

# NEWSLETTER >

**DOWNTOWN**  
ROCHESTER • MN



Rochester Downtown Alliance

## SocialICE 2017

Pleasant weather, big entertainment, and high-energy bring huge crowds  
- Pages 13

## Plus...

Meet our new Community Engagement Manager (pg. 6), 2017 events preview (pg. 7), 2017 programs preview (pg. 14), and more.

*Photo: SocialICE 2017*

# From the ED

**BY JENNA BOWMAN**  
RDA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**G**reetings and happy 2017. I hope everyone had a safe and enjoyable holiday season. I would first like to thank everyone who could make the RDA Annual Meeting, which was held on Tuesday, December 13, 2016. Even with cold weather, we were pleased that close to 100 downtown stakeholders attended. We look forward to hosting the 2nd Annual RDA Annual Meeting in December of 2017.

I wanted to take this opportunity to focus on what I believe to be one of the most important pieces of information for you, our stakeholders. That would be the five strategic areas selected by the RDA Board of Directors during the 2016 strategic planning session. These include:

- Stakeholder Relations
- Marketing & Promotion of Downtown
- Programing
- Collaborations
- Downtown Experts

Within this newsletter, you will begin to see and learn how the RDA staff will be executing on these Board directed priorities throughout the year. It is my commitment to ensure that updates are provided in each of the quarterly newsletters that are provided in 2017, in addition to the quarterly stakeholder sessions, which will be held throughout the course of the year. Now more than ever, I encourage you to stay engaged, connected and in communication with the RDA Board of Directors and staff.

Finally, I also wanted to take an opportunity to ensure you had access to our 2017 budget – expenses and revenues (see page 3). I am committed to ensuring fiscal responsibility and purposeful investment. We continue to thank you our special service district stakeholders, the City of Rochester and Mayo Clinic for the ongoing financial support. We also thank our program and events partners; you are vital to our organization.



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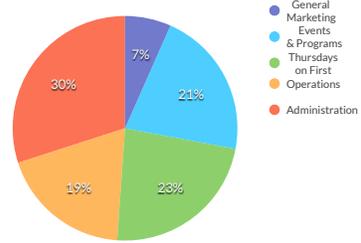
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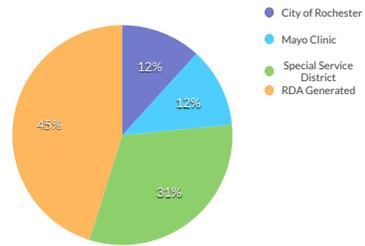
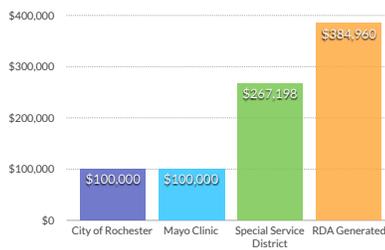
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**Expense**



**Revenue**



## Important Parking Reminder



As we are all aware, parking is one of the hottest topics when it comes to just about any downtown. Rochester is no different. As we seek to ensure parking availability for customers and visitors, we want to ask all downtown employees and business owners to ensure they are seeking parking locations that keep street spots available. We are all in this together! Thank you for your help and support – it is greatly appreciated.

## Discovering Transportation Needs

On Jan. 24, in the first of four Public Conversations highlighting transit for Rochester's downtown, the community had a chance to hear from transportation consultants about the four integrated transit studies being conducted. They also offered their ideas on what will work best for Rochester's future.

Two of the primary issues addressed by the studies and during the open house included parking and traffic into and out of downtown. It's no secret that parking has long been a hot-button issue, and the need for accommodating people who visit, live and work in the downtown area will continue to grow. The streets that run in and out of downtown nearly reach their maximum during rush hours and alternate means

of transporting people remains at the forefront of discussions.

The second Integrated Transit Study Public Conversation will be held in May. Information about the studies can be found at [www.rochestermn.gov/integratedtransit](http://www.rochestermn.gov/integratedtransit).

