



# 2019

## Annual Report

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**Choose Columbia**  
Columbia Economic Development Corporation

# Chairman's Message

In my first year as Board Chair, armed with a refreshed and updated three-year Strategic Plan, we further sharpened our focus on key objectives under our four framework pillars of entrepreneurship and innovation, infrastructure, quality of life and sustainability, and workforce and education. In this report, you'll find that we have strengthened and expanded initiatives that serve those pillars, which continue to provide the foundation for Columbia County's economic prosperity.

Our members are helping to define Columbia County's future. Economic development is about creating good jobs and increasing our tax base, but it is best done by thoughtfully shaping the conditions for growth. That is especially true in Columbia County, with its landscape that has inspired generations of residents and visitors. The county's natural rich soils and proximity to metropolitan markets has attracted successful entrepreneurs to the county, bringing with them modern farming methods which we see applied to food and cattle farms, as well as many agribusiness ventures including distilleries, wineries and cideries. Our tradition of rural, multi-generational farming and newer agribusiness ventures all contribute to our attractiveness as a place to live, work and play.



In 2019, we deployed important business expansion incentives, fostered the success of local companies through loans and technical assistance, advanced critical broadband and site infrastructure, strengthened our region's workforce pipeline, and contributed to projects that will enhance quality of life for generations of future Columbia County residents.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our President and CEO F. Michael Tucker for his leadership, our staff for their commitment and hard work, and the Columbia County Board of Supervisors for their ongoing support.

As members and partners, your generosity and dedication to our shared mission makes this all possible, and we look forward to continuing this important work in 2020.

David P. Fingar

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David P. Fingar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Board Chair

## President's Message

CEDC's staff has greatly valued the opportunity to work on your behalf in 2019 to grow, retain, and attract businesses and to create a supportive environment for entrepreneurship and economic development. We are proud to present the accomplishments of the past year in this report.

Our success is reflected in several recent headlines and statistics: Columbia County had the lowest unemployment rate of all counties in New York State in 2019 (an average of 3.1% average over the 12 months); Sales tax collections increased by over 8 percent; Hudson was recently ranked as the sixth most vibrant arts community in the country among small cities, and was listed in the top 20 communities nationally for the number of independent artists and arts and cultural organizations per capita; Tourism spending has continued to grow, and our communities are frequently highlighted as destinations for travelers; Our local community college is ranked in the top 10 nationally; Companies, organizations, and local governments in Columbia County won over four times as much in Regional Economic Development Council awards in 2019 as they did in 2018.



But it's the work behind the scenes that creates the conditions for continued success. Your sustained investment through CEDC in entrepreneurship, workforce development, infrastructure, and quality of life initiatives will shape economic development for years to come.

As of this writing, it is clear that our successes in 2019 will be tested by the COVID-19 crisis over the coming months. CEDC is more committed than ever to assisting businesses in Columbia County as we all navigate this challenging period responding to the pandemic. But as this report makes clear, we have the strong fundamentals and partnerships needed to restore economic vitality. Together, we are shaping a bright and prosperous future for Columbia County.

F. Michael Tucker

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "F. Michael Tucker". The signature is fluid and cursive.

President and CEO

# CEDC Mission and Strategic Plan

Columbia Economic Development Corporation is the lead economic development organization for Columbia County, New York. Our mission is to strengthen the area's tax base through economic development and job creation, to assist businesses to locate and expand within the County, and to promote Columbia County as a premier spot for both business investment and personal opportunity.

CEDC's current three-year strategic plan, completed in May 2019, sustains the organization's four framework pillars of entrepreneurship and innovation, infrastructure, quality of life and sustainability, and workforce and education—all critical underpinnings of CEDC's economic development mission. Through a thorough planning process involving research, analysis, and surveys and strategy sessions that incorporated input from the Board of Directors, partner organizations, the business community, and the public, CEDC updated its objectives for 2019-2021 as follows.



## 1

**PILLAR ONE – Entrepreneurship & Innovation:**

Create and foster an entrepreneurial ecosystem that promotes establishment, growth and long-term success of businesses.

**Objectives:**

- Connect businesses to information resources.
- Connect businesses to funding resources.
- Advance county business and expansion projects.

## 2

**PILLAR TWO – Infrastructure:**

Champion rural and main street infrastructure expansion by leveraging private and public partnerships.

