



Lancaster Chamber

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lancaster Chamber to host the 2025 State of the County on Friday, April 5, 2025, focusing on Housing, Innovation and Education & Workforce.

Lancaster, PA – The Lancaster Chamber is excited to host this year's State of the County where we will dive into the key issues shaping our economic and community landscape: education & workforce, housing, and innovation. The event will explore how Lancaster compares to state and national trends, what these insights mean for local businesses, and—most importantly—how we can take action. A leading expert will set the stage with a high-level presentation and data analysis, followed by a panel with in-depth perspectives from business, industry, and community leaders.

Key Areas of Focus:

Housing: Affordability, Availability & Impact – What do national and state housing trends tell us about Lancaster's challenges and opportunities?

Ryo Tashiro, Outreach Economist and Advisor, Federal Reserve Bank Philadelphia will speak on Housing: Affordability, Availability & Impact. As an outreach economist and advisor, Ryo Tashiro travels across the Third District, speaking to various groups about the economic outlook and the functions of the Federal Reserve. Ryo views interactions with the public as two-way streets. Not only does he see the importance of informing the public about what is going on with the economy and at the Fed, Ryo also thinks it is important to hear what individuals across the District are experiencing in the economy. Many of the research topics Ryo has pursued were inspired by these conversations with the public. Those topics include his two main areas of focus, labor economics and demographics. Among his many contributions to the Bank, Ryo is notably responsible for the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia Economic Outlook Survey.

Innovation: Driving Economic Growth – How can Lancaster foster a thriving innovation ecosystem and position itself as a leader in emerging industries?

Abby Smith, President & CEO, Team Pennsylvania will speak on Innovation: Driving Economic Growth. Abby Smith's work has focused extensively on building strategic public-private partnerships to address long-term issues that no one sector can tackle alone. Abby's 20-year career includes high-level strategic planning and leading collaborations at the state level in Pennsylvania as well as in several other states, along with ample experience as a grant and project manager overseeing multi-million-dollar grants and serving on various state-level councils. In early 2023, Abby received an Above & Beyond Award, honoring Pennsylvania women of "public and civic mind" who have demonstrated exemplary leadership in their field, combined with having made significant contributions to society.

Education & Workforce: The Talent Landscape – How is Lancaster positioned for workforce development and education, and what do future trends mean for employers and educators?

Lauren Miller, Associate Program Director for Educational Partnerships & Executive Director of the Lancaster County STEM Alliance will speak on Education & Workforce: The Talent Landscape. Lauren has a diverse background in education, having taught middle and high school science in both urban and rural settings. She has served as a High School Assistant Principal, consultant, and Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction, and now works as the Associate Director of Educational Partnerships at IU13. In this role, she fosters connections between education, business, and community partners to develop innovative instructional models that enhance student learning and workforce readiness.

Local Panelists

The event will then conclude with a Response Panel, bringing together leaders across industries to connect insights to action—ensuring we leave with tangible strategies for businesses, policymakers, and the community. Our panelists include **Jill Hackman**, *Career Coordinator* at Garden Spot High School in ELANCO School District, **Alex King**, *Real Estate Agent* at Puffer Morris, and **Rich Willet**, *President, Flooring and Industrial* at Ecore International.

Come join us as we gather business leaders, changemakers, and visionaries on Friday, April 4, 2025, at Saint Joseph’s University, 850 Greenfield Road, Lancaster from 7:30AM-10:30AM.

REGISTRATION: <https://lancasterchamber.growthzoneapp.com/chambereventcalendar/Details/state-of-the-county-1290936?sourceTypeld=Website>

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At the Lancaster Chamber, our mission is to create the environment, facilitate partnerships, and lead on issues that elevate business success. Established in 1872, the Chamber is celebrating its 150th Anniversary, commemorating 150 years of impact, support, engagement, and leadership for the Lancaster County business community. The Chamber continues to leverage the collective strength of the business community. By advancing a pro-business agenda, supporting community-focused initiatives, including Workforce, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, and being committed to providing resources for all business professionals – the Chamber strives to build Lancaster into a thriving community for all.