

→ VELOCITY

MAY 2022 • OKCCHAMBER.COM

GREATER
OKLAHOMA CITY
CHAMBER

CAMPAIGN ANNOUNCED TO SUPPORT COUNTY JAIL INITIATIVE

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber announced the formation of a campaign committee to encourage passage of the county bond issue to build a new jail and detention center.

The resolution calls for a \$260 million bond issue to fund the construction. These bonds would take the place of retiring bonds and could be sold without increasing the rate of property taxes for residents.

Clay Bennett, Chairman of the Oklahoma City Thunder, is leading the effort. “Our community has worked together to make great strides in reducing

incarceration in our county jail, and while there is more work to do, none of that work will fix the inherent problems with our current facility. We cannot put this decision off any longer,” he said.

The business community has been engaged in criminal justice reform since 2016.

“We have created such a vibrant city,” Bennett continued “But we aren’t finished. This work will improve our public safety, but also provide for mental health treatment, addiction and recovery, job training and other programs that divert people from incarceration to life as a productive member of our community.”

The committee, Fix Our Jail 2022, is chaired by Bennett. Tony Tyler, Tyler Media, is the campaign’s Treasurer.

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OKC CHAMBER PREPARING TO HELP SHOWCASE CITY’S BIO ECOSYSTEM AT BIO 2022

Oklahoma City has steadily – and intentionally – transformed itself into an emerging bioscience and biotechnology player over the last few decades, garnering attention from across the nation and globe. One national publication earlier this year even named Oklahoma City as one of five emerging life science development hubs. That notoriety did not happen by accident, nor has it been an easy path. Rather, it has been realized through the cooperative and collaborative efforts from a number of public and private entities and leaders, all of whom understood the importance of diversifying Oklahoma City’s economy in this increasingly global marketplace.



A good example of how public and private entities and individuals are coming together to help grow Oklahoma City’s bio industry is by attending the Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO) International Convention each year. This year’s convention will be held June 13-16 in San Diego and will provide

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Nursing at OU Health means I pick a schedule that works for me.



Safia Franks, RN
Cardiology

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Nursing at OU Health means you have flexibility in your schedule through innovative programs – created by nurses and made for nurses. We are dedicated to creating and fostering a strong culture of collaboration and patients-first mentality in our hospitals and clinics. We know that when you put the patients first, everything else falls into place.

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- OU Health Education Accelerator Program

Apply today by visiting OUHealth.com/Nursing. Job opportunities are available in all areas of adult and pediatric care, oncology and more, in hospital and clinical care settings, including OU Health University of Oklahoma Medical Center, Oklahoma Children's Hospital OU Health, OU Health Edmond Medical Center and OU Health Stephenson Cancer Center.

As an integrated academic health system, interested nurses can practice at OU Health and seek a faculty appointment at the OU Fran and Earl Ziegler College of Nursing.



LEADERSHIP NOTES

LEADERSHIP NOTES: ONWARD OKC ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Last month, five of the largest CareerTech centers in the Greater Oklahoma City metro announced the formation of Onward OKC, a new compact designed to allow for better, more streamlined access to training for both businesses and employees alike. (You can find more information about this compact on the story on page 7).

How did this compact come about? The Chamber's Talent and Business Growth team spends a great deal of time talking with and listening to local business owners and managers, surveying them on their needs, barriers to growth, what's working for them and what's not in our local economy and ecosystem. One of the things we heard was although the managers that had worked with our CareerTech system often found they were able to provide superb training and other services for businesses and their employees, many times businesses were confused about which CareerTech was responsible for what types of education, whom to contact, and how the system worked, especially when employees may need vastly different types of skills or perhaps across multiple locations. In short, often it was not a "customer-friendly" experience for businesses.

To their credit, when faced with this information, our local CareerTech leadership stepped up to make positive changes to the overall experience for customers and reduce some naturally occurring competitiveness that had crept in between their respective entities over the years. As you can imagine, cultural change of any sort is not an easy thing to accomplish, yet it was the right thing to do, and these leaders delivered.

Like many of our successes in Oklahoma City over the years, this is yet another example of the progress we can make when we work together and pull on the same rope. I want to congratulate and thank these leaders for their foresight and magnanimity in putting the needs of their students and businesses first, again creating a success story borne from a spirit of partnership, working together to make Oklahoma City better. This is something I hope we do not lose sight of as we continue to grow.



