

THE POINT

GREATER
OKLAHOMA CITY
CHAMBER

February 2017

www.okcchamber.com

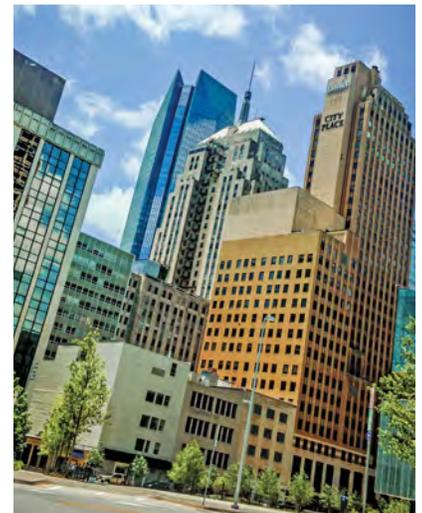
Economic Forecast Anticipates Job Growth in 2017

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber released its 2017 economic forecast, which stated that the Oklahoma City region is expected to see 0.7 percent job growth by the end of 2017. After the relatively flat total job growth in 2016, this moderate increase in job growth is viewed as a positive sign that the region is emerging from a downturn in the oil and gas sector.

“Historically speaking, our region has performed much worse in times of declining oil prices,” said Kurt Foreman, executive vice president of economic development for the Chamber. “Because of the diversification of our regional economy, our job growth remained steady throughout 2016. There are already signs of optimism about our regional economy, and we can expect to see a healthier economic climate by the end of 2017.”

Recapping 2016

Last year’s forecast described the 2016 outlook as a modest expansion in Oklahoma City offsetting a modest contraction in the rest of the state. This description proved largely correct, but the inventory adjustment cycle that crimped national activity imposed constraints on economic activity in



After a softening in the oil and gas industry, the Chamber’s economic forecast expects to see growth in 2017.

Continued on page 8

Vote on Feb. 14 to Shape Oklahoma City’s Future



Oklahoma City residents have an opportunity to impact Oklahoma City’s future growth on Feb. 14 when they vote in Oklahoma City Council and Oklahoma City Public School Board elections. Oklahoma City Council Wards 1, 3, 4 and 7 and School Board Chairperson and Districts 1 and 2 are up for election this year.

A total of 13 candidates filed to run for Oklahoma City Council elections, including incumbents James Greiner (Ward 1), Larry McAtee (Ward 3) and John Pettis (Ward 7). In Ward 4, incumbent Pete White is retiring and did not file for re-election. Eleven candidates filed for seats on the Oklahoma City Public Schools board, including District 2 incumbent Justin Ellis. Paula Lewis, currently representing District 4, is running for board chair.

To view your polling location and a sample ballot, visit www.ok.gov/elections. view a complete voter guide, including the candidates’ responses to a Chamber survey, at www.okcchamber.com/elections.

Vote on Feb. 14 to impact Oklahoma City’s future growth.

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MAPS 3 Bennett Event Center Open at State Fair

The MAPS 3 Bennett Event Center at State Fair Park opened in January, marking the first milestone in a year that is set to be full of progress for the MAPS 3 programs. Mayor Mick Cornett and other civic leaders cut the ribbon on Jan. 5 at the center, formally opening the new 279,000-square-foot expo building.

“Promoters of big events have bypassed Oklahoma City for years because we lacked the necessary space under one roof – but not anymore,” Mayor Cornett said. “We expect the total annual economic impact of all our exhibition buildings at State Fair Park to reach \$136 million this year with the addition of this building.”

The Bennett Event Center, located at 3101 Gordon Cooper Blvd., is the cornerstone of the MAPS 3 Oklahoma State Fairgrounds Improvements project. The \$58.7 million building is on the site of the former Travel & Transportation Building on the east side of State Fair Park.

