May 2018

Common Ground

Edwardsville I Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce

Business Builds: Economies, Leaders, Communities,

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Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce

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Katie Haas

Membership Director membership@edglenchamber.com

Kathy Hentz Administrative Assistant office@edglenchamber.com

Vision

The Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce will be the preferred provider of watch-dog, education and advocacy services that form a mission-critical catalyst for business success.

Mission

The Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce is a member-driven organization, dedicated to a strong, private sector regional economy.

on the cover

Annual Ed/Glen Chamber Golf Challenge: June 29 - Sponsor & Play!

It's not too late to sponsor or play in the 2018 Annual Ed/Glen Chamber Golf Challenge! We invite you to sign up to golf at Edwardsville's beautiful Fox Creek Golf Club Friday, June 29 and plan a fun day of networking, golf and leisure. This is a great opportunity for team building, treating your current or prospective clients, and rewarding your employees. Shotgun start is at 7:30am. Registration and sponsorship information are available on pages 10 and 11 of this publication, and may also be found online at www.edglenchamber.com. Questions? Call 618.656.7600.

CURRENT SPONSORS:

CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE: Breakthru Beverage

GOLF CART: The BANK of Edwardsville

PUTTING GREEN: 1st MidAmerica Credit Union

HOLE-IN-ONE: Cassens & Sons

POST-PLAY LUNCH: Gateway Regional Medical Center & Edison's

Entertainment Center

ON-COURSE FOOD & BEVERAGE: Robert 'Chick' Fritz Distributing, Chava's Mexican Restaurant, Breakthru Beverage & Edible Arrangements

...e...e.

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Guiding Principles

Chambers of Commerce honor and respect **capitalism** and **well-informed private sector job creators** as a central and foundational element of regional and national prosperity. Chambers of Commerce actively facilitate collaboration and open discussion between business and public officials through **education**, **business advocacy** and **leadership**.

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Walter Williams, City of Edwardsville

* denotes committee co-chairs

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save the date

6/21 Thu 5-7pm Business After 5

Lexow Financial Group & 88.7 WSIE The Sound 60 South IL Route 157 Edwardsville. IL 62025

6/26 Tue 3pm Ribbon Cutting

Clean Eatz Edwardsville 316 South Buchanan Street Edwardsville, IL 62025

6/29 Fri 7:30am Annual Golf Challenge

Fox Creek Golf Club 6555 Fox Creek Drive Edwardsville, IL 62025

7/19 Thu 5-7pm Business After 5

First Community Credit Union 2120 South IL Route 157 Glen Carbon, IL 62034

8/1 Wed 8-9amm Chamber Q&A:

Maximize Your Membership Ed/Glen Chamber Office 1 North Research Drive Edwardsville. IL 62025

8/1 Wed 4pm Ribbon Cutting

Variety Storage 30 Kettle River Drive Glen Carbon, IL 62034

8/2 Thu 5-7pm ChamberNET

Anderson Hospital 6810 IL Route 162 Maryville, IL 62062

8/16 Thu 5-7pm Business After 5

Kerber, Eck & Braeckel, LLP & EdGlenToday.com 102 Rottingham Court, Suite C Edwardsville, IL 62025

9/11 Tue 12-1pm nexus@noon

Edison's Entertainment Complex 2477 South IL Route 157 Edwardsville, IL 62025 RSVP at edglenchamber.com

9/20 Thu 5-7pm Business After 5

State Farm – Rick Marteeny & Envisioning Green 8550 Forest Boulevard Caseyville, IL 62232

9/26 Wed 8-9am ACCELERATE

Executive-Led Presentation w/ BarberMURPHY Group Broker Cathy Hamilton

Comfort Inn 3080 South IL Route 157 Edwardsville, IL 62025 RSVP at edglenchamber.com ACCELERATE Members Only

10/9 Tue 12-1pm nexus@noon

Edison's Entertainment Complex 2477 South IL Route 157 Edwardsville, IL 62025 RSVP at edglenchamber.com

10/11 Thu 8-9:30am Annual SIUE Day Community Breakfast

SIUE Campus Edwardsville, IL 62026

10/18 Thu 5-7pm Business After 5

1st MidAmerica Credit Union 1702 Troy Road Edwardsville, IL 62025

10/24 Wed 8-9am ACCELERATE

Executive-Led Presentation w/ Walmart GM Skip Sponeman Comfort Inn 3080 South IL Route 157

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By the air you breathe, the food you eat, and places you choose to live, work and play. Anderson Hospital is proud to be part of the Edwardsville and Glen Carbon communities which have created opportunities for improved health. Whether it's the miles of trails to walk, bike or run or the multitude of parks to enjoy, there is a visible shared responsibility to improve community health.

