

GREATER BELLEVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

chamber connection

JULY 2026

250 YEARS



AMERICA

— 1776 ★ 2026 —

ADVANCING BUSINESS.
SUPPORTING COMMUNITY.

CHAMBER
CALENDAR

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CURRENT &
UPCOMING EVENTS

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TIPS, TOOLS
& NEWS

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Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce
216 East A Street, Belleville, IL 62220
Phone: (618) 233-2015 Fax: (618) 233-2077
www.bellevillechamber.org

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Ads must be received by the 15th of each month, electronically in JPEG or PDF form.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATES

Welcome

*to the following businesses and organizations
who have joined the Chamber in May.*

Man Cave Headquarters

25 East Main Street, A
Belleville, Illinois 62220
(618) 698-6140
mancaveheadqrtrs@gmail.com

Rockin Robyn's Diner

7309 Old Saint Louis Rd
Belleville, IL 62223
(618) 402-6659
rockinrobynsdiner@gmail.com

Soulcial Kitchen

127 Northbelt East
Swansea, IL 62226
(719) 338-1547
johnnemichel@gmail.com

The Roundabout Bar and Grill

104 W Main St
Belleville, IL 62220
(618) 641-9487
theroundabout104@gmail.com

Trivers

218 West Main Street, Suite F
Belleville, IL 62220
(314) 406-5071

ATTENTION YOUNG PROFESSIONALS!

BELLEVILLE YPN HAPPY HOUR

Join us for a relaxed gathering
to connect, unwind, and
celebrate new connections!
Sign up below, more details to
come!

[Register Here!](#)

@Bennie's Pizza Pub
Side Room
113 E Main St, Belleville IL
62220

July 8th
2026

4:30PM-
6:00PM



CHAMBER EVENTS



- | | | |
|----------|--|---|
| July 2 | | Business After Hours with Hospice of Southern Illinois |
| July 3-6 | | Chamber Office Closed for 4th of July Holiday |
| July 14 | | Coffee Cup Connections with Big Brothers Big Sisters |
| July 14 | | Ribbon Cutting at Rockin' Robyn's Diner |
| July 15 | | SIUE AI Learn-a-Thon hosted by The Greater Belleville Chamber |
| July 29 | | New Event! Spin the Spoon |
-



APPLICATIONS
ARE NOW
AVAILABLE!

SUBMISSION
DEADLINE IS
ON FRIDAY,
JULY 24TH.

CHAMBER EVENTS



EST. 1981

Business After Hours

celebrating **45** years of caring

 **THURSDAY, JULY 9TH**

 **4:30 PM - 6:00 PM**

 **HOSPICE OF SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**
305 S ILLINOIS ST.
BELLEVILLE, IL 62220





\$5
FOR CHAMBER MEMBERS

\$10
NON-MEMBERS

RSVP AT
BELLEVILLE CHAMBER.ORG



Did you know the Chamber has a members-only event calendar?

Submit your event online at www.BellevilleChamber.org and click "Calendar" to see the calendar and submit your event! All events will be featured in our Weekly Friday E-blast.

42ND ANNUAL
BELLEVILLE
Chili
COOK-OFF
OCT 9-10
2026

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

2026 Chili CHASE 5K
AND KIDS' PEPPER DASH
Downtown Belleville | October 10

CONTACT
(618)233-2015

CLICK HERE
FOR MORE INFO

The graphic features a red chili splash, a silver spoon with red chili, a green chili character running, and orange chili pepper slices. The background has a white polka-dot pattern.

CHAMBER EVENTS

Coffee Cup Connections

HOSTED BY



2900 Frank Scott Pkwy W,
Belleville, IL 62223

RSVP Today!

Tuesday, July 14 | 8:30am



**SIGN UP FOR THE
CHAMBER'S NEWEST
NETWORKING EVENT!**

**WED, JULY 29
11:30AM-12:30PM**

ENJOY NETWORKING WHILE YOU LUNCH!

Learn AI. Lead What's Next.



Grow with Google Learn-a-thon

Hosted by SIUE • Proudly Sponsored by the Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce



Wednesday, July 15, 2026



10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.



Southwestern Illinois
Justice & Workforce
Development Campus



Belleville, Illinois



NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED.



Begin the
Google AI Professional Certificate



No cost to learners



Chamber members receive
priority registration



Hands-on support in a
welcoming learning environment



BRING: laptop, charging cord, and headphones

REGISTER NOW



<https://forms.office.com/r/3ugc8r8wr4>

Space is limited.

QUESTIONS?



Liz Barnes
Navigator



618-650-2354



elizaba@siue.edu



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Belleville
CHAMBER of COMMERCE

Stronger Together.

Building skills. Building business.
Building our future.

Back to School Donations Requested

Help us ensure that every child in care has the supplies they need to be successful in school.

- 3 Ring Binders
- Dry Erase Markers
- Backpacks
- Ink Pens
- No. 2 Pencils
- Spiral Notebooks
- Pocket Folders
- Pencil Bags
- Colored Pencils/Crayons

Serving youth in Madison, St. Clair, Clinton, Monroe, Bond, Washington, and Randolph counties.

Learn More & Donate



Scan the QR code to view our Amazon wishlist, learn more, and make a donation.



