

VELOCITY

MAY 2023 • OKCCHAMBER.COM

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CHAMBER AIMS TO UNDERSTAND IMPACT OF CHILD CARE ISSUES ON WORKFORCE

Exacerbated by the recent pandemic, some Oklahoma City-area businesses, like many others across the state and nation, are having trouble finding and retaining enough workers. Some of the reasons, they say, are the high cost and lack of available child care services.

Recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics found the child care sector is nearly 10% smaller than it was three years ago. That adds up to about 100,000 fewer child care workers nationwide. Typically, jobs at child care facilities pay about \$13 an hour. Workers can earn more at fast food restaurants, gas stations and grocery stores.



Kim Wilmes, vice president of economic development programs at the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, said in addition to the Chamber hearing about child care

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CHAMBER TO SHOWCASE OKC OPPORTUNITIES AT ICSC AND BIO INTERNATIONAL

Chamber executives, entrepreneurs and local officials are preparing to attend two large conferences and pitch Oklahoma City as a premier destination for biotechnology and retail.

The BIO International Convention, hosted by Biotechnology Innovation Organization (BIO), attracts more than 14,000 attendees from the biotechnology and pharmaceutical sectors. Investors looking for new opportunities and promising partnerships also attend the event. This year's convention is June 5-8 in Boston.

Once again, the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber is partnering with the Oklahoma Biosciences Association (OKBio) to host an exhibit booth at the event. Oklahoma-based bioscience and life science companies use the exhibit to meet with senior biotech executives, business development leaders, and investors from premier firms around the world.

“This is a fantastic opportunity to showcase the incredible work happening in Oklahoma City,” said Jeff Seymour, executive vice president of economic development for the Chamber. “It allows emerging companies to come face-to-face with people who can take their company to the next level. These types of partnerships are the key to Oklahoma’s continued success in the biotech industry.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



A New Noninvasive Treatment for Essential Tremor

OU Health is the first and only health system in Oklahoma to offer an incisionless treatment for patients with medical refractory essential tremor that can result in improvement in hand, head and body shaking as well as increased mobility through a same-day treatment. Called “Focused Ultrasound,” the new technology is for essential tremor patients who have not responded to medication, or who cannot take it.

Focused ultrasound for essential tremor is an FDA-approved, non-invasive procedure that’s transforming patient care. The procedure uses ultrasound waves to target the specific areas of the brain responsible for tremors. Guided by MRI, the soundwaves pass safely through the skull and soft tissues to focus heat on only the targeted area, providing relief from symptoms. With no surgical cuts or permanent implants necessary, there is minimal to no risk of infection, and the treatment is often performed on an outpatient basis. Many patients can expect to resume normal activities within days.

OU Health is proud to be the first in Oklahoma to offer this revolutionary treatment.

To make an appointment or for more information, visit us at OUHealth.com/EssentialTremor

OU Health Physicians — Neurosurgery Clinic
1000 N Lincoln Blvd, Suite 4000
Oklahoma City, OK 73104
(405) 271-4912



LEADERSHIP NOTES



CHRISTY GILLENWATER
President & CEO

Oklahoma City closed out April in style, with the last week of the month ushering in the Spring and Summer event season. This was my first opportunity to experience several of Oklahoma City’s longest running events, Festival of the Arts and the Oklahoma City National Memorial Marathon.

As my family enjoyed the festivities, we were impressed with the variety of activities downtown – the festival, the marathon, a baseball game. And just down the street at the fairgrounds, the 2023 Better Barrel Racing World Finals. So many options in downtown OKC! Oklahoma City puts on a show and makes it look effortless. There were thousands of people on the streets,

moving from one event to another, and the energy was electric.

During the marathon, we met a family visiting from the Dallas region. The wife is from Oklahoma and came to see the race in honor of her dad, who ran every year since the marathon’s beginning. Unfortunately, he passed away before this year’s event. She talked about how compelled she was to be here and feel the hope and energy that the race brings to her each year. No matter how far away she goes, the spirit of the people in Oklahoma City brings her back time and again. She spoke passionately about the Oklahoma Standard and how OKC is such a special and magnetic place.

These events were such a great reminder of how truly special this place, and its people, is for residents and for visitors. Events like these are not only great fun for those of us fortunate enough to live here, but for visitors they send a strong message about who we are. The countless volunteers and staff who enable these events and showcase our friendliness, safety and efficiency are to be commended. There are more events on the way, so get out and enjoy what our city has to offer... and keep an eye out, you never know who you might meet along the way!