Stay tuned to DMC.MN for upcoming events to engage on DMC's Heart of the City and Transportation efforts, and subscribe to our DMC newsletter at [info@dmc.mn](mailto:info@dmc.mn).



# Thanks for Popping By

**BY ABBY SLICK**  
EVENTS SPECIALIST



A new year means new events. Our first new event of 2017 was National Popcorn Day on January 19. A one-day event consisting of handing out free snack-sized bags of popcorn in partnership with Carroll's Corn. There were two locations where we could engage with many different people. The first location was in the Subway Level, outside Associated Bank. The second location was on the first floor of Shops at University Square.

In its inaugural year, National Popcorn Day was such a hit, it broke records (pun intended). The subway level

location ran out of popcorn within 15 minutes and the first-floor location within 30 minutes of the event starting.

This small event gave many people of downtown Rochester a reason to smile. And smile they did. Their smiles added vibrancy to downtown and that is something the RDA strives to do with each event and engagement opportunity. The positive response from the community helps solidify RDA's interest in pursuing more unique events to engage with our stakeholders, community and employees of downtown in the future.



Photos: 2017 Pop Corn Day



# Ladies Night Out

BY JENNA BOWMAN  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Ladies Night Out is back for a second year. It will take place on Thursday, March 23 from 5:00-9:00pm. Last year the event saw over 500 attendees and we hope to see even more this year. Currently, there are 22 businesses registered to participate; each offering a unique promotion, incentive or activity. New this year, the Rochester Downtown Alliance offered out \$75 mini grants to support the expanded programming or promotion by a participating business. In total, \$1,275 was provided in grant funding.

In regards to the marketing efforts of this event, the RDA has two new event partners; Rochester Women Magazine and iHeart Media. Rochester Women Magazine is providing complimentary ad space in their March/April magazine, along with discounted advertising opportunities to RDA businesses. iHeart Media is providing complimentary air space on all their stations. In addition, Julie Jones from 102.5 The Fox will be broadcasting live from the event site. These two partnerships show the RDA's commitment to finding new avenues and partnerships to highlight downtown programming.

The intention of Ladies Night Out is to offer Rochester an opportunity to rid themselves of cabin fever and support our downtown businesses. There is a strong desire that the event will help drive an increase in spending that night, as well as raise awareness of the unique products and services offered by the downtown businesses community. **Through post-event survey results, the estimated economic impact of the event last year was \$24,860.** In addition, 77% of survey respondents agreed that Ladies Night Out gave them a new perspective on shopping, dining, or services in downtown Rochester.

Photos: 2016 Ladies Night Out

# Meet our CEM

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WE'RE EXCITED FOR YOU TO MEET OUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MANAGER

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We are pleased to share that the RDA has welcomed a new Community Engagement Manager to the team - Cassandra Linkenmeyer. She has a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Northern Iowa and a Masters of Education from the University of St. Thomas. Cassandra joins the RDA from the Rochester Family YMCA. Before her position at The Y, she served as the Special Events Manger for the Upper Midwest Chapter of the National MS Society. During her four years with the MS Society, Cassandra oversaw 33 walks in four states. For one specific walk, she had over 1,100 participants, which was an increase of nearly 30% from the previous year. The walk also resulted in over \$117,000 raised for the organization.

Locally, Cassandra serves on the Human Rights Commission Board at the County level.

Executive Director, Jenna Bowman shares "We are excited to have Cassandra join the team. She brings an extensive amount of knowledge and experience with her as well as passion for Rochester."

When asked what she is most excited about with this opportunity, Cassandra shared, "What excites me most about this position is the opportunity to work with the amazing businesses, organizations, and individuals in downtown Rochester. The events really showcase the energy and vibrancy of the downtown community, and I'm thrilled to help continue and advance the great work of the RDA." Cassandra will start with the RDA on Monday, March 6.



Photo: Cassandra Linkenmeyer



# 2017 Summer Events Preview

*Welcome to downtown Rochester. Enjoy.*

From winter to summer, the Rochester Downtown Alliance (RDA) programs events bringing energy, identity, and vibrancy (and often times very large crowds!) to downtown Rochester. 2017 is no exception. Continue reading for a complete list of summer events,

a brief introduction to each event, and how you can get connected. The RDA is pleased and excited to have such a positive impact in our community's vibrancy through our events, programs, and activities. Welcome to downtown Rochester. Enjoy!