For over 40 years we've been serving your communities' healthcare needs, and continue that commitment to providing residents with the highest-quality of advanced medical care. Driven to be the best healthcare providers, our entire staff is committed to custom, compassionate care for each patient to meet each and every medical need. A pillar in the community, Anderson Hospital strives to provide the best care close to home.

Together, we are building healthy communities. Together, we are building better healthcare.

www.andersonhospital.org



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2018 ACCELERATE Speaker Schedule

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 28

Embracing Young Leadership

As businesses learn how to embrace young leadership, it's more important than ever for emerging leaders to focus on what they can do to be taken seriously in today's workforce. Bhavik Patel has been with Sandberg Phoenix & von Gontard for 14 years and currently serves as the firm's managing partner.



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25

Successfully Navigating Change

It's not a matter of *if* something will change in your business, but *when*. Learning how to lead through the changes is vital to successfully navigating them. As CEO of Hortica, a brand of the Sentry Insurance Group, Mona Haberer will share her insights on how she recently led Hortica through some significant changes.



WEDNESDAY, MAY 23

Business Growth & Expansion Strategies

HireLevel President & CEO Teresa Katubig may have started her business on a credit card and a prayer, but she has developed key strategies for business success and now operates in eight states. Learn what being better, working harder and reaching higher means to her, and how you, too, can grow.



WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

The Economic Development Process

With years of experience in public and private—sector economic development, BARBERMurphy Group Broker Cathy Hamilton will discuss investment and development from a regional perspective. Learn about the market-driven nature of development, and factors companies take into consideration when locating.



WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 24

Customer Satisfaction Makes All The Difference

Whether you're trying to increase overall revenues, overcome negative stereotypes or increase community support of your business, customer satisfaction is key. As a store manager for more than 25 years, Skip Sponeman will share what he's learned about effective customer service.



Sponeman Photo Credit: Southern Illinois University Marketing and Communications

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Maintaining Integrity While Building A Business

What does integrity have to do with business? Everything. Eric Gowin, president of Contegra Construction Company will share what it's like to build and operate a successful construction business in multiple states that makes integrity so topof—mind that the word 'integrity' is included in the business name.



Each Session Held From 8-9AM Comfort Inn in Edwardsville 3080 South IL Route 157

For more information on ACCELERATE, contact the Ed/Glen Chamber at 618.656.7600 or go to edglenchamber.com/accelerate.



Edwardsville | Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce

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We would like to recognize the many Ed/Glen Chamber investors who are celebrating membership anniversaries in the month of May This monthly feature spotlights members for their ongoing support of the Ed/Glen Chamber. We offer our sincerest thanks to each of the following business for their continued membership!

60+ YEARS

TheBANK of Edwardsville
Cassens & Sons
Cassens Insurance
Donnewald Distributing
Edwardsville Intelligencer

First Mid-Illinois Bank & Trust
Kitchenland
Madison Mutual Insurance
Southern IL Underwriters Agency
US Bank

50-59 YEARS
Hawthorne Animal Hospital

40-49 YEARS

Market Basket
McCarthy & Allen, Attorneys at Law

30-39 YEARS

Glik's Department Store
Greater Gateway
Association of REALTORS

20–29 YEARS

Belleville News Democrat Dobbs Tire & Auto Center Metro East Humane Society

10-19 YEARS

Edwardsville Dairy Queen Keith A. Bryant, DMD, PC Culver's of Edwardsville Lincoln School Alumni Foundation Illinois Heartland Library System Auto Body Shop, Inc.

5-9 YEARS

YCG Accounting
DK Power, Heating & Cooling, LLC
Hastings & Chivetta Architects, Inc.

CompuType, Inc.
Franklin & Vaughn, LLC
State Farm Insurance - Rick Marteeny

1-4 YEARS

Hinshaw & Culbertson LLP Edward Jones Investments - Tim Mahnesmith Northwestern Mutual Goshen Coffee Company Visiting Angels of Edwardsville Madison County Historical Society The UPS Store
Lewis and Clark N.O. Nelson Campus
Cricket Wireless - Gateway
Town Square Publications

2018 Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber Golf Challenge Friday, June 29 at Fox Creek Golf Club

Please enclose a check payable to Ed/Glen Chamber.
Payment in full due upon receipt of registration.

