

# THE POINT



December 2012

[www.okcchamber.com](http://www.okcchamber.com)

## Site Promotes OKC to New Residents

With the competition for recruiting employees constantly increasing, the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber is continually developing tools to help its member companies in their recruitment efforts. Most recently, the organization re-launched its relocation website, [www.ABetterLifeOKC.com](http://www.ABetterLifeOKC.com), a key tool in the Chamber's relocation program. Through ABetterLifeOKC, site visitors can discover more about Oklahoma City, including the region's quality of life, housing, climate and more. The updated site includes a redesign, an updated interface and improved readability to make the site a more useful tool for new



*The recently re-launched [ABetterLifeOKC.com](http://www.ABetterLifeOKC.com) promotes Greater Oklahoma City to potential new residents.*

residents and individuals that are considering relocation.

*Continued on page 10*

## Pursuing A Talented Future Workforce

Each year, bright graduates from Oklahoma City's 18 colleges and universities face the decision of whether they will stay in Oklahoma City after graduation. Their decision to stay is based on more than a good job offer – today's graduates are looking for a great quality of life, low cost of living, entertainment options, recreational activities and a community where they feel connected.



The Chamber's Greater Grads program seeks to engage this important segment of the population by teaching them of the opportunities available in Oklahoma City. The program has

three main components: a website – [www.greatergrads.com](http://www.greatergrads.com), an annual career fair and InternOKC, a series of lunches designed to show students why Oklahoma City is the place to start their careers after graduation. Each element is meant to get students plugged into the community, while emphasizing the quality of life here and allowing them to network with like-minded peers.

Since it began in 2006, the InternOKC program has seen incredible results. At the beginning of last year's program, 55 percent of students enrolled in InternOKC said they would likely live and work in Oklahoma City after graduation. After they completed the program, that number went up to 92 percent with several students citing the program specifically as the reason they chose to stay. Nearly 1,500 students have been reached through the InternOKC program alone, and countless others online and through the career fair. Each year the program grows exponentially.

*Continued on page 5*

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# Leadership Notes

*The Best is Yet to Come*

As another year draws to a close, it's a good time to look back on what has happened over the past 12 months and look ahead to what the coming year will hold.

In a word, 2012 has been incredible. Looking around, it's hard to imagine that there has ever been or will ever be a better time to be in Oklahoma City. In fact, I think our city is filled with as much enthusiasm and excitement today as it was nearly 125 years ago when the Land Run of 1889 founded Oklahoma City.

The situation we find ourselves in today didn't happen overnight. It is the product of varying circumstances, with the outcome ultimately decided by how the people of Oklahoma City chose to react to those circumstances. In Oklahoma City, we have experienced some truly rare occurrences – the incredible success of the MAPS programs that rejuvenated our city when it needed it most; economic growth and success during a difficult national recession; the rise of the Oklahoma City Thunder from a struggling team to one of the most exciting organizations to watch in the NBA. All of these things, and many others, have been possible because of an even more rare occurrence – a community filled with commitment and cooperation, focused wholeheartedly on making Greater Oklahoma City a better place to live, work, play and visit.

Without each of you, our successes would not be possible. Because of your commitment to the vision and future of Greater Oklahoma City, our city and community is in the prime of its life. And the way I see it, we have no where to go but up. There are even more incredible things in our future, even more rare occurrences for us to experience. As 2012 comes to a close, I invite you to celebrate in all that we have achieved. But more importantly, I ask that you rededicate yourself to the path ahead and to the future of our city, because, in my opinion, the best is yet to come.

Sincerely,



Roy H. Williams  
Chamber CEO & President



**Roy H. Williams**  
President & CEO

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Greater Oklahoma City Chamber  
President & CEO

## THE POINT!

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# Pursuing A Talented Future Workforce

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*Through the Greater Grads program, future and recent college graduates learn the benefits of starting a career in OKC.*

“I had an intern two summers ago who was a law student in South Carolina,” said Sarah Chancy, Oklahoma Center for Nonprofits. “She went through the program and learned so much about the city – about what it had to offer and how it was growing – and she is actually coming back when she graduates to start her career here.”