*Photo: 2016 Dogs Downtown*



## 2017 Events Preview

### Donut Day: A Sweet One-Day Fundraiser for Local Non-Profits

June 2

Donut worry, be happy! Join downtown Rochester in celebrating National Donut Day with complimentary donuts and live musical entertainment. Various non-profits will be on the Peace Plaza handing out the donuts from 1-4 pm from local bakeries. If you need another reason to attend other than getting a free donut - here's a fun fact: National Donut Day was established to honor the volunteers who served during World War I which helped keep morale up. Come celebrate these non-profits and enjoy a delicious treat.



### Thursdays on First & 3rd

June 1 - August 31

Returning this summer, is another fun filled fourteen weeks of art, food and beverage vendors along with musical entertainment on 1st Avenue and the Peace Plaza. There have been some new additions to engage further with Rochester businesses and downtown community. The first new addition is vendor spaces for commercial/for-profit businesses. The second addition: a new line-up for Themed Thursdays filled with exciting activities for all ages. If you are looking to get involved this year as a vendor, sponsor or on a Themed Thursday, visit our website [downtownrochesterminn.com](http://downtownrochesterminn.com) for more information.



### Movies in the Park

June 17, July 15,  
August 5 & 19

In partnership with Premier Banks, Movies in the Park will be back for four Saturdays this summer! Bring a chair or blanket and join us in Central Park for this free, fun and family-friendly outdoor event. The four movies playing are: 'Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good Very Bad Day', 'Cool Runnings', 'The Secret Life of Pets', and 'Rogue One: A Star Wars Story'. We look forward to seeing you in the park!



More information on all  
of our events at:  
[DowntownRochesterMN.com](http://DowntownRochesterMN.com)



### Dogs Downtown

August 6

Mark your calendars, the 3rd Annual Dogs Downtown event presented by Clements Subaru will be back for another day of tail-wagging fun. This canine-centric event is jam packed with activities, performances, games and giveaways for you and your four-legged friends to enjoy. In its first year, attendance was 3,300 and tripled in its second year to 9,000, in hopes it'll increase again this summer. It's an event you don't want to miss. If you are interested in being a part of this event, please reach out to us at 507.216.9882 or [info@rdowntownalliance.com](mailto:info@rdowntownalliance.com)



# Meet our Events Specialist: Abby

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*ABBY SLICK JOINS RDA TEAM IN NEW CONTRACT POSITION CALLED EVENTS SPECIALIST*

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**A**bbey Slick joined the Rochester Downtown Alliance on January 4, 2017. Abby serves as the Event Specialist: a new 30-hour a week contract position.

Abby recently graduated from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Marketing Communications and English, the focus being in literature.

You may have seen Abby at our events this past summer, as she was one of our Event Interns. That experience has given her a real look into downtown Rochester and all it has to offer. In addition, she has a great wealth of knowledge when it comes to event operations and logistics from her in class work as well as planning the annual Professionals Panel as President of the Marketing Communications Club and the annual Spring Exhibition as Vice-President of Prologue, the on campus literary and art journal.

As the Event Specialist, Abby will focus on supporting the planning

and execution of all events with a special focus on Thursdays on First & 3rd. She will be working closely with the Community Engagement Manager Cassandra Linkenmeyer. Along with the operations of RDA events, she will be working with the Marketing Manager, Ender Göçmen, on event marketing.

“I am excited to be back in downtown Rochester,” says Slick. “My internship with the RDA helped solidify my decision of pursuing a career in coordinating events. It holds a special place in my heart. I look forward to another great Thursdays season and RDA’s year ahead.”

Welcome Abby!



