



2023 MOMENTUM



RUSSELLVILLE
AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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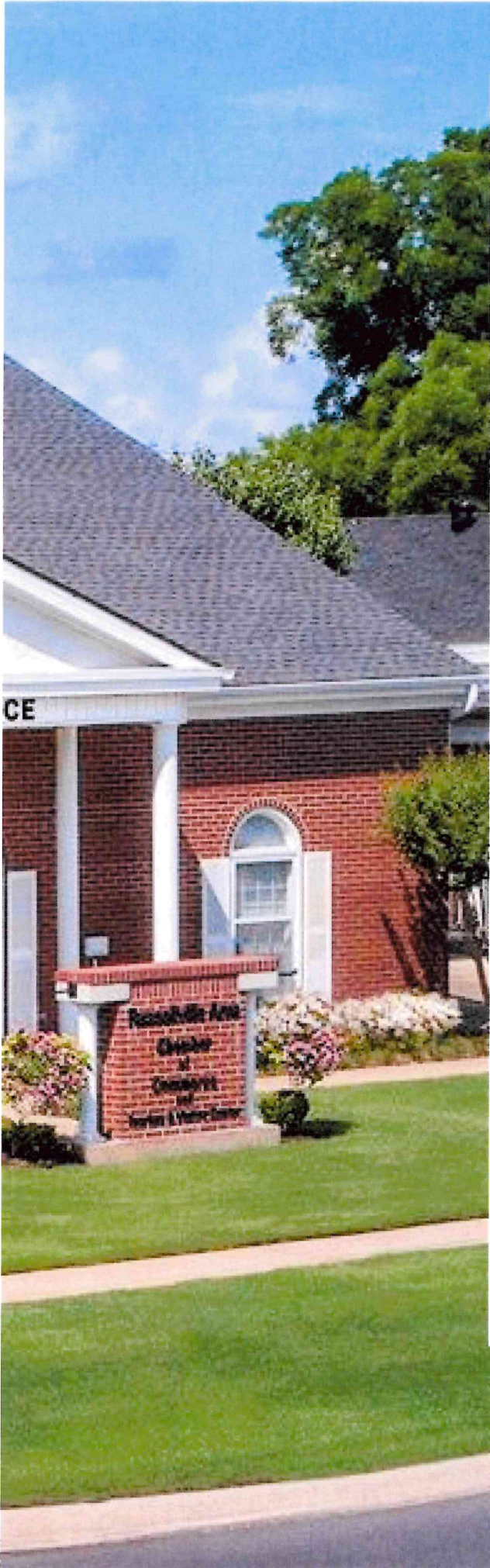


RUSSELLVILLE
REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ALLIANCE



"Strong teams make strong communities. The economic growth happening in our region is not by accident. It is a testament to our teamwork and united effort in building a thriving and competitive economic region. At the Chamber, we have an unwavering commitment to enrich lives in our community by bringing people together, creating high quality jobs, igniting innovation, developing a regional workforce, celebrating diversity, and pursuing excellence. Our goal is stewardship of place; investing in our regional community and creating a better tomorrow for future generations."

Dr. Megan Selman
CEO, Russellville Area Chamber of Commerce



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**Mayor
Fred Teague**
City of Russellville



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“For more than 45 years, I've called Russellville home and I have never seen a stronger, more unified group of community leaders. There has never been a more exciting time to be part of this City.”



Ben D. Cross
Pope County Judge



“

“The Russellville Area Chamber of Commerce serves as the conduit for all things positive about living and working in the River Valley. From promoting area businesses and industry, to spearheading economic development initiatives and workforce development, the Russellville Chamber is the voice I rely on to champion our cause and project our image.”

Dear Chamber Members,

Each year, the Chamber of Commerce and Alliance for Economic Development publish a joint Annual Report to highlight our work towards improving our regional community, with the goal of improving quality of life and increasing prosperity in the area. I am proud to share with you our 2023 report, significant events, and accomplishments. Job creation remains a top priority and we understand the importance of providing meaningful employment opportunities for our residents. To achieve this, we are actively collaborating with local leaders and businesses to identify areas of growth and better match our skilled workforce with the needs of our businesses, ensuring both employers and employees thrive. In line with our commitment to workforce development, we are investing in training and education programs to equip our workforce with the skills needed for today's job market. This includes partnerships with educational institutions and vocational training centers to provide accessible and relevant training. By focusing on skill development, we can strengthen our labor force and create a win-win situation for our regional community. Teamwork initiatives are at the heart of our economic and community development strategies. We believe that by bringing community stakeholders together – local leaders, industries, businesses, government agencies, community organizations, and residents alike – we can harness our collective expertise and resources to overcome challenges and seize opportunities. Collaboration is the key to our success, and we encourage all members of our business community to actively engage in these efforts. Strong teams make strong communities. The economic growth happening in our region is not by accident. It is a testament to our teamwork and united effort in building a thriving and competitive economic region. At the Chamber, we have an unwavering commitment to enrich lives in our community by bringing people together, creating high quality jobs, igniting innovation, developing a regional workforce, celebrating diversity, and pursuing excellence. Our goal is stewardship of place; investing in our regional community and creating a better tomorrow for future generations.

