

# VELOCITY

JULY 2024 • OKCCHAMBER.COM

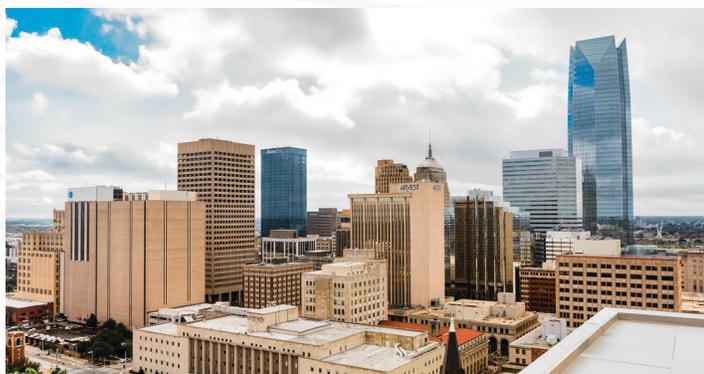
## GREATER OKLAHOMA CITY CHAMBER'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY: SHAPING OKC'S FUTURE AND CONTINUED GROWTH

Oklahoma City is poised for a new era of economic growth and development, marked by a strategic partnership between the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, the City of Oklahoma City and the Alliance for Economic Development. This collaborative effort has culminated in a comprehensive economic development plan designed to guide the city's progress over the next three decades.

The new economic development plan involved over 370 stakeholders in focused groups and meetings, aided by EY in partnership with the Chamber over the past year.

"Our new vision statement and the five focus areas emerged from extensive community input," said Greater OKC Chamber President and CEO Christy Gillenwater. "These areas include education, quality of place,

*CONTINUED ON PAGE 8*



## FROM OKC TO D.C.: ENGAGEMENT AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber visited the nation's capital from June 11-13, collaborating with key national and international stakeholders. During the two-day journey, chamber representatives engaged with congressional leaders, military officials, and top business figures to advocate for pivotal economic and legislative initiatives.

"The D.C. Fly-In provides an opportunity for high-level engagement with our federal delegation and their staff," stated Mike Jackson, Senior Vice President of Government Relations at the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber.

The visit culminated in high-profile engagements, including a dinner at the Korean Cultural Center and sessions at the Library of Congress. Attendees gained insights from a panel of distinguished speakers, including Sen. Markwayne Mullin, Congressman Kevin Hern, Chief of Staff Will McPherson, Congressman Frank Lucas, Dr. Max Katz and Sen. James Lankford.

Additionally, critical briefings addressed key community issues such as Air Force logistics, emerging technologies in national security, transportation priorities and energy initiatives, underscoring the chamber's commitment to fostering pro-business legislation and supporting Oklahoma City's economic prospects.

Prepared with a comprehensive agenda, the chamber's priorities spanned crucial sectors including federal government affairs, healthcare, transportation, education

*CONTINUED ON PAGE 6*



## 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](https://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

## GROWING OUR INDUSTRIES KEY TO ECONOMY

Last month we relaunched our state's association created to collaborate for the growth of the life science industry. Life Science Oklahoma is a reinvigoration of the former OKBio and comes to market with a new plan for success and significant enthusiasm for success.

Rebuilding this critical organization is one of the projects included Oklahoma City's Build Back Better Federal grant program. Your Chamber led the application process for Oklahoma City and is the lead on this critical implementation piece of the grant.

The new organization debuted on the world's largest stage for the biotechnology community, BIO International, the annual meeting of nearly 20,000 attendees from all over the world. The Oklahoma team connected with partners, potential funders and each other during the nearly week-long event.

Industry organizations like Life Science Oklahoma are vital to growing an economic cluster. The collaboration they engender facilitates connections and innovation. Our life science industry is ready for more recognition and is primed for growth. This is the ideal environment for the new organization to find success.

The continued diversification of our economy is dependent on growing multiple sectors of business and developing more robust activity within each of our sectors. In Life Science, moving from research and drug development to manufacturing is one example. Growing our capacity in medical device development is another. Oklahoma has so many opportunities to play a vital role in our nation's bioscience sector and this reformed statewide organization will help us maximize each of these areas.

Congratulations to our life science partners on this new association – we are committed to you and to its success.