**Drop off supplies or mail checks to:
8 Executive Dr in Fairview Heights**

For more info, contact Mario at
618-688-7092 or mmccart@hoyleton.org

Additional drop-off locations:

Auffenberg Ford Belleville
901 S Illinois St., Belleville, IL

Auffenberg Ford North in O'Fallon
115 Regency Park, O'Fallon IL

Auffenberg Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram
1108 Auffenberg Avenue, Shiloh, IL



CHAMBER EVENTS

COFFEE CUP CONNECTIONS AT ST. PAUL'S SENIOR COMMUNITY

Thank you to St. Paul's Senior Community for hosting June's Coffee Cup Connections and providing a wonderful space for Chamber members to connect and network.

St. Paul's offers independent living, assisted living, memory care and outpatient rehab in a safe and secure environment where there's always something to enjoy - from socializing and engaging in daily activities to home-cooked meals and weekly housekeeping.

A special thank you to Da Lytes On Productions, LLC. for creating [this fantastic video](#) and capturing all the fun and meaningful connections made throughout the event!



BUSINESS AFTER HOURS AT TOUCHETTE REGIONAL HOSPITAL



We had an exciting June Business After Hours at Touchette Regional Hospital's new location at 180 South 3rd Street in Downtown Belleville. Thank you to all that attended!

Designed like a course, guests were invited to "putt" their way through the building while exploring each specialty area and learning more about the services now available to the community. Their services include a Behavioral Health Intensive Outpatient Program, Imaging and Cardiology, InstaCare / Family Medicine (scheduled to open on August 3rd), Laboratory Services, a Multispecialty Clinic and Physical Therapy.



We are excited that Touchette Regional Hospital has brought expanded, accessible care to our region!

CHAMBER EVENTS

RIBBON CUTTING AT AUTISM CARE THERAPY

Welcome to Belleville and to the Chamber, Autism Care Therapy!

Located at 215 W. Washington Street in Belleville, Autism Care Therapy is a clinic designed to provide a safe, engaging, and supportive environment where children can learn, grow, and thrive. From structured learning spaces to fun sensory and play areas, every detail is built to support each child's unique journey.

Learn more at autismcaretherapy.com.



RIBBON CUTTING AT SOULCIAL KITCHEN

Welcome to the Chamber, Soulcial Kitchen!

"Where Food is Love", Soulcial Kitchen is changing lives and transforming communities through dignified dining, faith-driven values, and the power of business creation.

Learn more about Soulcial Kitchen and how to support their mission at soulcialkitchen.com.

127 North Belt East | Swansea, IL
719-338-1574



TUESDAY, JULY 14 | 11AM



Rockin' Robyn's Diner
7309 Old Saint Louis Rd
Belleville, IL 62223

New Member & New Business!

CHAMBER EVENTS

RIBBON CUTTING & OPEN HOUSE AT STANDARD RULE PROMOTIONS

We had a great time celebrating with long time member, Standard Rule Promotions and new owner, Cari Frick, at an open house and ribbon cutting!

Established in 1949, Standard Rule Promotions offers custom apparel, screen printing, embroidery, team and school spirit wear, corporate branding and much more. Call them for all of your promotional needs!

618-416-7539

cari@standardrule.com

www.standardrule.com



SPIN THE SPOON - NEW EVENT!



The Chamber hosted our very first Spin the Spoon, and wow - what a fun time! Members were assigned a surprise local lunch spot and paired with a small group of fellow

Chamber members for a fun, relaxed networking experience. The conversations were lively and the food was fantastic.

A huge thank-you to everyone who joined us, and an extra shout-out to Charlie's Place, I Don't Know Restaurant & Grill, Copper Fire, Tavern On Main, The Roundabout Bar & Grill, Belleville Stein Haus, and Fletcher's Kitchen & Tap.

We're already excited for the next Spin the Spoon on July 29th!



CHAMBER EVENTS

BELLEVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND SIUE PARTNER TO LAUNCH AI LEARN-A-THON FOR LOCAL PROFESSIONALS AHEAD OF AI APPRECIATION DAY

The Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce is partnering with Southern Illinois University Edwardsville to host an AI Learn-a-thon on Wednesday, July 15, 2026, at SIUE's Belleville location on the Southwestern Illinois Justice & Workforce Development Campus.

The event will give Chamber members first access to a hands-on workshop designed to help participants begin the [Google AI Professional Certificate](#). Attendees will learn what the certificate includes, how the program can support practical workplace skills, and get started on their learning as part of a marathon session journey that day. Space is limited; Chamber members receive priority and registration for the event can be found here: [Grow with Google Learnathon Registration - Fill out form](#)

The Learn-a-thon will begin with a structured kickoff session, followed by flexible time for participants to work independently, collaborate with peers, and receive support as they begin the certificate.

The event is intentionally scheduled just ahead of National AI Day on Thursday, July 16, an annual observance that encourages individuals and organizations to learn about artificial intelligence and consider how it can be used responsibly to shape the future. The timing reflects a shared commitment by the Belleville Chamber and SIUE to help local professionals build practical, accessible AI skills for work and everyday problem-solving.

“Artificial intelligence is already changing how organizations communicate, make decisions, serve customers, and approach everyday work,” said Maribeth Bendick, President, Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce. “This Learn-a-thon gives local professionals a welcoming, practical place to build confidence with AI and begin developing skills they can apply right away.”

