

January 2021

www.winonachamber.com | (507) 452-2272 | 902 E. Second St., Suite 120, Winona, MN

MEET THE 2021 CHAMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Michael Charron, Chair
Saint Mary's University



Andy Puetz, Chair Elect
Chrysler Winona



Dave Jensen, Past Chair
Farmers Insurance



Jolene Vaselaar, Treasurer
Altra Federal Credit Union



Kyle Rupprecht, At Large
Minnwest Bank



Rebecca Lamberty
Winona Health



Andrea Northam
Winona State University



Ben Adank
Itechra



Kelly Pronschinske
Fastenal Company



Dan Rivers
Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott



Nathan Sarvi
The Garage Cowork Space



Dave Pederson
Dunlap & Seeger, P.A.



Randy Skarupka
Miller Ingenuity



Ellen Smith
WNB Financial



Joanne Thompson
MN State College SE

ABOUT THE CHAMBER

- OUR VISION -

Be the Foremost Resource and Advocate for Businesses in the Winona Area

- OUR MISSION -

To Serve Businesses How and When They Need Us

Officers:

Michael Charron – Chair
Andrew Puetz – Chair Elect
Dave Jensen – Past Chair
Jolene Vaselaar – Treasurer
Kyle Rupprecht – At Large

Retiring 2021:

Ben Adank
Joanne Thompson
Dave Jensen
Rebecca Lamberty
Jolene Vaselaar

Retiring 2022:

Michael Charron
Danny Rivers
Kyle Rupprecht
Randy Skarupka
Ellen Smith

Retiring 2023:

Andrea Northam
Dave Pederson
Kelly Pronschinske
Andy Puetz
Nathan Sarvi

Staff:

Christie Ransom – President & CEO
Kay Mathews – Vice President of Finance and Operations
Amanda Steine – Membership Development and Programs Manager
Ben Strand – Main Street Program Manager
Nicole Schossow – B.E.N./REACH Program Manager

CHAMBER CHAMPIONS

- VISIONARY -



Retired Board Members receive plaques of recognition

Christie Ransom, President & CEO
Winona Area Chamber of Commerce

Five amazing Chamber Board Members finished up their terms in December: Corey Hancock, Terry Klonecki, Dan Welsh, Dave Erickson, and Scott Rodeghier. We are grateful for the time and expertise that they have shared with us and appreciate their leadership within our business community. The Chamber's strength and direction comes because of amazing supporters and leaders like them.

THANK YOU TO OUR RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS!



Corey Hancock
Vice President of Strategic Accounts
Benchmark Electronics, Inc.
2019 Board Chair



Terry Klonecki
President / Owner
Winona Sign & Design and Formgraphics
2018 Board Chair



Dan Welsh
Store Director
HyVee, Inc.



Dave Erickson
CFP Wealth Management Advisor
Northwestern Mutual



Scott Rodeghier
Manufacturing Manager
Fastenal



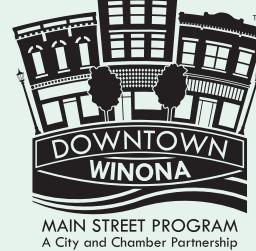
Main Street News 2020 In Review

Ben Strand, Program Manager
Main Street Program

Much like the small business community, this year has forced us to change the way the program operates while simultaneously sticking to our vision of "creating a downtown where people want to be." It wasn't easy, but we're very proud of what we've been able to do to continue working toward realizing that vision, and we don't plan to stop any time soon.

Staying positive and keeping a bright outlook proves more and more difficult as 2021 stares us in the face. Remaining optimistic and holding hope for better things in the future can be draining.

And that's fine. It's okay to feel exhausted after a year like this, but we have to remain vigilant because we're all still traveling this winding, unpaved road together.



The persistence, resilience, and strength our community has shown this year is extremely impressive and inspiring. Our downtown small business community continues to battle, and we continue to support them in their fight. Whether it's maintaining a goal of shopping local as frequently as possible, buying gift cards, leaving positive reviews, or engaging with their social media pages, I know our downtown businesses deeply appreciate the support they've received through the ups and downs this year threw at them (and us).

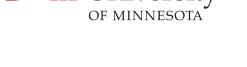
From our perspective, we had to change virtually everything we do to provide support and resources to the small businesses in our downtown. From Dine Out Downtown, to our Passport Program, to our Toast to the Holidays initiative, the Main Street Program has done a number of new things this year to amplify and encourage the necessity of supporting our downtown businesses.

You can stay up-to-date on all things Main Street by visiting our website at winonamainstreet.com or our Facebook page Winona Main Street Program.