The building has more than six acres of contiguous space under its roof and can host large exhibitions and private events, including banquet space for up to 2,500 people. The Bennett Event Center is now the largest event space in Oklahoma City, and it offers 201,000 square feet of contiguous floor space. Because of the voter-approved MAPS 3 program, the center opened free of debt.

The building was named after Clay Bennett, past Chamber chair and current vice chair of strategic planning. Bennett has served on the Oklahoma State Fair board of directors for more than 30 years, including 14 years as chairman.

“Like our equine facilities, the new Bennett Event Center will be one of the finest large-scale exhibition centers anywhere,” said Ronald J. Norick, Oklahoma

State Fair, Inc., board chairman. “It is appropriate we name this building after Clay in recognition of the game-changing achievements during his tenure as our chairman.”

The grand opening of the Bennett Event Center was the first in what is sure to be a busy year for the MAPS program. This month the City of Oklahoma City will hold the groundbreaking for the MAPS 3 Modern Streetcar Rail Line. The first rails will be installed along Sheridan Avenue in Bricktown, and when complete Oklahoma City will have two streetcar routes that will provide service through Bricktown to the future MAPS 3 convention center and from the central business district to Midtown and Automobile Alley. Construction on that project is set to be complete in late 2018.

The first of four Senior Health and Wellness Centers is also scheduled to open in early 2017. This center, located in northwest Oklahoma City on Rockwell Avenue, will have an indoor heated fitness swimming pool, an arts and crafts studio with a pottery room and kiln, a full-size gymnasium with a multipurpose court, fitness center, locker rooms, health screening center, reading room, walking track, aerobic studio with a cushioned floor, game room, café, meeting spaces, social lounges and more.

The city’s second Senior Health and Wellness Center, located at 4021 S Walker Ave., is currently under construction. The facility will offer an indoor fitness swimming pool heated to 88 degrees, fully equipped fitness center, aerobics and fitness studio with cushioned floors, café, game room, art room, classroom space with computers, demonstration kitchen, event center and a large covered patio for outdoor activities. All MAPS 3 Senior Health and Wellness Centers will be geared for residents age 50 and up.

Leadership Notes

Make your voice heard

This month, Oklahoma City community members will have two great opportunities to shape our city's future. On Feb. 14, Oklahoma City Council Wards 1, 3, 4 and 7 and Oklahoma City Public School Board Chair and Districts 1 and 2 will be up for election. While these elections typically have some of the lowest voter participation, these elected positions play a vital role in the future of Oklahoma City.

This month also marks the beginning of Oklahoma's legislative session. Our state elected officials will be making very important decisions in the face of budgetary concerns and uncertainty. The Chamber will always represent the voice of business for the region, but our strength is multiplied when our members also engage in the process.

In this issue of The POINT! you will find a voter guide to the upcoming local elections and ways to stay informed this legislative session. The Chamber also released its 2017 Public Policy Guide, which describes the public policy priorities the Chamber will pursue at the local, state and federal level this year. The most important thing is that you commit to speaking up for your business and for Oklahoma City's future.

Without the involvement of our members, we cannot achieve our legislative goals. You have incredible power to create a better business climate and quality of life in the Oklahoma City region just by speaking up and making your voice heard. Please vote on Feb. 14 and stay engaged in the democratic process by contacting your elected official throughout the 2017 legislative session.

Sincerely,



Roy H. Williams, CCE
Chamber CEO & President



Roy H. Williams, CCE
President & CEO

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THE POINT!

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pretty much everything
with The Oklahoman.”

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Marketing Manager,
Oklahoma City Museum of Art



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Relo Video Displays Oklahoma City is Larger Than Life

The Chamber recently released its newest relocation video at its annual State of the City event on Jan. 11. Created by Ackerman McQueen, this video showcases the “larger than life” benefits of living and working in Greater Oklahoma City.