**Objectives:**

- Increase shovel-ready development sites.
- Increase investment in infrastructure to support and attract businesses.
- Monitor countywide activities to expand broadband access.

## 3

**PILLAR THREE – Quality of Life and Sustainability:**

Partner with public and private organizations to identify and support improvement and expansion efforts designed to improve quality of life.

**Objectives:**

- Strengthen Columbia County's economic health and competitive advantage.
- Enhance local government economic efforts and opportunities.
- Integrate smart economic development into county and local activities.

## 4

**PILLAR FOUR – Workforce & Education:**

Facilitate networking and collaboration among the County's educational, business and government institutions to stimulate purposeful alignment of educational offerings and business needs.

**Objectives:**

- Leverage Columbia County's education to workplace pipeline.
- Increase skilled workforce.
- Increase funding for and investment in skills training.

# 2019 Key Initiatives & Partnerships

Capital Region Economic Development Council (CREDC): Columbia County projects were awarded approximately \$5.3 million in 2019 Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) grants, nearly four times as much as 2018, bringing the County's total REDC awards to more than \$28.9 million since the program was initiated in 2011. The Capital Region was named a top performer statewide. CEDC provided guidance, resources, and letters of support for a number of applicants and co-hosted an application workshop locally. Columbia County is represented on the CREDC by CEDC President F. Michael Tucker, Basilica Hudson's Melissa Auf der Maur, Hudson Valley Agribusiness Development Corporation's Todd Erling, Sabal Capital Partners' Matthew Nelson, and Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell.

## **Columbia County**

The County renewed its contract with CEDC to receive the organization's continued economic development services for local residents. We thank the County Board of Supervisors for their continued confidence and support.

## **Columbia County Industrial Development Agency (IDA)**

CEDC continues to administer and oversee the Columbia County Industrial Development Agency, which actively promotes and attracts industry expansion through a variety of tax and lending incentives.

## **Columbia County Capital Resource Corporation (CRC)**

CEDC oversees and administers the CRC, which encourages community and economic development by providing low-cost financing to not-for-profit capital projects.

## **City of Hudson Industrial Development Agency (HIDA)**

CEDC oversees the City of Hudson Industrial Development Agency, which provides tax incentives to promote and attract industry expansion in the city of Hudson.

## **Economic Development Partnerships**

In addition to the partners above, CEDC works in coordination with multiple organizations including the Columbia County Chamber of Commerce, Columbia County Tourism, Columbia-Greene Community College, NY Works, Hudson Development Corporation, Hudson Valley Agribusiness Development Corporation, Columbia Land Conservancy, Greene County Economic Development, Planning and Tourism, Greene County Chamber of Commerce, Questar III, Center for Economic Growth, Empire State Development, NY Farm Bureau, NYS Economic Development Council, Hudson Valley Pattern for Progress, U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and several others as noted throughout this report. CEDC maximizes its impact by working with such partners to implement initiatives aligned with its Strategic Plan.



## Marketing

CEDC continued to administer a comprehensive marketing and communications program, promoting the County's economic successes and important local and regional economic news to its stakeholders through email marketing, social media, print media, CEDC's website, presentations, meetings, and events.

## Annual Meeting

CEDC members and stakeholders gathered on April 30th, 2019 at Kozel's Restaurant to celebrate the past year's economic accomplishments and preview 2019 activities. For the third consecutive year, Hugh Johnson, Chairman and Chief Investment Officer of Hugh Johnson Advisors, LLC, served as the event's keynote. The dynamic program also included remarks from Empire State Development Regional Director Mike Yevoli, Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell, and Hudson Mayor Rick Rector.

## City of Hudson Downtown Revitalization Initiative

CEDC continued to play an integral role in implementing the City of Hudson's DRI plan, leveraging the City's 2017 \$10 million award in state funding and investments to revitalize its downtown neighborhoods and generate new opportunities for long-term growth.



# Entrepreneurship and Innovation

## Business Retention & Expansion

CEDC revamped its BRE program in 2019, investing in valuable staff training through International Economic Development Council. Recognizing the fact that job growth in small towns comes overwhelmingly from existing business expansion rather than big-ticket industry attraction, CEDC has embraced an updated and robust BRE strategy to proactively address the opportunities and challenges faced by individual Columbia County businesses.