*Photo: Abby Slick*

# From the Chair

BY **BERN O'BRIEN**  
BOARD CHAIR



“Our organization continuously strives for growth and improvement, and we can only do that because of the support of our Board Members.”

events in Ladies Night Out and Fall Fest, and continued success of SocialICE, Thursday's on First, Dogs Downtown, and Style on the Plaza. We've already gotten out to a fast start in 2017 with our new National Popcorn Day event in January, and curing cabin fever with SocialICE in February, followed by Ladies Night Out in March. Both new and old, these events will continue to provide a vibrant and active downtown for all of our stakeholders and visitors alike.

Our organization continuously strives for growth and improvement, and we can only do that because of the support of our Board Members. I would like to give a special thanks to our past Chair, Dan C. Aguilar and outgoing Board member Brenda Riggott. They have both served on the

RDA Board since 2012 and have been instrumental in the growth of the organization and sustainability for future success. Thank you, both!

I am very excited to serve as the 2017 Chair and will remain committed to working with our stakeholders, our visitors, and the residents of Rochester to be an advocate for a thriving downtown.

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*From the Chair is a recurring article within the RDA Newsletter where the sitting Board Chair reflects on the past quarter and speaks to the next quarter.*

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**A**s your new RDA Chair, this is my first opportunity to extend everyone best wishes in 2017. For many of us, a new year brings new optimism and new goals for both personal and professional achievement. Here's hoping your new year's resolutions are still going strong.

During the RDA's first Annual Meeting in December, you were presented with a recap of the 2016 goals and new goals for 2017. Last year we saw a very successful RDA brand refresh, the launch of fantastic new

# Stakeholder Sessions

IMPROVING RDA & STAKEHOLDER RELATIONS FACE TO FACE

One of the five strategic priorities of the RDA for 2017 is stakeholder relations. This means that the RDA staff and Board of Directors is focused on improving relationships and connection points with you, our downtown businesses community. As a part of this commitment, the RDA is setting up quarterly meetings focused on various industries (dates located in box above).

Each of these meetings will begin at 8:00am and last 60 minutes.

April 6th – Restaurant & Bar  
May - Retail  
September - Services  
November – All Industries

During the session, there will be information provided on what activities and/or programming the RDA is facilitating for that industry. In addition, time will be provided for a Q&A session. These sessions are meant to

ensure you are aware of the latest update and information, as well as for you to share your feedback on what you are seeing in your industry. Please watch your e-mail for more details.

## Goodbye Eat & Drink. Hello Shop

The success of the Eat & Drink pilot program has prompted the RDA to continue the industry specific marketing campaign in 2017 with Shop.

SUCCESS OF RDA PILOT INDUSTRY SPECIFIC CAMPAIGN FUELS CONTINUATION

In November 2016, the RDA launched its first general marketing campaign targeted at one specific industry that exists in downtown Rochester. Conveniently enough, this “pilot program” came to be known as an Industry Specific Campaign. The point of this industry specific campaign was to gauge the feasibility of creating and executing a successful marketing campaign for one industry in downtown using the resources available at the RDA.

Feasibility and execution were two criteria to gauge success. Other criteria included increased brand awareness, increased web traffic,

and utilization of unique digital channels. Regarding web traffic: The date range for data is Nov 1 -

- **Pageviews: +91.37% (3,303 vs 1,726)**
- **Unique Pageviews: +102.29% (2,381 vs 1,177)**
- **Entrances: +1,944.07% (1,206 vs 59)**

Dec 31 vs Previous Period (Sep 1 - Oct 31). For a full detailed recap please contact Ender Göçmen at egocmen@rdadowntownalliance.com.

Shop will be our next marketing campaign focused solely on the vibrant and unique shopping district that exist within our 44-block downtown district. More information about this marketing campaign will be available in the next RDA newsletter.



**SHOP**

**Estimated Economic Impact**  
Through survey results, the Rochester  
Downtown Alliance estimated the total  
economic impact for SocialICE was  
**\$1,301,121**



# A Big Turnout for SocialICE

## SURVEY RESULTS

- 291 Respondents (as of 2/27/17)
- 81.79% of attendees were Rochester Area residents 78% visited at least one shop or restaurant while downtown for SocialICE
  - 39.18% of attendees were Mayo Employees
  - 71% of attendees felt more connected to the Rochester community after attending SocialICE
  - 73% of attendees felt motivated to seek out more activities in downtown Rochester during the winter months
  - 80% of attendees visited at least one shop or restaurant while downtown for SocialICE
  - 74% of attendees heard about SocialICE through social media

The event mission for SocialICE is “to produce a distinctive winter event that encourages activity in downtown Rochester.” This year SocialICE celebrated 9 years of existence. While warm weather was present again this year, SocialICE 2017 was a success. Take a look at some key highlights.

