More than 60 scientists, business leaders, educators and economic development officers from across the state of Oklahoma took the best of Oklahoma bioscience to the 2016 BIO International Convention in San Francisco last month. The delegation spent four days promoting the accomplishments of the Oklahoma bioscience sector and meeting with potential business partners.

“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.”

The delegation staffed the Oklahoma Bioscience Association booth and interacted with conference attendees, and the delegates informed others about the growth of Oklahoma’s bioscience sector. Oklahoma’s bioscience sector currently contributes more than $6.7 billion in economic activity and

**Chamber Achieves 2016 Legislative Priorities**

Despite the challenges of the state’s $1.3 billion budget shortfall, the Chamber achieved almost all of its legislative priorities during the 2016 session. The following is an overview of the session’s highlights.

**Chamber Protects All Six Critical Economic Development Programs**

The Chamber relies on several of the state’s economic development incentive programs to attract businesses that will bring economic growth to Oklahoma. The following six programs are especially critical to economic and community development:

- Quality Jobs Act
- Aerospace Engineering Tax Credit
- Historical Building Rehabilitation Tax Credit
- Five-year ad valorem abatement and sales tax exemption on manufacturing facilities
- Freeport (Inventory) Exemption
- Investment/New Jobs Tax Credit

Despite the pressure placed on scaling-back or repealing economic development programs, all six of these key programs were successfully preserved. The Investment/New Jobs Tax Credit was capped at $25 million annually, but earned credits may be carried forward and claimed in subsequent years.

**Governor Signs Pro-Business Gun Legislation to Protect Events**

One of the top priorities for the Chamber this session was to pass gun legislation to allow event hosts to...
The State of Oklahoma and the Greater Oklahoma City region continue to build its aerospace industry according to the Greater Oklahoma City Region Aerospace Industry Survey and Economic Impact Assessment, a report being released this month by the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber and Region Track. From early aircraft testing and manufacturing to its more recent distinction as a major hub for maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) of aircraft, Oklahoma remains a key component of the U.S. aerospace infrastructure. The Greater Oklahoma City region serves as the center of aerospace activity in the state and continues to attract significant aerospace industry development.

“The aerospace industry in Greater Oklahoma City is an essential part of our economy, and it is an area where we are targeting additional growth,” said Kurt Foreman, executive vice president of economic development at the Chamber. “This report indicates that our economic development focus on strengthening the aerospace industry is a worthy investment for this region’s future.”

While aerospace activity is highly concentrated in Oklahoma County, aerospace companies are spread across all 10 counties in the region. These aerospace establishments in the region are divided into five major subgroups: government; maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO); air transportation; manufacturing, engineering and consulting; and other sectors, including aerospace education, aerial spraying and aerial photography.

The report benchmarks the current size and scope of these subgroups and evaluates the industry as a whole. An estimated 236 public and private sector establishments in the Greater Oklahoma City region are directly engaged in aerospace activity. These employers produce an estimated $4.9 billion in goods and services and employ more than 36,600 workers earning $2.7 billion in labor income in 2015. Oklahoma County is home to nearly two-thirds of the region’s aerospace employers, over 97 percent of the jobs, and more than 93 percent of the total output produced by the sector.

When examining the aerospace labor force, Oklahoma continues to rank among the top 20 states for the number of workers in most key aerospace occupations. Wages for many aerospace occupations in Oklahoma are competitive when compared to other states and reflective of the overall low cost of living in the state. Average labor income in aerospace is approximately $72,818 per worker in 2015. Income per worker in the industry is 36 percent higher than the overall average of $53,542 for all industries statewide and 30 percent higher than the $55,944 average for all industries in the 10-county Oklahoma City region.

The findings of the report illustrate an area often overlooked in other state-wide aerospace studies: The importance of large government installations and the diverse MRO infrastructure that characterize the aerospace industry in the state and the Greater Oklahoma City region. Federal contracts contribute to this area of success, and in fiscal year 2015, a total of $1.41 billion in federal contracts were issued in Oklahoma for aerospace-related goods and services. In the Greater Oklahoma City region, $1.19 billion in contracts are directly aerospace-related.

The effects of this powerhouse industry on the broader economy are significant—estimates indicate that the industry indirectly supports the jobs of an additional 31,000 works in the region earning $1.4 billion in income and the production of $3.3 billion in total goods and services. Through both the direct activity of the industry and spillover effects to the broader economy, establishments engaged in aerospace in the Greater Oklahoma City region support approximately 67,600 jobs, $4.1 billion in labor income and the production of $8.2 billion in goods and services in 2015.

