

#1 IN THE WORLD

UA POLYMER SCIENCE & PLASTICS ENGINEERING



1ST QUARTER 2022
DOWNTOWN AKRON SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
QUARTERLY UPDATE

IN THIS ISSUE

In This Issue

[Meet the New DAP Staff Members](#)

[UA Polymer Science Program is #1 in the World](#)

[Downtown Small Businesses and Storefronts in the News](#)

- [Funny Noodle](#) offers next-level flavor
- [Akronym Brewing](#) is growing

[Residential and Business Development Dashboard](#)

[January - February Marquee Events](#)

- [2022 Lunar New Year Celebration](#)
- [St. Patrick's Day Parade](#)

[Clean, Safe & Welcoming: Ambassador Accomplishments](#)

[Marketing and Promotions Dashboard](#)

[NEW: DOWNTOWN STORIES & GUIDES](#)

[Vibrancy and Economic Development](#)

- [Akron Marathon Dates & Sponsors Announced](#)
- [UA, City of Akron Form Joint Working Group](#)
- [DAP Launches 6th Cohort of Start Downtown Businesses](#)
- [Fundraising Effort Underway for Sojourner Truth Statue and Plaza](#)
- [City of Akron Leverages Federal Funds for Public Spaces](#)
- [City of Akron Announces New Small Business Boost Initiative](#)
- [Perfect Pour: Martinis, Burgers and Bourbon Opens on Main St.](#)
- [Coming Soon to 357 S. Main St.: Big Mamma's Burritos](#)
- [RubberDucks 2022 Promo Schedule](#)
- [Summit Artspace Re-Launches Artist Entrepreneurship Institute](#)
- [Road Trips: Akron Arts Tour](#)
- [NOMZ Founders Pass the Torch to New Owners](#)
- [UA Polymer Professor Recognized for Work with 2D Materials](#)
- [Lock 3 Park Vision Plan is Fully Funded](#)
- [New Akron Civic Theatre Deck to Be Named PNC Plaza](#)
- [Akron Council Approves Video Wall for Civic](#)

[Business Achievements and News](#)

[Featured Property](#)

- [Delaware Building | 137 S. Main St.](#)

[Featured Business](#)

- [The Experience | 88 E. Mill Street](#)

[Transportation and Development](#)

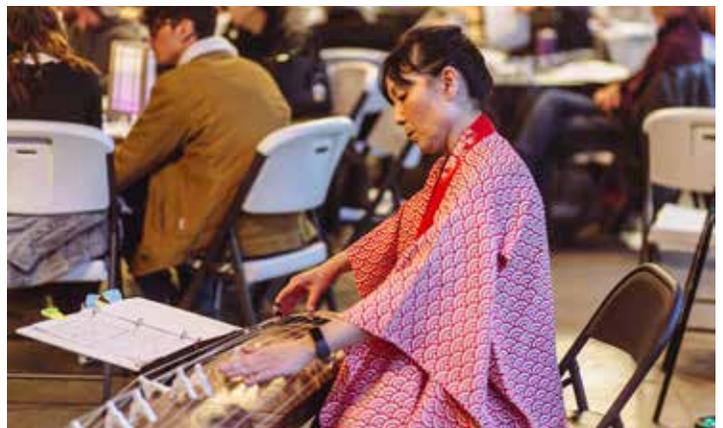
- [METRO Launches New Electric Buses](#)
- [METRO Receives National Recognition for Safety & Security Efforts](#)

[Rubber Worker Statue](#)

- [Mayor Horrigan announced Chemstress Consultant Company as Presenting Sponsor](#)

Photographs from the Downtown Akron Cherry Blossom Celebration on April 9, 2022 by Talia Hodge.

See more Cherry Blossom Photos by Talia Hodge in our [Photo Album](#).



LOCK 3 PARK PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

Tuesday, May 3 | 5 - 7 p.m.

Knight Stage at the Civic Theatre

182 South Main Street, Akron, Ohio 44308

Join us for the Lock 3 Park Open House and share your ideas about Lock 3 Park and how might we create an accessible, equitable and welcoming park for everyone.

View the [Lock 3 Vision Plan](#) [here](#). Feel free to also take [this survey](#) to share your thoughts on the Lock 3 Vision Plan.

For more information, please contact Dan Rice, Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition, drice@ohioerielcanal.org or (330) 374-5657.

