



**E·C·G·R·A**  
ERIE COUNTY GAMING REVENUE AUTHORITY

**EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR'S  
REPORT  
FOR  
JULY  
2020**



**PennState**  
Behrend

Young People's Chorus of Erie  
The Pennsylvania State University  
Logan Carriage House  
4213 Station Road  
Erie, PA 16563

814-898-6789  
behrend.psu.edu/ypcerie

June 8, 2020

Mr. Perry Wood  
ECGRA  
5340 Fryling Road, Suite 201  
Erie, PA 16510

Dear friend of YPC Erie,

The Young People's Chorus of Erie has been a youth outreach program of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Penn State Behrend for eleven years. Since its inception, YPC Erie has stayed true to its mission of providing a comprehensive, quality, music education program for young people in our community regardless of their socioeconomic situation. In short, *we never refused a child who wished to participate in the program*. Due to the COVID-19 situation, the program had to adapt quickly. While the chorus has been on hiatus in its traditional form since mid-March, the choristers have been participating in weekly Zoom activities with YPC Erie staff and other choristers.

However, it is with a heavy heart that we share, after eleven years, this will be the last season of the Young People's Chorus of Erie at Penn State Behrend. Our music education program relied heavily on donor support as well as support from Penn State Behrend and, unfortunately, Behrend is no longer able to support the chorus at the level it once did.

YPC Erie has educated thousands of children on healthy vocal technique, music literacy, and music theory. We provided a safe learning environment and a culture that fostered inclusion, diversity, and creativity. And, while we taught children how to be more confident, expressive singers, we also taught them to become more thoughtful and knowledgeable people.

Education has been such a strong component of YPC Erie's mission, and while the program was lucky to have Dr. Gabrielle Dietrich as artistic director and conductor for eight years, the chorus was also fortunate to work with outstanding musicians like Nobuntu and Cantus, and choral clinicians Rollo Dilworth and Brandon Williams.

While singing was something that brought immense joy to our choristers, we have never underestimated how much our music meant to our audience members. Whether it was a performance at a skilled nursing facility, a large community gathering, or a self-produced concert hosted by YPC Erie, our legacy carries on through the lives touched by the voices of our young people.

Finally, we are grateful to you. No matter if you purchased a concert ticket, assisted us with a performance, supported us financially with a gift or grant award, attended an event, or were a current or former chorister, we have been humbled by your generosity and appreciate your support over the years. We are equally grateful to have had the privilege of teaching such impassioned, kind-hearted, and dynamic young people for the past eleven years. Thank you for making a difference in their lives and ours.

Sincerely,

Alyson Amendola, program advisor  
Marit Bakken Barber, communications and production manager

# EMPOWER ERIE

---

June 29, 2020

Tom,

This letter addresses the questions in your June 26, 2020 email.

I. Role and Qualifications of Key Consultants Engaged by Empower:

A. David Dix, Luminous Strategies, LLC - Specialty: Government Affairs

Mr. Dix, a native of Erie, Pennsylvania, has over 14 years of experience as his firm's most senior manager overseeing every aspect of government relations and public affairs as a registered lobbyist. He and Luminous Strategies have played a key role in Empower Erie's successful Harrisburg strategy in the prosecution of the Erie County Community College application thus far. Mr. Dix will continue as a member of the Empower Erie team as we focus on, among other things, the final vote of the State Board of Education, potential legal challenges before or after the vote, and the effort to secure State funding for the college. More information on Mr. Dix's experience and other qualifications is attached.

B. Peter Shelly, Shelly Lyons Public Affairs – Specialty: Communications

Mr. Shelly of Shelly Lyons was responsible for public relations communications in Harrisburg in support of the Erie County Community College application. The firm helped coordinate Erie County's Harrisburg mobilizations at State Board of Education meetings in Harrisburg. The firm helped create a rapid response procedure to meet and repel any partisan attacks on the community college efforts of Erie County. The firm coordinated messaging with Erie-based Turn-Two Communications. Ms. Danielle Gross, also of Shelly Lyons, served as the Director of Public Affairs for the Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges for three years, and has contributed valuable information. The firm will continue as a member of the Empower Erie team as we focus on, among other things, the final vote of the State Board of Education, potential legal challenges before or after the vote, and the effort to secure State funding for the college.

