsgiver, Inc. to provide broadband internet service to as many unserved or underserved locations as possible with the current available funding. Mr. Stauffer indicated that he is hopeful that anyone whose home or business does not have sufficient broadband service will have the opportunity to provide feedback in an effort to potentially identify future broadband projects for the county with upcoming funding opportunities through the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority.

Mr. Stauffer concluded his report by announcing that the Southwest Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) will be holding another round of Public Participation Panel (PPP) meetings for Indiana County beginning with the first on May 8th at PA CareerLink, located at 300 Indian Springs Road in Indiana. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for years 2025-2028 is being developed, and the draft TIP will be made available for public review at these meetings. The region's long range transportation plan is implemented with a series of shorter-term investment plans, known as Transportation Improvement Programs, or TIPs. Each TIP is a step along that 25-year investment in our region's future. Staff from SPC, PennDOT, and the Indiana County Office of Planning and Development will also take part in the public meetings.

"The Southwest Pennsylvania Commission will be unveiling transportation projects for the next four years at this meeting and they are seeking public comment that can help to shape these plans moving forward," Mr. Stauffer reported.





# BOARD MINUTES

*Continued*

## Tourism

Greg Van Horn, President of the Indiana County Tourist Bureau (ICTB), thanked First Commonwealth Bank along with the Indiana County Commissioners for the opportunity to be involved in the development of a new Welcome Center for Indiana County. He added that ICTB is looking forward to increased collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Indiana and the benefits this relationship will bring to the entire county.

Van Horn informed the board that there are a few upcoming events which are sure to bring visitors to the area. The PA Taxidermist Association returns for the third year to the Kovalchick Convention and Athletic Center (KCAC) and the Hilton Garden Inn Indiana at IUP for their 45th Annual Taxidermy & Wildlife Art Competition, Convention & Trade Show, March 20 – 24, 2024. There will be a Sportsman's Show open to the public on Saturday, March 23 from 10am – 4pm and the Taxidermy Competition Arena will be open from 12pm – 4pm. There will be over 40 vendors to see, raffles, demonstrations, food truck and more.

The association draws over 300 members who travel from across the state and beyond to attend this annual convention.

The KCAC will once again host the Indiana-Armstrong Builders Association and their Spring Home Show, April 5 – 7 and then the PA State Twirling Championships on April 20, 2024.

The Smicksburg Specialty Shops will kick-off the shopping season with a Spring Open House on March 23 and the Pleasure Valley Raceway will be hosting the PAMX Spring Championship, April 27 – 28, 2024.

Van Horn congratulated the Northern Appalachian Folk Festival, Inc. (NAFF) on the March 16th soft launch of the Jim Rogers & Ken Holliday Folk School of Arts & Humanities. According to organizers, The NAFF Folk School will serve our community as an institution for music, dance, the arts and other forms of vernacular cultural expression.







# BOARD MINUTES

## Continued

This will be the first establishment of its kind in the area with courses offered throughout the year at the NAFF Center, located at 580 Philadelphia St, Indiana, PA 15701. To learn more and for a schedule of events, visit [www.naffinc.org](http://www.naffinc.org).

Van Horn explained that ICTB will soon be releasing a new edition of the Seasonal Events Brochure featuring upcoming events for April, May & June 2024. ICTB members are encouraged to continue to submit their events throughout the year.

Van Horn added that for the first time in many years, ICTB will be attending the Pennsylvania Bus Association Marketplace in State College on March 25 & 26, 2024. Indiana County will be well represented by Laura Herrington, ICTB Executive Director, and Janie McKirgan, President of The Jimmy Stewart Museum. The PBA Marketplace provides an opportunity to meet directly with Motorcoach Operators and Group Tour Leaders and discuss group travel opportunities.

## White Township

Chauncey Ross, public relations and communications specialist from White Township informed the board that site plans have been approved for a new veterans' outpatient medical clinic on IRMC drive at South Sixth Street; for a Raising Canes fast food chicken restaurant on Oakland Avenue at what many may still know as Renaissance Circle; for a medical office building next to the 119 Professional Center on Hospital Road; for a new scale house at Sadler Construction Company on Airport Road; and for a solar power array on McNaughton Brothers storage center property at Wayne Avenue and Old Route 119. Texas Roadhouse has had a township building permit in hand several months and may soon be ready to break ground. Jersey Mike's opened last Wednesday on Oakland Avenue, and Primanti Bros. is opening its doors this week.

In other business, Ross reported that the township has contracted with Shadco Excavating, of Home (Indiana County) for replacement of the stormwater drainage system on Apache Drive east of Jimmy Stewart Airport.