### »» READ CHRISTY'S VELOCITYOKC ONLINE STORY OF THE MONTH

Horizons District: Oklahoma City's Upcoming Cultural Hub

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



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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## CALENDAR

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

### JULY 23

#### State of the City

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Oklahoma City Convention Center

100 Mick Cornett Dr.

[OKCChamber.com/City](http://OKCChamber.com/City)

### AUGUST 7

#### State of the Schools

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

National Cowboy & Western

Heritage Museum

1700 NE 63rd St.

[OKCChamber.com/Schools](http://OKCChamber.com/Schools)

### AUGUST 21

#### Chamber Forum

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Petroleum Club

100 N Broadway, 34th Floor

[OKCChamber.com/AugustForum](http://OKCChamber.com/AugustForum)

## Oklahoma City Recognized as Best-Run Large City in the U.S. by WalletHub Study

In recent years, local leadership in Oklahoma City has faced unprecedented challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, rising inflation and increasing homicide rates. Managing a city, especially a large one, requires balancing diverse public interests with limited resources. Leaders must make critical decisions about essential services, budget allocations and local tax rates.

One effective way to measure the effectiveness of local leadership is by assessing a city's operating efficiency — how well officials manage and spend public funds compared to the quality of services residents receive.

WalletHub recently conducted a study to compare the operating efficiency of 148 of the largest U.S. cities, revealing which cities are managed best. Oklahoma City emerged as a standout in this study, ranking fifth for Best-Run City in the U.S. and first among large cities. This recognition highlights Oklahoma City's successful management and efficient use of public funds, ensuring high-quality services for its residents. The city's impressive ranking is an indication of the effective leadership and strategic decision-making of its local officials.

WalletHub's evaluation covered six key categories: financial stability, education, health, safety, economy, and infrastructure and pollution. These categories were assessed using 36 relevant metrics, providing a comprehensive picture of how effectively cities are managed.

To put Oklahoma City's achievements in perspective, it's helpful to look at how other cities performed in the same study. Nampa, Idaho topped the list with the number one ranking in quality of city services and 45th in total budget per capita. Lexington-Fayette, Kentucky, came in second, with a 41st ranking in services and second in budget. Boise, Idaho and Nashua, New Hampshire also performed well, ranking fourth and third in services and 13th and fourth in budget, respectively.

Oklahoma City's ability to rank fifth overall, with a 58th ranking in quality of city services and sixth in total budget per capita, demonstrates its efficiency in managing resources and delivering quality services. The city's leadership has effectively navigated the complexities of urban management, ensuring that residents receive high-quality services without overextending the budget. Other cities that performed well in the study include Durham, North Carolina (16th in services, 20th in budget); Provo, Utah (6th in services, 29th in budget); and Fort Wayne, Indiana (49th in services, 11th in budget). These cities, like Oklahoma City, have shown a strong ability to balance service quality with fiscal responsibility.

Oklahoma City's high ranking in WalletHub's study is a clear indicator of its effective local leadership. By prioritizing efficient resource management and high-quality services, Oklahoma City has established itself as a model for other large cities. This achievement reflects the city's commitment to its residents and its ability to thrive even in challenging times.

Visit [Wallethub.com](http://Wallethub.com) for more info on the full study.

# STATE OF THE SCHOOLS 2024

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber's 2024 State of the Schools event will feature two keynotes by newly appointed Oklahoma City Public Schools (OKCPS) Superintendent Dr. Jamie Polk and University of Oklahoma President Joseph Harroz. The event will be held Wednesday, August 7, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum.



With over two decades of experience in educational leadership, Polk is an esteemed education advocate with a passion for driving transformative change. She is dedicated to enhancing student outcomes, fostering community involvement, and creating nurturing learning environments for all of OKCPS' nearly 33,000 students.

Prior to joining OKCPS in 2019, Dr. Polk served students in Lawton, Oklahoma as a decorated teacher and principal before being named the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services for Prekindergarten through 12th Grade at Lawton Public Schools. She earned the prestigious National Title I Distinguished School accolade for closing the achievement gap among priority groups for her focus on intentional planning, iterative improvement and personalized feedback to foster continuous development and excellence in education. In her keynote, Polk will share her vision for the OKCPS district.

Serving the University of Oklahoma for over 28 years in various leadership roles, Joseph Harroz Jr. was named

the 15th president of OU on May 9, 2020. Harroz's previous service to the university includes a one-year term as interim president, nine years as dean of the College of Law, 12 years as general counsel, and two years as vice president for executive affairs.