Through SIUE's Grow with Google initiative, participants can access no-cost professional learning opportunities designed to support career growth, workforce development, and lifelong learning. The Google AI Professional Certificate provides foundational instruction in using AI tools responsibly and effectively, with an emphasis on practical applications.

For more information about SIUE's Grow with Google initiative, visit <https://www.siue.edu/grow-with-google/>



Member Tips, Tools & News

INFORMATION SUBMITTED FROM
CHAMBER MEMBERS

SOUTHWESTERN ILLINOIS COLLEGE ANNOUNCES NEW DENTAL HYGIENE AND DENTAL ASSISTING PROGRAMS

Southwestern Illinois College is excited to announce plans to launch a new Dental Hygiene and Dental Assisting programs beginning in Fall 2027, pending final approval and accreditation. The programs are expected to be offered at the college's Fairview Heights location.

The new programs are being developed to help meet the growing demand for skilled dental professionals throughout the region while providing local students with additional career training opportunities close to home.

"We are excited to expand our healthcare offerings with the addition of Dental Hygiene and Dental Assisting," said Joseph Walter, Chief Academic Officer. "Many students in our district currently travel to other Illinois colleges to pursue these programs, and we are proud to work toward bringing these opportunities directly to our community."

Students enrolled in the programs will receive hands-on training designed to prepare them for careers in dental offices, clinics, and other healthcare settings. The college is partnering with area dental professionals to ensure students gain valuable real-world clinical experience during their education.

Additional details regarding admissions, accreditation updates, and program requirements will be announced as they become available.

HSHS ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL RE-LAUNCHES RUNNING PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

The Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA) has announced Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach (HSMO) as the recipient of the 2026 Achievement Citation at Assembly 2026. The organization was honored at the Assembly 2026 awards banquet on June 3.

Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach addresses critical global needs by strengthening health systems, expanding access to medical care, and promoting sustainable development. As a Medical Supply and Equipment Recovery Organization, HSMO collects, refurbishes, and distributes quality medical supplies and equipment in low-resource countries. Beyond donations, HSMO provides technical biomedical support, empowering partner communities to build lasting health infrastructure, equip trained professionals, and create economic development. HSMO aims to ensure every donation is usable, repairable, and appropriate to the setting.

"Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach is honored to be selected for this prestigious award," said Erica Smith, executive director of HSMO. "Our work is a collaborative effort that depends on many Catholic health systems around the nation for donations. Across the globe, each year Mission Outreach's contributions support clinical healthcare access for 28,000,000 people in low-resource areas. This recognition from CHA shows the impact that can be made when Catholic health entities work together to help people and communities in need."

(continued on next page)

MEMBER NEWS

Each year, CHA's Achievement Citation recognizes an outstanding program or service that exemplifies the ministry's commitment to carry on Jesus' mission of compassion and healing. The Achievement Citation is given to a CHA-member organization that is the creator and lead sponsor or partner in an original, bold, innovative program that delivers measurable results for the community served. Programs are selected because they are inspirational for the sponsoring organization, the people it serves, the community, and beyond, and they will be available for replication within CHA's membership.

The annual Catholic Health Assembly is the largest gathering of Catholic healthcare leaders in the United States. This two-and-a-half-day event is hosted in an interactive platform where attendees engage with speakers, connect with colleagues, and create new friendships.

About Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach

Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach is a medical surplus recovery organization founded in 2002 by the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis and is now a ministry of Hospital Sisters Health System. More than 80 hospitals and clinics from around the Midwest donate surplus medical supplies and equipment to Mission Outreach, which are then made available to partners in low-resource areas around the world. For more information about Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach, visit mission-outreach.org.

About the CHA

The Catholic Health Association of the United States is the national leadership organization of the Catholic health ministry, representing the largest nonprofit provider of healthcare services in the nation.

- 1 in 7 patients in the U.S. is cared for in a Catholic hospital each day.
- Catholic healthcare, which includes more than 2,200 hospitals, nursing homes, long-term care facilities, systems, sponsors, and related organizations, serves the full continuum of health care across our nation.
- Learn more at www.chausa.org.



Photo Caption: The Catholic Health Association of the United States (CHA) announced Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach (HSMO) as the recipient of the 2026 Achievement Citation at CHA's Assembly 2026 awards banquet. (Far right) Erica Smith, Hospital Sisters Mission Outreach Executive Director accepts the award alongside HSMO team members (left to right): Rose Kibet, Coordinator of Operations; Ken Ware, CDL Driver/Warehouse Associate; Vicki Detmers, Recipient Services and Operations Manager; Joe Hardwick, Volunteer Specialist; Sister Ritamary Brown, OSF, volunteer; David Wilcox, CDL Driver/Warehouse Associate; Jay Rees, Warehouse Associate; Ratish Kumar, Procurement and Biomedical Engineer; Hannah Cline, Foundation Specialist; and Carolyn Oldenburg, Foundation Director. They are joined by CHA leaders Sister Mary Haddad, RSM, President and Chief Executive Officer; Joe Gage, new CHA Board of Trustees Chairperson from Bon Secours Mercy Health; and Orest Holubec, outgoing Chairperson from Providence St. Joseph Health.

MEMBER NEWS

DON'T SKIP THE PIT STOP: PRIORITIZE PREVENTIVE CARE DURING MEN'S HEALTH MONTH

As the official medical care provider of World Wide Technology Raceway, HSHS is encouraging men to make preventive health care a priority during Men's Health Month by staying up to date on routine checkups and screenings.