C. Scott Westcott, Turn-Two Communications – Specialty: Communications

Mr. Westcott of Turn-Two Communications has been working closely with Empower Erie for more than three years, focusing on strategic

---

1001 State Street ♦ Suite 1400 ♦ Erie, PA 16501

814-480-5717 ♦ [empowererie1001@gmail.com](mailto:empowererie1001@gmail.com)

communications and public relations. Turn-Two partnered with Empower Erie to write the narrative and assist in the content for the Erie County Community College application submitted in June 2017. Since then, the firm has been responsible for public relations communications in Erie County to gain greater understanding, awareness, and support for Erie County Community College. The firm helped coordinate Erie County's communications-based effort to win support for the Erie County Community College through earned and paid media, social media, and community mobilization. The firm organized the engagement of all major sectors of the community including the historic Interfaith Task Force on the Erie County Community College as well as weekly "Community College Conversations" with community leaders from a range of sectors. The firm worked with Shelly Lyons to create a rapid response procedure to meet and repel any partisan attacks on the community college efforts of Erie County. The firm instituted a newsletter, a petition drive, and special events. The firm will continue as a member of the Empower Erie team as we focus on, among other things, expanding the mobilization and database in support of the college, establishing a plan for fund development, preparing for the final vote of the State Board of Education, pursuing State funding for the college, and preparing for the transition associated with the seating of the Board of Trustees for the college.

D. Joseph Maloney; Maloney, Reed et al. LLP; Specialty: Public Accounting

Mr. Maloney, a Certified Public Accountant, has worked with Empower Erie since it was founded in 2016. He is one of the most experienced municipal accounting and finance experts in the state with over 38 years of experience working for the County of Erie on matters of accounting, finance, and budgeting. He wrote the financial plan for the establishment of the Erie County Community College, and his work has been ratified by the Department of Education and the State Board of Education thus far. He was a key witness at the June 10-11, 2020 hearing on the college application. Mr. Maloney will continue as a member of the Empower Erie team as we focus on, among other things, the final vote of the State Board of Education, potential legal challenges before or after the vote, and the effort to secure State funding for the college.

E. Eckert Seamans, Cherin & Mellott, LLC – Specialty: Legal

In 2019, Ronald DiNicola, an attorney and Co-Founder of Empower Erie, and Erie County Councilman Carl Anderson, led a search of law firms that maintained offices in Harrisburg to represent Erie County and Empower Erie in connection with the prosecution of the Erie County Community College application. The search focused on firms specializing in administrative law, litigation, and appellate work in the context of state government. Erie County and Empower Erie accepted, respectively, the recommendations from the search that Erie County retain the firm of Post & Schell, P.C., and that Empower Erie retain Eckert Seamans, Cherin & Mellott, LLC. Eckert Seamans is a national law firm

with offices in 15 cities across the nation including Harrisburg. Empower Erie's motion to intervene in the hearing before the State Board of Education was granted and Attorneys Mark Stewart and David (Neil) Hittinger of Eckert Seamans have represented Empower Erie, at Empower Erie's expense, in the pending administrative proceedings. More information on Mr. Stewart and Mr. Hittinger and their experience and other qualifications is attached.

F. Dr. Roy Church, President Emeritus Lorain County Community College – Specialty: Community College Education

Dr. Church has served 45 years as a leader in higher education. He served as president of Lorain County Community College for 30 years, retiring in 2016, at which time he was awarded the honorary title of President Emeritus of the College. He served previously for six years as Vice-President of Academic Affairs and Student Services at St. Petersburg Junior College, Pinellas County, Florida. Dr. Church is recognized nationally for his leadership in creating innovative models to fulfill the four cornerstones of the comprehensive community college mission—educational, economic, community and cultural development. He has been the anchor education expert for Empower Erie since 2016 and chaired the curriculum committee in the preparation of the Erie County Community College Plan and application. He was recognized as an expert by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the State Board of Education. He was a lead expert at the hearings of June 10 and 11, 2020. Dr. Church will continue as a member of the Empower Erie team as we focus on, among other things, the final vote of the State Board of Education, potential legal challenges before or after the vote, and the effort to secure State funding for the college. More information on Dr. Church's experience and other qualifications is attached.

II. Pending and Anticipated Legal Work Needs

We anticipate that further legal work on the part of Eckert Seamans will be required in connection with (a) the creation of findings of fact and conclusions of law drafted on behalf of the State Board of Education (SBE) by government counsel if the SBE requests proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law be submitted by Erie County and Empower Erie; (b) issues relevant to the scheduling of the final vote of the SBE; (c) responding to issues raised by the SBE in connection with the final vote; (d) additional legal maneuvers by opponents of the application prior to, during or after the final vote; and (e) in connection with appellate and post appellate proceedings.