# BOARD MINUTES

*Continued*

White Township had Guyer Brothers, of New Enterprise, Bedford County, in town for three recent projects: relining the Indian Springs Road sanitary sewer main pipeline, and stormwater drain pipes on Cambridge Street in Monticello and Edgewood Avenue in White's Woods.

Ross also announced that the Route 286 East sanitary sewage service extension project by Bison Construction Company is now on track for completion and start of service in May. The company is experiencing supply line delays in delivery of a generator for a pump station.

Gail McCauley, chairwoman of the board of supervisors and a member of Indiana County's committee planning for the 2026 festivities marking the 250th anniversary of America's independence, has organized a planning session within White Township with an eye on entertainment/education productions on stage at the township amphitheater at the recreation complex along East Pike.

Supervisor Sandi Gillette and the township administration will meet next week to chart out the development of the amphitheater and its programming. The township is exploring opportunities for external funding, such as through naming rights, for fleshing out the budget for construction and future operation of the amphitheater

The recreation complex is phasing from primarily internal activity in S&T Bank Arena to the outdoor fields and courts seasons. Indiana High baseball has begun practices, soccer season will ramp up again soon, tennis courts will become active.

Ross also reported to the board that the township will host its first festival-type event this summer, the White Township Emergency Services Expo, on Saturday, June 29 at the recreation complex. The first line emergency responders – the state police, Indiana and Creekside fire companies and Citizens' Ambulance – will anchor this event and 10 other agencies directly related to emergency service will take part.





# BOARD MINUTES

## *Continued*

The township is providing this opportunity for people in emergency services to show off their vehicles and equipment, demonstrate their skills and talents, to build strong relationships with the community and especially youngsters and young adults who are forming their aspirations for the future.

“It’s a chance to change people’s thinking – when they hear the sirens and see the flashing lights, it doesn’t just mean there’s trouble, but there are people there to help,” Mr. Ross stated. “Ultimately, we’d like to see people telling the emergency responders, ‘this is great, I want to do this, I want to be like you,’ and for the people at the agencies to say ‘here is how you start.’”

The township report concluded with the announcement that the White’s Woods draft stewardship plan public comment period closes 4 p.m. Friday, March 22. Find the plan and an online comment form on the township website, [whitetownship.org](http://whitetownship.org)





# LEVITY BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

March 28th, 2024, Leivity Brewing Company hosted a Business After Hours Event. The Chamber's Business After Hours Events are a way for our members to mingle and socialize in a relaxed environment while also showcasing what their business has to offer, as well as providing an opportunity to network with fellow community members.

Under a clear blue spring sky and afternoon sunlight, guests filed into the main room of Leivity Brewing Co., greeted by chic rustic décor and the warm smiles of chamber ambassadors. Upon entering, guests had the opportunity for a raffle by putting their business card in a bowl for a gift card from Leivity, as well as Easter trivia for the upcoming holiday.

There was a wide variety of refreshments guests had the opportunity to try. Upon entrance, guests received a beverage token, as well as the opportunity to purchase beverages from the bar as well. Leivity featured many delicious dishes for guests such as a refreshing vegetable arrangement accompanied by dips and dressings, as well as pretzel bites which also featured complimenting condiments. Leivity also featured pulled pork which was a guest favorite. Overall, the refreshments were fantastic as many of the guests returned for additional servings.

Throughout the summer, Leivity will be holding specials and events such as open mic nights, \$4 Tacos, and a live performance by Hair Force One as well as other live performances throughout the summer. For a full agenda of activities, please visit Leivity's website [www.leivitybrewing.com/indiana](http://www.leivitybrewing.com/indiana)

The Chamber would like to sincerely thank Leivity Brewing Co. for hosting this Business After Hours Event!





# MARCH RIBBON CUTTINGS!

*Congratulations!*



*The Remnant Faith Community - March 22nd*



*Primanti Bros. Restaurant & Bar - March 20th*



# UPCOMING EVENTS



## IA BUILDERS ASSOCIATION HOME SHOW



APR.  
5-7



## WEDDING FLEA MARKET



MAY  
5



## STEELERS CHARITY BASKETBALL



APR.  
13



## MISS MAJORETTE OF PA



MAY  
26



## PA STATE TWIRLING CHAMPIONSHIPS



APR.  
20-21



## CHAMPION FORCE CHEERLEADING



CHAMPION FORCE  
ATHLETICS

JUNE  
1



VISIT [WWW.IUPTIX.COM](http://WWW.IUPTIX.COM), THE FIRST COMMONWEALTH BANK BOX OFFICE,  
OR SCAN THE QR CODES TO LEARN MORE & PURCHASE TICKETS!