Just like a race team relies on regular pit stops to keep a car performing at its best, physicians say preventive care plays a critical role in helping men stay healthy and catch potential concerns early, often before symptoms appear.

"Many men tend to put their health in the back seat, especially when life gets busy or they feel fine," said Dr. Brian Klostermann. "But routine screenings and annual wellness visits can help identify risks early, when conditions are often easier to manage or treat. Preventive care is one of the most important ways men can protect their long-term health."

Health screenings are not one-size-fits-all and often depend on age, family history and personal risk factors. Physicians recommend establishing care with a primary care provider and staying current on recommended screenings throughout every stage of life.

In their 20s and 30s, men should focus on building a healthy foundation by monitoring blood pressure, weight, cholesterol, mental health and lifestyle habits. In their 40s, screenings for heart disease risk, diabetes and colorectal cancer become increasingly important. Men in their 50s and beyond should stay current with cancer screenings, vaccines and chronic disease management to help maintain their health and independence.

Providers also encourage men to speak openly about concerns that may otherwise go unaddressed, including fatigue, sleep issues, stress, sexual health, urinary changes and family history of disease.

Visit with HSHS team members during all national events at World Wide Technology Raceway this season including the NASCAR Enjoy Illinois 300 on September 7 and NHRA Midwest Nationals October 2-4.



Running *Performance* Program

HSHS St. Elizabeth's Running Performance Program is led by experienced physical therapists and designed to help runners of all levels move more efficiently and safely.

Learn how to reduce injury risk and improve performance through detailed movement analysis and individualized training.

To schedule your assessment, call 618-624-3668 or scan the QR code above.



**HSHS
St. Elizabeth's
Hospital**

Outpatient Therapy

209 Rec Plex Drive | O'Fallon, IL 62269
618-624-3668

steliz.org/running

ROBOTIC-ASSISTED SURGERY EXPANDS IN THE METRO EAST AS HSHS ST. ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL ADDS THIRD DA VINCI SYSTEM

HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital has recently installed a third robotic-assisted surgical system, the da Vinci® 5, to continue to enhance the surgical offerings and access to patients in the Metro East region. The minimally invasive robotic surgical system, funded fully by HSHS St. Elizabeth's Foundation, can be used across a spectrum of procedures for gynecology, urology, thoracic, cardiac and general surgery.

Dr. Scott Crouch, a general surgeon on staff at St. Elizabeth's, recently performed the first surgery with the new da Vinci 5 robotic system. "With three da Vinci systems, we are able to expand access to robotic-assisted surgery for patients across the region," said Crouch. "This additional capacity helps reduce scheduling delays, provides more flexibility for patients and surgeons, and ensures emergency procedures can be handled with less impact on planned surgeries."

With robotic-assisted surgery, the surgeon operates with enhanced vision and precision and is in 100% control at all times. The robot translates the surgeon's hand movements into smaller, precise movements of tiny instruments inside the body. With smaller incisions, there is less scarring and trauma to tissue, leading to a faster recovery.

Patients benefit from the use of the da Vinci surgical systems in the following ways:

- Surgery is minimally invasive, with reduced scarring
- Shorter hospital stays
- Quicker recovery
- Less pain medication is required

"Expanding our robotic surgery program allows more people to benefit from these advances without having to leave the area," said Chris Klay, President and CEO of HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital and the HSHS Southern Illinois Market. "We are proud to support our surgeons and care teams by investing in technology that helps deliver the best possible experience for our patients and families."

St. Elizabeth's continues to support the expansion of access to surgical services for the community of Southwestern Illinois. In 2025, construction began on the northeast side of the hospital's campus for a new outpatient surgical treatment center and medical office. This new outpatient surgery center will include four operating rooms and two procedure rooms, along with post-acute rooms and prep and recovery stations. The medical office will feature space for physical specialty clinics and new providers to serve patients on St. Elizabeth's campus as well as diagnostic imaging services. In total, HSHS is investing approximately \$50 million to fund the project, which is expected to be completed in the spring of 2027.



MEMBER NEWS

GASTROENTEROLOGY CARE IN O'FALLON EXPANDS WITH NEW PROVIDER



HSHS Medical Group welcomes Angela Croessman-Marshall, MSN, AGPCNP-BC, to HSHS Medical Group Multispecialty Care - St. Elizabeth's, at 3 St. Elizabeth's Blvd., Suite 5000, in O'Fallon, Illinois. She provides comprehensive gastroenterology care for adults, evaluating and managing conditions such as gastroesophageal reflux disease, inflammatory bowel disease, liver disorders and irritable bowel syndrome.

Croessman-Marshall earned a Master of Science in nursing from Walden University and a Bachelor of Science in nursing from McKendree University. She is board certified as an adult gerontology primary care nurse practitioner through the American Association of Nurse Practitioners. Her clinical background includes extensive experience in critical care and cardiovascular services, strengthening her approach to complex and chronic medical concerns.

Croessman-Marshall focuses on thorough assessment, accurate diagnosis and individualized treatment planning. She values listening to patients, encouraging questions and involving them in decisions about their care. Her goal is to help adults better understand their digestive health and manage conditions that affect daily life.

To schedule an appointment with Croessman-Marshall, visit hshs.org or call 618-641-5803. New HSHS Medical Group patients may call the HSHS Medical Group Patient Advocate at 844-520-8897 to help set up their first appointment.



