

March 2026



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HALF-DAY LEADERSHIP seminar

Unlocking Potential:
The Culture and Mindset
Advantage

TAMIEN DYSART
CEO & Co-Founder of Think 3D

See page 10 for more information

CHAMBER NEWS

Hoeven Outlines Major Defense Funding Package



Pictured Senator Hoeven

During a recent meeting with Senator John Hoeven, the Base Enhancement Committee highlighted the continued momentum at Grand Forks Air Force Base (GFAFB). Committee members emphasized the significant progress underway and noted that the future has never looked brighter for GFAFB, Grand Sky, and the region's expanding high-tech aerospace ecosystem.

Senator Hoeven outlined nearly a dozen Department of Defense investments included in a funding package totaling approximately \$100 million, with direct impact on GFAFB and aerospace companies operating in the Grand Forks region. The investments further solidify the base's strategic importance and support continued innovation and mission growth.

Below is a recap from Senator Hoeven's official news release. Continues on page 3.

Senator John Hoeven, a member of the Senate Defense Appropriations Committee, today announced he has secured more than \$100 million for the Grand Forks high-tech aerospace ecosystem in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 funding, including:

- A \$50 million plus-up supporting the Space Development Agency (SDA) low-Earth orbit (LEO) satellite mission in Grand Forks.
 - This additional funding will focus on connecting LEO satellites operated from Grand Forks Air Force Base to ground receivers, ensuring the rapid flow of information from space to the warfighter.
- \$33 million to bolster unmanned aerial systems (UAS) and counter-UAS research, development and operations in the state, including:
 - \$25 million to support UAS research and testing activities by eligible entities in North Dakota, including Ideal Aeromsmith, the University of North Dakota, Q Station, Space Dynamics Laboratory, Anno.Ai and Vidrov.

CHAMBER NEWS

Senator Hoeven's official news release continued from page 2

- o \$8 million to develop military applications for UAS and counter-UAS technology through initiatives like Senator Hoeven's Project ULTRA.
- o Report language to advance the goal of conducting U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) MQ-9 operations to Grand Forks.
- \$22 million to support development of protective coatings for Department of War (DoW) equipment and vehicles, as well as training the workforce required to meet this need.
 - o This includes \$10 million for the expanded use of corrosion-resistant magnesium coatings, such as that produced by the Technology Applications Group (TAG) in Grand Forks.
 - o The funding builds on the \$6 million that Hoeven secured in FY2025 to help TAG build a new production line.
 - o TAG applies coatings to a variety of hardware components for DoW, including key parts of 10 different aircraft.
 - o Unlike other alternatives, TAG coatings are less costly to produce, provide better protection and are non-toxic.
- \$18.5 million for research and development of hypersonic technology through eligible projects and entities in North Dakota.
- \$37.5 million for additional defense research, development and operations in the Red River Valley.
- T-REX at Camp Grafton: Further solidifying North Dakota's leadership, earlier this week Hoeven announced a new partnership between DoW and the North Dakota National Guard to hold a Technology Readiness Experimentation (T-REX) event at Camp Grafton to test and evaluate counter-UAS technology during the last two weeks of August with additional events to follow. Hoeven made the case to the Pentagon to leverage North Dakota's technology ecosystem for the T-REX event.

Q Station

The \$100 million Hoeven secured in FY2026 funding includes \$4 million to bring Q Station, a Partnership Intermediary of the Air Force Research Lab (AFRL), to Grand Forks to grow both the region's technology ecosystem and the state's leadership in UAS, space, hypersonics and other military priorities. As part of its work in North Dakota, Hoeven announced Q Station will also partner with The Hive in downtown Grand Forks.

- Q Station is an innovation hub focused on space, defense and advanced technology.
- Q Station has long-standing experience in linking industry, startups and researchers with universities, the U.S. military and government agencies.

CHAMBER NEWS

Senator Hoeven's official news release continued from page 3

- The funding Hoeven secured will enable Q Station to expand its operations to Grand Forks, where it will support emerging UAS companies and strengthen the UAS ecosystem.
- Q Station will help bring new businesses to the region, plug them into the local technology ecosystem and assist them in securing DoW funding opportunities.
- This will help drive investment to support economic growth, while enhancing the nation's defense capabilities in a more cost-effective manner than traditional contracting, similar to Hoeven's Project ULTRA.