Under Harroz's leadership, over the last four years the university has ambitiously pursued the fulfillment of its "Lead On, University" Strategic Plan, sparking a new era of excellence and elevating OU's position as a top-tier public research university with life-changing impact. In his keynote, Harroz will focus on how the university is becoming an economic engine for the state.

Individual tickets are \$60 for Chamber members and \$90 for nonmembers. To register or learn more, visit [okcchamber.com/schools](http://okcchamber.com/schools). Sponsor tables of eight with additional recognition are available for \$1,750. Contact Suzette Ellison at [sellison@okcchamber.com](mailto:sellison@okcchamber.com) for table sponsor inquiries.

The Chamber and American Fidelity Assurance Company invite attendees to bring school supplies to the event, which will benefit the Oklahoma City Public Schools Foundation in honor of their 40th anniversary. Supplies can also be dropped off at the Chamber office prior to the event.

Special thanks to Presenting Sponsor University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center and Platinum Sponsor Cox Communications, and School Supply/Centerpiece Sponsor American Fidelity Assurance Company.



*Newly appointed Oklahoma City Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Jamie Polk and University of Oklahoma President Joseph Harroz will be the keynotes at this year's State of the Schools on August 7th.*



## D.C. FLY-IN (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

Transportation priorities highlighted the chamber's support for sustainable funding of surface transportation programs, federal capital improvement grants and the critical role of the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center. Additionally, the chamber endorsed ongoing investments in Tinker Air Force Base, emphasizing its critical role in national defense and aerospace.

Educational priorities focused on facilitating higher education access through initiatives like Pell Grants and FAFSA completion efforts, while advocating for updates to federal nutrition programs under the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act.

Through strategic engagements with federal leaders and insightful discussions on pressing community issues, the chamber affirmed its role as a proactive advocate for business development and policy innovation. This collaborative effort stresses the chamber's dedication to shaping a prosperous future for Oklahoma City through impactful advocacy and the power of strategic partnership.



*Senator Markwayne Mullin thanked attendees for their advocacy for Oklahoma City and everything Oklahoma has to offer.*

and the pivotal role of Tinker Air Force Base. Among the focal points were proposals for single-payer healthcare, federal capital improvement grants, advancements in artificial intelligence and initiatives to support higher education access and federal nutrition programs.

Artificial Intelligence emerged as a transformative technology with the potential to revolutionize industry efficiencies and enhance quality of life. Oklahoma aims to foster an innovation-friendly environment while ensuring robust regulatory safeguards.

Further initiatives included advocating for comprehensive immigration reform to attract essential workers, supporting federal legislation such as the SAFE Act to enable banking services for marijuana businesses, opposing Medicaid cuts and promoting research and development initiatives.



## CHAMBER PROGRAM HELPS COMPANY LEADERS “CONNECT” WITH OKC

OKConnect, an exclusive, high-level orientation program created by the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber and Leadership OKC, will return on Sept. 18 and will continue through the end of November.

OKConnect is designed for community newcomers, or business leaders with a new or expanded role with a focus on community awareness and involvement.

The program helps company leaders discover how to get involved in the community. Participants gain behind-the-scenes insight into Oklahoma City – from its earliest beginnings to its current growth and success.

Chaired by Jim Parrack, senior vice president at Price Edwards & Company, and Shannon Rich, president and CEO at the Oklahoma Hall of Fame, OKConnect includes four sessions from noon to 5 p.m.

Each session features a deep dive from speakers in the community that focus on Oklahoma City’s past, economic growth, education and ways to get involved.

OKConnect is \$500 for Chamber members and \$600 for nonmembers. Attendance is limited to 60 participants. To apply for the 2024 class, visit [okcchamber.com/okconnect](http://okcchamber.com/okconnect).



*Designed for community newcomers and business leaders, OKConnect seeks to provide insights into Oklahoma City – from its early history to current accolades and opportunities for community engagement.*

For more details or if you have questions, please contact Marcus Elwell at [melwell@okcchamber.com](mailto:melwell@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](http://okcchamber.com/grandopenings).

### Sit Still Kids Salon

601 NW 14th  
OKC, OK 73103

### Stand-By-Personnel

3625 S. Council Road  
OKC, OK 73179

### Walmart Supercenter Store 564

6100 W. Reno  
OKC, OK 73127

### Urgent Recovery at Red Rock Behavioral

4400 N. Lincoln Blvd.  
OKC, OK 73105



economic growth, civic engagement and marketing our city's story."

