



Supporting your local economy helps create jobs for your family, friends, and neighbors. It helps fund schools, infrastructure, and services. By buying local, you are helping maintain Durango's distinct character and makes a big impact on our community.

Click [here](#) for a directory of local businesses.

Mercy Hospital



[durangobusiness.org](http://durangobusiness.org)

*From the CEO's Pen* by Jack Llewellyn, Chamber CEO

## Tips on starting a new business

Steve Jobs once said, "The only way to do great work is to love what you do." We all spend most of our waking hours working, so we better enjoy what we do.

The Durango Chamber is often asked about how to start a business, what resources are available and what is needed to be successful. Jobs also said, "If you really look closely, most overnight successes took a long time." Part of the secret sauce is about hard work, determination and a desire to succeed. But that's not all it takes. Here are some basic tips to starting your own business.

- Find your passion, identify a need, then pursue it. A lot of time and effort goes into starting a business, so you better love what you're creating. I had a passion for music and enjoyed playing music that made people want to get up and move. So, I started a local DJ business, Aiko Aiko Sound. As you develop your idea, know that it takes time. You should also research the competition and the market (Is there a demand?), and identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis).
- Develop a business plan. One of the first questions I ask those who want to start a business is, do you have a business plan? A business plan is a working document that's flexible with the market. It's a road map that gives you focus to explore every angle of your business and can identify areas where you may need additional help. It also provides valuable information for your banker and other possible investors. A good business plan answers the tough questions and will be your go-to document as you get closer to making your dream a reality.
- Funding is essential. Undercapitalized business ventures can equate to future problems. There are many resources for financing,

including small-business loans, funding from angel investors, incubators or other investor groups. In addition to traditional lenders, [Region 9 Economic Development District](#) can provide "bridge gap financing."

Your own finances combined with a traditional loan may not meet the amount needed, and Region 9 can potentially help. I suggest engaging with it early in the process because it can provide valuable insights and help with your business planning.

- Market your business. You'll need to promote your new company, and there are many ways to do this. The Chamber offers networking, collaboration and marketing at very low costs. In addition, digital marketing is another effective option to target your audience. Develop a plan that includes defining goals, target markets and strategic positioning to promote your business. If you don't inherently know how to do this, identify resources that can assist.

- Use available resources. The Small Business Development Center, [SBDCLewis.org](#), offers consulting and provides quarterly "Starting Your Business" workshops. The Southwest Colorado Accelerator Program for Entrepreneurs – SCAPE – also offers assistance and access to funding for startups; [GoSCAPE.org](#). And of course, the Durango Chamber can offer resources and opportunities to help your business succeed; [DurangoBusiness.org](#).

Starting a business can be challenging, but knowing the right tools and resources will help make it easier for you and can help pave the way to success.



## 2022 CHAMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF

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*Durango Motor Company*

## Much Gratitude and Appreciation to these businesses who made the 2022 Girls Gone Golfing fun & successful!



Thank you to our sponsors: Alpine Bank, Durango Motor Company, Animas Surgical, and Wendy Most Insurance Agency!!!



### More Thanks:

**Donations for silent auction items & more:**  
Leavitt Insurance Agency, Glacier Golf Club, Dalton Ranch Golf Club, Hillcrest Golf Club, Woodhouse Day Spa, Pause Yoga & Pilates, Pathways Occupational & Physical Therapy.

**Thank you to our Hole Sponsors for adding excitement to the afternoon:**

Alpine Bank, Animas Surgical, Durango Motor Company, Wendy Most Insurance, Leavitt Group, TBK Bank, Studio B, Wells Group, Adela Flora, Ascent Digital Media, Durango Property Management, Express Employment, FastTrack Communications, Spine Colorado, and Sky Ute Casino Resort.

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Wendy Most Insurance  
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April's Garden  
Bank of the San Juans



[click to see more photos](#)

**Other thanks:** Many thanks to the staff at the Hillcrest Golf Club and the Chamber staff. Appreciate the work of Animas Signature Signs on the picture frame!

**Save the date: Friday, June 2, 2023 at Hillcrest Golf Club**



## Featured Young Professional of Durango: Ben Sorensen, Vice President of the YPOD Board

**Where do you work?** Ascent Digital

**What is your job title/responsibilities?**

I am the President and Founder, so I wear a lot of hats. I help individual clients with their marketing. I hire and train our employees, develop products and services, and many other things.