The video is packed with stunning visuals and impressive accolades that help introduce people to the tremendous change seen in Oklahoma City during the past two decades. Featuring an introduction to Oklahoma City’s districts, its arts and culture, recreation opportunities and more, the video explains Oklahoma City’s ease of living that makes it a great fit for everyone from young adults to retirees.



“Greater Oklahoma City has so much to offer new residents,” said Roy H. Williams, CCE, Chamber president and CEO. “We get to experience these things every day, but for those considering a move here, this video helps them get a glimpse of the amazing opportunities available.”

The video is part of the Chamber’s larger relocation program, which includes a website, a weekly blog and newsletter and a printed Welcome Guide. View the video and all of the Chamber’s relocation resources at www.abetterlifeokc.com.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Feb. 14

Member Orientation

Time: 4 to 5:30 p.m.
Location: FNB Community Bank, 2911 S Air Depot Blvd. in Midwest City

Feb. 15

MegaLunch

Time: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Location: Vast, 333 W Sheridan Ave.

Feb. 23

Greater Grads Career Fair

Time: Noon to 4 p.m.
Location: Cox Convention Center, 1 Myriad Gardens

Feb. 28

Sunset Reception

Time: 4 to 6 p.m.
Location: RSC @ OKC Innovation Station, 133 W Main Street, Suite 102

March 14

Member Orientation

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

March 28

Sunset Reception

Time: 4 to 6 p.m.
Location: Andy Alligator's Fun Park & Water Park, 3300 Market Place in Norman

Promote Your Company at SchmoozaPalooza

The Chamber's largest networking event, SchmoozaPalooza, is back at the State Fair Park's Oklahoma Expo Hall on April 11 from 4 to 7 p.m. Reserve your booth now to promote your business, product or service to hundreds of attendees. Exhibiting is exclusive to Chamber members, and the event will include live music, networking activities, food tastings and door prizes.

A \$300 exhibitor booth includes a 10-foot-by-10-foot draped space, an eight-foot draped table, two chairs and a professionally printed sign. For maximum exposure, reserve a double booth for \$600. If you are a restaurant or caterer, you can showcase a signature dish through a food sponsorship. Visit www.okcchamber.com/schmooza for more information.



Attend D.C. Visit May 3-4

Join the Chamber and local leaders on a two-day trip to Washington, D.C., May 3-4, to advocate for pro-business legislation in the nation's capital. The annual event includes personal briefings with Oklahoma's U.S. senators and congressmen and a reception on Capitol Hill with federal officials and defense leaders. On the second day, sessions will cover specific topics of interest on issues critical to our community.

Cost is \$800 per person and includes one night's lodging at The Henley Park Hotel, 926 Massachusetts Ave., and all affiliated events. Air travel to and from Washington, D.C., is not included, giving attendees the option to extend their stay for additional business in the area.

Additional hotel nights are available for Tuesday, May 2, and Thursday, May 4. Visit www.okcchamber.com/dc for more information. Special thanks to Signature Sponsor American Fidelity Assurance Company.

Register for events online and view a complete event calendar at www.okcchamber.com/events.

Find Your Next Hire at Greater Grads Career Fair

Whether you are an employer looking to fill an open spot or you know a college student looking for an internship or job, make plans for the Greater Grads Career Fair on Thursday, Feb. 23. Nearly 500 college students are expected to meet with 100 Oklahoma employers during the Career Fair from noon to 4 p.m. at the Cox Convention Center, 1 Myriad Gardens.

The career fair is part of the Chamber's Greater Grads initiative to encourage students to live and work in Oklahoma after they complete their college education. Only employers with Oklahoma positions are allowed to exhibit.

Employer booths are \$400, with special rates for government and nonprofit agencies. Double booths are \$750. For more information or to register, visit



www.greatergrads.com/recruiter. The Chamber's Greater Grads program also offers resources for companies who would like to start an internship program. For more information, contact Drew Dugan at ddugan@okcchamber.com or 297-8940.