III. Timeline of Deliverables and Milestones

July 2020 Preparation and review of findings of fact and conclusions of law by counsel if the SBE requests proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law be submitted by Erie County and Empower Erie

July – September 2020 Final vote by the SBE (post completion of findings of fact and conclusions of law) depending on whether vote takes place at July meeting of SBE, later in July, or at September [9-10] meeting of SBE

July – September 2020 Possible initiation of appellate proceedings by parties aggrieved by final vote

July – November 2020 Formulation of plan of transition and plan of fund development

August – November 2020 Seating of Board of Trustees of Erie County Community College if Erie County prevails in final vote and opponents of Erie County Community College do not seek and/or are unable to obtain an injunction to block the formation of the college

August – November 2020 Pursuit of funding from State government for Erie County Community College

IV. Request re Issues or Objections

We are compelled to respond here with a generalization that issues and objections are common in such proceedings.

V. Capital Funding

The Harrisburg campaign to obtain capital funding will utilize our Harrisburg consultant resources and local mobilization to focus on the Governor's promise and the State's legal duty to provide funding for the newly established college.

VI. Community Mobilization Assets

Empower Erie and the Erie County Community College Committee presented to the Board of Education letters of endorsement and/or support from well over 125 individuals and organizations. These include: the Erie Community Foundation, ECGRA, Erie Regional Chamber & Growth Partnership, United Way, Interfaith Task Force for the Community College, PA United, and NAACP. In addition to these community wide organizations, our submission also included several letters of support from various Labor Unions, Erie County Superintendents of Schools, The School District of the City of Erie (and several others throughout Erie County), Guidance Counselors, many local business leaders such as; Tim Hunter, Dale and Lynn McBrier, David Tullio, Thomas Hagen, Robin Scheppner and Elected Leaders such as; Mayor Joseph Schember, Former Mayor Joyce Savacchio, Former County Executive Barry Grossman, Erie City Council member Dave Brennen, Erie County Council

members Fiore Leone, Kathy Fatica, Kim Clear, Carl Anderson III and Andre Horton to name a few. Working with mobilization partners, Empower Erie will involve them in our efforts to make a positive difference in our community.

VII. Plan of Public Outreach

Empower Erie will continue to execute on a fully integrated media and marketing plan that leverages a range of communication tools to update the community through newsletters, news blasts, web site posting, social media, content marketing, video, media outreach and direct communications.

Please do not hesitate to call on us if you have any further questions.

Empower Erie

*Judith Roth*

-----  
By: Judith Roth  
Its: Treasurer

## ADDENDUM TO SECTION I.A

### David H. Dix.

**DAVID H. DIX** is President and CEO of Luminous Strategies. He was motivated to unite his career experience, his passion of politics and public policy to launch Luminous Strategies. As President and CEO of Luminous Strategies, David strives daily to develop innovative approaches to civic engagement, advocacy and government relations. Since its inception, his firm has risen to prominence, now holding the distinction as the largest African American owned lobbying firm in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. A native of Erie, Pennsylvania David studied political science and marketing at Indiana University of Pennsylvania where he was the student representative on the Board of Trustees. More Recently, David was nominated by Governor Tom Wolf as the Chairman of the Governor's Advisory Commission on African American Affairs (GACAAA) he also serves as Treasurer of the Community College of Philadelphia Foundation Board (CCP), and holds life memberships in both the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated. He currently shares time between the birthplace of American Democracy, Philadelphia and the Sweetest Place on Earth, Hershey Pennsylvania.



## ADDENDUM TO SECTION I.E

**David C. Hittinger, Jr.**

### OVERVIEW

**David C. Hittinger, Jr., (Neil)** focuses his practice in the areas of business counseling, gaming, hospitality, and regulated substances. As a member of the firm's Business Division, Neil advises clients on an array of issues in both state and federal courts as well as before administrative agencies of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Prior to joining Eckert Seamans, Neil served as assistant counsel in the Governor's Office of General Counsel, Pennsylvania Department of Health, where he provided counsel to the Department's Bureau of Epidemiology, Bureau of Community Health Systems, and Health Policy Board on all legal aspects relative to the department's mission of promoting healthy lifestyles, preventing injury and disease, and assuring the safe delivery of health care to Commonwealth citizens.

