

THE POINT

GREATER
OKLAHOMA CITY
CHAMBER



July 2020

www.okcchamber.com

Aerospace startup bringing top-tier engineering jobs

Aerospace company Skydweller Aero Inc. announced the establishment of the company's headquarters and engineering operations in Oklahoma City and testing and integration in Ardmore. Skydweller plans to increase operations to 120 aerospace engineering and field technician jobs in Oklahoma by 2024.

Skydweller has offices in the Washington, D.C., Madrid and Valdepeñas, Spain. This rapidly growing multi-national startup will be recruiting top-tier aerospace and software engineering talent to further the development and deployment of their ultra-persistent, unmanned aircraft in both locations over the coming years.

"We are honored to be moving our corporate headquarters to Oklahoma, following in the footsteps of Oklahoma aviation titans like Wiley Post," said Skydweller CEO Dr. Robert Miller. "Oklahoma's inspired and dedicated engineering talent will help make our vision a reality."



Elevate professional development event is back on Sept. 10



Valorie Burton to be the keynote speaker at this year's Elevate. Elevate, the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber's professional development event, is back for its second year of helping Oklahoma City professionals grow their careers. Due to the Chamber's response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Elevate will be held entirely online on Thursday, Sept. 10, giving attendees the opportunities to experience world-class career coaching from the comfort of their own home or office.

National bestselling author, international speaker and life strategist Valorie Burton will provide the keynote address at this year's Elevate. Valorie is the founder and

CEO of the Coaching and Positive Psychology (CaPP) Institute. Her life-changing message has an intriguing, research-based emphasis in the pioneering field of applied positive psychology – the study of what happens when things go right with us. She teaches that resilience is a skill that can be learned – and anyone who wants to have fulfillment, high impact and success must learn it. Valorie's keynote address "Resilient & Ready: How to Thrive Through Challenge & Change" will help attendees understand and create the building blocks of resilience so they can bounce back from setbacks, withstand pressure and maintain a positive perspective.

The Elevate experience includes two keynote sessions, the attendee's choice of three breakout sessions, access to a virtual expo, a custom attendee profile and personalized agenda, live community chat and a digital happy hour featuring online exhibitors, 1:1 speed networking, live

Continued on page 8



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Leadership Notes

These past few months we all know have been filled with uncertainty and difficulty for many Oklahomans, but we are definitely seeing signs that our city's underlying potential for growth remain strong.

When you consider the long-term economic outlook for the city, our momentum remains. Economic development activity has not slowed, and the Chamber is working with 65 active economic development projects. These projects include aerospace, back office and distribution and logistics projects – and the calls keep coming.

Oklahoma City has so much to offer companies with a pro-business environment that builds dynamic partnerships and innovative collaborations with companies, universities, not-for-profit organizations and government leaders.

The proof of this good news can be seen in two significant announcements since the beginning of the pandemic. Retail giant Costco announced in May their intentions to move their e-commerce and travel back-office operation here and with it 1,500 jobs in the next five years. Skydweller, a cutting-edge drone manufacturer designed for the defense industry, announced they would headquarter here and bring lucrative engineering jobs, building our rapidly growing aerospace industry.

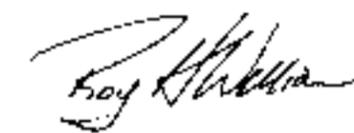
One thing that has been readily noticeable even through these times is the eagerness of Oklahoma City businesses to return to work. In many cases businesses adapted and adjusted their operations to stay in front even when the pandemic's grip was at its tightest.

Recent reports have OKC at No. 1 in the United States for approval rate and disbursements for Paycheck Protection Program loans. Local banks worked in partnership with businesses, rolled up their sleeves, burned the midnight oil and worked non-stop to get OKC businesses in step with the aid requirements at both the local and federal levels. A hearty congratulations to all.

There is great value to our shared commitment to making Oklahoma City one of the greatest cities in the United States. It is definitely a time to keep our foot on the gas as we write our city's next chapter in its proud history.



Roy H. Williams, CCE
President & CEO



Roy H. Williams, CCE
Chamber President & CEO

VELOCITY
 READ ROY'S VELOCITYOKC STORY OF THE MONTH
 "Automobile Alley art"
VELOCITYOKC.COM/ROYSPICK

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THE POINT!

ISSUE #3545 - July 2020

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The Point (ISSN 1075-6264) is published monthly by the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, 123 Park Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK 73102.

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to The Point!, Greater Oklahoma City Chamber

123 Park Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK 73102

or e-mail thepoint@okcchamber.com.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$15 per year included in Chamber membership; nonmembers, \$25 per year within the U.S..