- PREMIER -



- EXECUTIVE -





WINONA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE • In Business for Business

NEWSLETTER & BUSINESS PAGES

January 2021

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BIZ BITES



Chris Livingston has been promoted Assistant Vice President/Retirement Plan Director at **Merchants Bank**, according to Masood Dehnavifar, Trust Department Manager. "Chris' knowledge and expertise is a tremendous asset to our Trust Department and the clients we serve," said Dehnavifar. "Chris does an amazing job of serving business owners, plan sponsors, and ultimately employee participants." Livingston has been with the Merchants Bank Trust Department since 2018. He earned the Qualified 401(k) Administrator ("QKA") designation in July of this year. "I feel fortunate to be able to grow with Merchants and I enjoy being able to help our customers focus on building their business while we take care of their 401(k) plans. I look forward to continuing to serve our customers and our community," said Livingston.



Winona Health President/CEO, **Rachelle Schultz, Ed.D.**, was honored with The American Hospital Association's (AHA) Grassroots Champion Award. The AHA Grassroots Champion Award honors exceptional leadership in generating grassroots and community activity in support of the missions of hospitals and health systems. In receiving the award, Schultz was recognized for effectiveness in educating elected officials on how major issues affect hospitals' and health systems' vital role in the community; for broadening the base of community support for hospitals and health systems; and for advocating tirelessly on behalf of patients, families and communities. "As someone who works closely with Rachelle, I know that she cares deeply about improving access to healthcare for all people, and she works tirelessly to ensure Winona Health can remain devoted to its mission of serving our community," said Rebecca Lamberty, Winona Health chief administrative officer. "We're grateful to have a dedicated and involved leader to keep issues related to community health in the forefront and that AHA chose to recognize Rachelle with this honor."



WNB Financial is pleased to announce that at a recent meeting of the Bank's Board of Directors, **Mary Polus** was promoted to Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer. In her new role, Polus will lead the development and implementation of WNB Financial's technology and digital strategy. In addition, she will continue to lead the Bank's Information Technology and Deposit Operations Departments, as well as serve on the Bank's Senior Leadership Team. Polus has been an employee of WNB for 27 years, serving in many different areas including IT and Deposit Operations, Retail Banking, Marketing, Accounting, and Administration. She's a 2017 graduate of the prestigious Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Polus resides in Winona with her husband, Hugh, and volunteers her time as a member of the Great River Shakespeare Festival board of directors. "Mary provides outstanding leadership and dedication to her responsibilities, and she's very deserving of this promotion," said David Vaselaar, WNB Financial President and Chief Operating Officer. "Her knowledge, technical skills, and leadership quality are valuable to the continued growth and success of WNB Financial."



REACH offers scholarships to graduates

Nicole Schossow,
B.E.N./REACH Program Manager

at Minnesota State College Southeast – one in CNC Machining, one in Mechatronics, and one in Social Work. The final graduate is attending Winona State University for a nursing degree. All continue to do well at both school and work.

As we prepare for another group of graduates from REACH in June 2021, we are looking to build our scholarship fund. In 2021, we will have graduates only from Winona Senior High School. However, in 2022, we will also have graduates from Lewiston-Altura and Wabasha-Kellogg. As the number of students grows, so will the opportunity to support students who continue to study technical careers.

To donate to the REACH scholarship fund, please contact Nicole at nschossow@winonachamber.com.

REACH
YOUR FULL POTENTIAL

As each group of students graduates from high school and the REACH program, it is important to support plans for after graduation. Through generous support from our businesses and community members, we have been able to offer scholarships to REACH students who meet specific requirements. The original donors to the scholarship fund believed it was important to support local education, so an eligible student must attend Minnesota State College Southeast, Saint Mary's University – Winona, or Winona State University. In addition, the graduate must continue their higher education in the REACH field they focused on in high school.

To date, we have been able to provide scholarships for four REACH graduates. Three of the graduates continued their studies



Looking back at 2020 and looking forward to 2021

Mikaela Mohr,
Chamber Intern B.E.N./REACH

"How to Start A Business" online and printed guide. Besides updated content, there also will be a digital upgrade including easy-to-find resources through hyperlinks and a modern aesthetic. Second, there has been the compiling of several events and planning program aspects, for our local Winona Area Young Professionals (YP) Program. The YP Program was significantly impacted during 2020 through the cancellations of events due to Covid-19, however, we have been learning through change and planning for virtual social and networking events to start off the new year. Beyond networking, our YP program has several other contemporary additions including our new "More than a YP" podcast! Our first Pilot episode will be launched come January 2021. There will also be virtual seminar opportunities such as an open Human Resources presentation at the beginning of this oncoming year.

