



# ERIE COUNTY CHAMBER of COMMERCE

604 W. WASHINGTON STREET, SANDUSKY, OH 44870  
(419) 625-6421 [ERIECOUNTYCHAMBER.COM](http://ERIECOUNTYCHAMBER.COM)



## Opening Day Set For The Hogrefe Building

The Hogrefe Building is set to open on  
Saturday, March 19.

Totaling about 30,000 square feet, the new building stands three stories tall and reaches 45 feet, just like the Cooke Building did. It will house a mixed-use site for retail, office and residential uses. It will also connect to the adjacent Marketplace at Cooke complex.

The Opening Day Celebration will be from 10am to 10pm on March 19 with lots of entertainment available all day long.

The Hogrefe Building closely mirrors its predecessor, the Cooke Building, which could not be saved due to its dilapidated condition. Rick and Meghan Hogrefe tried to replicate the former structure's shape and dimensions.

Be sure to stop out to see the new building on March 19.

### UPCOMING CHAMBER EVENTS:



**"SUCCESS ISN'T ALWAYS ABOUT GREATNESS. IT'S ABOUT CONSISTENCY. CONSISTENT HARD WORK LEADS TO SUCCESS. GREATNESS WILL COME."  
-DWAYNE JOHNSON**

# UPCOMING EVENTS

 FIRELANDS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

## HOPE FOR A NEW WORLD

*Offerings of Light & Love*



*Orchestra Concert with Guest Artist Sterling Elliot, cello*  
**SATURDAY | FEB. 19 | 7:30 P.M.**  
Sandusky High School Auditorium (Sandusky, OH)

 FIRELANDS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CHORALE

## THE ESSENCE OF BEETHOVEN

*In honor of Beethoven's 250th Anniversary*



*Chorale Concert with Guest Soloists from Baldwin Wallace*  
**SUNDAY | MARCH 13 | 4 P.M.**  
Saint Mary's Catholic Church (Sandusky, OH)

 FIRELANDS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

## MELODIC LANGUAGES OF LOVE

*From Russia to Spain*



*Orchestra Concert with Guest Artists Ilya & Olga Kaler, violins*  
**SATURDAY | MARCH 26 | 7:30 P.M.**  
Sandusky High School Auditorium (Sandusky, OH)



## JOIN OUR COMMITTEE!

The Chamber of Commerce is looking for individuals who would like to be a part of our Ambassador Committee.

This role meets monthly at the Chamber, attends Business After Hours and other events when they can, helps to plan future events and volunteers to help organize and attend the event(s), and just have overall good ideas and can be a team member.

Please email  
[kimberlym@eriecountychamber.com](mailto:kimberlym@eriecountychamber.com)  
if you are interested. Thank you!



**“ALMOST EVERYTHING WORTHWHILE CARRIES WITH IT SOME SORT OF RISK, WHETHER IT’S STARTING A NEW BUSINESS, WHETHER IT’S LEAVING HOME, WHETHER IT’S GETTING MARRIED, OR WHETHER IT’S FLYING INTO SPACE.”**

**– CHRIS HADFIELD**

SPONSORED BY



**May 21st**  
**Thunderbird North**

\$100 Per Person  
18 holes  
Snack, Lunch, Beer Provided

**Tee Off at 9:00 AM**

[www.ability-works.com/awgolf](http://www.ability-works.com/awgolf)





January 15th, 2022

Dear Potential Sponsor,

At Ability Works, we have served individuals with disabilities in our area for over 45 years by providing day services, homemaker/personal care services, transportation, employment services, and a Sensory Space.

We will be hosting our first Annual Golf Fundraiser May 21st, 2022. Our goal is to raise enough money from sponsors like yourself to put on the event and allow 100% of registration fees to go directly towards Ability Works!

We cannot meet our goal without the help of the community. Would you please consider being one of our sponsors to help make this event a success? There are several sponsorship opportunities available outlined in this packet.

Thank you in advance for your support and we'll see you at the first Annual Ability Works Golf Fundraiser!

Sincerely,

Courtney Spencer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Courtney Spencer'.

