

NETWORKS

DIGITAL NEWS

Brackets and brainpower: Young Professionals gear-up for trivia

The Young Professionals of Blair County are gearing up for a lively evening that blends friendly competition, community connection, and festive spirit. On March 19, 2026 at 5:30 PM, join the YPs at Zach's Sports & Spirits for a special March Madness and St. Patrick's Day Trivia Night—a perfect pairing for early spring energy. Attendees are invited to show off their sports knowledge, test their luck with St. Patrick's Day-themed questions, and enjoy a relaxed atmosphere ideal for meeting new people or old friends. Whether someone is a die hard college basketball fan, a trivia enthusiast, or simply looking for a fun afterwork outing, the night promises something for everyone!



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Beyond the trivia itself, the evening offers a chance to unwind, network, and support a group dedicated to fostering professional growth and community engagement among Blair County's emerging leaders.

Committee member Rebecca Culp notes, "It's the kind of event that captures what YP does best—bringing people together through shared experiences, a bit of competition, and a lot of fun. We hope to see you there!"

Click [here](#) to register.

Real-life AI solutions for small and mid-size businesses

Doing more with less has become a common challenge for small- to mid-size businesses. With limited staff and growing demands, teams can only take on so much. A practical solution is through the use of artificial intelligence. However, many businesses feel overwhelmed and unsure how to approach it safely.

The Chamber's Breakfast Club on Feb. 19 at the Blair County Convention Center, brought to you by series sponsor, [Altoona-Blair County Airport](#) and [Contour Airlines](#), will offer real-world examples of how small and mid-sized businesses are successfully using AI. The discussion, sponsored by [Wells Fargo](#), and led by industry experts



Wayne Hippo, CEO of Fortiva AI, LLC, and Bruce Moser, Vice President of AI Technology at PS Solutions, will provide a practical framework for getting started.

Breakfast Club begins at 7:45 a.m. Cost to attend is \$25 for Chamber Members and \$35 for non-members. To make reservations, click [here](#).



Nominations deadline approaching

The Chamber is now accepting nominations for a full slate of prestigious awards recognizing outstanding businesses and individuals from across the region. Nominate a deserving individual or business for their extraordinary accomplishments. The 2026 Awards include: ATHENA, Business of the Year, Small Business of the Year, Non-Profit Spotlight, Donna D. Gorty Servant Leadership, George, Joseph P. Rosenhamer Chamber Spirit, and Judith A. Rossi Educator of the Year. A description of each award is available on the Chamber's website at www.blairchamber.com including a link to the [nomination form](#). Deadline to nominate is Feb. 12. Awards will be presented at the Chamber's red carpet Gala & Annual Celebration on April 28, 2026, at the Blair County Convention Center.

FEB. 27, 28 & MAR. 1

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Ribbon Cutting



Casa Bella

A Chamber ribbon-cutting ceremony was held for the grand opening of [Graystone's Casa Bella at the Grande Palazzo](#) located at 2620 8th Avenue, Altoona. Casa Bella features 195 luxurious units and a 220-car indoor parking garage. It's convenient location affords residents easy access to shoppes, a restaurant, spa, and theatre room. The top floor lounge area and rooftop patio offers stunning views of the city. For more information, call 814-201-2145. ABCD Corporation and M&T Bank were proud to partner with Jeff S. Long Construction on this incredible project. Pictured at the ribbon, from left: Greg Haffling, Chamber Ambassador; Megan Rossmann, Blair County Chamber of Commerce; Stephen McKnight, President/CEO, ABCD Corporation; State Senator Judy Ward; Jeff Long, Jeff S. Long Construction; Vikki Long; Stephanie Castle, Building Manager; Dana McGarvey, Activities Director; Mayor Matt Pacifico, City of Altoona; P.J. Kemerer, M&T Bank; and Tara Saltzburg, Chamber Ambassador.

LBC Youth applications now online

Applications are now open for the Blair County Chamber's Leadership Blair County Youth program. This is an exciting opportunity for motivated high school sophomores to grow, connect, and lead by example in our community. This hands-on servant leadership experience brings together students from across Blair County for a year of interactive learning, career exploration, and community involvement. Participants build confidence and essential leadership skills through sessions focused on communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and volunteerism. Along the way, students meet local business and community leaders, and tour area organizations. LBCY emphasizes service and collaboration, encouraging students to work together on meaningful projects that strengthen their connection to the community. The program helps students



discover their strengths, expand their networks, and better prepare for college, careers, and future leadership roles. If you know a student who is eager to make a difference, encourage them to apply. Applications for the 2026–2027 Leadership Blair County Youth class are available [online](#) and are due April 24. Help us inspire and develop the next generation of Blair County leaders!

Congratulations!

...to [Mount Aloysius College](#) for ranking in the national Top 100 placement on Newsweek's inaugural America's Best Colleges for Women 2026 list, and Top 10 ranking for Pennsylvania institutions.

...to [United Way of the Southern Alleghenies](#) Family Resource Center of Blair County Toasty Toddler program. This season the program distributed new coats, hats, and gloves to 710 children.

...to [Juniata College](#) for earning the Carnegie Community Engagement Classification, a designation that places it among a select group of U.S. colleges and universities recognized for excellence in community engagement.

Chamber sets new travel destination

If once-in-a-lifetime wildlife encounters, luxury hotels, and seamless transfers are your idea of the perfect vacation then get ready to set sail with the Chamber and travel partner Ketrow KURTZ Travel on an Ecuador and Galápagos Islands Cruise, May 2-9, 2027. Your adventure will include a stop in Quito, Ecuador, a five-day Galápagos Cruise Experience, and then finish with a stay at Finch Bay. A no-cost, no-obligation informational meeting will be held March 18 at 6 p.m., at the Devorris Center for Business Development. To register, click [here](#).

Stay up-to-date on great progress in Blair County!

[CLICK HERE](#)