Contact us for more information on our full spectrum of comprehensive services including: Free Epilepsy Education, Case Management, Support Groups, Advocacy, Emergency Epilepsy Medication Funding and Summer Camp.

Website: www.efgreatersil.org, Phone: (618) 236-2181

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MEMORIAL

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Brochures	Business Forms	Blueprints
Business Cards	Flyers	& much more



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CENTRAL ILLINOIS WOMAN FIRST PATIENT IN ILLINOIS TO UNDERGO GROUNDBREAKING PROCEDURE FOR IRREGULAR HEARTBEAT AT PRAIRIE CARDIOVASCULAR

DR. BHARATH RAJAGOPALAN USED ABBOTT'S VOLT™ PULSED FIELD ABLATION (PFA) SYSTEM

A 75-year-old woman from Watson, Illinois, who has suffered with atrial fibrillation (AFib) since she was a teenager is the first patient in Illinois to receive a groundbreaking procedure performed by Dr. Bharath Rajagopalan of Prairie Cardiovascular.

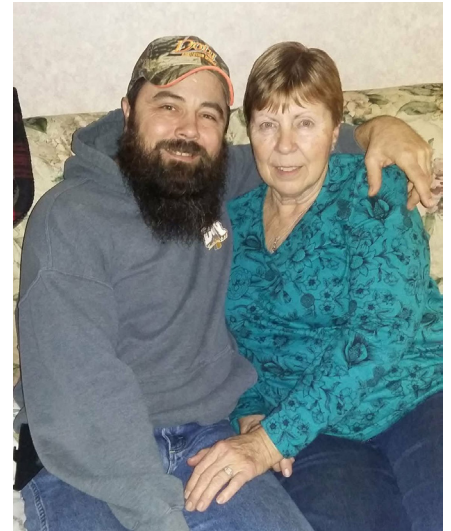
Carolyn Burk said she has noticed no AFib symptoms, has experienced at least a 75% improvement in her health, and has been able to stop taking AFib medication since recently undergoing the innovative procedure for her irregular heartbeat.

"I feel this procedure has given me a new lease on life," she said. "I was afraid I would have either a stroke or a major heart problem since heart conditions run in my family."

Burk's surgery could not have come at a better time. She has a monitor implanted in her chest to keep a close eye on her heart, which Dr. Rajagopalan's team remotely observes. They immediately called her when the monitor alerted them of uncontrolled AFib episodes and multiple pauses of her heart. A few days later, she was in surgery.

AFib occurs when the heart's electrical signals become erratic, causing the heart to beat extremely fast and irregular. Blood clots may form, leading to a stroke, or heart failure may occur. The condition is on the rise in the United States, with the American Heart Association reporting that affected individuals are five times more likely to have a stroke.

Dr. Rajagopalan noted Abbott's Volt™ Pulsed Field Ablation (PFA) System is the latest technology using PFA - short, rapid pulses of electricity - to precisely map, target and destroy small portions of heart tissue contributing to the irregular heart rhythm. The traditional method of thermal ablation uses heat or extreme cold to destroy the problem tissue and risks damaging nearby healthy tissue and other vital organs. The Volt procedure also allows eligible patients to forgo general anesthesia and opt for sedation - using medications to relax and block pain while the patient remains comfortable for the surgery without the added risks of general anesthesia.



Carolyn Burk and her son, Mark



"I'm grateful I could perform this innovative procedure to help Carolyn feel better," said Dr. Rajagopalan. "Our mission at Prairie Cardiovascular is to offer the latest cutting-edge technology right here in central Illinois to serve our patients and help them to live better lives."

Burk praised Dr. Rajagopalan's expertise and compassion. "He listens and takes the time to explain everything," Burk said. "He gave me hope."

Her recent AFib surgery was not Burk's first with Prairie Cardiovascular. She had a previous traditional ablation 20 years ago. She is hopeful the new procedure helps others.

"It will be great for anyone else who has this problem," Burk said.

To learn more about the doctors of Prairie Cardiovascular, call 888-4PRAIRIE or visit hshs.org/heart.

OATES ASSOCIATES PRINCIPAL MIKE BUSCH NAMED ONE OF APWA'S TOP TEN PUBLIC WORKS LEADERS OF THE YEAR



A career defined by leadership, service, and commitment to public infrastructure has earned Mike Busch, PE, PTOE, one of the American Public Works Association's (APWA) top honors. Busch, a principal at Oates Associates, Inc. - a 100% employee-owned civil and structural engineering and surveying firm - was recognized as one of APWA's 2026 Top Ten Public Works Leaders of the Year. The award recognizes individuals who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, long-term commitment, and meaningful contributions to the public works profession. Busch was honored for a career that reflects technical excellence, mentorship, professional service, and a commitment to improving communities through public infrastructure.

Busch has dedicated his career to serving municipalities, counties, and transportation agencies throughout the St. Louis region and beyond. Since joining Oates Associates in 1998, he has grown from intern to principal, leading complex transportation and public infrastructure projects while helping guide the firm's strategic direction, staff development, and client service efforts. Over the course of his career, he has managed and supported projects throughout the region that improve mobility, accessibility, and safety.

Busch has long supported professional organizations that advance the public works profession, with significant involvement in APWA. Over the years, he has served as President of the APWA Missouri Chapter, President of the APWA St. Louis Branch, and in other board and officer roles. He has also contributed his time to committees, outreach efforts, mentoring, and initiatives aimed at strengthening the profession and encouraging the next generation of public works leaders.