Marketing & Communications Coordinator  
Ability Works Inc  
419-626-1048 ext 3101



# SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES



	Title Sponsor	Vehicle or Cash Prize Hole in One Sponsor	Lunch Sponsor	Beverage & Snack Sponsor	Hole Sponsor	Closest to the Pin Sponsor	Longest Drive. Men and Womens
	FIRELANDS Regional Medical Center	(1)	<del>\$1,000</del>	\$1,000 (2)	\$200 (18)	<del>\$100 (1)</del>	\$100 (2)
Recognition on website	★	★	★		★	★	★
Recognition at registration and awards	★	★	★		★	★	★
Logo on t-shirt	★	★	★		★	★	★
Flyer in carts	★	★	★		★	★	★
Logo on tee sign	★	★	★		★		
Mentions in all media promotions for the tournament	★	★	★				
A business logo on all sponsorship banners	<b>Large</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Medium</b>	<b>Medium</b>			
Supply a company banner to be displayed at the events	★	★					
Tournament welcome and chance to speak at the lunch	★	★					
Tournament entries	<b>4</b>						

## Additional Sponsorship and Donation Opportunities

Swag Bag Sponsor or Donor

Auction Prize Donor

Contact us to discuss additional opportunities at 416-626-1048 ext 3101

Proceeds from this event will benefit Ability Works Inc, a 501(c)(3) non-profit with a mission to support Independence, Inclusion, and Employment for individuals with a disability in our community.

**YES, Sign me up for a Golf Sponsorship:**

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Title Sponsor                      Hole in One Sponsor  
 Hole Sponsor                      Closet to the Pin Sponsor  
 Longest Drive Sponsor          Lunch Sponsor



*Please email company logo to [cspencer@ability-works.com](mailto:cspencer@ability-works.com)*

**Golf Team Registration**

Cost per player \$100  
 Team Captain \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
 State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Player #2 \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Player #3 \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Player #4 \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Method Of Payment**

Check Enclosed          Credit Card

**Credit Card Information**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Expiration Date \_\_\_\_ \ \_\_\_\_ Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Billing Address**

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Address Line 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to "Ability Works"**

If mailing, please send payment and completed form to:

Courtney Spencer  
 3920 Columbus Ave  
 Sandusky Oh 44870

SIGN UP ONLINE



# Exploring the Possibilities of Starting, Buying, or Expanding a Business?

*Discover what it takes by charting your course with*

## Small Business Basics

*presented by*

**Ohio Small Business Development Center  
at Terra State Community College**

*Small Business Basics is a free, three-hour seminar that will answer your questions about starting, buying, or expanding a small business. This seminar will take the confusion out of your efforts, and help you to avoid costly mistakes and unnecessary steps.*

**Ohio** | Small Business Development Centers



### Learn the Basics of:

- Name Registration • Licensing • Taxes • Advisors
- Business Entities • Employees • Insurance • Financing
- Business Planning • and More!

*Sponsored by*

**Civista Bank • Croghan Colonial Bank  
Erie Basin Resource Conservation and Development • First National Bank  
Great Lakes Community Action Partnership • PNC Bank • Sutton Bank • U.S. Bank**

# 2022



### Location:

Terra State Community College  
2830 Napoleon Road, Fremont, Ohio 43420

*Doepker Leadership & Entrepreneurial Center, Building B, Room 103*

### Dates & Times:

- Wednesday, Jan 5, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. • Wednesday, Jan 19, 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Feb 2, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. • Wednesday, Feb 16, 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Mar 2, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. • Wednesday, Mar 16, 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Apr 6, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. • Wednesday, Apr 20, 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 4, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. • Wednesday, May 18, 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, June 1, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. • Wednesday, June 15, 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
(No July Seminars)
- Wednesday, Aug 3, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. • Wednesday, Aug 17, 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Sep 7, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. • Wednesday, Sep 21, 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Oct 5, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. • Wednesday, Oct 19, 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, Nov 2, 8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. • Wednesday, Nov 16, 4:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.  
(No December Seminars)

**CROGHAN  
COLONIAL BANK**



EQUAL HOUSING LENDER • MEMBER FDIC



**First National Bank**



To register, contact: **Miranda Hoffman, Director**

Ohio Small Business Development Center at Terra State Community College

Phone: 419.559.2210 • Email: [mhoffma05@terra.edu](mailto:mhoffma05@terra.edu)

The Ohio Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Program is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration. The SBDC program is also funded in part by the Ohio Department of Development. All services are extended to the public on a non-discriminatory basis. Language assistance services are available for limited English proficient individuals. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance. Contact the SBDC at Terra State Community College, 419.559.2210.



Department of  
Development





February 1, 2022

## Media Release

### Mack Iron Management Announcement

The Mack Iron Works Company is pleased to announce new management roles for two key longtime associates of the company. Effective January 1, 2022, Peter P. Kowalski, Jr. assumed the office of President and Thomas M. Hastings assumed the office of Vice President.