Periodicals Postage paid at Oklahoma City.

Advertising rates upon request.

Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertising.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CALENDAR

(Events are subject to change. Consult www.okcchamber.com/events for the most recent updates.)

July 13

State of Health

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
okcchamber.com/statehealth

July 14

Member Orientation

9 to 10:30 a.m.
okcchamber.com/orientation

July 15

Chamber Forum

11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.
okcchamber.com/julyforum

July 23

MegaLunch

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
okcchamber.com/megalunch

August 7

Enlighten

Noon to 1 p.m.
okcchamber.com/enlighten

August 11

Member Orientation

9 to 10:30 a.m.
okcchamber.com/orientation2

August 12

State of the Schools

Noon to 1:30 p.m.
okcchamber.com/schools

September 10

Elevate

11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
okcelevate.com

CHAMBER FORUM

Monthly Chamber Forum to discuss projects shaping OKC's skyline

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber's monthly Chamber Forum event series continues its programming virtually July 15 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Discussion will center on the projects shaping Oklahoma City's skyline, including information about First National Center, BancFirst Tower and SandRidge Energy's headquarters.

Panelists for the discussion include Jane Jenkins, president and CEO of Downtown OKC, Gary Brooks, president and CEO of Cornerstone Development, LLC and David Harlow, CEO of BancFirst.

Attendees can take part in a 15-minute "virtual table" to create networking opportunities beginning at 11:45 a.m.

Special thanks to Presenting Sponsor Cox Business and Corporate Sponsor ADG. Tickets to the event are \$15 for members and \$25 for nonmembers. For more information visit okcchamber.com/julyforum.

Chamber's MegaLunch returns with virtual format for networking

MegaLunch, an online speed networking event where members get 90 seconds to pitch products or services to other professionals from the comfort of their home or office, is set for July 23.

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber's quarterly event has been moved to a virtual format that will include breakout rooms and a computerized rotation schedule. The event allows participants to meet many new prospects. A total of five rotations will happen to create an ever-changing audience.

The event begins at 11:30 a.m. with breakout rotations starting at 11:45 a.m.

An online event link will be emailed by July 20.

Special members-only tickets are \$15. For more information visit okcchamber.com/megalunch

Special thanks to Host Sponsor Gaillardia Country Club and Networking Event Sponsor Grand Casino Hotel Resort.



Jaime Casap, Google's global education evangelist, is a well-known collaborator with school systems, educational organizations, and leaders focused on building innovation into education policies and practices.

Google education evangelist, speaker panel to share philosophy at State of the Schools address

Chamber members are invited to learn about current trends in education at State of the Schools on Aug. 12. The event's virtual format will allow participants to view from the convenience of their home or work.

This year's keynote speaker is Jaime Casap, Google's global education evangelist. Casap speaks all over the world working with educational organizations around the world, helping them find ways to continuously improve the quality of education by utilizing and enabling technology capabilities.

"Jaime Casap understands the role of technology plays in today's modern education," said Teresa Rose Crook, OKC Chamber vice chair for education. "With what schools and teachers went through this spring to bring material to their students in non-traditional ways, his discussion will be engaging, entertaining and productive."

In addition to Casap's address, a distinguished panel of K-12 and higher education leaders will also provide their insight to the future of education in Oklahoma. The K-12 panel will discuss the 2019-20 school year and how they approached learning in response to the pandemic. The group will also discuss how their districts plan to address the upcoming school year and how their approach to education might be adapted depending on the impact of COVID-19. Panelists include:

- Dr. Sean McDaniel, Superintendent of Oklahoma City Public Schools (OKCPS)
- Brent Bushey, Executive Director of Oklahoma

Public School Resource Center (OPSRC)

- Dr. Nick Migliorino, Superintendent of Norman Public Schools (NPS)
- Bart Banfield, Superintendent of Epic Charter Schools

A second panel discussion with leaders of some of our region's colleges and universities will discuss what they see in the future of higher education as it meets Oklahoma's changing labor demands for college graduates. Higher education panelists include:

- Burns Hargis, President of Oklahoma State University (OSU)
- Joseph Harroz, President of the University of Oklahoma (OU)
- Dr. Martha Burger, President of Oklahoma City University (OCU)
- Dr. Jerry Steward, President of Oklahoma City Community College (OCCC)

Online registration for this event is \$25 for members and \$40 for nonmembers. To purchase, visit www.okcchamber.com/schools.