**Why did you want to be a YPOD board member?** I am very passionate and invested in the professional community of Durango. I am excited to contribute anywhere I can to help our young professional community thrive!

**What are your hobbies?** I love to run, play with my kids, and enjoy the outdoors.

For more information on joining the Young Professionals of Durango, click [here](#).



## Featured Chamber Diplomat: Matt Gomez



**What do you do for a living?** I am the director of information technology for The Payroll Department.

**How long have you been a DIP?** I have been a DIP for 6 glorious years

**Why did you become a DIP?** I became a dip to get more involved in the community. I was working for the IT company who was doing the IT for the Chamber and saw it as a good way to become more connected with the community and to a way to give back.

**What are your favorite things to do in Durango?** I love to snowboard, rock climb, backpack, hike, raft, climb mountains and, most recently, road bike. We live in such a beautiful place, doing any outdoor activity here is great.

**Fun fact about you:** A weird fact about me is that I am ridiculously afraid of balloons popping. If someone is doing something with a balloon which has a high risk of it popping, I will totally vacate the area.

*There are limited spots currently available for the Diplomat program. Click [here](#) to learn more.*

## Featured Leadership La Plata Alumnus: Tracy Pope

**What LLP Class were you in & what is your leadership style?** Class of 2021/22 and leadership social style is an analytical-amiable.

**What do you do for a living?** Serve as the Deputy Director of the Community Foundation, and work closely with local nonprofits. I have the privilege of witnessing firsthand the fantastic support system our region has through a wide-ranging and thriving nonprofit sector.

**What do you appreciate most about LLP?** I feel that it was a great opportunity to learn even more about this amazing place we get to call home. Meeting so many inspiring people is definitely the best part! The network I have grown through LLP is second to none!

**What do you do for fun?** Volunteer at St. Columba Parish and spend time with family. I've recently taken up the hobby of beekeeping which works perfectly with my husband's apple orchard!

*Interested in participating in LLP? Leadership La Plata Applications for the 2022/2023 Class are due May 31. To learn more about LLP or become involved in LLP committees, visit [Leadership La Plata.org](#).*



## Chamber Leads Groups

"Being part of the Chamber Leads group has been a great experience for me and I highly recommend it to anyone looking to grow their business and network. I love the Chamber Leads group as it has helped me grow my network of business partners and has even led to friendships that truly make working together all the better. I love that we are not a high pressure leads group as some of the other types of leads groups can be quite high pressure. We are all here to help support each other and help our businesses thrive, no pressure required to want to help out your fellow business owners! I have more than made up for the cost to join and truly enjoy our meetings, absolutely worth the investment."

• Jennifer Wade, Owner Wade Insurance Agency

*The Chamber Leads Groups meet on the first Wednesday and second Tuesday of the month. Learn more about joining the Chamber [Leads Group online](#) or call (970) 247-0312.*



## The Next Coffee Connections Learning Series is August 2 at 8am with Actor Dan Lauria

Join the Chamber and the Durango Playfest for this fun and interesting learning session with renowned actor Dan Lauria (This is Us, The Wonder Years) on August 2 from 8am to 9am at Create Art & Tea (1015 Main Avenue). Dan will cover the Durango PlayFest's roots, how COVID-19 impacted live theatre and how the arts contribute to the community. Dan and a small group of Durango theatre lovers co-founded Durango PlayFest in 2018. PlayFest brings together emerging and renowned playwrights and national-known actors to develop new plays and hold readings for local audiences. Dan returns to Durango for the 4th annual Durango PlayFest Aug. 4-7. For information on the August Coffee Connections, [click here](#). Learn more at [DurangoPlayFest.org](#).



## Lunch & Learn Workshop on Optimizing LinkedIn July 27

Are you portraying your business in the best possible light on LinkedIn? Join Jeff Saville, director of Career Services at Fort Lewis College, when he presents ways to build and optimize a LinkedIn company page. Learn to attract maximum attention from prospects and new talent, promote your products and services for free, showcase your company's story, build a community of enthusiastic followers, and move your audience to take action. Pre-registration is required for this workshop on July 27 and includes lunch. [Register now](#). Sponsored by TBK Bank.