Pete Kowalski is a native of Seven Hills, OH and a Mechanical Engineering graduate of The Ohio State University College of Engineering who achieved his Ohio Professional Engineering certification in 1989 and maintains professional memberships in the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and the American Welding Society. He began his work with Mack Iron in 1983, serving as its Chief Engineer and Manager of Quality Assurance and Safety. In addition to those duties, he has served as the company's Vice President since 2001. As President, he will manage the day-to-day activities of the Company's departments in their daily operations and will continue his duties as Chief Engineer and Safety Director. He is a 1989 Graduate of Leadership Erie County and is a Board Member of The Bellevue Hospital and the Sandusky Central Catholic School Education Foundation, also having held leadership roles in the United Way of Erie County, the Sandusky Central Catholic School Board of Directors, Kiwanis Club of Sandusky and the Ohio State Alumni Club of Erie County. An active member of Sts. Peter & Paul Catholic Church, he lives in Perkins Township with his wife, Marsha.

Tom Hastings, a native of Huron, OH, is a graduate of Huron High School and the Vocational Welding program at EHOVE Career Center. He began his work with the Company in 1978, serving 11 years as a Welder/Fabricator of company products before moving into product sales as a Project Estimator in 1989. In 1998, he became Chief Estimator and manager of the company's sales program, conducted both in-house and through national and international sales representatives. While maintaining those duties, as Vice President he will manage the Company's day-to-day business in the absence of the President and serve as a resource to the President for special projects. He is a 1991 Graduate of Leadership Erie County and is Chairman of the Trustees at the Huron United Methodist Church, also having been a Huron City Council Member, serving two terms as Vice-Mayor of the City. He lives in Huron with his wife, Karen.

John O. Bacon, who served the Company as President since 1989, will continue to serve as Chairman and Chief Executive Officer and will manage the Company's financial matters.

The Mack Iron Works Company has been a leading metal fabricator located in Sandusky since 1901, serving both the construction and petrochemical industries. These management promotions continue the company's reason for success and pride in the "*Quality People Doing Quality Work*" for Mack Iron customers throughout the country and around the world.

February 1, 2022

Media Release

Mack Iron Management Announcement



**Peter Kowalski, Jr.**



**Thomas Hastings**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NEW STAFFING STRUCTURE AT SHORES & ISLANDS**

**SANDUSKY, OHIO, December 20, 2021.**

**Contact: Larry Fletcher [larry@shoresandislands.com](mailto:larry@shoresandislands.com) 419.625.3552**

Several changes are soon to take place with the staff team at Lake Erie Shores & Islands. Some of the changes are to fill open positions and others are to shift existing team member responsibilities as the organization evolves to provide a greater level of service in promoting the region to all audiences.

Changes taking place at the beginning of the year include shifting the role of Group Accounts Director, Amanda Smith Rasnick, to a new position in the organization titled Destination Development Director. This position recognizes that the reasons why people choose to visit, live and work in the Shores & Islands (S&I) region continue to expand and that S&I must also expand the role they play in helping support destination development enhancements in the communities they serve. Ms. Rasnick will be interacting with partners in communities across the region to assist them in their destination development efforts as well as overseeing the Destination Experience Team (formerly Visitor Services) that will ensure visitors are well-accommodated while in the region. Ms. Rasnick is in her 14<sup>th</sup> year at S&I having served previously in sales for Kalahari Resorts & Conventions.

In addition, S&I's current Sports Marketing Manager, Chris Lewis, will be moving into the role of Director of Marketing & Sales. Mr. Lewis has been with S&I since early 2019 and has been instrumental in helping grow the region's reputation as America's Sports & Family Fun Capital. He will oversee marketing and sales efforts for all segments of leisure and group marketing. Prior positions included working in various marketing, management, and sales roles for Lorain Metroparks, Defiance College, Special Olympics New York, and the Buffalo Bills. A new Sports Tourism Manager will be brought on in early 2022.

Another change will move S&I's current Creative Manager, Jen Yochem, into a new role as Assistant Marketing Director. Ms. Yochem will continue to provide creative direction and graphic design work as well as take on an expanded role in strategizing our marketing approaches and managing the efforts of our advertising agency and other outside contractors. Ms. Yochem has been with S&I for five years, prior to which she was employed as a graphic designer and account representative for Mark Advertising.

S&I also welcomes Social Media Manager Alyse Gillentine who started with the company in late summer. Ms. Gillentine is responsible for gathering and posting content on all of S&I's social platforms. Her previous experience includes two summers on the digital marketing and communications team at Cedar Point.

###

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT GRANT AVAILABLE IN ERIE COUNTY**

**SANDUSKY, OHIO, February 1, 2022** --- A new matching grant program is available this year for the purpose of assisting Erie County organizations and communities in developing activities or projects that will attract and engage visitors, serve and educate regional tourism partners, and generate economic growth for their communities and the region through travel and tourism development. This is in addition to the sponsorship grant programs that will continue to be offered.