NEW FACES AT DAP

Elizabeth Flanagan

DAP, Director of Engagement and Events

Elizabeth oversees the planning and ideation of all DAP programming. She works closely with the director of communications to execute planning, promotions and logistics of downtown events and engagement. She oversees programming and events that are designed to foster growth and community engagement. Her passion for contribution, connection, community and creativity serves the programming initiatives in a positive way toward building a vibrant and valuable downtown for all people. Elizabeth received her bachelor's degree from Kent State University in Communication and Information Studies.



Sonia Potter

DAP, Communications Specialist

Sonia joined Downtown Akron Partnership's staff in February 2022 and works closely with the communications director—not only to promote DAP initiatives and lend an editor's eye to pre-published materials, but to help tell the stories of the vibrant people, programs, and spaces that make up downtown's unique ecosystem. She's driven and inspired by the warmth of her community and is dedicated to working toward making it a welcoming, connective, loving place for all people. Sonia received her bachelor's degree in English and creative writing from The University of Akron in 2019.



Lauren Lienhart

DAP, Programming and Engagement Specialist

Lauren helps develop and plan Downtown Akron Partnership programming alongside the director of engagement and events. She believes fostering relationships with local businesses, artists, and other talented individuals is the key to creating unique and collaborative events that community members value and enjoy. Prior to joining DAP, Lauren lived and worked in Cincinnati, managing events in civic spaces for the downtown and Over-the-Rhine communities. She is excited by the vibrancy of downtown Akron and hopes to continue growing events for all Akronites to enjoy. Lauren received her bachelor's degrees from Miami University in Psychology and Theatre.



WORKING FOR DOWNTOWN

UA #1 in the World for Polymer Science and Plastics Engineering

"The University of Akron was recently named as the top university in the world for polymer science and plastics engineering according to global ranking site EduRank.

...the School of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering at The University of Akron offers cutting edge master's and doctoral programs. The faculty represent one of the largest concentrations of polymer expertise in the U.S., having invented more than 300 issued and pending patents, including some that have been commercialized worldwide...

...'In the evaluation, 31,128 research publications of our university were considered. Of these, 14,146 were in engineering and 9,477 were in material sciences,' said John Wiencek, executive vice president and provost. 'Research publications from the University overall have been cited more than 760,492 times.'"

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

NE Ohio Polymer Industry Could See a Big Boost from Federal Funding

The Northeast Ohio Polymer Cluster, consisting of The University of Akron, Case Western Reserve, Kent State University and the region's entire polymer industry could receive a game-changing federal grant of \$17 million through the Build Back Better Regional Challenge.



"If the effort succeeds, plans call for the new polymer center to be built at the University of Akron over the next two to three years. It would conduct polymer research and perform testing for local manufacturers, and work with them to prototype and scale up production of new polymer-based products.

All three of the local universities' polymer programs would use the center and participate in its work, but Akron might have the most to gain." —*Dan Shingler, Crain's Cleveland Business, Apr. 24, 2022*

[Click here to read the full story on crainscleveland.com.](#)

Downtown Small Businesses and Storefronts in the News

Local Flavor: Funny Noodle a fun spot for pho, ramen soups in downtown Akron, by Kerry Clawson, Akron Beacon Journal: It was a night for noodles as my husband and I enjoyed the Asian fusion food and funky-cool environment of the Funny Noodle restaurant in Akron last week.

The downtown eatery, which opened Dec. 1, features a walk-up counter for ordering and a dining room that seats 42. The place, owned by The Lockview owner Danny Basone, has low lighting, burnt orange-painted walls and old-school rap music that was playing on a recent weeknight...

...Last week at Funny Noodle, my husband, Steve, and I kicked things off with a great appetizer of crispy-fried Brussel sprouts and broccoli (\$7), which we dipped in a delightful, light orange sauce of maple kimchi mayo and topped with a squeeze of lime juice. The warm veggies were served with a side of cold, spicy red kimchi, which



created a marked contrast in temperature, color and flavor. [READ MORE](#)

Ready to expand, Akronym Brewing will open a gastropub in Medina County, by Jeremy Nobile, Crain's Cleveland Business: The Akron-founded brewery will be opening a new location in Montville Township, the second in its footprint, in a space last home to a Rockne's restaurant.

Akronym Brewing will mark its first expansion since launching in downtown Akron in spring 2018 as it opens a second location in the Medina area that is slated to come online this coming spring or early summer...

...The Akron brewery on Market Street, which features a 10-barrel brewing system, is about 4,800 square feet and has seating for 99.

Akronym currently has about 16 employees. But the new location likely will have a staff of between 40 and 60 people. [READ MORE](#)

VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Downtown Akron Residential Open House

Coming May 14, 2022 | 2 - 5 p.m.