## Calendar

**Upcoming Programs & Events!** Click [here](#) for information.

**July 7** 5:15pm **YPOD Summer Power Hour Series** at 1st Southwest Bank

**July 13** 5:30pm **YPOD Social Hour** at 11th Street Station

**July 14** 4-6pm **Business After Hours** at Baird Wealth Management – Crossroads Building

**July 22** noon **Lunch & Learn: Optimizing LinkedIn** at TBK Bank

**August 2** at 8am **Coffee Connection with Actor Dan Lauria** at Create Art & Tea

**August 18** **Business After Hours at Zia Taqueria** on North Main

**August 24** at Noon **Lunch & Learn: Building More than Brands** with Ascent Digital Marketing



Click [here](#) for past Member Moment Videos



## Business After Hours on the Patio July 14 from 4 to 6pm

Baird Wealth Management hosts Business After Hours on July 14 from 4pm to 6pm (note new summer hours) on the deck at 1099 Main Ave. Two drinks & appetizers for only \$10 (pre-registration), plus networking and giveaways.

[Register now & save.](#)



## Growing Your Customer Base Quicker June Lunch & Learn Workshop with Bert Carder



Many thanks to Bert Carder with Carder Consulting for sharing information and tips on gaining new customers, keeping current ones and measuring promotional efforts to determine its effectiveness. The June workshop covered calculating the Lifetime Value of a customer and Customer Acquisition Cost. Bert is an

entrepreneur, having founded five companies over his career in the US and Asia. He provides trainings and marketing consulting to small businesses in the region. For more information about Carder Consulting, visit [CarderConsulting.space](#).

## June Coffee Connections: Navigating Caregiving Facilities & Programs

The June Coffee Connections learning series reviewed hospice, home health, assisted living, long & short term care, skilled rehabilitation and medial power of attorney. So many of us don't like to think about or talk about these topics until it's absolutely necessary. Expert speakers from Junction Creek Health & Rehabilitation Center, Hospice of Mercy, Mercy Home Health, Comfort Keepers, and Community Health Action Coalition reviewed why understanding and planning for these topics are an invaluable step to helping alleviate unnecessary stress during a challenging time. Thank you to all who participated in this very informative session.



## Your Team Can Respectfully Disagree, Even About Politics

Talking about politics at work can be dicey. So what should you do as a manager? While it may be tempting to ban political conversations on your team, doing so can alienate employees and make them feel like they can't bring their authentic selves to work. Instead, ask yourself: How can I encourage my team to handle differences, respect one another, listen, and learn? Here are a few suggestions.

- **Build empathy for others' views.** Encourage regular conversation and sharing of personal stories and vulnerabilities on your team. Understanding and respect are built through day-to-day interactions.
- **Invite different perspectives.** Lead by example; admit you don't know everything, and demonstrate open-mindedness.
- **Accept mistakes gracefully.** People tend to avoid political conversations for fear of saying the wrong thing or being misunderstood. Encourage grace and give your team members the benefit of the doubt (unless they've proven they don't deserve it).
- **Demonstrate that disagreement is OK.** Make clear that it's fine to dissent and debate as long the conversation doesn't turn into an existential battle where "I'm right" and "You're wrong." You don't have to be persuaded by someone's belief in order to understand it and respect it.

*This tip is adapted from "Don't Ban 'Politics' at Work," by Megan Reitz and John Higgins*





## 5 Ways To Level Up Your Small Business Marketing (and yes, it's time)

If you're interested in ways to reach more people, and you're ready to start maximizing technology, it's time to look at these business solutions:

### List Building

You need an email list. It's the best way to stay in touch with your customers, nurture them into a sale, and then remind them to come back. The other benefit to an email list is that it's yours. You won't lose access to it if you're in Facebook jail or one of your social media platforms goes the way of MySpace (for those of you who are old enough to understand that reference).

Here are a few [ways to build an email list](#).

### Marketing Automation

Now that you have a list, it's time to start talking about marketing automation. There are tons of marketing or e-mail automation tools out there from enterprise software to free aps. There's an initial time investment to set the campaign up, but once the initial set up is done, you'll have a wealth of options to help you grow your business and stay connected with your customers.