Special thanks to Signature Sponsor Cytovance Biologics and Greater Grads Benefactors American Fidelity Assurance Company, The Boeing Company, Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores, Inc. and OGE Energy Corp.

The world's smallest pacemaker is here.

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Micra Transcatheter Pacing System

 **Medicine** 

Chamber Releases Economic Forecast (cont'd from page 1)

Oklahoma. Oklahoma City managed only a lateral move, which did not fully counter the contraction in the rest of the state.

Average monthly nonfarm and private sector payrolls fell in 2016 with the state averaging 8,000 fewer private sector jobs in 2016 than 2015. As measured by employment, the state narrowly skirted a significant recessionary period. As measured by gross state product, the state suffered a recession very similar to the experience of 2009.

In 2016, unemployment rates for the state and the Oklahoma City metro ticked upward compared to the nation. September 2016 was the first time in 26 years that the state's unemployment rate (5.0 percent) topped the nation (4.9 percent). In comparison, while Oklahoma City also experienced an increase in unemployment, it remained competitive with other large metros. Oklahoma City MSA has been among the 25 lowest unemployment large metros (over one million population) for six years (about 72 consecutive months). The Oklahoma City metro ended 2016 with an annual average unemployment rate for the year a little over 4 percent, with monthly unemployment rates ranging as low as 3.6 percent and as high 4.7 percent.

The 2017 outlook

Both national economic conditions and activity in the oil and gas sector should improve to something that resembles full health by the end of 2017. Just as the state's economy was hit by the dual headwinds in 2016, it should benefit from dual tailwinds toward the latter half of 2017.

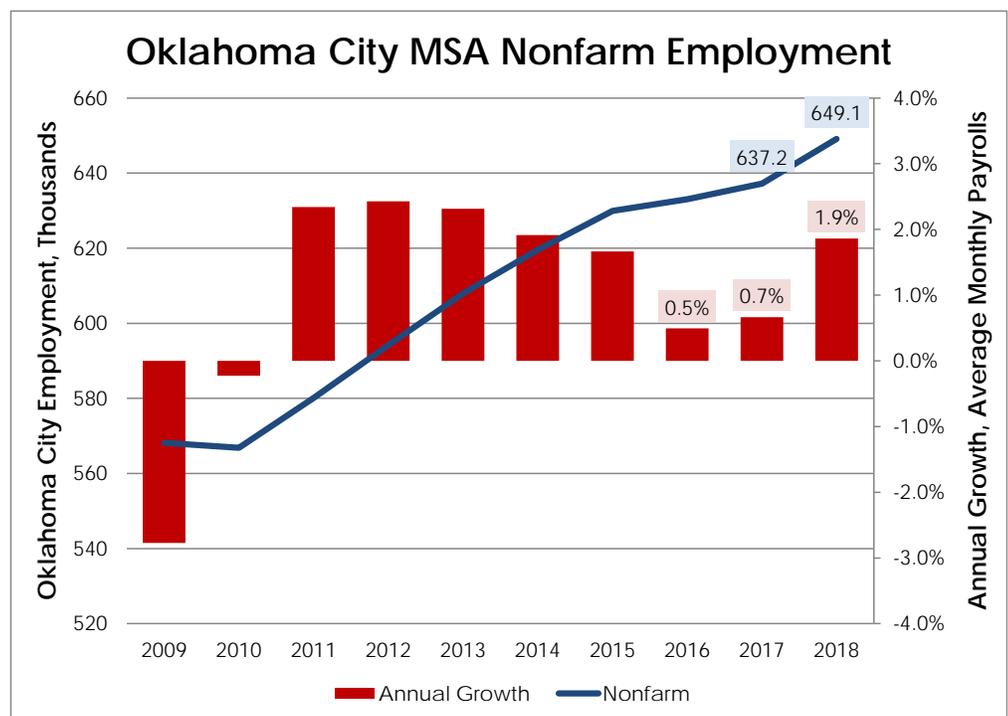
The year ahead is anticipated to be a year of recovery and economic improvement. The depth of the improvement will depend on how early in the year the state's economy transitions to strength and how strong the second half of the year proves to be. Oil and gas employment continues to hold steady but has

yet to show signs of significant gains. This will likely be the case for 2017, with hiring activity picking up in the second half of the year. The baseline expectation is for a holding pattern to dominate 2017 before growing at 3.7 percent in 2018.