Dr. Megan Selman
CEO of the Russellville Area
Chamber of Commerce



OUR 2023 LEADERSHIP



Mark Clarke
Rockline Industries
2023 Chair



Steve Mallett
City Corporation
**2023 Immediate Past Chair
and Secretary/Treasurer**



Dustin Morphis
Bridgestone/Firestone
2023 Chair Elect



Elizabeth Latch
Asurion, LLC
2023 Officer



Omar Clemons
Entergy Arkansas
2023 Officer



Josh Stroud
River Valley Realty
2023 Officer

Chamber Board Members:

Andrew Barrett, Perihelion Solar
Anna Lester, Farm Credit of Western AR
Bob Hiegel, HTW Architects, Engineers & Planners
Bob Honeycutt, Alliance Board Chair
Brett Wilkins, Chambers Bank
Brock Langford, Blackstone Construction
Chad Weisler, Van Horn Construction
Charleigh Albrecht, Centennial Bank
Chris Abington, River Valley Realty
Christie Graham, Russellville A&P Tourism & Visitors Center
Danielle Housenick, Main Street Russellville
Dr. Ginni McDonald, Russellville School District
Ian Bryan, Simmons Bank
Jason McGee, Arvest Bank

Johnny Brazil, Jackalope Cycling
Jorge Sanchez, First State Bank
Judge Ben Cross, Pope County
Julie Paladino Vaugh, Friends of the Latimore Tourist Home,
VanKleef & Vaugh Attorneys at Law'
Dr. Keagan Nichols, Arkansas Tech University
Lindsey Hill, Denali Water Solutions
Mayor Fred Teague, City of Russellville
Nate Harrison, Phoenix Innovations
River Valley Realty
Roy's Heating and Air
Saint Mary's Regional Health System
Sarah Neihouse, Matt McCoy State Farm, West Main Donuts
Shane Butler, Roy's Heating and Air
Vanessa Bailey, Saint Mary's Regional Health System



Bob Honeycutt
Saint Mary's Regional
Health System
Chair



Omar Clemons
Entergy Arkansas
Immediate Past Chair



Joe Wilson
ConAgra Brands
Chair-Elect



Steve Mallett
City Corporation
Secretary/Treasurer



Allen Laws
Laws Law Firm
Officer



Dustin Morphis
Bridgestone/Firestone
Officer

Alliance Board Members:

Andy McNeil - Denali Water Solutions
Ben Cross - Pope County Judge
Blake Tarpley - Quorum Court Liaison
Chip Blanchard - First State Bank
Chris Olson - City Council Liaison
David Purtle - Premium Protein Products

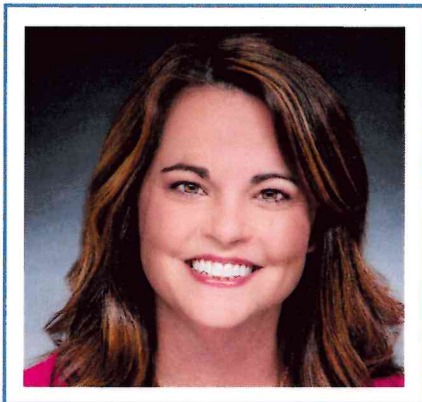
Dr. Keagan Nichols - Arkansas Tech University
Fred Teague - City of Russellville, Mayor
Gregg Long - Crafton Tull
Luke Duffield - Duffield Gravel
Mark Clarke - Rockline Industries
Terry Freeman - Trash Hogs of Arkansas

