

# → VELOCITY

JANUARY 2022 • OKCCHAMBER.COM

GREATER  
OKLAHOMA  
CHAMBER

## TRAUSCHKE TO REMAIN CHAMBER CHAIR FOR 2022; EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE NAMED

The nominating committee and the board of directors of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber are pleased to announce the 2022 officers and members of the executive committee that were approved in December 2021.

Sean Trauschke, OGE Energy Corp., will once again serve as Chamber chair in 2022. Other officers include John Hart, Continental Resources, treasurer; David Rainbolt, BancFirst Corporation, corporate secretary; and Roy H. Williams, CCE, Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, president and CEO.

Vice chairs for 2022 will include Clayton I. Bennett, Dorchester Capital, and J. Larry Nichols, Devon Energy

Corporation, both co-chairs for strategic planning; Steve Hahn, AT&T Oklahoma, membership; Judy Hatfield, CCIM, Equity Commercial Realty Advisors, LLC, military and aerospace; Rhonda Hooper, Jordan Advertising, business/economic inclusion; Bradley Krieger, Arvest Bank, government relations; Bill Lance, The Chickasaw Nation, partnership development; Tom McDaniel, American Fidelity Foundation, MAPS 3 development; Jenny Love Meyer, Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores, Inc., marketing and communications; Rick Muncrief, Devon Energy Corporation, Forward Oklahoma City; Teresa Rose, JD, Communities Foundation of Oklahoma, education and MAPS 4 development; Natalie Shirley, National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, convention and visitor development; and W. Kent Shortridge, Oklahoma Natural Gas Company, economic development.

## CHAMBER RELEASES 2022 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA AHEAD OF SESSION

The Chamber's board of directors recently adopted a comprehensive set of public policy priorities that are crucial to creating a strong future for Oklahoma businesses. Below is an excerpt of key priorities. Read the full list at [okcchamber.com/legislative](http://okcchamber.com/legislative).

### VACCINE MANDATES

The Chamber supports allowing each company/business to determine whether to mandate vaccinations for its employees.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The Chamber supports retaining and strengthening the state's premier economic/community development programs which are critical in attracting new businesses to the state, assisting existing companies expand and encouraging investment in communities across the state. Following are the key programs the Chamber will seek to protect:

- Quality Jobs Act, 21st Century QJA, Small Employer QJA and the Prime Contractor QJA
- Aerospace Engineer Tax Credit
- Investment/New Jobs Tax Credit
- Historical Building Rehabilitation Tax Credit

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

**IN THIS ISSUE: CHAMBER'S "ELEVATE" SET FOR APRIL 14 - PAGE 6**



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



Safia Franks, RN  
Cardiology

## We Make a Difference for Our Patients.

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.

We've recently launched new nursing positions and programs with competitive pay rates, including:

- OU Health Weekend Position (*Work 2 shifts, get paid for 3*)
- OU Health Travel at Home Position
- OU Health Education Accelerator Program

**Apply today by visiting [OUHealth.com/Nursing](https://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

## JAIL TRUST'S IMPORTANT WORK SHOULD NOT GO UNNOTICED

As the important work the Oklahoma County Criminal Justice Advisory Council and its members has decreased the number of people being held at Oklahoma County's jail, the Oklahoma County Criminal Justice Authority, or the "Jail Trust," as it is more commonly known, has undertaken the really difficult task of bringing new management and reform to the operation of the facilities. They are making significant progress in what can only be described as the most difficult of situations. Even during an unprecedented pandemic, in addition to vaccinating 3,600 detainees and staff during the fiscal year, the Jail Trust has implemented a number of improvements at the facility.

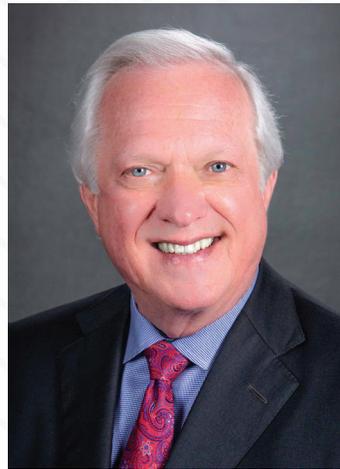
Hot water systems have been replaced, resulting in alleviation of water pressure and availability problems. Ventilation and exhaust systems have been upgraded and overhauled, including the ability to bring in fresh air for the first time. Water management systems for each cell have been installed, numerous doors and locks have been replaced, and installation of a new garbage disposal system that can help alleviate plumbing problems has been completed.

Better food options for detainees have been added, as have more pest control and sanitation services as well as installation of new cleaning equipment. In addition, increased starting pay and staff training have been implemented for those that work in the jail. Future plans include eliminating "triple ceiling," increasing staffing and efficiencies in intake and release processes, improving retention and job satisfaction for employees and providing more improvement programs for detainees to reduce their chances of ending up in the jail again.

As an inmate recently said, "I really truly feel like we're being treated like humans now. Things are changing, and I hope you all keep up the good work." While clearly more work remains to be done, the Trust should be lauded for the important improvements they've made to our detention facility and supported in their efforts to continue to implement CJAC's recommendations to improve conditions at the jail and bring them to more humane levels. Our fellow citizens deserve nothing less.