Learn more about [marketing automation and how to get started](#).

### Copy Tricks and Content Marketing

Copywriting is the art of persuasion in the briefest of characters. These days, most audiences are more won over by eye-catching images than long prose. But you still need compelling copy for website visitors of the human and search engine kind. If you don't have a marketing person or you're not freelancing it out to a professional, take a weekend to brief yourself on the [basics of copywriting](#). You won't be a copywriting pro in just a weekend but your efforts will show.

Here's one idea that's incredibly important to making sales. If you are giving your customers a choice between three levels of service, mark one as the "best value" or "most popular." There are many customers who want to be told what to do, albeit subtly. Marking an option with this type of designation persuades them into choosing what others have.

Also, make sure all your pages have a call to action that fits the level of the relationship/page content. If the page is based around the visitor getting to know you, for instance, don't immediately ask for the sale. It doesn't fit what they're trying to do. A pop-up for content on how to make an educated purchase decision for what you sell is a better fit.



### Chatbots

People want answers on their schedule. A chatbot can help you stay in touch with your audience and potential customers when they have a question or concern, even when your business isn't open.

Here are [a few ways you could be using them](#).

### Ask

I wanted to throw in an idea for the non-techies as well. Some of the other components mentioned here can be a bit overwhelming at first. This one is as basic as speech. Start a conversation with your customers, vendors, or a similar audience to your own who aren't customers yet. Become more social. Listen to what people are talking about, what they need, what they like. If you have a brick-and-mortar store, talk to people when they come in. Run your branding by them. Go to a festival and host a pop-up booth. Sure, you may have some sales, but it's also a way to get in front of a different audience and talk to people. Then use all that information to change how you communicate with others and market to them.

There are a lot of ways to increase sales these days. Much of the marketing technology has become less expensive and does more. But all these solutions do take time. Just as people say it takes money to make money; it also takes time. Thankfully, it doesn't have to be your time. If someone can do it more efficiently than you can, let them and concentrate your efforts on the things that only you can do for your small business.

*Christina R. Metcalf works with small businesses, chambers of commerce, and business professionals who want to make an impression and grow a loyal customer/member base. She loves road trips, hates exclamation points, and believes the world would be a better place if we all had our own theme song that played when we entered the room. What would yours be?*

## Reaching Diverse Candidates is One of the Biggest Hiring Challenges for 1 in 5 Companies

### 54% of Businesses Report Having a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy in Place

Latest Results from The Harris Poll

Efforts to establish a company diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) policy have steadily increased over the last two years, but 21% of U.S. companies say translating this effort to hiring is one of the biggest hiring challenges their company will face over the next year.

This is according to a recent survey from The Harris Poll commissioned by Express Employment Professionals.

Fifty-four percent of businesses report having a DEI policy in place compared to 52% in the first half of 2021 and 46% in the second half of 2020. Looking to the future, nearly a fifth of hiring decision-makers (18%) say their company plans to implement such a policy. Of those planning to do so, 11% say they plan to implement one by the end of 2022.

Given companies' establishment of DEI policies, the likely next step is to actively recruit candidates outside of the companies' traditional demographic (e.g., have unique backgrounds, racially/ethnically diverse).

Around half (49%), say their company is planning to take such action in 2022—in line with 2021 (51%). To this point, a fifth of U.S. hiring decision-makers (21%) say reaching these diverse candidates is one of the biggest hiring challenges their company will face over the next year. This is particularly a struggle in manufacturing industries (39%).

## Want to Grow Your Business? Join a Chamber LEADS GROUP

If you are interested in joining a group that is focused on business referrals, professional growth and promoting your products and services – check out the Chamber's Leads Group.

Call or email today to join or find out more information!

**970.247.0312** or [chamber@durangobusiness.org](mailto:chamber@durangobusiness.org).



### Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between April 11 and 13, 2022, among 2,061 U.S. adults ages 18+. Data were weighted where necessary by company size to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population.

The Durango Express office is located at 321 So Camino Del and serves the Four Corners area. Local businesses and applicants are encouraged to stop by, visit [ExpressPros.com/durangoco](https://ExpressPros.com/durangoco) or call (970) 403-8780.