OUR TEAM



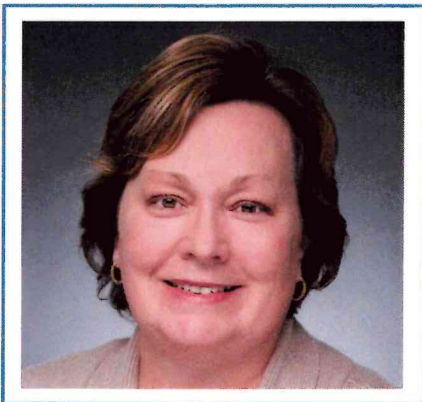
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Dr. Megan Selman, Chamber and Economic Development Alliance CEO, is responsible for economic development in Russellville and the regional area, overseeing Chamber & Alliance staff and functions, and working with community leaders to enhance economic stability and drive community progress. Megan serves as the liaison to the Chamber Board of Directors, the Alliance Board of Directors, the Joint Officers Committee, the Russellville Development Foundation, and the Industrial Site Selection Committee. Additionally, Megan reports quarterly to the City Council and Quorum Court and also holds a Pope County Board Seat on West Central Planning and Development District's Board of Directors.



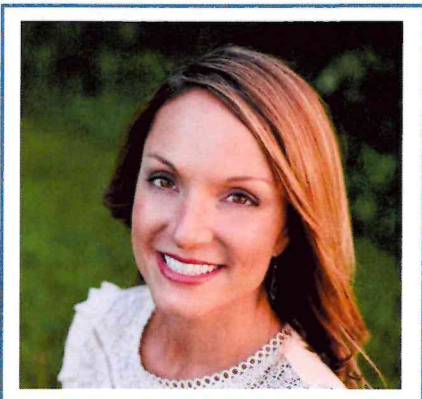
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Alyssa Carter, COO, is responsible for daily operations of the Chamber of Commerce and Russellville Regional Alliance, including event coordinating, financial bookkeeping, human resource management, and staff oversight. She also works closely with community leaders to improve regional quality of place. She serves as the liaison to the Quality of Place Committee, the Promotion & Events committee, and holds a seat on the TriPeaks Board of Directors.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Suzy Griffin, Director of Workforce Development, is responsible for working strategically with our regional educational community, and industry partners to further develop and refine the region's workforce development and workforce attraction initiatives. Suzy implements workforce programming in our area k-12 schools as well. She serves as the liaison to the Workforce Development Cabinet and serves 23 area school districts.



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Lori Kirtley, Assistant Director of WFD, plays a critical role in advancing the Chamber's mission to support economic development by ensuring the local workforce is equipped with the skills and resources necessary for success. This position involves collaborating with local businesses, educational institutions, government agencies, and community organizations to develop and implement workforce development programs and initiatives.

OUR TEAM



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS & RUSSELLVILLE REGIONAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY DIRECTOR

Angela Bonds, Director of Government Affairs, University Affairs and the Russellville Regional Leadership Academy, is responsible for fostering community relations with local Chamber members and elected officials in the River Valley, ensuring local issues are reaching our government leaders. Angela also leads the Russellville Regional Leadership Academy program. Angela serves as the liaison to the ATU Connect Committee and the Government Affairs Committee.



COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING DIRECTOR

Odalis Garcia, Director of Communications and Marketing, maintains communication between members and the Chamber including managing the Chamber's website and social media platforms. She creates and distributes the Chamber's weekly email and email communications, creates visual content across multiple platforms, and creates marketing campaigns that engage local members. Odalis serves as the liaison to the Downtown Russellville Streetscape Project Committee and the Community Engagement Marketing Committee.



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & MEMBER ENGAGEMENT / RETENTION DIRECTOR

Brandon Shelley, Director of Member Engagement/Retention and Business Development, is responsible for developing and implementing membership programs, tiers, and benefits, to grow and cultivate our membership base. He generates revenue for the Chamber, ensuring membership is valuable for local businesses. Brandon implements and maintains comprehensive and aggressive recruitment, engagement, and service programs resulting in strong, stable relationships. He also serves as the liaison to the Red Coat Ambassadors.



ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Meredith Holman, Administrative Assistant, provides support and assistance to the leadership staff and Workforce Development Director, while serving as the primary point of communication for the Chamber phone, email, and walk-in traffic. Meredith assists with events, maintenance of building and grounds, management of the calendar and scheduling, and is responsible for maintaining a positive first impression of the Chamber on a daily basis.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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“Russellville continues to make great strides toward becoming an even more attractive community to call home and operate a business.”



Clint O'Neal

Executive Director of the Arkansas Economic Development Commission

We began 2023 with an announcement from Owens Corning committing to a \$60 million dollar capital investment in Russellville with a new foam insulation plant in our East End Industrial Park. With this investment, new high paying jobs will be added to our community and a new and innovated product will be produced right here in Russellville.

Additionally, in 2023 the Chamber and Alliance hosted 8 site visits for industries and large-scale developments looking at the Russellville area for their next project. Many of these projects are ongoing and we look forward to more success and exciting announcements in 2024.



