Chamber Promotes Oklahoma’s Bioscience Industry

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber and a delegation of Oklahomans will highlight the world-class research opportunities, available facilities and the scientific collaboration available in Oklahoma at the 2015 Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO)’s International Convention on June 15-18 in Philadelphia. The delegation will promote the recent successes of the bioscience industry in Oklahoma while also promoting the area as a prime location for research opportunities.

“The momentum for this region’s bioscience industry has truly never been stronger,” said Roy H. Williams, CCE, president and CEO of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber. “The groundbreaking research being conducted in Oklahoma City alongside the opportunities for collaboration and investment set our bioscience community apart from many locations across the nation.”

Bioscience researchers from across the state have seen scientific breakthroughs and increased investment in the past year in medical, pharmaceutical and agricultural fields. Leading the charge in Oklahoma... Continued on page 11

Chamber Sees Business Advocacy Success in 2015

The 2015 Legislative Session adjourned on May 22, marking a highly successful year for the Chamber’s business advocacy efforts. Despite a challenging budget environment, the Chamber scored victories on most all of its public policy agenda. The following are highlights of the 2015 legislative session:

**Critical Economic Development Incentive Programs Protected from Elimination**

The Chamber successfully protected several state economic and community development programs from being scaled back or repealed. The need to identify funds to address the state’s budget shortfall, as well as opposition to incentive programs by a number of legislators, created an extremely challenging environment.

The Chamber’s 2015 Public Policy agenda identified six economic development incentive programs critical to the Chamber’s ongoing economic and community development efforts. Those programs are: Quality Jobs Act (includes 21st Century QJA and Small Employer QJA); five-year ad valorem abatement and sales tax exemption on manufacturing facilities; Investment/New
We put people first to build relationships that last.

At Enable Midstream Partners, we define success a little differently. For us, it’s all about relationships. Because when you connect the right people for the right reasons, amazing things happen.

We’re building bonds of trust to achieve unparalleled success – for our customers, employees and the communities where we live and work.

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Leadership Notes

Long-term success, new challenges

In March 2015, the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Statistical Area had an unemployment rate of 3.3 percent, tying it with Austin, Texas, for the lowest unemployment rate for large metros in the nation. While taking the top ranking for unemployment is always a positive sign, it only illuminates part of Oklahoma City’s story. The Oklahoma City metro has been among the five lowest unemployment rates for large metros for 51 consecutive months – that is more than four years of consistently strong numbers.

While a low unemployment signals success for our companies and our business climate, it also issues a challenge. In order for our economy to grow and our businesses to prosper, the growth of our workforce must be a top priority. Oklahoma City is positioned for future growth, but we can only do that with a skilled and available workforce. As the demand for quality workers continues to grow, we must look for ways to meet that demand.

Our first resource is our most valuable – our students. The Chamber’s Greater Grads program addresses the retention of Oklahoma’s college students with success, and we also advocate for the continued reform of our primary and secondary schools. But it will take a communitywide effort to make sure our students are career ready. The Chamber plans on leading that discussion at our annual State of the Schools luncheon on Aug. 20, and we hope you will make plans to join us. For the continued success of Oklahoma City, the development of our future workforce is a top priority.

Sincerely,

Roy H. Williams, CCE
President & CEO

Roy H. Williams, CCE
Chamber CEO & President
Chamber Sees Success During Session (cont’d from page 1)

Jobs Tax Credit; Historical Building Rehabilitation Tax Credit; Aerospace Engineering Tax Credit; and Freeport (Inventory) Exemption. During the session, the Chamber also engaged to protect the Tax Credit for Contributions to Biomedical Research and Cancer Institutes. All of these programs were protected during the 2015 session.

Legislation was filed this session by Sen. Mike Mazzei, R-Tulsa, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, and Rep. Earl Sears, R-Bartlesville, chairman of the House Appropriations and Budget Committee, to sunset Chamber-supported incentive programs. Following is a brief recap of legislative action on those measures:

- **Senate Bill 82 (Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit)**  
  Sen. Mazzei/Rep. Sears: SB 82 would have sunset the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program on Jan. 1, 2019. This community development program played a critical role in bringing the Skirvin Hotel back to life and in sparking the growth of several thousand hotel rooms (including the Ambassador Hotel and Colcord Hotel) and vibrant restaurants/nightlife in downtown, Bricktown and Midtown. Without this program, it is doubtful OKC would now play host to a successful NBA franchise or attract significant sports and convention business, all of which contribute revenues to the state. After passing the Senate, Chairman Sears chose to not hear SB 82 in the House Appropriations and Budget Committee by a legislative deadline; thus preserving this important program.