## La Plata Extension: Health Tip of the Month by Nicole Clark

### What animal kills roughly a million humans every year?

Kids love to ask this trivia question, so maybe you've heard this before. Did you guess the mosquito? So small, yet so dangerous.

Between the rains, warm evenings spent outside and camping season kicking into high gear, there are plenty of hungry mosquito moms buzzing around, looking for their next meal.

With a life span ranging a mere 2 weeks to 6 months, mosquitos ("little fly" in Spanish) prioritize reproduction. Blood, which is rich in iron and protein, helps eggs produce, hence the females mosquitoes preference for this meal.

Despite the innocence of their need to feed, the method in which female mosquitoes do so, is far from innocent. Their tubular mouthparts pierce the skin, creating an open wound. A small wound by human standards, but large enough for the transmission of parasites that cause malaria, chikungunya disease, dengue hemorrhagic fever, Japanese encephalitis, lymphatic filariasis, Rift Valley fever, West Nile virus infection, and yellow fever.

Symptoms of these diseases are a far cry from the common cold. For example, dengue fever is also called the "bone-crusher"; may you only have to imagine why.

Fortunately, most mosquito bites max out at being an annoying and itchy red welt that disappears after a few days. This is because most species of mosquitoes do not carry disease causing germs. In the continental U.S., West Nile virus is the most likely pathogen to be carried by the species of mosquitoes living here.

#### To avoid becoming a mosquito buffet, consider the following tips:

1. Wear long sleeves and pants with fabric thick enough to prevent mosquitoes from biting through.
2. Wear clothing treated with [0.5% permethrin](#), but do not apply directly to skin.
3. Use EPA approved insect repellent such as DEET, picaridin (known as KBR 3023 and icaridin outside

the US), IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus\* (OLE), para-menthane-diol\* (PMD), or 2-undecanone. Wash hands after applying to prevent accidental ingestion. \*Not for children under 3 years old.

4. Dump standing water around your property on a weekly basis to prevent eggs from hatching.
5. Repair or replace missing window screens.
6. Always be outside with someone who attracts more mosquitoes than you. (Not exactly a Center for Disease Control recommendation, just sharing a life lesson).



For concerns about the safety of DEET, a common and effective insect repellent, see additional links below. For perspective, in the past 60 years, only nine DEET associated deaths have been documented, far less than those associated with mosquito bites. In all cases, it was further determined there was either intentional oral ingestion or extremely high exposure through the skin.

Of course, [consider your location in the world](#), and duration of time outside to determine which measures may be most appropriate for your situation.

#### DEET and safety

<https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/toxfaqs/tfacts185.pdf>

<https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents/deet>

#### References

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## Ribbon Cutting with Ohana Physical Therapy

Ohana Physical Therapy opened 2.5 years ago and offers high quality effective treatments that help people manage pain, recover and get back to their lives. They also work in collaboration with other healthcare professionals, including surgeons, general practitioners, massage therapists, chiropractors and more. Ohana PT is located at 130 Rock Point Drive, Unit C. Learn more at [OhanaPhysicalTherapyDurango.com](https://OhanaPhysicalTherapyDurango.com).



**Ohana Physical Therapy is delighted to welcome Bria Rubie, PT, DPT to our team!**

Bria attended Rocky Mountain University of Health Professions where she received her Doctor of Physical Therapy and Level 1 Pelvic Floor Certification. She enjoys treating all conditions but has a particular interest in pelvic health and is passionate about helping patients get back to their favorite activities. Welcome to Ohana PT, Bria!

**130 Rock Point Drive Unit C  
Durango, CO 81301**

**t 970 247 7895 ♦ f 970 459 8404**

[ohanaphysicaltherapydurango@gmail.com](mailto:ohanaphysicaltherapydurango@gmail.com)

[ohanaphysicaltherapydurango.com](https://OhanaPhysicalTherapyDurango.com)



## Congratulations on the opening of Durango Psychic!

The Chamber Diplomats recently celebrated a ribbon cutting with Durango Psychic owner, Patricia, who has more than 40 years' experience as a spiritual consultant, life coach and psychic reader. She offers a variety of services, including aura cleansing; chakra balancing; palm, tarot, sand and crystal readings; and more. Located at 640 Main Avenue, or visit her website at [DurangoPsychic.com](http://DurangoPsychic.com).