"Mike's leadership has had a lasting impact on our firm, our clients, and the communities we serve," said Chief Executive Officer Jeffrey Rensing, PE, SE. "He is respected not only for his engineering knowledge, but for the way he leads, mentors others, and represents the profession. This recognition is well deserved and reflects the impact he has made through his work, service, and mentorship."

Busch's career has been marked by a strong commitment to mentorship and professional development. At Oates Associates, he has helped guide emerging professionals, support leadership development, and encourage involvement in professional and community service. His influence can be seen not only in the projects he has helped deliver, but also in the growth of the people around him.

The APWA Top Ten Public Works Leader of the Year Award honors individuals who exemplify excellence in the field of public works. Busch's recognition reflects more than two decades of meaningful contributions. He was nominated by the APWA Missouri Chapter and recognized alongside nine other professionals from across the nation.

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MEMBER NEWS

TOP LAWYERS METRO EAST AREA BASED UPON A SURVEY OF THEIR PEERS



These **LEADING LAWYERS** have been recommended by their peers to be among the **TOP LAWYERS** in Illinois.

Joseph A. Bartholomew	Bartholomew Shevlin & Flack LLP	Belleville	618.873.0050	Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury: Professional Malpractice; PI Plaintiff: Product Liability
Donald M. Flack	Bartholomew Shevlin & Flack LLP	Belleville	618.873.0050	Class Action/Mass Tort Plaintiff; Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Gregory L. Shevlin	Bartholomew Shevlin & Flack LLP	Belleville	618.873.0050	Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation
Edward J. Blake, Jr.	Blake Law Group PC	Belleville	618.233.7900	Close/Private Held Business; Family; Tax: Business; Tax: Individual; Trust/Will/Estate
Brad L. Badgley	Brad L. Badgley PC	Belleville	618.235.1000	Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability; Workers' Compensation
James F. Clayborne, Jr.	Clayborne Law PLLC	O'Fallon	618.607.4910	Commercial Litigation; Gov't/Municipal/Lobbying/Admin; Public Utilities; Real Estate: Commercial
Nicole L. Winters	Craney Winters Law Group LLC	Edwardsville	618.307.9595	Personal Injury Defense: General; Products Liability Defense
Steven M. Dawson	Harrison LLP	Edwardsville	618.636.7380	Trust/Will/Estate
M. Ann Hatch	Hinckley Allen & Snyder LLP	Columbia	618.206.7402	Personal Injury Defense: General; Products Liability Defense; Toxic Torts Defense
J.D. Graham	JD Graham PC	O'Fallon	618.235.9800	Bankruptcy: Individual
Frederick William Keck	KeckBrown PC	Swansea	618.418.5330	Employment: Employee; Workers' Compensation
Kelly T. Crosby	Keefe Keefe & Unsell PC	Belleville	618.236.2221	Personal Injury: Professional Malpractice; Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Thomas Q. Keefe, III	Keefe Keefe & Unsell PC	Belleville	618.236.2221	Crim Def: Felonies/Misdemeanors; PI: General; PI: Prof'l Malpractice; PI Plaintiff: Product Liability
Thomas Q. Keefe, Jr.	Keefe Keefe & Unsell PC	Belleville	618.236.2221	Personal Injury: General; PI: Prof'l Malpractice; PI: Transportation; PI Plaintiff: Product Liability
Samantha S. Unsell	Keefe Keefe & Unsell PC	Belleville	618.236.2221	Nursing Home Neg; PI: General; PI: Prof'l Malpractice; PI: Transportation; PI Plaintiff: Product Liab
Daniel W. Farroll	Keith Short & Associates PC	Alton	618.254.0055	Nursing Home Negligence; PI: General; PI: Professional Malpractice; PI Plaintiff: Product Liability
Andrew M. Luther	Keith Short & Associates PC	Alton	618.254.0055	Nursing Home Negligence; Personal Injury: General; PI: Prof'l Malpractice; PI Plaintiff: Product Liab
Holly A. Marcum	Keith Short & Associates PC	Alton	618.254.0055	Close/Private Held Business; Trust/Will/Estate; Workers' Compensation
D. Keith Short	Keith Short & Associates PC	Alton	618.254.0055	Civil Appellate; PI: General; PI: Prof'l Malpractice; PI Plaintiff: Product Liability; Workers' Comp
Ryan J. Mahoney	Mahoney Law Firm LLC	Glen Carbon	618.961.8281	Civil Rts/Constitution; Class Act/Mass Tort Plaintiff; Consumer Protect; Employmnt: Employ; PI: Gen
Robert A. Breidenbach	Mathis Marifian & Richter Ltd	Belleville	618.234.9800	Bankruptcy/Workout: Commercial; Commercial Litigation
Patrick B. Mathis	Mathis Marifian & Richter Ltd	Belleville	618.234.9800	Banking/Financial Institutions; Close/Private Held; Tax: Business; Tax: Individual; Trust/Will/Estate
Kevin J. Richter	Mathis Marifian & Richter Ltd	Belleville	618.234.9800	Close/Private Held Business; Employee Benefits; Trust/Will/Estate
Laura E. Schrick	Mathis Marifian & Richter Ltd	Belleville	618.234.9800	Commercial Litigation
Mark S. Schuver	Mathis Marifian & Richter Ltd	Belleville	618.234.9800	Commercial Litigation; Personal Injury: General
Philip D. Speicher	Mathis Marifian & Richter Ltd	Belleville	618.234.9800	Close/Private Held Business; RE: Commercial; Tax: Business; Tax: Individual; Trust/Will/Estate
Mark J. Stegman	Mathis Marifian & Richter Ltd	Belleville	618.234.9800	Close/Private Held Business; Corporate Finance; Tax: Individual
John W. McCracken	McCracken Law Firm LLC	Edwardsville	618.685.1200	Close/Private Held Bus; Comm Lit; Insur/Coverage/Reinsur; RE: Commercial; Telecommunications
Nathan Carl Lanter	Nelson & Nelson Attorneys at Law PC	Belleville	618.277.4000	Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation
David C. Nelson	Nelson & Nelson Attorneys at Law PC	Belleville	618.277.4000	Class Action/Mass Tort Plaintiff; Consumer Protection; Personal Injury: General; Workers' Comp
Reed C. Nelson	Nelson & Nelson Attorneys at Law PC	Belleville	618.277.4000	Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation
Robert C. Nelson, Jr.	Nelson & Nelson Attorneys at Law PC	Belleville	618.277.4000	Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation
James E. Neville	Neville Richards Zittel & Siegel LLC	Belleville	618.277.0900	Medical Malpractice Def; PI Def: General; Products Liability Def; Transportation Def; Toxic Torts Def
Timothy S. Richards	Neville Richards Zittel & Siegel LLC	Belleville	618.277.0900	Civil Appellate; Medical Malpractice Defense; PI Def: General; Products Liability Def; Toxic Torts Def
Derek J. Siegel	Neville Richards Zittel & Siegel LLC	Swansea	618.277.0900	Medical Malpractice Defense; Personal Injury Defense: General; Professional Malpractice Defense
Matthew C. Zittel	Neville Richards Zittel & Siegel LLC	Belleville	618.277.0900	Civil Appellate; Medical Malpractice Defense; Personal Injury Defense: General; Toxic Torts Defense
Erica J. Bash	Opel Bash Group LLC	Edwardsville	618.307.5241	Close/Private Held Business; Trust/Will/Estate
Katherine L. Opel	Opel Bash Group LLC	Edwardsville	618.307.5241	Association/Non-Profit; Close/Private Held Business; Real Estate: Commercial; Trust/Will/Estate
Aaron J. Chappell	Rich Rich Cooksey & Chappell	Fairview Heights	618.632.0044	Workers' Compensation
Kristina D. Cooksey	Rich Rich Cooksey & Chappell	Fairview Heights	618.632.0044	Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation
Michelle M. Rich	Rich Rich Cooksey & Chappell	Fairview Heights	618.632.0044	Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation
Thomas C. Rich	Rich Rich Cooksey & Chappell	Fairview Heights	618.632.0044	Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation
Lorraine K. Cavataio	Sandberg Phoenix & von Gontard PC	O'Fallon	618.624.3008	Close/Private Held Business; Intellectual Property; Tax: Individual; Trust/Will/Estate