Get to know the downtown residential neighborhood at the Downtown Residential Open House. Take a tour of downtown properties, meet the property management, get a flavor for the neighborhood vibe and experience the benefits of downtown living.

This a self guided open house. Start your afternoon at your preferred location and property staff will be on hand to show you around. There is not a central meeting location for this event. Registration is encouraged. [Find out more.](#)



above: [The Standard](#), 22 E. Exchange St., 330-375-1183

Residential Development as of Q1 - 2022

90% Residential Occupancy

UNITS OPENED	UNITS IN CONSTRUCTION	UNITS RENOVATED	PLANNED UNITS
121	139	499	144

Business Development

Office Occupancy

	OCCUPANCY RATE	AVG ASKING RATE (PER SQ. FT.)
H1 - 2020	79.5%	\$16.46
H2 - 2020	80.7%	\$16.24
H1 - 2021	80.2%	\$16.54
H2 - 2021	81.2%	\$16.77

*Data from CBRE



Business Outreach

Q1 - 2022	CONTACTS MADE*
RETAIL BUSINESS CONTACTS	36
NON-RETAIL BUSINESS CONTACTS	55
RETAIL AND BUSINESS PROSPECTS**	17

* refers to the number of unique visits/contacts initiated by DAP per quarter

** Refers to the number of requests for DAP's assistance in locating space for business

JANUARY - MARCH EVENTS



Downtown Akron Lunar New Year

February 12, 2022

Akron welcomed the Year of the Tiger at the city's first centralized, large-scale Lunar New Year Celebration on February 12. An estimated 1,100 people attended the event inside the Lock 3 Commons, decorated with red and gold lanterns and lights.

Elaine Tso, CEO of Asia Services in Action (ASIA), Inc., welcomed visitors with opening remarks. She also explained the significance of each cultural performance through the duration of the evening. These included the Lion Dance, performed by the Kwan Family Lion Dance Team; the Dragon Dance, performed by students from the National Inventors Hall of Fame STEM Middle School; the Face-Changing performance by Master Moachang Zhang; the Waist Drum Dance by the Glory Drum Team of Cleveland; and martial arts performances by international Kung Fu Master Sen Gao of Ohio Wushu Academy.

While these cultural exhibitions were happening in the main event space, volunteers from the Akron Children's Museum held a craft activity in an adjacent room, where children and adults could create lanterns out of clear jars, tissue paper, glitter, and LED tea lights. In the hall, the University of Akron's Confucius Institute gave free commemorative t-shirts to attendees. And after the indoor festivities took place, a vibrant red and gold fireworks display rained over Lock 3.

DAP is thankful to the Confucius Institute and our partners at the University of Akron for allowing us to share what they've developed over the years as a wonderful community event, and we're grateful to have done so along with ASIA, Inc., Akron Public Schools, the Ka'Ren Community of Akron, Inc., Civic Youth Engagement, Akron Children's Museum, Global Ties Akron, and Akron METRO RTA. We're grateful, too, for support from Knight Foundation, GAR Foundation, Akron Community Foundation, Akron Civic Commons, and Ohio Arts Council.

[Find out more about the Lunar New Year Celebration.](#)

St. Patrick's Day Parade

March 12, 2022

Once again, DAP marched in the St. Patrick's Day Parade from Spaghetti Warehouse to Lock 3, hosted by the Ancient Order of Hibernians in partnership with the City of Akron. It was a snowy morning, but that didn't stop people from lining up to watch the parade, especially on city blocks containing Irish pubs.

We made a festive parade float for the occasion that featured a number of life-size teddy bears dressed in their best St. Patrick's Day attire. We were excited to learn that our float won 2nd place in the Commercial Float category of the parade contest!

DOWNTOWN PROGRAMS



CLEAN, SAFE & WELCOMING

DAP Ambassador Stats Jan. 1 - Mar. 31, 2022



The DAP ambassador team continued to provide clean, safe and welcoming support to downtown, while also helping to shovel curb cuts and clearing bus steps so that visitors could access walkways during the snowy weather. The ambassadors participated in the "Point-in-Time" count this year, and created incentive bags for the unhoused population which they distributed on January 25.

Ambassador hours of operation:
Monday - Saturday: 7 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Sunday: 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

For ambassador services or to report a problem, call the on-duty ambassador during hours of operation at 330-706-7383.

[Find out more about downtown Ambassadors.](#)

DOWNTOWN BEAUTIFICATION

Beautification efforts for the summer and fall of 2022 in downtown Akron begin approximately the last week of May with flowers in downtown planters, hanging baskets and flower beds. Want to volunteer to help?

