

UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ACCREDITED®



2018

Annual Report



Sauk Valley Area
chamber of commerce

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Our Mission:
**To Enhance the Economic Climate and Quality of Life in the
Sauk Valley Area**

On behalf of our board of directors, we say Thank You! Thank you for investing in us to help promote your business, or organization and this community, and thank you for believing in and supporting the work we do.

As an organization, we work with you to provide citizens with a strong business environment that increases employment, the retail trade and commerce, and industrial growth to make the Sauk Valley a better place to live and work. We encourage community members to shop local and use local resources; as we know this is a win-win situation for our businesses, and the community as a whole.

Much of the work we do is about making connections and building relationships, and we need you, as members, to be involved and engaged with us. We need your input as we look forward and prioritize what needs to be done. This is YOUR chamber and we look forward to partnering with and representing you in 2019.

In this report are the highlights of 2018. We are proud of the work we are doing, feel good about the things we have accomplished, and yet we know there is a lot more to be done as we work to fulfill our mission.



Kris Noble Executive Director

2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Amanda Baron ~ Ward Murray Pace & Johnson
- Jerry Binder ~ Whiteside Area Career Center
 - Lance Buser ~ Wal-Mart D.C. #7024
 - Jim Cesarek ~ RE/MAX Sauk Valley
 - Tim Determan~ Pinney Printing
- Brian Hawkins ~ Hawkins-Cassens Insurance
 - Dave Knie ~ Knie Appliance and TV
 - Mike Loos ~ Edward Jones Investments
- Jon Mandrell ~ Sauk Valley Community College
- Steve Nunez ~ Sauk Valley Community College
 - Sheila Martinez ~ US Bank
 - Steve Munson ~ The Medicine Shoppe
 - Claudia Sauer ~ CGH Medical Center
 - Rick Turnroth ~ Turnroth Sign Company
- Karen Voss ~ Rock River Hospice and Home
 - Mary White ~ Community State Bank

In memoriam:

- Pam Topper ~ Illinois Bank & Trust
Pam joined the Board of Directors in February 2013. She was an advocate for the Chamber and was a great asset to our Board of Directors.



2018 was is one for the record books for the Sauk Valley Area Chamber as we've been recognized nationally by the US Chamber of Commerce. I would like to thank our board of directors and committees for donating their time and energy to make the SVACC what it is today. I would also like to thank our exceptional staff for their tireless dedication. Last but not least, I would like to thank each of our members for their continued support and participation. All of the national accolades this organization has recently received is a attribute to the quality of our membership and how we continue to find ways to work together to provide value to the Sauk Valley Area. Thanks again for all you do and lets make

2019 another great year!

Mike Loos, 2018 Board President

Your Chamber: By the Numbers

390 members representing employees in 28 cities

36 New Members in 2018

92% retention rate

7 Customer Service Awards Given to Members for outstanding service

35 Ribbon Cuttings Celebrating new members, grand openings, expansions and landmark occasions

Networking and Building Relationships

- **9 Business After Hours and 1 Breakfast Before Business event hosted 504 members.**
- **Professional Women's Network, Lunch and Learn events, and breakfast workshops provided networking and educational opportunities for 214 members and guests.**
- **Signature Chamber Events- The 2018 Annual Dinner, Manufacturing Dinner, Golf Outing, Steak Fry in the Country and Chamberweek Celebration brought together over 913 community members.**

Marketing and Communications

Newsletter open rate of 45%

Over 38,000 visits to the website

Use of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to promote members

Adblast sent to over 900 emails

Membership Breakdown



Community Investment:

\$17,140.00 given back; including:

\$9750.00 in Scholarships

\$2640.00 to education

\$4,550.00 to not for profit organizations/service clubs

\$200.00 in misc. donations

Your Chamber: Making It Happen

Committees and Collaborations do "the work" of the chamber.



153 Individuals Volunteered on a Committee in 2018 and 145 people volunteered for Chamber Community Events

Ambassadors



This group kept busy in 2018 with monthly luncheons, ribbon cuttings, Customer Service Award presentations, welcome hosts at Business After Hours events, welcome visits to new members and retention visits to our current members. The Ambassadors act as the public relations arm of the SVACC.