At the July Chamber Forum, key leaders discussed the new strategic economic development plan, emphasizing the need for a fresh direction as the city competes on a higher level.

The forum featured a panel discussion with four key leaders: Mark Beffort, CEO of Newmark Robinson; Bob Funk Jr., executive vice president of corporate development and growth at Express Employment Professionals International Headquarters; Mike Jackson, senior vice president of government relations and policy at the Chamber; and Jeff Seymour, executive vice president of economic development at the Chamber.

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***“Oklahoma City has been a leader in placemaking and long-term public strategy. However, to stay competitive, we need to evolve our approach and have a community conversation about our future.” - Jeff Seymour***

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Jeff Seymour kicked off with the importance of continuing the city's legacy of community building and economic development. "Oklahoma City has been a leader in placemaking and long-term public strategy. However, to stay competitive, we need to evolve our approach and have a community conversation about our future," he said.

Seymour elaborated on the city's competitive evolution, stating, "We're competing with this first-tier set of America's largest cities." He stressed the need for a comprehensive urban strategy integrating education, transportation and innovation to sustain Oklahoma City's growth momentum.

Mark Beffort emphasized the importance of creating vibrant urban destinations: "A destination where people can go and spend all day or a full weekend." He highlighted ongoing projects aimed at enhancing entertainment options and housing availability, essential for attracting and retaining residents.

Education emerged as a critical focus area during the discussion.

"We know there's no silver bullet to solving educational challenges, but we are committed to making a difference," Bob Funk Jr. said.

Gillenwater acknowledged the significant role education plays in the community's strategic vision, introducing Rhonda Baker as the new director of education at the Greater OKC Chamber. She highlighted ongoing efforts to secure funding for education initiatives, stressing the urgency and collaborative spirit required to address educational challenges effectively.

Bob Funk Jr. emphasized the pivotal role of education in workforce development amidst widespread labor shortages projected over the next three decades. He emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach integrating K-12, career technical education and higher education to align student talents with market demands effectively.

Funk noted that the workforce deficit exceeds 3.5 million across North America, underscoring the critical need for long-term investments in education and workforce training. He highlighted the necessity for state and municipal involvement to tackle demographic challenges and ensure a skilled workforce.

Reflecting on Oklahoma City's historical leadership in initiatives like MAPS, Gillenwater and Funk expressed optimism about replicating such success in education.

The spotlight turned to the critical task of defining Oklahoma City's brand story. Gillenwater set the stage by referencing recent perception research, revealing that many business leaders and site selectors lacked a clear understanding of the city's strategic investments and vibrant community initiatives. This highlighted the urgent need for a unified and compelling narrative to showcase Oklahoma City's strengths on a broader stage.

Mark Beffort stressed the necessity of establishing a distinct identity for the city: "We're at a pivotal moment where defining our brand is crucial. Cities like Denver



Mark Beffort, CEO of Newmark Robinson, expressed his excitement about the Chamber's new strategic plan, noting substantial investments in excess of \$5 billion are poised to transform the city over the next few years.

and Austin have successfully crafted unique identities that drive economic growth and cultural vibrancy. We need a brand that resonates beyond our borders, showcasing our strengths and ambitions."

Bob Funk Jr. noted the challenge of overcoming the city's inherent humility: "Oklahoma City is filled with hardworking, good-hearted people, but we haven't been as assertive in telling our story. We need to celebrate our successes and articulate why this city is a great place to live, work and invest."

Mike Jackson stated the need for strategic investment in marketing and tourism: "Our neighboring states excel in promoting their attractions. It's time we adopt a more aggressive approach to market Oklahoma City's unique appeal. Increased funding in tourism and broader marketing efforts will amplify our visibility and attractiveness to visitors and potential residents."

Jeff Seymour emphasized leveraging upcoming opportunities like the LA 2028 Olympics to elevate Oklahoma City's global profile: "As we prepare for events like the LA 2028 Olympics, we have a significant opportunity to showcase our city on an international stage. However, we must ensure our narrative remains authentic and preserves Oklahoma City's distinctive character amidst growth."