- **Senate Bill 84 (Tax Credit for Contributions to Biomedical or Cancer Institutes)**  
  Sen. Mazzei/Rep. Sears: SB 84 would have sunset the Tax Credit for Contributions to Biomedical Research or Cancer Institutes on Jan. 1, 2021. Donations, both in terms of amount and donors, to support Oklahoma’s growing bioscience industry have increased dramatically since the enactment of this program. The list of impressive milestones achieved by the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation (OMRF) over those years includes the opening of an almost 200,000-square-foot research tower which now houses dozens of labs and clinics pursuing cures to chronic disease. OMRF now has the ability to attract world-class scientists to lead cutting-edge research programs and regularly obtains multimillion dollar federal grants. Chairman Sears also chose not to hear SB 84 in his committee, thus protecting this critical program from sunset.

These legislative victories, achieved in a tough political and economic environment, will ensure that important economic/community development programs will continue to serve the needs of businesses and communities across Oklahoma.

**Gov. Fallin Vetoes Harmful Gun Measure Threatening High Economic Impact Events**

During the final weeks of session, the Chamber led an effort to stop legislation (SB 41 by Rep. Kevin Calvey, R-Edmond, and Sen. Jack Fry, R-Midwest City) that, if enacted, would have had a devastating impact on OKC’s ability to retain and attract high-economic-impact events.

On May 4, the Senate passed legislation (previously passed by the House) to amend Oklahoma’s concealed carry statute. The legislation, SB 41, was initially innocuous; however, new language was added in late April and passed overwhelmingly by the House (88-4) and Senate (39-7) that would have prevented entities that use/lease “any property designated by a city, town, county or state governmental authority as a park or recreational area, or fairgrounds” from prohibiting guns from being carried at those locations.

The Chamber and its partners engaged in conversations with the NCAA, the OKC Convention and Visitors Bureau, the State Fairgrounds, top law firms and other experts who were clear in concluding that passage of SB 41 would result in major events leaving Oklahoma City. As an example, the NCAA enforces zero-tolerance policies in prohibiting firearms at their events – this requirement is written into the contracts under which the events are held in OKC. Because SB 41 would have allowed firearms at these events, the contracts governing the events would have been breached – forcing the NCAA and other organizations to move events to locations outside of Oklahoma.

The Chamber therefore asked Gov. Fallin to veto this harmful legislation, which she did on May 11. The Chamber successfully fought efforts to override this veto throughout the final days of the session until its early adjournment on May 24. The Chamber would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Governor for her leadership in protecting high-economic-impact events held throughout Oklahoma.
Legislature Approves Speaker’s Plan to Complete the American Indian Cultural Center

The Chamber has been a long-time supporter of completing the American Indian Cultural Center and Museum (AICCM), a state project that sits at the intersection of two major interstate highways (Interstates 35 and 40). Originally conceived by Gov. Henry Bellmon in the 1980s and signed into law by Gov. David Walters in 1994, the vision behind the AICCM was to create a Smithsonian-level museum showcasing Oklahoma’s rich Native American history.

On May 21, the Oklahoma Senate approved legislation by Speaker Jeff Hickman, R-Fairview (HB 2327) that provides a path forward to complete the American Indian Cultural Center. The legislation provides the City of OKC with an opportunity to enter into an operating agreement under which the AICCM would be first transferred to a new public trust and then, eventually, to the City of OKC. It is not clear at this time whether OKC will execute such an agreement. Some of the key details of the legislation/plan are:

- The State of Oklahoma will issue a $25 million bond toward completion of the project, to be matched with $25 million in privately-raised matching funds.
- The State of Oklahoma, Native American Cultural and Educational Authority and City of OKC will enter into negotiations on an operating agreement to provide for an immediate transfer of 143 acres surrounding the museum site to the City of OKC. Commercial development on this acreage would contribute to paying for the museum and its operating costs.
- Fifty percent of all annual revenue over $7 million from the museum and surrounding 143 acres would be paid to the state to be used to pay back the $25 million bond.
- After 30 years or until the $25 million bond is paid off, whichever occurs first, the City of Oklahoma City will gain sole ownership of museum property.

Having previously passed the House, HB 2327 was subsequently signed by Gov. Fallin.

Funding for ODOT’s Eight Year Plan Kept Intact

A safe and efficient transportation system is critical to fostering economic development. The chamber has been a strong advocate for the

Continued on page 19
UPCOMING EVENTS

Learn About Your Chamber Membership

Whether you are a new member, a new employee or a long-time member that wants to brush up on what is included in your Chamber membership, the monthly Member Orientation can help. At this meeting, Chamber Vice President of Membership Sunny Cearley and other senior staff members will help you learn how a Chamber membership can benefit your business through a variety of ways.