The Russellville Alliance for Economic Development was recognized for its accomplishments by Governor Hutchinson during his 2022 Proclamation of Economic Development Week, and in 2023 by Governor Sanders as she acknowledged the economic development happening at Chambers across the state.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

AEDC featured Russellville in several publications throughout the year. Additionally, the Alliance was featured on the AEDC round table podcast in 2023, alongside only 2 other economic development organizations in Arkansas. In 2023, Selman was awarded Economic Development Rockstar by Southern Business and Development, an award only given to 3 economic developers in the state annually.

In 2023 the Alliance, with AEDC and Entergy Arkansas, Re-Certified a 45-acre industrial site in order to be one of few communities across the state to boast a Select Site piece of industrial property. We also formed a Site Selection committee to aggressively purpose new industrial property that we can have packaged and ready to go (available



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

product) in order to compete for projects on a large scale.

At the request of local industry and area employers, the Alliance conducted a wage and benefit surveyed to reflect the most recent information in our labor market. We also surveyed local industries to assess strengths, challenges, and current state of industrial/manufacturing climate in Russellville for our largest employers.



The Alliance worked with multiple local and state agencies to bring opportunity and increased prosperity to our region. In a time with rising interest rates, inflation, supply chain disruptions, and labor shortages, Russellville and the surrounding area continues to work hard, defy the odds, and succeed in growing the local economy. We worked to tell a better story to recruit business and industry as well, with 4 new commercials and multiple aggressive marketing strategies to ensure Russellville and our regional community continue to compete on a national scale.



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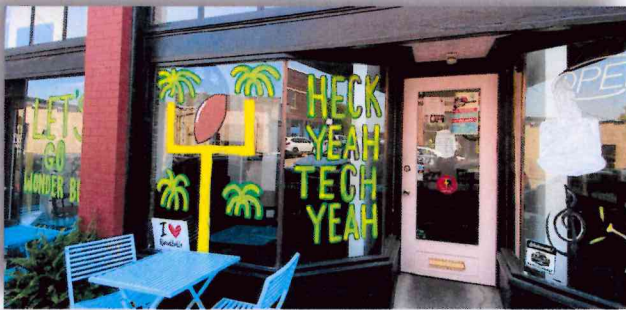
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MEMBER FDIC

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A successful Bash at the Ballpark was held at Baswell Baseball Field on the campus of ATU. The ATU Connect Committee organized the annual event with games, team autographs, giveaways, food and lots of fun.

The ATU Connection Council organized the 8th Annual Paint the Town Green & Gold held August 14-22. Thirty-six businesses participated in the decorating contest with winners announced at the first home football game. C&D Drug Store of Russellville earned the top overall prize in the 2023 Paint the Town Green and Gold. Additional winning businesses and organizations included Boys and Girls Clubs of the Arkansas River Valley-Russellville (best outdoor display), Jean's Simple Treats and More (best first-time entry), Baptist Health Urgent Care-Weir Road (best indoor display), The Gunslingin' Burger (Tech pride), JBT Corporation and Friendship Pottery Worx (co-winners, best Jerry the Bulldog) and JBT Corporation (people's choice).

This event and Bash at the Ballpark bring business partners together to support Arkansas Tech.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Our annual First Responder Appreciation Cookout was a huge success this year. We served over 300 meals on Sept 11, as we gathered at Depot Park to honor our local heroes. We can not thank them enough for all they do for us each day. We had great food, live music, and tons of volunteers for this event.



In 2023 the City of Russellville was awarded \$24 million to expand the Russellville Connected Trails System. The Chamber of Commerce served on the advisory board for the grant and helped gather business, government, and community letters of support for the project.

Russellville gets \$24 million grant

Funds will support a 13.8-mile expansion of Russellville's Connected Trail System

By SEAN HUGHMAN

sean.hughman@timesfreemedia.com

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senators John Boozman (R-AR) and Tom Cotton (R-AR) announced Friday that two U.S. Department of Transportation grants have been awarded to infrastructure projects in Arkansas.

The city of Russellville will receive a \$23,752,759 grant for a 13.8-mile expansion of its Connected Trail System, connecting the areas north of Interstate-49 to the south of Lock and Dam Park.

"We're excited for what this grant will bring to the citizens of Russellville," Mayor Fred Trogan said. "We are constantly trying to improve quality of life and quality of place for our citizens. This will be a great addition to our already-existing Russellville Trail System." The Russellville project will create approximately 13 miles of new

active transportation infrastructure connecting the trail system with the Historic Downtown District and shopping, restaurants and other businesses.