Please fax this completed form to the Chamber office at 618.656.7611 or mail with payment to: Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce, 1 North Research Drive, Edwardsville, IL 62025

Tournament Includes

- 18 holes of tournament golf with cart at Fox Creek Golf Club
- Unlimited use of driving range and putting green
- Straightest drive, longest putt & closest to pin contests
- Hole in one contest
- Snack & beverages on the course
- Late lunch provided (post-play)

Schedule of Events

6:00am Registration & Driving Range Open

7:30am Shotgun Start

12:30pm Late Lunch in Banquet Room

Flight Winner Awards

1st Place 2nd Place

A Flight \$500 Golf for 4 @ Fox Creek Golf Club
B Flight \$500 Golf for 4 @ Fox Creek Golf Club

Proceeds Advance the Ed/Glen Chamber's Mission

Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce

1 North Research Drive Edwardsville, IL 62025 618.656.7600 edglenchamber.com



Golf Challenge Sponsorships

Promote your business to more than 100 golfers including chamber members & area community/business leaders!

Information must be received by June 18 to guarantee full benefits. Payment must accompany registration.

Chairman's Circle

\$2,500

• Exclusive event sponsor w/ tournament naming rights

- Welcome message at reception
- 1 team (4 players plus cotte)
- Separate corporate (again)
- Table available to advertise as a second control of the secon
- 3 tee sponsorships
- Full-page color ad in event program
- Certificate for full-page color ad in Common Ground (chamber newsletter)

Vice Chairman's Circle

- 1 team (4 players plus carts)
- Tables available to advertise, pass out gifts & interact with participants
- 2 tee sponsorships
- Half-page color ad in event program
- Certificate for half-page color ad in *Common Ground* (chamber newsletter)

Golf Cart Sponsors

\$650

- · Limited to four businesses
- Company logo on front of all cartely.
- Sign at registration are before and during tour
- Eighth-page color ad in every property

Post-Tournament Lunch Host

\$650

- · Limited to two businesses

 Signage on all dinity and ONAL MED. Cyline No. 125.2 to auvertise and share aifts/promotion at letts (1).

Eighth page color of in event progress

• Certificate for a common Ground (chamber newsletter)

Putting Green Sponsor

\$650

- · Exclusive sponsorship
- Sole sponsor sign in practice and
- Use as an opportunity the asset guiff balls or gifts or visit with golfers
- Honor of delivering prize for law scare on putfing cone stauring awards ceremony
- Eighth-page color at in even pre
- Certificate for quarter-page color ad in Common Ground (chamber newsletter)

On-Course Food/Bev Sponsors

Limited to six businesses

Sign (1241) beaute & during fournament

- Signs on beverage parts a bit array, comers inroughout
- Tables available to advertise this to full this & to a value at the same and the same are same as the same are s

Hole In One Sponsor

\$650

- Logo/listing in all event programs, website & Common
- Provides car at designated to a contract the second s

Exclusive Hole Sponsor

\$250

- 1 exclusive hole sponsorship (sign provided by chamber; 18 available)
- Opportunity to host a tent (supplied by sponsor) at designated hole
- Opportunity to advertise, pass out gifts & interact with participants
- Eighth-page color ad in event program
- Certificate for quarter-page color ad in Common Ground (chamber newsletter)

Tee Sponsor

\$125

- Unlimited number of tee sponsorships available
- Placed along cart paths in high visibility areas

Cash & Prize Donation

• Donate cash, a door prize or contest prize (value of approximately \$25-\$100)

TOURNAMENT DATE: FRIDAY, JUNE 29 **TOURNAMENT TEE TIME: 7:30AM**

All Sponsorships Include:

- Logo/listing in all event programs, website & Common Ground
- Online & social media recognition leading up to tournament

Edwardsville/Glen Carbon **Chamber of Commerce**

1 North Research Drive Edwardsville, IL 62025 618.656.7600 edglenchamber.com



schmooze

business after 5



Bella Milano, Gori Julian & Associates, Robert 'Chick' Fritz, and First Mid-Illinois Bank & Trust, April 19



Bella Milano, Gori Julian & Associates, Robert 'Chick' Fritz, and First Mid-Illinois Bank & Trust, April 19