The Chamber produces its Greater Oklahoma City Region Aerospace Industry Survey and Economic Impact Assessment every five years. The Chamber is set to release the 2016 report on July 13. View the executive summary online at www.greateroklahomacity.com/aerospace.
Aerospace industry continues to soar

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber has been actively developing the aerospace and aviation industry in Oklahoma City since as early as 1919, a time when airplanes represented a new era of travel and exploration. In these years, the staff of the Chamber did everything they could to garner interest in aviation—including mailing bricks to friends around the U.S. to meet the weight requirements for Oklahoma City’s air mail route.

Almost 100 years later, the Chamber is still pursuing the growth of aerospace in Greater Oklahoma City, but we no longer have to mail bricks to strengthen this important industry. According to the Greater Oklahoma City Region Aerospace Industry Survey and Economic Impact Assessment, which we will release this month, there are 67,000 jobs, $4.1 billion in labor income and $8.2 billion in goods and services associated with this industry in our region. And while aerospace activity is highly concentrated in Oklahoma County, companies are in all 10 counties of our region.

The years of strategic economic development have created an economy that stands on its own merits when attracting aerospace companies. Two of our most engaged partners will celebrate significant milestones this month, further illustrating the momentum of this important industry. Tinker Air Force Base will break ground on its KC-46A facility, representing more than 1,300 direct jobs in our community and hundreds of millions in capital investment. The Boeing Company will also celebrate the grand opening of its research center as it continues to deepen its investment in Oklahoma City’s aerospace community. Because of Tinker’s mission and the companies that support it, our aerospace industry has never been stronger.

Sincerely,

Roy H. Williams, CCE
Chamber CEO & President

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This isn't medicine. It's the reinvention of medicine.
MegaLunch: July 28

An exclusive event for Chamber members, MegaLunch provides companies of every size with a unique opportunity to promote their business and network among other members of Oklahoma City’s growing professional population.

Join representatives from other Chamber companies at The Yellow Rose Dinner Theater on Thursday, July 28, in this focused and personal atmosphere where attendees can develop their relationships with other business leaders. Attendance is limited to one person per member company, and computer-generated schedules will guide them around the tables for 90-second pitch rotations. Be sure to make your reservation by Monday, July 25, to ensure your company has access to this chance to connect with your next business lead.

Reserve your seat by emailing register@okcchamber.com by Monday, July 25 at 5 p.m. Tickets are $40 per person. Special thanks to Host Sponsor The Yellow Rose Dinner Theater.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 6
IntemOKC Session 3
Time: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Location: Embassy Suites Oklahoma City Downtown/Medical Center, 741 N Phillips Ave.

July 12
Member Orientation
Time: 8:30 to 10 a.m.
Location: Chamber offices, 123 Park Ave.

July 12
Sunset Reception
Time: 4 to 6 p.m.
Location: Aloft Oklahoma City Downtown/Bricktown, 209 N Walnut Ave.

July 13
IntemOKC Session 4
Time: 3 to 5:30 p.m.
Location: Chevy Bricktown Events Center, 429 E California Ave.

July 20
IntemOKC Finale
Time: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Location: National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, 1700 NE 63rd St.

July 28
MegaLunch
Time: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Location: The Yellow Rose Dinner Theater, 1005 SW 4th St. in Moore

Aug. 17
State of the Schools
Time: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Location: National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, 1700 NE 63rd St.

Register for events online and view a complete event calendar at www.okcchamber.com/events.
State of the Schools: Aug. 17

As Oklahoma’s schools face unprecedented challenges, it is more critical than ever to learn about innovative efforts for education reform and improvement. At the Chamber’s State of the Schools event, James K. Spurlino, president and owner of Spurlino Materials and member of ReadyNation, will discuss how investing in the first three years of a child’s life can benefit their success as students and as future employees.

The program will also include a discussion of educational attainment and reform on a statewide and local level from Lynne Hardin, board chair for the Oklahoma City Public Schools, and Aurora Lora, superintendent of the Oklahoma City Public School District. Teresa Rose Crook, vice chair of education and workforce development for the Chamber, will present the Chamber’s education initiatives.