Transitioning to a broader perspective on civic participation, Mike Jackson delved into Oklahoma City's strategic direction, pointing out the importance of regional collaboration to amplify the city's economic influence. With Oklahoma City now driving 41% of the state's GDP and areas like Canadian County ranking among the fastest

growing in the nation, Jackson painted a picture of a city poised for significant growth and influence.

Jeff Seymour expanded on the discussion, reflecting on the evolving landscape of leadership within the city. He stressed the need to mentor and prepare the next generation of leaders, ensuring they reflect the city's diversity and values. Seymour spoke passionately about inclusivity in civic discourse, highlighting the importance of engaging a wide array of voices in shaping Oklahoma City's path forward.

As Oklahoma City embarks on this new journey, the strategic economic development plan aims to ensure the city remains a vibrant, competitive and inclusive place to live, work and invest.

Jeff Seymour expressed Oklahoma City's unique identity amidst rapid growth, stating, "I do not want us to be Dallas. I do not want us to be Austin. I do not want to look 30 years from now and go, 'Man, we're a concrete jungle.'" His sentiment reflects a collective desire to preserve the city's distinct charm and community spirit, ensuring it remains a place with a special, authentic appeal.

The panelists conveyed excitement about the strategic plan examining the substantial investments, exceeding \$5 billion, poised to transform the city over the next few years. Mark Beffort noted, "I'm most excited to watch that come forth and how we really engage that." This optimism is tempered by the need for unity in purpose, as Bob Funk Jr. emphasized, "That unity of purpose, probably even more than anything else, is what I see to carry us through the long term."

## LIFE SCIENCE OKLAHOMA LAUNCHES AT THE 2024 BIO INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

At this year's annual Bio International Convention in San Diego, the Oklahoma life science industry came together to announce the relaunch of its industry association, Life Science Oklahoma.

Formerly known as OKBIO, the association is relaunching with new leadership, a new format, and a renewed focus to support businesses and organizations within the Oklahoma life sciences and healthcare communities.

Oklahoma boasts more than \$316 million in annual bio-related university and biomedical institution R&D expenditure and is home to over 563 bio-related establishments. The sector supports more than 31,000 workers and is experiencing a 10% employment growth.

"This is an exciting time for the life science industry in Oklahoma," said Christy Gillenwater, president and CEO of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber. "The industry not only brings a substantial economic impact to our state, but also helps improve people's health in Oklahoma and across the world."

The new branding was revealed at a special industry breakfast during the conference and was showcased



One of six funded projects through a \$35 million U.S. Economic Development Administration's Build Back Better Regional Challenge, Life Science Oklahoma stresses the importance of the life science sector in well-positioned cities like Oklahoma City.



# LIFE SCIENCE OKLAHOMA

at the Life Science Oklahoma pavilion. In addition to introducing the new brand to an international audience, the pavilion provided a space for Oklahoma companies and organizations to connect with potential partners to advance their important work.

During the four-day event, over 100 meetings took place at the Life Science Oklahoma pavilion, which typically attracts approximately 18,500 industry leaders from around the world.

Life Science Oklahoma is one of the six funded projects through the awarded \$35-million U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) Build Back Better Regional Challenge.

"The EDA's investment in our region demonstrates the potential of the life science sector here and emphasizes the importance of developing life science hubs in well-positioned cities," said Gillenwater.

Life Science Oklahoma will be an important advocate for the state's dynamic and diverse life sciences and healthcare communities. As such, it is committed to bringing national and international awareness to key areas of the state's biotech, drug manufacturing, agricultural science, veterinary medicine and healthcare industries, including therapeutics, diagnostics and biomanufacturing; medical and health technologies; and health and clinical care.

The new association will be based at the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber and is currently hiring a director to oversee day-to-day operations. To get involved, visit [www.lifesciok.com](http://www.lifesciok.com).



## TWISTERS SET TO OPEN JULY 19TH NATIONWIDE

The highly anticipated standalone sequel "Twisters" is set to storm theatres nationwide on July 19, with opening weekend box office predictions ranging between \$45 to \$60 million. Directed by Lee Isaac Chung, known for his work on the Golden-Globe winning film "Minari" and "The Mandalorian," the film highlights Oklahoma's unique terrain and landscape, making them critical elements of the production.

"Twisters" marked a significant milestone as the very first Oklahoma City rebate project through the Oklahoma City Film & Creative Industries Office, led by Executive Director Jill Simpson.