Roy H. Williams, CCE
Chamber President & CEO



Roy H. Williams, CCE
President & CEO



▶▶▶ **READ ROY'S VELOCITYOKC ONLINE STORY OF THE MONTH**

"TALK OF THE TOWN: FIRST NATIONAL CENTER REDEFINES OKC'S EPICENTER"

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UPCOMING EVENTS

CALENDAR

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

MAY 13

State of Health
10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Oklahoma City Convention Center
100 Mick Cornett Dr.
okcchamber.com/statehealth

MAY 18

Chamber Forum
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Vast
333 W Sheridan Ave.
okcchamber.com/mayforum

JUNE 14

Inclusion at Work
3:30 to 5 p.m.
Zoom
okcchamber.com/inclusionatwork

JUNE 15

Chamber Forum
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Vast
333 W Sheridan Ave.
okcchamber.com/juneforum

JULY 14

State of the City
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Oklahoma City Convention Center
100 Mick Cornett Dr.
okcchamber.com/soc

JULY 20

Chamber Forum
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Vast
333 W Sheridan Ave.
okcchamber.com/julyforum

Still time to register for Chamber's State of Health event slated for May 13

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber's annual State of Health event is about a week away, but that does not mean you won't be able to attend this informative, worthwhile event. Tickets are still available!

Come hear health care futurist and marketing leader Chris Bevolo as keynote speaker during the State of Health event, which will run from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. May 13 at the downtown Oklahoma City Convention Center.



Chris Bevolo

Bevolo has provided leadership and guidance in the areas of strategy, brand, marketing, digital and change management to hospitals and health systems across the country for more than 20 years. An award-winning author, his latest book is "Joe Public 2030: Five Potent Predictions Reshaping How Consumers Engage Healthcare."

In his keynote address, Bevolo will explore ways in which consumer health engagement may change over the coming decade and offer an in-depth look into one of the predictions called The Funnel Wars. Registered attendees will also receive exclusive access to a virtual meeting conducted by Bevolo, where he will dive deeper into all five predictions reshaping how consumers engage health care. The virtual meeting will be June 8 from noon to 1 p.m.

State of Health attendees will also hear from a panel of local health care leaders discussing the impact of the past year on their institutions and the outlook for the health care industry's growth in 2022 and beyond. Participating in the panel will be:

- Jim Gebhart, President, Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City
- Dr. Kevin Lewis, President, SSM Health Medical Group
- Dr. Richard Lofgren, President & CEO, OU Health
- Timothy Pehrson, President & CEO, INTEGRIS Health

Attendees will also get an opportunity to connect with Chamber-member exhibitors aligned with the health care industry before and after the scheduled luncheon. Nearly 30 companies have already signed up! Exhibitor tables are available on a first-come, first-served basis for \$300 for members and \$600 for nonmembers. Each table includes one skirted table and two chairs. To purchase an exhibitor table, email register@okcchamber.com.

Individual tickets to attend the State of Health event are \$60 for members and \$85 for nonmembers. Sponsor tables of eight with additional recognition are available for \$1,500. To register for State of Health, or to inquire about sponsor tables, call 405-297-8921 or visit okcchamber.com/statehealth.

Special thanks to Presenting Sponsor MidFirst Bank and Host Sponsor OU Health.

Updates on MAPS 4 program and new county jail vote on tap for upcoming Chamber Forums

Attendees of the May and June Chamber Forums will get to hear the latest news and information concerning two game-changing initiatives in Oklahoma City: MAPS 4 and a new county jail.

Oklahoma City voters approved MAPS 4 in December 2019. The program, which is being funded by a temporary penny sales tax over the next eight years, is expected to raise almost a billion dollars for parks, youth centers, mental health care and other social services aimed at improving quality of life in Oklahoma City.

During the May 18th Chamber Forum, attendees will hear from a panel of city leaders as they provide an update on the 16 transformative projects included in the MAPS 4 program. Scheduled to participate in the panel discussion are:

- Jason Cotton, Director of Program Management, ADG
- Teresa Rose, JD, MAPS 4 Citizen's Advisory Board
- David Todd, MAPS Program Manager, City of Oklahoma City

Those attending the June Chamber Forum on the 15th will hear from a panel comprised of county officials who will discuss the latest on the June 28 vote that, if approved, will fund a new county jail for Oklahoma County. The new facility will ensure public safety,

provide for job training, mental health treatment and more. Participants in that panel will include:

- Carrie Blumert, Commissioner – District 1, Oklahoma County
- Jim Couch, Jail Trust Chairman, Oklahoma County Criminal Justice Authority
- Tommie Johnson III, Sheriff, Oklahoma County

The cost to attend the May and June Chamber Forums is \$40 for Chamber members and \$50 for nonmembers. Chamber Forum half-season ticket packages are also still available, which are good for five Chamber Forums at a discounted rate of \$175. To purchase a half-season ticket package, you can do so by emailing register@okcchamber.com or calling 405-297-8921.

To register for the May Forum, visit okcchamber.com/mayforum. If you would like to also register for the June Forum, please go to okcchamber.com/juneforum.

The Chamber Forum series brings thought leaders together to discuss major initiatives, programs and current issues that impact Oklahoma City's business climate, economy and community.

Special thanks to our Series Presenting Sponsor Cox Business and Series Corporate Sponsor ADG.

Mayor Holt to provide State of the City address July 14

Oklahoma City continues trending upwards as one of the top-performing cities in the nation. And the accolades keep pouring in, espousing Oklahoma City as one of the America's best cities in which to live and work.

