

# ERIE READER

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## BUSINESS QUARTERLY

Spring 2023

*Your local source for  
business perspectives,  
news, and insights*



## LECOM: Unifying Health and Communities

How many parts came together to  
form the nation's largest medical college

## Outstanding and Repeat Best of Erie Winners

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*The Erie Reader Business Quarterly is published by the Erie Reader and Flagship Multimedia Inc., 1001 State St. #1315. For all inquiries, please email us at [contact@eriereader.com](mailto:contact@eriereader.com)*

February 17, 2023



# Pete Sala

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# LECOM: Unifying Healthcare and Communities

How many parts came together to form the nation's largest medical college

By: Matt Swanseger

Osteopathic medicine is based on the premise that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The body is not a mishmash of cells, tissues, organs, and systems, but an integrated and purposeful unit with the innate ability to regulate, heal, and maintain itself. A patient's mind and spirit are not afterthoughts during treatment, but equally important considerations.

So it is, too, with the health of a community and the health of its population. The Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM) was established in 1992 by Millcreek Community Hospital physicians and administrators, who saw the need to bring more healthcare practitioners aboard. Its inaugural class began work on Aug. 9, 1993 and graduated on May 24, 1997, after which LECOM received full accreditation from the American Osteopathic Association.

Now, 30 years later, LECOM is the nation's largest (and second most affordable) medical college, with four campuses (Erie | Bradenton, Fla. | Greensburg, Pa. | Elmira, N.Y.) and a fifth planned (LECOM at Jacksonville University in Florida). It is also the country's only osteopathic academic health center — defined as the integration of a health profession school, patient care operation, and research enterprise.

The medical college, Millcreek Community Hospital, and Medical Associates of Erie (a clinical practice network of physician's offices throughout Erie County) form LECOM's core here in the Gem City, a self-sustaining organism supplying the community with fresh and vital healthcare resources — just as founding partner, president, and CEO Dr. John Ferretti intended. That core has been regularly reinforced throughout the decades, with the additions of the John M. and Silvia Ferretti Medical and Wellness Center (2009), LECOM Institute for Successful Aging (2015), LECOM Institute for Behavioral Health



**LECOM has expanded their footprint locally to include the John M. and Silvia Ferretti Medical and Wellness Center (pictured), along with an astounding number of other medical and educational health care facilities since their inaugural class began in 1993.**

(2020), and the soon-to-open LECOM Ambulatory Surgery Center, a 23,000 square-foot outpatient surgical facility.

Acquisitions of Corry Memorial Hospital, the LECOM Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, and the Visiting Nurse Association of Erie County in 2016 and a partnership forged with Warren General Hospital in 2017 have extended LECOM's reach throughout Northwest Pennsylvania, delivering care to rural communities through facilities such as the Corry Medical Arts Center (2019) and the Union City Rural Health Clinic (2020). LECOM continues to invest in the regional population both young (the Achievement Center of LECOM Health, which treats adolescents who are experiencing emotional, social, physical, or behavioral challenges) and old (with Independence Court most recently

joining its Parkside Senior Living Communities in Erie, North East, Millcreek, and Corry).

When we factor in LECOM's vast alumni network, we see its life-changing and life-saving work spanning the globe, its collective impact nearly incalculable. To date, LECOM has awarded its Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Degree to more than 8,500 graduates. To put it in perspective, of the estimated 142,000 DOs practicing in the United States today, roughly 1 in every 20 is likely to be a LECOM grad. That percentage should only be expected to grow, as LECOM has introduced more than 500 doctors of osteopathic medicine in each of its recent graduating classes. That means of the approximately 6,500 DOs entering the U.S. workforce every year, between 7 and 8 percent will have

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earned their doctorate through LECOM.