## Loan Programs

Through the CEDC Revolving Loan Fund and the U.S. Small Business Administration's Microloan program, CEDC loaned \$697,000 to 11 businesses & nonprofits and provided technical assistance to 69 business owners. CEDC secured a \$120,000 SBA grant for the provision of small business technical assistance, and a \$250,000 SBA loan to provide additional small business lending in 2020.

## MicroBusiness Seminar Series

Ten entrepreneurs completed CEDC's popular 8-week MicroBusiness Seminar Series in the fall of 2019. Course topics included marketing, bookkeeping, financing, business sustainability, and legal issues, taught by professionals in those fields.

## New York Makers

CEDC collaborated with New York Makers to bring a unique marketing opportunity to Columbia County businesses that produce locally created items. This first-of-its-kind statewide digital marketplace and magazine markets a curated selection of beautifully designed, locally created items from across the state.

Throughout 2019, CEDC regularly promoted relevant resources to the local agribusiness and manufacturing industries, including various grants, R&D assistance, and other statewide programs. CEDC co-hosted, sponsored, or participated in a variety of workshops and conferences for the purpose of improving Columbia County businesses' access to resources like financing (June 2019 Access to Capital Workshop) and foreign markets (Canada Day in Albany). CEDC was again a supporter of 2019's highly successful Small Business Saturday, and welcomed the establishment of the new Hudson office of the Northeast NY chapter of SCORE.



"I was building a clientele, I didn't want to take on business debt, but I also didn't want to turn away clients. I developed a business plan with projections that showed I could grow the business, pay down debt over time, and find a balance. The loan from CEDC helped me take the next step."

**KARYN DORNEMANN**

KARYN QUILTS, 86 CENTER ST., CHATHAM, NY 12037

**2019 Microloans and CEDC Loan Totals**

<b>Business</b>	<b>SBA Microloan</b>	<b>CEDC Loan</b>	<b>Total Loaned</b>
	12,500	12,500	25,000
Dirtworx	17,000	17,000	34,000
Germantown Beer Farm	30,000	30,000	60,000
Hudson Development Corp.	200,000	200,000	400,000
Minna Goods, LLC	25,000	45,000	70,000
Miracle Springs Farm, LLC	100,000	100,000	200,000
Philmont Beautification	25,000	25,000	50,000
Saison New York	20,000	20,000	40,000
Tivoli Farm, Inc.	25,000	50,000	75,000
Train Time Express, LLC	22,500	22,500	45,000
Willa's Bakery, LLC	30,000	30,000	60,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>182,000</b>	<b>515,000</b>	<b>697,000</b>



**2019 MicroBusiness Seminar Series Graduates**

Pooky Amsterdam – Pooky Studio, Hudson  
 Amy Bonville – Outsourced Partner, Hudson  
 Adam Chai – Hudson Electric LLC, Hudson  
 Patrick Daly – Keeler Precast Concrete, Inc., Hudson  
 Anthony D’Argenzio – Zio and Sons, Hudson

Linden Scheff – Kinderhook  
 Izumi Shepard – Retreatopia, Copake  
 Lawre Stone – Hudson River Design, Ghent  
 Michael Williams – Beneath My Feet, Hudson  
 Kashayla Wright – Hudson



# Infrastructure

## Site development

CEDC continues to advance sewer infrastructure and business expansion in the Gerald R. Simons Commerce Park in the towns of Ghent and Claverack; provided a \$200,000 loan to Hudson Development Corporation to acquire a former plastics warehouse property owned by CSX for mixed-use transit-oriented development; and is administering a Community Development Block Grant for the preparation of a site to be operated by Drumlin Fields for orchards, a distillery, and related facilities.

## County Broadband Initiative

CEDC continues to serve as Columbia County's designated Broadband Coordinator, providing a leadership in one of the most critical areas of infrastructure for building a competitive modern economy. CEDC continued to work with partners across the County to ensure steady progress toward delivering broadband to underserved households, and attended all key meetings and public hearings related to public and private broadband investment in the County.

Throughout the year, CEDC routinely assisted businesses with securing utilities access necessary for business growth, promoted grants for historic preservation, and addressed other infrastructure improvements—particularly wastewater treatment and sewer—needed for future economic development.