Neil also served for 11 years in the Office of Chief Counsel at the Pennsylvania Gaming Control Board, most recently as senior counsel. In that role, Neil advised the seven-member board on all aspects of the implementation and regulation of legalized casino gaming in Pennsylvania, including litigation, agency administration, employment law matters, and ethical considerations. Neil also participated in the successful defense of the board in appeals of casino licensure decisions on multiple occasions.

### **EDUCATION:**

J.D., The Pennsylvania State University, Dickinson School of Law, 2005

B.A., University of Pennsylvania, College of Arts and Science, 2002

## ADDENDUM TO SECTION I.E

### Mark Stewart

#### OVERVIEW

**Mark Stewart** concentrates his practice on areas where business, law, and government intersect. His practice includes a blend of civil and administrative litigation, regulatory advice, transactional representations, and government affairs. As co-chair of the firm's hospitality and gaming groups, Mark has represented gaming companies, Native American Indian tribes, and gaming industry participants in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Massachusetts. His work spans the full spectrum of issues and services in the gaming space, including licensure and regulatory compliance; civil, administrative and appellate litigation; legislative support and analysis; financing and transactional matters; and land development, taxation, and liquor representations. Mark has also provided legal advice in these areas to national corporations, municipal governments, private equity funds, public utilities, educational institutions, nursing homes, real estate developers, small businesses, and many other clients. He has been an active participant in the growing trend to privatize public infrastructure through long term public-private partnerships, or P3s.

Mark is a former deputy attorney general in the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General, Bureau of Consumer Protection.

#### REPRESENTATIVE MATTERS

##### *Gaming Matters*

- Ongoing representation of casinos, gaming manufacturers, and vendors on a broad array of matters before regulatory agencies in multiple jurisdictions, as well as state and federal trial and appellate courts.
- Counsel to three of Pennsylvania's 13 licensed casinos.
- Pennsylvania regulatory counsel to The United States Playing Card Company.
-

## **ADDENDUM TO SECTION I.E**

- Pennsylvania regulatory counsel to two private equity funds in their acquisition of Harrah's Entertainment before the PA Gaming Control Board and Harness Racing Commission.
- Participated in drafting legislation on issues impacting the gaming industry, including Internet gaming, horse racing and pari-mutuel wagering, smoking bans, liquor issues, and Internet sweepstakes cafes.
- Representation of racetracks in administrative and appellate litigation involving licensure, account wagering, and regulatory issues.

### ***Infrastructure Investment & Privatization***

- Counsel to the Dauphin County Infrastructure Bank in the design, implementation, and operation of its innovative transportation infrastructure financing program.
- Representation of the sponsors of a P3 lease of a city's parking assets on transactional, regulatory, municipal, and government affairs matters.
- Worked with the Pennsylvania House Majority Leader to develop and draft liquor privatization legislation.
- Special counsel to multiple third-class counties in the privatization of their longtime county nursing homes, as well as for all regulatory, operational, and labor matters involving the facility pre-sale.
- Privatization of a county youth detention and shelter facility.

### ***Administrative & Civil Litigation***

- Representation of numerous businesses in relation to investigations and enforcement actions by the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General and other state agencies.
- Representation of one of the largest school districts in Pennsylvania in successfully resolving a special audit by the Pennsylvania Auditor General.

## ADDENDUM TO SECTION I.E

- Representation of non-utility generators in litigation pertaining to the implementation of the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards Act and its alternative energy credits program.
- Representation of a first class township in land use and Fair Housing Act litigation against a corporate operator of group home facilities.
- Representation of the developer of a large traditional neighborhood development project on land development, zoning, utility, and regulatory matters.

### ***EDUCATION:***

J.D., cum laude, Cornell Law School, Cornell University, 1995

B.A., with honors and high distinction, The Pennsylvania State University, 1992

## **ADDENDUM I.F**

### ***Dr. Roy A. Church President Emeritus of Lorain County Community College***

Dr. Church has served 45 years as a leader in higher education and served as president of Lorain County Community College for 30 years, retiring June 30, 2016. At that time the District Board of Trustees awarded him the honorary title of President Emeritus of the College. Dr. Church is recognized for his leadership in creating innovative models to fulfill the four cornerstones of the comprehensive community college mission-educational, economic, community and cultural development. Notable among these are the nationally recognized University Partnership Program, an Early College High School and a Public Service Institute with its Joint Center for Policy Research. In addition, Dr. Church has worked to build collaborative initiatives with business, organized labor and government to enhance workforce education, economic development and entrepreneurial activity in Northeast Ohio. His work in economic development has led to the creation of GLIDE, which is recognized by the State of Ohio as a highly successful Technology Incubator; the Innovation Fund, a \$20 million pre-seed fund for regional technology start-ups; a 46,000 square foot commercialization center for sensors and microsystems; and a 75,000 square foot Advanced Technologies Center supporting advanced manufacturing and containing a National Science Foundation Weld-Ed Center and a digital rapid prototyping center.

