



Creative Leaders to Speak at Regional Economic Development Summit

SUNY Chancellor Zimpher to Deliver Keynote

Albany, NY (October 30, 2014) –The Regional Alliance for a Creative Economy (RACE), led by the Center for Economic Growth and the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region, has announced the full list of speakers for the Capital Region Creative Economy Regional Summit on November 13.

The Regional Summit will take place Thursday, November 13, from 7:30 – 10:30 a.m. at Proctors' GE Theater, 432 State Street in Schenectady. The Regional Summit is free, and the general public is encouraged to attend. To learn more and register, visit **UpstateCreative.org**.

At the Regional Summit, Beth Siegel of Mt. Auburn Associates, a consulting firm specializing in regional economic development, will share the results of a six-month-long research study on the greater Capital Region's creative assets, and issue recommendations on how to utilize those assets as economic drivers.

Nancy L. Zimpher, Chancellor of the State University of New York, will launch the summit with a keynote address. Other speakers include:

- Beth Siegel of Mt. Auburn Associates, who will present findings from the research study and discuss recommendations;
- F. Michael Tucker, CEO for Center for Economic Growth and Karen Bilowith, President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Greater Capital Region, who will discuss the implementation of recommendations developed from research study findings;
- Guha Bala, president of software development company Vicarious Visions;
- Thomas Lloyd, owner of Adirondack Studios, a design and fabrication company specializing in design, carpentry, metal, paint, electrics, soft goods and project management for the entertainment industry;
- Laban Coblenz, founder and chairman of the Tech Valley Center of Gravity, which supports independent artists, developers and small companies throughout the Capital Region;
- Angela Beddoe, publisher and editor-in-chief at Herlife Magazine New York, a monthly lifestyle women's magazine, and co-founder and principal at GreenForce Energy, which partners with communities, institutions and businesses to identify and implement sustainable energy projects;
- Theresa Agresta, partner, Allegory Studios, an integrated marketing, design and web development firm specializing in branding, web platforms and inbound marketing;
- Angela Beddoe, publisher and editor-in-chief at Herlife Magazine New York, a monthly lifestyle women's magazine, and co-founder and principal at GreenForce Energy, which partners with communities, institutions and businesses to identify and implement sustainable energy projects;
- Melissa Auf der Maur; creative director of Basilica Hudson, former bassist for Hole and the Smashing Pumpkins, artist, and actress.

The summit will conclude with a panel question and answer discussion.

For the last year, RACE has worked to understand the composition of regional creative work, as well as strengths and challenges of the region's creative economy. Data was gathered during the discovery phase by methods including:

- County tours (eight counties, numerous businesses and individuals);
- More than 100 one-on-one interviews;
- Focus groups (eight groups of 12 – 20 participants);
- Creative Freelancer Survey (nearly 600 respondents);
- Economic Development Data – EMSI composite dataset (more than 90 sources including the U.S. Census Bureau, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics) with insight into occupational wages, industry trends, employment growth/decline and concentration, and more.

Regional creative workers and industries present untapped opportunities for the region's future economic growth. Intended outcomes of the Capital Region Creative Economy project include:

- Job growth in the creative industries throughout the greater Capital Region;
- Increased recognition by regional leaders and residents of the important role creative industries play in the economy and in quality of life;
- Enhanced competitive advantage of other regional industries (i.e., talent attraction);
- Income growth for creative freelancers;
- Economic opportunities for low income residents in creative industries;
- Acceleration of new enterprise development in the creative industries;
- Stronger and more sustainable nonprofit cultural institutions;
- Enhanced quality of life throughout local rural and urban communities;
- Increased market for creative goods and products;
- Increased engagement of youth in the arts.

ABOUT THE REGIONAL ALLIANCE FOR A CREATIVE ECONOMY

The Regional Alliance for a Creative Economy, a community-selected assembly of Capital Region leaders working on behalf of the region's creative economy. This project operates under the leadership of the Center for Economic Growth and the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region.

The Creative Economy of New York's Capital Region encompasses the enterprises and people involved in the origination, production, and distribution of goods and services in which artistic and cultural content gives the product or service value in the marketplace.

The Capital Region Creative Economy project has been designed to assess our region's creative assets and develop ways to leverage related economic development opportunities (e.g. travel and tourism, local economic and infrastructure development, workforce development, etc.). This community-based, collaborative initiative will examine the creative sector, including the arts (performing, literary, visual), design (graphics, fashion), textiles, crafts, architecture, communications and marketing, cinema and film, broadcasting, software development, publishing and printing, cultural and educational institutions, craft beer brewing and distilleries, culinary arts, and more. The project activities span Albany, Columbia, Greene, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren and Washington counties.

For more information and a full list of partners, visit www.UpstateCreative.org.

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Since 1968, the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region has strengthened the greater Capital Region and beyond through philanthropy. The Foundation achieves this goal in collaboration with donors and community partners who share their vision for community transformation through stewardship of charitable endowments, superior donor services, effective grantmaking, and leadership to address community needs.

The Community Foundation distributed more than \$4.87 million in 2013 to more than 1,100 nonprofit organizations in the Capital Region and beyond. With assets of more than \$63 million, the Foundation is comprised of more than 390 charitable funds created by a diverse group of individuals, families and corporations. In addition, two local independent foundations, the Bender Family Foundation and the John D. Picotte Family Foundation, contract with the Community Foundation for grantmaking assistance.

Through flexible donor services, strategic grant making and community leadership, the Community Foundation helps people support the causes they care about, now and for generations to come. For more information, please visit the Foundation at www.cfgr.org or call (518) 446-9638.

ABOUT THE CENTER FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

Center for Economic Growth (CEG) is the leading economic development organization in New York's Tech Valley and serves as the Capital Region's designated Regional Technology Development Center (RTDC). A private, non-profit, membership-based organization, CEG drives economic growth by working with partners in business, government, and education on strategic initiatives to grow local companies, attract new industry and investment, and prepare communities for future growth.

CEG receives significant financial support from Empire State Development's Division of Science, Technology and Innovation, which works to facilitate the integration of innovation and technology throughout New York's economic development efforts, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) / Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP), and National Grid.

As the designated RTDC for the New York State's Capital Region and one of nearly 350 MEP locations across the country, CEG is charged with assisting local manufacturing and technology companies generate new sales, create stronger operational infrastructure, and overcome barriers to growth. Visit www.ceg.org

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