On Thursday, July 14, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt will join business and community leaders at the Oklahoma City Convention Center for a unique opportunity to be informed about Oklahoma City's key projects and initiatives, and be inspired about its future development and opportunities.

Tickets for this annual event are \$60 for Chamber members and \$100 for nonmembers. To register or learn more, visit okcchamber.com/soc. Sponsor tables of eight with additional recognition are available for \$1,500. Please contact Suzette Ellison Jordan at sellison@okcchamber.com for table sponsor inquiries.

Special thanks to Presenting Sponsor The Professional Basketball Club, LLC - Oklahoma City Thunder and Host Sponsor Express Employment Professionals.



The campaign is building a coalition of organizations to support the effort. “We are reaching out across the county to develop support for this initiative,” said Tyler. “This vote is important for every community of our county, from Edmond to Bethany, from Midwest City to Harrah. We look forward to working with communities countywide to ensure passage.”

More information about the campaign can be found at www.FixTheJail.com.



INTERNOKC WILL BENEFIT INTERNS, BUSINESSES

Students attending the Chamber’s summer internship program, InternOKC, will have an opportunity to receive sage advice and training from a lineup of accomplished business professionals.

Started in 2006, InternOKC is a way for students to discover the benefits of living and working in Greater Oklahoma City, while fostering peer networking and providing resources to help interns transition from college student to young professional.

The overall core competencies that are driving the session content for this summer’s InternOKC came out of the Chamber’s engagement with Oklahoma City employers to identify common gaps and needs they could target.

JUNE 14 – OKLAHOMA CITY CONVENTION CENTER

Learn how adopting the right habits and practices will have a significant impact on your career development

Speaker: Mayor David Holt, City of Oklahoma City, and young professional panel participants Perrin Duncan, Arnall Family Foundation; Farhad Hameed, The Boeing

Company; Crystal Garcia, Strata Leadership; Roderick Wright, Public Strategies; and Liz Zaleski, Love’s Travel Stops & Country Stores, Inc.

JUNE 28 – CHAMPION CONVENTION CENTER

How to navigate and form relationships that build your career and make a positive difference in those around you

Speakers: J.D. Baker, Cortado Ventures, and Jessica Martinez-Brooks, Metro Technology Centers

JULY 12 – FIRST AMERICANS MUSEUM

Build a mindset and perspective that builds resiliency, solves problems and makes a positive impact on your career and on others

Speakers: Ashleigh Robinson, Miss Oklahoma 2021, and Ariel Moore, Oklahoma State University-OKC Oklahoma City

To register your interns for InternOKC, visit internokc.com. The registration fee per intern is \$150 for Chamber members or \$250 for nonmembers.

Special thanks to Presenting Sponsor Love’s Travel Stops & Country Stores, Inc.

NEW ONWARD OKC COMPACT LEVERAGING COMBINED RESOURCES OF FIVE OKC-AREA TECH CENTERS



Imagine you are an Oklahoma City business owner or executive looking for training classes for your employees through your local career technology center. You contact them only to find out they cannot help you simply because they do not offer that training, or they can't help you because your business is not located within their specific district boundary. A business's request to use services at a tech center outside of their designated district could then take up to a month to be resolved.

For years, scenarios like what was described above were not that uncommon between OKC's career technology centers and business and industry. It was frustrating for the companies but also frustrating to the tech centers who did not want to appear rigid or difficult to work with as perceived by some in the business community. That reputation has sometimes even affected Oklahoma City's ability to effectively recruit companies to the metro.

Officials with the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber shared with superintendents from all the local technology centers that some of the businesses they were trying to lure to OKC said they were having a hard time working with the tech centers and were frustrated with the whole process. That initial conversation with the Chamber was an eye-opener for the superintendents who then decided to do something about it.

Canadian Valley, Francis Tuttle, Metro Tech, Mid-Del and Moore Norman technology centers began working with the Chamber and each other to get to the root of the problem of why businesses were finding it difficult to access training and services. Most importantly, the schools wanted to find a way to better serve their customers.

"What we figured out is that we had some measures in place that were put there so that each of CareerTechs could celebrate success," said Canadian Valley Technology Center Superintendent Gayla Lutts. "We would collect data for each respective tech center and celebrate how many classes we had done, for example.

But what happened was that that created competition among all of the tech centers, which was not healthy and was not benefiting us and especially business and industry."

The many meetings and discussions that ensued with superintendents and their business directors led to a culture-changing compact among the five CareerTechs called Onward OKC. Now, instead of competing against each other, the tech centers actually collaborate with one another without any regard to district boundaries, leveraging the combined resources of each tech center to directly deliver the type of workforce training businesses want, regardless of their location in the metro.

Mid-Del Technology Center Superintendent Rick Mendenhall noted how Onward OKC will impact the number of short-term classes the tech centers will now be able to offer adult learners.