Oklahoma City's population continues to grow at an average annual rate of 1.6 percent trending towards 1.4 million in 2018 and reaching 1.5 million by 2021. Since 2010, the Oklahoma City MSA is the 10th fastest-growing large metro in the country and has grown more than twice as fast as the nation. Given current growth rates, the Oklahoma City metro will exceed 2 million residents before the year 2040.

In 2016, slowing income growth combined with population gains are projected to leave per capita income unchanged. Per capita income is expected to return to growth in 2017 and 2018 at rates of 2.2 percent and 1.6 percent respectively. Baseline expectations are for per capita income to reach \$47,818 by 2018.

The Chamber's annual forecast provides a comprehensive analysis of the national, state and metro economies, including a historic trends analysis, an overview of the current economic situation and a forecast of the upcoming year. To read the full publication, visit www.okcchamber.com/forecast.



Be an Advocate for Business This Legislative Session

During the 2017 legislative session, the Chamber will actively lobby on behalf of the business community to improve economic development and quality of life in Greater Oklahoma City. The Chamber also relies on its members to engage with legislators and help move the agenda of Oklahoma City's growth forward.

In order to help you fully maximize your impact on the political process, the Chamber's advocacy website, www.okcbusinessadvocate.com, allows you to easily identify your elected officials and the most effective ways to communicate with them. The site also contains the Chamber's public policy priorities and updates on the progress of the Chamber's lobbying efforts at the Capitol.

Throughout the legislative session, Chamber members can opt to receive "The Business Advocate" – an email newsletter featuring timely updates on the status of priority legislative issues. The Chamber also encourages business leaders to act as a grassroots advocate for issues that are important to the economic stability of the region.

Ways to speak up for your business:

- Contact your elected official and leaders at the state Capitol by phone, email, letter or an in-person visit.
- Stay informed on the issues. Visit www.okcbusinessadvocate.com to learn more about issues that will impact Oklahoma City businesses and sign up for "The Business Advocate" newsletter at that link.
- Connect with the community. The Chamber's events throughout the year are the perfect way to stay informed on the issues facing Oklahoma City while meeting legislators and other business leaders.

For more information about the Chamber's advocacy efforts or the Business Advocacy Center, contact Derek Sparks, government relations manager, at dsparks@okcchamber.com or 297-8933.



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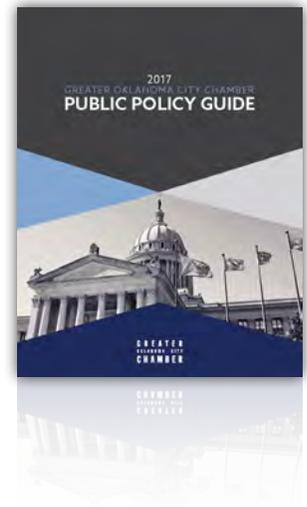
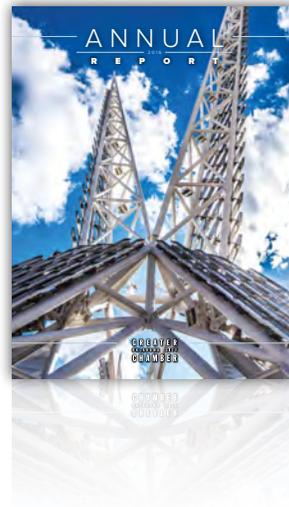
The Chamber's annual resources packet will arrive in your mailbox later this month. This packet, which is exclusive to Chamber members, includes the 2017 Public Policy Guide, the 2016 Annual Report, a 2017 membership plaque sticker and an envelope of attraction passes from Chamber members.

