

Chamber celebrates Annual Meeting

More than 400 Chamber members gathered for the Chamber's 2025 Annual Meeting. Chamber leaders shared achievements of the past year and previewed the year ahead, the Rick Worrel Community Legacy Award and OP Award were presented, and our keynote speaker shared inspiring insights into becoming a leader.

Presenting Sponsor



Photos by Lisa Wilson, [TRU Imagery](#)



Kim Winslow, [TILDA Strategic Consulting](#), was thanked for serving as 2025 Chair by our 2026 Chair, David Freisner, [Konza Global Wealth Group](#).



Raven Jemison, president of KC Current shared insights about becoming a leader with Courtney Kounkel, owner and founder of [Monarch Build](#).



Sonia Warshawski, 100-year-old Holocaust survivor, received the 2025 OP Award for her many years of public appearances, speaking to countless groups, ranging from middle schools to prisons, urging audiences to never forget and to choose love over hate.



Michael Tracy, [OMNI Human Resource Solutions](#), was recognized as the 2025 recipient of the Richard A. "Rick" Worrel Community Legacy Award presented by Chamber President Tracey Osborne Oltjen and 2025 Chair Kim Winslow.

Chamber Board

Board Officers:

David Freisner, Chair
Konza Global Wealth Group

Matt Sogard, Chair-Elect
Overland Park Regional Medical Center

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Black & Veatch

Will Mann, 2nd Vice Chair
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FNBO

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Board Members:

Phil Bressler, Rhycom Advertising

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Health System

Brian Goldman Ruiz, Taco Naco

Gretchen Ivy, HNTB Corporation

Scott Kautzi, Q39

Pat Kellerman, Shamrock Trading Corporation

Courtney Kounkel, Monarch Build, LLC

Mike Levitan, Lane4 Property Group

Matt Makes, Turner Construction

Ryan Matthews, Kansas City National Security
Campus

Rich Muller, VanTrust Real Estate

Billy Oades, Oades Brothers Tire & Auto

Ben Prell, MTC Holding Corporation

Cindy Shelton, Nifty Promotions

Dana Streck, WellSky Corporation

Josh Wetzig, DLR Group

Lily Zamora, Compass Minerals

Ex-Officio Board:

Jim Holland, Fisher Phillips LLP

Matt Huderski, Shamrock Trading Corporation
[2026 Economic Development Council Chair]

Lori Curtis Luther, City of Overland Park

Dr. Tony Miksa, Johnson County Community
College

Tracey Osborne Oltjen, CCE, Chamber

Dr. Michael Schumacher, Shawnee Mission
School District

Mayor Curt Skoog, City of Overland Park

Warren Wilkinson, Visit Overland Park

Dr. Ben Wolfe, Kansas State University Olathe

Chamber staff

Tracey Osborne Oltjen, CCE, IOM, President &
CEO

Celia Byers, Senior Director of Programming &
Partnerships

Courtney Cavlovic, Workforce Development
Coordinator

David Dyer, Membership Director

Craig Finn, Vice President of Finance &
Administration

Izzy Hagen, Director of Marketing

Stan Lawson, Communications Director

Imani Lemon, Economic Development
Coordinator

Katie Lindgren, Economic Development Director

Hannah Melton, Assistant Director, Member
Services

Libbey Tucker, CECd, Senior Vice President of
Economic Development

Wil Ullmann, Public Policy Coordinator

Kevin Walker, CCE, IOM, Executive Vice President
& Chief Policy Officer

Andrew Weisberg, Director of Talent

David Freisner
2026 Chair of the Board



2026: Looking to the year ahead

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

I have the honor of serving as your Chamber Chairman in 2026, and together with the full Board, Chamber leadership, and staff, we are excited to continue building on our strong foundation.

As a small business owner who chose Overland Park more than 20 years ago, my path mirrors that of many others in the Chamber – people who took a risk and pursued a dream. It's no accident that nearly 10,000 businesses now call Overland Park home. Much of that success stems from the city's strong foundation and its long-standing support for business growth.

One of Overland Park's greatest strengths is the diverse mixture of businesses across the city – from global corporations to franchise operators to local enterprises. All call Overland Park home because of the exceptional environment it offers: a place where business owners can thrive, and where employees and their families benefit from outstanding neighborhoods, excellent education and opportunities for a high standard of living.

To support the city's ongoing growth needs, significant projects will come online in 2026, including:

- The US-69 Express project, which will ease congestion along Kansas' busiest four-lane highway corridor.