## Congratulations to the new owners of Pathways Occupational and Physical Therapy

Joe Gorriceta and Mike Anders recently purchased Pathways Occupations & Physical Therapy from Cindy Schmidt. They offer a holistic approach to caring for their clients, including male and female pelvic health rehabilitation, intramuscular dry needling, craniosacral, frequency specific microcurrent, acute and chronic pain issues, concussion rehab, vision therapy and traditional occupational & physical therapy. For more information, visit [PathwaysDurango.com](http://PathwaysDurango.com). 2243 Main Avenue, Suite 1B.



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## Congratulations to Peak Eyecare!

The Chamber Diplomats recently celebrated Peak Eyecare's opening at 3710 Main Avenue, Suite 203 with a ribbon cutting. Dr. Davis Capaccioli, known affectionately as "Cap," created Peak Eyecare to not only offer a wide range of eyecare services but to also specialize in premier dry eye treatment options and is the only Intense Pulse Light Dry Eye Treatment Center in Durango. Dr. Cap works with specialty contact lenses, including scleral lenses for irregular and post-surgical cornea. Peak Eyecare also donates a portion of total glasses sales to the patients' choice of Manna Soup Kitchen or the Boys & Girls Club of La Plata County. Learn more at [PeakDurango.com](http://PeakDurango.com) or call (970) 403-5655.





## New Members

### Cascade Xpress CarWash

Mary Hert  
1455 S Camino Del Rio  
Durango, CO 81303  
[website](#)  
Services

### Downs, McDonough, Cowan & Foley, LLC

Meg Foley  
2051 Main Ave  
Durango, CO 81301  
[website](#)  
Attorneys

## Renewed Members

1st Southwest Bank  
A&L Coors, Inc.  
Advanced Digital Media Services, Inc.  
Advertising Innovations, Inc.  
Aiko Aiko Sound  
Alternative Horizons  
Animas Laser Therapy  
AREM Property Management, Inc.  
Aspen Design Studio  
Backcountry Experience  
Bonds Construction, LLC  
Boys & Girls Club of La Plata County  
C & J Gravel Products, Inc.  
CT Electric  
Durango Property Management  
Feeney Architect  
Four Corners Gem and Mineral Club  
John A Rothchild DDS, PC  
Junction Creek Health & Rehabilitation Center

### Local First Foundation

Sarah Tober  
556 Main Ave  
Durango, CO 81301  
[website](#)  
Non-Profit

*Buck says ...*

**Buy Durango!**



La Plata County Democratic Party  
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Mr. Plant of Durango  
Norm Phillips, CMPS / Draper & Kramer  
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Reynolds Ash + Associates Architecture  
& Engineering  
Sandy Bruce  
Singletrack Cafe, LLC  
Smart Enterprises  
Southwest Civic Winds  
Sunnyside Farms Market  
The Payroll Department, Inc.  
Tile & Light Art of Durango  
United Campground  
Visiting Angels of Southwest Colorado  
Whole Health Family Medicine Clinic

## Business After Hours at Habitat for Humanity ReStore!

Thank you to Habitat for Humanity of La Plata County for hosting the June Business After Hours at their ReStore Center at 50 Design Center Road. The ReStore shop sells new and gently used building materials, household items, furniture and fixtures, and the proceeds help support the mission of Habitat for Humanity. Habitat helps families of moderate and low incomes become homeowners by building and partnering to create affordable housing. Learn more at [HabitatLaPlata.org](http://HabitatLaPlata.org)







### 4 the Children is the umbrella organization that currently houses 3 programs.

#### C.A.C.(Child Advocacy Center)

Sexually abused children need a safe space for healing, justice, and hope. CAC provides this space for these young, vulnerable children while investigating abuse cases and holding offenders accountable. Our mission is to protect childhood today for stronger families tomorrow.

#### CASA(Court Appointed Special Advocates)

The CASA program advocates for the best interest of abused and neglected children. A CASA volunteer is assigned to a case within the Dependency and Neglect System. All volunteers are sworn officers who serve as an advocate for the children and stay with each case until it is closed and the child is safe in a permanent home.