Osteopathic medical students are empowered to tailor the curriculum to how he or she best learns, with five pathways to attaining their doctorate. Perhaps the most innovative of these is the Problem-Based Learning Pathway, in which medical case studies provide the foundation in the biochemical and clinical sciences. The lecture hall is replaced with intensive small group study sessions, in which knowledge is built through applied context and collaboration. A faculty facilitator guides (but does not dictate) the direction of the group's efforts. It's a sort of inside-out approach that offers real context from the onset, and for many an attractive alternative to traditional learning models. (The beautiful backdrop of the LECOM Education Center — formerly the Porreco Center of Edinboro University — doesn't hurt either, with a spacious outdoor wellness and recreation area and a state-of-the-art Clinical Simulation Lab.)

Not all LECOM students learn the same way; nor do they learn the same things.

The total alumni across *all* of LECOM's programs number nearly 20,000 — these health professionals are equipped with diverse and broad-ranging skill sets benefiting communities around the nation and the world. The LECOM School of Pharmacy joined the operation in 2001 and has since granted Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) degrees to more than 4,000 graduates. It bears the distinction of being one of the first in the country to offer online distance learning and accelerated degree options. Accelerated learning pathways continue to be a differentiator across LECOM programming.

In 2012, LECOM welcomed its first class of dental students to its Bradenton, Fla. branch campus (which began accepting School of Osteopathic Medicine applicants in 2004 and School of Pharmacy students in 2007). The School of Dental Medicine adopts the same Problem-Based Learning model that has proven so successful with osteopathic medicine students, emphasizing teamwork, self-reliance, and the role of faculty as vested

mentors vs. impersonal lecturers. Dental students spend their last year in dental outreach practices in either Defuniak Springs, Fla. or here in Erie.

In 2018, LECOM announced the formation of the LECOM School of Health Services Administration (SHSA), which teaches the business of healthcare and prepares students for deft leadership in the private or public spheres. That same year, the LECOM Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences was also established to provide educational and research opportunities for students in a variety of different career paths. The LECOM School of Podiatric Medicine will look to establish a strong foothold in the community when it opens this fall as the 11th podiatric medical school in the United States.

With a high-functioning structure integrating programs, campuses, facilities, faculty, administrators, students, alumni, and partners, the LECOM juggernaut more than stands on its own two feet, one firmly planted in the present and the other in a promising future.



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## Reveling in Romolo Chocolates

Confectioner perennially an Erie sweetheart

**W**hile many may have their hearts set on Valentine's Day as the biggest day for candy and sweets, Easter is actually Romolo Chocolates' biggest holiday for confections. An Erie staple, you'd be hard pressed to find someone in the area who hasn't tried one of Romolo Chocolates' incredible creations, but some may not be familiar with the history behind the company.

"Romolo Chocolates was created from a finality," owner Tony Stefanelli explains. "I expected to continue as the third generation of chocolatier owners of Stefanelli's Candies, but when my father retired and my uncle sold the business, I was able to create Romolo Chocolates one year later (in 1994) with my wife, Jennie, and my sons and fourth-generation candymakers, Anthony and Roman." The business was named for Tony's beloved grandpa, Romolo Stefanelli, the family's first chocolatier and one of Tony's teachers.

"It has been exciting, painful, joyous, and hard, hard work to start from scratch," Tony continued. But luckily for Romolo Chocolates, they had experience and ambition in their toolbox, and were ready to hit the ground running. "I had years of training and experience cooking and solid relationships with vendors, so I knew I could make an outstanding product in my grandpa's tradition."

In 1994, Romolo Chocolates opened its doors at its first location in the Schaal Plaza on West 12th Street. While the loss of the family's last name to the old business was lamented, the new opportunity provided by Romolo Chocolates is a thing of pride for Tony. "To overcome that was the greatest thing that ever happened to me," he said. "It gave me a chance to start anew, to bring my family into the future. We really dove into it and gave birth to a company with a wide-open view."

Along with that new vision came the

CONTRIBUTED



**A staple on West Eighth St. since 2003, Romolo Chocolates carries on a tradition and a namesake begun by current owner Tony Stefanelli's grandfather, Romolo Stefanelli. Now in their fourth generation of chocolate-making, Romolo Chocolates continues on with their delicious family legacy.**

Romolo Chocolates we know and love today. In 2003, the business opened at their current location on West Eighth Street, next to the Greengarden Plaza and across from Frontier Park, ushering in that new vision with more clarity than ever. Comprising a chocolate shop, a gift shop, and the Cocoa Café, the location offers something for everyone, and was voted both Best Local Business and Best Chocolates/Candies in the Erie Reader's 2022 Best of Erie Awards.