- Equally important are infrastructure upgrades that receive less attention but are vital to safety and mobility—traffic signal improvements, curb and drainage upgrades, and new or improved sidewalks across the city.

In 2026, Chamber priorities include:

- Strengthening the Leadership Overland Park program through alumni engagement.
- Enhancing opportunities for Young Professionals and the Student Chamber of Commerce.
- Preparing our business community for the global spotlight of the World Cup.
- Continuing our role as convener and unifier on key community issues.
- Advocating for our quality of life as political fragmentation grows.
 - We need your voice to help tell our story – how we drive the resources that fund both our quality of life and infrastructure:
 - 28% of the city's property taxes are generated by commercial businesses.
 - 130,000 employees work in Overland Park and support tens of thousands of families, fuel local economic activity, and generate sales tax revenues that maintain our essential city services, and:
 - Advancing philanthropy through our time, talent and treasure.
- Accelerating Opportunity NOW.

(continued on the next page)

Upcoming events

Wednesday Wake-up

Wednesday, January 14 – 8:00-9:00 a.m.

[The Golden Scoop](#), 10460 West 103rd Street

Make connections and foster lasting business relationships while enjoying coffee and a light breakfast.

This event is a great opportunity to learn more about a life-changing nonprofit. In addition to serving made-from-scratch ice cream and coffee, The Golden Scoop provides meaningful employment for people with unique abilities.

Free for Chamber members.

[Register](#)



Small Business Council: Virtual 2026 Update

Thursday, January 8 – 8:00-9:00 a.m.

Join us for the Chamber's January Virtual Small Business Update. During this month's virtual event, Katie Lindgren, Director of Economic Development, will share the latest insights on proposed legislation that could affect home-based businesses and new retirement plan options tailored for businesses with five or more employees. We'll also take time to hear directly from our small business community to better understand local needs and set priorities for 2026.

[Register](#)



Small Business Council: Fail Forward – Lessons from Growing Tech Entrepreneurs

Thursday, January 22 – 8:30-10:00 a.m.

[Lifted Logic](#), 5600 West 95th Street

Join fellow business owners, start-up founders and members of the small business community to learn how seasoned innovators turned setbacks into stepping stones and walk away with practical strategies, renewed motivation and a powerful reminder that every failure is a step closer to success.

At this inspiring and candid event, technology entrepreneurs share their toughest challenges, biggest missteps and pivotal lessons that shaped their journeys.

[Register](#)



Business Honors Lunch

Wednesday, February 11 – 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

[Johnson County Community College](#),
12345 College Boulevard

Join us as we celebrate the people and projects shaping Overland Park's nationally ranked success story. Our Annual Business Honors Luncheon brings together civic leaders, innovators and industry partners to recognize the businesses and visionaries who elevate our community and strengthen our economy.

This signature event showcases four prestigious awards:

Nova awards recognize fast-growing companies in Overland Park.

- [Arise Homes](#)
- [Ascentist Healthcare](#)
- [NVisionKC](#)
- Integrated Controls and Engineering

Hall of Honor awards recognize businesses that have made significant contributions to economic development and quality of life in Overland Park.

- [Varnum, Armstrong, Deeter LLC](#)
- Jewish Community Center Campus

Commercial Development awards recognize developments and redevelopments with significant investment in the Overland Park economy.

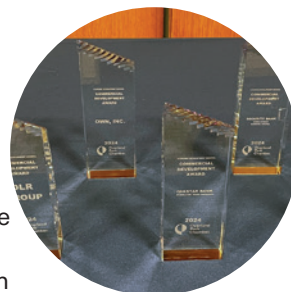
- Kiddie Academy
- Galleria 115
- Stone Manor on 79th

Ben Craig Award recognizes a non-profit or community leader who goes above and beyond to ensure Overland Park's economy is prosperous.

- [Kristy Stallings](#), [City of Overland Park](#)

Registration required by February 3.

[Register](#)



Chairman's message continued . . .

- Launching new resources for small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Driving redevelopment, recognizing that much of the city's commercial infrastructure is entering middle age.

Overland Park's success did not come about by chance. It is the product of the interconnectedness of strong government, a diverse array of businesses, a commitment to public safety, vibrant neighborhoods, an excellent educational system and a skilled and motivated workforce that continues to advance the foundation leaders before us built.

Our commitment is that your Chamber will continue to be your bold, unwavering voice for pro-business policies at the local, state and federal levels, and help shape a thriving Overland Park for future generations.

Wishing you a great 2026 and thank you for your continued support and investment in your Overland Park Chamber.

Welcome to the Chamber!

