

Small Business Education Series



Darlene Shutovich
Health and Life Insurance Broker,
USA Benefits Group



Lauren Small
CEO and President, Lakewood Chamber of Commerce



Christian Fedor
President, Schooley Mitchell



Cost Saving Strategies for Small Business

Panel Discussion, moderated by Steve Meka

June 11, 2024

9:00am - 10:30am

Presented by The Lakewood Chamber of Commerce in
partnership with the City of Lakewood



Moderated 3-Person Panel Discussion with Q&A

Steve Meka, Moderator

Christian Fedor, President, Schooley Mitchell

Darlene Shutovich, Health and Life Insurance Broker

Lauren Small, CEO and President of Lakewood Chamber of Commerce





Moderator: Steve Meka

Steve Meka is the owner of STEM Handmade Soaps, a successful venture born out of a science experiment in Lakewood, Ohio. With a background in biochemistry, Steve, along with partner Dave, crafted an all-natural soap that garnered widespread acclaim. STEM's popularity led to an expansion of their product line and operations.

In addition to his entrepreneurial pursuits, Steve actively contributes to the local business community. He serves as a board member of the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce and holds the position of Vice Chair of the Education Committee within the chamber. Steve's commitment to business and education reflects his dedication to fostering growth and innovation within the community.



Christian Fedor, President, Schooley Mitchell

Christian Fedor, President of Schooley Mitchell, brings over 25 years of IT consulting experience to the table, focusing on optimizing operations and reducing costs for clients. Partnering with the Cost Reduction Company, Christian specializes in lowering overhead expenses such as energy, facility supplies, merchant services, shipping, and software as a service. Through meticulous invoice analysis and strategic vendor negotiations, he consistently delivers substantial bottom-line improvements, typically ranging from 7-10%. Christian's dedication to client success is underscored by the company's fee structure, where clients only pay based on actual savings realized. Residing in Lakewood, Ohio, with his wife Debbie, who is also a partner in the Cost Reduction Company, Christian seamlessly integrates his professional expertise with family life, raising five children aged 24 to 39. His commitment, expertise, and family-centered values make him an invaluable asset to businesses seeking to enhance efficiency and reduce costs.



Darlene Shutovich, Health and Life Insurance Broker, USA Benefits Group

Darlene Shutovich is a dedicated Health and Life Insurance Broker at USA Benefits Group, renowned for her ability to connect with clients and tailor insurance solutions to fit their unique needs. Her expertise helps small businesses and entrepreneurs find optimal health and life insurance options, rescuing them from plans that fail to align with their lifestyle or budget. Darlene's passion lies in educating clients about their current plans and informing them of better possibilities, ensuring they make well-informed decisions.



Lauren Small, CEO & President Lakewood Chamber of Commerce

Lauren Small recently took on the role of CEO & President at the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce, leveraging over 15 years of collaborative marketing and brand management expertise to initiate a process of revitalization. In her approximately one-year tenure, she has been instrumental in steering the Chamber towards a positive trajectory, with a focus on enhancing member attraction, retention, and service quality. Under her leadership, the Chamber is experiencing momentum, with efforts underway to provide small businesses with a robust array of benefits and resources. Through strategic collaboration with the Chamber's Board of Directors, Lauren is actively engaged in shaping the organization's direction towards greater support for local economic growth and success. As a panelist, she will share insights into the ongoing revitalization efforts and discuss the evolving benefits available to small business owners through the Lakewood Chamber of Commerce.

Thank you to our panelists, moderator, event sponsor and co-presenter

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