"Improvements to our transportation infrastructure such as this are crucial to Arkansas's economic development and enhancing our standard of living. Our state is filled with beautiful trails and open spaces that we can and should continue to utilize and develop," said Boozman. "I'm pleased the Department of Transportation

awarded this funding for projects important to multiple National State communities."

"This funding will go to infrastructure projects that are critical to maintaining roads, trails, and railroads in Arkansas. I'm pleased Senator Boozman and I were able to secure the grants for these projects," Cotton said.

Additionally, the Arkansas Department of Transportation (ARDOT) has been awarded \$23,000,000 to reconstruct approximately 3.6 miles of Old Stagecoach Road (Highway 5).

The ARDOT project in Bryant will reconstruct approximately 3.6 miles of Old Stagecoach Road (Highway 5), create a shared-use path, add continuous sidewalks, make storm drainage improvements and complete utility work.

The funding comes from the Department of Transportation's RAINN (Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity) Discretionary Grant program that works to invest in need, innovative and port projects that promise to achieve national objectives. Both were made possible through Fiscal Year 2023 appropriations that Boozman and Cotton voted in support of last year.

Look for additional updates from city officials and resident members in a future edition of The Courier.

Each year, the Chamber of Commerce works with River Valley United Voices to honor 3 inductees into the River Valley Black Hall of Fame. This esteemed institution honors and commemorates the significant contributions and achievements of individuals in various fields such as arts, sports, politics, and community leadership, highlighting their profound impact on our community. The award serves as a symbol of recognition and celebration, aiming to inspire future generations.



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



This year we published an Outdoor Recreation map in conjunction with Russellville Tourism. The map features all outdoor rec activities in Pope Co.; camping, hiking, biking, ATV trails, canoeing, wildlife habitats, disc golf, climbing, etc. This was a great way to show our community and our visitors all we have to offer at a glance.



BATTLE
of the **BULBS**



The Chamber once again hosted the Battle of the Bulbs, a festive event that brings our community together to highlight its Christmas spirit. This friendly competition not only spreads holiday cheer but also fosters a sense of unity and civic pride among our residents. It's heartwarming to witness the creativity and enthusiasm our business community pour into this event, truly exemplifying the season's spirit.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

In 2023, the Workforce Development Cabinet voted to explore the support for and need for the creation of a new, highly visible, workforce training center. Members of the Workforce Development Cabinet toured several facilities throughout the state, and continue to discuss possible programs and funding.



Inspire River Valley expanded in the past school year, with volunteer guest speakers from 16 regional companies giving presentations to over 1,000 students and individuals in the area. The Chamber's Jobfinder program was enhanced this year with the addition of a phone app. The website continues to have a lot of traffic and on average has about 800 job listings in the Russellville area.



We held the Chamber Job Fair, at the request of local employers, giving the public, and graduating students from high school, trade school, and college an opportunity to talk to local employers. Over 50 employers participated, and approximately 300 people attended. The second Annual Workforce Signing Day was held in May, with 50 graduates signing letters of intent to go to work for 15 different local employers.

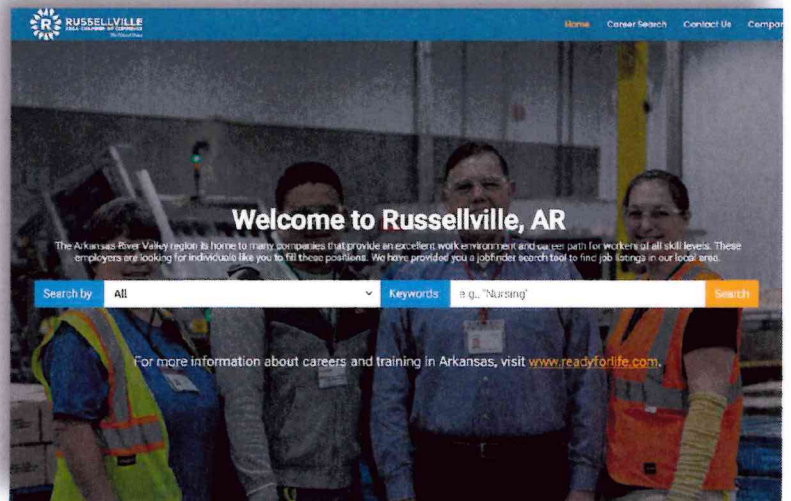


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“Being a part of the Chamber's Workforce Development program is a priority for Rockline and is essential for our current and future success. Without enough workers, we cannot maintain efficiency, productivity, or profitability.”