Agribusiness Committee

The Agribusiness Committee planned and implemented the Annual Steak Fry in the Country Event -with 302 attending. The committee also organized relevant Agriculture workshops for our members and community members. Our partnerships with area FFA clubs and the SVCC Ag program continued to grow as well.



Education Committee



The Education committee continued to impact change in the Sauk Valley by focusing on bringing together education and business to discuss career pathways and workforce development issues. The committee, representing 31 member businesses and organizations, presents collaboration at its best. This committee is also actively engaged with CEO, 40 Developmental Assets/Positive Youth Development, and the Sauk Valley Leadership Program.



Your Chamber: Making It Happen

Golf Committee

The Annual SVACC Golf Outing was held on June 15th at Rock River Golf and Pool. It was a great day with over 100 golfers participating. This event provides funds for the the Charles Farnham Business Scholarship.



Hispanic Business Leaders Committee

In 2018, HBLC continued to advocate for and provide resources to our Hispanic community and Hispanic Businesses. In addition to organizing the Fiesta Day Parade this committee works with the three local High School Spanish Clubs and Sauk Valley Community College. For the 2nd year, the committee donated funds for a scholarship to be awarded to a Latino student attending SVCC.



Professional Women's Network

This group of professional women organizes quarterly educational and networking events to enhance the professional development of area business women. This year they provided two educational workshops and hosted an evening networking social. The monthly meetings include discussion topics to focus on professional and personal growth.



Seasonal Sights and Sounds

Seasonal Sights and Sounds 2018 included a Community Concert, Downtown Christmas Walk, Santa's Workshop and the Twin City Holiday Parade. In Collaboration with Sterling Main Street and the City of Sterling, the Sights and Sounds Committee organized and implemented this long standing holiday tradition.

Your Chamber: Making It Happen

Manufacturing Dinner

Manufacturing has been and continues to be a primary contributor to the success of the Sauk Valley Area. The Chamber held its first Annual Manufacturing Dinner in May at Sauk Valley Community College to recognize and celebrate the manufacturing industry. The collaboration being done between The Chamber, our members, manufacturing and education (Sauk Valley Community College, Morrison Institute of Technology, and the Whiteside Area Career Center) to address workforce development and improve career pathways is critical to the growth of the Sauk Valley. 160 guest attended this inaugural event.



Collaboration and Partnerships-Working with the SBDC at SVCC and Sterling Main Street we worked to promote small businesses, shopping local and using local resources to support our members and strengthen the Sauk Valley. We continued working with the Greater Sterling Development Corporation, Sterling Today, The City of Sterling, The City of Rock Falls, and Rock Falls Tourism to provide support in the areas of Economic Development and Tourism.

Community Leadership- Throughout 2018 we continued to be engaged in the Sauk Valley Leadership program; the 2018-19 class includes 14 participants representing all areas off the Sauk Valley.

Critical Conversations- Recruiting and Retaining people to our community was a big topic for 2018. A workshop on this topic including a panel of Millennials' prompted the realization that more conversations and sharing of ideas needed to be done with this demographic. Partnering with Sterling Main Street we have begun a series of meetings to engage the Millennials' in the Sauk Valley and to develop strategies to help keep this area thriving.

Legislative Advocacy-Throughout the year, the chamber worked with State Representatives to ensure that our members voices were heard regarding issues important to them at the state level. In September a Candidate Forum was held for local candidates with over 100 people attending. The Chamber continued to work with city officials to advocate for the business community.

Workforce Development- Through our involvement in the Inspire MORE initiative, the CEO program, the MutliCraft program, the SVCC Ag Advisory Board and our Education committee, we continue to be committed to developing creative ways to create talent pipelines, create bridges between education and employers/business, and impact change for our future workforce.

SVACC Staff

Brandi Langner ~Office Manager and Financial Specialist
Dallas Knack ~ Marketing and Advertising Coordinator