



IMPACT IN ACTION REPORT **2023**

CREATING UNPARALLELED OPPORTUNITY FOR BUSINESS

A Special Message from **SUSAN FOX AND MICHAEL N. ROMITA**

IT'S ALL ABOUT IMPACT

2023 was a memorable year for the WCA, a year where members collaborated to advance a positive agenda for strengthening the regional economy and to improve their respective organizations. Our achievements stem directly from their efforts and those of our board and dedicated staff.

We expanded our influence and achieved significant advocacy victories at the state and local level. These include historic increases in Medicaid funding and staffing reforms in healthcare, creating a template for regional housing reform, and advancing a clean energy future.

Our working groups all made significant progress towards measurable goals. This year saw us expand our nationally recognized digital initiative with the launch of Connect Westchester, continue the region's most innovative talent programs, and focus on the future of sustainable real estate development. In addition, the WCA strengthened opportunities for members to build meaningful professional connections through best-in-class programming, special events, and proprietary membership groups – like the New Leaders Roundtable.

This report highlights all that we were able to accomplish together this year. We look forward to building on these successes and accomplishing even more in the year ahead with the brand-new launch of the 1000 Jobs Challenge. We hope you will join us.

Here's to the future!



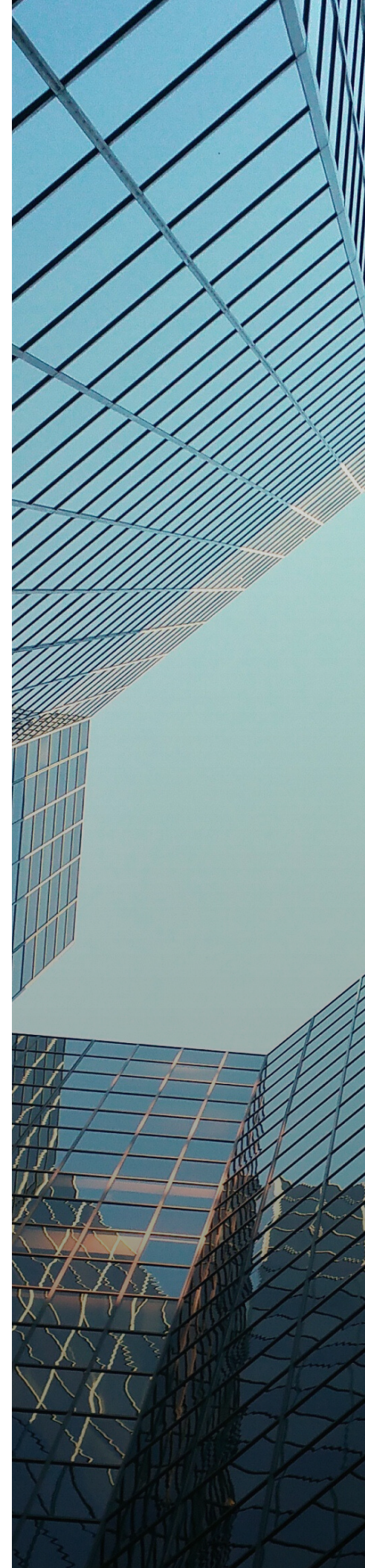
SUSAN FOX

Chair, WCA Board of Directors
President & CEO, White Plains Hospital



MICHAEL N. ROMITA

President & CEO, WCA





**WESTCHESTER COUNTY ASSOCIATION
CREATES OPPORTUNITY FOR**

THE REGION, OUR COMMUNITY, AND YOU

**by uniting and mobilizing professional leaders
to advance issues and lead initiatives that
strengthen our regional economy.**

We partner with leaders to:

- Drive economic vitality in Westchester and the region
- Stimulate new business development and job creation
- Provide a strong and clear voice for the interests of business on the regional, state, and national levels
- Provide our members with the resources and talent they need to grow

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**WESTCHESTER COUNTY ASSOCIATION
IS THE PREMIER BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP
ORGANIZATION IN THE WESTCHESTER REGION.**



WCA'S IMPACT IN ACTION

HEALTHCARE

A KEY SECTOR OF THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

"The WCA sees our region as the leading destination for hospitals, healthcare providers, and healthcare workers. In 2024, our goals are to build on our successful advocacy efforts, help our providers meet their hiring needs by growing strong regional talent pipelines, and focus on the importance of health equity and social determinants of health."