During his Presidency, he was active professionally serving as Co-Chair of the Ohio Department of Higher Education Articulation and Transfer Advisory Council; a member of the Governor's Executive Workforce Board; Advisory Board Member of the Ohio Third Frontier; Vice Chair of the Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education and served as a member of the Ohio Department of Higher Education Commercialization Task Force. Nationally, he was a member of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Board (MEP); he also served as a board member for several regional workforce and economic initiatives, including the Regional Competitiveness Council, MAGNET (Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network), Fund for our Economic Future, and Entrepreneur's EDGE. Locally, he served on the boards of the Lorain County Chamber of Commerce, Team Lorain County, the Workforce Institute, the Workforce Investment Board and the Lorain County Port Authority.

Dr. Church continues to serve on the Board of Directors for Team NEO, a business and economic development organization focused on accelerating economic growth and job creation throughout the 18 counties of Northeast Ohio.

## ADDENDUM I.F

### Education:

1969-1973 Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL

Doctor of Education: Higher Education Administration and Supervision. Second cognate field was Economics.

Master of Education: Administration and supervision—emphasis in higher education

1964-68 State University of New York, Cortland, New York

Bachelor of Science—Health and Phys. Ed with emphasis in Anatomy and Physiology

### Positions:

2016 – Present	President Emeritus, Lorain County Community College
1987 – 2016	President, Lorain County Community College, Elyria, OH
1981-1987	Vice Pres., Academic Affairs and Student Services, St. Petersburg Junior College, Pinellas County, FL
1973-1981	Broward Community College, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 76-81: Provost, Judson A. Samuels (So.) Campus 74-77: Dean of Academic Affairs, North Campus 73-74: Assistant to the President
1969-72	St. Joseph College of Florida, Jensen Beach, FL 71-72: Dean of Students 69-72: Assistant Professor
1968-69	Rome Public Schools, Rome, New York Junior high school teacher

# VIEWPOINT

## OUR VIEW

### Jobs program shows power of protest

**The Issue:** Summer jobs program returns  
**Our view:** Resource fashioned after march

**C**autious and doubt informed by history accompany the unprecedented groundswell of support for racial justice in this country. Will the momentum yield a reckoning? Or will it subside or be answered with punishing backlash?

Those questions remain open. But we know this much – activism, the mobilization of voices and vision works.

A story published Friday noted the return on Monday of Erie County's Summer Jobs and More program.

The project offers Erie County youth from low- to moderate-income households a chance at a valuable rite of passage, a summer job. The work, 180 hours at \$8.25 an hour, helps them earn some pocket money, of course. More importantly, it offers them entry to the workforce and a view on learning and career opportunities that might not be visible in the circumstances in which they live.

Gary Lee, Erie County director of administration, noted that since its inception in 2014, 915 young people have completed Summer J.A.M.S.

Erie County, the Greater Erie Community Action Committee, the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and the Erie Community Foundation back the program and together have invested nearly \$2 million.

On Monday, the first group of 50 participants began Summer J.A.M.S. at 28 local employers. Those interested in taking part in a second phase have until July 2 to apply at [www.gecac.org](http://www.gecac.org).

Given the toll of COVID-19 safety measures on the local economy, summer work opportunities for young people could prove scarce. We welcome the return of Summer J.A.M.S. under these difficult circumstances because it guarantees that some of the region's most vulnerable, who are already faring worse amid the pandemic, won't be left out of the slow reopening.

More importantly in this season of awakening to enduring, systemic racial injustice, it is a reminder of the power of protest.

Summer J.A.M.S., now a staple, emerged only after Bishop Dwane Brock, of Victory Christian Center, Erie County Councilman Andre Horton, Gary Horton of the Urban Erie Community Development Corp., the Erie NAACP and others marched to the Erie Community Foundation and lobbied others, exhorting them to give young people economic opportunity and a path out of the gun violence that was claiming young lives, especially in poor, minority communities.