- Participating Bars/Restaurants**
- Chester’s Kitchen & Bar – The Addams Family
  - The Loop - Prince
  - Kathy’s Pub – Jurassic Pub
  - Martini’s – 8-Bit Video Game
  - Pescara – Little Mermaid
  - Dooley’s Pub – Beauty & The Beast
  - Victoria’s Ristorante & Wine Bar –
  - The Great Gatsby

**Ice Bar Champions  
Cup Winner  
Dooley’s Pub**

- Event Partners**
- Premier Partner – Mayo Clinic & Minnesota Super Bowl Host Committee
  - Photo Station Partner – Think Mutual Bank
  - Heating Partner – Kraus-Anderson Construction
  - Radio Partner – Townsquare Media
  - TV Partner – CW Rochester
  - Entertainment Partner – Apollo Music

Photo: SocialICE 2017



# 2017 Programs

**BY KARLI MCELROY**  
PROGRAM MANAGER

As a part of the RDA's 2017 strategic objective to collaborate, we're excited to work with several partners such as, the Rochester Public Library, The Minnesota Children's Museum – Rochester, FireFly barre | fitness (formerly Studio on Third), Zumba Fitness, and Dahl Dance Center on a wide range of programs for 2017. These range from family-friendly storybook planter walks, adventurous sidewalk excursions, calming yoga mornings, high-intensity cardio, and romantic dance classes to kick off a night downtown.

## Groove on the Plaza

Inhale. Exhale. Groove. Repeat. We predict this will be the mantra for those looking to keep their groove (or get it back) this summer on the Peace Plaza!

Groove on the Plaza will feature FREE fitness and dance programming on the Peace Plaza from businesses you know and love.

### Dance!

#### West Coast Swing Nights

June 2nd, July 7th, and August 4th  
7:00pm – 10:00pm

#### Argentine Tango

June 16th, July 21st, and August 18th  
7:00pm – 10:00pm

Make a memorable night! Each dance session is open to all skill levels, and will featuring top dancers each night to highlight each and of course, entertain! Brought to you by Dahl Dance Center.

### Work It!

#### Zumba on the Plaza

Every Monday, June – August  
Classes start at 5:30pm

Zumba is a rush! Classes combine upbeat rhythms with easy-to-follow, instructor led, choreography. Brought to you by Zumba Fitness.

### Barre-Pound Fusion

Every Wednesday, June – August  
Classes start at 5:30pm

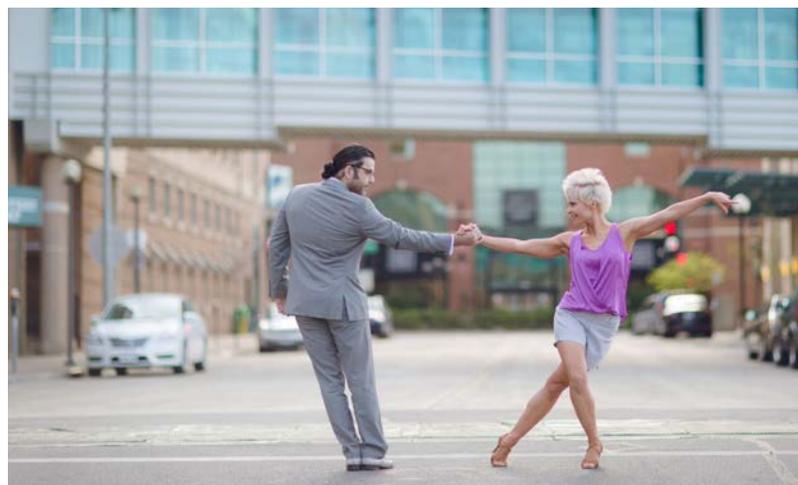
Sculpt a “dancer’s body” and get funky too! Classes blend body weight exercises and drumming to increase endurance, strength, and tone your body! Brought to you by FireFly barre | fitness (formerly Studio on Third).