# Quality of Life and Sustainability

## Hudson River Skywalk

On June 1st, 2019, hundreds of visitors gathered to celebrate the grand opening of the Hudson River Skywalk. The \$11 million investment by the State extends the historic and scenic walkway along the Rip Van Winkle Bridge to connect the two founding sites of America's first art movement: the Thomas Cole National Historic Site and Olana State Historic Site. The Hudson River Skywalk includes pedestrian viewing stations on the bridge that allow for stunning views as well as safe pedestrian access to the two historic sites and a new visitor parking area on the east side of the bridge. CEDC partnered with the NYS Bridge Authority, NYDOT, Empire State Development, Greene County Economic Development, Olana and Thomas Cole House on this initiative.

## Albany-Boston Rail Trail Feasibility Study

CEDC continued advocating for and pursuing funding for the expansion of the local Rail Trail, which allows residents and tourists to explore the County's landscape and recreational opportunities. In 2019, a consultant to CEDC and the Columbia Land Conservancy completed a feasibility study for constructing a multi-use trail to connect the Empire State Trail in the City of Hudson to the Harlem Valley Rail Trail in the eastern part of the County.



“It took a lot of planning to get our wood-fired restaurant ready to open. Working with our bank and CEDC, we were able to make it happen. The technical assistance offered by CEDC has helped tremendously. We invite you to stop in to try our Neapolitan pizza, fine wines, and small plates featuring locally-sourced ingredients.”

**JOEY ALVAREZ AND JULIANA SANTOS**  
OAK PIZZERIA NAPOLETANA  
523 WARREN ST., HUDSON NY 12534

## Creative Economy

CEDC contributed to regional branding efforts with the Upstate Alliance for the Creative Economy (ACE) and provided support for ACE’s April 2019 “Lessons from Austin” event, at which 250 attendees learned about that city’s implementation of a successful cultural tourism plan that made Austin an international destination.

## Tourism

CEDC partnered with Columbia County Tourism to produce a series of articles highlighting individual towns in the County. Columbia County has one of the fastest-growing tourism industries in the Hudson Valley, and in 2018, travel spending in the County was up 9% year-over-year, with 9% of the County’s labor income generated by visitor spending.

## Housing

CEDC collaborated with the County, the City of Hudson, and the Hudson Housing Authority to explore avenues to increasing housing diversity and affordability for the area’s current and future residents and workforce, based on the recommendations of a December 2017 countywide housing study.

2019 also saw significant state investment in three State Parks (revitalization and rehabilitation projects at Lake Taghkanic State Park, Olana State Park, and Taconic State Park), as well as the acquisition of two properties by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to preserve critical open space and protect watersheds. These investments are complementary to CEDC’s efforts to leverage the County’s valued landscape and recreational opportunities for quality of life improvements and economic growth.



# Workforce Development and Education

## 2019 Junior Career Institute

13 high school students completed this career-preparedness program, a collaboration of CEDC, Columbia-Greene Community College, and Columbia County Chamber of Commerce. The Junior Career Institute interactive sessions focus on career awareness, soft skills training and leadership development, and the successful graduates will be paired with local businesses for 6-week internships in 2021.

## Twin County Recruitment Expo

CEDC co-hosted the Twin County Spring Recruitment Expo at Columbia-Greene Community College in Spring 2019, the third time CEDC has helped to present this event that pairs job seekers with companies' workforce needs.

## Business-Education Partnerships

CEDC maintained an extremely active Workforce and Education Committee and related agenda throughout the year. CEDC Board Member James Lapenn serves as a representative to the Columbia-Greene Workforce Development Board. CEDC was a sponsor of the 2019 STEAM Conference titled "Building a Workforce for the 21st Century," focused on the issue of improving workforce preparedness through enhanced science, technology, engineering, arts, and math curriculum. Staff participated in multiple workforce development events, including the BCNYS's 2019 Business & Education Forum in Albany, the New York State Apprenticeship Forum, the NYATEP/NYSEDC Partners for Workforce Transformation conference, the Veteran Workforce Collaboration Summit in Albany, and the annual Questar III BOCES Consultant Committee Breakfast to be able to update and advise local businesses evolving best practices for industry-education partnerships that strengthen the talent pipeline.