The Erie County Destination Development Grant offered by the Erie County Visitors & Convention Bureau, Inc., part of Shores & Islands Ohio, serves to develop and enhance destination-based assets that reflect the regional organization's mission and helps attract visitors, talent, and increased visitor spending in the region. The grant will support tourism industry and community collaboration, maximize the economic return on public and private investments for travel and tourism destinations in Erie County, and enhance the quality of life for residents as a result.

Eligible grant recipients could include, but are not limited to, local governments, for-profit enterprises, and non-profit organizations, and grant requirements must be met. If a for-profit enterprise is the lead or a partner applicant, the project must reflect an economic benefit for their municipality or the county at large. Eligible projects should target the development of quality-of-place amenities, attractions, and facilities that enhance the visitor experience and foster connectivity with the specific destination or geographic area.

This grant program seeks big, transformative ideas. Applicant preference will be given to large-scale projects that enhance communities with visitor attraction efforts. Information on the types of projects that are potentially eligible for grant funding can be found in the official grant application.

An educational webinar detailing the grant, eligibility, application process, and reporting requirements will be held at 9 am and 2 pm on February 8, 2022.

Application proposals are being accepted now and will be due by 5 pm on March 31, 2022. Grant finalists will be notified by April 15, 2022 and final grant recipients will be chosen by May 2, 2022. For more information on the grant process or to receive an application, please contact Shores & Islands Ohio Destination Development Director, Amanda Smith Rasnick, at [amanda@shoresandislands.com](mailto:amanda@shoresandislands.com) or 419.625.2175.

###

# SHORES & ISLANDS<sub>OHIO</sub>

Erie County Visitors & Convention Bureau, Inc.

## Destination Development Grant

### Purpose

The Destination Development Grant Program has been created to assist organizations and businesses in Shores & Islands Ohio- East (Erie County) in developing activities/projects that will attract and engage visitors, serve and educate regional tourism partners, and generate economic growth for the community through travel and tourism development.

### Goal

The goals of the Destination Development Grant Program include:

- Developing and enhancing destination-based assets that reflect Shores & Islands Ohio's (S&IO) mission and strategic plan, and help attract visitors, talent, and increased visitor spending to the region.
- Support tourism industry and community collaboration.
- Maximize the economic return on public and private investments for travel and tourism destinations in Erie County.
- Enhance the quality of life for residents as a result of the elevated destination assets.

### Applicant Eligibility

Applications must be signed by an official authorized to legally bind the applicant to perform the project. The lead applicant is responsible for meeting all grant requirements. Eligible organizations include, but are not limited to, local governments, for-profit enterprises, and non-profit organizations.

*\*\*If a for-profit enterprise is the lead or a partner applicant, the project must reflect an economic benefit for the city, township, or county at large.*

### Activity & Project Eligibility

Projects should target the development of quality-of-place amenities, attractions, and facilities that enhance the visitor experience and foster connectivity within the specific destination or geographic area. They should align with Shores & Islands Ohio's mission and strategic plan and increase the likelihood of visitation from outside the area. Partnerships that bring together local and regional organizations, economic development and/or government organizations and tourism-related businesses will be looked upon favorably.

The grant program seeks big, transformative ideas. Preference will be given to large-scale projects that enhance communities with visitor attraction efforts. Proposals are expected to detail transformational projects that strengthen the applicant's destination profile.

Examples of activities/projects that are **eligible** for grant funding include but are not limited to:

- New tourism product development that adds to the tourism inventory
- Revitalization/restoration (business sign, façade or other aesthetic improvements, etc.)
- Way-finding signage programs (S&IO must be part of design process)
- Research, feasibility, financial analysis, and marketing studies dedicated to improving and developing tourism specific attractions.
- Development and presentation of hospitality, quality service, and/or other training programs intended to provide a competitive workforce for the tourism industry.
- Expenses related to developing and promoting new initiatives and/or new products that enhance the destination
- Projects that elevate the visitor/guest/resident experience within the destination

Examples of expenses that are **ineligible** for grant funding include but are not limited to:

- Mortgage, rent, lease, personnel, or utility costs
- Purchase of items the State the Ohio prohibits public dollars be used for
- Contingency funding or debt refinancing
- Projects that do not have a regional impact, either directly or indirectly
- Projects receiving funds through the Erie County Capital Improvements Grant

### **Limits & Awards**

- In general, grant requests up to \$25,000 will be considered. Larger requests will be considered for multi-year projects.
- Maximum grant monies available are dependent upon budget restrictions and collective number of applicants received.
- The program is not designed to cover the entire cost of a project. Nor is it designed to be the determining factor on whether a project is done. The applicant must secure at least 50% of the project expenditures from other sources.
- Projects must be initiated in the year applied for and completed within two years of receiving an award. Contingent for multi-year projects.