»» READ CHRISTY’S VELOCITYOKC ONLINE STORY OF THE MONTH

“Two Oklahoma City chefs named finalists for James Beard Award”

[VELOCITYOKC.COM/CHRISTYSPICK](https://www.velocityokc.com/christyspick)



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CHRISTY GILLENWATER
Greater Oklahoma City Chamber
President & CEO



ISSUE #3579 - May 2023

Editorial staff

Harve Allen, Kelly Dexter and Cynthia Reid

Designer

Billy Callan

405-297-8900

thepoint@okcchamber.com

[okcchamber.com](https://www.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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

CALENDAR

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

MAY 10

State of Health
10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.
National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum
1700 NE 63rd St.
okcchamber.com/statehealth

MAY 17

Chamber Forum
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
The Petroleum Club
100 N Broadway, 35th Floor
okcchamber.com/mayforum

MAY 24

Fair Chance Hiring Workshop & Expo
8 a.m. to noon
Champion Convention Center
803 S Meridian Ave.

MAY 30

Chamber Connection
3 to 4:30 p.m.
Credit Union House of Oklahoma
631 E Hill St.

JUNE 14

Chamber Forum
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
The Petroleum Club
100 N Broadway, 35th Floor
okcchamber.com/juneforum

JUNE 27

Chamber Connection
8:30 to 10 a.m.
OKC Chamber Offices
123 Park Ave., Second Floor
Conference Room

JULY 19

Chamber Forum
11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
The Petroleum Club
100 N. Broadway, 35th Floor
okcchamber.com/julyforum

JULY 20

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



Clara Luper Civil Rights Center, Katz sit-in monument progress focus of May Forum

Attendees of the May Chamber Forum will receive progress reports on the development of the Clara Luper Civil Rights Center in northeast Oklahoma City and the planned downtown monument commemorating the historic Katz Drug Store sit-in. The forum will also focus on Clara Luper's life and legacy.

The May 17 Chamber Forum will be held at 11:30 a.m. at the Petroleum Club of Oklahoma City, which is located on the 35th floor of the BancFirst Tower, 100 N. Broadway Ave., Suite 3500. Participating in a panel discussion will be:

- Christina Beatty, project director of the Freedom Center of Oklahoma City.
- John Kennedy, founding chair of the Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation.
- Brent Hart, executive director of the Oklahoma City Philharmonic Orchestra.

Luper was the driving force behind the Oklahoma Civil Rights movement. Along with the NAACP Youth Council, she helped integrate hundreds of establishments, including the Katz Drug Store in Oklahoma City, where, on Aug. 19, 1958, she and a group of 13 Black children staged a peaceful three-day sit-in at the lunch counter to protest racial segregation. Luper, who would have turned 100 years old this month, passed away in 2011.

The cost to attend the May Chamber Forum is \$45 for Chamber members and \$55 for nonmembers. To register for the Forum, visit okcchamber.com/mayforum.

Special thanks to the Presenting Sponsor Cox Communications and the Corporate Sponsor ADG | Blatt.

CHAMBER CONNECTION

Upcoming Event

Tuesday, May 30 | 3 to 4:30 p.m.
Credit Union House of Oklahoma | 631 E. Hill St.

No cost to attend!

Want to find out more about your company's investment in the Chamber? Attend Chamber Connection May 30 and learn more about the Chamber's key initiatives while also meeting other members. You will walk away with a better understanding of the Chamber's role in Oklahoma City's business community, including:

- Economic development efforts
- Government relations activities
- Community involvement programs
- Involvement opportunities

To register, email [Suzette Ellison Jordan](mailto:Suzette.Ellison.Jordan@okcchamber.com) at sellison@okcchamber.com.

STATE OF HEALTH EVENT TO FEATURE KEYNOTE ON PRECISION MEDICINE AND BARRIERS TO ITS PROGRESS

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber welcomes renowned cancer genomic scientist Dr. Lynda Chin as keynote speaker for the annual State of Health event May 10 at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum. Chin is president and CEO of Apricity Health, a leader in the development of digital technologies that help manage patient care.

In her keynote address, “The Landscape and Future of Digital Medicine,” Chin will discuss precision medicine, an innovative approach in which physicians create individualized treatment plans based on a patient’s genes, environment and lifestyle.

Health care is a key economic driver of the regional economy with the health care and education super-sectors combined accounting for nearly 88,000 jobs in Oklahoma –

14% of the state’s workforce.