Roy H. Williams, CCE  
Chamber President & CEO



Roy H. Williams, CCE  
President & CEO



## 2022 OFFICERS

### SEAN TRAUSCHKE

OGE Energy Corp.  
Chair

### JOHN HART

Continental Resources  
Treasurer

### DAVID E. RAINBOLT

BancFirst Corporation  
Corporate Secretary

### CLAYTON I. BENNETT

Dorchester Capital  
Vice Chair, Strategic Planning

### STEVE HAHN

AT&T Oklahoma  
Vice Chair, Membership

### JUDY J. HATFIELD, CCIM

Equity Commercial Realty Advisors, LLC  
Vice Chair, Military and Aerospace

### RHONDA HOOPER

Jordan Advertising  
Vice Chair, Business and Economic Inclusion

### BRADLEY W. KRIEGER

Arvest Bank  
Vice Chair, Government Relations

### BILL LANCE

The Chickasaw Nation  
Vice Chair, Partnership Development

### TOM J. MCDANIEL

American Fidelity Foundation  
Vice Chair, MAPS 3 Development

### JENNY LOVE MEYER

Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores  
Vice Chair, Marketing and Communications

### RICK MUNCRIEF

Devon Energy Corporation  
Vice Chair, Forward Oklahoma City

### J. LARRY NICHOLS

Devon Energy Corporation  
Vice Chair, Strategic Planning

### TERESA ROSE, JD

Communities Foundation of Oklahoma  
Vice Chair, Education and MAPS 4 Development

### NATALIE SHIRLEY

National Cowboy & Western  
Heritage Museum  
Vice Chair, Convention and Visitor Development

### W. KENT SHORTRIDGE

Oklahoma Natural Gas Company  
Vice Chair, Economic Development

### ROY H. WILLIAMS, CCE

Greater Oklahoma City Chamber  
President & CEO



ISSUE #3563 - January 2022

Editorial staff

Harve Allen, Nate Fisher,  
and Cynthia Reid

Designer

Josh Vaughn

405-297-8900

thepoint@okcchamber.com

okcchamber.com

twitter.com/okcchamber

facebook.com/okcchamber

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

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to VeloCity, 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.

## CONTENTS

5

OKC finalist for EDA grant program; will get \$500K planning grant

9

Cultivating Coders creating hope for underserved residents

6

Chamber's popular Elevate conference set for April 14

12

Wireless provider and health care company expanding to OKC

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## CALENDAR

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

### JANUARY 19

Chamber Forum  
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Vast  
333 W Sheridan Ave.  
[okcchamber.com/januaryforum](http://okcchamber.com/januaryforum)

### JANUARY 26

Legislative Kickoff  
8 to 9:30 a.m.  
National Cowboy & Western  
Heritage Museum  
1700 NE 63rd St.  
[okcchamber.com/legislativekickoff](http://okcchamber.com/legislativekickoff)

### FEBRUARY 16

Chamber Forum  
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Vast  
333 W Sheridan Ave.  
[okcchamber.com/februaryforum](http://okcchamber.com/februaryforum)

### MARCH 23

Chamber Forum  
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Vast  
333 W Sheridan Ave.  
[okcchamber.com/marchforum](http://okcchamber.com/marchforum)

### APRIL 14

Elevate  
8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.  
Oklahoma City Convention Center  
100 Mick Cornett Dr.  
[okcchamber.com/elevate](http://okcchamber.com/elevate)

### APRIL 20

Chamber Forum  
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Vast  
333 W Sheridan Ave.  
[okcchamber.com/aprilforum](http://okcchamber.com/aprilforum)

## *Issues impacting businesses to be heard during Legislative Kickoff Jan. 26*

On Jan. 26, the Chamber will host its Legislative Kickoff where Chamber members will hear from a panel of area legislators and will get an opportunity to make their voices heard on those issues impacting the business community. Participating on the panel will be:

- Greg Treat, Senate President Pro Tempore
- Kay Floyd, Senate Democratic Leader
- Jon Echols, House Majority Floor Leader
- Cyndi Munson, House Democratic Minority Caucus Chair

The Legislative Kickoff will be held at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in OKC from 8 to 9:30 a.m. Registration and networking start at 7:30 a.m.

Tickets for Legislative Kickoff are \$50 for Chamber members and \$75 for nonmembers. To register, visit [okcchamber.com/legislativekickoff](http://okcchamber.com/legislativekickoff). Sponsor tables of eight with additional recognition are available for \$1,000. Contact Suzette Ellison Jordan at [sellison@okcchamber.com](mailto:sellison@okcchamber.com) for table sponsor inquiries.

Special thanks to Presenting Sponsor The Boeing Company; Host Sponsor Cox Communications; Government Relations Benefactors The Chickasaw Nation, Cox Communications, Devon Energy Corporation and OG&E; and Government Relations Sponsor Google, Inc.

## *OKC diversion programs making a difference focus of first Chamber Forum of 2022*

The Chamber will hold its first Chamber Forum of 2022 on Jan. 19 at Vast from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., featuring a panel discussion about diversion programs in OKC and how they help low-level, nonviolent offenders return to productive lives within our community. Participating in the panel will be:

- Damon Britton, Executive Director, Diversion Hub
- Jaime Patterson, Director of Diversion Services, TEEM - The Education & Employment Ministry
- The Honorable Kenneth M. Stoner, District Judge, Oklahoma County
- Timothy Tardibono, Executive Director, Oklahoma County Criminal Justice Advisory Council

The cost to attend the January Forum is \$40 for Chamber members, \$50 for nonmembers. Discounted full-season and half-season packages can also be purchased for \$350 and \$175, respectively. The full-season package consists of 10 tickets, while the half-season package includes five tickets. Special thanks to Series Presenting Sponsor Cox Business.

To register for the forum, visit [okcchamber.com/januaryforum](http://okcchamber.com/januaryforum). If you prefer to purchase either a full-season or half-season ticket package, you can do so by emailing [register@okcchamber.com](mailto:register@okcchamber.com) or calling 405-297-8921.