[Click here to find out how you can help.](#)



MARKETING & PROMOTIONS

DAP shares news about downtown progress, businesses, institutions and organizations, downtown life and the downtown community in numerous ways. The most readily measurable outlets for promotion and advocacy are digital, through the DAP website, social media and email newsletter. Below are selected metrics related to these communications.



SOCIAL MEDIA	Q4 - 2021	Q1 - 2022
FACEBOOK	9,626	9,875
TWITTER	9,393	9,462
INSTAGRAM	6,187	6,444
LINKEDIN	1,607	1,661

WEBSITE TRAFFIC	Q4 - 2021	Q1 - 2022
USERS	78,740	86,671
SESSIONS	99,405	110,273
PAGE VIEWS	284,390	364,211

EMAIL NEWSLETTER	Q1 - 2022
NUMBER PUBLISHED	18
SENDS	97,711
OPENS	25,858
CLICKS	2,198
SUBSCRIBERS	17,185

Stay connected to the latest information on downtown Akron, subscribe to Do Downtown, our bimonthly email newsletter at downtownakron.com/news/subscribe, and follow us on social media @DowntownAkronPartnership

Downtown Stories and Guides

DAP Stories present a closer look at some of downtown Akron's interesting events, places, and people.

We'll do the planning, you make the memories. DAP's growing list of downtown Guides can help you make a day of it in downtown Akron. *(click to read)*

STORIES

- [Akron welcomes the Year of the Tiger at Lock 3 Lunar New Year celebration](#)
- [Pick up the poop! Not-so-fun facts about dog waste](#)
- [The buzz on the Butterfly Waystation at downtown Akron's Northside Green](#)
- [Summit Suffrage Centennial to honor Sojourner Truth with a statue and plaza in downtown Akron](#)
- [Downtown Akron enjoys 2nd annual Sakura Cherry Blossom Celebration](#)
- [How we manage the geese in downtown](#)

GUIDES

- [Discover 4 Fine Dining Restaurants in Downtown Akron](#)
- [Downtown Akron Shopping Guide](#)
- [24 Black-Owned Businesses in Downtown Akron](#)
- [23 Free and Low-Cost Things to Do in Downtown Akron](#)
- [14 Casual Restaurants in Downtown Akron](#)
- [7 Music Venues in Downtown Akron](#)
- [36 Women-Owned Businesses in Downtown Akron](#)

Goose Patrol

Where there's water, there's geese. The Canada Geese we all know and love spend a lot of time downtown. We can't stop them, but we can give them incentives to share the space (and not poop all over every walkable surface). That's why each year, DAP contracts Ohio Geese Control (OGC) to persuade the geese to keep things civil. OGC makes sure that the geese are not harmed in any way—they are approved by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the Humane Society, and PETA. OGC helps the geese to be better neighbors in our downtown environment, and we all get to enjoy the space. [Find out more.](#)



NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Akron Marathon Announces Dates and Sponsors for 2022

“While new companies often get the headlines, big corporations, many with decades or more of history in town, still keep Akron running—literally.

For proof, look no further than the Akron Marathon Race Series—or, as it’s more formally known, the Akron Marathon Race Series presented by Summa Health.

Mark one large local business off your list. Summa Health is not only one of the region’s largest health care providers, it’s Summit County’s largest employer by far, according to data from the city.

And, again this year, the big runners’ events are being sponsored by other large companies in and around Akron.”
—Dan Shingler, *Crain’s Cleveland Business*, Jan. 12, 2022

[Click here to read the full story.](#)



University of Akron, City of Akron Form Joint Working Group

“Officials from the city of Akron and the University of Akron are coming together more formally in an attempt to figure out ways to advance ‘cooperation, support, and mutual growth’ between the two institutions.

‘The City and the University are intertwined at many levels and the future of our region depends on each of us thriving as we move forward,’ Akron Mayor Daniel Horrigan said in a release issued Wednesday, Jan. 26. ‘Having this working group in place will help ensure that we coordinate our efforts’

A group of 13 senior university and city leaders, including Horrigan and UA president Gary Miller, plan to initially meet biweekly to discuss ‘topics and issues of mutual benefit and coordinate joint activities,’ per the release.” —Amy Morona, *Crain’s Cleveland Business*, Jan. 27, 2022

[Click here to read the full story.](#)



DAP Launches the 6th Cohort of Start Downtown

“Downtown Akron Partnership (DAP) is happy to announce six new businesses are opening within downtown’s 42-block Special Improvement District after being selected for the Start Downtown program. The businesses are Capital Talent Development Group, Ernie’s Catering, Perfect Pour, Street Craftery, Sweet & Savvy, and Velvet Vintage.” Five of the businesses are owned by women, and five are owned by people of color.”