The event also features a panel discussion with the following health care leaders:

- Stacy Coleman, President, SSM Health St. Anthony
- Jim Gebhart, President, Mercy Hospital Oklahoma City
- Dr. Richard Lofgren, President & CEO, OU Health
- Timothy Pehrson, President & CEO, INTEGRIS Health

State of Health will also feature multiple exhibitors aligned with the health care industry.

Individual tickets are \$60 for members and \$85 for nonmembers. Sponsor tables of eight with additional recognition are available for \$1,600.

To learn more about State of Health, including purchasing individual tickets or sponsoring a table, visit okchamber.com/statehealth or call 405-297-8921.

Special thanks to presenting sponsor MidFirst Bank and host sponsor OU Health.

CHAMBER’S INCLUSION AT WORK SERIES OFFERS DEI RESOURCES AND TOOLS

The Chamber has joined forces with the Urban League of Greater Oklahoma City to help businesses implement diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives that improve employee retention and impact a company’s bottom line. Our Inclusion at Work series gives you the opportunity to learn from others who’ve had success implementing new practices at their organizations.

This month we’re offering a webinar titled “Breaking the Bias Barrier: Tools for recognizing and addressing implicit prejudices.” The insightful discussion will be led by Regina Lane, chief inclusion, diversity and access officer at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma.

The webinar is on Tuesday, May 9 from 3:30 to 5 p.m. via Zoom. It’s open to all Chamber members and would be especially helpful for those working in a DEI capacity.

Implicit bias is automatic and unintentional but can still affect judgments, decisions, and behaviors. It can also pose a barrier to recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce. Attendees will learn how to identify implicit

bias as well as practical techniques for interrupting biased thinking and behavior. Lane will also share ways to build more inclusive workplaces through honest, courageous conversations about race and bias.

Born and raised in the Greenwood District of Tulsa, Okla., Regina Lane has led a life of service to family and community. Fueling her passion for community through the President's Leadership Class at the University of Oklahoma, she carried it over into her career developing fine arts programs for the City of Oklahoma City Parks and Recreation Department and service-learning projects for students at Heritage Hall. She currently serves as the first chief inclusion, diversity and access officer at the Regional Food Bank of Oklahoma and is the founder of The Vanguard, a regional theatre production company with a focus on creating opportunities for African American artists.

To attend the Inclusion at Work meeting, email Maegan Dunn at mdunn@okcchamber.com.

Special thanks to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Benefactors American Fidelity Assurance Company, Bank of America Merrill Lynch and Devon Energy Corporation.

EMPLOYERS INVITED TO ATTEND FAIR CHANCE HIRING WORKSHOP & EXPO



One of the biggest challenges facing Oklahoma City businesses is a shortage of talent. We may be able to close the gap by utilizing an untapped labor market: people formerly involved in the justice system. Roughly one in three adult Americans is in that category. That's 70 million people. Many of them are unemployed or making significantly less than workers without a criminal record.

One of the greatest barriers to employment is the section on many job applications asking applicants if they have a criminal record. If the applicant says yes, they may automatically be rejected. They have no opportunity to give context for the record; how long ago the offense occurred, what they've done to rehabilitate themselves, or if the record is relevant to the position.

Fair Chance hiring is about choosing candidates based on merits and skills. Then, once a job offer is made, having a respectful conversation about backgrounds. Give the candidate an opportunity to share their experience and their story. It could lead to a professional relationship that is mutually beneficial. Compared to the general workforce, justice-involved individuals have lower turnover rates, lower absenteeism, and higher retention rates.

Many businesses are open to fair chance hiring practices but aren't sure where to start. That is why we've partnered with the Criminal Justice Advisory Council

(CJAC) to host the Fair Chance Hiring Workshop & Expo. This event will provide employers with valuable information and resources including where to find candidates, which incentives are available and the legal implications to consider.

They'll also learn about local organizations that prepare justice-involved individuals for reentry to the workforce. CJAC works with several such partners including The Education and Employment Ministry (TEEM), the Start Helping Impacted Neighborhoods Everywhere program, ReMerge, Drug Court, and Diversion Hub.

The Fair Chance Hiring Workshop & Expo is Wednesday, May 24, from 8:30 a.m. to noon at the Champion Convention Center, 803 S Meridian Ave. Oklahoma City.

Registration is \$35 for Chamber members and \$45 for nonmembers. Continental breakfast is included. Click [here](#) to register.

If you're interested in learning more about fair chance hiring, visit www.okcountycjac.com and download the Fair Chance Hiring Toolkit for Businesses.



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2023 OKLAHOMA LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: CHAMBER CLAIMS SEVERAL VICTORIES

Editor's Note: Information contained in this article was up to date at the time of publication.

