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## **TWO COMPANIES WIN YORK COUNTY BUSINESS AWARDS**

*Chilled Ponds earns Distinguished Business Award for growth and investment;  
GeddingFit named Chamber's Small Business of the Year*

(YORKTOWN, VA, March 15, 2024) – At York County’s annual Distinguished Business Affair yesterday, two local companies accepted awards for their community and economic impact.

During this event at the Freight Shed at Riverwalk Landing, ice sports complex Chilled Ponds at Yorktown accepted the 2024 Distinguished Business Award. This award is given each year by York County’s Economic Development Authority (EDA) and Department of Economic and Tourism Development (ETD) to honor growing businesses that make significant investments in the County.

“I’m extremely honored to even be considered for this award, let alone be chosen to win it,” said Patrick Cavanagh, owner of Chilled Ponds at Yorktown. “We were thrilled to learn we were selected.”

“Chilled Ponds at Yorktown serves a unique role here and has become a destination in its own right, not to mention the many ways it gives back to the community,” said Kristi Olsen-Hayes, director of economic and tourism development for York County. “With its recent renovations and increased programming, it has brought so many assets to the County. This is a perfect example of what can happen when businesses, government agencies and the community work together.”

Also during this event, the York County Chamber of Commerce recognized its Small Business of the Year—GeddingFit: Home of Proelium CrossFit. The business was selected for its support of and commitment to the local and worldwide community.

“This is a real opportunity for us to be more inclusive of the business community around us,” said co-owner Larry Geddings. “We look forward to expanding and growing those ties with the County, Chamber and business community. The Chamber president has already stopped by, and we had a good discussion about what we could do together in the future.”

“GeddingFit aligns brilliantly with the purpose of this award,” said Chamber President Sean Cronin. “We look for a business that gives back substantially to the community, and they really hit the ground running with that as a young business. They even offer community-based workout every Saturday morning that’s open to the public, to help local residents improve their wellness.”

## Chilled Ponds at Yorktown



While residents might still know it as the Hampton Roads Iceplex, this popular facility recently reopened with a new look and a new name. Chilled Ponds at Yorktown offers all levels of ice sports, from kids to adults. When the facility came up for sale last February, Patrick Cavanagh said he “jumped at” the opportunity.

“It was a natural chance to buy it and the ideal way to share it with the community,” he said, “and as soon as we closed the sale, we were right into renovations that lasted until February 2024.”

Cavanagh knew what he was doing—he already had owned the Chesapeake location of Chilled Ponds since 2003, which he also immediately renovated. The newest location is now 95 percent complete, he reported, with just some final touches left in the lobby and grill area.

What changes can patrons expect?

#### **Ice Rink:**

- Revamped viewership lanes
- Improved ice surface temperature controls
- Entire ceiling replacement with a low emissivity ceiling (create vapor barrier to prevent the ceiling from dripping onto the ice)
- Souped-up lighting: brighter and more focused on the ice surface itself (better for events and shows) instead of the perimeter



#### **Comfort & Aesthetics:**

- Improved size of windows and viewing locations (parents spend a lot of time in and around the lobby and rink)
- New furniture and ambiance in lobby
- Adding full-service bar and grill (offering both healthy and entertainment foods)

#### **Outdoor Enjoyment:**

Cavanagh said he takes “special joy” in the property’s location beside a lake. While the lake view was previously obscured by weeds and trees, Cavanagh had the area cleared out and created an outdoor gathering space—so patrons can enjoy nature and the view year-round while relaxing,

The response to the changes so far has been glowing.

“For our customers, the improved quality of the rink and lobby has been great,” he said. “It evokes a strong emotional response, especially for people who have been coming here for years.” But for Cavanagh, Chilled Ponds isn’t simply a business—it’s a community service. York County’s leaders view it the same way.

“My experience with York County officials has been five stars,” he said. “They recognize the importance of the facility to the community, and they have embraced my ideas to expand and grow it. I can’t speak highly enough about everyone involved. Every one of my engagements with staff and officials have been enthusiastic and encouraging.”