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

Fundraising Effort Underway for Sojourner Truth Statue & Plaza in Akron

“In May 1851, at the Second Ohio Women’s Rights Convention at the Old Stone Church in Akron, Ohio, Sojourner Truth, a former slave and uninvited speaker, raised up her imposing six-foot presence and electrified the audience with a powerful speech that many historians consider to be the most important women’s rights and abolitionist speech in U.S. history.

While the most accurate version of the speech was originally printed in the Salem Anti-Slavery Bugle, it has most often been referred to as “Ain’t I a Woman?,” even though Truth never spoke those words. —*Jackie Darrow, Ohio Capital Journal, Feb. 18, 2022*

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

Community, Collaboration & Trust: Akron Leverages Federal Funds for Public Spaces

“Through centering trust-building and community voice, Akron, Ohio, has created a cross-sector vehicle for transformational change that is mobilizing millions of federal dollars to invest in historically disparaged neighborhoods.

With this recent influx of federal funding, mostly from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Akron is flexing their ability to collaborate across silos while maintaining equity as a guiding principle to create value in forgotten civic assets.

A total of \$5.5 million from ARPA funding will be used to increase the City of Akron’s investment to \$10 million for the transformation of parks at Lock 3 and Summit Lake as part of Reimagining the Civic Commons in Akron. The Knight Foundation, a local funding partner, has agreed to provide an additional \$3.5 million match to secure ARPA funding, bringing their support at the two parks to \$9.5 million. With willing partners at the City of Akron and an engaged community, more than \$19.5 million has been directed to public space improvements through this partnership.” —*Sidra Fatima, The Kresge Foundation, Mar. 14, 2022*

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

With Support from Principal® Foundation & the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund, Akron Announces New Small Business Boost Initiative

“The City of Akron and the national nonprofit Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund (CFE Fund) announced the launch of Small Business Boost, a new pilot to connect small business owners and entrepreneurs to one-on-one Financial Empowerment Center (FEC) financial counseling.”

[Click here to read the full story.](#)



NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Perfect Pour: Martinis, Burgers and Bourbon Open on S. Main St.

376 S. Main St.

234-334-4219

perfectpourakron.com

Open 7 days a week 11 a.m. - midnight

Perfect Pour is now open 7 days a week, from lunchtime through midnight. They specialize in top shelf bourbon, whiskey, martinis, craft cocktails, and craft beers. They also offer bourbon, martini, and craft beer flights.

Along with a full-service bar, they offer cozy table seating. Their food menu includes a generous selection of appetizers, salads, and sides, along with their speciality burgers. The space is friendly and elegant, and they are currently offering a 10% discount to essential workers (with valid ID), including doctors, nurses, fire fighters, food service workers, transit employees, police officers, FEMA workers, teachers, and members of the military.

Photos are from their April 1, 2022 ribbon-cutting.



Coming Soon: Big Mamma's Burritos

Opening May or June at 357 S. Main St.

"It only takes 34 seconds to make a burrito and Big Mamma's makes each one count, stuffing our warm flour tortillas with freshly delicious blends of mexi-cali goodness. Always fresh and made-to order, Mamma knows there's never one burrito for every craving so we style our burritos, bowls, and chips to surprise and delight with every bite. We are open from lunch to late, so show your hunger some love, and let Mamma make it!" *—from the [Big Mamma's Burritos website](#)*

Big Mamma's menu includes breakfast burritos, the Philly, the Mamma Grande, the Vegan Chorizo, the Steak 'n Bacon, and many others (including build-your-own burrito options), available in baby and regular sizes, and also available as bowls.



RubberDucks 2022 Promo Schedule

“We have been hard at work all offseason planning these great promotional nights for the fans,” said RubberDucks Director of Marketing and Promotions Kyle Hixenbaugh. “This season’s promotional schedule brings some new faces to Canal Park like Chris Kattan and Tracy Reiner. We are excited to once again honor the Akron Black Tyrites as we salute the Negro Leagues, and continue to grow our Perros Calientes brand, our COPA identity.” [Click here to read the details.](#)

[To view the RubberDucks 2022 Schedule, click here.](#)

Summit Artspace Re-Launches Artist Entrepreneurship Institute

“Summit Artspace is searching for artists to enroll in its Artist Entrepreneurship Institute (AEI) this May with funding provided by the Burton D. Morgan Foundation. AEI is a multi-week course for artists designed to help them grow their businesses.