Due to road construction in downtown Oklahoma City, the June and July Member Orientations will be held at IBC Bank, 3817 Northwest Expressway, Suite 100. View the Calendar of Events on this page for dates and times.

State of the Schools: Aug. 20

The Chamber is committed to supporting the success of education in Oklahoma. Learn about efforts and ideas for reform to improve education at the upcoming State of the Schools luncheon on Thursday, Aug. 20.

Joy Hofmeister, Oklahoma state superintendent of public instruction, will keynote this year’s event. The program will also include a discussion of educational attainment and reform on a statewide and local level from Natalie Shirley, Oklahoma secretary of education and workforce development, and Robert Neu, superintendent of the Oklahoma City Public School District. Teresa Rose, vice chair of education and workforce development for the Chamber, will present the Chamber’s education initiatives.

Visit www.okcchamber.com/sos for more information or to register. Special thanks to School Supply/Centerpiece Sponsor American Fidelity Assurance Company.
Network with Chamber Members

With more than 20 events each year specifically designed to get members in front of other members and the public, your Chamber membership allows you to build new relationships and make valuable business connections. Don’t miss these upcoming networking events:

**Sunset Reception: June 16**

Grab your coworkers and head to the Rapp Foundation Conference Center at SSM Health Care of Oklahoma, 535 NW Ninth Street, from 4-6 p.m. for the Chamber’s monthly Sunset Reception. This free event includes food, drink and networking and is the perfect opportunity to introduce your business contacts and friends to the Chamber. This event is open to the public and no registration is necessary. Special thanks to Signature Sponsor TapSnap™ Phototainment.

**MegaLunch: July 28**

MegaLunch is a quarterly speed networking event that connects Chamber members in a creative way. Because of the event’s computerized rotation schedule, attendees will have the chance to give their 90-second elevator pitch to other business professionals at the event. In July, MegaLunch will be held at The Yellow Rose Dinner Theater, 1005 SW Forth Street in Moore, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

MegaLunch is only open to Chamber members. To maximize networking opportunities, only one person per member company may attend. Tickets are $35 per person, and advance registration is required. Email register@okcchamber.com to register. Special thanks to Host Sponsor, The Yellow Rose Dinner Theater.

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OSU-OKC Industry Training

We measure **OUR success by YOUR success.**

Through a partnership between Cox Communications and Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City, the Cox Reaching Higher program has allowed 26 Cox employees to pursue their undergraduate degrees over the last two years. Cox is dedicated to strengthening its workforce from within, and OSU-OKC helped develop a program that did just that.

Going back to college as an adult presents the unique challenge of balancing a job, family, and school. OSU-OKC’s program was specifically designed to address this challenge. Thanks to the support and guidance of the staff and instructors at OSU-OKC, the program has been a huge success. One employee said, “Cox’s investment in my future and belief that I can positively impact our business has increased my morale and loyalty to our company.”
BOOMSLAM

BOOMSLAM, BOOMSICLE, BOOMSHAKALAKA
VOTED ONE OF THE BEST SPORTS TEAMS IN THE NATION, TWO YEARS IN A ROW.

The Associated Press Sports Editors recently named The Oklahoman’s Sports Team one of the best in the nation for the second year in a row and the third time in the past four years. While recognition is nice, results matter more — that’s why we believe our readers and our community deserve the finest local sports coverage, and we strive to deliver it each and every day.

To get a limited time offer for new subscribers today, visit oklahoman.com/bestsports.
CVB Honors Hometown Heroes of Visitor Industry

The Oklahoma City Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), the Chamber’s convention and visitor development division, honored the following Oklahomans and organizations that have made a significant impact on Oklahoma City’s tourism and hospitality industry at their sixth annual Hometown Heroes awards on Wednesday, May 6.

Elaine Warner, Freelance Writer
Elaine Warner is a freelance writer from Edmond and is the only Oklahoma member of the Society of American Travel Writers. In the past year, her writings on Oklahoma City have reached more than one million AAA members in eight states.

Karen Youngblood, Director of Continuing Education at the University of Central Oklahoma
Karen Youngblood works with the Oklahoma City CVB to bring meetings and conferences to Oklahoma City. Youngblood was instrumental in bringing the National Conferences on Undergraduate Research to Oklahoma City in 2018, which is expected to have an economic impact of more than $3 million and includes 3,000 hotel room nights in the Oklahoma City market.

Scott Vanhorn, Meeting Planner for the Oklahoma State Firefighters Association
In his role with the Oklahoma State Firefighters Association, Scott Vanhorn has been very influential in securing three meetings in Oklahoma City that had previously been held in Tulsa. These conferences will have an economic impact of more than $500,000.

