

Chairman's Circle Investors



STUDENT JOB FAIR & CAREER EXPO



The Willmar High School gym buzzed with energy last Thursday as 1,250 students from schools across Kandiyohi County explored career opportunities with 40 employers. Special thank you to our partners: Business Education Network, Willmar Public Schools, Kandiyohi County Economic Development, Ridgewater College, Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services, Inc., and Southwest Initiative Foundation for helping make this event a success. To encourage interaction, students received bingo cards to engage with employers from a wide range of industries. Those who completed their cards were entered into a drawing for gift cards. A big thank you to Walt's for generously donating the prizes, and to Les Schwab for donating snacks to keep the vendors fueled.

FIRST DOLLARS

AJC General Maintenance



AJC General Maintenance is a family-owned business proudly serving Willmar and surrounding communities. Carlos Castrillo and José Martínez specialize in turkey barn maintenance—repairs, clean-outs, power washing, and full-scale upkeep—while also providing a wide range of commercial and residential services. From flooring and carpet installation to junk removal, concrete work, painting, tiling, drywall, fencing, and more, they're ready to tackle whatever you need with reliable, family-driven dedication.

ABIDE Boutique



ABIDE Boutique located within ATLAS of West Central Minnesota offers a curated selection of affordable, faith-inspired gifts, apparel, and décor designed to share God's love. Explore unique jewelry, books, home accents, and locally crafted goods that spark hope and positivity. Whether you're searching for a meaningful gift or something uplifting for your home, ABIDE Boutique provides a warm, welcoming place to shop—"Together Touching Lives for Christ."

Westre's Marine & Sport



With locations in St. Cloud and now in Willmar, Westre's Marine & Sport has a wide selection of new and used boats in stock, from Alumacraft, Tracker, and Nitro fish-and-ski models to Tahoe runabouts, plus pontoons from Barletta, Bennington, and SunTracker. Their sales, financing, service, and parts teams work together to make the whole process easy and enjoyable, from picking out your boat to keeping it running strong. Westre's Marine is all about great service and building relationships that last.

CHAMBER CHAT

THURSDAY MORNINGS @ 10:00AM
With Chamber President James Miller



Thursday mornings on Open Mic, Chamber President/CEO James Miller hosts Chamber Chat. Recordings are available on KWL's website or on Spotify. Heritage Bank, The Crossings, Advocacy and Inclusion Matter (AIM), Kensington Bank, and KCEO were featured over the past month.

CHAMBER CONNECTIONS

May 1 | May 8 | May 15 | May 29



Join us Friday mornings from 7:30-8:30 at rotating member locations! Introduce yourself, share updates, and connect with fellow professionals. Each week wraps up with a host business spotlight and door prize drawing — don't forget your business card and \$1 for a chance to win!

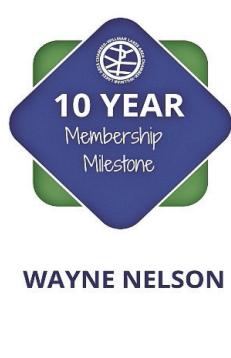
NEW MEMBER WELCOME



MEMBERSHIP MILESTONES



Congratulations and thank you to Debbie Tonsfeldt, Rachel Clark, Andrew Bregar, and David Kemp of Willmar Public Library on 40 years of membership and support of the Chamber! The Willmar Public Library has proudly served the City of Willmar and its surrounding communities for more than 115 years. As a member of the 32-library Pioneerland Library System, WPL connects residents to a wide range of statewide and national resources. Beyond books and ebooks, the library offers board games, yard games, fitness and craft kits, a seed library, state park passes, life jackets, and more showcasing its commitment to creativity, learning, and community engagement. Check out the library for fun educational events and programs for all ages!



Congratulations and thank you to Wayne Nelson on 10 years of Chamber membership — though with his long career as Market President at Heritage Bank, it's more like a 30-year milestone. Wayne has been a dedicated community volunteer, serving on numerous nonprofit boards including the Willmar Area Community Foundation, United Way of West Central Minnesota, Family Promise, and the Ridgewater College Foundation. A true champion of philanthropy, he received the 2025 Innovative Impact Award from the Willmar Area Community Foundation. He now enjoys chasing his grandkids and spending time with his wife, Linda. He continues to give back, now serving on the CentraCare Foundation Willmar Advisory Board.

WORKING GENIUS AT WORK



Desiree Petrich of Intentional Action set the tone immediately, bringing her trademark energy and clarity to help teams understand why some work feels effortless while other tasks drain us. What followed was a steady stream of laughs, elbow nudges, and explosive "oh my gosh, that makes so much sense!" moments as teams uncovered their Working Genius and gained insight into their own and each other's strengths. Everyone walked away energized — with a sharper understanding of their natural gifts, stronger team chemistry, and practical ways to spark joy, boost productivity, and elevate morale across their workplace.

LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVES VISIT THE STATE CAPITOL



Earlier this month, the Leadership Perspectives cohort took a trip to St. Paul for a day at the Capitol, where they engaged directly with local legislators; Representative Dave Baker, Representative Scott Van Binsbergen, and Senator Andrew Lang. Each shared what motivated them to enter public service and provided updates on the issues they were working on midway through the 2026 legislative session.

A highlight of the day was hearing from Senator John Hoffman, who spoke about his work on behalf of all Minnesotans. Representative Kristin Robbins also joined to share about the important work of the Fraud Prevention and State Agency Oversight Policy Committee, which she chairs. In addition, Representative Dave Pinto and Representative Dave Baker, co-chairs of the Workforce, Labor, and Economic Development Finance and Policy Committee, provided insights into their committee's work and how bipartisan collaboration can strengthen Minnesota's business climate. The class was also honored by a visit from Speaker of the House Lisa Demuth, who offered her perspective on the end-of-session outlook and shared insights into current legislative priorities.

To cap off the day, the cohort stepped into the role of lawmakers themselves, discussing, debating, and voting on a bill related to tax incentives for data centers on the Minnesota House floor. Based on the group's informal vote, the measure did not pass, sparking thoughtful discussion and reflection.

Elevating the Customer Experience

MAY 11, 2026 | 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Willmar Lakes Area Chamber | 1700 Technology Drive NE
MinnWest Technology Campus
Facilitated by: Jennifer Liberty Clark

FREE for Chamber Members
\$20 for Future Chamber Members