### **Grant Application Requirements**

**For consideration, grant applications must provide the following in a written proposal:**

- 1) A detailed line-item budget showing overall project scope and sources and uses for all funding associated with the project, and identifying status of funding (e.g., secured, contingent, applied for, etc.).
- 2) Authorized signatures from the applicant's Board Chair and Executive Director/CEO approving all matching funds are on hand and documentation of commitment from all organizations supplying matching funds.
- 3) A project timeline.
- 4) Project photograph(s) and/or rendering(s), if applicable.
- 5) Competitive vendor quotes, if applicable.
- 6) If a project application contains multiple destination or community partners, letters of support from each partner committing to the project.
- 7) A demonstration that the project complements and is consistent with existing local tourism development, talent attraction efforts, and marketing initiatives.
- 8) Quantitative demonstration of benefits from the project, which may include economic impact projections or other data demonstrating a benefit to the local economy.
- 9) Qualitative demonstration of benefits from the project. For example, an explanation of how this project will enhance the visitor experience as well as quality of life for residents.
- 10) Marketing and sustainability plans that explain how the asset will be promoted and maintained into the future.

***\*\*Applications that do not submit all of the requirements will not be scored\*\****

### Considerations

- The inclusion of endorsement letters with the application is strongly encouraged. Endorsement letters may be from, but not limited to, community leaders, industry partners, or peers and other organizations involved in or affected by the project.
- Grant awards are limited to one per organization per grant cycle
- Applicants cannot transfer funds from one specific grant project to a different project.
- Any deviation from the grant application must be submitted in writing to Shores & Islands Ohio and be approved.
- S&IO must be notified in writing as soon as possible if the applicant does not plan to use the awarded funds.
- The recipient of the grant is responsible for any and all liability issues evolving from the activities of this project. Proof of liability insurance coverage and a rider provision may be requested prior to fund disbursement.

### Application Proposal Submission – Round 1

Application Proposals due by **5:00 p.m. on March 31, 2022**, PREFERABLY by email to: [Amanda@shoresandislands.com](mailto:Amanda@shoresandislands.com) or mailed to: Shores & Islands Ohio at 125 E. Water St., Sandusky, OH 44870 Attn: Amanda Smith Rasnick. Proposals must arrive by the deadline.

### Timeline

EVENT	DATE
Call for Application Proposals	February 1, 2022
Grant Process Educational Webinar	February 8, 2022 at 9am & 2pm
Applications Proposals Due	March 31, 2022 before 5pm
Notification of Finalists	April 15, 2022
Finalist Meetings	April 20—27, 2022
Grant Awards Notification	May 2, 2022

### Acknowledgement Requirements

Applicants receiving grant funds will be issued a Memorandum of Understanding that must be signed and returned to receive funding. Shores & Islands Ohio will be identified as a grantor in any press releases, media outreach, or any other recognition of project funders. Additional requirements will be discussed with award recipients.

### Reporting

- **Quarterly Project Status Report**  
A quarterly project status report must be submitted to Shores & Islands Ohio in the requested format. Details and report due dates will be given to award recipients.
- **Project Completion Report**  
At the conclusion of the project, a report summarizing the deliverables and accomplishments must be submitted to Shores & Islands Ohio along with proof of completion (e.g., pictures, marketing materials, copies of invoices for related expenses). Details and report due date will be given to award recipients.

Please direct any questions regarding the grant or the process to Shores & Islands Ohio Destination Development Director, Amanda Smith Rasnick at [Amanda@shoresandislands.com](mailto:Amanda@shoresandislands.com) or 419-625-2175



Leadership Erie County is a non-profit, service-oriented organization that prepares civic-minded individuals through training to serve their communities. Leadership Erie County classes decided on several community service projects to advocate for and execute each year. This year, one project the class of 2022 is committed to is raising money for a Hoop House for Back to the Wild.

Back to the Wild, INC. is a Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitation Center located in Castalia, Ohio. Back to the Wild's primary mission is to rehabilitate and ultimately release injured, orphaned, and displaced wildlife into their natural habitat. Through this work, Back to the Wild's overall mission is to educate and foster an awareness, appreciation, and respect of our natural world in children and adults.

The need for a hoop house derives from an effort to become more self-sufficient in feeding their animals. During the summer of 2021, Back to the Wild cut costs by around 30% with their first-ever garden. A Hoop House is a structure that will allow plants to grow through all four seasons, helping to increase the saving of food costs. Leadership Erie County is looking to construct a hoop house in collaboration with Back to the Wild and Erie County Master Gardeners in its entirety by the fall of 2022. The Erie County Master Gardeners will help with design and needs and plan to utilize the hoop house for education, community collaboration, and volunteering.