Special thanks to Presenting Sponsor OU Medicine, School Supply/Teacher Attendance Sponsor American Fidelity Assurance Company, Host Sponsor Epic Charter Schools and Platform Signature Sponsors American Fidelity Assurance Company and Hobby Lobby.

OKC businesses eagerly snap up PPP loans

Oklahoma City-area businesses were quick to take advantage of federal funding relief from the Small Business Association (SBA) through the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), according to data released by SmartAsset.

SmartAsset, a personal finance technology company headquartered in New York City, uses financial modeling to provide advice on major financial decisions, credit monitoring and credit scores.

At the time of the analysis, Oklahoma City ranked No. 1 in the nation for both loan approvals (78%) and loan disbursements (64%). Kansas City was second in both categories with a 77% acceptance rate and 51% loan disbursements. In comparison, San Jose, Calif. ranks near the bottom with 17% of loans distributed.

SmartAsset used data from the Census Bureau's new Small Business Pulse Survey for small businesses for the week spanning April 26 to May 2. Plans are to update each week as data becomes available.

SmartAsset's report was done by calculating PPP loan acceptance rates by dividing the percentage of businesses that received a PPP loan by the percentage of businesses that applied for a loan.

"I think these rankings showcase the dedication of our regional banking community to assist local companies through the process of applying for and processing PPP loans," said W. Kent Shortridge, Greater Oklahoma City Chamber vice chair for economic development and vice president of operations for Oklahoma Natural Gas. "The willingness of so many local teams to work tirelessly to help small businesses complete their applications quickly and get them the funds needed to help them through this crisis was amazing. I can't thank these partners enough for their efforts."

Overseen by the Small Business Administration (SBA), the PPP is the largest fixture

of federal coronavirus financial relief programs. The program provides forgivable loans to small businesses, defined as those with fewer than 500 employees, to cover payroll and associated costs.

One of Oklahoma City's businesses that were among the first to take advantage of the PPP offerings was Chamber member Vox Printing, Inc.

"The PPP Loan has been very beneficial to Vox Printing since it can be a forgivable loan. It made the most sense for our company," said David Reid, president of Vox Printing. "All the other options we had were loans that needed to be repaid. The PPP loan allowed Vox to keep all of our employees on the payroll during the toughest part of the COVID-19 shutdown."

Reid said the process went relatively smoothly once the federal government got the guidelines so his bank could process the application accurately.

"Kirkpatrick Bank has been our bank for over 20 years and was very helpful in securing the PPP loan in the first round," Reid said. "They gave us a list of what was needed and kept in touch all the way through. We were updated on the status and funding came quicker than I thought it would. It was a relatively simple process from start to finish."

More details about the data and a complete look at the rankings and how the data was gathered can be found at SmartAsset.com.

Places With the Highest PPP Loan Acceptance Rates, as of May 2, 2020

Rank	City	Rate
1	Oklahoma City, OK	78.0%
2	Kansas City, MO-KS	77.5%
3	Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI	71.5%
4	Birmingham-Hoover, AL	70.7%
5	Milwaukee-Waukesha, WI	70.1%
6	St. Louis, MO-IL	67.5%
7	Indianapolis-Carmel-Anderson, IN	66.3%
8	Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News, VA-NC (Tie)	66.0%
9	Louisville, KY-IN (TIE)	66.0%
10	Buffalo-Cheektowaga, NY	66.0%

SOURCE: Small Business Pulse Survey, Survey Week April 26, 2020 - May 2, 2020
NOTE: Tie indicates that these metro areas had the same PPP loan acceptance rate.

OK Contemporary phased reopening not lessening excitement for brand new museum

Oklahoma Contemporary Arts Center is working through a phased opening plan so guests can have their first chance to visit the new museum.

On March 12, the day before its scheduled grand opening, Oklahoma Contemporary's management closed its doors to help slow the spread of the COVID-19 virus. As Oklahoma City businesses and organizations grapple with out to best open while coronavirus cases climb, the arts center is working double-time to bring the museum to the public in the safest way possible.

"We have spent the weeks following the public health emergency consulting with medical professionals, civic officials and peer organizations. We have developed a data-based, phased plan to support our local arts community, expand our digital programming and, eventually, open our doors to the public," said Eddie Walker, Oklahoma Contemporary executive director.

The arts center's new 4.6-acre campus is located at 11 NW 11th St. The 54,000-square-foot building is home to galleries, classroom studios, performance spaces, community lounge, café and outdoor spaces.

"We are eager to share our incredible exhibitions, engaging art classes and new programs. But the well-being of our community comes first. In light of the continuing threat, we decided to cancel all programs and remain closed through at least mid-July," Walker said.