## OKC FINALIST FOR EDA CHALLENGE PROGRAM; WILL RECEIVE \$500,000 PLANNING GRANT

Oklahoma City is one of 60 finalists for the U.S. Economic Development Administration's \$1 billion "Build Back Better Regional Challenge" and will receive a \$500,000 EDA planning grant to grow Oklahoma's biotech innovation cluster with the aim of making the region's biotech sector more globally competitive.

The "Build Back Better Regional Challenge" grant is the marquee program under the EDA's entire American Rescue Plan. The aim of the Challenge is to boost economic recovery and rebuild American communities. The EDA was allocated \$3 billion in supplemental funding under the American Rescue Plan to assist communities nationwide in their efforts to rebuild their local economies resulting from the impact of the pandemic.

In an EDA news release, the agency said grantees will compete to receive up to \$100 million for their proposals to "develop and strengthen regional industry clusters across the country, all while embracing economic equity, creating good-paying jobs and enhancing U.S. competitiveness globally." Each of the 60 finalists will receive \$500,000 to further develop their proposed projects and will compete for a much larger grant in Phase 2 of the Challenge.

The Oklahoma City Economic Development Foundation, Inc., a 501(c)(3) supporting foundation of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, is the lead applicant for the Challenge grant. The application also brings together a coalition for implementation of the grant, including the Oklahoma City Innovation District; the University of Oklahoma and OU Health Sciences Center; Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology; and Prairie One Solutions, a not-for-profit subsidiary of the Oklahoma State University Research Foundation. Other involved partners include Echo Investment Capital.

The vision of the coalition will be to invest in infrastructure, including labs and research facilities, a workforce training center and startup/incubator



facilities, all with the sole purpose of addressing and overcoming persistent challenges plaguing the global biotech industry. The program will also make the biotech innovation cluster more favorable to future research and startups originating within the region by creating what it describes as a "frictionless, equitable biotech supercluster" along a 70-mile stretch of I-35 connecting Norman, Oklahoma City and Stillwater.

"We are thrilled that the EDA thought enough of our Challenge grant proposal that they selected the Oklahoma City Economic Development Foundation as a finalist," said Chamber President & CEO Roy Williams. "For far too long, our biotechnology community has produced many innovative and leading-edge ideas and products only to see the commercialization and job-growth results occur outside Oklahoma. This grant is intended to support an environment where that growth occurs here and supports further expansion of the biosciences cluster."

The Oklahoma City metro is one of the fastest growing in the nation, and a big reason for that growth, Williams said, is the emerging biosciences sector, which supports more than 51,000 workers in the region and generates annual revenues of more than \$6.7 billion.

Oklahoma City, along with the other 59 Challenge finalists, were chosen from a pool of 529 applicants spanning all 50 states and five territories, including finalist Puerto Rico. The EDA will eventually award 20 to 30 coalitions each up to \$100 million to implement their proposed projects. The deadline for coalitions to submit Phase 2 applications is March 15, 2022; winners of Phase 2 are expected to be announced sometime next fall.

# ELEVATE

## ELEVATE YOUR WORKFORCE WITH THE CHAMBER'S ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVENT

Invest in the future of your company by sending your company's managers and new employees to Elevate, a professional development conference and networking event that's all about strengthening Oklahoma City's workforce. With motivational speakers, breakout sessions and networking opportunities throughout the day, Elevate is designed to help your company provide professional development options to its employees—without having to send people out of the market to experience an excellent conference.

“The Chamber knows that the most valuable resource of our employers is our region's workforce,” said Cynthia Reid, senior vice president of marketing and communications for the Chamber. “Elevate gives businesses the opportunity to invest in and encourage key employees after the challenges of the past two years. It's also a great opportunity for small business owners, managers or entrepreneurs who need additional training to boost their success.”



Elevate will take place on Thursday, April 14, at the Oklahoma City Convention Center, with registration for the event and a continental breakfast beginning at 8 a.m. After a welcome session, attendees will choose two breakout sessions before lunch and the mainstage luncheon presentation. Two more afternoon breakout sessions will be followed by the finale keynote presentation from Dr. Elizabeth Lombardo, known as America's most-trusted celebrity psychologist and former NBA star Shaquille O'Neal's "head coach for happiness." The day will conclude with a closing reception, which will feature networking opportunities, exhibitor booths from Chamber members and a drink ticket for all attendees.

Breakout session tracks will allow the attendee to customize the experience to match his or her professional development needs. The event will feature 32 breakout sessions in the following categories:

- Starting Your Career (sessions geared toward college students, interns and new professionals)



- Expanding Your Influence (session geared toward people of all experience levels who want to grow as leaders)
- Boosting Your Sales (sessions geared toward people who are in sales)
- Managing Your Team (sessions geared toward people who manage others)
- Improving Your Skills (sessions that focus on practical and actionable skills for the workplace)
- Growing Your Business (sessions with business development tips for small business owners, location managers and entrepreneurs)
- Developing Your Cultural Competency (sessions with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace)
- Investing in Your Resilience (session to help both employees and managers boost their mental wellbeing and stress management skills)

The Elevate experience is open to everyone, but Chamber members get a discounted conference registration for \$250 per person or \$200 per person for groups of three or more within the same company. An all-day conference registration includes breakfast, lunch, all keynote speakers, four breakout sessions, morning and afternoon refreshments, and a pass to the Elevate closing reception. Chamber members that are nonprofit organizations will also receive a discounted rate of \$200 per person or \$160 per person for groups of three or more within the same organization. To purchase tickets, see a list of the speaker lineup or view additional information, visit [okcelebrate.com](http://okcelebrate.com).