"At Mid-Del, as an example, we offered about 110 fast-track classes last year, but through the Onward OKC compact, we are now able to offer about 1,900 collectively in those short-term type courses to put people to work immediately," Mendenhall said.

With the new compact now in place, the Chamber can explain to potential clients that the Chamber has a real relationship with the technology centers and, with confidence, be able to tell them that they will be able to provide their company with the training they need.

Businesses interested in more information about CareerTech business services in the Oklahoma City metro area can visit the compact website at onwardokc.com.



attendees with ample opportunities to network with thousands of global biotechnology and pharmaceutical leaders and companies. Under the OKBio banner, Oklahoma will have its own exhibit space at BIO 2022 to promote Oklahoma and its growing bioscience and biotechnology industry. Officials representing many of OKC's leading bio companies will be in attendance, as will the Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation, Oklahoma State University and i2E, a private, not-for-profit corporation working directly with entrepreneurs, researchers and companies to help them commercialize their technologies, launch and grow new businesses and access needed capital.

Many Oklahoma City residents understand what a thriving bioscience sector means for the long-term economic viability of OKC. For instance, one of the 16 projects approved by OKC voters as part of the Metropolitan Area Projects (MAPS) 4 initiative is a \$10 million matching grant that will go toward the construction of an innovation hall in the city's Innovation District. The innovation hall will serve as a central place where activities to grow Oklahoma City's innovation economy can be facilitated.

"This show continues to be one of the largest bio-specific tradeshows in the world and provides us with opportunities to highlight existing companies, technologies and partnerships working in the space and to have conversations with potential new investors. In addition, it is a great opportunity to showcase our capacity in this space," said Jeff Seymour, the Chamber's executive vice president of economic development.

This entrepreneurial spirit has served Oklahoma City well as OKC's bioscience and biotechnology sector has

grown into a nearly \$7 billion industry and boasting a workforce of approximately 50,000. Oklahoma City is poised for continued growth in the bioscience and biotechnology sector with established bioscience players such as OMRF, where researchers have made groundbreaking discoveries for several major human diseases; the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and its seven medical schools; pharmaceutical manufacturer Cytovance Biologics; and relative newcomer and bio-manufacturer Wheeler Labs, who in 2020 developed Oklahoma's first at-home COVID-19 test.

An array of Oklahoma City companies have already established their own footprint within the bioscience and technology space, and there are a variety of startups that are on their way to achieving success and creating their own unique footprint as part of this incredibly important sector. It is no surprise then that they and other fellow startups, not only in the bio world but in other emerging or established business sectors, had their genesis in OKC. After all, OKC has developed a reputation of being a great place for startups. In fact, one recent publication named OKC as the No. 12 city for startups, while another named OKC as an emerging future hub for life sciences development.

With such a conducive environment in Oklahoma City for established companies and startups alike to succeed, bio companies have sprung up around Oklahoma City in recent years, including Moleculera Labs, which has been around for almost a decade, and recent startups ParaNano Wound Care and Excitant.

MOLECULERA LABS

Moleculera Labs has been an integral part of the Oklahoma City biotechnology scene for almost a decade, conducting research and blood testing on infection-triggered autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders. Through a panel of five tests researched by University of Oklahoma Professor and Co-Founder Dr. Madeline Cunningham, it was commercially developed, validated, and launched by Moleculera Labs. This patented panel allows clinicians to determine if a patient's neuropsychiatric disorder is being caused by autoimmune antibodies triggered by an infection and attacking parts of their brain or nervous system. Knowing this information allows clinicians to treat the root of the problem rather than just the symptoms, said Moleculera CEO, Co-Founder and OU Professor Dr. Craig Shimasaki.

“I like to use the tack theory analogy, that if you are sitting on a tack, the treatment isn’t two Advil every four to six hours; the treatment for tack-sitting is tack removal. For individuals who test positive, instead of just treating the symptoms with neuropsychiatric drugs, their doctor treats the underlying subclinical infections and the dysfunctional immune system. We hear some amazing recoveries as these patients get remarkably well, even if they have been suffering for many years,” Shimasaki said.

Shimasaki shared a case of a 15-year-old girl diagnosed with schizophrenia who was on psychiatric medications, in and out of psychiatric institutions, and not improving. Doctors ran the Cunningham Panel of tests and discovered she was suffering from an autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorder with autoantibodies attacking her brain. The girl was treated with immunotherapy and plasmapheresis (replacing or removing antibodies), and within two weeks she was back to normal playing tennis and off all psychiatric medications.

Moleculera Labs has tested more than 13,000 patients from all over the world since its inception and has generated about \$10 million in cumulative revenue, according to Shimasaki, and he said they are just getting started.

PARANANO WOUND CARE

ParaNano Wound Care was formed in 2018 by University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) graduate Chelsea Larsen, CEO, who has successfully cofounded three companies, and Maurice Haff, CTO, who teaches entrepreneurship and innovation courses at the university and has successfully started three technology-based companies. He is also a registered patent agent.

