



Sauk Valley Area
chamber of commerce

UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ACCREDITED



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Partnering for Success

FEBRUARY 2023

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SIGHTS & SOUNDS
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Sauk's Chocolate
Rendezvous

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11
SVCC.EDU/CHOCOLATE

SPONSORED BY
HALO
BorgWarner
Frery Lumber
Sauk Valley Bank • Community State Bank
KSS Hospital • Galley Home and Heating
Farmer's National Bank • Amer. Mobile Service
CCM Medical Center • Compton Financial
Sterling Federal Bank • Winfield State Bank
Lumen Bank • Premier Savings
Edward Jones • TeleOne Gait
Sauk Valley Media

February Meetings

February 2 Executive Board
February 14 Board of Directors
February 15 Professional Women's Network
February 16 HBLC
February 21 Ag

Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce Directors & Staff

Executive Committee

President: Dr. Jon Mandrell
First Vice President: Pam Fluck
Second Vice President: Tim Determan
Treasurer: Geoff Wright
Past President: Lance Buser

Term Ends January 31, 2024

Dave Knie, Knie Appliance & TV
Tim Determan, Pinney Printing
Steve Munson, Retired, The Medicine Shoppe
Lance Buser, Wal-Mart DC #7024
Ryan Olson, Ward Murray Pace & Johnson
Violet Nava, Sauk Valley Bank

Term Ends January 31, 2025

Alejandro Rivera, RE/MAX Sauk Valley
Geoff Wright, CGH Medical Center
Josh Johnson, Whiteside Area Career Center
Dr. Jon Mandrell, SVCC
Rebecca Munoz-Ripley, YWCA

Term Ends January 31, 2025

Pam Fluck, Self Help Enterprises
Sandi Cavazos, US Bank
Katie Whitehead, HALO Branded Solutions
Kristina Kaecker, Kunes RV

Staff

Executive Director—Kris Noble
Marketing Coordinator— Dallas Knack
Financial Specialist/Office Manager—Bailey Dorner

A Message from the Director

Looking Back.....Moving Forward.

Thank you to all who attended our Annual Meeting and Dinner on January 26. It was a great evening spent with all of our wonderful members. The CEO Program was once again a great help with the success of the evening. From their creativity with the program ("the Adventures of Space Cow"), and their fabulous space desserts to hosting and talking with our members, they were truly impressive. The SVACC Chamber Champion Award was presented to TWO amazing women in the Sauk Valley: Dr. Lori Cortez and Pam Martinez. Both are women that I respect, admire, and feel fortunate to call my friend.

The Annual Dinner is a time to reflect on 2022 and share plans for 2023. We are proud of what we accomplished in 2022. With record growth in new members, membership, and contributions back to the community in scholarships, support for education, service clubs, and not for profit organizations we accomplished a lot on behalf of our members. (Read our full 2022 Annual Report [here](#).) We are excited for 2023. Hearing about what is important to our members, taking action on those areas, building relationships, impacting change on key community issues, and being a voice for the Sauk Valley are a few of the things we are looking forward to continuing.

We are also excited to welcome three new board members, and are looking forward to them sharing their ideas, expertise, and guidance in helping the SVACC continue to thrive.

Please help us welcome:



Katie Whitehead
HALO Branded Solutions



Sandi Cavazos
US Bank



Kristina Kaecker
Kunes RV

Your ideas, input, and suggestions are critical to the success of our chamber. We exist to represent YOUR business and/or organization. We are looking forward to a fabulous 2023 and hope you are too!

Kris

Investor Update February 2023

NEW INVESTORS

Birkey's Farm Store
200 North Street, Prophetstown
815-537-2304

INVESTOR RENEWALS

Arthur's Garden Deli
Axiom Wealth Advisors
Bradford Supply Company
Brother Daryl's
Candlelight Inn Sterling
D & E Furniture
Edward Jones/Tom Gleissner
Fraternal Order of Eagles #2783
Fringe Co Salon & Western Boutique
Gold Star FS, Inc.
Illinois American Water

Knie Appliance & TV, Inc.
Lil Smoked Bar + Grill
LK Design Source
Manpower
Mattox Insurance Agency
Newman Central Catholic High
School
Paulette Selmi, Ph.D.
Pizza Ranch
RE/MAX Sauk Valley
Reitzel Roofing Company
Russ & Carol Siefken

Sauk Valley Food Bank
Sauk Valley Pest Control
Shay Brown State Farm Insurance
Sterling Steel Company
The Cornerstone Agency, Inc.
Thompson Truck & Trailer
U.S. Cellular
United Way of Whiteside County
US Bank
Willett, Hofmann & Associates, Inc.
Your CBD Store Sterling

We would like to give special recognition to the following groups who provide extra support to the Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce. This extra effort and support is truly appreciated. If you have the opportunity to express your sincere appreciation to these members, please do so!