AMY ALLEN

Vice President, WCA

Here in Westchester, no other organization has done as much to advance the interests of the healthcare industry as the WCA, and the impact is enormous. With our comprehensive advocacy, creative initiatives, and strong leadership, we have moved the needle.

During 2023, WCA's effective advocacy resulted in a 7.5% increase in Medicaid funding, and a \$395M funding allocation from New York State to our regional providers. We also moved legislation, signed into law on May 15, 2023 by Governor Kathy Hochul, that permits nursing students to complete up to one third of their clinical training through simulation experiences. We are

addressing New York's nursing shortage by expediting training and delivering an influx of nurses where they are needed most.

The WCA's Healthcare Consortium and our partners made extensive progress on building a sustainable regional talent pipeline, addressing a most critical issue for healthcare providers. To date, our programs have trained 210 potential healthcare workers, with over 111 highly qualified graduates already hired by regional healthcare employers. The salaries of placed participants amount to more than \$4.5 million, or an ROI of 10:1. "That's what I would call a good investment," notes Amy Allen, Vice President, WCA.





We honored the county's Healthcare Champions, recognized for their leadership and dedication to improving lives in the communities they serve, at the WCA's signature healthcare event, Toasting to a Healthy Westchester.

We also spearheaded a summit of healthcare CEOs and college presidents to create the first-of-its-kind Regional Asset Inventory and industry-specific Talent Map to build the sector's workforce.

WCA Board Chair Susan Fox, President and CEO of White Plains Hospital, notes: "The WCA has long

connected healthcare and the biosciences, key economic sectors in Westchester County, with professional and political communities by acting as a hub for promoting policies, attracting and training talent, and advancing health equity and access. We provide our healthcare members with a strong and consistent voice to advocate for a vibrant health ecosystem."

In short, WCA's impact on the healthcare sector in 2023 has been tremendous.

WE ARE MAKING A BIG DIFFERENCE IN HEALTH EQUITY AND ACCESS

7.5%

Increase in
Medicaid Funding

\$395M

NYS Funding Allocation
for Nursing Homes, Assisted
Living and Hospitals

30%

Nurse Training Now
Allowed via Simulation

OUR HEALTHCARE TALENT PIPELINE PROGRAM IS FILLING HUNDREDS OF IN-DEMAND HEALTHCARE JOBS

10:1

ROI Job Creation

210

Future Healthcare
Workers Trained

\$4.5M

Salaries Created By
Participant Placements

- Building the local talent ecosystem
- Mapping assets; performing gap analysis of training programs
- Creating career pathways and forecasting future talent needs

"Clearly, there's been a need to retool for changes in technology, demographic shifts, and regulatory pressures, but **with WCA's help, we've consistently partnered with educational institutions** to build new and needed programs that are starved for talent today."

DEREK ANDERSON

Executive Director
Northern Westchester Hospital / Northwell



WCA'S IMPACT IN ACTION

REAL ESTATE & HOUSING

LEADING SMART GROWTH & HOUSING REFORM

"The WCA has led the clarion call for bold statewide solutions that address local zoning and land use restrictions, which remain the root causes of the crisis."

MICHAEL N. ROMITA
President & CEO, WCA

Real estate is a major economic driver and industry sector in Westchester and the mid-Hudson region, where the affordable housing shortage continues to be a serious impediment to economic growth and community vitality. The major culprit is an antiquated patchwork of local land use and zoning restrictions.

In 2023, the WCA devised a collaborative approach around advocating to correct these pressing issues, one that includes other pro-business groups, developers, nonprofits, higher education, local government representatives, attorneys, and others. To tackle New York State's debilitating housing shortage, we were the founding members of Welcome Home Westchester

and New York Neighbors, a statewide, pro-homes coalition that supports several options to increase housing supply and create more affordable homes. Advocacy and education are the keys to progress.

In addition, the WCA is focusing on sustainability in real estate by organizing hundreds of professional stakeholders around a first-of-its-kind guide to local clean energy siting and storage, climate adaptation, and stormwater management. This guide will be critical to developers, local governments, and communities as we move towards a more sustainable future for the built environment.