That heightened awareness has extended to a national stage. As Oklahoma City continues its renaissance and pursues these young adults, more and more young people are choosing to make a home here. In October, Oklahoma City was named one of the best cities for college students. Earlier in the year, Oklahoma City was named a top 10 city for millennials and also a top 10 city for job-seeking graduates. Just this month, America’s Promise Alliance named Oklahoma City one of the 100 Best Communities for Young People – for the sixth year in a row.

With the vast number of baby boomers set to retire in the next few years, now is an especially crucial time to keep talent in Oklahoma City. These bright students will foster economic development and create future leaders. To learn more about starting an internship program, visit [www.greatergrads.com](http://www.greatergrads.com) or contact Joyce Burch at [jburch@okcchamber.com](mailto:jburch@okcchamber.com).

## THE RIGHT FIT IS EVERYTHING. (SO'S THE RIGHT TEAM.)



from left –  
**Kim Beaucourt,**  
 CPA/ABV, CFF, CGMA  
**Lou Ann Gibson,**  
 CPA/ABV, CVA, CFFA  
**Tony Otto,**  
 CPA/ABV, CVA  
**Bud Sartain,**  
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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## State of the City: Jan. 24

Find out what's in store for the metro this year. Keynote speaker, Mayor Mick Cornett, will give his "State of the City" address during a luncheon on Thursday, Jan. 24, at the Cox Convention Center, 1 Myriad Gardens. Chamber Chair Peter B. Delaney, OGE Energy Corp, will also share highlights of the Chamber's major strategic objectives for 2013.



Registration begins at 11 a.m. and the program runs from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Admission is \$50 for Chamber members and \$75 for non-members. Corporate tables seating 10 are also available for \$1,000 each. Special thanks to Signature Event Sponsor, The Professional Basketball Club, LLC - Oklahoma City Thunder.

## Legislative Breakfast: Jan. 31



Hear from state legislative leadership during a panel discussion on Thursday, Jan. 31, from 7:30 to 9 a.m. at the Oklahoma City Marriott Hotel, 3233 NW Expressway. This breakfast is the perfect opportunity for Chamber members to become engaged in the legislative process and learn about the issues impacting the business community.

Tickets for the breakfast are \$40 for Chamber members and \$50 for non-members. Each ticket sold sponsors the attendance of an elected official. Special thanks to Government Relations Benefactors AT&T Oklahoma, Chesapeake Energy Corporation and Devon Energy Corporation and Government Relations Sponsors: Cox Communications and OGE Energy Corp., as well as Signature Sponsor The Boeing Company and Host Sponsor Oklahoma City Marriott Hotel.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Register securely online for Chamber events at [www.okcchamber.com/events](http://www.okcchamber.com/events).

### January 8

#### Member Orientation

**Time:** 4 - 5:30 p.m.

**Location:** Chamber offices, 123 Park Ave.

**Cost:** This event is free to attend. Register by contacting Christine Soileau at 297-8961 or [csoileau@okcchamber.com](mailto:csoileau@okcchamber.com).

### January 22

#### Sunset Reception

**Time:** 4 - 6 p.m.

**Location:** The Outlet Shoppes at Oklahoma City, 7624 W. Reno Ave., Suite 380

**Cost:** There is no cost to attend this event. RSVP not required.

### January 24

#### State of the City

**Time:** 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

**Location:** Cox Convention Center, 1 Myriad Gardens

**Cost:** \$50 for members, \$75 for non-members; Corporate tables seating 10 are available for \$1,000

### January 31

#### Legislative Breakfast

**Time:** 7:30 - 9 a.m.

**Location:** Oklahoma City Marriott Hotel, 3233 NW Expressway

**Cost:** \$40 for members, \$50 for non-members

### February 20

#### MegaLunch

**Time:** 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Location:** Credit Union Association of Oklahoma, 631 E. Hill St.