"As a partner to the Air Force Research Lab, Q Station will inject real energy into our start-up community, bringing in new small businesses and connecting them with our military to meet the needs of our warfighters in innovative ways," said Hoeven. "Q Station is also a natural fit to partner with The Hive, and we look forward to the new opportunities to grow our tech ecosystem that will result from this partnership with Q Station."

"This is one of the ways we're working to expand North Dakota's leadership in our national defense, and it comes in addition to the wide array of priorities we secured in our annual defense appropriations bill. These priorities strengthen our UAS, space and hypersonic missions, while supporting greater defense research and development throughout the Red River Valley. All of these different pieces tie together to create a complex of private, public, university and military partnerships that truly enhance our nation's defense capabilities, doing innovative work that you can't find anywhere else in the nation."

Visit with Barry

Share your business challenges and success with Barry.

Drop me an email. I would love to stop by your business for a visit.

Barry@gochamber.org

Barry Wilfahrt, Chamber
President and CEO

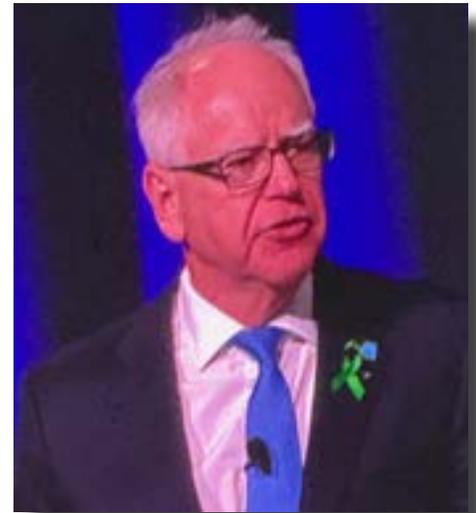


CHAMBER NEWS

Governor Walz Speaks at Minnesota Chamber Annual Meeting

Speaking to a crowd of more than 1,600 attendees in what was a notably tense setting, Governor Tim Walz called for Minnesota to be more neighborly and encouraged support for Metro-area businesses recovering from recent immigration enforcement actions. His remarks focused primarily on community response and economic recovery efforts. Issues such as fraud, the state's business climate, and Minnesota's projected structural deficit were not addressed during this portion of the program.

Legislative leaders, in separate remarks, called for federal immigration reform and discussed a range of policy challenges currently facing Minnesotans.



Pictured Governor Walz

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CHAMBER NEWS

Governor Armstrong Shares Message of Optimism at Chamber Annual Meeting

The North Dakota Governor talked about the state's population growth, economic progress, infrastructure and investments like the 42nd underpass scheduled to break ground this year. The Governor addressed over the record crowd of over 500 in attendance at the Chamber annual meeting at the Alerus Center.



Pictured Governor Kelly Armstrong

He also cautioned the group as the Chamber and community leaders look toward the 2027 legislative session. A smaller state budget is on the horizon. While the state budget will still be strong it won't be the "land of plenty" as before.

Looking ahead he also touched on issues Grand Forks Leaders and the Chamber have been wrestling with for years: housing, and affordability.



Pictured Kim Strom

Kim Strom awarded the Local Defense Community Champion Award

Kimberly is an extraordinary advocate and tireless supporter of the men and women of Grand Forks Air Force Base and the North Dakota National Guard, particularly the 1-188th Air Defense Artillery Regiment. Her dedication to military personnel and their families is unparalleled and has had a profound impact on both the installation and the broader Grand Forks community.

CHAMBER NEWS

Oncken Recognized as 2025 Henry Havig Award Recipient



Pictured John Oncken

John Oncken of True North Equipment has been named the recipient of the Chamber's Lifetime Achievement honor, the 2025 Henry Havig Award.

Oncken is a former Board Chair of the Chamber GF/EGF, the North Dakota Chamber, and the Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation. Throughout his career, he has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership and a deep commitment to advancing the business community.

According to Chamber CEO Barry Wilfahrt, "John has stepped up with both his time and financial resources every time the business community has been called upon to move our region forward." Wilfahrt cited John's leadership support for the Career & Technical Education Center, the Air Service Grant match, and numerous other community initiatives where he played a pivotal role in rallying business support and driving projects to completion.