"The Oklahoma City Film Incentive Program and OKC-based Prairie Surf Studios were instrumental in securing the production of "Twisters" here in Oklahoma," according to Jill Simpson. We all worked closely with the Oklahoma Film + Music Office and NBC/Universal in recruiting and supporting the production throughout much of 2023. "Twisters" represents the perfect example of how state and local collaboration and incentives coupled with state-of-the-art studio facilities can net big results for an entire region. It was a fantastic experience."

The project spent over \$42 million in Oklahoma City in 2023, with a projected total economic impact of \$258 million. More than half the shooting days took

place in Oklahoma City, utilizing over 200 local vendors. The cast and crew were accommodated in 10 different OKC hotels, with filming locations including El Reno, Chickasha, Midwest City, Spencer, Pawhuska and several other cities around Oklahoma.

The film is projected to have created an estimated 2,000 jobs for locals and further provided talent development and inclusion workforce opportunities through a traineeship program that partnered with OKCCC, the Film Education Institute of Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Film Training Academy and the Cherokee Nation. The distinctive 'Universal Below-The-Line' traineeship initiative offered newcomers, including those from underrepresented backgrounds, firsthand experience and mentorship on set.

"Twisters" features Glen Powell ("Top Gun: Maverick," "The Hitman"), Daisy Edgar-Jones ("Where the Crawdads Sing"), Anthony Ramos ("Hamilton") and Kiernan Shipka ("Mad Men"). The film is produced by Frank Marshall, known for his legendary contributions to "Jurassic Park," "Jurassic World," "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and the "Bourne Identity" series. Steven Spielberg serves as the executive producer, adding his creative vision to this anticipated film.

It's been 28 years since the original 'Twisters' captivated audiences, becoming the second highest-grossing film of the year and earning nearly \$500 million worldwide during its theatrical run. According to Universal, the standalone sequel of this big screen thrill "promises to put audiences with direct contact with one of nature's most wondrous—and destructive—forces."



Chamber employees enjoyed watching "Twisters" come to life right outside our doors, as production transformed downtown Oklahoma City's Park Avenue into a New York city street last summer.



## THE REAL DEAL COLLECTIVE HELPS STRENGTHEN BUSINESSES FROM THE INSIDE OUT

The Real Deal Collective is a six-month executive growth program that fosters collaboration and innovation to grow businesses. Created and conducted by program instructor Gene Hopper and financial strategy expert Sherry Dale, the program provides education, access to capital, business planning and an influential network of resources to directly address barriers where businesses typically get stuck.

Combined, Hopper and Dale have a plethora of credentials and experience. Hopper has launched four of her own companies, secured a patent and commercialized diagnostic and technology products on a national scale. Dale is a certified public accountant, and she has owned, founded and built companies in professional services, real estate, retail, wholesale, technology and financial services.

Along with Hopper and Dale, students of The Real Deal Collective will learn from 20 different CEOs and business owners, who will walk them through six different modules of business. With nearly 40 program alumni, the program now has two different registration options: one for general business and one specifically for food and beverage services.

For general business, registration is due by August 1. A virtual information session will be held on July 17 for the

program, with classes set to begin August 9 and conclude in December. For food and beverage, The Real Deal registration deadline is July 15.

Once registered, participants will be able to begin the program, with modules covering topics from company finances to leadership within the company.

Module one covers strategy, vision, values and metrics, with subcategories in management tools, building a business and company culture. Module two covers finances, while module three discusses operational excellence. Attendees learn about marketing and sales in module four, such as brand, ideal clients and building up sales. In module five, the curriculum covers leadership and management. Finally, module six consists of presentation preparation, final presentations and graduation from the program.

Upon graduation, each participant will be able to walk away from the program with a custom designed, three-year playbook tailored to their business' greatest needs. With this playbook, the student can refer to their personal vision for their company when in times of need.

The Real Deal Collective is a cohort of Hopper and Dale's co-owned company, Mettise, which also focuses on the further development of business leaders through playbook strategy management systems, training, business and executive coaching and more.

Whether small or large, any company is welcome to register for The Real Deal Collective to help build business and tackle obstacles holding them back from reaching full potential and success.



Nicholas Tobey, executive director of Price Executive Academy addresses professionals last year in the mini-MBA program. Photos Courtesy of Prairie Surf Studios.