### Breathe!

#### Yoga (varying styles)

Every Saturday in June  
9:00am – 10:00am

Make time for yourself. Varying styles of yoga classes which focus on creating strength and awareness in both mind & body. Brought to you by FireFly barre | fitness (formerly Studio on Third).

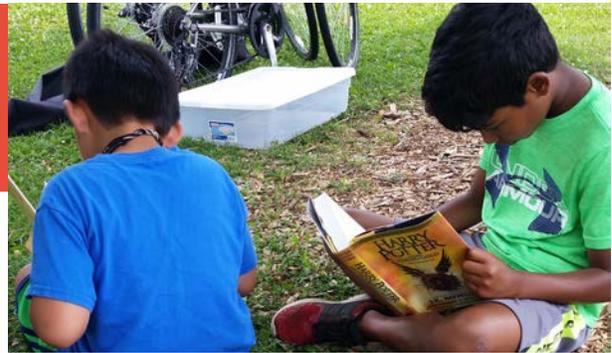


## Downtown Storybook Planter Project

We all know reading to our kids is important; reading helps stimulate imagination, develops vocabulary & listening skills, not to mention builds their awareness and empathy of others. However, when it's summertime, the weather is nice, and you're just itching to get outside, it can be a struggle to keep reading.

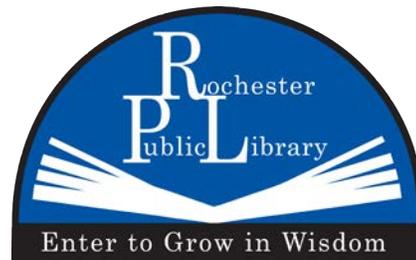
Well, struggle no more! Starting in May, the Downtown Storybook Planter Project will provide families with the opportunity to read aloud pages from popular children's books located within city flower planters while following a mapped route downtown.

This is a great opportunity to stretch your legs, stretch your mental muscles, and help instill a lifelong love of reading while creating a memorable experience with your family downtown! Fun for all ages and reading levels. Reading routes and featured books to be announced,



along with a kick-off event in the Peace Plaza planned for May. Be sure to check the Rochester Downtown Alliance's website [DowntownRochesterMN.com](http://DowntownRochesterMN.com) for more details as they become available.

The Storybook Planter Project is a partnership program between the Rochester Downtown Alliance and the Rochester Public Library.



## Let's Play Rochester!

Imagine walking out your door and seeing that your stepping stones have turned into...HOT LAVA! Or the footprints the neighborhood bird left became GINOURMOUS and you just have to follow them to see where they lead!

As adults, somewhere along the line we lose this sense of play and curiosity, and sometimes we need a little help. So, the Minnesota Children's Museum Rochester (MCMR) and the Rochester Downtown Alliance (RDA) have decided to collaborate on a sidewalk art project intended to illustrate to our community The Power of Play! This June through September, Rochester will see various paths to inspire our imagination on downtown sidewalks urging us all to see our space in a new way.

"To use our imagination is a brilliant exercise for our creativity and innovative thinking! Play is not just nice to have, it is an essential part of our continuing development both in our professional and personal worlds." Says Heidi Mestad, Director of MN Children's Museum Rochester.



The sky – or rather, the edge of the sidewalk's the limit to what we can come up with! So come outside, throw your inhibition to wind, spark that imagination and Let's Play Rochester! More information to come on the Rochester Downtown Alliance's website, [www.DowntownRochesterMN.com](http://www.DowntownRochesterMN.com) in the coming weeks – stay tuned for more updates on this fun project!