Tony and Jennie take a lot of pride in Romolo Chocolates as an Erie business, and love providing the service that makes them stand out. "We appreciate going to other businesses and finding that hometown Erie service," Jennie says. "From our auto shop to Tony's barber to our next door Greengarden Plaza neighbors, Erie businesses show their style and their hard work, and we are proud to be one of them."

In 2023, Romolo Chocolates is showing no signs of slowing down and they refuse to compromise on their vision and quality. "Supply issues after the pandemic meant searching for ingredients and packaging that met our high standards and not always finding them,"

says Tony. "Sometimes we just didn't make a confection, or an ice cream, or a cookie, because we weren't going to change its quality or flavor."

With Easter reigning as the business's busiest holiday, each year seems to grow customer demand at Romolo Chocolates. "We prepare for Easter by focusing on our molding process, setting production goals, and working together day to day as a team, like we always do," explains Tony. "To help keep pace with customer demand, we incorporate more machinery each year."

Eastertime also brings around some fan favorites and best sellers, some of which include the solid chocolate miniature Easter pieces like the Running Classic Rabbit, the Sitting Rabbit with Flower, and the Large-Eared Classic Rabbit. Joining their ranks this year is Sophie, a solid chocolate lamb that is the newest addition to the Easter lineup.

"Our new solid chocolate Easter Lamb, Sophie, is the cutest; she's cute enough to cuddle!" says Jennie, proud of the newest addition. Sophie will replace previous years' lamb, whose lack of a now-discontinued sugar eye created an undesirable look that the busi-





**"Sophie," Romolo Chocolates' newest Easter addition, is an improvement upon last year's lamb, and with her signature Romolo ribbon, she is the perfect centerpiece for your Easter basket this season.**

ness didn't love. The new lamb comes with a Romolo ribbon around her neck, making her the perfect signature piece for every Erieite's Easter basket this year.

Another new addition to this year's Easter roster are Easter-themed miniatures. Crafted using molds imported from Italy, the miniature shapes include lambs, chicks, bunnies, and eggs, all classic indicators of the Easter holiday. Thanks to the perfect tempering performed at Romolo Chocolates, each piece has a beautiful shine, making them (almost) too pretty to eat.

A hidden gem of the Easter season that many may not realize are sold at Romolo Chocolates are their "nickel eggs." These are a petite version of the business' crème eggs, and have the same delicious flavors that can be found in their larger counterparts. "We handcraft these large and small eggs,

which feature crèmes of maple, peanut butter, chocolate, butter, and coconut, as well as fruit and nut and solid nut eggs," explains Tony.

If you're looking for other Easter candy ideas – or for any time of the year, as Romolo Chocolates are perfect for all occasions – be sure to check out Jennie and Tony's current favorites in the shop. "Like many of the Romolo team, we get fixated on a particular confection and then move to another when we've satisfied that taste," the couple said. Currently, Tony is loving the new flavors of nougat, while Jennie has been enjoying the toffee bark.

As they look ahead, Romolo Chocolates see nothing but new opportunities, no matter what the future holds. "I enjoy the challenge," says Tony. "When I open a gift box of our confections, it strikes me as beautiful music – a perfect orchestra of chocolate."

## Downtown Erie's Victoria Inn Moves Forward with Intention

Yoga, breathwork classes, and retreat spaces now offered

**“W**hen you put your intention out there, the world conspires to make it happen for you,” explains Vicke Marz, owner of the historic Victoria Inn at 401 Peach St. in the heart of Downtown Erie. Marz enthusiastically tells the story of how a broken water pipe on Christmas Eve sparked a flow of ideas to bring yoga and meditation back to the inn and expand retreat and wellness offerings in the space.