Mark Clarke

General Manager of Rockline Industries



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Connecting Educators with Industry was held in summer 2023. Sixty area educators toured International Paper, and Bridgestone-Firestone. After the tours, there was a lunch and a panel discussion from local industry leaders. Educators were then given the opportunity to tour the Be Pro Be Proud mobile demonstration unit. The fifth annual Skilled Trade Expo brought 28 schools from 7 counties, with 2,300 students to Cyclone Arena in October. Over forty employers and trade schools exhibited in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, military and law enforcement, logistics & transportation, automotive technology, cosmetology, construction, utilities, agriculture, heavy equipment operation, and other career fields. Approximately seventy volunteers made this event possible, including a large group of area bankers who served as guides. To celebrate National Manufacturing Day in 2023, a new event focusing on 7th and 8th grade students who are interested in technology, automation, and engineering was held, "Connecting Students with Technology". 25 students from Dardanelle and 25 students from Russellville toured the Rockline Industries facility and heard from some local industry leaders about the technologies used by their companies.



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WORKFORCE REPORT

2022-23 Annual Report

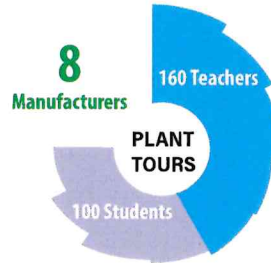
Inspire River Valley - Workforce Development Programs



7 employers were added to the list of Inspire Resources, bringing the total to 29.

Workforce Signing Day

Before graduation, 50 students signed letters of intent to work locally for 15 different employers



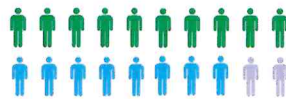
Skilled Trade Expo



65 Exhibitors | 3,000 Students

6 Counties

22 Schools



108 Employers participated in Workforce programs or events

1,015 Students

10 Inspire employers made class presentations to a total of 1,015 students

332 Students

14 employers served on panels and interacted with 332 students

350 Students

Provided 4 employers for Center Valley Elementary Career Day, reaching 350 students

1,005 People

16 speakers from Inspire employers were provided to community and education groups, reaching 1,005 people

23

Area Schools

participated in Workforce Programs or events

3

Workforce Training Classes offered free of charge



Job Fair



52 Exhibitors | 300 Attendees

Graduating Students



Serving the River Valley for Over 50 Years



- Long Term Care
- Short Term Care
- Respite Care
- Offering Speech, Physical, & Occupational Therapy
- Accepting Medicare, Medicaid, Private Insurance, & Private Pay

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

In February a legislative reception was held in February for the 94th Annual General Assembly. A record crowd attended the event. The reception was held at Red & Blue Events Venue adjacent from the state capitol. Russellville business leadership had the opportunity to meet elected officials and public policy decision makers in person.

US Representative Bruce Westerman held a meet and greet and shared a legislative update on February 16 at the Chamber office.

Members of the Chamber staff and community members attended the 63rd annual Arkansas State Chamber Washington Fly-In May 10-12 in Washington DC. A reception was held honoring the Chiefs of Staff, legislative directors and schedulers. Meetings included a working breakfast with Arkansas House Delegation, policy briefings and a national economic outlook update, along with a working lunch with the Arkansas Senate Delegation. Private meetings with US Representative Bruce Westerman and US Senator John Boozman's staff also took place. Congressman Bruce Westerman also took the group on a private night tour of the US Capitol.



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BUSINESS & NETWORKING

In a year marked by dynamic business and networking opportunities, the 20th annual River Valley Business Expo marked a significant milestone in our community's economic development journey. Showcasing 86 diverse booths and drawing 1,207 attendees, the Expo provides a dynamic platform for various industries and businesses to connect, network, and showcase their products and services to the local community. This event celebrates and signifies the longstanding impact and collective commitment to fostering economic development and prosperity in the River Valley. Additionally, throughout the year, First Friday Breakfast provided invaluable networking opportunities, allowing attendees to exchange ideas and enjoy engaging business programs. Notable events

“Events like First Friday Breakfast and Commerce & Connections provide opportunities to broaden your knowledge of our community and state while facilitating new professional and personal relationships and exchanging ideas with like-minded professionals. I am grateful to be a part of a community that values equipping businesses with the resources they need to grow.”