Minnesota Children's Museum Rochester

*Photos (left to right, top to bottom) courtesy of Dahl Dance Center, Rochester Public Library, and Minnesota Children's Museum Rochester*

# Featured Stakeholder Series

with Virginia A. Smith  
of Ginny's Fine Fabrics

**BY ENDER GÖÇMEN**  
**MARKETING MANAGER**

Stakeholders are the personality of Downtown Rochester, and that got us thinking, "We bet there are some interesting stories out there." So the RDA sat down with downtown Rochester stakeholder Virginia A. Smith of Ginny's Fine Fabrics with one objective: "Tell us about yourself."

Why did you start Ginny's Fine Fabrics?

Virginia Smith: I started Ginny's Fine Fabrics when I was just 26 years old and had worked for a fine women's clothing store for many years. My employer had taught me all aspects of running a business and my passion had always been creating unique garments by sewing them, so when an opportunity to start a branch of Amluxen's, a fine fabric store in Minneapolis, was offered to me, I jumped at the chance.

Why is it important to you to be operating from downtown Rochester?

VS: I truly believe that my business would not have survived elsewhere in Rochester, as proximity to Mayo has brought me customers from all over the world, especially people who appreciate the value of quality.

Is your main customer base local residents, visitors, or a mix?

VS: My main customers come from everywhere. Many are local - happy to have a local source for their sewing needs,

whatever they are. However, I do have regular customers from all over the world. I carry the unique silks and cottons desired by the ladies from the Middle East, whose desert sun fades fabric of lesser quality in no time at all. Men from the same countries choose my fine "tropical" woolens for their full-length caftans. I have mail order customers who have found a cloth they enjoy working with and cannot find elsewhere, who order over and over. I also have designers who just love working with elegant fabric when creating their original designs. All are welcome!

What is your favorite thing about Rochester?

VS: I was born here, so it is 'home.' Most of my family is within a few hours of Rochester. Although I went away to college, I never felt safe until I returned to live in the shadow of the Mayo Clinic.

What do you think is the best kept secret about downtown?

VS: [It's] the incredible variety of quality choices in merchandise and cuisine. Unlike the "big box" retailers, quality is job #1!

What do you think the biggest change will be to downtown in the next 20 years?

VS: ...seems to be the impact of the implementation of the DMC. That change will have an unknown effect on the community I have known all my life, but change is the one constant of life, so let's have it.

What unique perspective do you have being a fabric store in downtown Rochester?

VS: My customers are so varied, from so many different cultures, that they have given me a unique, appreciative view of the entire world.

What is the most exciting project you've worked on?

VS: The most exciting project I ever participated in was making a suit for a local young man who was 7'8" tall and had been invited to go on a cruise where a suit jacket was required to enter the dining rooms. With the financial and stitching help of a few loyal customers, we were able to "dress" him properly for the cruise in less than a week's time! It was very rewarding in many ways!

And lastly, is it Virginia or Ginny?

VS: Everyone - but my banker - calls me Ginny.

*Photo: Virginia (Ginny) of Ginny's Fine Fabrics*



# Storytelling Media Suite



**BY LAURA ARCHBOLD & SHAWN FAGAN**  
CO-FOUNDERS, RED COUCH STORIES

Through snowball fights and glasses of wine, to pop art and architectural plans, Red Couch Stories is documenting life of Rochester through the “People, Places and Experiences” of our downtown, creating a collection of content to be used within RDA.

Since late summer of 2016 until the early summer of 2017, Red Couch stories is capturing photographs and video to help tell the story of downtown Rochester. RDA will then use the films and photographs throughout it’s owned and paid media to help share activities, happenings, shopping, eating, business...and overall life of our downtown!

The team at Red Couch Stories strives to capture emotion and life as it happens through a storytelling approach, adding authenticity and then viewer engagement through the created media. Our 24/7 information world has pushed us into ferocious consumers of content. We have seconds to capture the attention of our audience and to tell our story.