“My brother, my husband, and I were watching this water cascade into the dining room on Christmas Eve; thankfully we were able to mitigate the damage,” Marz recalled. The inn was closed for three weeks, leaving Marz with time to think big about her true intentions for the space, which includes expanding beyond being a bed-and-breakfast exclusively. “I love hosting guests in the bed-and-breakfast space, but I want to expand our offerings and really follow

CONTRIBUTED



**The historic architectural elements of the Victoria Inn built in 1872 like the intricate woodwork, mantelpiece, and original hardwood floors provide wide open spaces and a unique backdrop for yoga practice.**

my passion to share this amazing space with more people.”

The Victoria Inn, previously known as the George Carroll house, offers historic lodging with a maximum capacity of

20. One step through the beautiful front doors and guests quickly realize why the Victoria Inn is one of Erie's landmark Victorian mansions. Examples of the era surround you, from the 12 foot ceilings

to the incredibly detailed, handcrafted hardwood moldings, mantles, and beautiful hardwood floors throughout the house. “The Victoria Inn is such a peaceful oasis in the middle of the chaos of downtown, and when I first walked in, I felt the energy of the space,” Marz said. “I came downtown to buy a building after retiring, and, much to my husband’s surprise, I came home with a bed-and-breakfast. Adding yoga is just another chapter in the very colorful history of this lovely building.”

That sacred feeling has inspired Marz to combine her passion of running the inn with her dream of offering an intimate gathering space for retreats. The inn already has an almost-full calendar

this year of author’s retreats, ceremonial breathwork retreats, and yoga retreats. Marz has been practicing Bikram yoga since 2010 and received her certification to teach in 2018. She currently offers the “26 and 2” practice, which is a sequence of 26 postures and two breathing exercises, practiced over 90 minutes. There are also plans for a 60 minute version of the same practice. Sound bowls, meditation, and restorative yoga will also be offered.

Breathwork classes are available to the guests as well as the general public on Sundays from 3 until 5:30 p.m. for \$90 a class. Reservations are required and the class is 90 minutes. The breathwork classes begin with intention setting, rounds of elemental breathing, a medita-

tion, an integration, and a sharing circle. They also include music and drumming.

Marz says she would like to see more people utilizing the Inn for weekend or overnight retreats, eventually bringing in more out of town retreat hosts and guests. Bringing a Kirtan to Erie is high on her list of wishes, as are wellness offerings for the local community. The inn is booking up quickly for 2023 weekend retreats, but there are some options remaining, so if you’re interested in talking about booking a retreat, she recommends calling soon.

Breathwork and Yoga are beautiful practices that will change your life, heal your heart and create space for joy. Join us!

## Industrial Sales and Manufacturing

A family business looking to grow in Erie

**M**anufacturing is alive and well in Erie County despite the Rust Belt perception that most of the jobs have been outsourced. On West 12th Street, the Rutkowski family and a team of 150 skilled workers continue Erie’s rich manufacturing heritage at Industrial Sales and Manufacturing (ISM).

Founded 55 years ago, ISM has remained here in Erie for three generations. The team has provided decades of service to Erie and worldwide to over 800 distinct clients. Begun in 1967 by Joan and Jim Rutkowski Sr. in a garage on Connecticut Drive, this local manufacturer is still thriving. ISM is always looking for reliable, hard-working people to join their family and be a part of the decades-long manufacturing legacy of service they have built.

Industrial Sales and Manufacturing is a contract manufacturer that provides machined, fabricated, welded, and assembled components for original equipment manufacturers. ISM’s products are found worldwide in transportation, recreation, healthcare, golf and turf, food processing, and many other industries. Headquartered in Erie, ISM comprises six facilities featuring state-of-the-art

equipment for machining, welding, and fabricating.

Kathryn Schaaf, workforce development manager for ISM, is excited to be in a position to welcome new employees to the company and her team has been working to make sure that anyone hired feels welcomed and supported. She comments, “We feel on-the-job training, learning, and development opportunities are more important than ever. We want to be able to offer clear career advancement pathways. To support this we’re in the process of introducing Tooling U, an online learning platform where employees can take online classes during working hours to learn new skills and develop existing ones.”