Over \$1000 Invested

CGH Medical Center
Community State Bank
Farmers National Bank - Morrison
Midland States Bank
Sauk Valley Bank
Select Employees Credit Union
Sterling Federal Bank
US Bank
Wahl Clipper Corp.
Wal-Mart DC #7024
Ward, Murray, Pace & Johnson

150% Club

Bushel Basket Candle Co.
Candlelight Inn
Helm Civil
Hill's Electric Motor Service, Inc.
Illinois American Water
Lance's Plumbing
Lee Ogle Transportation System
LK Design Source
Loescher HVAC

Mattox Insurance Agency
Moore Monument & Granite Co
NICIL
RE/MAX Sauk Valley
Rock River Hospice & Home
Sawdust N Dreamz
Select Employees Credit Union
Sterling Rock Falls Child Care
Sterling Township
T-Mobile
United Craftsmen, Ltd.

110% Club

1st Gateway Credit Union	Hawkins-Cassens Insurance	Rock River Lumber & Grain	The Cornerstone Agency
Allstate Insurance Company	James S. Ferris DDS, PC	Rock River Ready Mix	Wendler Engineering
Astec Mobile Screens Inc	Jim Prescott's BBQ Shop	Scholl Insurance Agency	Services
Bardier & Ramirez Real Estate	Johnson Oil Company	Servicemaster	Winter Construction
Bollman Auto Center	Kelly's Restaurant	Showplace Antiques & Treasures	
Cassens Drainage	Kiwanis Club of Sterling	St. Mary's School	
Compeer Financial	Marv Lofgren & Sons Contractors	St. Vincent DePaul	
Dennis Electric of Tampico	Mertes & Mertes	Sterling Chevrolet	
	New Millenium Directories	Sterling Napa Auto Parts	

Chamber Ambassadors

Allie Johnston – University of Illinois Extension
Angie Delhotal— Sauk Valley College Foundation
Arnulfo Valdivia—Sauk Valley Bank
Cassandra Salmon – YWCA
Chandra Meyer – Re/Max Sauk Valley
Christina Bystry — House in the Country
Janell Loos — Heritage Woods
Jennifer Alvarez — Surf Broadband

Karen Voss – Morningside of Sterling
Mary White – Community State Bank
Nicole Bollman - CGH Medical Center
Pam Fluck – Self Help Enterprises
Sheila Martinez – U.S. Bank
Sherry DeWalt – CGH Health Foundation
Skip Dettman—LSSI
Stepheni Chandler. Hughes Resources
Tygen Bausman—Sterling Federal Bank

We are excited to welcome our
newest ambassadors!
Arnulfo Valdivia, Sauk Valley Bank and
Stepheni Chandler, Hughes Resources



Ambassador Spotlight—Cassandra Salmon, YWCA

My name is Cassandra, I have been an ambassador for 8 years and I absolutely love volunteering my time. So much, that I decided to leave my 12 year banking career to join the YWCA of the Sauk Valley as the Director of Development and Marketing. I had volunteered on the Board of the YWCA for five years before beginning my role on December 1, 2022. It has been quite a change, but nothing less than rewarding. Since starting my new role, I have jumped right in to fundraising. With that being said, here are some dates to put on your calendar: The YWCA of the Sauk Valley will be hosting our 40th Anniversary Women of Achievement Luncheon on April 13th from 11a-1:30p. Our Peace, Justice, Freedom, & Dignity 5k will be held on June 10th at Westwood Sports Center. Please be on the lookout for both of these registration forms in the coming months. If you want to make sure you are on the list to receive a registration form for either event, you can call 815.625.0333.

Member Spotlight

Culver's of Rock Falls Represents Top 10% in the Culver's Franchise in Nationwide Competition

Out of over 800 Culver's restaurants, Culver's of Rock Falls ranked 51st receiving Bronze in the nationwide 2022 Culver's Crew Challenge.

Ashlee Alber, Regional Manager, says, "I am proud of our Rock Falls Team and what they have accomplished again this year! Our team strives to provide a consistent guest experience with quality food and exceptional hospitality! It is truly our pleasure to serve the Rock Falls Community!"



The annual Culver's Crew Challenge consists of each restaurant and team member's performance being evaluated on core company values, strategic priorities, and operational initiatives. The challenge encourages Culver's restaurants to continually improve and live out the franchise's mission, "We genuinely care, so every guest who chooses Culver's leaves happy."

If you would like to be a part of the Culver's Team and explore opportunities through Culver's, please visit www.culvers.com and apply today!