THE WCA IS A CLEAR AND CONSISTENT VOICE FOR THE REAL ESTATE COMMUNITY AND WESTCHESTER RESIDENTS

- Urging the legislature and Governor to work together to pass housing reform
- Changing the legislative and regulatory environment so Westchester can build workforce and affordable housing
- Improving market conditions and attracting business tenants
- Fostering smart growth development through master planning and adoption of form-based codes
- Connecting the real estate sector to the broader business community
- Calling on local government to embrace shared solutions



"Because the WCA is leading the affordable conversation statewide and locally, we're seeing **real movement** that goes beyond strategy."

WILLIAM V. CUDDY, JR.

Executive Vice President, CBRE
Chair, WCA Real Estate Task Force

IMPACT WCA DEvised THE ANNUAL REAL ESTATE & HOUSING SUMMIT WHERE:

- Hundreds of participants discuss the most pressing issues in real estate
- Experts tackle critical issues facing the sector and offer insights about how to address them

AND WE'RE DRIVING RESULTS!



3M+

Space redeveloped for mixed-use
Housing, retail, healthcare, recreational and educational facilities (sq.ft.)



\$90M

County Funding targeting
affordable housing



3400

New Housing Starts in 2022
Double the ten-year average

WCA'S IMPACT IN ACTION

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

"There's a big gap in the community. Our team's priority is to **make connectivity possible** so people can leverage opportunity and participate in the new economy."

ROBIN WHITE

Director of External Affairs, AT&T
Co-Chair, WCA's Digital Connectivity Committee



Westchester County is known for its many affluent communities, but large pockets of underserved exist as well — 75,000 households still have no internet connection and 45,000 households are without a computer. In 2023, the WCA expanded its efforts to close the digital divide with the launch of Connect Westchester, an extension of the WCA's nationally recognized Y-Zone program, created to increase access to affordable internet and training in Yonkers.

Now spanning the entire county, Connect Westchester will create economic opportunity by expanding digital resources, tech education and affordable internet access to low-income residents. Led by Westchester County, the program is in partnership with The STEM Alliance, the WCA, and Westchester Library System.

At the October press conference announcing Connect Westchester, Michael N. Romita, WCA President & CEO, noted the progress being made: "Digital connectivity and access are fundamental for people and businesses to thrive in the new economy. This program is about individual empowerment, lifting up communities, and building a healthy economy. Westchester's future looks bright with multiple stakeholders working together to advance digital equity across the region."

WCA is proud that Connect Westchester builds on its valuable work to close the digital divide. The new program leverages federal funding to help boost equitable access to broadband and digital literacy for residents.



WE ARE CLOSING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE TO STRENGTHEN THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

CREATED CONNECT WESTCHESTER

This is **the largest program in New York State** to bridge the digital divide. With a grant from Westchester County, the WCA, in partnership with The STEM Alliance and the Westchester Library System, is providing:

- **Essential digital resources**
- **Education and affordable internet access** to low-income residents
- Help to communities to participate in **the new economy**: WCA studies show that people with digital skills are **much more likely** to utilize telehealth, gain financial literacy, and receive education and job skills training

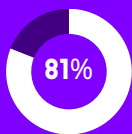
SPEARHEADING BROADBAND ADVOCACY

WCA's efforts are aimed at streamlining the permitting of fiber and wireless projects and/or municipal implementation of broadband policies and building support for local 5G and broadband infrastructure projects.

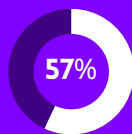
- **\$1.5M grant allocations** to advance digital connectivity and digital access in Westchester
- **Founding Members** of the Westchester Digital Inclusion Coalition
- **Advanced Advocacy**: ConnectALL, Empire State Development

2021-2023 Y-ZONE RESULTS & IMPACT: ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

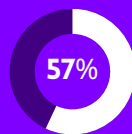
700+ CLIENTS SERVED



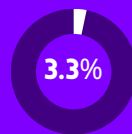
Improved financial literacy



Developed
Workforce/Tech Skills



Improvement
in the ability to start a new
business or market one



Estimated Household
Income Increase
for newly connected ACP
enrolled homes

"We're not just centered on digital equity; we look at how digital equity translates into economic and business development in Westchester County..."