## MEET THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER



### ELIZABETH LOMBARDO

America's Most-Trusted Celebrity Psychologist; Best-selling Author; Head Coach for Happiness

Considered former NBA star Shaquille O'Neal's "Head coach for Happiness,"

Elizabeth Lombardo is on a mission to free people from their inner critic to create the health, wealth and happiness they crave.

At Elevate, Lombardo will use her patented true success formula to help attendees discover the three essential ingredients that will help you create success in the new normal. While there are many factors in life that people can't control, Lombardo's presentation will offer immediate, actionable skills that will help attendees optimize their mindset to create success, both now and in the future. By the end of Elevate, attendees of Lombardo's keynote will be able to formulate a personalized action plan to advance in your personal and professional lives, even in unusual times.

## ABOUT LOMBARDO

Lombardo's ability to help people unlock their own, unique personal happiness code has made her America's most interviewed celebrity psychologist, with more than 100 TV and radio appearances on shows like Good Morning America, Dr. Oz, The TODAY Show, Steve Harvey, CNN, Fox Business News and others.

A licensed practicing psychologist with a Ph.D. in psychology and a master's degree in physical therapy, Dr. Lombardo's newest bestselling book and course, "Better Than Perfect: 7 Strategies to Crush Your Inner Critic and Create a Life You Love" helps anyone suffering from conditional self-worth or perfectionism turn down their critic's voice, turn up their self-confidence and gain essential skills to flourish in work, health, relationships and life. Lombardo is also the author of "A Happy You: Your Ultimate Prescription for Happiness."

## LEGISLATIVE AGENDA (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

- Cyber-security/Software Engineer Tax Credit
- Five-year ad valorem abatement and sales tax exemption for manufacturing facilities
- Regional Home Office Insurance Premium Tax Credit

The Chamber will support efforts to reinstate the Tax Credit for Energy Efficient Homes.

### AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021

The Chamber will work with the City of Oklahoma City, the State Fairgrounds and other stakeholders to pursue state ARPA funding for economic development and other appropriate projects in central Oklahoma.

### GUN LEGISLATION

The Chamber supports the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the responsible expansion of gun-owner's rights in Oklahoma. However, the Chamber will oppose legislation that would allow open/concealed carry of guns into high-economic impact events (many of which are required by contract to prohibit weapons), including horse shows, the Oklahoma State Fair, Olympic Qualifying on the Oklahoma River, high school basketball and wrestling tournaments at the State Fairgrounds, and NCAA and Big XII sporting events.

### MEDICAL MARIJUANA

The chamber supports additional legislation to protect an employers' right to maintain a drug-free workplace, enforce policies to prohibit employee impairment during work hours and other business friendly reforms.

The Chamber supports legislation to address issues related to the state's medical marijuana industry, including: 1) unlicensed growers/black market sales; 2) illegal land purchases; 3) damaging use of pesticides; and 4) uncontrolled water use.

### LEARNING LOSS DUE TO THE PANDEMIC

The Chamber acknowledges challenges of the pandemic, including remote learning and technology access, led to learning loss for many students. We know that prior to the pandemic, not enough students were achieving advanced or proficient test scores and 2020-21 test scores indicate lower performance. It is urgent to



dramatically improve learning at all levels. The Chamber supports sustained help for additional and enhanced learning opportunities that utilize recognized best practices. We believe it is important to help students catch up by having more time on-task, including longer school days and additional instruction days.

### HIGHER EDUCATION – REFORM AND INVESTMENT

The Chamber urges the higher education system to pursue significant reform to better meet employer needs. The business community supports the following reforms:

- Higher education funding specifically directed to produce graduates with degrees in critical occupations such as engineering, nursing and information technology/software.
- Increased accountability and annual metrics that motivates institutions to increase the number of graduates in critical occupation degrees by 20% within four years.
- Innovative approaches to curriculum and degree offerings, such as reducing non-critical occupation degree programs and creation of non-degree programs/certificates that create a workforce with needed skills.
- Efforts to maximize funding through consolidation and sharing of services, programs and instructors.
- New partnerships between four-year institutions, CareerTechs and community colleges that enable schools to share resources, staff and facilities.

### MEDICAID REFORMS

As the state seeks to improve health outcomes and to modernize payment models to incentivize value within the state's Medicaid system, the Chamber supports

dialogue and efforts to most effectively address the state's total health care needs on a systemwide basis.

The Chamber supports protecting the current Medicaid supplemental payments or equivalent programs to our state's medical schools and their hospital partners to ensure uninterrupted funding for medical education and the other unique services each provides.

### OKLAHOMA CITY COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The Chamber supports local public health efforts/responses and the independence of the Oklahoma City County Health Department.

### NETWORK PROTECTION

The Chamber opposes legislation which would eliminate the incentive for medical providers to contract with managed care networks and, as a result, potentially frustrate efforts at cost and quality control and ultimately deny consumers the benefits of cost-reducing arrangements with providers.



The Chamber further opposes legislation that would interfere with an employer's ability to offer affordable health benefits due to a reduced ability to control benefit plans relating to prescription drugs.

### MAJOR STATE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

The Chamber will advocate for full funding and timely completion of work on the following major interchanges/projects:

- I-44/I-235 Interchange
- I-240/I-35 (Crossroads Interchange)
- I-35/I-44 (Remington Park)
- I-44/I-40 (K Interchange/Near State Fairgrounds) west to MacArthur on I-40
- Necessary improvements to I-40 corridor east of I-35 (Tinker Air Force Base), including expansion of I-40 facility to six lanes from Douglas Boulevard to Shawnee
- I-35/I-40 Dallas Junction and I-35 (including Oklahoma River bridges)
- Future development of I-44 corridor from I-40 to SH-62, including SH 152/Airport Road, (southwest OKC to Newcastle) to better provide for future mobility needs due to ongoing commercial expansion

### HEARTLAND FLYER

The Chamber supports continued dialogue on extending the Heartland Flyer Amtrak service to Newton, Kansas, which would connect Oklahoma City to Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago and other locations on the Amtrak system. Furthermore, the Chamber supports designation of the Oklahoma City-Newton, KS line as a national Amtrak route. This would strategically address a significant gap in the national Amtrak rail system map and assist with Federal/State burden/cost-sharing to help ensure the viability of passenger rail.