Betty Ann Ridley, CEO & Founder with DayStar Foundation and Betty Ann Ridley Association
Betty Ann Ridley’s dedication to the Oklahoma City convention industry has annually brought more than 500 Christian Science Convention attendees to the area for 30 years.

Bart Conner, President of Bart Conner Gymnastics
Using his background as an international and Olympic gymnastics champion, Bart Conner has worked to grow the sport in Oklahoma City. He and his staff have hosted the Bart & Nadia Sports Festival in Oklahoma City for several years and have grown the event by adding a boys’ tournament and a college women’s tournament.

The National Reining Horse Association
The National Reining Horse Association is an important part of Oklahoma City’s equine events industry. By holding events in Oklahoma City, the NRHA contributes to the economic impact that horse shows have in Oklahoma City and help this community maintain its title of “Horse Show Capital of the World.”

Mike Lee, County Executive Director with Oklahoma Association of County Office Employers
Mike Lee is responsible for helping secure the 2014 national convention of National Association of Farm Service Agency County Office Employees to Oklahoma City, which had a significant economic impact on Oklahoma City and showcased this community to a national audience.

The Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum
The Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum just completed a $10 million enhancement to its world-class facilities and recently celebrated its 15th Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon, which draws more than 25,000 people to Oklahoma City each year.

The Oklahoma City CVB also selected a Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA) as the CTA Star of the Year. Oklahoma City’s CTA Star is acknowledged for their excellence in hospitality and customer service and one who demonstrates knowledge of local attractions, venues and current events. This year, the Oklahoma City CVB selected Shane Grander, marketing director for Armstrong Auditorium.

Michael Carrier, CTA, president of the Oklahoma City CVB, awards Susan Winchester, chairman of the Oklahoma City National Memorial board of trustees, and Kari Watkins, executive director of the Memorial, for the museum’s significant impact on the Oklahoma City visitor industry at the 2015 Hometown Hero awards.
Annual Campaign Offers Marketing Opportunities for Your Company

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber launched its 2015 Total Resource Development Campaign (TRDC) on May 7 with a fundraising goal of $3 million, the highest campaign goal in its history, to support the growth of the Chamber’s work in Oklahoma City. John Higginbotham, Bank of Oklahoma, and Michael Laird, Crowe & Dunlevy, are leading teams of volunteers during the Chamber’s 22nd campaign.

Since the campaign kickoff, Chamber volunteers have been connecting with local companies and individuals to identify sponsorship, marketing and advertising opportunities available through Chamber programs and publications. Companies that purchase sponsorships will reach more than 4,000 Chamber members, and sponsorships raised through TRDC support the Chamber’s work in economic development, government relations, education/workforce development and community involvement.

No matter your business size or marketing budget, the Chamber has several ways that you can reach its unique, business-minded audience. Read on for opportunities to maximize your marketing efforts with the Chamber.

2016 Chamber Forums
Show business leaders that you support our “city on the rise” by sponsoring Chamber Forums (previously Friday Forums). Previous Forum topics have included promoting Oklahoma City as a visitor destination, regional transportation issues, Oklahoma City’s music scene, the official Global GE announcement, Oklahoma City’s new convention center and commercial district revitalizations. Sponsors will be recognized at a minimum of three Chamber Forum events in 2016, with opportunities ranging from Series Signature Sponsor ($3,000) to Small Business Sponsor ($300).

2015 Chamber Golf Tournaments
As a sponsor during this exclusive tournament you will be recognized at three separate but identical tournaments that are attended by CEOs and their employees of Chamber member companies. Treating your clients and prospects to a round of golf at Oklahoma City Golf & Country Club will provide an excellent opportunity to entertain them in a casual and friendly atmosphere.

Your business will be highlighted in front of a variety of local leaders through networking and sponsorship recognition. Sponsorship opportunities include a Hospitality Sponsor ($1,500) and the best-selling Hole & Team Sponsor ($1,600).

A Better Life Welcome Program
The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber is the go-to source for individuals relocating to the Oklahoma City area and for businesses who are recruiting employees. Get in front of new residents in a variety of ways through the award-winning A Better Life Welcome Program. Large companies like Boeing and Continental Resources use this Welcome Program to inform and motivate employees to move to Oklahoma City. A Better Life Welcome Program has three advertising opportunities: printed and digital ads in the Welcome Guide (previously the Relocation Guide), banner ads in the Better Life weekly email/blog and advertising on www.aBetterLifeOKC.com.

Contact a TRDC volunteer and take advantage of the Chamber’s marketing opportunities today!
Visit www.okcchamber.com/trdc for more information.
City is the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation and its team of scientists. The National Institutes of Health once again designated OMRF an Autoimmunity Center of Excellence, one of only 10 sites in the U.S. OMRF also received a $14.5 million grant to continue research aimed at combating bioterrorism, specifically to study the anthrax bacteria.