**Cost:** \$35 for members. Advanced reservations are required and must be made no later than Friday, Feb. 15 at 5 p.m. To register, email [register@okcchamber.com](mailto:register@okcchamber.com). Only one person per Chamber member company may attend.

# Member Orientation: Jan. 8

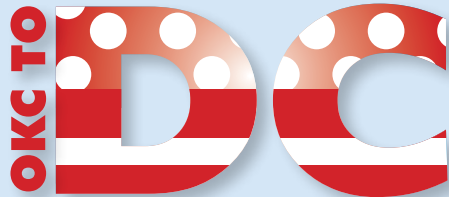
Chamber membership is more than a plaque at your front desk and a listing on OKCChamber.com. At the first Member Orientation of 2013, Tuesday, Jan. 8, from 4 to 5:30 p.m. at the Chamber offices, 123 Park Ave., you can learn how your membership helps you gain access to a variety of events and opportunities – from networking to getting more involved in the business community. There is no cost to attend Member Orientations. To register, contact Christine Soileau at [csoileau@okcchamber.com](mailto:csoileau@okcchamber.com) or 297-8961.

# Sunset Reception: Jan. 22



Head over to The Outlet Shoppes at Oklahoma City, 7624 W. Reno Ave., Suite 380, on Tuesday, Jan. 22, for after-hours networking at the Chamber's Sunset Reception. This event gives you optimal opportunities to meet other members and the business community and promote your company's products and services – all while enjoying food and drinks. An RSVP is not required and admission is free. For more information, contact [register@okcchamber.com](mailto:register@okcchamber.com).

## SAVE THE DATE



**March 6-7, 2013**

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# Companies Continue to Choose OKC

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber has always been in the business of recruiting companies to the region. Economic stability in recent years has produced a number of new opportunities for the Chamber to market Greater Oklahoma City's impressive quality of life, low cost of living and other positive aspects of the region. In fact, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Oklahoma City is one of only 13 metros that has regained jobs lost during the recession.



*Continental Resources moved their headquarters from Enid, Okla., to downtown Oklahoma City.*

Through the Chamber's "A Better Life" relocation program, companies and individuals can find out more about life in Oklahoma City and the Chamber can continue to promote a positive image of the region.

"The strength of our economy, our growing list of accolades, the quality of life our citizens experience – all of these are part of the reason companies look at Oklahoma City when they're considering relocating or expanding," said Kurt Foreman, executive vice president, economic development. "By combining these things with the tools available in our relocation program, we can give companies and individuals a good picture of what life is like in Oklahoma City."

## Recent Relocations

Over the past year, a flurry of business expansions and relocations has grabbed the headlines in Oklahoma City. The following companies have seen the competitive advantage Oklahoma City gives their operations:

- During 2011 and 2012, **Boeing** announced that more than 1,500 employees from the company's Long Beach, Calif. and Wichita, Kan. operations would be

moving to their Oklahoma City facility. Last month, the company completed the relocation of more than 1,200 employees from California and has started relocating people from Wichita.

- With the opening of the new Devon Energy Center came the opening of a significant amount of square footage in downtown Oklahoma City. **Continental Resources** relocated its headquarters and 700 employees to downtown Oklahoma City. The company has plans to triple that number in the next three years.

- At the end of 2011, **Centek Industries** announced its plans to locate a new manufacturing facility near Will Rogers World Airport. This facility, which opened in September of this year, marked Centek's entry into the U.S.

- **Grocery Supply Acquisition Corp.**, a subsidiary of Nash Finch, will soon open two food distribution warehouses in south Oklahoma City. The move will create 140 to 150 new jobs by the end of the year.

- Earlier this year, **FMC Technologies** announced its plans to move a plant from Houston to Oklahoma City. The move will result in more than 70 jobs for the city.

- **Malarkey Roofing** opened a new-to-market plant in August. The company spent \$30 million on the facility, which included a 22,000-square-foot expansion, and brought 60 jobs to the city.

The Chamber's Economic Development team works with companies considering a relocation or expansion in Oklahoma City. For more information about these efforts, contact Kurt Foreman at [kforeman@okcchamber.com](mailto:kforeman@okcchamber.com).