Being a family-owned business means that treating employees like family is second nature, and Schaaf stresses the importance of that dynamic, “We understand the importance of work/life balance. Family is everything and we want to support our employees by offering flexible working hours and a four-day work week, whenever possible. We’re looking at new wellness initiatives to support our employees, as well as offering more fun events within the



**Industrial Sales and Manufacturing recently celebrated their 55th year in business. Begun in a garage on Connecticut Drive, this local manufacturing company looks forward to carrying on their family-operated business for years to come.**

workplace.”

ISM is always looking for people to join their team. They offer both full and part-time positions across all three shifts, as well as offering internships for students looking to bolster their work experience. ISM’s departments include machining, welding, fabricating, assembly, shipping, maintenance, and quality control.

For more information on available positions, or to speak with a member of the ISM team, be sure to visit their website at [ismerie.com](http://ismerie.com) or call or stop by one of their locations.

## The Dinor At Lawrence Park

Great food at a fair price all part of diner's 75-year tradition

**T**oday a diner is someone who eats in a restaurant, but not that long ago the word meant so much more. It was a place, a menu, and a vibe.

That's exactly what you'll find at the Lawrence Park Dinor, which celebrates its 75th anniversary this year.

If you haven't eaten in a traditional diner, you're in for a treat. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Lawrence Park Dinor is 40 feet long and 14 feet wide and she's a special lady – a Silk City diner. Only 1,500 were manufactured between 1926 and 1966, with just a few still in existence today.

Over the years, a handful of owners have continued the tradition of treating customers like family – offering superior service and outstanding food at affordable prices.

It's easy to see why so many have become regulars over the years. Soups and pies are made fresh in house daily. Favorites include the Daily Special, Reuben, and the Greek omelet. Burgers and Greek sauce are always fresh, never frozen. Breakfast is served daily from 8 to 11:00 a.m., lunch from 11 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., on Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CONTRIBUTED



**The historic Dinor at Lawrence Park, located at 4019 Main St., is the only diner in Pennsylvania to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The business is celebrating their 75th anniversary of serving great food at a fair price.**

On Sunday, breakfast and pie are offered all day.

While you can still find the signature details of the 1950s design throughout the Lawrence Park Dinor, an outdoor patio has been added to offer additional and handicap-accessible seating. It'll be the perfect spot for enjoying live music

and classic cars during special cruise-in events planned for this summer.

Another new addition: the monthly Supper Club, offering a four-course meal by reservation only.

So don't miss your chance to experience all a diner – and dinor – has to offer.

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# Outstanding & Repeat Winners of Best of Erie 2022

Among the awardees, these winners are a cut above

By: Erin Phillips

The results of the Erie Reader's ninth annual Best of Erie Awards were recently published in January and while there were quite a few newcomers spanning the categories, there have been those consistent winners that seem to always sweep their respective niches over the years (there have even been a few to win in multiple categories, like Romolo Chocolates, featured within this issue). Repeat winners like **Panache Salon & Spa** who have taken home the top spot for **Best Beauty Salon** every single year and **Bianchi Honda**, who never seems to disappoint in the **Best Car Dealership** category are some great examples of consistency in customer satisfaction. Additionally, the following group of awardees are so well loved and respected in Erie, that their customers and fans can't help but drive them to the top year after year, and we are excited to give their businesses a moment in the spotlight.

## Oliver's Rooftop

Winner of 2022's **Best Patio, Best New Restaurant, Best Waterfront Dining, Best Romantic Restaurant**, and runner up for **Best Place for a First Date**, Oliver's Rooftop has effectively swept Best of Erie, carrying home an armload of awards proving just how much Erie loves the establishment.