A special thank you also goes to past Chamber Board Chair and previous Havig Award recipient Bob Boyd, who delivered the Havig Award presentation for the final time in this milestone 50th year. For the past 15 years, Bob has traveled from Stillwater, Minnesota, to Grand Forks to present the award. He concluded this year's presentation with a humorous story about why he wears a tuxedo to the Annual Meeting each year — his personal tribute to Paul Harvey's famous "The Rest of the Story."

Bob's distinctive style, thoughtful storytelling, and carefully crafted introductions will be greatly missed.



Pictured Bob Boyd

CHAMBER NEWS

Praxis Engaged to Strengthen Tax Incentive Strategy

The Chamber GF/EGF and the Grand Forks Region Economic Development Corporation have retained Praxis Strategy Group to conduct a comprehensive review of tax incentive best practices from competitive communities and regions. The work will focus on how housing and primary sector projects are evaluated, including the development of objective, transparent scoring rubrics to assess when incentives are warranted and at what level.

This initiative is about ensuring Grand Forks competes — and wins — in an increasingly competitive economic development environment.

According to 2025 Chamber President and CEO Barry Wilfahrt, “This work is particularly important in light of recent debate surrounding the Agristo project. With a projected economic impact approaching \$1 billion for the Northern Valley, projects of this magnitude demand clear, disciplined evaluation standards. Communities that hesitate or lack process risk losing transformational opportunities.”

The Agristo incentive ultimately passed, and the company is scheduled to be operational by fall harvest 2028. However, the discussion underscored the need for a consistent and defensible framework for future decisions.

That conversation will continue throughout 2026. The bottom line is clear: strategic incentives are sometimes necessary for Grand Forks to remain competitive. Moving forward, the emphasis will be on discipline, consistency, measurable return on investment, and aligning incentives with long-term community benefit.

Grand Forks must be prepared to compete — and prepared to act.



CHAMBER NEWS

Barry attended the Mitchell Institute Air Power Forum in DC

Heading back after two full days at the Mitchell Institute Air Power Forum in DC. Informative roundtable with Air Force Chief General Wilsbach at his exclusive roundtable dinner. Also heard Air Combat Command Commander General Spain.

With our new Point Defense Battle Lab mission GFAFB is at the tip of the spear with a relevant mission contributing to our national defense.



Pictured Air Force Chief General Wilsbach



Pictured Air Combat Command Commander General Spain

Very bright future for Grand Forks Air Force Base!



Local chambers participated in meetings at the Minnesota Capitol

Over 75 local chambers participated in meetings at the Minnesota Capitol. While visiting their legislators concerns about the MN business climate and the significant amount of fraud in the state were big issues. There was a spirit of optimism that progress can be made in the 2026 session on regulation.

Pictured local chamber representatives that attended the meetings

HALF-DAY LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

Why Workplace Culture is a Competitive Advantage in 2026

High-performing organizations do not treat culture as an afterthought. They lead it intentionally. They measure its impact. They align it with performance.

In today's workforce environment, leadership is no longer defined solely by strategy or operations. It is defined by mindset, clarity of expectations, and the ability to engage teams around meaningful results.

That is why the Chamber is hosting **Unlocking Potential: The Culture and Mindset Advantage** on April 15.



This seminar will be led by Tamien Dysart, CEO and Co-Founder of Think 3D. With more than 16 years of leadership experience and a track record of developing high-performing teams, Tamien works with organizations to build intentional cultures that drive measurable results.

Participants Will Leave With:

- A clear framework for strengthening leadership mindset
- Practical strategies to increase engagement and accountability
- Tools to align teams around clear performance expectations
- Immediate action steps that can be implemented within their organization
- Greater clarity on how culture directly influences measurable outcomes

This leadership experience is designed for executives, managers, supervisors, and emerging leaders who want structure, clarity, and application — not abstract theory.

Date: April 15, 2026

Time: 8:00 a.m. to Noon

Location: Minnkota Power

Chamber Members: \$149

Non-members welcome! \$174

Click QR code to register



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North Dakota CHAMPIONS BALL

Saturday, April 25 | Alerus Center | 5-11 p.m.



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ndchampionsball.com



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TOUGHEST MONSTER TRUCK TOUR

MARCH 28

ALERUS CENTER

The Valvoline/Tire One Toughest Monster Truck Tour presented by Baymont by Wyndham returns to Alerus Center on March 28 for the 2026 Championship Event, where the toughest trucks on dirt battle it out for the title!