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MEMBER NEWS



A. Courtney Cox	Sandberg Phoenix & von Gontard PC	Edwardsville	618.503.6010	Civil Rts/Constitution; Commercial Litigation; Emplmnt: Mngmnt; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin
John L. Gilbert	Sandberg Phoenix & von Gontard PC	Edwardsville	618.659.9861	Civil Rts/Constitution; Close/Private Held; Emplmnt: Mngmnt; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin; School
Philip J. Lading	Sandberg Phoenix & von Gontard PC	Edwardsville	618.659.9522	Commercial Litigation; Gov/Muni/Lobby/Admin; Ins/Ins Coverage/Reinsur; PI Defense: General
David W. Aubrey	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	618.659.9833	Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Erin Lyn Beavers	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	618.307.4085	Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Evan D. Buxner	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	618.307.4085	Class Action/Mass Tort Plaintiff; Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Ivan D. Cason	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	618.659.9833	Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Jason B. Epps	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	618.659.9833	Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Tonya Len Genovese	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	866.966.6658	Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability; Workers' Compensation
Beth A. Gori-Gregory	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	618.247.4237	Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Christopher T. Layloff	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	618.247.4242	Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Robert P. Marcus	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	618.307.7451	Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury: Transportation; Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Sara M. Salger	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	618.659.9833	Class Action/Mass Tort Plaintiff; Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Gregory J. Sandifer	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	618.659.9833	Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Jason J. Steinmeyer	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	618.659.9833	Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
James R. Stever	The Gori Law Firm	Edwardsville	618.659.9833	Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability
Erin M. Phillips	Unsell Schattnik & Phillips PC	Wood River	618.258.1800	Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury Plaintiff: Product Liability; Workers' Compensation
Michael L. Wagner	Wagner Lickfield PLLC	Belleville	618.239.0187	Commercial Litigation; Environmental; Gov't/Muni/Lobby/Admin; Public Finance; RE: Commercial
J. Michael Weilmuenster	Weilmuenster Law PC	Belleville	618.257.2222	Class Action/Mass Tort Plaintiff; Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury: Professional Malpractice

These EMERGING LAWYERS have been recommended by their peers to be among the TOP LAWYERS in Illinois who are age 40 or younger OR who have been admitted to the practice of law for 10 or fewer years.