#### SEPT (Supervised Exchanged and Parenting Time)

To support families in crisis, our staff and or volunteers neutrally observe parenting time for non-custodial parents for periods or 60/90 minutes. This service provides an opportunity to eliminate the re-victimization of children and typically, this service is court ordered.

Through our SAFE Exchanges, we provide a place for parents and children to transition between homes without exposing children to high conflict interactions between parents.

In order to change these children's lives, we need a strong team of volunteers that can help us advocate for these children in both the SEPT and CASA programs. If you are interested in volunteering, you can sign up on our website.

If you would like to help us, donations will help us be able to enrich our programs to provide the strongest care for each child.

Having a strong board of leaders can change our program to determine policies, procedures, and regulations for the conduct of the agency, to raise funds to finance the organization and its programs, and to monitor organizational performance.

(970) 259.0312 | [www.4theChild.org](http://www.4theChild.org) | [info@4theChild.org](mailto:info@4theChild.org)

If you would like your non-profit featured in our newsletter, contact Jennifer Dickens at [jennifer@durangobusiness.org](mailto:jennifer@durangobusiness.org).



## Business Connection

### Sustainably Sourced – Desert Sun Coffee Roasters

By Sara Lynn Valentine

When Zachary Ray was studying international trade and economics at Fort Lewis, he was invited to Boston for the 'Change Initiative' run by an international non-profit, OXFAM America. The Initiative teaches a select group of college students how to change the world, promoting social justice and an end to poverty by supporting fair trade practices (producers in developing countries receiving fair prices for their products, with workers guaranteed fair wages and decent working conditions).

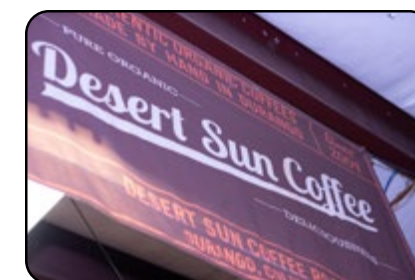
When Zach returned to Fort Lewis, he convinced campus dining services to exclusively serve fair trade coffee. He also organized events to promote awareness of worldwide hunger and poverty. For the next four years, Zach represented the Change Initiative at conferences around the country, teaching other students how to accomplish on their campuses what Zach had done at Fort Lewis.



In 2009, Zach began working at Desert Sun, the only organic fair trade coffee roaster in Durango. "I started at the bottom and within months, became head roaster and ran the production." When the owner invited Zach to become General Manager and then part-owner, Zach took an active role running the business. He bought the rest of the company in 2021. "I'd never seen a model for fair trade as powerful as Desert Sun's," Zach says.

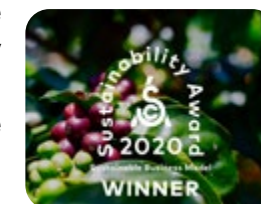
Desert Sun is a member/owner of Cooperative Coffees, the only roaster-owned importing cooperative in North America. The cooperative's 23 owner-members are dedicated to the same mission - to go above and beyond for people, the planet and the coffee bean. They work directly with hundreds of small farmer-partners, committing to buy their beans year after year. This provides security that's necessary for sustainable farming.

"Maybe a farmer has a bad year," Zach says. "But we've committed we'll sell his coffee that year to a roaster whose standards aren't as high as ours. In 2015, a fungus killed up to 75% of coffee trees in many places. Our cooperative created an 'Impact fund,' voluntarily charging ourselves 3 cents per pound. It generates \$15,000 a month and has



paid for nurseries to help farmers regrow, organic composting facilities, education to grow healthier, fungus-resistant plants, and for our farmers from around the world to meet to share information and techniques. All of this has resulted in better and better coffee beans. We redirected the fund after discovering 'Grow Ahead,' an organization that's developing a tool to quantify how much carbon farmers can sequester (put into the earth). Many people quantify carbon sequestration, but no one had paid to incentivize it. Our cooperative financially incentivizes our farmers to use this tool, and we expect to become carbon neutral within three years." [carbonclimateandcoffee.com](http://carbonclimateandcoffee.com)

These kinds of projects are unprecedented among coffee roasters. "Everyone says they have sustainable coffee - but really? We're entirely transparent and financially accountable. Visit [www.fairtradeproof.org](http://www.fairtradeproof.org) and you'll see what we pay our farmers and all the sustainability projects we have funded. Coffee of this high quality that's sustainably produced may cost more, but that money doesn't go to us - it goes to the farmers," says Zach. The Specialty Coffee Association (FCA), the largest coffee organization in the world, recently awarded the cooperative for having the most sustainable coffee on the market - a huge honor for a small business in Durango.