ParaNano Wound Care has developed a special nanofiber membrane based on technologies licensed from UCO and the University of Manitoba. Larsen calls the membrane a biosensor that can detect whether a chronic wound, such as a diabetic foot ulcer, is developing an infection. The biosensor will change color if it detects a rise in bacteria within the wound. Early detection and color change will alert patients or their caregivers to contact the physician in order to treat the infection in enough time to prevent other, more serious complications.

Larsen said they are currently working with Oklahoma State University’s New Product Development Center to help develop the biosensor, along with the University of Manitoba to help them improve the sensitivity of the biosensor. Larsen also won the Wound Shark Pitch competition at the Symposium on Advanced Wound Care spring conference in Phoenix, Ariz., last month. ParaNano Wound Care was one of just four startups out of 22 applicants selected to give a pitch presentation for their company or product.

“It was a great experience and further validated that the product we are commercializing will make a huge impact in [the wound care] industry,” Larsen said. “We treated this conference as somewhat of coming-out party since we have been operating a little under the radar.”

EXCITANT THERAPEUTICS

Started in 2018 by three University of Oklahoma researchers – Dr. Jay Ma, Dr. Adam Duerfeldt and Dr. Henry Shin – Excitant Therapeutics’ mission is to develop an oral drug that can more effectively treat diabetic retinopathy (DR) and age-related macular degeneration (AMD). There are currently no FDA-approved oral drugs to treat either DR or AMD. The only drug treatment available for patients with these eye diseases is through invasive eye injections.

According to Dr. Shin, since Excitant officially began operating in 2019, the pharmaceutical company has received approximately \$1 million in Small Business Innovative Research grants from the National Eye Institute to help them continue their research. The SBIR program is highly competitive for companies looking to commercialize their innovations.

“Startups like Excitant may be small, but we focus on the transformational technology that could improve health-related quality of life for millions of people and create ripples in the economy,” Shin said. “We envision that our experience, and hopefully success, will ultimately pay back to Oklahoma’s bioscience ecosystem for even more growth and innovation.”

Moleculera Labs has tested more than 13,000 patients from all over the world since its inception and has generated about \$10 million in cumulative revenue.



ICSC SHOW WILL HELP CHAMBER, CITY PROMOTE OKC AS RETAIL DESTINATION

Attendees at a past ICSC show gather at the Oklahoma City booth. This year's ICSC show is May 22-24 in Las Vegas.

Greater Oklahoma City Chamber staff, along with Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt and other city leaders, will be in Las Vegas May 22-24 for ICSC 2022, one of the nation's largest and most relevant conventions for retailers and developers.

ICSC is a trade association comprised of members from the marketplace industry, whose mission is to “promote and elevate the marketplaces where people shop, dine, work, play and gather as foundational and vital ingredients of communities and economies.”

Tammy Fate, the Chamber's senior manager of retail development and recruitment, said being at the ICSC show is a great way for her and other OKC representatives to meet with various retailers and developers who may be looking to expand or move elsewhere.

“We were one of just 14 cities across the U.S. that grew by over 100,000 people in the last 10 years, and so we are on more people's radar screen,” Fate said. “We weathered the pandemic so well that a lot of companies on the East Coast and West Coast are really starting to focus in and realize that Oklahoma City is a hidden jewel, and there is a lot of opportunity – and it's affordable to live here.”

While at ICSC, the Chamber will showcase the city in their own exhibit space, joining close to 900 other exhibitors in the Las Vegas Convention Center.

“There is a big delegation from Oklahoma City going. We have two big meeting rooms within our booth that have large monitors for presentations. Outside our booth we will have touchscreens set up. It really kind of helps

display and showcase Oklahoma City in the best light. The exhibit places Oklahoma City in front of all kinds of major retail brands and developers,” Fate said.

Last year's ICSC event occurred much later in the year and was much smaller than past shows, mainly due to the pandemic. But despite those challenges, Fate deemed ICSC 2021 a rousing success, noting that Oklahoma City has had two site visits already in the first quarter of 2022 following that show.

“Anytime we can increase quality of life, enhance placemaking and make Oklahoma City a place where people want to be, it ultimately leads to an increase in sales tax collections, which is what fuels our general fund. To continue to have that kind of investment in Oklahoma City is critical. Retail is the foundation that helps drive the general fund to pay for things like police, fire, public safety and keeping our city clean,” Fate said.

If there was one thing Fate would consider for the 2022 ICSC to be a successful event for the Chamber and Oklahoma City, it would be getting at least one site visit from either a developer or retailer that has never been to Oklahoma City.

“We are such a big city, and we have many areas where there is a lack of amenities and food service or grocery or soft retailers,” she said. “Being able to tell that story helps us because we are such a large city. It's a bit hard for people to understand our market if they are not from here. So it's about walking side by side with developers and retailers and engaging in those conversations.”