The Samuel Noble Foundation in Ardmore is in a renaissance period for agricultural research. Two Noble Foundation scientists recently earned the distinction of being among the most cited researchers in the world. The Noble Foundation also launched a new research initiative - Forage365 - aimed at providing a sustainable, year-round grazing system.

Investment in Oklahoma bioscience companies has also increased. Over the last year, Accele Biopharma, a biotechnology venture accelerator, invested in four promising life science companies, and the Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST) has awarded $1.3 million for five applied research projects and $4.5 million for 34 health research projects in bioscience fields.

Oklahoma’s delegation to the BIO Convention will promote all these accomplishments and more, but they will also focus on branding Oklahoma City as a place of opportunity for bioscience researchers and promising companies. According to bioscience recruiters in Oklahoma City, this region is becoming more attractive as a location for research and innovation. Those who work to recruit these scientists mention the quality of both the Oklahoma Health Center complex and the revitalized Oklahoma City itself as strong selling points.

“The research facilities are a big start,” said Shari Hawkins, senior public affairs specialist for the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation (OMRF). “The Oklahoma City part is the icing on the cake. It’s so much more diverse than they [the recruits] imagine.”

Oklahoma City continues to provide opportunity in terms of the strength of its bioscience community and all the amenities and activities the city has to offer, researcher recruiters said.

“The biomedical science environment in Oklahoma City has dramatically changed in the last 10 years,” said Dr. Dewayne Andrews, senior vice president and provost of the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (OUHSC) and executive dean of the OU College of Medicine. “All the changes have been very positive.”

Oklahoma City “is kind of like ‘Big Brain Mecca,” said Courtney Stevens Greenwood, OMRF’s vice president for human resources who spends some of her time recruiting researchers from elsewhere. “That is a big appeal.”

One of OMRF’s researchers, for example, works with the OU Stephenson Cancer Center across the street from OMRF – both sides are studying cancer, but different parts of the disease, she said.

“It’s a win-win for them and for us and the scientists we’re recruiting,” Greenwood said. “They’ve access to everything they need to thrive.”

Currently, Oklahoma’s bioscience industry contributes more than $6.7 billion in economic activity, supports more than 51,000 Oklahoma jobs and has annual revenues of more than $4.1 billion. To learn more about the opportunities in Oklahoma’s bioscience sector, visit www.okbio.org.

The Chamber will promote Oklahoma’s growing bioscience sector at the upcoming 2015 BIO International Convention.
Last month, the Chamber released its 11th issue of VeloCity, the digital magazine of Oklahoma City. This dynamic interactive magazine, first published in 2011, tells the story of Oklahoma City through compelling articles and interactive features such as videos and interviews.

Filled with stories of Oklahoma City’s renaissance, the latest issue focuses on Oklahoma City’s startup culture. One article, “America’s Startup Engine: OKC” describes how Oklahoma City is the ultimate location for startups, including those in the bioscience and technology industries. In this issue, readers can learn more about Oklahoma City startups that are experiencing success, including Cage, a software platform; Tailwind, a Pinterest analytics service; Monscierge, a hospitality app and WeGoLook, a crowdsourced inspection website.

VeloCity also features a look at the last remaining Film Exchange District in the nation, Oklahoma City’s Film Row, which is now home to several startups and small businesses. Other articles include “ACCLA1M,” a list of national rankings that reflect Oklahoma City’s still-
snowballing Cinderella story, and an article discussing two Oklahoma City startups that are now national brands: Sonic, America's Drive-In and Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores.

*VeloCity* is a component of the Chamber’s efforts to market Oklahoma City on a national level, and is a resource for locals who want to share the Oklahoma City story with friends, colleagues and potential employees.

“Some people have an outdated perception of Oklahoma City, and *VeloCity* was created to inform people of Oklahoma City’s dynamic culture and history,” said Cynthia Reid, vice president of marketing and communications for the Chamber.

“This magazine is the perfect way to easily share Oklahoma City’s story with others – the bragging rights and success stories found on its pages will impress and inform everyone who reads them.”

The current issue of the magazine can be viewed at www.velocityokc.com, while current and past issues can be found at the Chamber’s online video channel, www.greaterokc.tv.
The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber recently adopted a position in support of congressional reauthorization of The Export-Import Bank of the United States (Ex-Im). The Ex-Im Bank is the nation’s official export credit agency, with a mission to assist companies in financing the export of U.S. goods and services to international markets.

The Ex-Im Bank was founded in 1934 under President Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Ex-Im Bank estimates it has financed more than $600 billion in exports – mostly to developing markets where commercial banks are often more reluctant to lend – in its 80-year history. Ex-Im extends loans to all applicants that meet its strict lending requirements, but only does so when commercial credit is unavailable or when it is necessary to counteract below-market credit from foreign export credit agencies (ECAs).