Tickets available at the Alerus Center Box Office or online at <https://bit.ly/47VIQ11>

The Chamber
GRAND FORKS • EAST GRAND FORKS

The Chamber Grand Forks/East Grand Forks

JOB BOARD

gochamber.org/community-job-board

If I only had more time...!

Are you dealing with constantly changing priorities, continual interruptions, procrastination, too-much email? Is your work area covered with paper, reports, manuals and other stuff? If you answered yes, you probably are not using your time as effectively as you could.

This session will review time management basics and provide techniques and tools to help you become more effective with your time and your priorities.



Wednesday, March 18, 2026

11:30 am - 1:00 pm - Chamber of Commerce Board Room

Brown Bag Seminar 

Presented by...



Dennis "Denny" Elbert, Phd

Dennis Elbert retired from the University of North Dakota as Professor of Marketing Emeritus and Dean Emeritus of the College of Business and Public Administration. Denny is busy in retirement with board work and consulting.

During his time at UND he conducted over 600 workshops and seminars on topics to include strategic planning, time management, teamwork, marketing, delegation, desk management, customer service, board development, and accountability.

Elbert has held positions on the boards of various organizations, such as Edgewood REIT, Edgewood Healthcare, Gate City Bank, Vistal Holding Company, Cirrus Design Inc., Noridian Mutual Insurance Company (Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota) and other nonprofit organizations.

Elbert is a retired USAR LTC Armor Officer and a veteran of Vietnam and Cambodia. In 2022 he was inducted into the US Army ROTC National Hall of Fame.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR SEMINAR](#)

\$25/Member & \$35/Non Member (Includes Lunch)

If you have questions, please contact the Chamber. doug@gochamber.org or 701-772-7271

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Dahl Companion Care LLC

info@dahlcompanioncare.com

Dahl Companion Care LLC is a home-based, non-medical, senior companionship service located in Grand Forks, ND, serving the Grand Forks area. The business focuses on providing friendly, compassionate support for older adults in their homes, helping improve quality of life and combat loneliness by offering meaningful social interaction and practical assistance.

Services typically include senior companionship visits, transportation & escort services for appointments and outings, errands & shopping support, accompaniment to events, and more. We're happy to provide initial consultations to tailor services to individual needs.

DCC puts an emphasis on enhancing emotional well-being and social connection rather than providing medical care, helping seniors remain independent and connected in their own homes.



Assessment and Therapy Associates of Grand Forks

3535 S 31st St, Suite 201, Grand Forks, ND 58201
701-780-6821
info@grandforkstherapy.com



Founded in 2006 by Dr. Dave Jackson and Dr. Catherine Yeager, Assessment and Therapy Associates of Grand Forks (ATAGF) is a mental health clinic based in Grand Forks, ND, with a primary mission of providing quality mental health and well-being services to our community. ATAGF currently has 29 clinicians in psychology, counseling, and social work with a cumulative 466 years of experience.

In addition to individual therapy, ATAGF clinicians offer a range of specialty services including assessment of children and adults, couples/relationship therapy, sport psychology, play therapy, family therapy, and relationship retreats. We also partner with Haugen Performance Consulting to offer continuing education and training courses on numerous topics.

One of our newer initiatives is offering free relationship retreats in Grand Forks & Minot for couples where one member is a service member or Veteran in North Dakota. This effort is associated with North Dakota's State Suicide Prevention Program, funded by the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Behavioral Health Division (BHD). Visit our website or call us for more information about this or any of our other services!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Prairie Supply Inc.

680 50th St S, Grand Forks, ND 58201

701-775-2109

www.prairiesupply.com



Prairie Supply, Inc. is a supplier of construction equipment and materials. We specialize in, but are not limited to, concrete construction.

For over 35 years, Prairie Supply has served the Dakotas and beyond as a reliable customer service-oriented supplier. Prairie has been a part of some of the biggest projects in the region, lending knowledge and support to the hardworking contractors in the field or at the drawing board.

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BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Hosted by Amazon Hub Delivery

@ Brick and Barley Bar & Restaurant, 9 N 3rd St, Grand Forks, ND

Thursday, March 19, 2026

4:45pm ~ 7:00pm

Amazon Hub Delivery invites all Chamber members and their employees to join them for a great Business After Hours event @ Brick and Barley.