# A Word From Our Staff

## Ender Göçmen, Marketing Manager

Here we are again: another year, another fabulous Rochester Downtown Alliance newsletter. It's the fourth volume of our print newsletter since launching it in October of 2014. It's hard to believe how much it's grown. Back when we first introduced the print newsletter, it was a mere six pages long and delivered to you in a folded 8.5" x 11". Now, at 20 pages and a magazine flat-mailer, we're very excited to be able to present all our most important updates in one place. That said, you can help the RDA. If you know a downtown stakeholder not currently receiving the newsletter (but would benefit from receiving it), please send me an email (at egocmen@downtownalliance.com), and I will add them to our mailing list. There's no cost to join the mailing list.



If you're an avid reader of the RDA newsletter - which, who isn't? - then you're aware general marketing is one of the RDA strategic priorities of 2017. The RDA has some very exciting and new general marketing projects and tactics lined up for 2017 that we can wait to share with you. They include items like our successful Industry Specific Campaign program (pg. 12), updated Media Suite (pg. 17), and not mentioned yet, what we're simply calling our General Marketing Campaign. More to come in our next newsletter.



## Karli McElroy, Program Manager

Towards the beginning of the new year I had lunch at a local Chinese food restaurant with my family and at the end of the meal I opened my fortune cookie. It said, "Some pursue happiness - you create it."

I usually don't pay much attention to the fortunes, but this one stuck out because this year I'm transitioning from the Events & Volunteer Coordinator to the new position of Program Manager. In this new role, I am very lucky to be working on some really fun new programs and events:

**The Book Planter Project** - partnering with the, **Rochester Public Library, Let's Play Rochester: Sidewalk Art Project** - collaborating with the Minnesota Children's Museum, **Groove on the**

**Plaza** - a health & wellness partnership with FireFly barre | fitness (formerly Studio on Third), Zumba on the Plaza, and Dahl Dance Center, **Partnership with the 2nd Annual Rochester City Jazz Fest**, and **Downtown Donut Day: A Sweet One-Day Fundraiser for Local Non-Profits**

These programs and events will each have their own set of objectives and measurable outcomes, but I am reminded that this work is the ability to help create happiness on a large scale. This is a passion area for me - one of my favorite aspects of this position is taking an idea from concept, to collaboration, to reality, and seeing the finished product result in people truly enjoying themselves in downtown Rochester.

I am excited to get down to work of creating happiness this summer and I hope you'll come join us!



# DMC Discussions

**DISCOVER. DREAM. DESIGN. DO.**

It's simple alliteration, but those four D words aptly describe the deliberate process used by Destination Medical Center to realize the community's vision for Rochester as a global destination for health and wellness.

The past year has seen tremendous progress in the Discover phase for Heart of the City sub-district. Public meetings, small group meetings, information gathering, surveys, interviews, presentations, question and answer sessions, prototyping, idea generation -- all with the same purpose in mind -- listening to all of DMC's stakeholders.

Each stakeholder has brought unique perspectives to the discovery efforts. So far, the results are fascinating -- some surprising, some not -- all valuable to the next DMC phases. Researchers were touched as they heard story after story shared with humility and a great sense of pride how the downtown business community is a compassionate group of people who step in when a need is present.

Valuable information is being gathered and analyzed for inclusion in the next phases. Researchers identified opportunities to make deeper connections as the foundational

brand of Rochester going forward. They also identified themes and questions that will help shape the next phases for Heart of the City:

- Leveraging uniqueness
- Creating experience zones
- Revealing the magic
- Removing barriers
- Elevating health and healing to an art
- Being a knowledgeable resource
- Promoting deep mutual connections
- Being proud of the contrast and uniqueness
- Feeling that here, you have time

***The stakeholder segments include:***

- ***Community members and visitors***
- ***Business owners and employees***
- ***Patients and companions***
- ***Organizations and public officials***

***To inform the Heart of the City design project, a team of research partners and advisors set out to learn the following:***

- ***What makes Rochester unique?***
- ***What supports the experience of connection?***
- ***What supports health and healing?***
- ***What do all of the market segments need?***

*"The Heart of the City project is about more than creating a beautiful downtown public space," said Jon Buggy, AIA, RSP Principal. "It's about creating magnetic experiences, celebrating Rochester's diversity, elevating health and healing, all while enhancing the economic vitality and opportunities of downtown."*

Photo Credit: DMC

# DOWNTOWN

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