LOCAL BUSINESSES AFFECTED BY PANDEMIC CAN BENEFIT FROM PROGRAMS

To find out how to submit an RFQ to provide technical services as part of the Oklahoma City Small Business Continuity Program, or to apply for the OKC Rescue Program, visit the Alliance's website at theallianceokc.org.

Looking for a new revenue stream or client? Local businesses affected by the pandemic can help or be helped by programs offered through the Alliance for Economic Development of Oklahoma City.

Part of the OKC Small Business Continuity Program, created in response to the challenges of the pandemic, is the city's Small Business Technical Assistance Program, which provides qualified small businesses with the services of local subject-matter experts from a pre-qualified pool for technical assistance services including establishing sound accounting and bookkeeping practices, marketing and website development, legal

assistance, help with HR and employment best practices, strategy and operations consulting, and more.

In addition, the Oklahoma City Rescue Program supports façade improvements and other exterior building improvements for some affected businesses. The improvements have a \$25,000 cap and will be reimbursed to the small business owner after submission of paid invoices. Some of these services may require engineering/architectural services. Small business owners may also apply for technical assistance help, providing up to \$15,000 for various services such as marketing new websites, HR, financial, business planning, and architecture and engineering services.

Kenton Tsoodle, president and CEO of the Alliance, said the OKC Rescue Program was designed to meet the most pressing needs while helping the smallest and most vulnerable businesses.

"Research shows that minority-owned businesses have been negatively affected by COVID-19 at a higher and more severe rate, so our programs lowered barriers to entry with fewer financial documents required and a streamlined application process," said Tsoodle.

200+

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www.okcps.org/JoinOKCPS

OKLAHOMA CITY PREPARING FOR SOFTBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS, ELITE ROWING EVENTS



Oklahoma City's growing reputation as being a championship sports destination continues to grow with the International Canoe Federation's recent announcement that the 2022 Canoe Sprint Super Cup is moving to the Oklahoma River in August. The ICF made the move in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Another event originally planned for Moscow, the 2022 ICF Stand Up Paddling World Cup, is also moving to Oklahoma City.

These moves certainly validate what Oklahoma City has been trying to do for years, and that is promote the city as a venue for elite sports competition and championships. And city leaders expect to draw even more elite-type events in the not-too-distant future.

One sporting event that year after year puts Oklahoma City in the limelight nationally is the NCAA Division I Women's College World Series, set for June 2-10 at the USA Softball Hall of Fame Stadium. Oklahoma City has been the home for the Women's College World Series for many years, and will continue to be at least through 2035, the end of the current contract with the NCAA.

"In terms of our place in the national sports landscape, hosting the NCAA Women's College World Series really gives us a landmark, flagpole event and reputation for being able to produce championship events. The World Series sells out immediately and attracts people from all over the country before they even know what teams are playing," said Adam Wisniewski, vice president of sports business with the Oklahoma City Convention and Visitors Bureau. "To have an event like that, we're selling out the largest softball stadium in the world for eight straight days, which does things for our city from an economic impact standpoint that nothing else can match."

Oklahoma City will also host the Phillips 66 Big 12 Softball Championship May 14-15 at the USA Softball Hall of Fame Complex, and will feature two of the nation's top teams – the University of Oklahoma, which won the 2021 national championship, and Oklahoma State University. Both teams have a good shot of making

a return trip to this year's College World Series, which has been expanded this year by two full days.

"From a destination standpoint, seeing an event of that caliber extended even further is fantastic. Being two days longer is significant from a hotel and restaurant and attraction standpoint," Wisniewski said.

Last year's College World Series drew record-breaking crowds to Oklahoma City, mainly due to the stadium expansion completed in early 2021, allowing for an additional 4,000 seats in a new upper deck. The fact that both OU and OSU made it to the 2021 College World Series also helped push attendance over the top, Wisniewski said.

"From a visitor experience, it's going to be even better this year. And we're really excited about that because we're talking about immediate sellouts for the entire week," Wisniewski said.

Wisniewski said the NCAA released the all-session passes to the 2022 Women's College World Series about eight weeks ago and within 20 minutes, all of the passes were sold out. Single-game tickets went on sale recently as well and sold out by the end of the day. But that does not necessarily preclude softball fans from getting tickets to the games.

"If you want to go to the event, you're looking at using the NCAA's fan marketplace and exchanging with people who bought those tickets but can't make a game or only want to make some games," Wisniewski said. Please visit naaa.com to access the NCAA Ticket Exchange.

Tickets to the Big 12 softball championship are also going fast and can be purchased on the Big 12 conference website at Big12sports.org.

What's the Color of Your Love?



Help kids Bloom!

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GRAND OPENINGS

Congratulations to Chamber members on their recent Grand Openings! To see the schedule of upcoming Grand Openings or subscribe to the Grand Openings calendar, visit okcchamber.com/grandopenings.

Black Rifle Coffee Company
14215 N. Pennsylvania Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73134

American Solutions for Business
741 N. Phillips Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104

Loveworks Leadership
210 James Garner Ave.
Norman, OK 73069

Carvana
5500 S. Rockwell St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73179



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.