*As of November, Boeing had relocated more than 1,200 employees to Oklahoma City.*

# Site Promotes OKC to New Residents

(continued from page 1)

As part of the Chamber's overall relocation program, the site is accompanied by an annual relocation guide, *VeloCity* digital magazine, GreaterOKC.tv online channel and "The Better Life" email newsletter program and blog. The program is used by existing and relocating companies who receive the relocation program resources and distribute the resources to their employees.

"Oklahoma City has one of the best job markets in the country, giving us an opportunity to recruit talented workers to our growing companies," said Cynthia Reid, vice president of marketing for the Chamber. "Our relocation program gives our companies extra tools to share the message of Oklahoma City with potential employees."

The newly designed ABetterLifeOKC.com welcomes potential new residents with dynamic photos, and well-organized links to help them easily navigate the

site. Frequently asked questions for those moving to Oklahoma City are found in one location, providing a one-stop page for those who need quick questions answered. ABetterLifeOKC.com also highlights Oklahoma City's story and helps promote the key aspects of what makes Oklahoma City unique which helps new residents integrate with the community.

## Sponsorships Available

The updated organization of the site is based on site traffic, with special attention given to "The Better Life" blog. There are a variety of new sponsorship opportunities on the home and interior site pages. The various pages and sections of the website offer opportunities for Chamber members to promote their products and services to individuals and companies that are moving to Oklahoma City.

"Sponsorships on the ABetterLifeOKC.com are a great way to get companies in front of new-to-market



The Better Life blog helps new residents get connected to the community.

Quick links to sign up for The Better Life and connect through social media.

<p><b>SOCIAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FACEBOOK</li> <li>TWITTER</li> <li>BLOG</li> </ul>	<p><b>EMAIL</b></p> <p>JOIN OUR NEWSLETTER</p> <p>EMAIL</p>	<p><b>CONTACT</b></p> <p>1100 WEST STEWART AVENUE, SUITE 1000 OKLAHOMA CITY, OK 73102</p> <p>405.247.8900</p>
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consumers,” said Reid. “The site reaches new residents who are seeking this information out, so they are eager to hear from people who can help them.”

The elements of the Chamber’s relocation program work together to provide a well-rounded picture of what it’s like to live, work and play in Greater Oklahoma City, giving companies additional tools when recruiting talent from outside the region. By utilizing the readily available elements, Greater Oklahoma City companies are able to provide those unfamiliar with Oklahoma City on information on everything from school districts and housing options to community activities and utility information – helping companies strengthen their recruitment efforts while also promoting our region.

Those interested in learning more about the Chamber’s relocation program and its elements can visit [www.abetterlifeokc.com](http://www.abetterlifeokc.com) or contact Cynthia Reid at [creid@okcchamber.com](mailto:creid@okcchamber.com).

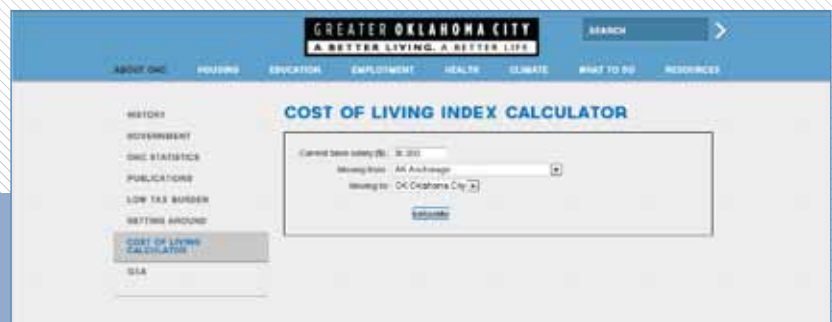


Easy access to relocation materials

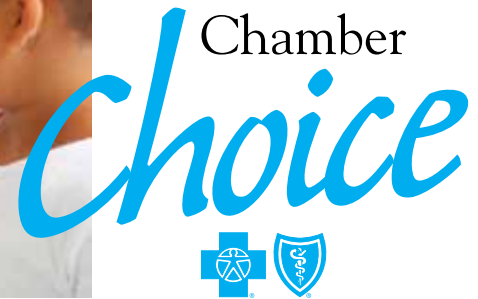


- Promoting OKC through key accolades
- Quick links to content for new residents
- Instant access to relocation video

