

## Amherst Chamber of Commerce Announces Partnership with Arts Services Initiative



Submitted by [Amherst Chamber of Commerce](#)

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### **Group Health Insurance Plan for Cultural Sector Announced**

*Partnership between Amherst Chamber of Commerce & Arts Services Initiative formed*

The Arts Services Initiative of Western New York (ASI) and the Amherst Chamber of Commerce (CoC) today announced a partnership that will provide group health insurance for the cultural sector, effective April 1, 2012.

The Amherst CoC is providing complimentary chamber membership to ASI, which in turn will allow those in the cultural community to receive group health insurance through the chamber through ASI's membership. The program will be open to cultural organizations and their employees, as well as individual artists, actors, tech workers, arts administrators, musicians, and others working in the field in Western New York.

“The Amherst Chamber of Commerce recognizes the value of the arts community to the quality of life in our region,” said Colleen DiPirro, President & CEO of the Amherst Chamber.

“Unfortunately, the economy has had an adverse impact on the creative class and their ability to prosper due to less discretionary spending by their customers. The Amherst Chamber is pleased to partner with ASI in an effort to provide services to their members that affords them the opportunity to dedicate their resources to their core competencies. Through a shared membership agreement, members of ASI can take advantage of the Chamber's group health insurance which will provide them with highest level of knowledge and service at the lower group rates. Working together, the Chamber and ASI can continue to make the Buffalo Niagara region a great place to live, work and play.”

“One of the first things I heard from those in the cultural sector when I came to ASI was that they needed health insurance, but trying to find good coverage and competitive rates as an individual or small organization is incredibly difficult,” ASI Executive Director Tod A. Kniazuk added. “This partnership with the Amherst Chamber of Commerce gets the cultural workers the healthcare coverage they need, and also serves as a prime example of the kinds of connections with the business sector and regional leaders that ASI is working to forge.”

Those signing up will have the choice of five plans from Blue Cross Blue Shield, Independent Health, and Univera Healthcare. They can choose from single or family coverage, with a range of coverage from basic to comprehensive. New enrollments will happen monthly; those wishing to enroll or get more information can contact Christian Solecki at the Amherst Chamber at [csolecki@amherst.org](mailto:csolecki@amherst.org) or 716-250-4206.