

September 2023

www.winonachamber.com | (507) 452-2272 | 902 E. Second St., Suite 120, Winona, MN



**Revitalizing
Downtown Winona**

Christie Ransom, President & CEO
Winona Area Chamber of Commerce

Many of you have seen a lot of things happening in the downtown area in Winona. New construction, renovations, windows/doors/awnings, revitalization projects, and more! A while back, our Winona Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation was the recipient of a Main Street Revitalization Grant. We worked with the City of Winona and Port Authority to make this happen and to accept applications for this program. These were leveraged grants, which required private investment from each recipient.

As a result, we were able to assist in 25 projects, many of which are in the works and a couple of which have been completed. Money from the grant will create over 40

housing units, several new businesses, and a large number of building revitalization projects. The grant was the catalyst that pushed some of our business owners and new businesses to move forward with projects that they had only been thinking about prior. This development of our economy is so beneficial to everyone in our community now and to those who will move here in the future.

We are working hard to attract talent to our area and a vibrant business community and downtown district are key aspects of what draws people to a location. We are proud to be a part of this and know that the things that are happening are all so critically important.

When you next see a project happening, or a new business open, or even visit one that has been here for a long time, make sure to say thank you to the person who invests their time, money, and talents to ensure that we have places to eat, stay, shop, and experience here in Winona. We are so very blessed.

ABOUT THE CHAMBER

- OUR MISSION -

To Serve Businesses How and When They Need Us

- OUR VISION -

Be the Foremost Resource and Advocate for Businesses in the Winona Area

Officers:

Katrice Sisson – Chair
Stan Breitlow – Chair Elect
Andrew Puetz – Past Chair
Amber Hamernik – Treasurer
Andrea Northam - At Large

Retiring 2023:

Andrea Northam
Dave Pederson
Kelly Pronschinske
Andy Puetz
Mike Dieter

Retiring 2024:

Dr. Marsha Danielson
Janneke Sobek
Katrice Sisson
Jared Literski
Kendra Maggert

Retiring 2025:

Stan Breitlow
Amber Hamernik
Jason Gamoke
Kevin Ritz
Mandy Hansel

Staff:

Christie Ransom – President & CEO
Kay Mathews – Vice President of Finance and Operations
Emma Ebbinger – Director of Workforce and Business Development
Kateri Petry – Director of Marketing and Communications
Anna Sibenaller – Director of Main Street Programs

NETWORK NITE
SEPTEMBER 14 | 5-7PM

NETWORK NITE IS OPEN TO ALL CHAMBER MEMBERS & THEIR EMPLOYEES

HOSTED BY

Winona Health

855 MANKATO AVE



**Main Street Corner
September 2023**

Anna Sibenaller, Director of
Main Street Programs

We were thrilled to see everyone come out for Big Muddy Brew n' Que! It is so heartening to see folks from all different pockets of the community come together to have a good time and support the work of the Main Street Program and the Chamber of Commerce. We truly cannot thank our event sponsors and volunteers enough for their contributions – without them, we wouldn't be able to make awesome events like this happen.

Even though the kids are back to school and the weather is starting to (slowly) cool down, there's still plenty of things coming up to get excited about! Specifically, the last event in our Winona in the Street series, **Salsa in the Street the evening of Friday, September 22!** Put on your dancing shoes and come on downtown to spin to the sounds of Salsa del Soul. Thank you to everyone who came to the previous Winona in the Street events throughout the

summer, and don't forget to **bring your Street Stamp cards on the 22nd!** Turn them in that night, or to the Chamber by the 28th to be entered for the drawing.

And we would be remiss to let 2023 go by without celebrating the **Winona Main Street Program's 10 Year Anniversary!** We hope you'll join us at **Peter's Biergarten on Wednesday, October 4 from 4-6 p.m.** to celebrate the successes of the Program over the last 10 years and the resurging energy in downtown Winona.

For all things downtown Winona, visit winonamainstreet.com and follow us on Facebook and Instagram!



RIBBON CUTTINGS



The Chamber Ambassadors had a Ribbon Cutting for the Habitat for Humanity ReStore 20-year Celebration! Shopping at the ReStore supports safe, decent, affordable housing in this community. Thank you, Habitat, for all you do for our community.

To learn more about Habitat for Humanity serving Winona County visit <https://habitatwinona.org/> or stop in at 900 W 3rd Street, Winona. ReStore hours: Wednesday-Friday 10am-5pm, Saturdays 10am-4pm.



The Chamber Ambassadors had the honor of hosting a ribbon cutting for the opening of St. Luke Hall – the new K-6 elementary school on Cotter Campus. We are excited for the staff and students to begin this school year in the new space. Congratulations to Cotter Schools!