Mary E. Schallert	Keefe Keefe & Unsell PC	Belleville	618.236.2221	Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury: Professional Malpractice; PI Plaintiff: Product Liability
S. Clayton Spoeneman	Keefe Keefe & Unsell PC	Belleville	618.236.2221	Personal Injury: General; Personal Injury: Professional Malpractice; PI Plaintiff: Product Liability
Melissa C. Meirink	Mathis Marifian & Richter Ltd	Belleville	618.234.9800	Commercial Litigation; Employment: Management
Daniel M. Renner	Mathis Marifian & Richter Ltd	Belleville	618.234.9800	Close/Private Held Business; Trust/Will/Estate
Chad J. Richter	Mathis Marifian & Richter Ltd	Belleville	618.234.9800	Commercial Litigation; Real Estate: Commercial; Trust/Will/Estate
Allyson T. Schwab	Mathis Marifian & Richter Ltd	Belleville	618.234.9800	Close/Private Held Business; Real Estate: Commercial; Trust/Will/Estate
Dane C. Nelson	Nelson & Nelson Attorneys at Law PC	Belleville	618.277.4000	Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation
Zachary Kent Jones	Neville Richards Zittel & Siegel LLC	Swansea	618.277.0900	Medical Malpractice Defense; Personal Injury Defense: General; Professional Malpractice Defense
Colin C. Clark	Sandberg Phoenix & von Gontard PC	Edwardsville	618.659.9861	Close/Private Held Business; Tax: Business; Tax: Individual; Trust/Will/Estate
Nathan J. Law	Sandberg Phoenix & von Gontard PC	Edwardsville	872.242.9186	Products Liability Defense; Toxic Torts Defense
Rebecca K. Wohltman	Sandberg Phoenix & von Gontard PC	O'Fallon	618.624.3398	Close/Private Held Business; Tax: Business; Tax: Individual; Trust/Will/Estate
Sarah J. Lukas	Unsell Schattnik & Phillips PC	Wood River	618.258.1800	Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation
Bradley C. Young	Unsell Schattnik & Phillips PC	Wood River	618.258.1800	Personal Injury: General; Workers' Compensation
Bryce R. Lickfield	Wagner Lickfield PLLC	Belleville	618.239.0187	Commercial Litigation; Personal Injury Defense: General; Real Estate: Associations/Condominiums

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MEMBER NEWS

MEGAN HERZING JOINS OATES ASSOCIATES



Oates Associates, Inc. - a 100% employee-owned civil and structural engineering and surveying firm - welcomes a new team member building her career in marketing, Megan Herzing.

Herzing joins Oates Associates as a Marketing Coordinator, supporting the firm's transportation and civil/site teams through proposal development and marketing communications. In this role, she assists with preparing proposals, project descriptions, and other pursuit materials, while also developing content for social media and the firm's website to highlight Oates' expertise and projects. Megan collaborates closely with technical staff and leadership to support business development efforts and contributes to event coordination and client engagement initiatives. Through these efforts, she helps strengthen Oates Associates' brand and supports the firm's continued growth and outreach.

OATES ASSOCIATES WELCOMES FORMER INTERNS TO FULL-TIME POSITIONS

Oates Associates, Inc. - a 100% employee-owned civil and structural engineering and surveying firm - welcomes five former interns into full-time Associate Project Designer roles. Andrew Holba, Cameron Ramirez, Hayden Ott, Jon Daugherty, and Owen Vering bring fresh perspectives and enthusiasm to the firm's growing team of employee-owners.

Holba, Ramirez, and Daugherty support transportation projects in the firm's Belleville and Collinsville offices, while Ott contributes to civil/site projects in Collinsville. Vering joins the building structural team in the St. Louis office. All five employees began their careers at Oates Associates as interns and, after earning their Bachelor of Science degrees in civil engineering, have continued their professional development with the firm. Holba, Ramirez, Ott, and Daugherty graduated from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, while Vering earned his degree from Missouri University of Science and Technology.

Oates Associates looks forward to supporting their continued growth and the contributions they will make to projects and clients across the region.



Hayden Ott



Cameron Ramirez



Andrew Holba



Jon Daugherty



Owen Vering

MATT FIELDS REJOINS OATES ASSOCIATES AS PROJECT MANAGER



Matt Fields, PE has rejoined Oates Associates, Inc. - a 100% employee-owned civil and structural engineering and surveying firm - as a Project Manager in the firm's St. Louis office.

Fields specializes in transportation engineering, delivering roadway and infrastructure improvements for public agencies and communities throughout the region. His experience includes local roads and highways, safety enhancements, drainage improvements, and pedestrian facilities. He shares the firm's commitment to improving communities through thoughtful transportation solutions.

Having previously worked for Oates Associates, his return reflects both his familiarity with the firm's approach and the value of his experience in transportation engineering.

Fields will work closely with team members and clients to develop practical solutions that enhance safety, accessibility, and mobility.

Oates Associates is a 100% employee-owned multi-disciplined design firm with offices in Collinsville and Belleville, Illinois and St. Louis and St. Charles, Missouri. Oates provides engineering and surveying services for transportation and building projects. Specifically, this includes transportation and traffic engineering, ADA transition planning, stormwater management, site design, building and bridge structural design and inspections, surveying, and drone operations. For more information, visit www.oatesassociates.com or call 618.345.2200.

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