INTRODUCING OUR NEW MEMBERS

Backyard Box Office

Aaron Foster
P.O. Box 3298
Olathe KS 66063
info@backyardboxoffice.com
www.backyardboxoffice.com
Entertainment, Event Services

Brain Group – new EDC Investor!

Andrew Bain, Co-Principal
300 East 19th Street
Kansas City MO 64111
(816) 281-5900
www.braingroup.co
Commercial Real Estate

Heddi Monro and The Dressing Room at Heddi Monro

Christa Johnson, President
7900 Conser, Suite 20
Overland Park KS 66204
(913) 513-0095
info@heddimonro.com
www.heddimonro.com
Retail, Entertainment

Micro grant to support small business growth

The Overland Park Chamber Economic Development Council is launching a micro-grant program to support small business growth in Overland Park.

Applications will open early in 2026 and remain open until mid- March. Limited funding is available.

Small business owners may apply for up to \$3,000 for projects related to the following:

- Staff development
- Paid internships
- Business improvements (repairs, updates, paint, awnings, signage, professional services)
- Technology upgrades (hardware, software, connectivity, point of sale systems)
- Equipment
- Commercialization
- Proof of concept

Preference will be given to businesses that can demonstrate a financial or in-kind match, best business practices, and align request with reasonable/sustainable company growth.

For more information, [click here](#).

Jani-King of Kansas City

Luis Pastrana, Regional Sales Manager
14821 West 95th Street
Lenexa KS 66215
(913) 385-1440
lpastrana@janikingks.com
www.janiking.com
Janitorial

KDGS Works Inc.

Kim Schmutzler, President
8101 College Boulevard, #100
Overland Park KS 66210
(913) 626-8566
contact@kdgsworks.com
www.kdgsworks.com
Internet Marketing & Advertising, Website Design

7 Brew Coffee

Sydni Shiner, New Stand Operator
8721 West 135th Street
Overland Park KS 66221
(913) 954-7091
sydni@ebsinvestments.com
www.7brew.com
Beverages, Coffee & Tea

The Smile Line Studio

Frank Young, Marketing Manager
11526 Ash Street
Leawood KS 66211
(913) 276-1921
smilelinestudiomarketing@gmail.com
www.thesmilelinestudio.com
Dentists

TILDA Strategic Consulting LLC

Kim Winslow, Owner
KC Metro
tildastrategicconsulting@gmail.com
www.tildastrategies.com
Energy Management & Conservation Consultants, Environmental & Ecological Consultants

Warehouse on Wheels

Jeremy Milne, Account Manager
7300 Kaw Drive
Kansas City KS 66111
(913) 286-2348
jmilne@wowtrailers.com
www.wowtrailers.com
Storage – Household & Commercial

World Cup resources

As we prepare to welcome international visitors, here are some helpful resources:

- **OP's World Cup Hub**
Event planning, permitting, accommodations, transportation and rental licensing. www.opkansas.org/newsroom/ops-world-cup-hub/
 - **Johnson County United**
Events, regional transportation and merchandise
www.johnsoncountyunit-ed.com
 - **ConnectKC26**
Regional transportation plan at
www.kansascityfwc26.com
- 50+ Years**
Central Bank of the Midwest
Suburban Lawn & Garden
Wallace Saunders
WaterOne
- 40-49 Years**
Johnson County Community College
University of Kansas Edwards Campus
- 20-39 Years**
Children's Mercy Hospital Kansas
Erickson Solutions Group
Fastsigns of Overland Park
Gary C. Richter, C.P.A., P.A.
Hepler & Associates
Johnson County Funeral Chapel & Memorial Gardens
Kansas City Business Journal
Kaw Valley Engineering
MarksNelson Advisory, LLC
Merrill Companies
Rosana Square/Mark One Electric
Sandler Training
Sheraton Overland Park Hotel
- 10-19 Years**
American Cancer Society
CBRE Group Inc.
Davidson Architecture & Engineering
Empower
Equity Bank
Hillcrest Transitional Housing of Kansas
Phoenix Home Care & Hospice
Sunflower Bank
- 5-9 Years**
Monarch Build, LLC
Pilgrim Coffee Company
- 1-4 Years**
AGH CPAs & Advisors
Alto Senior Living by Allegro Overland Park
Berry's Golf & Groove
Bikanervala
Charles River Labs
Compass Minerals
Evexia Health & Performance
Homewood Suites
IMA, Inc.
Jewish Federation of Greater Kansas City
Kansas City Vascular Institute, LLC
Kansas Turnpike Authority
Life 88.5
Re-Bath Kansas City
Superior Moving & Storage
Taco Naco
Thyme Out Consulting
Urban Egg a daytime eatery

Thanks for reinvesting!