Charleigh Albrecht
Development Officer for
Centennial Bank

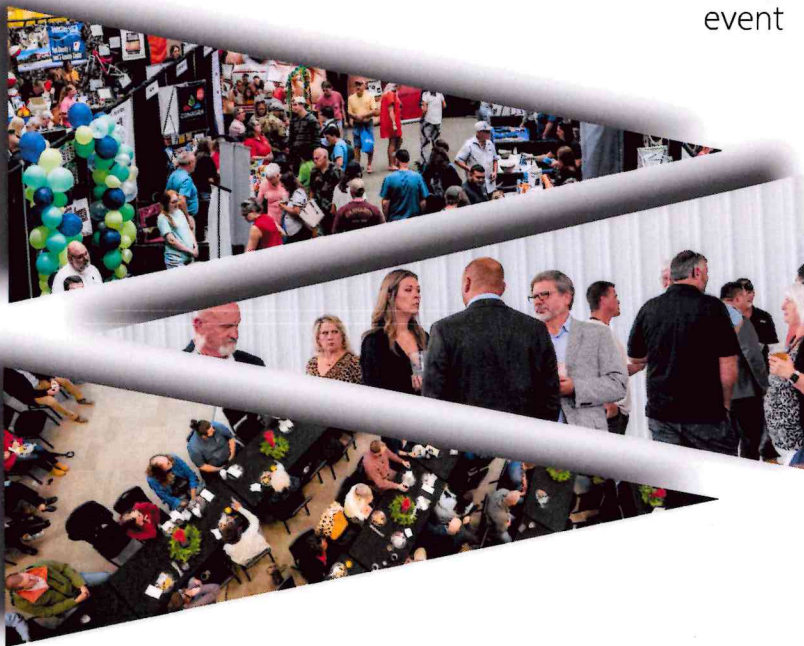
River Valley Business Expo at a Glance

86

Vendor Booths

1,207

Attendees over the 2-day event



included the celebration of Owens Corning's plans to build a new impressive 150,000-square-foot manufacturing facility, set to bring 50 new jobs as well as millions of dollars in economic impact to Russellville, and Workforce Signing Day, honoring graduates who committed to joining our local workforce. In 2023 the Chamber also met popular demand by reintroducing an after-hours networking event which was aptly named "Commerce and Connections". Commerce and Connections provides a vital platform for professionals to network and forge meaningful collaborations and relationships. Outstanding membership participation has contributed to the success of these gatherings, and we look forward to more of these beneficial events in the upcoming year.

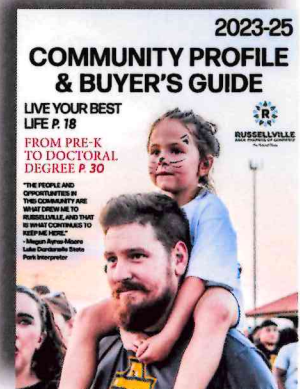
MARKETING

Throughout the year, we've achieved several significant milestones to better connect with our community and members. We also expanded our digital presence and continued engaging with our audience, creating over 100 engaging social media posts, and producing the 2023-25 Community Buyer's Guide and Business Directory. The numbers speak for themselves, showcasing remarkable growth and reach on Facebook and Instagram from May to October compared to the beginning of the year. We're excited to keep the momentum going!

“At the Russellville Chamber, we're not just shaping a community; we're telling its story. Our social media efforts showcase the hidden layers of growth and progress that might often go unnoticed. We bring leaders together, bridging the gap between vision and reality, all to create a brighter future for our wonderful community.”

Odalis Garcia

Director of Marketing and Communications



May- October vs. January-May

- Facebook: 50% increase in reach, 86% increase in profile visits, 39% increase in page likes, 100% increase in paid impressions, 100% increase in paid reach
- Instagram: 26% increase in reach, 23% increase in instagram followers, 35% increase in instagram visits
- Create a landing page for Paint The Town Green and Gold
- Created a landing page for the 2023 Business Expo
- Monthly radio talks with KCJC “Chamber Chats” to give Chamber updates
- Made over 100 social media posts
- Produced the 2023-25 Community Buyer’s Guide and Business Directory and 2023 Annual Momentum & Marketing Opportunities
- Posted Russellville commercials on YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn

ANNUAL MEETING

In 2023, two pivotal annual meetings were held, each serving as a testament to the Chamber and Alliance's dedication to progress and excellence. The January gathering encapsulated the successes of 2022, featuring an insightful keynote address by Ted Abernathy of Economic Leadership, LLC who delved into the impending workforce challenges facing the upcoming generation and labor pool. 2023 culminated with a December meeting, highlighting the achievements of the year. Both annual meetings hosted the installment of new board officers and recognition of notable honorees including the Red Coat Ambassador

of the Year and the Citizen of the Year. The 2023 meeting welcomed esteemed guests, Jacob Oliva, the Arkansas Secretary of Education, and Arkansas' Chief Workforce Officer Mike Rogers, who addressed transformative changes in the state's educational and workforce landscape, emphasizing initiatives aimed at bolstering future prospects for all. These meetings stand as beacons of achievement and innovation, propelling the local community towards a promising future.