"We connect the unconnected to better healthcare, education, and employment, and provide a digital pipeline to our county's biggest employers, service providers, and the internet economy."

CHRISTOPHER B. FISHER

Managing Partner, Cuddy & Feder LLP
Vice Chair, WCA



A woman with dark, curly hair, wearing a black blazer over a white top, is shaking hands with a man. The man is wearing a plaid shirt. They are in an office environment with bookshelves and a lamp in the background.

WCA'S IMPACT IN ACTION

TALENT PIPELINE

CREATING A TALENT ECOSYSTEM

"It's all about creating a local talent ecosystem and pushing for regulatory changes that will ease the shortage...We're focused on employer needs, which means we need to start that pipeline earlier, even as early as high school."

JASON CHAPIN

Director of Workforce Development, WCA

Finding talent is a critical challenge for businesses and organizations. It is crucial to economic development and a major focus of the WCA. Talent, and understanding and responding to the evolving current and future employer needs, are key to a thriving regional economy. Currently, the needs remain great in Westchester and the region as there are over 60,000 job openings and approximately 38,000 unemployed people, many due to their lack of skills.

In 2023, the WCA met the challenges head on. We stimulated economic growth with the success of our Healthcare Talent Pipeline that saw a rise in trained healthcare workers and graduates hired. We also launched the 1000 Jobs Challenge, an ambitious initiative which aims to fill 1,000 high-demand jobs within five years. It is projected to create \$60 million in annual economic impact.

"This underscores our commitment to proactively foster job creation and fortify Westchester's position as a hub for talent and innovation," said Jason Chapin, WCA's Director of Workforce Development. Program aspects will include WCA's working groups, committees, job fairs, conferences, career days and grant initiatives, all aligned to address Westchester's talent needs and attract young working professionals to Westchester.

Related to these activities was the formation of WCA's New Leaders Roundtable, which, among other things, will cultivate Westchester's next generation of professional leaders. Headed by Andrew Weisz, President, RPW Group, and Brad Schwartz, Partner, Zarin & Steinmetz LLP, the group has already collaborated with Yonkers Partners in Education to provide high school students exposure to diverse career paths.



WCA IS CREATING A TALENT ECOSYSTEM THROUGH OUR:

- **Annual Regional Workforce Development Summit**, attended by 150 business leaders in 2023
- **2023 Special Talent Solutions Report**, with strategies for employers
- **Regional Talent Resource Guide**, containing critical information about on-campus and online courses, credentials, degree programs and career services, childcare, transportation, housing, and healthcare resources
- **Healthcare Career Launch Project**, training 50 job seekers for entry-level healthcare positions
- **Healthcare Talent Pipeline Program**, recruiting 300 job seekers and employees and placing them in high-demand healthcare jobs
- **Healthcare Talent Council**, addressing worker shortages, clarifying career pathways, nurturing a talent pipeline for the future

WCA'S IMPACT IN ACTION

1000

JOBS CHALLENGE

GOAL

Fill **1000 in-demand jobs** in 5 years

IMPACT

\$60M in economic impact

HEALTHCARE

210 TRAINED HEALTHCARE WORKERS

111 GRADUATES HIRED

\$4.5M IN SALARIES CREATED

JOB FAIRS

50+
EMPLOYERS

500+
JOB
SEEKERS



"All these efforts are helping us to **reach the right candidates**, who are vested and familiar with the community, instead of our having to compete with New York City."

MARY AMATO

Partner, CohnReznick
Co-Chair, WCA
Workforce Development Committee

WCA'S IMPACT IN ACTION

SUSTAINABILITY

PREPARING FOR A LOW-CARBON FUTURE

"We advanced our education and advocacy goals by successfully hosting the Profit and Purpose '23 conference and by revising the Policy Playbook to be leveraged by local officials and real estate developers in coming up with sustainable building standards for the region."

ASHISH ARORA, CFA

Senior Vice President, Bank of America
Chair, WCA's Committee on Energy & Sustainability

As New York State moves towards greater sustainability with its ambitious Climate Action and Community Protection Act of 2019, the goals of which are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 40% by 2030 and 85% by 2050, the WCA strongly believes that a low-carbon future is a strategic business imperative. "Paying attention to environmental, social, and governance issues is critical for all companies," notes Michael N. Romita, WCA's President & CEO.