### OKLAHOMA RIVER BRIDGES

The Chamber supports construction of clear span bridges on Interstate 35 across the Oklahoma River. Replacing existing river bridges with iconic bridges would showcase Oklahoma City at the confluence of two major U.S. interstate highways (Interstates 35/40) and facilitate increased sporting events and tourism in the boathouse district.

## CULTIVATING CODERS CREATING HOPE FOR UNDERSERVED RESIDENTS; CHAMBER LOOKS TO EXPAND PROGRAM

More than two dozen students from Millwood Public Schools and eight women in the ReMerge diversion program graduated in 2021 from computer programming classes offered by New Mexico-based Cultivating Coders.

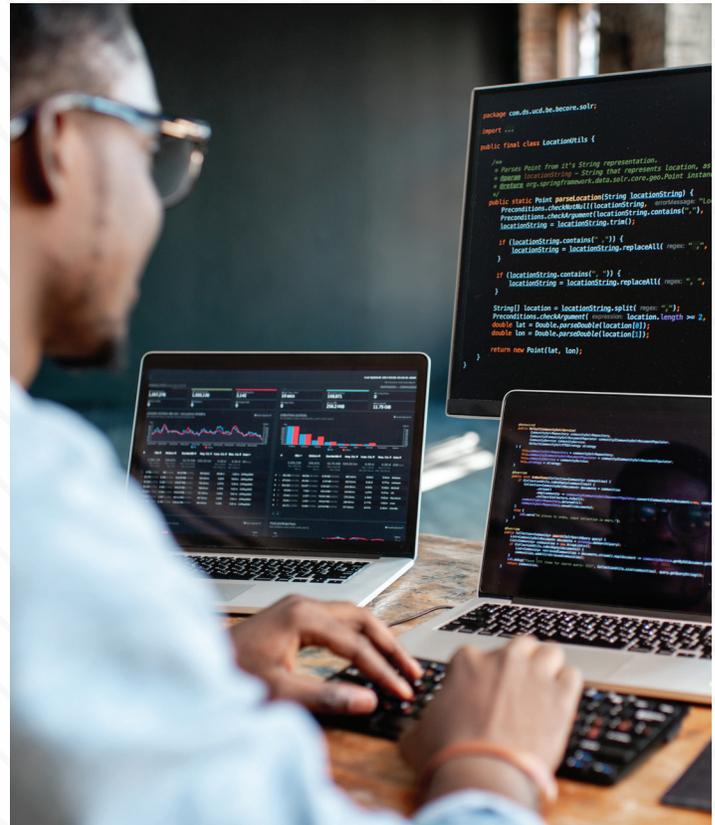
Cultivating Coders is a nonprofit that works with mostly minority and lower-income students to teach them computer coding, a highly desirable skill in today's business world. The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber provided financial support to Cultivating Coders in 2020 to help get the program launched in Oklahoma City.

Chamber officials said they were excited to see the program expand to include a partnership with ReMerge, a program that helps provide mothers battling cycles of addiction, poverty and incarceration with a pathway to become more successful members of the community. While in the 12-week-long class, the students learned various platforms needed to perform web development and coding skills.

"We have gone through three classes – two with Millwood Schools and now one with ReMerge – 35-40 students graduated from the program at Millwood as well as the eight ladies at ReMerge," said Jeff Seymour, executive vice president of economic development at the Chamber, adding the Inasmuch Foundation has also played a key role in supporting Cultivating Coders in OKC.

Seymour said just from the sheer success of the Millwood classes since 2020 and the recent ReMerge class that finished in November 2021, it is evident the Chamber's decision to partner with Cultivating Coders almost two years ago was the right move.