Bella Milano, Gori Julian & Associates, Robert 'Chick' Fritz, and First Mid-Illinois Bank & Trust, April 19



Bella Milano, Gori Julian & Associates, Robert 'Chick' Fritz, and First Mid-Illinois Bank & Trust, April 19



May 2018

BA5, April 19

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Edwardsville | Glen Carbon

ribbon cuttings, accelerate & advocacy



Sour Mash Boutique, April 18



Minas Espresso, Inc., April 26



ACCELERATE w/ Hortica CEO Mona Haberer



Mayors' Legislative Breakfast, April 26 (Cathy Hamilton of BARBERMurphy Group – Ed/Glen Chamber Policy Council Chair & Past Board Chairman)



Mayors' Legislative Breakfast, April 26 (Mayors Rob Jackstadt & Hal Patton)



Mayors' Legislative Breakfast, April 26

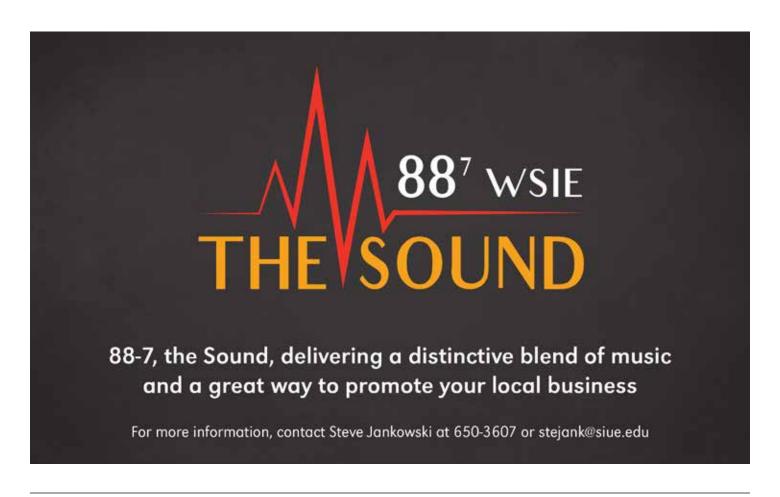


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Fabulous Motown Revue + Johnny Holzum & Well Hungarians to Headline at 21st Annual Route 66 Festival

Another eventful weekend full of exciting entertainment, food and fun has been planned for the 2018 Edwardsville Route 66 Festival being held in City Park June 8th & 9th. Start your summer off right by participating in this annual community event, celebrating its 21st year, with live music performances, amazing food, and one-of-a-kind art by local vendors and more.

"This family-friendly event is a great kick-off to summer in Edwardsville. Children will love the different activity tables, face painting, music, and bounce houses. The event also offers festival-goers a beer garden, live music, trolley rides and the ever-popular classic car cruise, which starts at the Cassens and MCT parking lots just a block away from the festival," said Katie Grable of Edwardsville Parks & Recreation. The Catapults will open up for the headlining act on Friday night beginning at 6:30pm. Fabulous Motown Revue will take the stage and perform from 9–11:30pm.

This year's 21st anniversary celebration will also include two very popular events: the Metro Milers 10k Run and the Trailnet Route 66 Bicycle Ride. Information can be found on the Edwardsville Route 66 Facebook page or at www.edwardsvilleroute66.com if you're interested in registering. Complete festival information is also available on the Route 66 website for up-to-date live music and fun.

The headlining act for Saturday evening is Johnny Holzum & Well Hungarians – the ever-popular rock band that fans with all musical tastes can enjoy. The band will take the stage at 9pm and close down the festival at 11:30pm Saturday evening. Start marking the calendar now and gather your friends to enjoy a weekend full of music and great memories.

Current sponsors include Mother Road Sponsor Cork Tree Creative; Hot Rod Sponsor 1st Mid America Credit Union; The Roadster Sponsors include Mathis, Marifian & Richter, LTD., Southside All Star Collision, and Irwin Chapel of Glen Carbon.



Tasch Named VP At First Hinton Named Partner Mid-Illinois Bank & Trust

First Mid-Illinois Bank & Trust announced that Neal Tasch has been named vice president and trust administrator with the trust and wealth management division. Tasch will provide trust services for Edwardsville and surrounding markets. Prior to joining First Mid, Tasch served as vice president and trust officer with both UMB Bank



and Commerce Bank in Kansas City, MO. He earned a bachelor's degree in history from the University of Missouri-Columbia and a juris doctor degree from University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law.