Nick Scott, president of Scott Enterprises and owner of Oliver's Rooftop, feels proud



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Since its inception in 2020, Oliver's Rooftop Restaurant has made a huge impression on the people of Erie. Voted Best of Erie in 2022 in three categories including Best New Restaurant, Best Waterfront Dining, and Best Romantic Restaurant, these views are just one of the reasons to call Oliver's a winner.

to be a part of the burgeoning bayfront community, "People say it's the most exciting thing on the waterfront. You're looking at the bay and the tower and you're right in the heart of the Bayfront area, which has now taken on a life of its own and has become a real tourist attraction." Oliver's Rooftop was named in honor of Oliver Hazard Perry, an American naval commander most known for his heroic role in the Battle of Lake Erie during the War of 1812. Diners at Oliver's can actually see Perry's flagship, the U.S. Brig *Niagara*, docked in the waters directly adjacent to the restaurant. Oliver's represents the best of what is new about Erie's Bayfront while giving its customers a chance to reflect on the history of the area as well.

Since its opening in 2020, Oliver's has offered world-class, upscale fine dining with a view that is second to none in Erie. Catching the sunset over cocktails and gourmet appetizers, with the breeze through the windows and sailboats off in the distance — it's no wonder the people of Erie have voted Oliver's the **Best Romantic Restaurant**.

## MacDonald, Illig, Jones, and Britton LLP

Winner of 2022's **Best Law Firm** and **Best Lawyer (Kimberly Oakes)**, the long-standing, generational law firm in Erie has earned these titles through their hard work and pristine reputation. The firm, which is celebrating their 125th anniversary this year, offers legal services in a comprehensive number of areas including: banking and finance, business services, cannabis, non-profit organizations, construction, education, environmental law, family law, government services, health care, intellectual property, labor law, litigation, manufacturing, real estate, tax, transportation, estate planning and trusts, and workers compensation. Basically a one-stop legal shop, they have partners and counselors who can cover any potential need.

Kimberly Oakes is a partner at the firm,

CONTRIBUTED



Voted Best of Erie in the category of Best Lawyer, Kimberly Oakes is a partner at MacDonald, Illig, Jones, and Britton LLP which was also voted Best Law Firm. A winning partnership, Oakes brings her expertise in Family Law to round out the unbeatable team at the favorite Erie firm.

and performs her job so well she was voted **Best Lawyer** by the people of Erie in 2022. With her primary focus in family law, Oakes is highly experienced in effectively handling divorces, adoption, alimony and spousal support, child support, child custody and visitation, domestic violence, paternity, prenuptial agreements, and postnuptial agreements and is a trained mediator. In addition to her award from the Erie Reader, Oakes was recently selected as one of the Best Lawyers in America for 2023.

## Pineapple Eddie Southern Bistro

**Pineapple Eddie** has taken home the gold in an impressive total of three categories this year including **Best Restaurant, Best Chef**, and **Best Seafood Restaurant**. To say that this business has a loyal clientele is a well-seasoned understatement.

Pineapple Eddie is owned and operated by sisters Karen Thomas and Adrienne Paul, who cut their teeth in hospitality through their parents' catering business. They would go on to continue the family legacy, both studying hospitality management and culinary arts before dedicating their early careers to the hospitality industry. Their ultimate dream came true in 2011 when they were finally able to open their own business in Pineapple Eddie Southern Bistro.

## FEATURE

The other side of the winning coin is the food that keeps people coming back again and again for those craveable dishes like their Southern Fried Chicken, Griyo (flash fried pork), and Shrimp & Grits. This is all due to the talents of Chef Jean Paul who has been able to combine the traditional dishes of his home country of Haiti with those flavors of the American South. Overall, his passion for the culinary world was most heavily influenced by his mother (Marie Paul), who owned and operated her own restaurant in Haiti.



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**Co-owners Kim Thomas (left) and Adrienne Paul have followed through with a lifelong dream in Pineapple Eddie Southern Bistro and their work has not gone unnoticed. Voted Best of Erie 2022 for Best Restaurant, Best Chef, and Best Seafood Restaurant, the sisters, along with Chef Jean Paul, have much to be proud of.**

The people of Erie (and their taste buds) are certainly glad that Jean Paul, Adrienne Paul, and Karen Thomas decided to make their dreams come true in our city and look forward to supporting them for years to come.