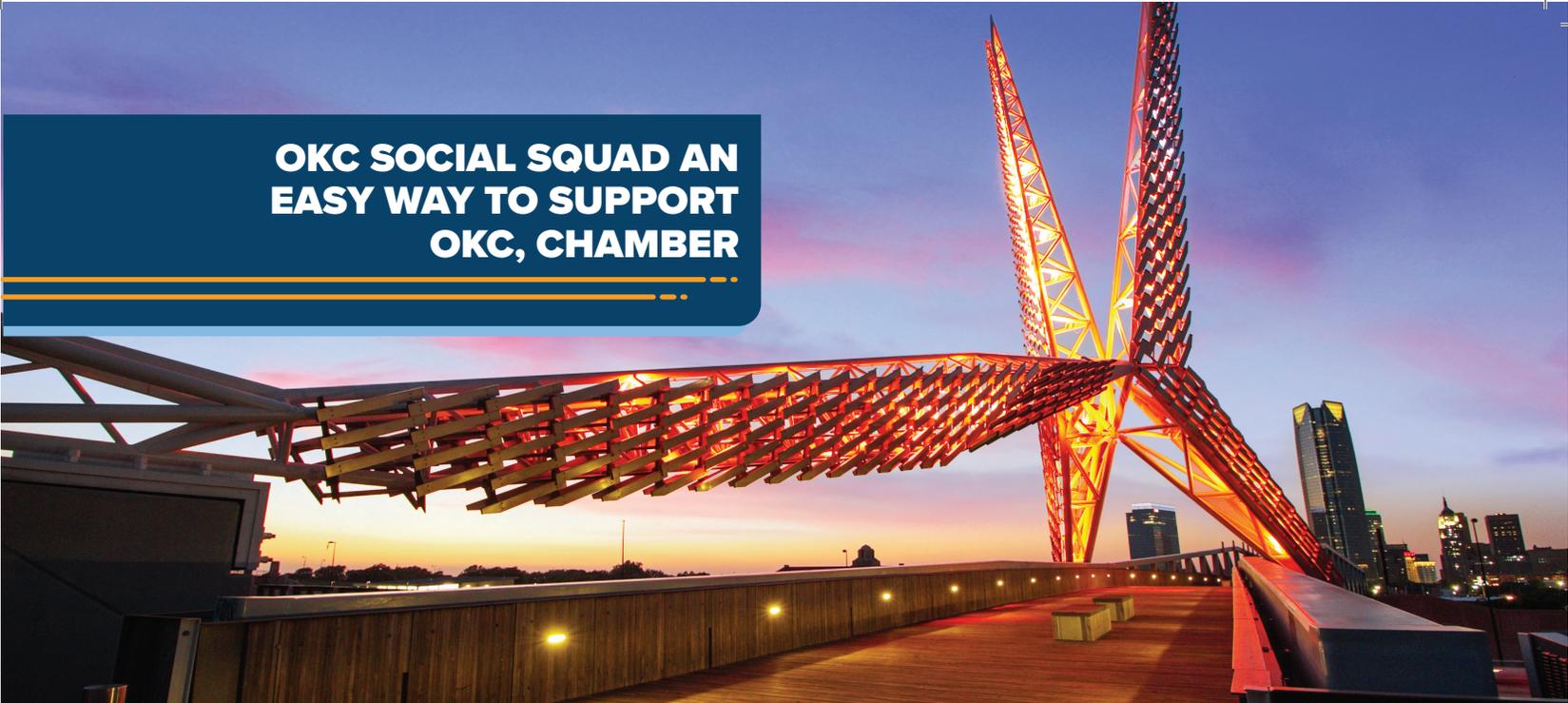
"[The program's success] validates that we were part of the right thing. We started the fire and other folks kind of poured gasoline on it and said, 'Oh, this is actually beneficial for students in Oklahoma City and especially minority students.'" Seymour said there were approximately 100 people who attended the graduation at ReMerge last November for the eight ladies who completed the computer programming class.



The program's success at Millwood Schools and ReMerge has led to the Chamber into looking to support the program's continued expansion in the region. Officials are hopeful that more partnerships can be forged soon to help even more students achieve their academic and career goals.

"The kids, as well as the adults, love the program. It opens a new paradigm for them as far as what they think is possible," Seymour said. "A lot of them are not sure about secondary education, and this not only gets them thinking about that, but also gets them thinking in terms of employability and jobs instead of just going to school to go to school."

Computer coding is a highly-sought skill. Software developer positions are expected to increase 21% by 2028, according to recent report by the U.S. Department of Labor. There are nearly 630,000 jobs open for computing right now, according to Code.org. Just 23 states have adopted policies giving all high school students access to computer science courses, and of those, 11 give all K-12 students access. Oklahoma adopted K-12 computer science standards in 2020. More than 71,000 computer science students graduated into the workforce last year.



## OKC SOCIAL SQUAD AN EASY WAY TO SUPPORT OKC, CHAMBER

If one of your New Year's resolutions is to find more ways to support your community, you're in luck. The Chamber's OKC Social Squad program is looking for new members.

The OKC Social Squad, accessible at [okcsocialsquad.com](http://okcsocialsquad.com), is a platform that allows social media users to easily share [VeloCityOKC.com](http://VeloCityOKC.com) content and news about Oklahoma City and new businesses, developments, accolades, lifestyle features, events and more. Participants gain points for sharing and gaining clicks over their social media networks, and can win valuable prizes in monthly contests.

"Social Squad has been a creative way to remain personally engaged with all of the exciting developments OKC has to offer, while encouraging all of us who participate to share this on various platforms and get the word out," said Natalie Bramlett, marketing manager at Chamber member Beck Design.

The Social Squad program is also great for those who want to be more active on social networking sites and want to help promote Oklahoma City and the Chamber to their circles, but perhaps are unsure of what to post. Prizes change every month. Past prizes have included valuable gift cards to local OKC Chamber-member retailers and restaurants, custom OKC wearables and tote bags, high-end headphones by local OKC companies and more.

"It's fun to have an incentive to share with your network," said Bramlett.

Social Squad members have full control over what links they post and what they say about them online, but can also utilize suggested language for any post, if preferable.

"I do not live in OKC, but work and spend most of my time in OKC. I really enjoy all the articles and posts the Chamber puts out spotlighting all the fun activities and new companies in the area," said Lori Martin, legal assistant at Chamber member Dunlap Codding. "It has introduced me and my family to many opportunities and experiences that would not be possible without the Chamber. Of course, the prizes are just the icing on the cake!"

Another benefit of using the Social Squad platform is that it's easy to join by going to [okcsocialsquad.com](http://okcsocialsquad.com) and connecting your Facebook, Twitter and/or LinkedIn accounts. There's no separate username or password to remember. You can choose from among categories of stories and share whatever you'd like to gain points and thus enter that month's contest. You may occasionally receive an email with more ideas of stories and content you might wish to post.

"OKC Social Squad members help to spread all of the great news about OKC to far more people than we could do by ourselves," said Cynthia Reid, senior vice president of marketing and communications for the Greater OKC Chamber. "That really helps when it comes to marketing Oklahoma City, attracting potential business and tourism."