Artists of all disciplines are invited to engage in seven sessions covering twelve topics that encourage peer-to-peer learning under the direction of experts in business, marketing, finance, and sales, benefitting from instruction in strategic planning, financial management, and communications expertise. They will graduate with a toolkit of skills and a cohort of peers to catalyze their business development.

AEI will be held Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 6-9 p.m. between May 3-May 24 at Summit Artspace. Registration for AEI is now open and will close on April 30.”

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

Road Trips: Akron Arts Tour

“Akron was built on tire production, but there is a lot of arts muscle covering the city’s industrial skeleton. The place that gave us Goodyear (the company is still headquartered here) also brought us rock ‘n’ roll legends Devo and The Pretenders’ Chrissie Hynde as well as the platinum-selling bluesy rock duo The Black Keys. Creativity runs deep here, and you can sample it at these spots throughout downtown.

The city’s art museum moved into downtown’s 1899 post office building in the early 1980s. A 2007 expansion tripled the museum’s size and remade the institution with a signature look and modern feel, thanks to a design by renowned Viennese architecture firm Coop Himmelblau. Inside, art lovers can browse a diverse collection that is focused on pieces from the 1850s to the present day.” —*Jim Vickers, Ohio Magazine, Mar. - Apr., 2022*

[Click here to read the full story.](#)



NEWS: VIBRANCY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DOWNTOWN AKRON COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE SITE SEARCH

Looking for office or storefront commercial space? Downtown Akron Partnership can help you search for available locations within our 42-block Special Improvement District and arrange for tours. This is a free and confidential Site Selection service provided by our organization. [Click here to try it!](#)

Visit downtownakron.com/do-business to view the ways in which DAP can help you relocate or start your business in downtown.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The DAP website highlights available job opportunities within the Special Improvement District. Whether it's an office job or service position, full or part time, we want this page to become a go-to source for those interested in working downtown. [Click here to visit the page.](#)

TO UPDATE YOUR COMPANY PROFILE, PROVIDE A PHOTO OR TO LIST A JOB OPENING, PLEASE EMAIL INFO@DOWNTOWNAKRON.COM.

SAVE THE DATE

Downtown Summer to Remember Kickoff

May 19 | 11:30 a.m. - 10 p.m.
LOCK 3 in downtown Akron

Meet Mayor Horrigan
Enjoy Live Music
Food and Happy Hour Specials
Games and Activities
Gift Card Giveaway

[Click here to check for updates.](#)

NOMZ Founders Pass Torch at Akron Restaurant to Explore Food, Starting in Bali

"NOMZ eatery founders Kass and Sam LaVictoire have hung up their Akron aprons and sold their eatery at NorthsideMarketplace, with a plan to travel, rediscover food and gain new skills in the kitchen.

Their first stop: Bali.

The newlyweds, who grew up down the street from each other in West Akron, left Sunday for the Indonesian island, where they'll spend two months exploring vegan restaurants and looking for culinary inspiration.

'We're taking a risk to prioritize expanding our skills and travel the world. The plan is to rediscover food and ourselves, to be able to build the concept of our dreams someday,' said Kass LaVictoire, 26.

Taking over NOMZ at Northside Marketplace, which the LaVictoires ran for more than three years, are Roy Wright and his fiancé, Jamie Krum, of Springfield Township and Wright's brother, Bill Simoes of Shaker Heights. The sale includes the large adjacent NOMZ coffee and bar, which the LaVictoires took over in June.

They plan to keep NOMZ's staff of 13 and continue to use the original recipes at the counter-style restaurant known for its scratch cooking and seasonal menus. Nearly all of the recipes were created by Sam LaVictoire, with a few invented by Kass." —*Kerry Clawson, Akron Beacon Journal, Apr. 3, 2022*

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

Polymer Professor Recognized for Research on 2D Materials

"Dr. Weinan Xu, assistant professor in the School of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering, was awarded the 2022 Polymer Processing Society Early Career Award. This award recognizes researchers who stimulate originality and potential for continuing creativity in the science and technology of all polymer processing related areas."

'My research is focused on changing the design and advanced fabrication of polymer composite or hybrid materials to improve their capabilities. Polymer composites are used everywhere in our lives, from outdoor decking to prosthetic devices and airplane frames.'

[Click here to read the full story..](#)

Akron's Lock 3 Park Vision Plan is Fully Funded

"Akron has reached its goal for funding the Lock 3 Park Vision Plan. The city will spend \$3.5 million of its American Rescue Plan Act money, and the Knight Foundation will provide matching funds.

The city plans to break ground on the new park in the fall.