To the Winona Area Community, thank you for showing your resilience during this challenging year. Regardless of the stress and difficulties, the Winona community was able to come together and pull through. Wishing everyone safe and happy holidays, and an even more wonderful new year.

When looking back at 2020 overall, there has been a lot changing within the Winona community. Some businesses were able to strive through the pandemic, and others, heartbreakingly, did not. Personally, throughout this year I was able to learn through the Winona Area Chamber of Commerce how to adapt to change and push through the hardships -as a team. Being a part of the Chamber provides not only numerous resources for local businesses, family-like atmosphere with ambitions to renew, adapt, provide, and strive for all our businesses in Winona County.

Looking forward, through the Winona Chamber, there are several exciting projects I have been able to work on and lead for the upcoming year. Primarily, we have been working with the Economic Development Committee to prepare content for the

THANK YOU 2020 VOLUNTEER LEADERS!

The Winona Area Chamber of Commerce would like to thank and recognize the 2020 volunteer leaders who chaired various chamber committees. We appreciate your leadership and passion to the pursuit of the Chamber's mission.



Agri-Business Committee
Kyle Rupprecht,
Minnwest Bank



Ambassadors Committee
Paula Beyer,
Gerard's Small Engine Service



Business Education Committee
Shannon Schroetke,
Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union



Main Street Steering Committee
Nick Larson,
City of Winona



Public Policy Committee
Dave Erickson,
Northwestern Mutual



Economic Development Committee
Mike Dieter,
Express Employment Professionals



REACH Health & Human Services Advisory Council
Jeff Rogness,
Benedictine Living Communities



REACH Manufacturing Advisory Council
Randy Skarupka,
Miller Ingenuity

NEW MEMBERS

Scharmer Construction LLC

Scharmer Construction is a locally owned, third generation general contractor business located at 24690 County Road 15 in Winona. Owned and operated by two brothers born and raised in Winona, Scharmer Construction is proud to do commercial and residential work around the Winona community. Masonry is their specialty; you can see some of their work on the new signs outside of Saint Mary's University.

For more information about Scharmer Construction contact Office Manager Jenny Scharmer at 507.452.7434 or scharmerconstruction@gmail.com.

929 BEERHOUSE & Grill
Winona MN

929 Beerhouse & Grill if you are searching for a good burger and beer in a nice atmosphere on the East End of Winona this would be the place to go! They serve breakfast every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, along with lunch and dinner all week long. They have a great selection of craft beer on tap with bartenders that are knowledgeable and kind.

For more information about 929 Beerhouse & Grill visit them on Facebook or contact owners Jude & Kellie at 507.454.6362.

aimnetwork

AIM Network is a networking group with a goal to provide their members with a unique but enriching experience, connecting them to other community members with similar goals, as well as to promote and grow Winona area businesses. Their group allows for only one person to represent a category (i.e. only one realtor per group) and they focus on three key things in their meetings: 1) introductions; 2) a presentation; 3) testimonials/referrals. They strive to be different from other networking groups, be supportive, provide a learning opportunity, and be community focused. Come see the difference for yourself!

To learn more about AIM Network contact David Bittner at 507.459.4409 or aimwinona@hotmail.com.

Saporì di Sicilia
PANIFICIO & PASTICCERIA

Saporì di Sicilia is a Sicilian Style bakery-cafe with a wide assortment of homemade breads, pastries, pastas, gelato and more served in a modern European style venue. They will be opening their doors soon in the new Main Square building, so be sure to keep your eyes peeled for more information.

To keep up to date on their plans be sure to check them out on Facebook! To preview their menu head to www.cafesaporidisicilia.com. To learn more email owner Eric Mullen at ciao@cafesaporidisicilia.com.

ANNUAL BANQUET AND AWARDS

YOU'RE INVITED

BACK TO THE FUTURE

2020 AWARD WINNERS

AG-BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

S&S DAIRY SYSTEMS, LLC.

BEHRENS™
EST. METALWARE 1911
MINNESOTA

BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

the Y

NON-PROFIT OF THE YEAR

CHOOSE A DESTINATION

FUTURE: VISIONS EVENT CENTER

22852 COUNTY ROAD 17

PAST: RIVERPORT INN

900 BRUSKI DRIVE

MONTH

DAY

YEAR

AM

HOUR

MIN

APRIL

30

2021

PM

05

:30

DESTINATION TIME