If conditions allow, late in the summer, Oklahoma Contemporary will begin offering free timed ticketing to inaugural exhibitions Bright Golden Haze and Shadow on the Glare. The exhibitions have been extended



The 54,000-square-foot building is home to galleries, classroom studios, performance spaces, community lounge, café and outdoor spaces to ensure something for everyone.

through the fall to allow more time for visitors to experience the blockbuster shows.

In the interim, the ramping up of creative digital content and programs has increased through Contemporary's blog, New Light, and on social media, according to Lori Brooks, director of communications. Through biweekly interviews, livestreamed videos and other engaging content, readers get an inside glimpse into the creative working processes of contemporary artists at home and in Oklahoma Contemporary's studio facilities.

"Our staff is now returning to our facilities, which will allow us to share even more virtual exhibition tours and workshops, projects with local artists and other programs," Brooks said. "This creative content will allow our visitors to engage even more deeply with the new arts center and the artists."

Computer coding camp set for July 6 launch date

Through a partnership with the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, a New Mexico-based computer-coding nonprofit organization is launching its first city-based camp here.

Cultivating Coders is partnering with Millwood Public Schools and Metro Tech Academy's Springlake campus to offer its eight-week all-virtual training camp to 20 students, ranging in age from 15 to 18 years old beginning July 6.

The organization sets itself apart from others teaching coding by bringing its classes to the students, whether that student is living in a rural area or on a tribal reservation. The Oklahoma City launch is the first time Cultivating Coders has brought the camp to the center of a major city. Students are given a laptop to participate in the program, where they'll learn web application development fundamentals and technical training. These skills are highly sought by Cultivating Coder's partnering companies that include Microsoft, AT&T, Facebook and Pixegon.

During the Oklahoma City camp, students will help solve a problem presented by another Cultivating Coder partner, Rural Sourcing, Inc. The company opened its Oklahoma City office in May 2019.

Film/television production industry readies for business of “show business” to bounce back

As states around the nation ease lockdown measures to flatten the COVID-19 curve, the Oklahoma film industry is aggressively pushing to get back in the business of “show business.” The health crisis has proven just how much the entertainment industry means to Americans who are eager to see new programming on their television screen, streaming service or their favorite movie theater.

While cast and crews across the state are eager to return to work “when safety protocols are put in place,” they continue to find more and more opportunities here thanks to Oklahoma’s efforts to accelerate the industry’s growth.

In 2019, Oklahoma passed into law a measure allowing films to rebate up to 37 percent of their costs incurred for filming in the state for the next eight years. The yearly limit was doubled to \$8 million.

The result?

Last year a record 39 film and television productions took place in the state. The productions generated \$75 million for the state economy. In contrast, five years ago, the state had five film projects with a \$3 million direct-spending impact, according to Tava Sofsky, director of Oklahoma Film + Music.

“We are so grateful for the momentum we have now,” Sofsky said. “It speaks to the certainty and the longevity the industry is promised here. It tells our workforce they can indeed stick around and continue to shoot in Oklahoma. Externally, it tells studios and producers that are shopping sites that Oklahoma is a place that can sustain the production to its conclusion.”

Because of the momentum the film industry is experiencing the OK+MO has successfully attracted the private sector to help work with state legislators to introduce new legislation.

Rep. Jason Dunnington (D-Oklahoma City) authored HB3921, which passed the State House and would have introduced a new tax credit with a \$50 million annual cap for productions with a budget over \$5 million. However, the measure was tabled as a result of the COVID-19 shutdown.



Oklahoma Film + Music Director Tava Sofsky believes the industry is ready to make its turn after the ease of restrictions put in place following the COVID-19 epidemic.

With the employment hardships as a result of the COVID-19 shutdown, Sofsky has directed her staff to assist in the recruitment of locals who may be interested in learning more about the business.

“Unfortunately, there are so many people who are now unemployed due to the pandemic and may be looking to pivot their career fields,” Sofsky said.

Elevate is back on Sept. 10 (cont'd from pg 1)

music and more. Breaks throughout the day will highlight Oklahoma City’s arts scene and will feature yoga and other movement sessions from Oklahoma City trainers.

Access to Elevate is available in three ticket tiers depending on what suits your needs. The Essential ticket package is \$49 for Chamber members and \$69 for nonmembers and includes day-of access to Elevate. The Preferred ticket package, which is \$99 for Chamber members and \$119 for nonmembers, also includes access to a replay of all general and breakout sessions for one month following the event and a VIP swag box delivered to your home or office. The Premier ticket tier includes all of the benefits already mentioned plus an additional live masterclass with keynote speaker Valorie Burton.