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber remains engaged on legislation that could impact metro-area businesses. As the session enters its final three weeks, the Chamber is working to protect and expand policies most conducive to business growth and expansion.

One piece of legislation the Chamber helped defeat would have required voters to approve all tax increment finance (TIF) districts within the entire jurisdiction (city/county) of the TIF. TIFs allow municipalities and counties to use tax money generated by new development to pay for public improvements in the TIF development area.

“It’s hard to explain to voters what a TIF is and why they are a critically important economic development tool for cities and counties,” said Mark VanLandingham, the Chamber’s senior vice president of government relations and policy. “Some voters may believe a TIF is a tax increase, but it’s not. We were pleased to see this economic development tool protected this year.”

Another notable victory was protecting the use of eminent domain to implement important economic development programs such as MAPS and turnpike construction. Legislation that would have strictly restricted the use of eminent domain by governmental entities did not advance this session.

Another Chamber priority has been to enhance economic development tools the state and municipalities can use to expand industries, create jobs and improve quality of life. Tourism is a growth area where this focus applies.

As Oklahoma’s third-largest industry, tourism continues to grow rapidly across the state with a record-breaking \$10.1 billion in direct visitor spending in 2021. Visit Oklahoma City, a division of the Chamber and formerly the Oklahoma City Convention and Visitors Bureau, is on the frontline of promoting tourism in the Oklahoma City metro.

Legislation seeking to increase the annual funding cap on the Tourism Development Act (TDA) from \$15 million to \$30 million, was not heard in the full Senate after being passed by the House and a Senate committee. However, the bill is alive and can be advanced by the Senate next year. If passed by the Senate and signed by the governor, the legislation will make Oklahoma even more attractive to developers seeking to strengthen the state’s tourism sector. The TDA allows developers to receive a partial rebate of state sales tax it generates for a limited period for new tourism projects where at least 25% of revenues come from out-of-state visitors.



“If this becomes law, there are several tourism projects in the pipeline that are likely to move forward,” said VanLandingham.

Another economic development bill the Chamber supports includes favorable revision of the Filmed in Oklahoma Act. The bill would provide filmmakers with up to a 20% rebate on out-of-state crews and a 30% rebate on in-state crews. Film industry officials believe these revisions are necessary to ensure Oklahoma has an available workforce for larger film productions.

Finally, the Chamber and its partners, including the Chamber-created Oklahomans for Business and Property Owners’ Rights coalition, successfully lobbied to defeat irresponsible firearms legislation which would have eliminated the property rights of business owners and event hosts to prohibit firearms. Legislation to allow firearms at the Oklahoma State Fair did not advance this year.

For additional details on these and other legislative efforts, check out the latest issue of the Chamber publication, “The Business Advocate,” at okcbusinessadvocate.com.

NOW A ONE-DAY EVENT, INTERNOKC CAN HELP BUILD CONFIDENCE, BOOST SKILLS

Kacie Cardenas has always been good at numbers. It's a big reason she landed her current position as director of operations and finance at Box Real Estate & Investments. But the lessons she learned at InternOKC were also part of the equation. Cardenas attended the Chamber's annual event in 2016, the same year she graduated from Oklahoma State University with a degree in finance.

Cardenas said the relationships she built at InternOKC helped lead her to her current employer.

"InternOKC gave me the extra boost of confidence necessary to transition from a student to working professional. It helped me build important skills and connections that have been invaluable to my career growth. I am grateful for the opportunity to have had such a meaningful experience in learning and appreciating why Oklahoma City is the best place to live, work, and play," Cardenas said.

InternOKC is designed to provide soft skills enhancement and professional development for interns working in Oklahoma City this summer. If you are a business with dozens of summer interns or just one, being a part of InternOKC is also an investment in your future workforce and the future of Oklahoma City.

The event, which provides attendees the opportunity to network with fellow interns, is scheduled for June 27. Attendees will also learn valuable tools to help them make the transition from college graduate to young professional.

Lee Copeland, director of talent and business growth at the Chamber, said local employers have provided constant feedback to the Chamber about the challenges they face in the workplace and the need for young professionals to develop soft skills. InternOKC's training is based on three components or pillars, he said, to help achieve that goal.

- Reinforcing professional behaviors or specific habits and practices that foster positive outcomes.
- Navigating networks and creating relationships.
- Developing a mindset that enables young adults to continue learning and growing as professionals.