"The Lock 3 Vision Plan includes shaded seating, landscape gardens, artwork, skating areas and a performance pavilion," [Akron Mayor Dan] Horrigan said." —*Glenn Forbes, ideastream Public Media, Mar. 1, 2022*

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

New Akron Civic Theatre Deck to Be Named PNC Plaza

"The Akron Civic Theatre and PNC Bank announced today a March groundbreaking for an outdoor deck to be named PNC Plaza.

PNC Plaza is part of the theater's Staging the Future capital project, which will also include a commissioned mural on the wall along the deck and under the Civic's new outdoor video screen. Local mural artist Scot Phillips will work with the Civic and local PNC employees to help select the mural artwork.

According to Joe Luckring, PNC regional president of Akron, sponsoring PNC Plaza reflects the bank's commitment to supporting the arts and local projects that make communities a better place to live."

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

Akron Council Approves Video Wall for Civic

"The Akron Civic Theater will soon have a new LED video wall on the south side of the building facing Lock 3 Park.

During the March 21 Akron City Council meeting, members approved a conditional-use permit for the new video wall.

According to city officials, the video wall will be used to stream live events at the Civic and Lock 3, present silent and sound movies, display historic and present-day photographs of Akron, as well as original digital artwork and murals. In addition, the video wall will be used to show images and short videos of upcoming productions at the Civic. Officials added the Civic hosts more than 200 events that draw approximately 150,000 people to Downtown Akron annually." —*Eric Poston, Akron.com, Mar. 24, 2022*

[Click here to read the full story.](#)



BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS



MAKING IT: THE TEA LADY BRINGS HIGH TEA TRADITION TO AKRON

“People knew me as an accountant, and now everywhere I go everyone in Akron calls me the ‘tea lady.’ Well, that was purposeful. I plan for you to call me that because I wanted to put in the mindset of who I am and who I’m becoming. And they embraced it. They loved it. They’re like, ‘Oh, great, we get to have a tea room right here in our very own city!’ And I believe that’s why a lot of people come from out of town, because they have family here and they’re bringing their family that lives right here in Akron to the tea room. So I think we’re making a big statement that you can go across the street to the Akron Civic Theatre, see a play and then come over here and have tea.” [Watch the entire interview with Renea Woods-Baylor on “Making It,” from ideastream Public Media.](#)

Bonus: In February Renea Woods-Baylor was featured on OpenTable.com, an online network that “connects diners with over 60,000 restaurants worldwide.” [Read the article here.](#)



EXPLORING DIGITAL ART & OUTREACH AT AKRON ART MUSEUM

“Akron Art Museum has a new website, launched earlier this year, and has continued to make strides in digitisation and digital outreach.

“Now, we’re rolling over our collections database and how it’s used on the website. We thought, why not just do it all? So, we’re doing a giant collection inventory. We are also getting ready to do eBooks. We’re going to be working with Getty’s free software, Quire.” [Read the blooloop. interview with Akron Art Museum Deputy Director, Seema Rao.](#)



ROBERT J. (R.J.) NEMER NAMED DEAN OF UNIVERSITY OF AKRON COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

“We are so excited to have R.J., a two-time graduate of The University of Akron, in this important leadership role as dean of the College of Business,” said John Wiencek, UA’s executive vice president and provost. “R.J. has the innovative spirit that is the hallmark of our Zip graduates, and we are thrilled to have him lead the College of Business at this pivotal time.” [Find out more.](#)

AKRON COMMUNITY FUND PRESIDENT & CEO JOHN PETURES NAMED TO “CLEVELAND 500”

“Change can be scary. But it can also be invigorating and an opportunity for growth. Let’s face it, there’s lots of change happening around us—and plenty of it is happening at the top of a well-established and well-earned power structure. We look at what it means to be a leader right now, where the change is happening and what tools we can offer the leaders of tomorrow.” [Find out more.](#)

BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS & NEWS

AKRON ART MUSEUM BOARD APPOINTS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Board of Directors at the Akron Art Museum announced their unanimous decision to appoint Jon Fiume as its new John S. Knight Director and CEO, Akron Art Museum. Fiume (he/him/his) is a former Board Trustee and has served as the Interim Executive Director since May 2020.

“As the trustees of the Museum, we believe Jon is the ideal person for Executive Director and CEO,” says Board President, Rose Andrews. “As an Akron native, he’s focused on connecting the Museum to the community. Over the past 19 months, he has maintained art as the heart and focus of our Museum while valuing and supporting the professionals who are here. We look forward to his leadership in guiding our organization through growth and strengthened relationships.” [Find out more.](#)



AKRON BMX, POWERED BY AKRON/SUMMIT CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU, 2020-21 CHAMPIONS OF SPORTS TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT

Sports Destination Management, the leading publication with the largest circulation of sports event planners and tournament directors in the sports tourism market, has announced the 2020-2021 Champions of Economic Impact in Sports Tourism, presented by Traveling Teams...