Complimentary hors d'oeuvres, Drink Ticket & Cash Bar, Great door prizes. Progressive cash drawing is at \$2100 (winner must be in attendance).

Stop by...Enjoy the fun and take advantage of great networking opportunities. You might even win **\$2100** in our Progressive Cash drawing!

Remember, BAH is FREE for all Chamber members! Is your employer a Chamber member? That means YOU ARE TOO!

See you Thursday, March 19, 2026 at Business After Hours!

**Because of the nature of this event, no one under 21 may attend.*

Thank you to Old National for hosting an eventful Business After Hours.



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

February 2026 Renewals

The following businesses know the value of their Chamber Membership and have renewed their membership in The Chamber GF/EGF.

Agile Accounting Solutions
Alerus Center
Bob's Oil and Gas LLC
Connect Interiors
Core Collective
Curt Kreun
Custom Graphics Inc.
Dahl Funeral Home
Dahlstrom Motors
Delta Dental of Minnesota
Ethos Home Care & Hospice
Farmers Union Insurance Vik/Kadlec/
Eggl Agency
FirstLight Home Care of ND
German Wealth
GGF Symphony Orchestra
Ground Round Grill & Bar
Hugo's Retail Support Center
Integrated Steel Inc.
Knife River
Legal Services of North Dakota
Leisureland RV
Marsh McLennan Agency

Midwestern Masonry Inc.
National Property Inspections - Tim
Brown
Newman Outdoor Advertising
Nodak Insurance Company - Kris Moen
Agency
North Dakota Eye Clinic
Pace Painting & Drywall
Plains Chiropractic & Acupuncture
Pro Land | Snow
Red River Dental
Red River Farm Network
RiverView Clinic
Sigma Defense Systems
Trustone Wealth Management
Vestis
Vilandre Heating, Air Conditioning,
Plumbing
Visit Greater Grand Forks
Wendy's 32nd Ave S
Wendy's S Washington
Willie Huot
Xcel Energy



of U.S. adults agree that their local chamber of commerce is a **trusted resource and partner** for businesses.



feel that their local chamber has an impact on **growing businesses locally**.

90%

believe that their local chamber has an impact on **growing the local economy**.



say that their local chamber has an impact on **addressing challenges** within their community.

Top **TEN** Chamber Membership Benefits

1. *New Business Contacts* – Networking and new business contacts will help your business grow. With more than 100 chamber programs and events, you'll have no problem adding to your contact base.

2. *Credibility* – Make a statement that you are committed to the future of the Grand Forks/East Grand Forks region.

3. *Leadership Development* – The Chamber offers learning and professional development opportunities to help you run a smarter, more profitable business.

4. *Community Commitment* – Community involvement benefits you and the community and shows your commitment to helping our region grow.

5. *Referrals* – The Chamber's referrals of our members are a great return on your investment.

6. *Publicity and Exposure* – Publicity and heightened name recognition as a Chamber Member shows your customers and potential customers who you are.

7. *Marketing & Advertising* – Targeted and affordable advertising offered by The Chamber help you promote your business effectively on a small budget.

8. *A Healthy Local Economy* – Be a part of a group that is committed to creating a strong local economy to keep our business momentum moving forward.

9. *Gain a Voice in Government* – The Chamber is your representative on a local, regional, state and national level. With over 1100 members representing thousands of area employees, The Chamber speaks with a strong voice for our business community on issues affecting your business.

10. *Partnership* - You will be a part of an organization whose mission is to create an environment that encourages business success while enhancing the quality of life in our region.

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AI for Business: Practical Tools You Can Use Today

Work Smarter. Communicate Better. Move Forward.

Artificial Intelligence is rapidly reshaping how business gets done – and organizations that adopt it now gain a measurable competitive advantage. Those who act move faster, communicate more effectively, and operate with greater efficiency. This comprehensive 5-week course is designed to equip participants with the practical expertise needed to harness AI tools to elevate their business operations.

From foundational principles to real-world implementation, attendees will master AI essentials, develop custom master prompts, and build practical applications they can immediately deploy. Grounded in a growth-oriented approach, this course empowers professionals to confidently integrate AI into their daily workflows and strategic initiatives by the end of the program.