Copeland said a strong talent pipeline is critical to the success of local businesses and the state's future growth. That's why it's important that today's college students stay in Oklahoma after graduation. The percentage of college graduates doing just that has improved over the last couple of decades. In fact, according to data provided by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 89.7% of Oklahoma residents are still employed in Oklahoma one year after graduation; 86.7% remain employed in the state after five years.

"A majority of our citizens have chosen to be here because of the quality of life, cost of living and availability of jobs, and so we want to continue impressing upon our interns that Oklahoma City is a great place to grow your career," Copeland said.

According to Copeland, every industry can benefit from creating opportunities to raise young talent. He believes there is no better way than through a summer internship.

"Some of our employers need to continue to find pathways into new talent coming out of our colleges and universities, expose them to their industry and show them pathways where they can grow, and develop in a career that maybe they didn't expect," he said.

Employers interested in enrolling their interns for this summer's InternOKC program can do so by visiting abetterlifeokc.com/summerintern. The registration fee per intern is \$150 for Chamber members and \$250 for nonmembers.

Thank you to Presenting Sponsor Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores, Inc.



InternOKC attendees will have an opportunity to receive worthwhile advice and resources from a lineup of accomplished business professionals.

CHAMBER'S ANNUAL DC VISIT SET FOR JUNE

Oklahoma City business leaders will have an opportunity to make one-on-one visits with Oklahoma's congressional delegation and key defense leaders during the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber's annual DC Visit to Washington June 21-22.

Each year, the Chamber strives to plan a visit that aligns with our members' needs and the goals of our organization.

The DC Visit includes afternoon briefings on day one with invited Sens. James Lankford and Markwayne Mullin, and Reps. Tom Cole, Frank Lucas, Josh Brecheen and Kevin Hern. We've invited federal and military officials to join us at a reception on Capitol Hill that evening.

On day two, attendees can attend morning sessions with federal officials and other government leaders that cover specific areas of interests on issues critical to our community including military defense and infrastructure.

**OKC
TO DC**
JUNE 21-22, 2023

Register by June 1 to take advantage of this rare opportunity to connect with federal policymakers. The \$900 registration fee includes one night's hotel stay, official events, and transportation to and from scheduled events. Air travel to and from Washington is not included, giving attendees the option to extend their stay for additional business in the DC area.

To register for the DC Visit or view the agenda, visit okcchamber.com/dc.

Special thanks to Presenting Sponsor American Fidelity Assurance Company.

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ELEVATE

GREATER
OKLAHOMA CITY
CHAMBER

More than 500 attendees recently experienced Elevate, the Chamber's professional development conference that was held on May 2 at the Oklahoma City Convention Center. With motivational speakers, breakout sessions and a closing reception, the conference was a huge success for all who wanted to take their careers to the next level.

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS WHO MADE THE EVENT POSSIBLE:

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CHILD CARE STUDY (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

issues impacting local companies, it is also a factor that some new-to-market, prospective companies consider when evaluating whether to establish operations in Oklahoma City.

To more fully understand the impact child care has on the Oklahoma City workforce, the Chamber has partnered with Cathy O'Connor from Coalign Group and Carrie Williams from Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness to conduct a child care research study, including a quantitative survey in both English and Spanish that will hopefully shed some light on this important topic. Their research will also include data gleaned from various qualitative focus groups.

“We need more people back into the labor force,” Wilmes said. “Parents are not going back (to work) due to child care, but we don’t exactly know why. If we don’t know the reasons, then we won’t know what solutions are really going to help alleviate the problem and get more people back into the workforce faster.”

Making matters worse, the cost of child care keeps going up, forcing many parents to decide between working or staying home with their children. In a recent Fortune article, the author told the stories of several women who made that choice because it would have cost them at least 25% of their paychecks to pay for child care. Wilmes said she has even heard of parents turning down a promotion because it would have placed them in a higher income bracket and, therefore, disqualify them for child care subsidies.

“It is preventing a lot of people who want to work from working,” Wilmes said. “It’s also stopping them from excelling in their job, which could change the whole trajectory of their life and their child’s life, but they’re not doing it because of child care issues.”

Wilmes said the initial goal of the study is to better understand concerns and build awareness about the problems.

“It will take the entire community working together to begin resolving some of the issues,” she said.

The English version of the survey has already closed; however, a Spanish version is still open until May 12th for those who live or work in Oklahoma City and currently use/need child care or plan to in the near future, Wilmes said. One response per household. All responses are anonymous. To complete the survey, visit surveymonkey.com/r/B7QMBZG.



·Echo Investment Capital, the corporate venture capital firm behind Wheeler BIO, is focused on investments in early-stage and growth start-up companies.