Among the winners were 2020 USA BMX Gold Cup Championships Northeast’s hosts: Akron BMX and Sports Alliance of Greater Akron - powered by: Akron/Summit Convention & Visitors Bureau. The October 1-4, 2020 event generated \$700,000.00 in economic impact to the local economy with expenditures on lodging, dining, retail and entertainment. [Find out more.](#)



LEADERSHIP OHIO ANNOUNCES 30TH ANNIVERSARY CLASS OF FELLOWS FOR 2022 (MARK GREER OF AKRON GREAT STREETS & HILLARY STEWART OF FIRSTENERGY NAMED)

“Leadership Ohio is pleased to announce it has selected the new class of Fellows for 2022. This year, 43 leaders from across the state will be given the opportunity to deepen their knowledge and perspective of Ohio while contributing to the Leadership Ohio legacy of impact as the organization celebrates its 30th anniversary year.” [Find out more.](#)

DAN WILSON AWARDED THE LETTERONE RISING STARS JAZZ AWARD FOR NORTH AMERICA

LetterOne and Air Artist Agency announced the winners of the 2021/2022 ‘LetterOne RISING STARS Jazz Award’—Armenian pianist Yessaï Karapetian has won the European edition of the award, while US guitarist Dan Wilson has won the North American edition. [Find out more.](#)



TRANSPORTATION & DEVELOPMENT

FEATURED PROPERTY

Delaware Building | 137 S. Main St.

Located on Main Street in the heart of Downtown Akron, this building offers office and retail including an available restaurant space with hood. High ceilings in many suites and offices opens up the space. Dedicated attached parking deck, on street parking and connection to the Cascade parking deck and downtown Skywalk. 10,000 SF, 2 Floors



For more information, contact Kimberly Beckett 330-374-7676 kbeckett@downtownakron.com

FEATURED BUSINESS

The Experience Barber & Beauty Shop
88 E. Mill St.

The Experience Barber & Beauty Shop provides a relaxing atmosphere, professional service, competitive prices and quality. Services include hair cutting, shampoos, trims, style, razor for men, women and children. Also offering beard trims and shaving.

You can now book your appointments online, through [The Experience's Facebook page](#) (under the About section, click Book Appointment).



METRO RTA ADDS FIRST 2 ELECTRIC BUSES TO FLEET

“Summit County’s public transportation provider launched the county’s first two electric buses, nicknamed ‘Jolt’ and ‘Volt,’ at a ribbon-cutting ceremony Tuesday [March 29, 2022] at the Robert K. Pfaff Transit Center in downtown Akron.



Minutes before the event, Metro’s Board of Trustees approved a resolution to purchase two additional electric buses at its monthly meeting. That means that by the end of 2023, Metro will have four electric buses in its fleet.

The buses have been on the road throughout March for operator training, and both will officially be in service Monday. But ‘Volt’ was charged early and launched Thursday, a few days ahead of schedule.” —*Emily Mills, Akron Beacon Journal, Apr. 2, 2022*

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

METRO RTA RECEIVED NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY EFFORTS

METRO was declared the Gold Winner in both Bus Safety Excellence and Bus Security Excellence by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). [Find out more.](#)



AKRON RUBBER WORKER STATUE

MAYOR HORRIGAN ANNOUNCES CHEMSTRESS CONSULTANT COMPANY AS THE PRESENTING SPONSOR OF THE AKRON RUBBER WORKER STATUE

Mayor Horrigan announced Chemstress Consultant Company, based in Akron for over 55 years, has provided the funding to be the presenting sponsor of the downtown Akron Rubber Worker Statue. This gracious sponsorship was due in large part to Chemstress Founder Robert “Bob” Handelman. Mr. Handelman was undeniably dedicated to the Akron community. He generously supported the creation and installation of the Akron Rubber Worker Statue, wanting to pay homage to those who built Akron and to honor the tenacity and strength of Akron’s work force. Mr. Handelman sadly passed away on March 8, 2022.

“I was deeply saddened to hear the news of Bob’s passing,” said Akron Mayor Dan Horrigan. “Bob was a passionate advocate for Akron. He was an extremely generous, kind, and forward-thinking man and I know he will be missed by not only his friends and family, but our community at large. My prayers and condolences are with his family at this time.”

[Click here to read the full story.](#)

below left: Rubber Worker artist Alan Cottrill, and right: Bob Handelman





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