Jordan Lindenmeyer, vice president, director of trust services, commented, "With more than 35 years of banking experience and his vast knowledge of trust administration concepts and services, Neal will be a strong leader and contributor for the First Mid trust and wealth management team."

At West & Company, LLC

Clayton R. Hinton has been named a partner of West & Company, LLC. Hinton is a native of Faring, IL and a graduate of Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. He resides in Effingham with his spouse Katie and their two children.



Hinton will serve as partner-in-charge of the firm's employee benefits department. He has extensive experience with a wide variety of industries including the agriculture, retail and petroleum. Hinton offers expertise in the provision of accounting and tax services to closely-held corporations, partnerships and individuals.

West & Company, LLC is a full service accounting firm with an emphasis in accounting and auditing, income tax preparation, bookkeeping and payroll services, employee benefit plan services, and estate and financial planning.



Breakthru Beverage and the Callison Family are proud to have served as your local wine and spirits distributor in Madison County and the Metro East for over 80 years.

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ASAPS Committee Welcomes Dr. Ryan Diederich of MidAmerica Plastic Surgery

Driven. Perfectionist. Caring. Three words that best describe Dr. Ryan Diederich, according to his feature in *New Beauty*, and may also be the reason he was nominated for and accepted a position on the The Aesthetic Society's Product Development & Market Research Committee, as well as the Young Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons Committee for 2018–2019.

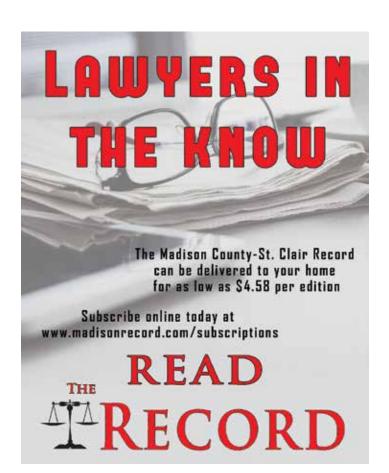
Dr. Diederich, plastic surgeon at MidAmerica Plastic Surgery, is a Southern Illinois native. Making the choice to begin his practice in the area was quite easy. Dr. Diederich states, "It was the community that made my decision to return to Southern Illinois. The people of the Midwest and their values helped make me who I am today. Being able to give back to the community is important."

The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS) is an organization of board-certified plastic surgeons who dedicate themselves to bettering the world of aesthetic procedures through medical education, public education

and patient advocacy. With more than 2,600 members in the U.S., Canada, and many other countries, being nominated for this committee is a tremendous honor.

Dr. Diederich's core values have always been exceeding the patient's expectations and creating natural, beautiful results. ASAPS shares the same values and mission as him; focusing on the patient experience and high-quality procedures. "My two favorite aspects of being involved with the committee process with ASAPS is the camaraderie with fellow plastic surgeons as we work together to shape the future of plastic surgery", explained Dr. Diederich. This committee bonds surgeons with entirely different backgrounds and experience to build the most diverse, innovative foundation to exceed their patient's needs.

Dr. Diederich and many other board-certified surgeons are featured on ASAP's website. His office is located at 4955 IL Route 159 in Glen Carbon, IL. MidAmerica Plastic Surgery & Spa can be reached at 618.307.6233.







We're dedicated to our communities. You can bank on it.

As a not-for-profit organization, we share our success with you and the communities we serve. In 2017, we donated \$424,000 and provided 2,400 volunteer hours for a variety of civic efforts throughout the region.

Learn more about the credit union difference at scu.org.



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We are more than just a law firm.

Our 170 employees are your friends, neighbors and champions of more than 150 local charities and their causes. In addition to the support we provide to the Mesothelioma Applied Research Foundation, we have given more than \$3 million locally to charity.

PRACTICE AREAS:

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J.F. Electric proudly supports the Ed/Glen Chamber's Annual Gala and Auction.

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Scheffel Boyle Raises \$6,100 For Big Brothers Big Sisters

Employees of Scheffel Boyle CPAs have once again teamed up to raise funds for Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) of Southwestern Illinois at the annual Bowl for Kids' Sake fundraiser. This year, the firm's employees raised an outstanding \$6,100 for the agency through their efforts. All donations collected go directly to BBBS of Southwestern Illinois.

