

# Executive Biography of Desirée M. Bennyhoff



**Desirée M. Bennyhoff, IOM, ACE**

President & Chief Executive Officer  
Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce



Edwardsville | Glen Carbon  
Chamber of Commerce

Desirée M. Bennyhoff is president and chief executive officer of the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce. After serving as interim for five months, she became CEO in January 2013.

Bennyhoff oversees the strategic direction of the St. Louis MSA-based, 500-member organization – the largest pro-business organization in southern Madison County, Illinois – which is dedicated to a strong, private sector regional economy.

Under Bennyhoff's leadership, the Ed/Glen Chamber is working to achieve 5-star accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Fewer than 3 percent of chambers nationwide receive accreditation, which recognizes adherence to industry best practices and organizational excellence.

Government affairs activity is a key priority for the Ed/Glen Chamber; the organization's advocacy efforts include local, state and federal legislative bodies.

In 2015, the Ed/Glen Chamber was awarded the Greater Gateway Association of REALTORS/Illinois REALTORS inaugural 'Partner in Advocacy' award for diligence and dedication to advocating on behalf of local businesses. In 2017, the Ed/Glen Chamber was nationally recognized with an 'Award of Excellence in Communication' from the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) for the organization's inaugural SAVOR: Restaurant Week initiative.

Bennyhoff serves as chairman of the board for the Illinois Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (IACCE), serves on the Illinois Chamber of Commerce board of directors, and is active with ACCE.

Professional development is paramount to Bennyhoff, and she is committed to sharing her knowledge and expertise with others. Over the last eight years she has presented a number of programs at state association conferences, covering topics including corporate identity and branding, marketing, communications, advocacy and strategic partnerships. She is also a frequent guest speaker and panelist in Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) classrooms.

In 2016 Bennyhoff graduated from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation's Institute for Organizational Management program at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, and received the Accredited Chamber Executive designation from IACCE. She is now a candidate for the Certified Association Executive credential from the American Society of Association Executives, which is designed to elevate professional standards, enhance individual performance, and identify association professionals who demonstrate the knowledge essential to the practice of association management.

Bennyhoff serves on the Illinois Chamber of Commerce education task force, along with Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois' public policy, education, and economic development committees. In addition, she counsels entrepreneurs through the Illinois Metro East Small Business Development Center and mentors at-risk high school students as part of the Regional Office of Education #41's 'Give 30' program. She was honored to be selected by peers as a class advisor for first-year students at Midwest Institute in 2017, and has been nominated to serve on Institute's curriculum committee, which governs course requirements and nationally.

Prior to assuming her leadership position at the chamber, Bennyhoff served as the organization's communications director beginning in March 2009, taught courses through Lewis and Clark Community College's Corporate & Community Learning department, and early in her career worked as a graphic artist in multiple capacities.

A Southern Illinois native, Bennyhoff holds a master's degree in speech communication (now applied communication studies) from SIUE.

One of Bennyhoff's most recent recognitions include the St. Louis Regional Chamber's 2016 Jim Anderson Professional Torch Award & Scholarship, which is presented annually to recognize an outstanding chamber of commerce professional from Missouri or Southwestern Illinois. Additional recognitions include being named one of *St. Louis Small Business Monthly's* 'Southwest Illinois People to Know' in 2016, multiple 'excellence in communications' awards from IACCE, SIUE's prestigious Robert B. Hawkins Graduate Award in Speech Communication, and the James Walker Graduate Scholarship. In addition, her research was presented at Texas A&M's Annual Assessment Conference in 2009.