IN 5 WEEKS PARTICIPANTS WILL LEARN:

- 1: AI fundamentals + custom master prompt
- 2: Faster emails, responses, and content creation
- 3: Marketing and customer communication support
- 4: Visuals, slides, and branded content
- 5: A repeatable AI workflow you can continue using

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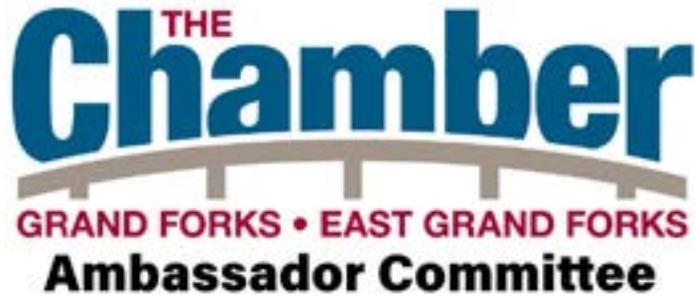
REGISTER NOW!

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AI Center of Excellence



Presented by **The Chamber of Commerce GF/EGF**

AMBASSADORS MEETING



The Chamber Ambassadors extend a warm welcome to new businesses, actively participate in celebrating grand openings and special events, and engage in various Chamber activities.

The Chamber Ambassadors play a crucial role in fostering a vibrant business community by actively encouraging and supporting new and fellow members. Their mission is centered around creating opportunities for businesses to thrive while simultaneously contributing to the community's well-being.

Their dedication involves promoting The Chamber to potential members, highlighting the benefits of membership, and showcasing the community as an excellent place to live and do business. Ambassadors commit to attending monthly meetings and participating in diverse events throughout the year, such as Ribbon Cuttings, Business After Hours, and Chamber activities. Through their commitment and positive representation, Ambassadors actively contribute to the success and growth of The Chamber and its members.

The Ambassadors meet on the 3rd Monday of the month.



Pictured The Chamber Ambassadors held their February meeting at Las Delicias De La Abuela.

RIBBON CUTTING

The Chamber Ambassadors would love to meet you and celebrate your business with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

If you are interested, please contact Doug at **772-7271** or **Doug@gochamber.org** to schedule a ribbon cutting event.

L.A. Formal & Prom

2650 32nd Ave S Suite 1, Grand Forks, ND



Pictured are L.A. Formal & Prom employees, guests and The Chamber Ambassadors.



MEMBER NEWS

Alerus Center Celebrates 25 Years



Twenty-five years ago, the Alerus Center opened its doors—marking the beginning of what has become one of the most important community and economic assets in our region.

Over the past quarter of a century, this venue has been the backdrop for countless memories while delivering meaningful economic impact: heads in beds, full restaurants, and sustained activity that supports our local businesses and quality of life. Its success is a direct reflection of the vision, partnership, and commitment of so many who have supported this mission over the years.

Thank you for being part of this journey and for your continued investment in the Alerus Center's future. We are proud of what has been accomplished and look forward to building on this legacy together as we set our sights on the next 25 years.

THE CHAMBER

Executive Committee

Chair: Derek Holt, First Community Credit Union

Chair Elect: Anna Rosburg, Alerus Center

Past Chair: Mike McLean, JLG Architects

Russel Crary, Crary Real Estate

Chris Jordheim, Widseth

Daren Muscha, Bass Pro Shops

Barry Wilfahrt, Chamber GF/EGF

Board of Directors

Landon Bahl, 322 Hospitality Group & Dist. 17 Legislator

Matt Bredemeier, Grand Forks Subaru Kia

Mylo Einarson, Nodak Electric

Jon Fargo, RealTruck

Todd Forkel, Altru Health System

Dean Gorder, General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, Inc.

Tony Hodny, H&S Electrical Services, LLC

Meloney Linder, University of North Dakota

Keith Lund, GF EDC

Emily O'Brien, ND Human Services Agency

Shari Olson, Northland Community & Technical College

Scott Reck, Northdale Oil

Curtis Regan, Dakota Commercial & Development Inc.

Andy Schneider, Dakota Concealed/GF County Sheriff

Andrew Vigen, Vigen Construction

Tyler Wilson, Vilandre Heating, Air Conditioning & Plumbing

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