## Governor Cuomo's Workforce Development Initiative

CEDC partnered with Greene County Economic Development, Columbia-Greene Community College, Workforce NY, Questar III BOCES, and the Columbia and Greene County Chambers of Commerce to form a core group to review the Governor's new \$175 million Workforce Development Initiative, and to work with other businesses and organizations in both counties to develop a strategy to initiate, partner on, and support eligible applications.

## Columbia-Greene Community College

In 2019, Columbia-Greene Community College was named one of the top 10 community colleges in the country by WalletHub, and rose to the top spot in state rankings in the areas of cost and financing, education outcomes, and career outcomes.



**2019 Junior Career Institute Graduates** 

- Sonam Verma, Chatham Central School District
- Emma Flandreau, Germantown Central School District
- Asher Wolff, Germantown Central School District
- Abida Begum, Hudson City School District
- Michael Green, Hudson City School District
- Hannah Konow, Hudson City School District
- Ahmed Mufti, Hudson City School District
- Danaya Oliver-Ragland, Hudson City School District
- Madison Schermerhorn, Ichabod Crane Central School District
- Leia Herrington, Ichabod Crane Central School District
- Brooke Dandridge, Ichabod Crane Central School District
- Shane Ringwood, Ichabod Crane Central School District
- Xavier Gomez, Taconic Hills Central School District



“I was able to invest in my business using personal savings, but I needed a loan to provide the remaining capital needed to start the business. CEDC helped me write my business plan so I could apply for a loan. I am happy to say my application was approved!”

**KATIE SHAW**  
KT HAIR STUDIO,  
3039 MAIN ST., VALATIE, NY 12184

# 2019 Regional Economic Development Council Awards

<b>Columbia County Awardee</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Ancram Opera House	\$14,000
Ancram Opera House Theatre, Inc.	\$13,015
Art Omi, Inc.	\$145,000
Basilica Industries LLC	\$950,139
Bindlestiff Family Variety Arts, Inc.	\$17,500
City of Hudson	\$750,000
City of Hudson	\$17,500
Friends of Clermont, Inc.	\$197,041
Harlem Valley Rail Trail Association, Inc.	\$237,500
Hudson Opera House, Inc.	\$55,000
Hudson Opera House, Inc.	\$100,000
Klein's Kill Fruit Farms Corp.	\$134,000
Klein's Kill Fruit Farms Corp.	\$200,000
Shaker Museum & Library	\$1,569,000
The Olana Partnership, Inc.	\$200,000
Town of Germantown	\$75,000
Trout Unlimited	\$191,789
Village of Kinderhook	\$75,000
Village of Philmont	\$168,595
Village of Philmont	\$188,164



**Columbia Economic Development Corporation**  
Statement of Net Position - Year Ending December 31, 2019

<b>Assets</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Capital Assets	13,532	6,782
Current Assets	1,955,259	2,273,000
Long-Term Assets	1,564,374	1,357,448
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>3,533,165</b>	<b>3,637,230</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Current Liabilities	151,848	122,293
Long-Term Liabilities	375,203	501,835
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>527,051</b>	<b>624,128</b>
Deferred Inflow of Resources	11,711	19,294
<b>Net Position</b>		
Unrestricted	2,626,467	2,661,273
Capital Assets	13,532	6,782
Restricted	354,404	325,753
<b>Total Net Position</b>	<b>2,994,403</b>	<b>2,993,808</b>
<b>Total Liabilities, Deferred Inflows &amp; Net Position</b>	<b>3,533,165</b>	<b>3,637,230</b>

**Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Change in Net Position**  
Year Ending December 31, 2019

<b>Income Statement</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
Operating Revenue	299,699	339,098
Operating Expenses	787,582	754,251
Operating Loss	(487,883)	(415,153)
<b>Non-Operating Revenue</b>		
Interest Earning	27,495	6,800
Land Sales	1,282	340,741
Appropriation from Columbia County	460,000	460,000
Non Operating Revenue	488,777	807,541
<b>Total Revenue in Excess of Expenditures</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>391,891</b>
Net Position, Beginning of Year	2,993,808	2,601,917
Net Position, End of Year	2,994,403	2,993,808
<b>Change in Net Position</b>	<b>595</b>	<b>391,891</b>

# 2019 Annual Report Sponsors

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**Choose Columbia**  
Columbia Economic Development Corporation

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