Oklahoma City will also have a strong presence at ICSC Las Vegas, the premier event hosted by ICSC, a member association for the marketplaces industry. Attendance for the annual event routinely tops 40,000. The conference brings together mall management firms, specialty leasing managers, retailers, entrepreneurs and store owners. This year's event will be held May 21-23.

Tammy Fate, the chamber's senior manager of retail development and recruitment, said ICSC is the best place to meet with retailers and developers looking to expand or relocate.

"Oklahoma City is one of the few places that is growing by leaps and bounds right now," said Fate. "We're now the 20th largest city in the country. We have a strong local economy and a low cost of living. Those are all very attractive to leaders in the retail industry."

Members of the Oklahoma City delegation will meet with new-to-market developers and retailers as well as existing developers who already have major investments in our market. Those include national firms such as Simon, The Outlet Resource Group (TORG) and Washington Prime Group, operator of Classen Curve.

"It's important that we continue to cultivate those relationships, share our successes and point out the growth we're seeing in Oklahoma City," Fate said.

While at ICSC, the Chamber will showcase the city in its own exhibit space inside the Las Vegas Convention Center. The space includes two large meeting rooms equipped with monitors for business presentations. Oklahoma City Mayor David Holt will also host a lunch with brokers.

Fate said the ultimate goal is to set up a site visit.

"Many of these folks have never stepped foot in Oklahoma. We want to show them all we have to offer. This is a great place to do business and a fantastic place to live, work and raise a family. I'm excited to brag about Oklahoma City."

Representatives from the Alliance for Economic Development will also attend the conference.



Dr. Tom Kupiec, left, visits with Dr. Henry Shin during last year's BIO International Convention in San Diego. The pair attended BIO 2022, along with Chamber staff and other Oklahoma City-based researchers and business owners, to promote Oklahoma and its growing bioscience and biotechnology industry."

Dr. Henry Shin, co-founder and CEO of Excitant Therapeutics, attended last year's BIO Convention in San Diego and said he found it extremely valuable.

"To be part of a bigger presence helped me get more exposure for my company," Shin said. "Some of my new industry connections were possible only because my fellow OKBio participants were making referrals for other Oklahoma companies at the OKBio booth."

Oklahoma companies and organizations attending this year's event include:

·Ascend BioVentures, a pharmaceutical accelerator that guides promising drug candidates through the riskiest, early stages of development.

·Progentec Diagnostics, Inc. collaborates with research institutions including Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation (OMRF) to develop state of the art diagnostic tests.

OKC PREPARING FOR YET ANOTHER RECORD-BREAKING WCWS



What figures to be yet another outstanding athletic event for Oklahoma City and sure to draw record-breaking crowds, the 2023 NCAA Division I Women's College World Series runs June 1-9 at USA Softball Hall of Fame Stadium.

The event has been a mainstay in OKC since 1990, except for 1996 when it was moved to Columbus, Ga., to coincide with the Summer Olympics in Atlanta, and in 2020 when it was cancelled due to COVID-19. Last year's event broke attendance records for a WCWS, drawing more than 12,500 fans per session (not fans per day!). The stadium, which added 4,000 seats with an upper deck expansion in 2021, is already sold out for this year's event.

Adam Wisniewski, vice president of sports business development for Visit Oklahoma City, a division of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, said the only tickets currently available to the public are on the secondary market.

"Seventy percent of those fans will be from out of town, which is pretty typical for this event," he said. "The coolest thing about the extra seating will be the huge impact on hotels and local businesses, and just the overall economy, from the additional visitors who may be staying a few extra days for the College World Series."

Although the official economic impact of last year's WCWS on Oklahoma City is not yet fully known, it's projected to be bigger than in previous years from an attendance standpoint. Previous data suggests the WCWS has brought in over \$25 million into the Oklahoma City economy on an annual basis since the expansion. With an attendance record in their sights in 2023, the economic impact could be even higher.

Last year's championship game between OU and Texas was broadcast nationally over ABC — the first time a WCWS game was played on a major television network. Wisniewski said the 1.2 million people who watched the broadcast were able to see why Oklahoma City is considered the "Softball Capital of the World" and what OKC has to offer as a sports or leisure destination.

"We were the tester and proved that the model could work for female sports," Wisniewski said, noting that ABC also broadcasted the women's Final Four in basketball for the first time earlier this spring. "Many more eyeballs got to see what we are capable of last year [as a host city]."

Making the event more accessible for fans traveling from their hotels to USA Softball Hall of Fame Stadium and the Adventure District was a priority this year, Wisniewski said.