### Lilly Broadcasting, Happi 92.7, and Sammy Stone

Happi 92.7 has taken home the win for **Erie's Best Radio Station** for seven years in a row, which means they've practically swept the category for as long as the category has existed. Radio host Sammy Stone, who hosts "Wake Up Happi" weekdays from 5:30 a.m. to 10 a.m., has become a household name, accompanying Erieites through their morning routines and solidifying herself as **Best Radio Personality** this year as well as last.

Sammy Stone has been "running on caffeine and concealer" with her radio personality professionally since 1994, but her passion for radio started at a young age. According to her bio: "Radio has always been



LILLY BROADCASTING

**Voted Best Radio Personality, Sammy Stone and her award winning radio station Happi 92.7 – voted Best Radio Station seven years in a row – make Erieites happy on the daily.**

Sammy's passion. As far back as the age of five, she was playing her mom's Kenny Rogers records on the living room stereo and talking into a makeshift microphone. She knew it was radio or bust." And her passion shines through the airwaves, as the voters of Erie clearly agree that she is doing her job well.

WICU and Lilly Broadcasting's Happi 92.7 has an outstanding team of radio hosts and programs that keep people tuning in via a medium that keeps on keeping on despite competition from video and internet resources. Their features like "Wet Nose Wednesday" (where Sammy Stone herself partners with sponsor Bianchi Honda to introduce you to an adoptable pet from the Erie Humane Society) and 2K Tuesday (which features throwback hits from the early 2000s) continually draw listeners from all over Erie and Warren counties, earning them the distinction of **Erie's Best Radio Station** over and over again.

### Erie Federal Credit Union

When it comes to voting for **Best Bank**, Erie agrees that they'd rather not pick a bank at all. With their resounding support for **Erie Federal Credit Union**, which has been voted Best Bank this year as well as LITERALLY EVERY OTHER YEAR that the awards have been in existence. Erie clearly feels strongly about this credit union and the folks at Erie Federal feel very grateful to have such a loyal member base.

Upon receiving their award back in 2017, CEO of Erie Federal Credit Union (FCU) Brian Waughman commented, "Being fans of the Erie Reader, we are truly humbled and thrilled to be a part of the Best of Erie Awards. There are some excellent financial

institutions serving this area, so winning 'Best Bank/Credit Union' means a lot to us. We take our commitment to serving our members, the Erie community, and our employees with care and compassion very seriously. A sincere 'thank you' to all who voted Erie FCU for this recognition!"

Credit unions provide a service unlike traditional banks. According to an Erie FCU statement, "When you join Erie Federal Credit Union, you become a member not a customer. As a member owner, the focus is on serving you and your financial needs. Unlike banks, credit union profits are returned to you through better rates and lower fees. Erie FCU was formed to serve our members not to earn profits for shareholders." It's this dedication to member service that sets Erie FCU apart from the rest.

In addition to serving their members and employees, Erie FCU has made a point to give back to the community here in Erie with their #TeamAOK supporting activities and charitable donations like hosting food drives for the Second Harvest Food Bank, participating in the American Heart Association Heart Walk, donating to Hope on Horseback Therapeutic Riding Center, and local animal rescue Because You Care among many others. Erie Federal Credit Union has shown they care about the Erie community in both their business and leisure time, and the people of Erie have shown they loyally back their favorite credit union.



ERIE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

**Winner in the "Best Bank" category for nine years running is Erie Federal Credit Union whose customers are clearly impressed with the service provided by the Credit Union over the years.**