MEMBER RENEWALS

11 leaders join Chamber Board of Directors

We are pleased to welcome the following leaders to the Chamber Board of Directors in 2026.



Reagan Cussimano
Director of Governmental Affairs
University of Kansas Health System



Brian Goldman Ruiz
Co-Founder & Managing Member
Taco Naco



Matt Huderski
Vice President, Real Estate & Procurement
Shamrock Trading Corporation
2026 EDC Chair
Ex Officio



Mike Levitan
Senior Vice President
Lane4 Property Group



Matt Makes
Vice President, General Manager
Turner Construction



Billy Oades
General Manager / Co-Owner
Oades Brothers Tire & Auto



Dr. Michael Schumacher
Superintendent
Shawnee Mission School District
Ex Officio



Dana Streck
Chief People Officer
WellSky Corporation



Josh Wetzig, PE
Regional Engineering Leader
DLR Group



Warren Wilkinson
President & CEO
Visit Overland Park
Ex Officio



Dr. Ben Wolfe
CEO & Dean
Kansas State University Olathe
Ex Officio



Retiring board members – At our Annual Meeting, Chair Kim Winslow (far left) and Chamber President Tracey Osborne Oljten (far right) thanked retiring Chamber board members including Christian Weld, Christian Weld Consulting; Tom Davies, Security Bank of Kansas City; Jason Wright, JE Dunn Construction; Dr. Alan Verrill, AdventHealth; Chris Wally, Wally & Co.; Josh Beck, MarksNelson Advisory; Cindy Rock; and Dr. Gillian Chapman, Blue Valley School District.
Not pictured: Josh Bitterman, Goldfish Swim School; and Neelima Parasker, SnapIT Solutions.

Spencer Fane strengthens clients and communities

CORPORATE SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

Spencer Fane is a full-service business law firm focused on providing results that move clients and their businesses forward. With direct access to firm leadership and a different approach to client engagement, its attorneys instill confidence and certainty that clients' interests are the priority.

The professionals at Spencer Fane work to unlock and add value in new and inventive ways. This is their passion; it is what drives them. The firm's mission is to build, maintain, and leverage a diverse and inclusive firm that strengthens its clients and communities. The more diverse, equitable, and inclusive the firm is, the better equipped it becomes to rise above challenges and add new, creative, and fresh perspectives to the problems it solves.

In Overland Park, Spencer Fane has a team of more than 45 attorneys and other business professionals who serve as board members, volunteers, and emerging leaders for more than 30 local community and philanthropic organizations. This includes everything from ArtsKC Regional Arts Council and the [Blue Valley School District](#) BEST Committee to [United](#)



[Community Services of Johnson County](#) and the Kansas City Children's Advisory Network.

Spencer Fane's Overland Park team also supports groups as an office.

The firm has multiple charitable grant programs including several in Kansas City. The Spencer Fane Charitable Giving Program in Kansas City provides significant support to select local nonprofit arts organizations through a \$50,000 donation over three years.

Spencer Fane people are all in on connecting with and improving the communities in which they are immersed. Together, they build relationships, drive local development, and realize opportunities to make a positive impact on the communities in which they work and live.

For more information, visit spencerfane.com.



Chamber President Tracey Osborne Oljten helped Douglas Cowan, MD, CEO; David Rudman, MD, Otolaryngologist; and other representatives of [Ascentist Healthcare](#) celebrate a ribbon cutting for a new location at 4550 West 109th Street.

Ascentist Healthcare is a physician-led, multi-specialty healthcare organization committed to delivering personalized, high-quality care across a broad range of services, including ENT, audiology, orthopedics, primary care and pain management.



City Council Member Andrew Payne joined Chamber Vice President Craig Finn to help Dan and Katherine Deenihan and Charisa McGee celebrate a ribbon cutting for [Pause Overland Park](#), 5601 West 135th Street in Prairiefire. Pause is a modern wellness brand offering science-backed recovery services like infrared saunas, cryotherapy, float tanks, LED therapy, IV drips and compression therapy to combat stress, improve sleep and boost physical/mental health.



City Council Member Andrew Payne joined Chamber Vice President Craig Finn to help Caitlin Chidsey, Owner Dentist; and her team celebrate a ribbon cutting for [My Kid's Dentist & Orthodontics](#), 13370 Metcalf Avenue.

After ten years in business, Dr. Chidsey moved the practice to Overland Park to better serve its pediatric patients and to join a thriving, welcoming community.