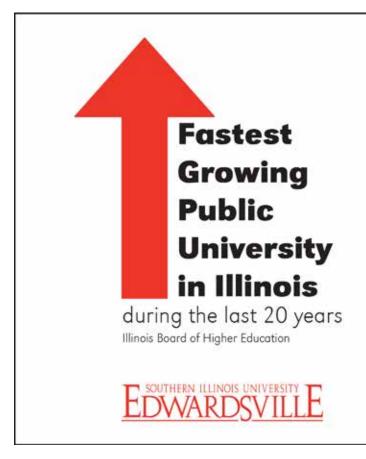
Scheffel Boyle's two bowling teams, the "Tax-Manian Devils" and the "Ten-Key Strikers," participated in the event on in April at Edison's Entertainment Complex in Edwardsville. The firm's ten bowlers are individually responsible for doing their own fundraising for the event. Due to their efforts, Bowl for Kids' Sake listed five members of Scheffel Boyle's teams as top fundraisers for the entire program this year.

"Every year our teams go above and beyond for this cause," said Scott Weber, a Principal in Scheffel Boyle's Edwardsville office and the board of directors treasurer for BBBS of Southwestern Illinois. "It's amazing to see them work so hard to raise money for this organization. I'm really proud of all they have accomplished."

BBBS has been changing lives of youth throughout the U.S. for more than 100 years. Their vision "that all children achieve success in life," is supported through donations and fundraising events, such as Bowl for Kids' Sake.



Scheffel Boyle is recognized as the largest locally-owned accounting firm in Southwestern Illinois, and as one of the largest accounting firms in the entire St. Louis region. Their offices are currently located in Alton, Edwardsville, Belleville, Highland, Jerseyville, Columbia, and Carrollton. Established in 1924, their services include corporate, personal, and governmental tax, auditing, and accounting. For more information about Scheffel Boyle, go to www.scheffelboyle.com.





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"Best Wishes to the Chamber for a great auction!"

Dr. James R. Brooks. Lead Minister Rev. Jeff Wrigley, Associate Minister

where the deep waters of faith meet the broad shore of community.

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Scott Credit Union's 16th Branch Will Be Located In St. Louis County

Scott Credit Union is finalizing plans to open its first St. Louis County Branch later this summer. The credit union, with headquarters in Edwardsville, IL, is finalizing the design for it first Missouri location at the intersection of I-170 and Ladue Road. The newest SCU location will be the credit union's 16 branch and will feature an innovative, consultative design to serve members.

"We are excited about our first branch in Missouri," said Scott Credit Union President & CEO Frank Padak. "We are currently finalizing plans and expect to open late in the summer. It will be an innovative branch designed to really help us connect with members who come in to do their banking business."

"Our new location will make it more convenient for the nearly 7,000 members we have who live in St. Louis County to take advantage of the value we offer," Padak added. "We also welcome other residents in the county to see why we are a great money-saving alternative."

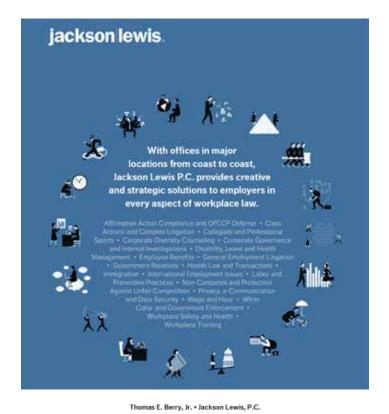
The new branch will feature non-traditional teller pods where SCU staff will guide members through their transactions, Padak noted.

"When members come in, we will greet them and be available to meet whatever financial need they have," he added. "The location will also feature a technology station to help members learn about the technology that SCU offers to make their financial lives simple. We will be able to walk them through how to deposit a check using our app on their smart phone, how to apply for a loan online and how to access their accounts through mobile and online banking."

Scott Credit union offers financial services for individuals and businesses.

"We offer all of the traditional products and services that the larger financial institutions offer," Padak noted. "We also offer the technology that helps make banking simple for our members. One example of that is ApplePay on credit and debit cards."

The new branch also will have mortgage and investment experts on hand to help area residents who are looking to buy a home or need assistance with planning for retirement or on investing their money, Padak said.



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Chamber of Commerce



Korte & Luitjohan Breaks Ground On Fairview Heights Dematology Facility

The design-build team of Korte & Luitjohan (K&L) and EWR/Farnsworth is proud to announce the groundbreaking of the new location for Distinctive Dermatology in Fairview Heights, IL.