PARTNER+

Delaware Nation Industries

Government Agencies & Services
Mr. Jerry Kennedy(405) 526-1030
2000 N. Classen Blvd., Suite 1700
Oklahoma City, OK 73106-6101
www.dnigov.com

ADVISOR

Bluecrest Financial Alliances

Financial Services
Mr. Brandon Story(405) 486-1400
1300 N. Walker Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73103
www.bluecrestfa.com

ADVISOR

Critical Fault, LLC

Cyber Security Services
Mr. Jordan Caldwell(405) 771-6399
404 Cricket Holw
Edmond, OK 73034-6621
www.criticalfault.com

ADVISOR

Gateway First Bank

Banks
Mr. Jeb Cook(405) 697-3033
6303 Waterford Blvd., Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73118-1115
www.gatewayfirst.com

ADVISOR

Penn Square Mall / Simon Property Group

Shopping Centers
Ms. Jill Merritt(405) 841-2696
1901 N.W. Expressway, Suite 1889
Oklahoma City, OK 73118
www.simon.com

ADVISOR

Warriors for Freedom Foundation

Nonprofit / Service Agencies
Ms. Erica M. Walker(405) 286-9920
730 W. Wilshire Blvd., Suite 114
Oklahoma City, OK 73116-7738
www.warriorsforfreedom.org

EMERGING LEADER

Raymond Management Company

Hotel & Motel Management
Mr. Justin Smith(405) 270-0588
328 E. Sheridan Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
www.raymondteam.com

EMERGING LEADER

The Worx Company

Information Technology
Ms. Sue Vanderwater(405) 773-1144
5940 NW 120th Court
Oklahoma City, OK 73162
www.worxco.com

ASSOCIATE

Ball Morse Lowe PLLC

Attorneys / Lawyers
Mr. Josh Watts(405) 701-5355
531 Couch Drive, Suite 201
Oklahoma City, OK 73102-2246
www.ballmorselowe.com

ASSOCIATE

Carvana

Automobile Dealers
Ms. Cara Williams(360) 852-4525
5500 S. Rockwell St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73179-6609
www.carvana.com

ASSOCIATE

Holiday Inn Oklahoma City Airport

Hotels & Motels
Ms. Keisha Osborne(405) 601-7272
4401 SW 15th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73108-2228
www.ihg.com/okcsw

CORE

Ace Appraisal Group

Real Estate Appraisers
Ms. Andrea Johnson(405) 505-0238
113 SW 168th Terrace
Oklahoma City, OK 73170-6701
www.aceappraisalgroup.com

CORE

Choctaw Casino Resort - Durant

Casinos
Mr. Jason Crace(580) 920-0160
4202 S. Highway 69175
Durant, OK 74701
www.choctawcasinos.com/durant

CORE

Garden Grille & Restaurant

Restaurants
Mr. Justin Smith(405) 270-2588
Hilton Garden Inn OKC Bricktown
328 E. Sheridan Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104

CORE

Hampton Inn & Suites Oklahoma City - Bricktown

Hotels & Motels
Ms. Kimberly Sramek(405) 232-3600
300 E. Sheridan Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
www.oklahomacitybricktownsuites.
hamptoninn.com

CORE

Hilton Garden Inn Oklahoma City Bricktown

Hotels & Motels
Mr. Justin Smith(405) 270-0588
328 E. Sheridan Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
www.oklahomacitybricktown.hgi.com

CORE

Holiday Inn OKC North Quail

Hotels & Motels
Mr. David Dickinson(405) 286-9393
13800 Quail Springs Parkway
Oklahoma City, OK 73134
www.ihg.com/okcot

CORE

Homewood Suites by Hilton Oklahoma City Bricktown

Hotels & Motels
Mr. Justin Smith(405) 232-3200
328 E. Sheridan Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
www.oklahomacitybricktown.
homewoodsuites.com

CORE

Hubbell Inc.

Manufacturers
Ms. Dara Holmes(405) 779-3382
6801 S. Sunnyslane Road
Oklahoma City, OK 73135-1712
www.hubbell.com

CORE

Mabee-Gerrer Museum of Art

Museums
Mr. Dane Pollei(405) 878-5300
1900 W. MacArthur St.
Shawnee, OK 74804-2403
www.mgmoa.org

CORE

NAMI of Oklahoma Inc.