Leadership Erie County: Project Hoop House seeks donations to support this project. We aim to raise \$15,000 over the next six months to help fund and support the Back to the Wild Hoop House. All of the funds raised will directly benefit the Hoop House Project. All donations are tax-deductible and will be recognized on marketing material, social media, and signage on the completed hoop house. Monetary donations are greatly appreciated; however, if you would prefer to donate a product or service, those contributions are welcomed as well. Hoop house needs include but are not limited to: hoop house with polycarbonate ends, raised beds, soil, and compost, electrical work, plumbing work, shelving units, volunteers.

We hope you consider donating to this great cause! If you have any questions, please contact Kerstyn Pou, Project Treasurer, at 419.366.9008 or kerstynpou@gmail.com.

***Project Hoop House committee members include Dan Bihary, Michelle Hoey, Daniel McKillips, Tony McKillips, Tara Ohlemacher, Alley Patterson, Kay Kay Pou, and Shane Williams.***

**\*Please return this portion to any committee member with your donation amount or a description of the donated product/service**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

PhoneNumber: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation Amount or Type: \_\_\_\_\_

Memorial Contribution (If applicable) In Memory Of: \_\_\_\_\_

- Payment Type:  Cash  
 Check - Check Number: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Please make checks payable to **Leadership Erie County**  
 Credit Card \*Please copy/paste for online card donations [https://swipesimple.com/links/lnk\\_dc92db14](https://swipesimple.com/links/lnk_dc92db14)  
 Service/Materials

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



**100% BWC REIMBURSEMENT!**

Good afternoon,

Under the heading of "I'd love to get that done this year"..... As we begin 2022, I'm following up on a great BWC program that can provide cutting edge return to work processes at no cost to you. Hurry before BWC grant money is exhausted !

**The BWC has now formally enacted their new 100% reimbursement policy regarding the development and/or updating of Transitional Work policies and procedures.** If you already have a program in place, under the new rules it can also be updated at no cost to you. This could be important if your internal procedures or work processes have evolved.

Below are some links as an example of our work for your review, and below is a summary of the scope of the project. We essentially will create a step-by-step process to address all manner of accommodation requests, be they work related or not.

**TWP Policy - Sample   Job Analysis - Sample**

This policy's use is not limited to Workers' Compensation but rather all accommodation situations (ie ADA), and depending on your operations, could be transferrable to other similar facilities within your organization.

**Transitional Work Program Development TPA Services**

- Develop a Transitional Work Program which complies with BWC Program guidelines and is intended to assist in obtaining an optimal reduction of workers' compensation expenses
- Policy & Procedures documentation provided on Flash Drive and in a hard copy binder:
  - Consultation with employer for policy development, including syncing with employer's leave protocols
  - On-site employer/employee training
  - Develop a community resources roster for medical treatment/rehabilitation services
  - Methods of evaluating the TW program
- Job Analysis documentation provided on Flash Drive and in a hard copy binder

Now would be a perfect time to allow us (through our VoCare subsidiary) to create and/or update your policy, and have the BWC pay the freight. I've also attached a link to an updated BWC Q&A document for your review, which addresses/reviews the recent changes.

**2021 BWC TWG Q&A**

If you'd like to proceed, I can create the BWC grant application and VoCare service agreement for your signature. Once the grant is approved, we can begin the project. As you might expect, there has been a great deal of interest in this program, and we are adding new assignments every week.

If you have any questions on this please let me know. I look forward to helping you update your internal procedures, all on the BWC's dime ! Have a great week !

"Pressure is what you feel when you don't know what you're doing" - Brian Kelly

Michael F. Brown, ARM  
 Account Executive  
 Paramount Preferred Solutions  
 25001 Emery Rd. – 3rd Floor  
 Cleveland, OH 44128  
 Direct: 216.765.4213  
 Office: 877.765.4200 Extension - # & 301770  
 Mike.Brown@paramountpreferredsolutions.com



## What is a Chamber of Commerce?

### Definition

A **chamber of commerce** is an organization of businesses seeking to further their collective interests, while advancing their community, region, state or nation. Business owners in towns, cities and other territories voluntarily form these local societies/networks to advocate on behalf of the community at large, economic prosperity and business interests. Chambers have existed in the US for more than two centuries, with many having been established before the jurisdictions they represent. A business-led civic and economic advancement entity operating in a specific space may call itself any number of things – board of trade, business council, etc. – but for the purposes of this primer, they are all chambers of commerce.

Chamber missions vary, but they all tend to focus to some degree on five primary goals: Building communities (regions/states/nations) to which residents, visitors and investors are attracted; Promoting those communities; Striving to ensure future prosperity via a pro-business climate; Representing the unified voice of the employer community; and Reducing transactional friction through well-functioning networks. Chambers have other features in common. Most are led by private-sector employers, self-funded, organized around boards/committees of volunteers and independent. They share a common ambition for sustained prosperity of their community/region, built on thriving employers. Most are ardent proponents of the free market system, resisting attempts to overly burden private sector enterprise and investment.