## OU'S PRICE EXECUTIVE ACADEMY HELPS LEADERS ENHANCE THEIR SKILLS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The University of Oklahoma Michael F. Price College of Business recently announced its launch of the Price Executive Academy, a program that will provide emerging leaders and established professionals with the tools to navigate the complexities of the business realm.

“The rapidly changing nature of work demands professionals to constantly reskill and upskill. This shift makes leadership development both challenging and crucial for organizations,” said Corey Phelps, dean of the Price College of Business at OU. “We created the Price Executive Academy to be the home of lifelong learning for working professionals and customized leadership development programs for organizations in Oklahoma and beyond.”

Price Executive Academy offers two different programs: a mini-MBA open enrollment program and a custom solutions program designed for organizations.

The custom solutions program is directed at larger organizations that desire growth in employees ranging in expertise, such as new leaders, managers, supervisors and upper-level management. For this program, custom solutions can include assistance in developing innovative mindsets, emotional intelligence, leading change and many other organization-specific challenges.

The mini-MBA programs are intended for any level of leader hoping to enhance their existing skills. The first program – a 10-week schedule beginning in January 2025 – focuses on leading change and innovation, while also covering necessary topics such as finance, strategic thinking and artificial intelligence.

As 2025 quickly approaches, more mini-MBA programs covering different topics will arise, as well as an online option that will focus on the same subjects of change and innovation.

The mini-MBA programs are a work in progress, with the first round of registration currently open for participants. However, the custom solutions program has already completed two custom-built leadership plans: one designed for Chesapeake Energy and the other designed for OU Health.

“Today’s leaders are facing problems in which there are no clear solutions yet and we are designing learning experiences with complexity in mind,” said Nicholas Tobey, executive director of Price Executive Academy.

Both programs within the Price Executive Academy allow participants to learn new skillsets at a quick pace so they can implement those tools into their organizations immediately.

At the end of the program, participants will receive a certificate of completion from the OU Price College of Business and will be recognized as an alum of the college. Participants will also earn a Continuing Education Unit (CEU) in the program and receive a badge from Credly.

If you are interested in enrolling in the mini-MBA program, all Chamber members receive 15% off tuition. Please contact Brittney Hatfield at [bsena@ou.edu](mailto:bsena@ou.edu).



The Price Executive Academy strives to be the home of lifelong learning for working professionals with customized leadership development programs. Photos Courtesy of Prairie Surf Studios.

# 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+

### Legal Aid Of Services of Oklahoma (LASO)

*Legal Services*

Mr. Michael Figgins.....(405) 488-6768  
3800 N. Classen Blvd., Suite 230  
Oklahoma City, OK 73118-2855  
www.legalaidok.org

## ASSOCIATE

### DARR Equipment Company

*Forklifts*

*Machinery, Equipment & Supplies*  
*Material Handling Equipment*

Mr. Justin Price.....(972) 672-6881  
3800 S. Thomas Road  
Oklahoma City, OK 73179-8600  
http://darequipment.com/

## ADVISOR

### Future Point of View

*Computer Software Developers - Mobile Applications*

*Consultants*

*Information Technology - Consulting*

Mr. Trent Saunders.....(405) 359-3910  
3856 S. Boulevard  
#100  
Edmond, OK 73013-8423  
www.fpov.com

### Hilton Garden Inn & Edmond Conference Center

*Hotels & Motels*

Ms. Sherri Banister.....(405) 285-0900  
2833 Conference Drive  
Edmond, OK 73034-7197  
www.edmond.hgi.com

### Invenergy, LLC

*Energy Conservation & Management Consultants*

Ms. Lisa Powell.....(580) 366-9662  
205 W. Maple, Suite 500  
Enid, OK 73701-4044  
www.invenergy.com

### Public Service Company of Oklahoma

*Industrial Utility Sales*

*Industrial Utility Sales*

Ms. Amy Brown.....(833) 776-7697  
9434 Cedar Lake Ave.  
212 E. 6th St.  
Tulsa, OK 74119-1212  
www.psoklahoma.com

### MacArthur Associated Consultants, LLC

*Engineering Services*

*Engineers & Surveyors*

*Engineers - Consulting*

Mr. Sam Pappas, PE.....(405) 848-2471  
25 NW 146th St.  
Edmond, OK 73013-2472  
www.macokc.com