# Tickets Now Available!

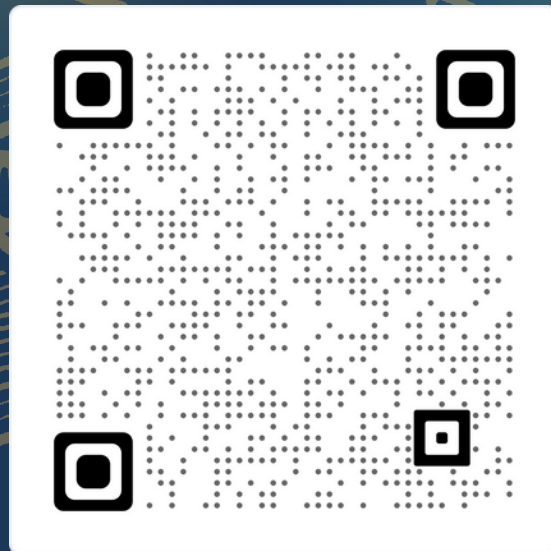


**MAY 13, 2024**

REGISTRATION BEGINNING AT 5:00 PM  
AWARDS DINNER BEGINNING AT 6:00 PM

KOVALCHICK CONVENTION AND ATHLETIC COMPLEX  
ED FRY ARENA  
711 PRATT DR, INDIANA, PA 15701

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS  
APRIL 29TH**







## Excellence in Education Partnership Opportunities

### Academic Achievement Partner

\$1,000

- Table of 10 registrants
- Academic Achievement Partner acknowledgment on the screens throughout the evening
- Academic Achievement Partner acknowledgment and full-page featured ad in the program booklet
- Academic Achievement Partner acknowledgment on social media

### Breaking Ground Partner

\$500

- 5 Breaking Ground Partner Tickets
- Breaking Ground Partner acknowledgment on the screens throughout evening
- Breaking Ground Partner acknowledgment and half-page ad in the program booklet
- Breaking Ground Partner acknowledgment on social media

### Core Curriculum Partner

\$250

- 2 Core Curriculum Partner Tickets
- Core Curriculum Partner acknowledgment on the screens throughout evening
- Core Curriculum Partner acknowledgment and quarter-page ad in the program booklet
- Core Curriculum Partner acknowledgment on the Chamber of Commerce social media

### Congratulations in the Program Booklet

\$100

- Offer a simple congratulations listing in the program booklet.
- Scrolled on big screen during the evening event.







## *Excellence in Education Partnership Opportunities*

*Excellence In Education - Scholarship - Award to Indiana County School District(s)*

**\$500**

- Scholarship acknowledgments on the screen throughout the evening*
- Scholarship acknowledgment on half-page ad in the program booklet*
- Scholarship acknowledgment on social media*







*Send a check in the amount of sponsorship with your company information to*

*Indiana County Chamber of Commerce  
1019 Philadelphia Street, Indiana PA, 15701.*

*Email your company logo and/or ad/message to Steven Lomax, Organization Manager -  
slomax@indianacountychamber.com.*

*(724) 465-2511.*

*indianacountychamber.us*

*Your support is greatly appreciated*





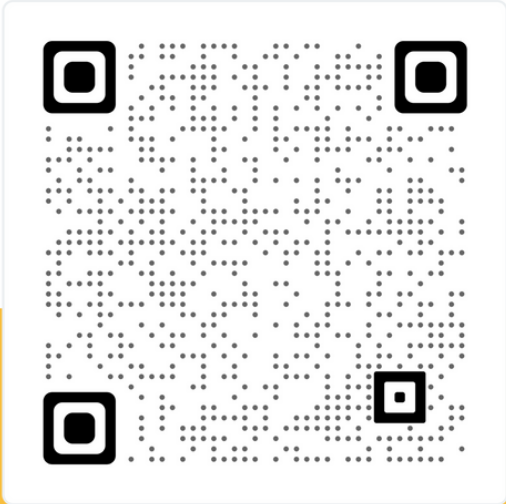


**Registration now  
open!**

# **ANNUAL GOLF OUTING**

**May 23, 2024**

**Shotgun Start at 10:00 a.m.**







# Indiana County Chamber of Commerce



Prestened by

## THE CHAMBER & FRIENDS ARE PORUD TO ANOUNCE THIS YEAR'S 10TH ANNUAL PADDLE AND PICNIC AFTER HOURS

# COME JOIN US ON JUNE 1, 2024



**SATURDAY, WHERE A SUNNY WATER ADVENTURE  
AWAITS YOU!!**

All kayaking participants will receive an information packet with additional details upon completing registration. Shuttling will be provided Blairsville and Robinson. You can bring your own, or rent a kayak - all paddling participants must wear a personal floatation device!