Nonprofit / Service Agencies
Mrs. Lorna Palmer(405) 601-8283
P.O. Box 1306
El Reno, OK 73036-1306
www.namioklahoma.org

CORE

Oklahoma Association of Health Plans

Associations / Membership Organizations
Ms. Haley Faulkenberry-Blood(918) 329-1438
P.O. Box 5444
Edmond, OK 73083-5444
www.okhealthplans.org

CORE

Osage LLC

Economic Development Agencies / Consultants
Mr. Frank Freeman(918) 578-5155
1211 W. 36th St. N.
Tulsa, OK 74127-1517
www.osagellc.com

CORE

Recruit Route

Educational Services
Mr. Bryan Bedford(405) 503-9284
12504 Lapis Lane
Oklahoma City, OK 73170-5430
www.recruit-route.com

CORE

Simple Manufacturing

Manufacturers
Mr. Chris Hoyle(855) 746-7506
750 SW 24th St., Suite 300
Moore, OK 73160-5526
www.simplemodern.com

CORE

Staybridge Suites OKC Airport

Hotels & Motels
Ms. Caroline Mayo(405) 429-4400
4411 SW 15th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73108
www.ihg.com/okcst

CORE

video405

Video Production
Mr. Patrick Kirk(405) 535-0521
701 W. Sheridan Ave., Suite 306
Oklahoma City, OK 73102-2402
www.video405.com

CORE

Water4

Nonprofit / Service Agencies
Ms. Jennifer Mayo(405) 551-8214
2405 NW 10th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73107
www.water4.org

MEMBER UPGRADES

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.

ADVISOR

EnviroDispose LLC

Waste Management & Disposal
Mr. Dustin Watson(833) 368-4763
7220 NW 63rd St.
Bethany, OK 73008
www.envirodispose.com

ADVISOR

True Sky Credit Union

Credit Unions
Mr. Sean Cahill(405) 682-1990
P.O. Box 26406
Oklahoma City, OK 73126
www.trueskycu.org

ADVISOR

Miller-Tippens Construction Company, LLC

Contractors - General
Mr. Lance Miller(405) 600-1022
45 NE 52nd St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-1825
www.miller-tippens.com

OKLAHOMA CITY METRO RANKS NO. 3 IN THE US FOR MOST AFFORDABLE PLACES TO BUY A NEWLY CONSTRUCTED HOME

MOST AFFORDABLE METROS TO PURCHASE A NEWLY CONSTRUCTED HOME (2021)

METRO	RANK	MEDIAN SALE PRICE OF NEWLY BUILT HOME
JACKSONVILLE, NC	1	\$270,000
GREENVILLE, SC	2	\$288,268
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK	3	\$290,000
ODESSA, TX	4	\$295,528
CINCINNATI, OH	5	\$325,785
JACKSONVILLE, FL	6	\$331,700
ALBUQUERQUE, NM	7	\$338,813
DETROIT, MI	8	\$348,730
CHICAGO, IL	9	\$359,500
TUCSON, AZ	10	\$369,950

Source: Realtor.com, 2022

- Realtor.com released its study of the most affordable metros to buy a new home and OKC ranked in the top 5.
- To find the best places to buy a brand-new home, Realtor.com analyzed the median sales price of newly constructed homes in more than 500 metro areas in December 2021.
- OKC's high ranking is primarily attributed to its abundance of flat, affordable land, which makes it easier for builders to construct homes quickly and inexpensively.

For comprehensive Economic Indicators and regional data, please visit your Greater Oklahoma City Chamber Economic Development Division at greateroklahomacity.com or contact Eric Long, Research Economist at 405-297-8976 or email him at elong@okcchamber.com.

DID YOU KNOW?

Get regional demographic data, consumer expenditure information, labor force data for the Greater Oklahoma City Region and more at greateroklahomacity.com.



→ V E L O C I T Y ←

Periodicals
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Oklahoma City, OK
73102

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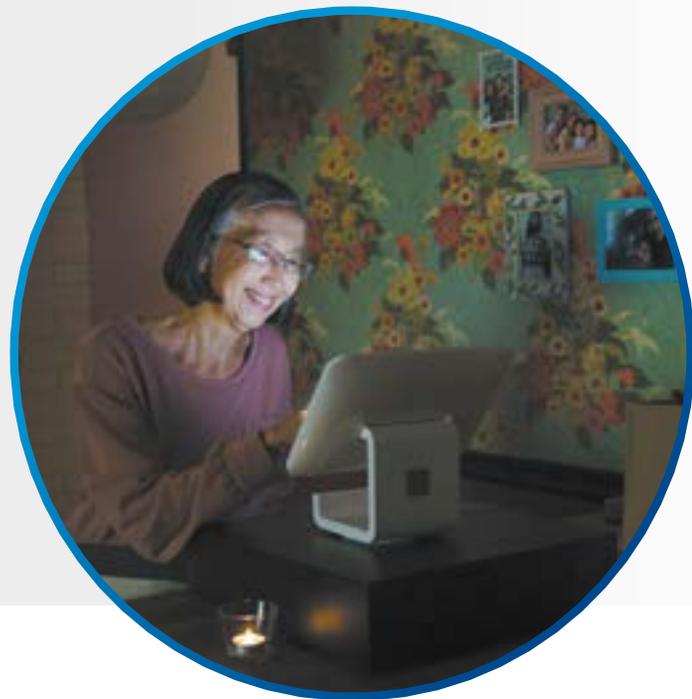


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