Ribbon Cuttings

Elevated Beauty Supply, LLC
 2900 East Lincolnway
 815-716-8933



In January, the SVACC Agri-business Committee presented checks to support Amboy High School FFA and Bureau Valley FFA. The SVACC is committed to support youth and education as we invest in our future!

Congratulations to Lundstrom Florist for receiving the Customer Service Award!

Nominated for their positive attitude, willingness to listen, and patience, Lundstrom Florist works hard to make sure their customers needs are met. For more information call them at 815-625-0080.

CSA Sponsored by:



Annual Meeting & Dinner

January 26 | Deer Valley Banquets

Our members are "Out of this World"! Thank you to everyone who attended our Annual Meeting & Dinner. We appreciate the opportunity to celebrate our organization and you - our wonderful members! The evening was a great success thanks to our awesome hosts, the WACC CEO Program, who provided "out of this world" dessert and entertainment in the form of "The Adventures of Space Cow". Thank you to Walmart DC #7024, the Kitchen Incubator, and Selmi's Weddings and Events for supporting the CEO Program and our event.



Workforce Development

Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce (SVACC) opened scholarship applications for the 2022-2023 school year. The SVACC awards scholarships to students pursuing a college degree in a variety of fields. Details and applications can be found at saukvalleyareachamber.com/scholarships.

Business/Human Relations: The Charles Farnham Scholarship. This scholarship is dedicated to an individual who was highly active with the Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Farnham's professional background and employment focus was on industrial relations at Northwestern Steel and Wire where he was a Vice-President. The Farnham application is a one-year, \$1000.00 scholarship. Applicants for this scholarship must attend Sterling High School, Rock Falls High School, or Newman Central Catholic High School. Two scholarships will be awarded in the amount of \$1,000.00 each. *Due April 1.*

Agriculture/Ag Related Pathways: The Agribusiness Committee Ag Scholarship. The SVACC Agribusiness Scholarships are available for any student attending high school in the Whiteside Area Career Center Service Area and pursuing a career pathway in the field of agriculture. *Due March 1.*

The Agri-Business Committee will award several scholarships in the following categories:

- A minimum of \$1,500.00 in scholarships to students attending an accredited 4-year college or university. This application is for a one-year scholarship.
- A minimum of \$750.00 in scholarships to students attending Sauk Valley Community College. This application is for a one-year scholarship.
- A minimum of \$750.00 in scholarship to students attended an accredited community college or 2-year college. This application is for a one-year scholarship.

Manufacturing Pathway: The SVACC Manufacturing Scholarship. This scholarship is open to students who are current seniors in a Whiteside Area Career Center high school, a current student at Sauk Valley Community College or Morrison Institute of Technology, or a current resident of the Sauk Valley area who will be attending SVCC or MIT and pursuing a career in a manufacturing related field. This application is for a one-year, \$500.00 scholarship. Several scholarships will be awarded in the amount of \$500.00 each. *Due April 1.*

Hispanic Business Leaders Scholarship. This application is for a one-year, \$1000.00 scholarship. Applicants for this scholarship must reside in the Sauk Valley Area. Applicants must be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as full-time undergraduate students, in an accredited four- year or two-year institution in the U.S. or U.S. territories. At least one parent must be of Hispanic ancestry. *Due April 1.*

For more information, please visit saukvalleyareachamber.com/scholarships or call 815-625-2400.

Governmental Affairs

Written by: Clark Kaericher, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs, Illinois Chamber



As you may know, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has proposed a [new regulation](#) to determine whether someone should be classified as an "independent contractor" or an "employee" under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). This new regulation would replace the regulation issued by the Trump administration that the U.S. Chamber supported. The proposal can be [viewed here](#)

Why it matters: The [new regulation](#) is heavily biased towards concluding that someone should be considered an employee. If an employer determines a worker should be classified as an independent contractor, the employer will not be confident that classification will be correct until the DOL approves it. The only way an employer can be confident in their classification decision is if they classify someone as an employee—the DOL will never question that decision.

On January 18th, the Sauk Valley Community Leadership Program cohort was warmly welcomed to the Walmart Distribution Center by Joanna Thiede and her crew. Class began with small groups of students working through sticky HR situations and sharing their discussion with the class. After an incredible tour of the DC, our cohort participated in an informative panel discussion that included Joanne Thiede, Walmart HR Manager; Sandy Baylor-Schmidt, CGH Medical Center HR Director; and Kaitlyn Nease, both a cohort member and the KSB HR Director. Lunch from Arthur's provided a close to a great morning.



Guest Editorial

Jill Calkins, President/CEO of Tri-County Opportunities Council

The Tri-County Opportunities Council (TCOC), Community Action Agency, was organized and incorporated in 1965 by a group of interested citizens from Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside counties for the purposes of investigating the frequency, location, character, and cause of poverty; and coordinating efforts to prevent, alleviate and eliminate poverty through the cooperation of public agencies, private organizations, businesses, industries, and interested individuals.