### 9AM - 2:30 PM

- 9:30am Shuttles leave Blairsville for Robinson
- **Please note: Shuttling will be provided to driver(s) parking in Blairsville. Participants will depart from Robinson.**

### Morning

### 2:30 PM- 4:30PM

- **Food, fun & entertainment**
- Shuttle arrives in Blairsville for Chamber Picnic sponsored by partnering organizations.

### Afternoon

### COST

- **Free with your own Kayak**
- \$45 Kayak Rental
- \$15 Shuttle Service
- Free Parking in Blairsville

### Questions?

### Email Our Office

slomax@indianacountychamber.com

### Register Now

724-465-2511

### More Information

**\*\*For the safety of our paddlers, the event is limited to the first 50 registered participants. No "fishing/sit atop kayaks" will be permitted.\*\***

Registration Ends May 25, 2024



# Flags for Heroes

Rotary Club of Indiana - Midday

A Community Event to  
Celebrate and Honor  
our Heroes.

Memorial Day through Flag Day 2024

Join us at Oakland Avenue  
Cemetery on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 at  
6:00 PM for our Opening Ceremony.



## **Sponsor a Flag to Honor Your Hero today!**

You can be part of our community's tribute to the heroes in our lives, both past and present. This is your opportunity to honor your personal hero. It could be a member of the military, police, fire or first responder who put their lives on the line for us every day. It could also be a teacher, coach, mentor, community leader or anyone else who has been a hero in your life.

Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Cost (\$50 per Flag): \_\_\_\_\_ Name of your Hero(es) - One Hero per flag: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Attached to each flag will be a medallion listing your name as the donor and the name of your personal hero. **The flags will be prominently displayed at Oakland Avenue Cemetery (by Elkin Mausoleum) Indiana, PA.**

### **Be a Corporate Sponsor!**

Corporate sponsorships will be available with recognition at the flag display site.

- 2' x 2' Sign (\$100)
- 2' x 4' Sign (\$175)
- 4' x 4' Sign (\$350)

### **Payment Information:**

Please make checks payable to **Rotary Club of Indiana - Midday.**

Mail to: PO BOX 5, Indiana, PA 15701

Credit card payments are accepted on our website, visit [www.indianamiddayrotary.org](http://www.indianamiddayrotary.org).



### **SCAN ME!**

to learn more about the Flags for Heroes event and how simple it is to honor your hero today!

 Follow us on Facebook: Indiana Mid Day Rotary Club

All proceeds raised from the Flags for Heroes event will benefit local organizations that the Rotary Club of Indiana - Midday proudly supports.

**For more information, contact Monica Jones at 724.349.9496.**



# RENEWING MEMBERS

- |                                     |                            |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Advance Care Pharmacy               | Indiana Healthcare         |
| All Eyes For you Mobile Notary      | Properties                 |
| AraMark Services                    | Indiana Kiwanis Club       |
| Authority Lifetime Roofing Co.      | Foundation                 |
| Benjamin's                          | Marcus and Mack Attorneys  |
| BR Electric & Audio Visual          | at Law                     |
| Brunzi's                            | Marion Center Bank         |
| Buckler,McKenney & Nadzadi          | Pathstone Corporation      |
| Calvary Baptist Church & Ministries | Pittsburgh Job Corps       |
| Citizens Ambulance Service          | Schroth Industries         |
| Community Guidance Center           | Strike Force Security      |
| Diamond Drugs Inc.                  | Subs N Suds                |
| Diamond Medical Supply              | The CARE Center of Indiana |
| East American Motorsports           | County                     |
| First Assembly of God/The Summit    | TS Juart Excavating Inc.   |
| Church                              | Twisted Jimmy's            |
| Gardners Candies                    | USI Insurance Services     |
| H & R Block                         | William G. Mechling        |
| Inidana Borough                     | Insurance Agency           |
| Indiana Eye Care                    | Worklink Staffing          |
| Indiana Healthcare Corporation      | XTO Energy                 |
|                                     | Zaucha Family, L.P.        |

## Diamond Sponsors



## Platinum Sponsors



## Gold Sponsors



## Silver Sponsors



## Bronze Sponsors