## CORE

### Benjamin Franklin Plumbing

*Plumbing*

Mr. Austin Jones.....(405) 336-1776  
2839 S. Portland Ave.  
2825 E. Kellogg Drive  
Wichita, KS 67211-2922  
www.benfranklinokc.com

### Chris Griswold, PC

*Legal Services*

*Real Estate - Commercial*

Mr. Chris M. Griswold.....(405) 229-7595  
12101 N. Meridian Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73120-8144  
chrisgriswoldpc.com

### The Criterion

*Amusement / Entertainment / Attractions*

*Entertainment - Event Ticket Sales*

Mrs. Maren Erickson.....(405) 840-5500  
500 E. Sheridan Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73104-4205  
www.criterionokc.com

### Oklahoma Secondary School Activities Association

*Nonprofit / Service Agencies*

Mr. Kyle Barnard.....(405) 594-0233  
7300 Broadway Extension  
Oklahoma City, OK 73116  
www.ossaa.com

### 100% Chiropractic OKC

*Chiropractors - D.C.*

Dr. Elizabeth Fallert, DC.....(405) 876-8787  
13100 N. Penn Ave., Suite C  
Oklahoma City, OK 73120  
100%chiropracticoklahomacity.com

### Paychex

*Payroll Services*

Ms. LK Cafiero.....(720) 431-8066  
911 Panorama Trail South  
Rochester, NY 14625-2311  
go.paychex.com

### Recovery Made Possible, LLC

*Counseling Services*

*Pharmacies*

Ms. Jackie Schulte.....(405) 883-3833  
8901 S. Santa Fe Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73139-8413

## 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](mailto:membership@okcchamber.com).

## ADVISOR

### MacArthur Associated Consultants, LLC

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25 NW 146th St.  
Edmond, OK 73013-2472  
www.macokc.com

# ECONOMIC INDICATORS

## OKLAHOMA CITY RANKED AMONG TOP 15 CITIES IN POPULATION GROWTH

### Population Estimates (2023)

TOWN	2022	2023	22-'23 GROWTH	22-'23 % CHANGE
GOLDSBY	3,071	3,321	250	8.14%
NEWCASTLE	13,080	14,001	921	7.04%
JONES TOWN	3,010	3,169	159	5.28%
MUSTANG	22,242	23,270	1,028	4.62%
YUKON	25,572	26,388	816	3.19%
EDMOND	96,339	98,103	1,764	1.83%
OKLAHOMA CITY	695,178	702,767	7,589	1.09%
STILLWATER	49,095	49,525	430	0.88%
SHAWNEE	31,640	31,803	163	0.52%
MOORE	63,200	63,470	270	0.43%
NORMAN	129,579	130,046	467	0.36%
MIDWEST CITY	57,997	58,086	89	0.15%
DEL CITY	21,405	21,312	-93	-0.43%
BETHANY	20,462	20,369	-93	-0.45%
<b>GREATER OKLAHOMA CITY REGION</b>	<b>1,631,237</b>	<b>1,650,550</b>	<b>19,313</b>	<b>1.18%</b>

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, 2023 POPULATION ESTIMATES, RELEASED JULY 2024;  
\* TOWNS WITH OVER 200 PERSONS

- US Census reports that city of OKC enjoyed 14th largest numeric population gains in nation from 2022-2023
- Greater OKC region had 11 of the top 20 fastest growing cities in the state.
- Of the 100 cities and towns in our region, 90 experienced positive population growth from 2022-2023. Only 5 cities or towns lost more than 10 people.
- OKC region had the 3 fastest % YoY growth towns in the state\*:
  - Goldsby 8.1%
  - Newcastle 7.0 %
  - Jones 5.3%
- The Greater OKC region added nearly 20,000 people and grew by 1.2%

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

# → V E L O C I T Y ←

Periodicals  
**PAID**  
Oklahoma City, OK  
73102

## LOOK INSIDE!

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- 15** Oklahoma City Ranked Among Top 15 Cities in Population Growth

**G R E A T E R**  
O K L A H O M A C I T Y  
**C H A M B E R**



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## STATE OF THE CITY

with Mayor David Holt

**G R E A T E R**  
O K L A H O M A C I T Y  
**C H A M B E R**



**Tuesday, July 23 | 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. | Oklahoma City Convention Center**  
**\$100 Chamber members | \$125 nonmembers**

Sponsor tables of eight with additional recognition are available for \$2,000.

Register online at [www.okcchamber.com/events](http://www.okcchamber.com/events)