To learn more or to join, visit [okcsocialsquad.com](http://okcsocialsquad.com).

## RECENT SIGNIFY HEALTH AND CONSUMER CELLULAR ANNOUNCEMENTS POINT TO ATTRACTIVENESS OF OKC AND OUR WORKFORCE



Chamber President & CEO Roy Williams speaks during a recent news conference at the Oklahoma History Center where wireless carrier Consumer Cellular announced their expansion into the Oklahoma City market.

Within the last month, two major new job announcements have each indicated a common reason for their choice of Oklahoma City as a great place to expand: the quality of our local workforce.

On Dec. 1, officials with Signify Health, Inc. joined Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt, Oklahoma Secretary of Commerce and Workforce Development Scott Mueller and Greater Oklahoma City Chamber President and CEO Roy H. Williams to announce a new 25,000 square-foot office space at 5400 E. Memorial Road, along with more than 200 new jobs. Signify Health is a leading health care platform that leverages advanced analytics, technology and nationwide health care networks to create and power value-based payment programs.

Named one of Fast Company's Most Innovative Companies of 2021, Signify Health works with health plans and health care providers to support their work to achieve better health outcomes for those they serve. This includes connecting people across the country with doctors, nurses and social workers to improve health care quality and access.

"The millions of people we are privileged to serve each year want to do more in and around their home to manage their health, and those who join us will be central to helping them do that," said David Pierre, chief operating officer at Signify Health. "When talking with

city and state officials, it became clear that Oklahoma City is home to people who have the right mix of qualifications for Signify Health, but as importantly, also have an interest in opportunities to work at purpose-driven companies like ours. We are delighted to now also call Oklahoma City home," he added.

The company is actively recruiting to fill 50 roles to start in early February.



"We are very excited to welcome Signify Health to Oklahoma City," said Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt. "Beyond the jobs they are bringing to Oklahoma City, Signify Health is an innovative company that will add to our community's diverse healthcare fabric. This announcement is just more proof of the positive momentum happening in Oklahoma City right now."

Just a few days later, the Signify Health news was followed by an announcement by top-rated wireless carrier Consumer Cellular of a new OKC service center at the former Baker Hughes building, located at 12701 N. Santa Fe Ave. The company is looking to hire supervisors, IT support staff, call center representatives and more, including both full-time and part-time positions. In all, more than 300 jobs are expected, with the average full-time employee making around \$54,000 per year, along with full insurance benefits. Additional benefits include flexible schedules and working from home options. Employees are also eligible for tuition reimbursement and other incentives.

The move to Oklahoma City marks the first time in the company's 25-year history it has expanded outside of its headquarters in Arizona or Oregon offices.

Alongside the Chamber's Roy Williams, Oklahoma Employment Securities Commission Director Shelley Zumwalt and Congresswoman Stephanie Bice, who appeared via video, Consumer Cellular CEO Ed Evans said Oklahoma City is strategically located in the center of the country, which makes the location perfect for this expansion.

"As our company continues to grow, it is vital to expand our footprint to remain competitive," Evans said. "Oklahoma City is the perfect location to serve our customers located in the middle of the country. I appreciate the support from our team, as well as all of our partners in the state who helped make this possible. With this move, we look forward to bettering our award-winning service, while being a community partner in Oklahoma City."

Evans indicated even with Oklahoma City's low unemployment rate, the move makes sense for the company.

"We have a workforce that wants to work," he said.

"This is a growing company with a strong track record for employee engagement and community partnership. We look forward to working with them as they continue to grow," said the Chamber's Roy Williams..

"This corporate culture will be extremely welcomed in our community," Williams added.

## 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](http://okcchamber.com/grandopenings).

**Aloft Oklahoma City Quail Springs**  
13111 Highland Park Blvd.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73120

**Rexel USA**  
2000 S. Council Road, Suite 103  
Oklahoma City, OK 73128

**Full Sail Capital, LLC**  
124 NW 10th St.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73103

**Fairfield Inn & Suites OKC Downtown**  
10 SW 4th St.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73109

**Walmart Supercenter #622**  
7800 NW Expressway  
Oklahoma City, OK 73132

**Club Car Wash**  
13600 N. Rockwell Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73142



# 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+

### Consumer Cellular

*Telecommunications Services*  
Mr. Alex Gerszewski.....(623) 999-2143  
9369 E. Bahia Drive  
Scottsdale, AZ 85260  
www.consumercellular.com

## PARTNER+

### First American Title Insurance Company

*Title Companies*  
Mr. Tyler K. Larsen.....(405) 760-2040  
18324 Chestnut Oak Drive  
Edmond, OK 73012-4058  
www.firstam.com/title/commercial

## ADVISOR

### CVS Health

*Health Services*  
Ms. Cassandra Hoch.....(920) 382-8708  
1275 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20004-2404  
www.cvshealth.com

## ADVISOR

### Oklahoma Chiller

*Contractors - Mechanical*  
Mr. Shane D. Hammons.....(405) 672-1100  
3737 Tinker Diagonal  
Del City, OK 73115-2107  
www.okchiller.com

## ADVISOR

### Oklahoma State University - Oklahoma City

*Schools - Universities & Colleges*  
Dr. Scott Newman.....(405) 945-3200  
900 N. Portland Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73107  
www.osuokc.edu

## EMERGING LEADER

### Delaware Nation Investments, LLC

*Holding Companies*  
Ms. Paula Brown.....(405) 526-1030  
395 NE 31st St.  
Newcastle, OK 73065-6485  
www.dnishines.com

## EMERGING LEADER

### The Recovery Center

*Drug / Alcohol Abuse & Addiction Info / Treatment*  
Ms. Tawney Poulsen.....(405) 525-2525  
1215 NW 25th St.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73106  
www.trcok.com