Unless Congress reauthorizes its charter, the Ex-Im Bank will expire on June 30, 2015, leaving thousands of American businesses without the financing they need to compete in global and emerging markets.

“The Ex-Im Bank has demonstrated its value to both American taxpayers and Oklahoma businesses,” said Roy H. Williams, CCE, president and CEO of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber. “The financing provided by the Ex-Im Bank allows small- and medium-sized Oklahoma businesses to remain competitive with overseas competitors. Without reauthorization, we will unilaterally disarm our companies from competing in many markets.”

Instead of costing the taxpayers money, Ex-Im is a self-sufficient organization. By charging fees for its services, in the last five years the Ex-Im Bank has generated $2 billion more than its operations cost. In 2014 it sent $674.7 million to the U.S. Treasury as surplus for American taxpayers. Over the past two decades, Ex-Im has generated an impressive surplus of nearly $7 billion.

Not only is Ex-Im Bank generating a profit for the American taxpayers, but it is also providing effective financing for businesses of all sizes. In fiscal year 2014, Ex-Im Bank provided financing or guarantees for $27.5 billion in U.S. exports, supporting more than 164,000 American jobs. Nearly 90 percent of those transactions benefited small businesses in the United States.

On a local level, Ex-Im has assisted 126 Oklahoma companies since 2007, 86 of which were small businesses. Since that time, Ex-Im Bank insured, provided credit or disbursed loan amounts to Oklahoma companies totaling $929 million, with On a local level, Ex-Im has assisted 126 Oklahoma companies since 2007, 86 of which were small businesses.

“Countries across the globe, such as China and Germany, are showing no signs of diminishing their export credit agencies, and by refusing to reauthorize Ex-Im Bank, the U.S. will be at a global disadvantage to our most powerful economic competitors,” said Williams. “We are calling for reauthorization because it is the right financial decision for our country and for businesses in Oklahoma City.”

Other supporters of the reauthorization include the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the State Chamber of Oklahoma, the Tulsa Regional Chamber, the National Association of Manufacturing, the Business Roundtable and Oklahoma City Mayor Mick Cornett.
The Forward Oklahoma City program has prioritized the growth of Oklahoma's bioscience industry since 1995, when identifying the needs of the industry was one of five specific priorities for Forward Oklahoma City I. Development at the University Research Park (then the Presbyterian Health Foundation Research Park) began in 1996, and the Chamber used Forward Oklahoma City funds to commission a study by Hammer, Siler, George Associates to detail how to best support the region's bioscience and technology companies.

With that goal in mind, the Chamber campaigned for the passage of state questions 680 and 681 in 1998, which authorized Oklahoma universities and academic researchers to own equity in companies that were commercializing technologies that universities invented. Up until that point, Oklahomans typically had to license their technology to out-of-state companies rather than developing in-state businesses to utilize their inventions.

Once those questions were approved by voters, it allowed Oklahoma to start building a technology-based economy and led to the creation of i2e. Soon a bioscience corridor emerged along Interstate 35 from Stillwater through Oklahoma City, Norman and Ardmore. In 2005, more than 90 percent of the state's health, biomedical and agricultural research took place along that corridor.

As the industry grew and developed, the Chamber’s Forward Oklahoma City program continued to invest in the future success of Oklahoma’s bioscience industry. Starting in 2002, the Chamber and a delegation of Oklahomans have promoted Oklahoma’s bioscience opportunities at the BIO International Convention, resulting in thousands of business leads in its 14-year history.

In 2005, the Chamber unveiled a comprehensive strategic plan produced by Battelle Technology Partnership Practice that was geared to create more jobs, investment and scientific research in Oklahoma. The four strategies implemented by the Chamber included building the region’s research and development base, attracting bioscience talent to the region, growing a critical mass of bioscience companies and building Oklahoma’s bioscience image. Today, the bioscience community in the Greater Oklahoma City region employs more than 27,800 people and has estimated revenues of $4.1 billion. Since 2001, bioscience employment has grown by more than 17 percent.

What is Forward OKC?