To purchase tickets, visit OKCElevate.com. Special thanks to Aspiration Sponsor OGE Energy Corp.

Convention and Visitors Bureau leader announces retirement after lengthy career in industry

Mike Carrier, President of the Oklahoma City Convention and Visitors Bureau has announced his retirement after a 35-year career in the hospitality industry. Carrier has led the Bureau (operated by the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber) since 2007.

“Mike was the right leader for our community as we developed, planned and built our new convention center,” explained Roy Williams, President and CEO of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber. “His extensive background combined convention sales and facility management and made him the ideal candidate. He has proven to be a leader that could dig in and bring our community’s vision to life.”

Carrier has led the bureau during a time of tremendous growth in the region’s hospitality industry. The economic impact of tourism in Oklahoma County alone has grown from \$2.1 billion a year to \$2.45 billion a year during the time he was here. Growth can be seen in multiple metrics – the number of hotel rooms is up by 31% and

hotel motel tax revenues (at 5.5%) are up by 44%. The hospitality industry became the fastest-growing sector of our economy.

Carrier’s departure on September 30 comes just as Oklahoma City is putting the final touches on its new convention center.

“I was so fortunate to close my career in such a dynamic environment,” Carrier said. “This community understands the potential meetings and tourism bring for the economy and for presenting our city to the as a world class destination. I am so proud to have been a part of creating America’s next go-to meetings destination.”



Mike Carrier, President of the Oklahoma City Convention and Visitors Bureau

OBRP taking applications for businesses seeking financial assistance through \$50 million grant

Grants of up to \$25,000 are part of a newly available plan through an allocation of funds through the Federal CARES Act program to aid businesses in overcoming the economic challenges they are facing as a result of the COVID-19 shutdown.

The Oklahoma Business Relief Program (OBRP), a \$50 million grant to offer vital funding for businesses that have suffered revenue loss, was made possible by allocations approved by Gov. Kevin Stitt.

The grants are a first-come, first-serve basis. There are no mandates for the expenditures, but funds must be used for business expenses such as grant payroll, inventory, equipment and working capital. At least 20 percent is earmarked to minority-owned businesses, according to the Oklahoma Department of Commerce.

Oklahoma businesses can request to apply for OBRP through participating financial institutions now. From that point, the financial institutions will evaluate

applications based on the program rules and determine if the business is eligible.

Approved applications will be submitted by the financial institution to the Oklahoma Department of Commerce. Applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, and funds will be provided to the business through the financial institution.

During the first phase of applications, at least 20% of the program funds will be designated for minority-owned businesses. The Phase I application deadline is July 20 with fund distributions beginning July 17.

The business may choose from an average of 2019 total payroll, or an average of Jan.-Feb 2020 payroll.

Further dates will be announced after the first round of applications are received. For more information businesses should email obrp@okcommerce.gov or visit the OBRP website.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Businesses who join the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber are part of the largest coalition of businesses in the state and make the Chamber's work in the community possible. Each member level is identified on the listing below.

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Mr. Joseph Magana 443-0588
1401 N. Lincoln Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104-2801

ADVISOR

Employer Advocates
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Mr. Joel Gargus 896-7788
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www.trustheartland.com

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1116 W. Park Place
Oklahoma City, OK 73106-4620
www.sirenmediaokc.com

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Oklahoma ranked in the Top 5 States with the Best Health Infrastructure for COVID-19

States with the Best Health Infrastructure for Coronavirus

Overall Rank	State	Total Score
1	North Dakota	71.37
2	West Virginia	64.38
3	Mississippi	61.69
4	Tennessee	61.60
5	Oklahoma	61.58

Source: WalletHub 2020; U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

- Oklahoma is ranked No. 5 for best health infrastructure for the Coronavirus.
- To help determine their ranking, WalletHub compared all 50 states using 14 unique metrics.
- Those metrics included, but were not limited to the following:
 - Public Health Emergency Preparedness Funding per Capita
 - Number of Hospital Beds per Capita
 - Emergency Centers and Services per Capita

For comprehensive Economic Indicators and Regional Data, www.greateroklahomacity.com/economicindicators or contact Eric Long, Research Economist – 297-8976; elong@okcchamber.com

Members Upgrade Their Support of the Chamber

The following member companies increased their investment in the Chamber, demonstrating strong support of the Chamber's efforts to drive the region's economy. To increase your investment, contact the membership division of the Chamber at 405-297-8949 or membership@okcchamber.com.

PARTNER+

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ymcaokc.org



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To learn more about our resources for making it work, visit coxbusiness.com/working or call (405) 286-5000.

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