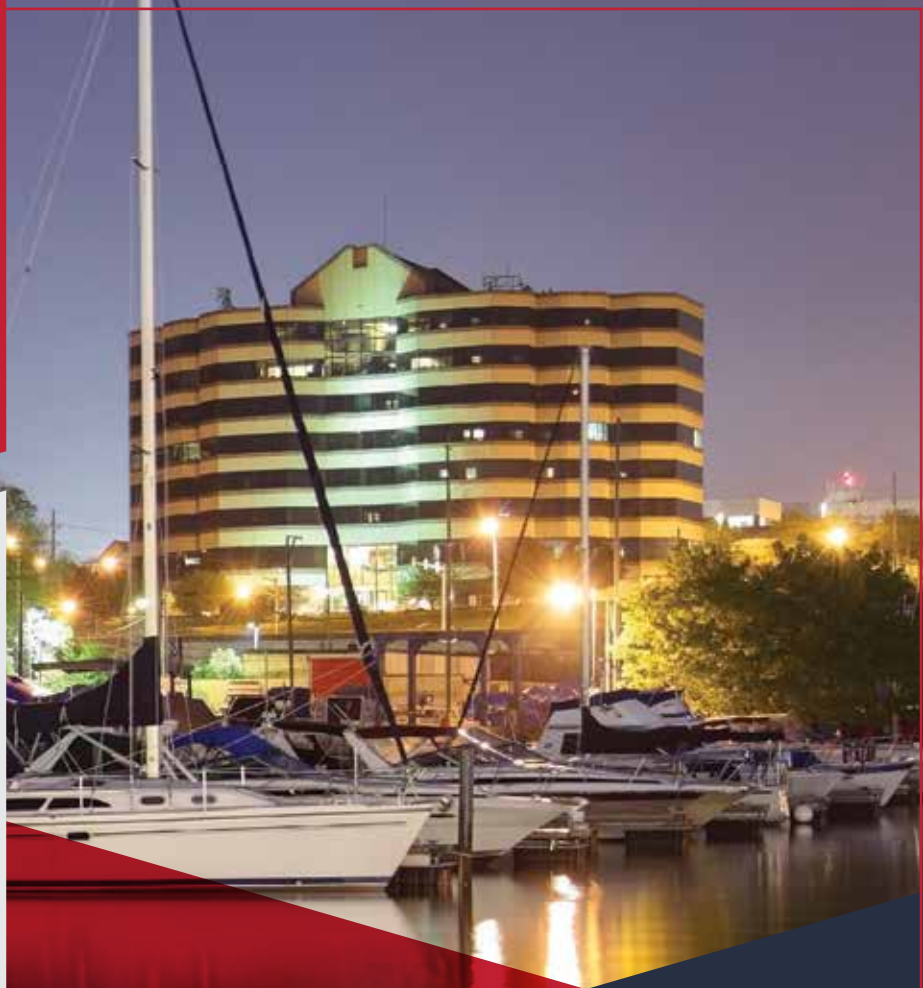
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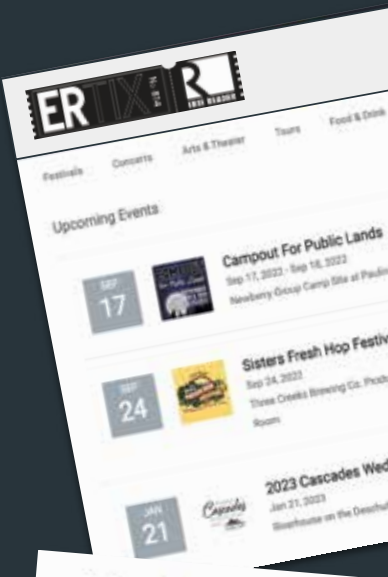
## ERIE'S ONLY LOCAL EVENT TICKETING

ER Tix is the only ticketing platform created exclusively for Erie's local, community events. It's free, easy to use, and fully customizable with all-access ticketing features to meet your event's unique needs.

Most importantly, ER Tix is powered by the same trusted team that operates the **Erie Reader**. We let you tap into our massive audience to attract even more *local* ticket buyers!

### Features

- Customizable event and organization web pages to highlight your events
- Scan & sell tickets at the door  
Evvnt app available on iOS & Android
- Reserved seating and general admission tickets  
seating chart builder for row seating or tables
- Flexible ticket management to comp, refund, or exchange ticket orders
- Customizable event and organization web pages to highlight your events
- Accept donations at checkout
- Exportable customer and event reporting
- Promo codes
- Schedule multiple ticket types and prices  
early bird, kids, day-of
- Customizable registration questions and waivers
- Full tech support



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- classes & workshops
- tours
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The Erie Reader