After experiencing the difficulties of a national economic downturn during the late 1980s and 1990s, Chamber leaders recognized the need to give Oklahoma City a new direction and purpose. Forward Oklahoma City was established to create quality jobs, increase capital investment, retain existing business and improve per capital income. Through five-year cycles, these initiatives have laid the groundwork for a dynamic economic effort that has produced results that far exceed expectations. Through Forward Oklahoma City, the Chamber has helped Oklahoma City become one of the top economic development sites in the country. Since 1995, Forward Oklahoma City has worked with companies to bring more than 99,000 new jobs to the region.
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Mr. Stanton Nelson .......... 608-1715
14000 N. Portland Ave., Suite 200
Oklahoma City, OK 73134
www.fdnh.com

Heartland Payment Systems
Credit Card Processing
Mr. William Collins .......... 414-5508
2216 NW 56th Terrace
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
www.heartlandpaymentsystems.com

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Credit Card Processing
Mr. William Collins .......... 414-5508
2216 NW 56th Terrace
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
www.heartlandpaymentsystems.com

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Oklahoma City, OK 73112
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Latham Wagner Steel Lehman
Attorneys / Lawyers
Ms. Patrice Douglas .......... 242-4145
6701 N. Broadway Extension, Suite 203
Oklahoma City, OK 73116-8237
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Construction Companies
Ms. Estela Hernandez .......... 209-5664
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Oklahoma City, OK 73130
www.mcdonalds.com
Recognizing members who take a special leadership role in financing the Chamber’s operations at significantly higher levels. Each Lead Investor is highlighted with a BLUE BOX and identified as a Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze Lead Investor. Board of Advisor members are identified as well.

### Board of Advisors

**Merrifield Office Products & School Supply**  
Office Supplies  
Mr. Zac Merrifield .......(800) 256-0994  
1825 W. Main St.  
Oklahoma City, OK  73106-3019  
www.merrfieldofficeplus.com

**Michael Murphy’s Dueling Piano Bar**  
Bars / Taverns  
Mr. Bobby Spann ....... 231-5397  
25 S. Oklahoma Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK  73104-2495  
www.murphyspianobar.com

**Moving Experts, LLC**  
Movers  
Ms. Ameena Dawood .... 430-4014  
4751 NW 24th St.  
Oklahoma City, OK  73127  
www.movingexpertsllc.com

**myheartcreative**  
Computer Web Design / Photography  
Mr. Vinod Samuel .... 410-7729  
P.O. Box 721098  
Oklahoma City, OK  73172  
www.myheartcreative.com

### Lead Investor

**ORI Environmental**  
Environmental Services  
Mr. Lee Marks ......... 943-8969  
308 N. Fonshill Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK  73117-3200  
www.oilsrecovery.com

### Bronze

**Oklahoma Air**  
Air Conditioning & Heating Equipment & Systems  
Mr. Mark Kaserman .... 848-8688  
9535 N. Robinson Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK  73114  
www.oklahomaair.net

**Oklahoma Curling Club**  
Associations / Membership Organizations  
Mr. Mark Ngo .... 613-1386  
P.O. Box 5244  
Edmond, OK  73083  
www.okcurling.com

**Oklahoma Grocers Association**  
Associations / Membership Organizations  
Mr. Ron Edgman ....... 525-9419  
25 NE 52nd St.  
Oklahoma City, OK  73105  
www.okgrocers.com

**Omni Air Transport**  
Aircraft Charter, Rental & Leasing Services  
Mr. Dan Burnstein .... (800) 870-3388  
6401 S. Portland Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK  73159-2231  
www.flyomni.com

**Premier Rental Properties**  
Corporate Housing  
Mr. Caleb Owens ....... 604-0786  
4401 NW 4th St., Suite 134  
Oklahoma City, OK  73107-6540  
www.prpokc.com

**Rodeway Inn & Suites**  
Hotels & Motels  
Ms. Dee Patel .... 787-1350  
321 S. Rockwell Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK  73128-2221  
www.choicehotels.com/hotel/ok174

**Stonebrook Event Center**  
Meeting / Banquet Facilities  
Ms. Marie Jackson ....... 605-6191  
9101 S. Robinson Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK  73139  
www.stonebrookeventcenter.com

**Territory Media**  
Publishers - Magazine  
Ms. Cheryl Dillard ....... 820-3508  
3017 N. Lee Ave., Suite A  
Oklahoma City, OK  73103  
www.territoryokc.com

**Tracy Freeny & Associates**  
Insurance - Investments  
Mr. Tracy Freeny ....... 209-6657  
3720 E. 2nd St.  
Edmond, OK  73034-7305  
www.vintageokc.com

**The Worx Business Group, Inc.**  
Insurance Agents, Brokers and Service  
Mnrs. Iva Germany ...... 488-7541  
14433 Locust Ave.  
Piedmont, OK  73078-8910

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The new issue of VeloCity is out!  
Check out the latest digital content from OKC's online magazine at www.VeloCityOKC.com
Congratulations to these Chamber members on their recent Grand Openings! All Chamber members are welcome to attend Grand Openings.

To view more photos, see the schedule of upcoming Grand Openings or subscribe to the Grand Openings calendar, visit www.okcchamber.com/grandopenings.