EMBARK is partnering with Visit OKC by providing bus service for \$4 per person to the stadium during game days. Two dedicated buses will run 30-minute loops all day between the Oklahoma City Convention Center and the stadium. The \$4 charge also gives them access to the downtown streetcars.

"If you are staying in Automobile Alley or Bricktown, for example, you can hop on the streetcar, which takes you right to the convention center, get off and then hop on the bus, get out to the stadium, enjoy the game, and then do it all right back the other direction," Wisniewski said. "That is so incredibly convenient and will only cost you \$4."

Keeping fans happy is important, Wisniewski said, because they make a massive impact on local businesses.

"Many of those businesses rely on that surge of business over that nine or 10-day period to keep them afloat through the tougher months and through the course of a year," Wisniewski said. "And, when you think about our relationship with softball and this event and how it can impact so many of our local citizens and our community-based organizations, that's where you really beam with pride."

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+

Hilliary

Communication Services

Mr. JJ Francais.....(580) 678-9450
22937 State Highway 58
Lawton, OK 73507-6008
www.hilliary.com

EMERGING LEADER

Country Road Recovery Center

Drug / Alcohol Abuse & Addiction Info / Treatment

Mr. Drew LaBoon(405) 595-9558
24962 Okay Road
Tecumseh, OK 74873-6504
www.countryroadrc.com

EMERGING LEADER

Watco

Railroads

Transportation - Logistics

Mr. Lucas Bellamy(620) 231-2230
900 S. Byers Ave.
315 W. 3rd St.
Pittsburg, KS 66762-4706
www.watco.com

ASSOCIATE

Mutual of Omaha Advisors

Financial Services

Mr. Carter Owens.....(405) 848-1101
2601 NW. Expressway, Suite 900W
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
www.mutualofomaha.com/oklahoma

ASSOCIATE

Mutual of Omaha Advisors

Financial Services

Mr. Carter Owens.....(405) 848-1101
2601 NW. Expressway, Suite 900W
Oklahoma City, OK 73112
www.mutualofomaha.com/oklahoma

CORE

PPL Motor Homes

Recreational Vehicles-Dealers

Mrs. Courtney Casares-Hernandez.....(956) 533-2028
3300 North Banner Road
El Reno, Oklahoma 73036-9329
Pplmotorhomes.com

CORE

Action Group Staffing

Employment Agencies

Mr. Garrit Snell(405) 666-9790
7115 S. Western Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73139-2003
www.actiongrp.net

CORE

Arrowhead Boat Sales

Boat Dealers

Mr. Braden Weese.....(405) 925-2628
7240 S. I-35 Service Road
Oklahoma City, OK 73149-2706

CORE

Aspire Business Solutions, LLC

Information Technology

Mr. Andy Zook.....(405) 494-0828
7725 W. Reno Ave., Suite 303
705 S. Mustang Road, Suite 313
Yukon, OK 73099-6778
www.aspireok.com

CORE

OKC Home Services LLC, dba Gatsby Glass 107

Construction Companies

Glass Companies
Mr. Joshua Shumway(405) 776-0706
313 NW 67th St.
Oklahoma City, OK 73116-7905
www.gatsbyglass.com/oklahoma-city-oklahoma

CORE

Joe W. Fly Co. Inc.

Filters

Mr. Kevin Doke.....(405) 802-8725
4116 Will Rogers Parkway, Suite 800
Oklahoma City, OK 73108-2008

CORE

Mid-Continent Crane

Contractors - Equipment & Supplies

Mr. Dave Bell.....(918) 807-6911
1735 US-75 S
P.O. Box 411
Glenpool, OK 74033-0411
www.mccrane.cc

CORE

PPL Motor Homes

Recreational Vehicles - Dealers

Mrs. Courtney Casares-Hernandez.....(956) 533-2028
3300 North Banner Road
El Reno, OK 73036-9329
pplmotorhomes.com

CORE

Rice N Buns

Restaurants

Mr. Midian Pratama.....(405) 849-9252
14600 N. Pennsylvania Ave., Suite G
Oklahoma City, OK 73134-6209
www.ricenbuns.com

CORE

Stages of Recovery, Inc.

Drug / Alcohol Abuse & Addiction Info / Treatment

Mental Health Services
Mr. Zach Gabriel.....(405) 261-3223
4101 N. Classen Blvd., Suite D
4413 71st. St., Suite G-101
Lubbock, TX 79424-2319
stagesrecoverycenters.com

CORE

Voss Lighting

Lighting Fixtures - Retail

Mr. Bruce Peacock.....(405) 949-1919
721 N. Ann Arbor
Oklahoma City, OK 73127-5822
www.vossighting.com

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.