Zach's fair trade business expertise and practices are making the world a better place. "I grew up in a poor family in Utah. There is alcoholism and homelessness in my family. I'm the first to go to college. ANYONE can help make the world a better place."

For more information visit [DesertSunCoffee.com](http://DesertSunCoffee.com) or reach Zach at (970) 247-1100 or [zray@desertsuncoffee.com](mailto:zray@desertsuncoffee.com). You can support Desert Sun by ordering coffee (ten different varieties, five blends and five rotating origins) from their website or buy it at local stores and restaurants.



## LLP Monthly Focus: 3 Ways to Create Freedom as a Leader



By Stacy Reuille-Dupont, StudioB

In honor of the 4th of July, I thought we'd talk about what leadership freedom can look like.

For some, the idea of offering freedom as a leader is scary. What if your team makes a mistake and you must take responsibility?

What if you don't have all the answers? Chaos may ensue.

What if you don't rule your group with an iron hand? All hell will break loose, and you'll be out of control.

In reality, the strongest structures are flexible. They balance the weight of the load between different parts and share the work. Physical tissues are most healthy when they are pliable. Mental health is when flexibility of thought and response replaces rigid thinking and reactivity.

Leadership is similar. A leader shows health when they can balance the load of work effectively spread appropriately between team members.

When the leader can be pliable about workflow and has flexibility to respond to problems while encouraging creative solutions, the team is healthy. Teams are strong. Work is fun. Team members are respected contributors. Trust is created.

As a boss, it's important to learn to trust your team. As you build trust in them, they build trust in you. Trust in each other offers freedom.

To enjoy this freedom, you (the leader) must do your work of understanding your leadership style. This helps you use your gifts to create genuine connection and shared goals with your team.

Each leadership style has strengths, but also has weaknesses. To be a leader who creates trust in your team which translates into freedom for you, you must address your weaknesses. You do not have to be everything to everybody. That's impossible.



When there is authenticity, people trust easier. This builds confidence in each other. When the team has confidence - the belief they can figure things out, you are creating a team that has freedom to fail and trusts each other to show up and help.

When you operate with a team that has trust, confidence, and freedom to fail, you create a group strong enough to weather difficult experiences and grow from those failures. This is where the juice is.

Failure drives success, but if the culture is such that there is no freedom to play, be vulnerable, or collaborate and contribute, your teams will not experience the freedom to support each other. They will not trust.

Freedom comes when support is available, trust is strong, and each member of the team knows the other members have their back.

Today, consider how your leadership style is impacting your team's sense of freedom or lack thereof. Notice how your strengths are contributing to creating a culture of trust and confidence. Notice if your weaknesses have blocked your team's ability to feel secure. Is it time to take a leadership inventory and see where you need to grow? Then become an LLP'er!

If you're interested in learning more about your leadership style, how to handle positive and negative experiences effectively as a leader, or learning more about how to recognize and manage teams successfully, consider applying to be in the next class of Leadership La Plata.

Learn more about Stacy - [www.stacyrd.com](http://www.stacyrd.com) & her integrative psychology clinic Studio B - [www.studiob.life](http://www.studiob.life).

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Durango: Public Library 2:00PM

Bayfield: Joe Stephenson Park 6:30PM

### FRIDAY, JULY 8

#### WOODWIND ENSEMBLE

Durango: Cottonwood Park 11:00AM

Durango: Senior Center 2:00PM

Durango: Buckley Park 6:30PM

### SATURDAY, JULY 9

#### STRING ENSEMBLE

Ignacio: Shoshone Park 11:00AM

Pagosa Springs: Town Park 2:00PM

Durango: Buckley Park 6:30PM

Please visit our website for more information and directions for each venue location!



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