## ASSOCIATE

### Club Car Wash

*Car Washing & Polishing*  
Ms. Brittny Goran.....(833) 416-9975  
13600 N. Rockwell Ave.  
1591 E. Prathersville Road  
Columbia, MO 65202-9614  
www.clubcarwash.com

## CORE

### AssuredPartners

*Insurance Agents, Brokers and Service*  
Mr. Nathan Christenson.....(405) 549-9798  
2309 Cherokee Strip St.  
Altus, OK 73521-1415  
www.assuredpartners.com

## CORE

### Bourbon St. Cafe

*Restaurants*  
Mr. David Southard.....(405) 232-6666  
100 E. California Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73104  
www.bourbonstcafe.com

## CORE

### Channel Blend, LLC

*Call Centers*  
Ms. Paula Brown.....(405) 526-1030  
451 Park Ave.  
395 NW 31st St.  
Newcastle, OK 73065-6485  
www.dnishines.com

## CORE

### Club Car Wash

*Car Washing & Polishing*  
Ms. Brittny Goran.....(833) 416-9975  
2932 SW 89th St.  
1591 E. Prathersville Road  
Columbia, MO 65202-9614  
www.clubcarwash.com

## CORE

### DNI Emerging Technologies, LLC

*Computers - System Designers & Consultants*  
Ms. Paula Brown.....(405) 526-1030  
2000 N. Classen Blvd., Suite 1650  
Oklahoma City, OK 73065-6016  
www.dnishines.com

## CORE

### Elledge Chiropractic

*Chiropractors - D.C.*  
Dr. Joe Wallace.....(405) 858-2225  
5715 N. Western Ave., Unit B  
Oklahoma City, OK 73118-1239  
www.elledgechiropractic.com

## CORE

### First National Center

*Meeting / Banquet Facilities*  
Ms. Amanda Clark.....(405) 724-8822  
120 N. Robinson Ave.  
101 N. Robinson Ave., Suite 920  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102-5521  
www.thenationalokc.com

## CORE

### Frontier Music Company

*Audio-Visual Production Services*  
Mr. Robert Archer.....(580) 704-4231  
3674 Foxden Road  
P.O. Box 5429  
Ardmore, OK 73403-0429  
www.fmcav.com

## CORE

### JDC Consulting, LLC

*Consultants*  
Mr. Jim Couch.....(405) 812-4966  
13108 Callie Drive  
Oklahoma City, OK 73131-1844

## CORE

### KB Strategies Group

*Business Support Services*  
Mr. Tyler Kelly.....(918) 760-2080  
101 NE 53rd St., Apt. 3116  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-1886  
www.kbslearning.com

## CORE

### Petland

*Retail*  
Ms. Emma Masters.....(815) 543-2858  
13820 N. Pennsylvania Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73134-6048  
www.petlandoklahoma.com

## CORE

### Red Earth, Inc.

*Arts Organizations & Information*  
Ms. Christy Alcox.....(405) 427-5228  
100 N. Broadway Ave., Suite 2750  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102  
www.redearth.org

## CORE

### Rexel USA

*Electric Equipment & Supplies - Wholesale & Industrial*  
Mr. Rick Roberts.....(405) 232-7626  
2000 S. Council Road, Suite 103  
Oklahoma City, OK 73128-9530  
www.rexelusa.com

## CORE

### SpartanNash

*Grocers - Wholesale*  
Ms. Therese Kierel-Allen, PHR, SHRM-CP(757) 858-9300  
1101 SE 59th St.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73129-7305  
www.spartannash.com

# ECONOMIC INDICATORS

## OKLAHOMA RANKS NO. 2 NATIONALLY AS MOST DESIRABLE PLACE TO INVEST IN OIL OR GAS

### POLICY PERCEPTION INDEX RANKINGS (2021)

LOCATION	SCORE	RANK
TEXAS	100	1
<b>OKLAHOMA</b>	<b>98.38</b>	<b>2</b>
WYOMING	97.54	3
NORTH DAKOTA	94.71	4
KANSAS	90.68	5
MISSISSIPPI	83.46	6
UTAH	82.28	7
MONTANA	77.92	8
PENNSYLVANIA	77.62	9
LOUISIANA	76.01	10

Source: The Fraser Institute, Canada-US Energy Sector Competitiveness Survey 2021. A score of 100 is most desirable.

- The Fraser Institute released its 2021 Canada-US Energy Sector Competitiveness Survey, and Oklahoma ranked in the top 10.
- The annual survey of oil and gas executives asked 16 questions pertaining to factors known to affect investment decisions, then ranked U.S. states and Canadian provinces in terms of potential investment attractiveness.
- The survey of 71 executives from companies primarily focused on conventional oil and natural gas recovery ranked Oklahoma second nationally for the most desirable place for oil and gas investment.

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

# → VELOCITY ←

Periodicals  
**PAID**  
Oklahoma City, OK  
73102

## LOOK INSIDE!

- 4** Chamber Forum and Legislative Kickoff lead off in 2022
- 6** Chamber's popular Elevate conference set for April 14
- 11** OKC Social Squad an easy way to support OKC
- 12** Wireless carrier and health care company expanding to OKC

GREATER  
OKLAHOMA CITY  
CHAMBER



[twitter.com/okcchamber](https://twitter.com/okcchamber)



[facebook.com/okcchamber](https://facebook.com/okcchamber)

## WIN PRIZES FOR TELLING OKLAHOMA CITY'S STORY!



New contest every month  
live leaderboard – easy to  
connect accounts  
join today!

[OKCSOCIALSQUAD.COM](https://OKCSOCIALSQUAD.COM)