The Public Policy Guide features a complete listing of the Chamber's 2017 public policy agenda, election information and contact information for elected officials at the congressional, state, county and local levels. The guide also contains information about the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber Political Action Committee and the Business Advocacy Center (www.okcbusinessadvocate.com). Also included is the 2016 Annual Report, which celebrates the accomplishments of the Chamber in 2016 and the companies, organizations and programs that are defining innovation throughout the region and moving the community forward.

The attraction passes will allow Chamber members to experience discounts from American Banjo Museum,

Dave & Buster's, Levant Technologies, Oklahoma City National Memorial & Museum, Oklahoma State Fair, Inc., Perk Place Café and YMCA of Greater Oklahoma City.

Special thanks to Brochure Insert Sponsor The Chickasaw Nation and Mailing Sponsor The Oklahoman Direct.



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Every day, the YMCA OF GREATER OKLAHOMA CITY gives our community the support it needs to learn, grow and thrive. From advocacy to food security, cancer support to athletics, afterschool care to yoga, everything we do helps strengthen our community and the people who live here.

But keeping our community great is a full-time job. Every day, we face new challenges that create a greater need for the work we do. And we need your help to do it. Your gift can help make our community stronger - one child, teen or family at a time.

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GIVE TODAY at YMCAOKC.ORG

Shape the 2017 Bond Election Projects

There is still time to speak up about Oklahoma City's infrastructure needs as city officials shape the next bond package. An election is set for Sept. 12, but Oklahoma City residents can give feedback at one of the remaining public workshops or by taking the bond election resident survey. Both of those things can be found at www.okc.gov/go.

Visit one of the community workshops to see information about community needs and benefits for project areas. Standing displays will have more information, and city staff members will be available for questions and comments.

Saturday, Feb. 18, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Southern Oaks Community Center, 400 SW 66th Street
Remarks by Ward 4 Councilman Pete White at noon.

Tuesday, Feb. 21, 5 to 8 p.m.

Pioneer Southwest Library, 2201 SW 134th Street
Remarks by Ward 5 Councilman David Greenwell at 6 p.m.

Tuesday, Feb. 28, 5 to 8 p.m.

Metro Tech Springlake campus, 1900 Springlake Drive
Remarks by Ward 7 Councilman John A. Pettis Jr. at 6 p.m.



Residents can also use the OKC Connect app to submit an idea or give feedback about project priorities in specific places. Download it at www.okc.gov/connect.

General obligations (GO) bonds are a critical tool to fund Oklahoma City's biggest projects like maintaining streets, bridges, sidewalks, parks and more. Bonds are funded by property taxes, and the entire bond package is determined prior to the election.

SPEAK UP FOR BUSINESS.

Visit
www.okcbusinessadvocate.com
to make your voice heard this legislative session.

The advertisement features a blue sky with white clouds at the top. Below the text is a photograph of the Oklahoma City skyline, including the SoFie Tower, under a clear sky.

THE MONTELLANO
EVENT CENTER

11200 North Eastern Avenue, OKC | (405) 478-0752

The advertisement shows a woman in a long, white, lace-trimmed dress standing in a room, looking out a large window. The window has a decorative frame with the text 'THE MONTELLANO EVENT CENTER' above it. The room has a polished floor and a column on the left.

Recognizing members who take a special leadership role in financing the Chamber's operations at significantly higher levels. Each Lead Investor is highlighted with a BLUE BOX and identified as a Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze Lead Investor. Board of Advisor members are identified as well.

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Ms. Lauren Hughes..... 759-7857
2311 S I-35 Service Road
Moore, OK 73160
www.vaporworld.biz

Vault Ice

Ice Sculpting
Mr. Seth Stevenson..... 495-4423
200 NE 34th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-4018
www.vaultice.com

Member Upgrades

Through increased financial support and attendance at board meetings, Board of Advisor and Lead Investor companies play a key role in the Chamber. The following member company recently increased their investment, 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 297-8949 or info@okcchamber.com.

