

New developments blooming in Downtown Scranton

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Mark Hoover named program director at Rock 107

SCRANTON — Mark Hoover started his career at Rock 107 by circumstance. As a part-time board operator for WEJL in 1998, Hoover was asked to work the midnight to 6 a.m. shift after a disc jockey called off at the classic rock station. (read more)

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BY LESLIE COLLINS, SCRANTON TOMORROW / PUBLISHED: MARCH 9, 2020

by Leslie Collins

Cities across the country are taking a proactive approach to fighting blight and improving the cleanliness and safety of their downtowns and neighborhoods through formalized "Safe, Clean and Green" initiatives. Often spearheaded by Business Improvement District organizations and business associations, community leaders in all corners of the country can see the direct correlation between beautification efforts, and improvements in economic development and quality of life. Scranton

Tomorrow is proud to be among those progressive thinkers with a long history of improving and maintaining city streets and public spaces, starting with CityPride in the 1990s and continuing with today's Downtown Safe, Clean & Green Ambassador program.

CityPride was a project encompassing dozens of clean-ups in city parks and streets every spring. Once a year, hundreds of volunteers armed with rakes, clippers, garbage bags, brooms and fresh flowers tackled the unsightly remnants of a harsh winter and debris left behind by careless litterbugs. The program made a huge impact on the appearance of the city, garnering pride for those who live and work here. CityPride gave everyone a clean slate for the start of a new season. It would serve as a wonderful precursor to the current Downtown Scranton Safe, Clean & Green Ambassador Program.

Now underway, the program will operate year-round under the direction of Steve Ward, team leader for the Ambassador program. Steve previously served as the coordinator of the Penn State Master Gardeners in Lackawanna County, and he has a long history of volunteer service to Scranton Tomorrow as a member of the Safe, Clean & Green Committee. He'll lead the charge in building the Ambassador program and its team members and volunteer base. The Safe, Clean & Green Team is instrumental in reporting safe, clean and green conditions adversely affecting the downtown and taking action to correct conditions observed. In addition to maintenance duties, hospitality-related tasks include the engagement of pedestrians, having knowledge of the commercial district and interacting with downtown residents, workers and visitors. Their first community clean-up of the season will be held Sunday, April 5. For details on volunteer opportunities, be sure to follow Scranton Tomorrow on Facebook.

The new Ambassador program plays an important role in Scranton Tomorrow's mission as the organization takes steps toward formalizing a Business Improvement District (BID), and progresses with plans to create a pocket park on the corner of Wyoming Avenue and Linden Street. The pocket park will be just a few steps from Scranton

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Tomorrow's new headquarters at 307 Linden Street. The new location allows staff and volunteers to connect with the Downtown community in an even more meaningful way as we foster economic development within the downtown business district.

The new office will also be right on the course of Scranton Tomorrow's Electric City Classic. Featuring professional cyclists from around the world, the two-day event will be held on Friday, Aug. 21 and Saturday, Aug. 22. Plans are underway to bring some exciting twists and turns to an already riveting event, including a Friday night Classic Hill Climb on Olive Street in the Hill Section and expanded programming in Downtown Scranton on Saturday. Look for details in an upcoming column, and be sure to follow Scranton Tomorrow on Facebook for the latest developments.

Leslie Collins is the Executive Director of Scranton Tomorrow, a non-partisan, non-profit economic development organization. Connect with her via email at leslie@scrantontomorrow.org. To learn more about Scranton Tomorrow, visit scrantontomorrow.org.