GRANTS

- In 2023, Russellville was selected as a pilot community in the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) National Foundation's Employment Accessibility project.
- The Chamber created a committee of non-profit, employers, and community organizations that represent traditionally underserved populations. The committee was challenged with designing a program to address the local employment issues.
- A plan to create interactive kiosks, that would display web-based information about job openings and job resources was developed. A local event for Human Resources and a marketing campaign would promote the kiosks, and the website.

“

“With downward population trends, and increased automation, the importance of having enough highly skilled workers cannot be overstated. Including adult and high school programs at the Workforce Training Center will positively impact the shortage of skilled trade workers in our area and will increase the effectiveness of this major investment. Failing to address our workforce needs now will have devastating effects on our local economy.”

Bryan Harris

Factory Manager for Mars Petcare

- SHRM awarded a grant of \$75,000 to the Russellville Chamber's Employment Accessibility committee for their project, which will be implemented in 2024.
- In October, the Chamber applied as lead organization for an EDA Recompete Phase I Strategy Development Grant that would fund additional studies to support a local workforce training center.
- As part of EDA Recompete, the Chamber submitted a workforce training center plan proposal. If accepted, we will qualify to apply for a Phase II implementation grant in 2024. Implementation grants in the range of \$50 million will be funded on a regional basis.



MEMBERSHIP

Our commitment involves both maintaining contact with our existing members and actively seeking new chamber members. We remain focused on membership recruitment and retention through direct, face-to-face interactions. Maintaining a consistent connection with our members year-round is crucial for monitoring our operations' performance and keeping them informed about the diverse opportunities available through our chamber.



“

"I feel extremely honored and blessed to be a part of RACC. They are filled with warmth, compassion, support, and care about the growth of your business and the community. They are the beating heart of Russellville."

Kristy Thompson
Just Breathe Massage
Therapist/Owner



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RED COATS

Red Coat Mission Statement

The Russellville Chamber Red Coat Ambassadors (RCAs) are a group of volunteers supporting the Chamber's mission, members, goals, and activities.



During the year 2023, there were 23 Red Coat Ambassadors who remained active all year long. The Red Coat Ambassadors continue to participate in many Chamber events, such as Business Expo, Skilled Trade Expo, Chamber Classic Golf Tournament, First Friday Breakfast, and Ribbon Cuttings. The Red Coat Ambassadors conducted a Membership Call Drive, during which they made 168 phone calls to potential chamber members. The Red Coats serve as a great resource to our members with business referrals and connections to various industries.

“

“Gratitude and relationships go hand in hand. Building connections, one grateful gesture at a time.”

Jorge Sanchez

First State Bank
Red Coat Ambassador



LEADERSHIP

Russellville Regional Leadership Academy aims to develop a network of competent leaders for present and future community needs. Russellville Regional Leadership Academy has been a program of the Russellville Area Chamber of Commerce since 1986, having over 600 graduates, many of which have become prominent leaders in the River Valley. The program covers a full slate of topics including government, the area's economy, education, social services and more.

“

Coming into class 37, I had no idea what all I was signing up for. I assumed I was signing up as a way to get involved in the community. I ended up leaving with knowledge for the community, businesses, and government, long-lasting friendships, and the opportunity to be a better leader. You can never stop growing yourself as a leader and what better way to grow than with other leaders throughout Russellville!”

Brittany Shannon
Class 37 Graduate



Charleigh Albercht,
Outstanding Leader of
the Year- Class 37

Class 37 Project

This year's class, Class 37, decided to improve the downtown flagpole by installing an automated winch system as part of their community project. This simplifies and ensures the safety of lowering and changing out the American flag. On May 25th, improvements were made to the flagpole island such as landscaping, power washing, and repainting. They were also able to purchase a supply of flags to help replenish the inventory that have been purchased by a private donor for two decades. Updates to the flagpole island included new landscaping, power washing and paint.



Russellville Regional Leadership Academy Class 38 kicked off in the fall with an overnight retreat at Winthrop Rockefeller Center. Team building, conversation and leadership skills were the topics for the retreat. Thirty-eight participants are in the class. Healthcare Day included meeting with local healthcare leaders, touring Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center, tours of Friendship Community Care Pediatrics and Pope County Senior Activity Center.