Individual tickets are $50 for Chamber members and $75 for non-members. Tables are available for $1,250 (8 seats per table). Register online at www.okcchamber.com/events. For more information, contact register@okcchamber.com.

School supply donations will be accepted at the event to benefit the Boys and Girls Clubs of Oklahoma County. Special thanks to Signature Sponsor Bank of Oklahoma and School Supply/Centerpiece Sponsor American Fidelity Assurance Company.

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prevent guns from being allowed into high-economic impact events. The Chamber worked closely with the NRA and OK2A to introduce SB 1057 by Sen. Jack Fry (R-Midwest City) and Rep. Kevin Calvey (R-Oklahoma City). Under this legislation guns cannot be brought into:

- Horse Shows and the State Fair
- Big XII and NCAA Sporting Events, including the Women's College World Series;
- Concerts (Chesapeake Energy Arena; Zoo; OKC Fest)
- State High School Basketball & Wrestling Tournaments at the Fairgrounds
- U.S. Olympic Qualifying and many other events.

SB 1057 received strong majorities in the House and Senate and was signed into law by Gov. Fallin in April.

Chamber Works to Defeat Two Pieces of Harmful Gun Legislation

The Chamber organized and led a broad coalition of businesses, law enforcement agencies and universities to defeat anti-business gun legislation that, if passed, would have undermined SB 1057.

HJR 1009, by Rep. Dan Fisher (R-Yukon), would have threatened to make SB 1057 irrelevant by having Oklahoma courts decide whether the business owners’ rights provisions of SB 1057 met the “strict scrutiny” test, the most stringent form of Judicial Review - under which many state statutes have been held unconstitutional. This legislation posed a direct threat to the right of a business or event host to preclude weapons.

HB 3098, by Rep. Jeff Coody (R-Grandfield), would have allowed Oklahoma residents 21 years or older not convicted of a felony to carry an open or concealed handgun without a license. The Chamber’s primary concern with this legislation was that unlicensed gun owners represent an insurance risk and cost to all businesses that would have led insurance companies to either withdraw from the market or increase rates for liability and workers’ compensation coverage (the same was true of HJR 1009).

Key Criminal Justice Reform Measures Enacted

The Chamber’s strong support of criminal justice measures passed by the Legislature this session was directly connected with the important work being undertaken by the Chamber’s Criminal Justice Reform Taskforce. This taskforce, composed of prominent leaders from the Oklahoma City criminal justice, law enforcement and business communities, was created out of a desire to address ongoing issues with the Oklahoma County jail.

All four criminal justice reform bills supported by the Chamber were signed into law:

- HB 2472 gives DA’s discretion in filing misdemeanor charges for some non-violent crimes.
- HB 2479 removes mandatory minimum sentences for certain drug possession crimes.
- HB 2751 re-classifies several property crimes as misdemeanors.
- HB 2753 allows judges to sentence certain offenders to community service or drug court instead of prison.

Chamber Prevents Economic Hit by Defeating Transgender Bathroom Measure

During the last week of session, the Chamber organized and led an effort to defeat transgender bathroom discrimination legislation that, if passed, would have been devastating to economic development in terms of lost federal funds, business investment, and conventions. North Carolina is expected to lose $5 billion annually in economic activity after passing similar legislation.

Oklahoma’s measure, SB 1619, would have allowed a student with a religious objection to request the use of separate bathroom, shower, or athletic changing facility while denying this right to a transgendered individual. The Chamber immediately engaged to educate legislators on the economic impact of the North Carolina law.

The measure was killed when it failed on a 10-10 vote in the House Joint Committee on Appropriation and Budget.

Legislation Improving the Municipal Board of Adjustment Process Signed Into Law

The Chamber was asked to take the lead on introducing legislation, SB 1341 by Sen. Greg Treat (R-Oklahoma City) and Rep. Jon Echols (R-Oklahoma City), to make improvements to the municipal Board of
Adjustment Appeals process that has been abused in the past. Under the existing BOA process, a person without a property interest in an area under development has the right to file an appeal in state district court that would automatically stay a municipal BOA decision and indefinitely halt development on a project. The subsequent delay resulted in substantial lost economic investment and jobs.

SB 1341, which was unanimously passed by the House and Senate and signed by Gov. Fallin, will stop frivolous appeals of BOA decisions to state district court by requiring those filing an appeal to have some property interest in the outcome and to post bond to cover the cost of delay if the appeal is unsuccessful.