Local businesses are voluntary paying members of a chamber (non-profits, quasi-public and even public sector employers also sometimes pay dues to belong). The membership, acting collectively, elects a board of directors and/or executive council to set policy for, and guide the workings of, the chamber. The board or executive committee then hires a chief executive (various titles), plus an appropriate and affordable number of staff to run the organization.

In the majority of countries, the use of the term "chamber of commerce" is regulated by statute, though this is not the case in the US. Only trademark, copyright and domain name rules protect a chamber's identity – only state corporation law defines their existence and reason for being. While most chambers work closely with government, they are not part of government although many consider the process of appropriately influencing elected/appointed officials to be one of their most important functions.

Currently, there are about 13,000 chambers registered in the official World chambers Network registry. There are roughly 4,000 chambers of commerce in the US with at least one full-time staff person and thousands more established as strictly volunteer entities.



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## Membership

Under the private, volunteer membership model, which exists in the USA and many other nations, companies are not obligated to become chamber members. Membership rolls in a given North American chamber can range from a few dozen firms to more than 20,000, so there is no real “average” or typical chamber of commerce.

Chambers do not operate in the same manner as a **Better Business Bureau** or trade association, which can bind its members under a formal operations doctrine (and, thus, can remove them). Businesses and other employers pay dues to belong and expect to receive the benefits of membership as long as they continue to invest in the organization. They usually accept any reputable business as a member, though dues investment schedules can sometimes result in intended or unintended exclusivity.

It is important to note that in most cases it is the company that is the member, not an individual. A member company is then encouraged to involve numerous senior level employees in the work of the chamber. While five, ten or more individuals from a given company will identify themselves as “members” of the chamber, only the organization they work for is counted when a chamber states its size. A company is free to join (pay dues to) multiple chambers and many mid-size to large firms do so (especially neighbors), in order to further advance their companies' market or policy interests.

Dues amounts are typically determined by the size of the member company (employee count or annual revenue), rather than by the number of people engaged in the chamber from that company. Some chambers have adopted pay-as-you-go or funding models based on specific categories or quantity of services provided to member companies.

Occasionally, chambers will “bundle” memberships, allowing a single dues investment in one organization to qualify a company for membership in a group of chambers. This is sometimes referred to as “federation” membership and it can even extend to the national level.

## Service Territory

The geography of any one chamber of commerce – often referred to as “service territory” – is seldom defined by any political or legal jurisdiction. More likely, the territory is defined by the catchment area of a chamber’s membership. The locations of the businesses that compose the membership tend to define the chamber’s footprint and “claim” to a territory. Adjoining organizations often establish formal or informal understandings about borders.

Like other businesses, chambers also dissolve and merge based on economic or other conditions. Both the economic recession and increased focus on regionalism appear to be driving increased examination of the benefits of mergers.



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## Relationships

The chambers in the US and Canada are **not** bound together under contracts or government regulations. There is no chapter or franchise arrangement between or among them. There can be very strong relationships between neighboring organizations, but those relationships are voluntary and informal rather than required or written. Chambers interact with each other across the nation and the globe – many even maintain formal memberships in other chambers – but the network is informal. In the chamber world, nobody is “in charge” of anybody; a local chamber does not answer to a state or national chamber.

Local chambers are often, but not always, paying members of their state and national chambers of commerce. This connection is one of voluntary membership and does not extend to control or governance. A significant number of chamber executives also choose to join professional associations of their peers, such as the American Chamber of Commerce Executives, the Western Association of Chamber Executives, State Chamber Executive Associations, or the World Chambers Federation. These memberships are for professional development purposes similar to those of any trade association and, once again, the relationships do not involve the abdication of self-determination.

## Policy Independence and Cooperation

The most difficult aspect for the general public, media, government officials and even some businesses to understand is that there is literally no inherent hierarchical structure in the chamber world. This can be extremely confusing to those who naturally assume that a few thousand entities sharing the same name must be related and that some ordered lineage must exist among them. That is simply not the case in the US. When business and economic policy priorities align, which is usually the case, chambers of all sizes attempt to work together and speak with a unified voice. Inevitably, conflicting positions will arise about some issues, or about strong positions (or lack thereof) of chambers at various levels.

To illustrate: The head of a community-based organization like a retired citizen group may wrongly assume that a position taken by a state chamber is shared and endorsed by their local chamber. Likewise, a large metropolitan chamber of commerce could take a strong position in favor of an infrastructure project or educational reform initiative, which will not be embraced or supported by suburban chambers operating within the same metro region.