The ability to implement unique and diverse solutions has afforded the Agency opportunities to grow, adjust and keep current in addressing the existing needs across communities. Today, TCOC serves the nine Illinois counties of Bureau, Carroll, LaSalle, Lee, Marshall, Ogle, Putnam, Stark, and Whiteside.

Through a wide scope of programming, services are available for utility assistance, rental assistance, housing, home weatherization, homeless prevention, early childhood education, food inadequacies, and a variety of other services, all focused on improving the community by providing resources for people to lead better lives and achieve their full potential. TCOC programs are listed below. For additional and more detailed information, please visit the Agency website at www.tcochelps.org.

Community Services Block Grant: Provides funding to Community Action Agencies, like Tri-County Opportunities Council to reduce poverty, revitalize income-eligible communities and to empower income-eligible families to become self-sufficient.

Foster Grandparent Program: Provides an opportunity for volunteers age 55 and older to stay active by giving between 5 and 40 hours a week to provide emotional and educational support to children in the classroom.

Early Head Start/Head Start Program: Provides comprehensive child and family development services for pregnant women and families with children ages birth to 5. The program's main goals are to work in partnership with parents to promote self-esteem, self-confidence, and school readiness for children.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program: Provides assistance to help households pay for the rising cost of winter energy services.

Weatherization Program: Provides home weatherization services to make homes safe and energy efficient, reducing the amount of fuel it takes to heat the home comfortably.



Written by: *Makenna Arickx, Rock Falls High School*

For ten years now, the West CEO program has had the privilege of being involved in the Sauk Valley Area Chamber Annual Dinner. This year, the theme was "Out Of This World", but our process of preparing for the dinner can be described as: organized chaos. We divided our class into different committees, and had Kaiyana Washington as our project manager. The food committee made a schedule of when to make the desserts. They went to the Kitchen Incubator of Northwest Illinois at five and six o'clock in the morning on the Tuesday and Wednesday before the dinner. About 400 Oreos balls and over 200 sugar cookies were made in those two mornings because of the food committee's commitment. The decorations committee communicated with Holly Davis and the Deer Valley staff about when and where to set up their decorations. They blew up and tied many balloons individually and were very precise with the center pieces on each table. I could go on and on with how beautiful each decoration was, but for the sake of you readers, I'll end this with telling you it was quite impressive. We also had a keynote committee. They put together the skit which related to the theme of the dinner, outer space. Ben Roth mastered the role of being the director and writer. He took time out of his personal life to create a funny and informative 7 minute skit that explained what CEO is. We were all worried about performing, considering we only had three class days to actually practice it and memorize our lines. Safe to say it went well, and we all put aside our nerves and delivered our lines. Now you're all probably thinking, how was this organized chaos? It may seem pretty organized to the outside point of view. Well, keep in mind we made the desserts two days before the event, and the decorations weren't set up until the week of and the day of. The time crunch was not because we were "lazy" or "procrastinating", but we're still in high school. Many of us have part time jobs after school, or sports, or even both. It's amazing how a group of 17 high schoolers with very busy schedules found time no matter what, even if it was a little late, to put together what was needed to make the dinner complete. We all learned how important it is to be committed to a project and work as a team. The process of this year's Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce Annual Dinner was definitely "Out Of This World."

Written by: *Logan Copeland, Erie High School*

Getting ready for individual businesses, what it looks like.

The process of getting ready to start your individual business is different for everybody. Some people are trying out recipes, others know exactly what they want to do and are just waiting for the check to be dropped in their hands in order to start their operations. I personally have an idea but have no idea how to execute it, so I got started a lot sooner than everyone else. My business idea is very technical, in short I want to make a website that is powered by Artificial Intelligence. It sounds very scary but with the advancements that have been made in the field it is becoming a reality that even a highschooler like me with no previous experience can develop something like this. I have spent my preparation period quite differently but yet very similar to everyone else. Learning how to code is kinda like finding a recipe for cookies, learning what API's are is kinda like finding out the nutritional facts of those cookies, and connecting with the experts in the field. The product is vastly different but the process is very similar, we are all starting a business.

Plan to attend the 10th Annual CEO Trade Show on April 26 and 27 at Northland Mall in Sterling.



NEWMAN
Central Catholic



REGISTRATION
BEGINS
FEB 1st

FAMILY ENVIRONMENT ROOTED IN TRADITION AND SPIRIT

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

Deadlines approaching

- Ag (March 1)
- Manufacturing, Business, and Hispanic Business Leaders (April 1)

VISIT SAUKVALLEYAREACHAMBER.COM/SCHOLARSHIPS TO APPLY