Promoting OKC's low cost of living



# Small Businesses Have Options With Chamber Choice



Small businesses are the backbone of our region's economy. The expenses that come with running a small business can be difficult. For more than 10 years, the Chamber has partnered with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Oklahoma to offer affordable group health insurance plans to its members. This program, Chamber Choice, is available to members with two to 50 employees headquartered in Oklahoma, Canadian, Cleveland, Logan, McClain or Pottawatomie county.

Since the program's inception in 2001, the program has never seen an annual overall rate

increase of more than 11 percent. For 2013, companies renewing their Chamber Choice plans will see an overall increase of only 6.3 percent.

Plus, Chamber Choice BlueOptions and HMO Value Option plans are Insure Oklahoma qualified health plans. Insure Oklahoma helps small businesses save up to 60 percent on health care coverage costs for eligible employees.

Rate information and a complete list of approved Chamber Choice producers are available online at [www.okcchamber.com/chamberchoice](http://www.okcchamber.com/chamberchoice). Contact Christine Soileau at 297-8961

or [csoileau@okcchamber.com](mailto:csoileau@okcchamber.com) with questions.

**“Health care is an important, yet costly, benefit for our team. As a small business, we can team up with the Chamber and the Chamber Choice program, giving us the advantages of a bigger corporation without all the costs, helping us affordably keep talented members of our team.”**

**Miles E. Hall, H & H Shooting Sports Complex**

## Chamber Choice features:

- No medical underwriting: Coverage is guaranteed for Chamber members that meet contribution and participation requirements.
- BlueOptimize PPO: This set of flexible choices includes three deductible options.
- BlueLincs HMO: Coverage available with or without an annual deductible.
- BlueOptions PPO: More in-network choices than any other Oklahoma PPO plan, with five deductible options.
- Prescription drug coverage
- Network availability in all 50 states
- Office visit copayments: \$20 or \$30 copayments, depending on the plan you choose.

# Cities Look to Learn from Oklahoma City

Cities across the country are looking to emulate the success Greater Oklahoma City has seen in recent years. From 2006 to 2011, 13 cities and organizations visited Greater Oklahoma City on benchmarking trips. In 2012 alone, seven communities, including one from outside the U.S., spent time in Oklahoma City. Cities are already beginning to schedule visits to Oklahoma City for 2013.

“This year, we saw the most traffic from visiting cities,” said Roy H. Williams, Chamber president and CEO. “The national press Oklahoma City receives, combined with our own image development efforts, are helping to get the word out about Oklahoma City and the results we’re witnessing. Other cities are keen to come here and better understand how we got where we are.”

Recent successes, including the Thunder’s run in the NBA Finals, the grand opening of the new Devon Energy Center, and the relocation of USA Canoe/



Kayak headquarters, are putting Oklahoma City at the top of the list for many cities looking to spur economic development

“People are especially interested in the way we’ve been able to utilize the success of our public investment to spur billions of dollars in private investment,” said Williams. “The things that we have kind of grown accustomed to here – low unemployment rates, good job opportunities, the rejuvenation of our downtown core – these things are rare throughout the rest of the country.”

The Chamber works with the groups coming to Oklahoma City, giving them agenda and speaker recommendations, and helping them while in town. The interests of peer cities vary, but recurring themes are MAPS, successful bond election strategies, creative financing and incentives, downtown redevelopment, river development, the region’s bioscience industry and others.