Or, a coalition of chambers might unite under the leadership of the United States Chamber (the national business advocacy organization representing hundreds of thousands of member corporations) to advocate for/against a bill affecting border crossings, but the coalition may include only a few dozen of the thousands of chambers in the US. Any individual chamber may take a very visible, contradictory stand on that same international visitor policy. On certain issues at certain times, the US Chamber



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can organize thousands of its member chambers and associations into a unified grassroots lobbying force. Many chambers have also voluntarily entered into a “Federation” relationship with the United States Chamber, which involves more consistent engagement in federal policy activities by both the local chamber and its members.

Since businesses are not required to join a chamber (penetration levels vary widely), and because territories overlap, it can be difficult for any one organization, regardless of size, to state that it “speaks for business,” but they do. They earn that privilege by attracting numerous and large heterogeneous employers to their membership and leadership, as well as by utilizing their collective voice on meaningful policy initiatives. In general, the smaller the chamber (and community it represents), the less active the organization will be on the policy/advocacy front. Even small organizations, however, take stands on regional issues ranging from school funding to road development.

The processes of choosing and articulating specific policy positions vary by organization and issue. For the most part, a vote (or expression of consensus) of a chamber board of directors determines the stand to be taken in the name of that chamber on any issue. In recent years, with the increased involvement of public sector and non-profit employers in chambers, consensus-building has become more difficult at all levels. Chamber boards are independent, but they usually take into account the recommendations of state and national organizations when larger issues are considered.

The US Chamber and state chambers provide local counterparts with extensive background and adaptable sample documents. Local chambers then debate, adopt, adapt or reject the larger entities’ recommendations. Likewise, local, regional and state chambers express their opinions about legislation specific to them, in hopes that their views will be shared, embraced and supported by others. The American Chamber of Commerce Executives provides access to a Policy Clearinghouse, which enables member chambers to share knowledge about state and local public policy issues and strategies being employed in various regions to deal with those issues.

Because the chamber world is not structured around an affiliate or chapter model, such disagreements cannot be solved by a controlling authority. Sometimes the disagreements cause destructive friction which results in bonds between chambers being broken. More often, chambers issue differing position statements and agree to disagree, knowing that the opportunity for cooperation on future issues will be critical for them all.

## **Structure**

Chambers of commerce in the US operate almost exclusively as non-profit entities known as 501(c)(6) corporations. Unlike charities, these 501(c)(6) non-profits have the authority under state and federal tax rules to represent their members in public policy debates. They may lobby and take positions on actual or proposed legislation, subject to local, state and federal laws. Chambers may legally endorse candidates for public



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can office and/or ballot propositions (but most do not). The use of general fund revenues for chamber political and lobbying purposes is strictly regulated. The chief executive or another member of the staff is sometimes a state-registered lobbyist. The portion of any member's dues investment allocated to direct lobbying is not deductible as a business expense.

Chamber business models and organizational missions vary significantly. Some chambers may offer services and products that appear to compete with businesses operating within their own territories. One group of chambers may affiliate with a service provider to offer discounts or other benefits to chamber members (from low-cost office products to health insurance), while another group aligns with a completely different vendor. As a rule, larger chambers tend to rely less on membership dues revenue than their smaller counterparts. About one-third of the chambers of commerce in the US also include economic development corporations and/or tourism and visitors bureaus. Virtually all chambers have revenue sources other than dues; event income is the most common.

Although a chamber is a non-profit entity under federal tax law, such a 501(c)(6) is free to undertake supporting business activities (referred to as "unrelated business income) – publishing, trade shows, insurance programs, etc. In many cases, these activities are subject to business income taxes.

Many chambers establish charitable/educational foundations, known as 501(c)(3) corporations, to support specific, eligible parts of the chamber's agenda. The allowable purposes and rules related to such supporting foundations are different than those that have been established for 501(c)(6) organizations.

(NOTE: In a few cases, for-profit chambers have been established in some communities. These business ventures are routinely shunned and fought by traditional non-profit chambers.)

The largest metro or state chambers may employ up to 100 people. The vast majority, however, have staffs numbering fewer than five and budgets under half a million dollars. Chamber professionals serve in jobs covering most of the disciplines found in other small businesses – communications, finance, marketing, customer service and event planning. Some chambers specialize in certain activities, such as economic development, tourism, research, and/or advocacy. Some provide staffing and management to development-related government agencies on a contract basis.

### **If You've Seen One...**

The term "chamber of commerce" is one of the oldest and most well-recognized brands in the world, but there is significant public misunderstanding of its meaning. There is an old adage in the chamber world: "If you've seen one chamber, you've seen one." In all cases, the whole of a chamber of commerce is greater than the sum of its parts, programs, people and participants.