Embassy Suites Oklahoma City Downtown/Medical Center
741 N. Phillips Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104

InterWorks, Inc.
1 E. Sheridan Ave., Suite 7
Oklahoma City, OK 73104

Homewood Suite by Hilton Oklahoma City West
6920 W. Reno Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73127

Sidecar Barley & Wine Bar, LLC
1100 N. Broadway Ave., Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73103

Sunbeam Family Services, Inc.
1100 NW 14th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73106

Dress for Success Oklahoma City
710 N. Broadway Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73102

The Salvation Army Central Oklahoma Area Command
1001 N. Pennsylvania Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73109

McDonald’s
9000 SE 29th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73130

SPECIALIZED CARE FOR GROWING BODIES
From Preteen to Young Adult

The adolescent years bring a unique set of health challenges. At The Children’s Hospital at OU Medicine, our specialists in adolescent care can help your child overcome a wide range of issues, from sports injuries and chronic illnesses to eating disorders and risky behavior. We can help guide our younger patients down a healthy, responsible path to adulthood.
Oklahoma City Ranked No. 3 in Downtown Employment Growth

Employment in City Centers by Metropolitan Area, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metropolitan Area</th>
<th>Metropolitan Employment</th>
<th>Urban Core Employment</th>
<th>Urban Core Employment Rate</th>
<th>Urban Core Average Annual Growth Rate (2007-2011)</th>
<th>Rank (% growth)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austin, TX</td>
<td>739,630</td>
<td>213,211</td>
<td>28.8%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte, NC</td>
<td>765,441</td>
<td>149,211</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma City, OK</td>
<td>488,054</td>
<td>84,165</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>437,978</td>
<td>101,989</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>4 (tie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
<td>3,791,689</td>
<td>647,518</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>4 (tie)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>2,405,782</td>
<td>357,739</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York, NY</td>
<td>7,304,357</td>
<td>1,672,725</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco, CA</td>
<td>1,764,024</td>
<td>461,261</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwaukee, WI</td>
<td>725,144</td>
<td>148,455</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orlando, FL</td>
<td>918,136</td>
<td>124,831</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartford, CT</td>
<td>541,746</td>
<td>123,368</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 41 of the largest metropolitan areas were analyzed.
- Urban cores were defined as the area within three miles of the center of each metro’s central business district.
- The average annual urban core growth rate was 0.5 percent (2007-2011) among metros analyzed.
- Downtown Oklahoma City showed a 2.2 percent annual growth rate that was more than four times greater than the average urban core annual growth rate.
- Nearly two out of nine Oklahoma City Metropolitan area employees work downtown, or 17.2 percent.

Source: City Observatory 2015, U.S. Census LEHD 2007-2011 (most recent data release).

Chamber Advocacy Protects Businesses (cont’d from page 5)

Protection of funding for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation’s Eight-Year Construction Work Plan. The FY 16 budget agreement maintained funding levels for ODOT’s current Eight Year Plan, which represents a significant victory in a challenging budget environment. While ODOT did receive a funding reduction of $12 million, state transportation leaders have publicly stated it will not impact any projects in the current eight year plan. Significantly, ODOT’s current eight-year plan includes a historic number of OKC-area projects (Downtown Boulevard; I-235/I-44; I-35/I-240; U.S. 74 north of Lake Hefner Pkwy) and the number of structurally deficient bridges on the state system has been reduced from 1,100 to 374.

**Oklahoma Biosciences Industry Protected from Efforts to Criminalize Scientific Research**

Legislation was filed this session - HB 1379 by Rep. Dan Fisher, R-Yukon - that, if enacted, would have negatively impacted the state’s growing bioscience industry. “The Protection of Human Life Act” would have criminalized embryonic stem cell research by creating a misdemeanor offense (up to a year in prison and $100,000 fine) for anyone found guilty of conducting such research. Such research is not now and has never been conducted in the state. This legislation would have harmed efforts to recruit world-class researchers to Oklahoma by sending an unmistakable signal to the scientific community that our state is not open to growing this key industry but instead interested in criminalizing certain types of research.

After overwhelmingly passing the House, HB 1379 was double-assigned to the Senate Public Safety and Senate Appropriations Committee, where it did not receive a hearing before either committee prior the legislative deadline. As a result, HB 1379 and its threat to the continued growth of Oklahoma’s biosciences industry was defeated.

Read the full recap at www.okcbusinessadvocate.com.
AT&T innovations keep you connected, like our wireless network that powers the iPhone and our award-winning AT&T U-verse® TV*. In business, we deliver productivity and results. In your personal world, we deliver conversations, messages and pictures. All because of our commitment to keep you connected.

*Geographic and service restrictions apply to AT&T U-verse services. Call or go to www.att.com/u-verse to see if you qualify.