**ODOT’s Eight Year Plan Protected in Tough Budget Environment**

The budget shortfall placed tremendous pressure on protecting funding for the Oklahoma Department of Transportation’s (ODOT) Eight-Year Construction Plan, which includes a historic number of key OKC-area projects. The Chamber strongly supports providing adequate funding for the eight-year plan so this, and other projects critical to economic development, can continue to move forward and be completed without delay.

Despite challenges throughout the session, the FY2017 budget agreement passed by the Legislature provides $200 million in bonds to protect funding for ODOT. With this bond funding, all projects in the current eight-year plan are protected and can move forward as scheduled.

**New Oklahoma Education Standards Adopted**

The Chamber supported the adoption of new Oklahoma education standards. The State Department of Education led an 18-month process, which included extensive public and professional input, to develop the new standards.

The new K-12 education state standards were adopted when the House and Senate passed separate resolutions recommending changes to the standards. Since the resolutions were different, the standards became law.
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Oklahoma National Stockyards Company

For 106 years the Oklahoma National Stockyards Company has been an active embodiment of Oklahoma City’s western roots. Established on Oct. 3, 1910, only three years after Oklahoma was granted statehood, the stockyards have showed amazing vitality in continuing to attract buyers, sellers, visitors, cowboys and everything in between for more than a century.

In 1909, civic leaders Anton Classen and Charles Colcord set out to convince the meat packing industry to locate in Oklahoma City. They approached Morris and Company, a successful meat packing company from Chicago. In 1910, Morris and Company agreed to come to OKC and they built a plant on a 120 acre plot of land west of the river and south of downtown. The Oklahoma National Stockyards Company started its operations as a public livestock market on the same plot of land that same year. Soon after, Amour and Company and Schwartzchild and Sulzberger, two other meat packing companies, also built plants around the stockyards and Packingtown was formed. Packingtown employed 2,400 people during a time when the city had a population of only 60,000.

By 1973, the Oklahoma National Stockyards Company was the biggest market in the nation in terms of livestock handling. With the dawn of the 21st century, most of America’s large stockyards closed. The Oklahoma National Stockyards were one of only six stockyards out of more than two dozen that survived the turn of the century. The others closed due to acquisitions made directly at feedlots or by internet sales. The Oklahoma National Stockyards Company remains the world’s biggest stocker and feeder cattle market.

Today, what was once known as Packingtown is now known as Historic Stockyards City and is on the National Register of Historic Places. While the meat packing plants closed in 1961, many of the same or similar shops around the stockyards are still operational today. Places like Cattlemen’s Steakhouse, the Rodeo Opry, Shorty’s Caboy Hattery and Langston’s Western Wear cater to both visitors and working cowboys. Stockyards City is also the headquarters for the International Professional Rodeo Association. There’s something at Stockyards City for cowboys and cowgirls of all ages.

The Oklahoma City National Stockyards Company is located at 2501 Exchange Ave., just west of Stockyards City’s Main Street. The Oklahoma City National Stockyards Company continues to be a cornerstone of the agriculture industry for Oklahoma City.

Oklahoma National Stockyards Company started its operations in Oklahoma City in 1910.

More than 100 years later, Oklahoma National Stockyards remains the world’s biggest stocker and feeder cattle market.
OKC Ranks No. 1 for Most Affordable Metros for Young Adults

- CareerTrends found the 32 most affordable metros for young adults.
- The average cost for young adults in large metros is $2,571 per month.
- The Oklahoma City estimated monthly budget includes:

  Food: $271
  Healthcare: $189
  Housing: $486
  Other Necessities: $366
  Taxes: $322
  Transportation: $475

For comprehensive Economic Indicators and Regional Data, please visit your Greater Oklahoma City Chamber Economic Development Division www.greateroklahomacity.com/economicindicators or contact Eric Long, Research Economist – (405)297-8976; elong@okcchamber.com

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Source: Economic Policy Institute, CareerTrends, 2016

GRAND OPENINGS

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.

- Metropolitan – OKC Apartments
  800 N. Oklahoma Ave.
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- Freestyle Creative
  2200 N. Broadway St.
  Moore, OK 73160

- Meat Market Refectory
  2920 NW 63rd St.
  Oklahoma City, OK 73116

- Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, Inc.
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  Oklahoma City, OK 73106

- AAA Oklahoma
  3549 W. Memorial Road
  Oklahoma City, OK 73134

- The Specific Chiropractic Center
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- Climb Up OKC
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