In 2023, the WCA saw a major expansion of our award-winning Clean Energy Portal and the development of our Regional Sustainable Development Guide, which includes chapters on renewable energy and climate resiliency. The WCA also convened its Second Annual Sustainable Business Conference ("Profit & Purpose '23")

that attracted hundreds of attendees to hear dozens of featured experts in energy policy, business strategy, finance, law, and compliance. Our first-ever Sustainability Boot Camp, led by the New York State Pollution Prevention Institute, helped businesses learn about implementing sustainability practices and transitioning to a low-carbon future. WCA's stepped up activity also was evident in its advocacy efforts for Clean Path NY, which will improve our economy and move us towards climate neutrality.

The bottom line: WCA is taking the lead in the region on sustainability through our advocacy, leadership, and action as we build a roadmap to a low-carbon future.

WE'RE PREPARING BUSINESSES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Today, sustainability is an imperative for any well-run organization. WCA's priority is to provide businesses with the advocacy and tools they need to maximize efficiency and profitability as we move towards a cleaner and more sustainable future.

1

WCA's Annual "Profit & Purpose" Conference:

- The first and only conference focused on sustainable business
- Attracted dozens of experts and hundreds of professionals

2

Advocacy with Impact:

- Proposed climate change-related zoning
- Provided access to financial and technical assistance for clean energy transition
- Outlined renewable energy infrastructure
- Published op-eds that support state and local action re: climate change

3

Clean Energy Portal:

A dynamic searchable guide to available clean energy programs and incentives for regional businesses. Updated in 2023, it was accessed by 200+ businesses and organizations.

4

Online Curriculum of Sustainability Management:

The WCA partnered with Fordham University's Gabelli School of Business to provide an online course in organizational sustainability to train working professionals and thought leaders.

5

Sustainable Business Training Bootcamps:

WCA convened experts from NYSEDERA, NYPA, Con Edison, New York State Pollution Prevention Institute and other local organizations to lead training sessions and webinars for our members.

"The impact of climate change is top of mind for all of us, as resilience is not optional anymore...ESG is here to stay. **The WCA is ahead of the curve** in preparing everyone for a more sustainable economy."

KRISTEN MOTEL

Partner, Cuddy & Feder LLP
Co-Chair, WCA's Real Estate Sustainability Working Group



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Executive Committee

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Aléida M. Frederico, SECRETARY, Westchester Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
William P. Harrington, Esq., IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR, Partner, Bleakley Platt & Schmidt, LLP
Paul Adler, Esq., Chief Strategy Officer, Rand Commercial
Mary Amato, Partner, CohnReznick
Derek Anderson, Executive Director, Northern Westchester Hospital/ Northwell
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William Mooney, Jr., Director- Communications & Institutional Relationships, Simone Development Companies
Michael N. Romita, President & CEO, Westchester County Association
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Melinda White, Middle Market Banking Director, Popular Bank
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Joseph Simone, President, Simone Development Companies
Jane Solnick, Director, Con Edison
Kenneth R. Theobalds, President, Government & Regulatory Affairs, RiverRun Partners
Teresita Wisell, Vice President, Workforce Development and Community Education, SUNY Westchester Community College
Richard Wishnie, Field Representative of New York Electric Contractors; Commissioner of the Westchester County Department of Emergency Services



BELONG!

Become a Member of the WCA; it is one of the best investments you can make for your business. When you join the WCA, you gain the full force of our formidable advocacy infrastructure, have the opportunity to make a difference in your community, and benefit from our relationships, experience, and expertise.

Become a member of the Westchester County Association and enjoy the many benefits of membership.

You will receive:

- Access to stakeholder-driven conferences, summits, and roundtables
- Networking opportunities with professionals and community leaders
- Access to data-driven reports and resources
- Company visibility
- Discounted tickets to events (virtual and live)
- Chance to engage in committee work that fosters collaboration and innovation
- *Policy Pulse*, a curated newsletter on New York's politics and policies
- Opportunity for young professionals to join New Leaders Roundtable
- ...and so much more!

We customize every membership package to meet your goals and objectives.

BE IN THE CONVERSATION. JOIN US IN SHAPING THE FUTURE.

For more information: e-mail info@westchester.org or call Melissa M. Luzzi at 914-948-1860



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