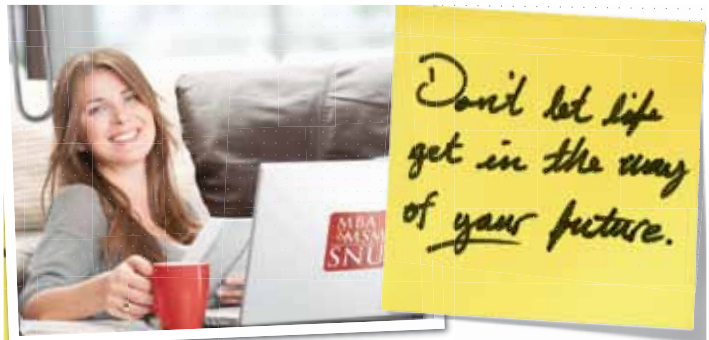


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# Chamber & CVB Welcome New Employees

As the voice of business and the visionary organization in Greater Oklahoma City, the Chamber's staff works to promote the region and strengthen the business climate through a variety of efforts. In recent months, the Chamber and Oklahoma City Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) have added several new employees.



**Jessica Herrera, retail development and recruitment manager**

Jessica joined the Chamber after spending more than five years as program coordinator for the City of El Paso's economic development division where she was responsible for the implementation and coordination

of a marketing and retail recruitment program. Jessica earned a bachelor's in government from the University of Texas at Austin and her master's in business administration with a concentration in international business from the University of Texas at El Paso. As manager of retail development and recruitment for the Chamber, she will work to promote Oklahoma City as a retail destination by building relationships with local and national real estate brokers, retailers and developers. She will also work with community stakeholders to coordinate retail development and recruitment efforts and assist existing retailers with retention and expansion efforts.



**Sheridan Irick, member development manager**

As member development manager, Sheridan is responsible for the management of the Chamber's annual fundraising campaign and membership drive, the Total Resource Development Campaign (TRDC). Prior to

joining the Chamber's team she worked as the associate development director at a small publishing company. Sheridan earned a bachelor's degree from East Central University and a master's degree from Southern Methodist University.



**Morgan O'Neill, convention services manager**

Morgan joined the CVB as a convention services manager after working for The Midland Group. Morgan earned a Bachelor of Arts in journalism and broadcasting from Oklahoma State University and completed a summer

internship at St. Jude Research Hospital. Morgan's role with the CVB includes servicing groups in the religious, fraternal, hobby, agricultural and small group markets. She acts as the primary point of contact for the CVB for convention groups when they are in Oklahoma City.



**Debra Shumate, executive assistant**

Deb came to the CVB after spending 21 years with the Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department. She attended Oklahoma City Community College and is a graduate of Robert Morris College in Illinois.

As executive assistant, she is responsible for the coordination of meetings and records minutes for the Convention and Visitors Commission as well as other administrative duties and office needs of the CVB staff.



**Brittany White, CVB communications coordinator**

Brittany graduated from Oklahoma State University in May 2012 with a Bachelor of Science in public relations. Prior to joining the CVB's marketing and communications team, she served as the community

relations intern at the Oklahoma Blood Institute and as the program management intern at OKC Beautiful. As the CVB's marketing and communications coordinator, Brittany is responsible for supporting the CVB's marketing and communications efforts.

# CVBs Team Up to Launch New Ambassador Program

Oklahoma City, Edmond and Norman CVBs launch tourism ambassador program

Joining a network of more than 100 destination marketing organizations in 15 states, the Oklahoma City Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB), in partnership with the Edmond and Norman CVBs, has launched a new certified tourism ambassador program centered on creating positive visitor experiences in the metropolitan area.



“We are very excited to launch the Greater Oklahoma City Area Tourism Ambassador program and begin educating members of the tourism and hospitality industry on the ins and outs of the entire Oklahoma City metro area,” said Mike Carrier, president of the Oklahoma City Convention & Visitors Bureau. “In conjunction with Edmond and Norman, I believe we can build a strong base of informed tourism and hospitality partners to ensure our metro-area visitors enjoy the best experience possible.”

The Certified Tourism Ambassador Program™ (CTA) is a nationwide certification program that serves to increase tourism by training and inspiring front-line hospitality employees and volunteers to work together to turn every visitor encounter into a positive experience. All levels of employment within the hospitality industry, from front-line workers to executive directors and general managers, are encouraged to participate.