Longtime staff members have been instrumental to the process—managers Liz Varva and John Smith, and Director of Operations Brad Jones, helped merge the programs and expedite the plans ahead of schedule. Langley Federal Credit Union also has been a key player, by helping make the renovations as the facility’s naming rights partner.

As one way to give back to the community and support wellness, the facility started offering free-skate times for residents several times per week, in partnership with the County. The partnership also helps provide free trial lessons for ice hockey and figure skating. Since Cavanagh also happens to own the Norfolk Admirals ice hockey team, he plans to bring in team members to lead learn-to-play programs at Chilled Ponds.

He has other plans in the works for local families, including camps, tournaments and competitions that had previously only been available in Chesapeake. He added that this spring, Chilled Ponds is looking to



launch a Keg Curling League for Adults, as well as a toddler ice skating program.

### **Chilled Ponds at Yorktown**

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[facebook.com/ChilledpondsatYorktown/](https://facebook.com/ChilledpondsatYorktown/)

## GeddingFit: Home of Proelium CrossFit



This two-year-old business in upper York County is the ultimate destination for fitness enthusiasts. GeddingFit: Home of Proelium CrossFit offers expert coaching, diverse and challenging workouts tailored to the individual's fitness level, community support, and results-driven training.



The business name itself is a play on the founders' surname. Stephanie and Larry Geddings are both the owners and head coaches at GeddingFit. They assert it's not just a business to them, but rather a mission— to positively influence the community through physical fitness, positive well-being and serving as a good neighbor.

“We talk a lot about creating an environment that is welcoming and challenging,” said Larry. “We try to espouse that no one HAS to be there, but we all GET to be there. We’re

aware that our member athletes choose to come and participate in our community, and we get to be a part of their lives.”

He said they’re always working to make the community a little bit better today than it was yesterday.

For Stephanie, opening her own gym has been a dream since 2007, when she first got interested in CrossFit. She has worked in the fitness community for over 30 years, but she cherishes getting to be her own boss and creating a true wellness community



Community in a broader sense is also important to the Geddings. The business gives back in a variety of ways, such as its recent fundraiser for the Heritage Human Society, and choosing a different cause each month to celebrate. Whether inside or outside the gym walls, GeddingFit wants it all to be about helping others.

“We have a good business model going with quite a few member athletes, and we’d like to help as many people as we can in the fitness realm,” said Stephanie, “but helping others outside of that is even better.”

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<https://www.proeliumCrossFit.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/people/GeddingFit-Home-of-Proelium-CrossFit>

### **About York County Economic Development**

York County seeks to create a diverse economic base through continually recruiting, growing and retaining business across a variety of industries. The **Department of Economic and Tourism Development** is dedicated to expanding York County's tax base through capital investment in the County; promoting tourism; supporting large, small and home-based businesses; and providing new employment opportunities for County residents. Its efforts result in improved quality of life throughout York County, including charitable giving, volunteerism, and job creation.

The Department of Economic and Tourism Development works in cooperation with many regional and state agencies to pursue its mission. Key among these allies are the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, Hampton Roads Alliance, Hampton Roads Small Business Development Center, and local Chambers of Commerce. Its strongest ally is the **York County Economic Development Authority (EDA)**. Established in 1972, the EDA is a political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia and has unique powers established in the Code of Virginia. The EDA is a conduit for non-taxable industrial revenue bonds, and can legally own, develop, and sell/lease commercial real estate. It also can provide incentives necessary to close deals within targeted industry sectors.

Learn more at <https://www.yesorkcounty.com/>

### **About the York County Chamber of Commerce**

The York County Chamber of Commerce is a not-for-profit business membership organization operated by volunteer business leaders who care about our community. The Chamber is dedicated to serving its community by promoting the businesses and business interests of its members. The Chamber is working to strengthen the area's overall economic climate by supporting small business development in the community through its programs, such as mentorship and workforce development. The Chamber offers low-cost, long-term room and office rentals, as well as an incubator that assists York County home-based and small businesses get started and flourish. The Chamber is the place to go for small businesses on the Peninsula. Learn more at <https://yorkcountychamberva.org/>

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