34 selected for 2026 LOP class

The Chamber Foundation has selected 34 business professionals to participate in its 2026 Leadership Overland Park (LOP) program.

During ten full-day sessions beginning this month, participants meet local leaders and study aspects of the community including government, history, education, politics and current issues impacting the local community, region and state. Class members graduate in June.

Our 2026 Leadership Overland Park class:

- Spencer Adam, **Superior Bowen Asphalt Company**
- Michelle Anderson, **OMNI Human Resource Solutions**
- Kristin Babcock, **Shawnee Mission School District**
- Adam Barnard, **VanTrust Real Estate, LLC**
- Nathan Bartocci, **Zurich North America Commercial**
- Angie Biles, **BRR Architecture**
- Trent Boultinghouse, **Gap Inc.**
- Leslie Breon, **Empower**
- Jared Burton, **Evergy**
- Craig Cogan, **HNTB Corporation**
- Beth DeCuir, **UMB Bank n.a.**
- Lindsey Deters, **AdventHealth South Overland Park**
- Cody Dusthimer, **Affinis Corp**
- Sean Easterly, **BCWM**
- Megan Foreman, **Johnson County Government**
- Brady Franklin, **Endeavor Private Wealth**
- Steve Heinauer, **Blue Valley Unified School District 229**
- Meghann Hoffman, **Black & Veatch**
- Rob Holland, **JE Dunn Construction Company**
- Rachel Hoyer, **Johnson County Community College**
- Rosey Jones, **Maxus Properties**
- Kyle Livengood, **Overland Park Police Department**
- Sonya McLelland, **The Arts and Recreation Foundation of Overland Park**
- Jake Menard, **DLR Group**
- Angie Mutti, **Downtown Overland Park Partnership, Inc.**
- Kristin Phelps, **CESO, Inc.**
- J. Kevan Prinds, Jr., **HDR Engineering, Inc.**
- Ashley Reece, **Johnson County District Attorney's Office**
- Tony Rome, **City of Overland Park**
- Ivan Sanchez, **Central Bank of the Midwest**
- Suzanne Schmidt, **Capitol Federal Savings Bank**
- David Schneider, **Overland Park Regional Medical Center**
- Zach Sheffield, **McCownGordon Construction**
- Adam Wuerfele, **SSC CPAs + Advisors**

Driving Economic Success

Building Permits – November 2025

	New Commercial	Institutional, Schools, etc.	Other Commercial	Total
	4	-	33	37
Square Feet	17,000	-	9,000	26,000
Value	\$3,200,000	-	\$11,500,000	\$14,700,000

– City of Overland Park

Unemployment

	Aug. 2025	July 2025	Aug. 2024
Overland Park	4.1%	3.9%	3.7%
Johnson County	4.0%	3.9%	3.7%
KC Metro MSA	4.3%	4.2%	4.0%
State of Kansas	3.8%	3.8%	3.8%

(These percentages are not seasonally adjusted)
– Kansas Labor Information Center (KLIC)
– U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Chamber Diplomats Volunteer Sub-Committee served a meal to patients and caregivers at the [American Cancer Society's](#) Hope Lodge.



Overland Park Young Professionals got a behind-the-scenes look at the public works projects that are vital to Overland Park's growth at a recent **CEO Unplugged Series** program. Moderated by Morgan Reidmiller, [Affinis Corp](#); the program featured Wayne Gudenkauf, [Affinis Corp](#); and Kevin Honomichl and Randall Gorton, P. E., PTOE, both with [BHC](#).

Thank you to our **Series Sponsor: FNBO**.

This newsletter is distributed by the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce,
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Kansas City

Security Benefit –
new 2026 Sponsor!

Spencer Fane LLP

The University of Kansas
Edwards Campus

To add your name to this list,
contact Tracey Osborne Oltjen
at (913) 491-3600 or
tosborne@opchamber.org.

Recent Events

MEMBERS CONNECTING WITH MEMBERS



Members enjoyed networking at last month's **Wednesday Wake-up** hosted by [Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites Overland Park-West](#).

Thank you to our Wednesday Wake-up 2025 Series Sponsor: [Farmers Insurance Federal Credit Union!](#)



Economic Development Council Investors and Small Business Council members got to try Culinary Virtue's new, refreshed food concepts at [Strang Hall](#) in [Downtown Overland Park](#) with fellow business leaders at a social mixer hosted by the Chamber Economic Development Council.

The Chamber partnered with the City of Overland Park to host an informational breakfast for the Johnson County Delegation before the 2026 Kansas Legislative Session begins.