Board of Advisors

Bronze

Zaxby's
Restaurants
Mr. Tyrone Coleman.....701-8860
1839 W Main St.
Norman, OK 73069
www.sjacfoodgroups.com

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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.

Ribbon-cutting ceremonies are a great member benefit. If your company wants to celebrate a new location, expansion or renovation, contact Amanda Bowen, abowen@okcchamber.com or 405-297-8961.



Malorie Avaline - Beauty Unveiled
9329 N. Pennsylvania Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73120



Jeremy Henley State Farm
114 NW 6th St., Suite 102
Oklahoma City, OK 73102



The Eye Experience
10740 S. May Ave., Suite 115
Oklahoma City, OK 73170

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www.oumedicine.com/wellness



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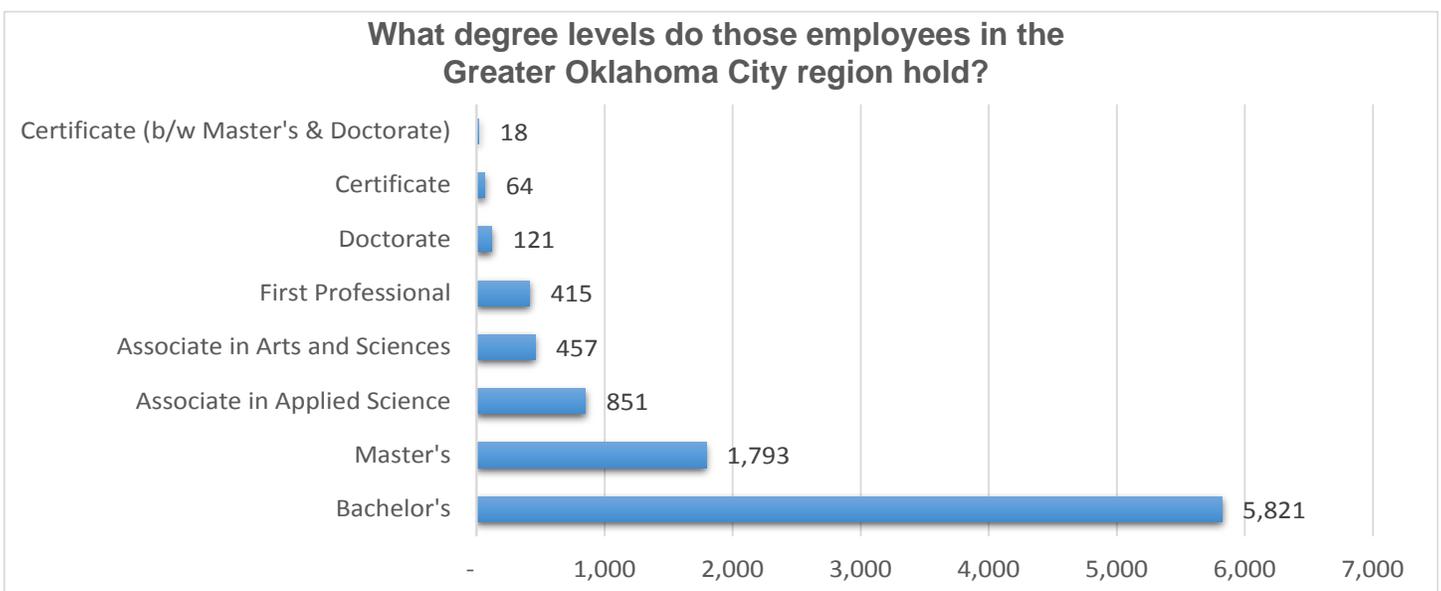
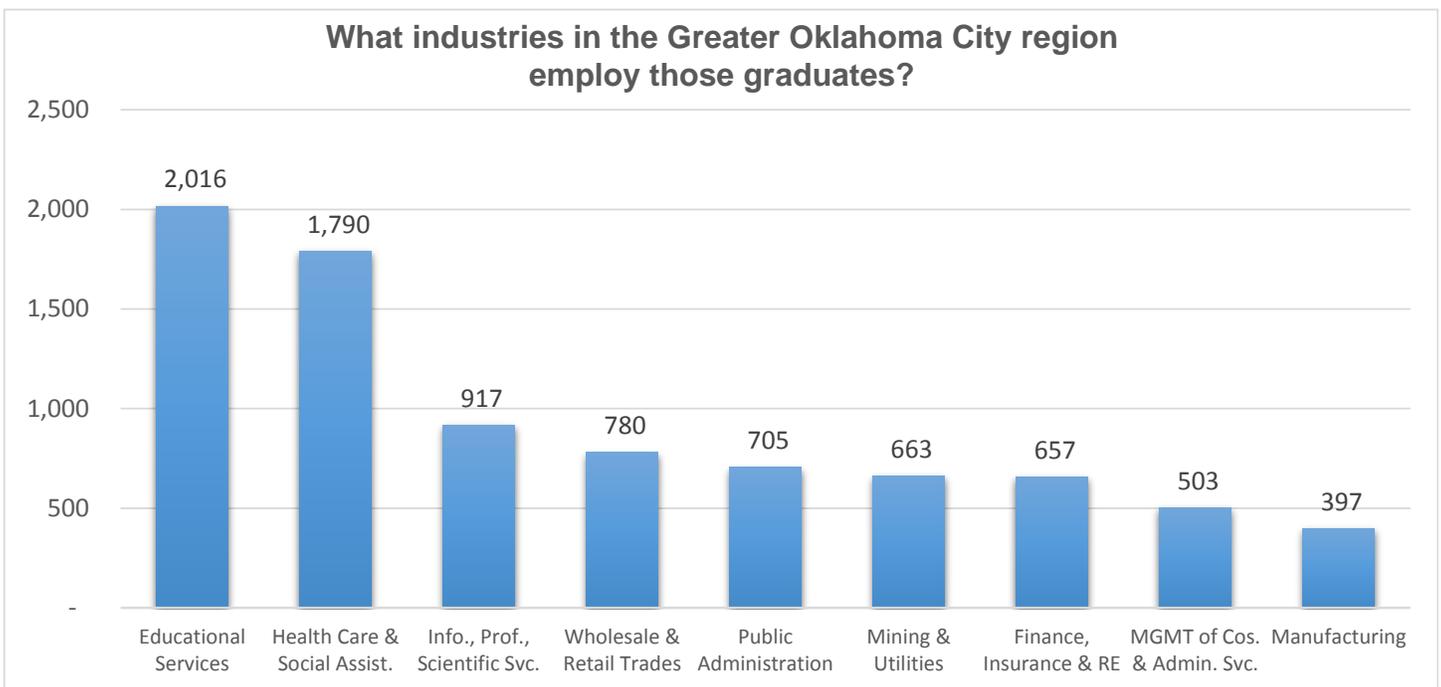
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ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Five years after graduation – How are we doing at retaining our college graduates?

- More than 25,000 students graduated from an Oklahoma college or university in 2008-2009.
- Five years later, about 62 percent of those graduates were found to be working in Oklahoma.
 - Of those nearly 16,000 statewide graduates, about 60 percent are working in the Greater Oklahoma City region while 20 percent are working in the Tulsa region.
 - Of the Ph.D. graduates, 95 percent work in the Greater Oklahoma City region.



Source: Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education – Data After Five Years for All State System Graduates 2008-2009 (Graphs depict data of the 2008-2009 graduates working in the Greater Oklahoma City Region)

LOOK INSIDE!

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- 11 Shape the 2017 Bond Election Projects
- 15 Economic Indicators

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