"We have outgrown our current space and the larger updated facility will help us more timely care for our current patients and decrease the wait time to address new patients' concerns.", said Dr. Tobin. "The new space will allow more providers to work at once including the new board-certified dermatologist who will be joining us this fall."

The Farnsworth Group of Fairview Heights designed Distinctive Dermatology's building. The 9,455 square foot Varco Pruden Pre-Engineered steel building structure includes a 2,900 square foot unfinished future tenant space and a 6,555 square foot dermatology office. The office also includes 14 exam rooms, a product display area, staff offices and break room.



Korte & Luitjohan is a leading design-build, general contracting firm with 60 years of building experience in the commercial, industrial and infrastructure markets. Since its founding in 1958, the company has provided quality construction throughout the Metro St. Louis area and Southern and Central Illinois. K&L brings traditional values and a strong work ethic to every project. Our collaborative approach allows us to apply our broad experience and management skills to deliver first class building projects to our clients. For more information, go to www.korteluitjohan.com.









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Illinois Chamber of Commerce View: The Training Shortfall For Vocational, Skilled Trades

This was published by the Illinois Chamber of Commerce in a May 2018 'Message From the President email

The Illinois Chamber of Commerce protects business interests by working to fight excessive taxation, onerous regulations, rising healthcare costs, frivolous lawsuits and all-around bad policies. Similarly, we are adamant advocates of maintaining all the positive assets Illinois has to offer. The Illinois Chamber has heavily



weighed in on two issues in the media: defeating a graduated income tax and highlighting the need for Illinois' vocational education programs and skilled trades training. Below is the Illinois Chamber's views on workforce development as featured in the *Daily Herald* this month, authored by Illinois Chamber of Commerce President & CEO Todd Maisch.

THE TRAINING SHORTFALL FOR VOCATIONAL, SKILLED TRADES.

With the nation's unemployment rate continuing to drop, labor markets are in an ever-tightening vice, and Illinois employers are feeling the pain as they try to fill middle-skill jobs. There is a misguided belief that the skills gap exclusively hits at the top end of the labor market, in fields such as professional services, engineering or computer sciences.

While there are critical shortages across many industries, the reality is that Illinois employers struggle most to find qualified employees in fields that require more than a high school diploma, but also certifications and skills not provided by a two or four-year college program.

As a result of this misconception, resources are being diverted away from vocational programs in our high schools, and soon-to-be graduates are being directed away from high-quality technical education programs, simply because they aren't part of the traditional college track.

The reality is there are great careers available in the skilled trades, but not enough people with the right training and skills to fill them.

During the past several months, I had the opportunity to visit with hiring managers of dozens of companies in the state's transportation industry. The career outlook for automotive and diesel technicians is incredibly strong due

to Illinois' position as a national transportation and logistics hub. But every employer I spoke with told me they simply can't find enough qualified entry-level technicians to hire.

Many students, pushed toward college by well-intentioned adults, never have the opportunity to hear about other careers and educational paths available to them. Too often, because of old stigmas and outdated perceptions, students are guided away from pursuing a career in the skilled trades such as transportation technicians, building trades or manufacturing.

One hiring manager remarked during a program, "Why is it that being a medical technician is lauded by counselors and principals, but they try to talk students out of becoming a diesel technician?"

I didn't have a good answer for him that day, and I'm still not sure I do.

If we want to help Illinois employers grow, and serve all our students, we have to stop categorizing skilled trades based on old ways of thinking. Beyond that, we have to embrace the reality that, while college may be right for many, it is not the only path to success and economic security.

The fact is, many industry-supported certificate and credentialing programs can be completed faster, at significantly lower cost, with as good, if not better long-term career outlooks than traditional liberal arts programs. Data in the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard shows that students who choose a quality post-secondary technical education may actually earn more, on average, 10 years after starting their program than peers at four-year liberal arts universities and two-year community colleges.

There is substantial value in a quality technical education, and there are countless high-quality, industry-supported training programs across Illinois that deliver skills that could take years or even a decade to earn on-the-job. These programs and providers need to be welcomed into our high schools by counselors, principals and parents, so that Illinois students are exposed to multiple paths that can lead to their future success.

Illinois' economy will be better served if we support all students and adult learners in finding programs that provide relevant skills and lead to good jobs and careers.

ILLINOIS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Illnesses and injuries don't make appointments. Why should you?

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