The Greater Oklahoma City Area Tourism Ambassador program focuses on a variety of topics relating to Greater Oklahoma City, such as core attractions, the importance of promoting tourism and knowing the expectations of visitors.

“We are implementing a program that provides the tools and knowledge necessary to create a more memorable visitor experience,” said Stephen Koranda, executive director of the Norman CVB. “By engaging employees at all levels of leadership within the hospitality industry, we are demonstrating our dedication to promoting our destination as one of the best with a high level of commitment to our visitors.”

The first session took place on Sept. 11, and since then, more than 130 participants have earned their CTA designation. The CVB trained industry professionals as facilitators for half-day classroom sessions.

“Our facilitators are individuals who have taken the time to know this metropolitan area like the back of their hand and are leading the way for future CTA recipients,” said Cathy Williams-White, director of the Edmond CVB. “These volunteers are dedicated to the Greater Oklahoma City tourism industry and are committed to educating participants.”

As a facilitator, Chad Huntington, general manager of Bricktown Water Taxi LLC and partner in Oklahoma’s Red Dirt Emporium and Bricktown Marketplace, has experienced first-hand how the CTA program not only impacts the participants, but also continues to educate the facilitators.

“I have not facilitated a single CTA class where I didn’t also learn something new about the community and what we have to offer here,” said Huntington. “I think that is the critical lesson that the CTA program teaches. Each of us should always be curious about our hometown, always learning, and should always try to experience it through the eyes of a visitor. All of us have opportunities to shape the way outsiders view Oklahoma City.”

For more information on the Greater Oklahoma City Area Tourism Ambassador program or to sign up, go to [www.CTANetwork.com](http://www.CTANetwork.com) or contact program administrator Jennifer Wilson at [jwilson@visitokc.com](mailto:jwilson@visitokc.com) or 290-7063.

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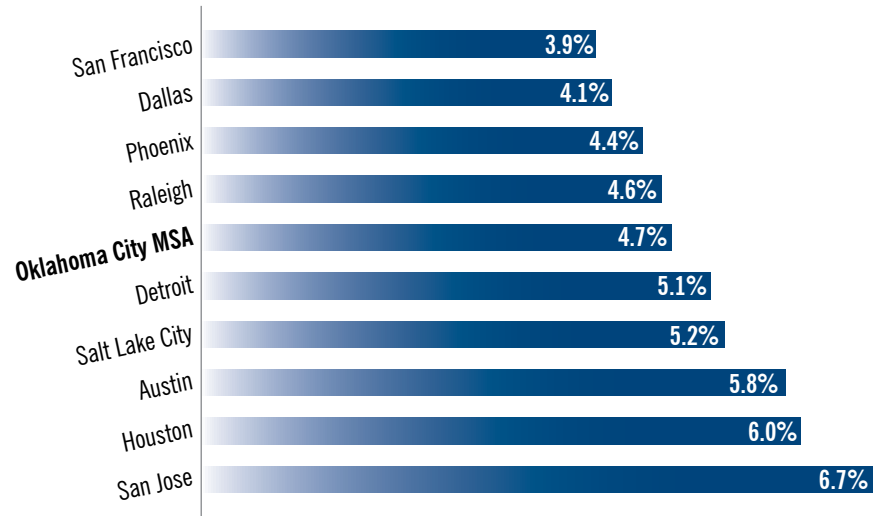
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# ECONOMIC INDICATORS

## OKC's Job Growth Continues to Outpace Most of the Nation

- Oklahoma City ranked 6th among large metros in percent job growth (+4.7%) from 2010-2012 according to Careerbuilder.com
- In comparison, the nation has experienced 2.4% job growth from 2010-2012
- The OKC MSA's raw job change over the past two years was 28,992
- Two specific industries that helped propel the OKC job growth include "Oil and Natural Gas Extraction" and "Temporary Help Services"
- The OKC MSA has experienced a 7.7% population growth over the last 5 years

### Top 10 Metros in Job Growth (by %) Post-Recession



Source: Careerbuilder.com, EMSI

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