The city under Mayor Joe Sinnott rejected the plea, arguing in essence that the status quo – policing youth violence and offering summer jobs at city parks – sufficed.

But Erie County Executive Kathy Dahilkemper, the Community Foundation and ECGRA heeded the call for something more and fashioned a program that does not just offer needed jobs, but also strengthens the whole community by enabling new relationships and opportunities for workers and employers alike.

That history should seed hope and remind us during this unprecedented time both to listen carefully and act to deliver overdue change.

# VIEWPOINT

## OUR VIEW

### Make Erie livable for everyone

**The Issue:** Erie's livability ranks high  
**Our view:** Work remains undone

**E**rie's found its way onto another national list ranking the quality of life here. As reporter Jim Martin detailed, the city made it into the top 25 "most livable" small cities in the U.S.

SmartAsset.com analyzed 10 metrics in 287 U.S. cities with between 65,000 and 100,000 residents and told us much we already know and love about Erie. The city earned the 24th most livable spot based on strong scores in its concentration of health care facilities and entertainment options, restaurants and taverns. It listed one of the shortest average commutes, just 17.8 minutes. The relatively low cost of housing was also a key factor.

Erie was one of many cities from the heartland that fared well in the rankings. SmartAsset.com cited a 2018 Gallup poll that found four in 10 Americans would choose to live in smaller locales that offer big-city amenities and small-town community ties.

It noted, too, that the coronavirus could increase this appeal because people could be drawn to areas featuring more open space and less population density, so hazardous amid a pandemic.

That bodes well for the future as our region – which had gathered so much momentum before COVID-19 arrived – finds its way out of the economic ruin wrought by the pandemic.

The work of the Erie Downtown Development Corp., the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and others has gone a long way to transform Erie's image on the national stage from Rust Belt punchline to paragon of local agency and self-determination. This flat-terring rating should burnish that profile and could help draw interest in the region. That is key if we are to reverse a deeply damaging half century of population and job losses.

But as with many such lists, however eye-catching, the number-crunching fails to capture the full sweep of life here.

A 2017 24/7 Wall St. report memorably deemed Erie the worst city in the United States for African Americans. That report, as reporters here have detailed, suffered from deep methodological flaws, but it got at an essential truth, that the city still suffers from gross and intolerable racial disparities.

The SmartAsset.com analysis factored in some of this damning data, including the fact that more than a quarter of Erie residents, 27.1%, live below the poverty line. That number was by far the highest among the other "livable" cities in the top 25 and arguably should undermine any valid claim to high "livability" here.

This is no occasion for laurel-resting, but rather action. Imagine how this city, graced with so much, would rank if we got even more intentional about rooting out the systemic barriers that impede human potential here, especially for poor and minority residents.

That would truly be a community worth bragging about.

## Summer JAM extends program

BY SARA JUKES

sara@thecorryjournal.com

An Erie County Summer Jobs and More program to give young adults job experience expanded and restructured to make accommodations for the ongoing pandemic.

The program has been split into two phases, the first phase started June 22, but youth ages 16 to 21, with qualifying household income, can now apply for a second phase, which will begin July 6.

An application deadline for phase two is July 2 and interested parties can apply at [www.gecac.org/work/employment-an-income/summer-jam](http://www.gecac.org/work/employment-an-income/summer-jam).

The countywide program is a summer job program that aims to employ young Erie County residents who come from low- to middle-income families. JAM is administered by the Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC), and is a collaboration between Erie County government, the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority and the Erie Community Foundation.

◀ See JAM, P.2

## JAM

*(Continued from front page)*

GECAC Workforce Development Summer JAM Program Manager Silvana Lavor said this second phase is an opportunity for additional youth to sign up for Summer JAM 2020.

"Adding a second phase allows us to keep this opportunity open for a bit longer while ensuring we take all precautions for a healthy and successful Summer JAM work experience."

In addition to receiving a Summer JAM welcome package with two washable masks and hand sanitizer, participants will see an increase in pay from past years.

The new pay wage is \$8.25, increased from \$7.25 because of a number of factors, including the pandemic, Lavor said.

"The safety and health of our youth, employers and staff is extremely important," Lavor said. "All youth participate in a mandatory youth orientation where we provide a COVID-19 safety training conducted by the Erie County Department of Health. The two phases allows all youth to receive a thorough orientation."

Youth in both phases can work up to 180 hours and both phases have an end date of Aug. 14.