PARTNER+

EnviroDispose LLC

Waste Management & Disposal

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

PARTNER+

Walmart, Inc.

Grocers - Retail

Retail

Mr. Ivan Jaime.....(210) 268-5852
16503 Nacogdoches Road
c/o Region 6
San Antonio, TX 78247
www.walmart.com

ADVISOR

Arthritis Foundation

Foundations

Nonprofit / Service Agencies
Ms. Shelly Jordan.....(405) 212-4703
3409 Still Moon Circle
Edmond, OK 73013-6824
www.arthritis.org

ADVISOR

Cleats for Kids

Nonprofit / Service Agencies

Ms. Stacy McDaniel.....(405) 418-4889
720 W. Wilshire Blvd., Suite 120
Oklahoma City, OK 73116
www.cleatsforkids.org

ADVISOR

Compliance Solutions, Inc.

Accountants and Accounting Services

Mr. Wes Johnson.....(214) 226-7813
3208 NW 158th Terrace
Edmond, OK 73013-6228
www.csilongwood.com

ADVISOR

Freedom City, Inc.

Nonprofit / Service Agencies

Mrs. Brittany Carter-Thomas.....(405) 655-8763
11911 N. Pennsylvania Ave.
P.O. Box 16443
Oklahoma City, OK 73113-2443
freedomcityokc.com

ADVISOR

The LifeShare Foundation

Nonprofit / Service Agencies

Ms. B. Gabrielle Butler.....(405) 488-3853
4705 NW. Expressway
Oklahoma City, OK 73132-5213
lifeshareokfoundation.org

ADVISOR

Not Your Average Joe

Coffee Service & Supplies

Nonprofit / Service Agencies
Mr. Tim Herbel.....(405) 265-5733
1227 N. Walker Ave., Suite 300
509 Wilkinson Drive
Moore, OK 73160
https://www.nyaj.coffee

ADVISOR

Oklahoma Center for Community and Justice

Nonprofit / Service Agencies

Ms. Sara Jane DelMonte.....(405) 254-5189
720 W. Wilshire Blvd., Suite 101-A
Oklahoma City, OK 73116
www.occjok.org

ADVISOR

Oklahoma City Ballet

Dance Companies / Instruction

Ms. Whitney Cross.....(405) 843-9898
6800 N. Classen Blvd.
Oklahoma City, OK 73116-7208
www.okcballet.org

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

80% OF GRADUATES FROM AN OKLAHOMA COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY FOUND TO BE WORKING IN STATE 5 YEARS LATER

Graduates Employed in Oklahoma After Graduation (2021)

	OKLAHOMA RESIDENTS	NON-RESIDENTS WHO ATTENDED OKLAHOMA INSTITUTIONS	TOTAL EMPLOYMENT RATE
1 YEAR AFTER GRADUATION	89.7%	65.6%	83.7%
5 YEARS AFTER GRADUATION	87.5%	61.5%	81.3%

SOURCE: OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

- The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education released their 2021 Employment Outcomes Report.
- The report analyzed employment data for graduates of Oklahoma public colleges and universities one year and five years after graduation, 2019-2020 and 2015-2016.
- One year after graduation, 84% of students are found to be employed and working in Oklahoma.
- Five years after graduation, 81% of students are found to be employed and working in Oklahoma.
- The report concluded that the majority of Oklahoma's state system graduates remain in the state, contributing to the state's economy and opportunities for growth, even five years after graduation.

For comprehensive Economic Indicator and Regional Data, please visit your Greater Oklahoma City Chamber Economic Development Division at www.greateroklahomacity.com/economicindicators or contact Eric Long, research economist, at 405-297-8976; elong@okcchamber.com.

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.

Freestyle Creative

301 N. Harvey Ave., Suite 100
Oklahoma City, OK 73102

Salt Real Estate

7248 N. Classen
Oklahoma City, OK 73116

Arrowhead Boat Sales

7240 S. I-35 Service Road
Oklahoma City, OK 73149

Oklahoma City Indian Clinic

4913 W. Reno Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73127



→ V E L O C I T Y ←

Periodicals
PAID
Oklahoma City, OK
73102

LOOK INSIDE!

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G R E A T E R
OKLAHOMA CITY
C H A M B E R



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[FACEBOOK.COM/OKCCHAMBER](https://facebook.com/OKCCHAMBER)



INVESTING IN OKC'S FUTURE WORKFORCE

Tuesday, June 27

National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum

www.ABetterLifeOKC.com/InternOKC