To learn more about Cotter Schools, visit <https://www.cotterschools.org/>

**CHAMBER
CHAMPIONS**

- VISIONARY -



- PREMIER -



- EXECUTIVE -



Winona Health

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BIZ BITES



WNB Financial is pleased to announce **Jake Sandstrom** as the newest member of **WNB Financial Advisors**. In his new role, Sandstrom will assist current advisors and the clients they serve. “We’re very excited to add Jake to our team,” said Andrew Kieffer, Vice President and Investment Services Manager. “With his addition, our team is able to expand financial planning services to the Holmen market and deepen relationships with those wanting to accumulate wealth and plan for retirement.” “WNB Financial Advisors is a great place to begin my career as an advisor,” Sandstrom said. “My coworkers Andrew Kieffer and Chris Forcier have a wealth of knowledge, and I’m excited to continue learning and growing.”

Sandstrom is a financial advisor with Series 7, Series 66, Life, Health, and Disability licenses. He earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting and finance from Saint Mary’s University of Minnesota. In 2022, he began his banking career as a Universal Banker at WNB Financial in Altoona, Wis. An Altoona native, Sandstrom enjoys skiing, golfing, and watching sports. He’s also a member of the La Crosse Area Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals.



Merchants Financial Group, Inc. (MFGI) announced year-to-date net income through the second quarter of **\$13.66 million** according to MFGI President & CEO Gregory M. Evans. “Serving our communities as a safe, strong financial institution is our privilege and we are grateful for the opportunity to partner with families and businesses every day,” Evans said. “We’re proud to be part of the stable, steady sector of community banks that contribute to the economic vitality of communities across our country.”

Net income for MFGI is \$956,459 ahead of plan and just \$149,841 behind mid-year earnings of 2022. Strong credit quality and Merchants’ conservative approach to balance sheet management continue to drive results. In June, the Company reversed \$1.0 million from the Allowance for Credit Loss (ACL) provision because of the overall performance strength of its consolidated loan portfolio. Total net loans are currently \$2.0 billion, a 20.1% increase year-over-year and growth of 3.4% compared to the end of the first quarter. Evans said Merchants’ deposit franchise remains strong with total deposits of \$2.1 billion and that the Bank continues to maintain a healthy loan-to-deposit ratio.

Merchants Financial Group, Inc. is a publicly traded Company. Ownership is made up of its more than 450 employees and mostly individuals and families from southeastern Minnesota and west-central Wisconsin.

Merchants Bank is a full-service community bank with 23 bank locations in southeastern Minnesota and west-central Wisconsin and a leasing division, Merchants Bank Equipment Finance, in Edina. Headquartered in Winona, MN, MFGI has more than \$2.5 billion in assets. Merchants was founded in 1875. Member FDIC.



Spanish interpreter **Nicholas (Nick) Moon** has joined **Winona Health** to enhance accessibility to healthcare services for Spanish-speaking people of all ages.

“We’ve always provided interpreter services for our families whose primary language isn’t English. Adding this position expands our capabilities to serve our Spanish-speaking families,” said Amanda Ciszak, director of Primary Care Services at Winona Health.

“Many people call this area home, but, partially because of language barriers, not all of them have the same access to services like healthcare,” said Moon. “I’m looking forward to helping Winona Health bridge that gap for their patients.”

Moon noted that he was excited when he learned of this new opportunity to use his Spanish-speaking skills. “I’ve heard good things about Winona Health from friends and family members who work here, and I’ve also been happy with the healthcare I’ve received here – so I’m confident I’m joining a great organization.”

Moon has a bachelor’s degree in Spanish from Winona State University. Prior to college, he graduated from Central Cities Health Institute, a rigorous charter school focused on healthcare, where he developed a base knowledge of medical practices and professions. He also studied abroad through Rotary International and spent about 10 months in Salvador, Brazil. His interest in the Spanish language began during a junior high trip to Mexico with his Spanish class.

In his free time, Moon is involved in the Rotary Club of Winona and has helped with Feed My Starving Children and the Ride the Ridges event to support Rotary projects.

He enjoys being outdoors, fishing and canoeing. He also plays Magic the Gathering, which he describes as a turn-based tabletop card game that requires a lot of creativity. He and his wife, Amber, are expecting their first child later this summer.

Those who would like a Spanish interpreter can request one when they schedule their appointment, or they can contact Nick Moon at 507-457-7740.



Certified Physician Assistant (PA-C) **Holly Engler**, who has been caring for patients at Winona Health’s Rushford Clinic since 2021, has joined the caregivers in the General Surgery department at Winona Health, 855 Mankato Avenue in Winona.

“I’m going to miss my patients at Rushford Clinic, but I know they are in good hands with the caregivers there,” said Engler. “I’ve always had an interest in surgery, and I’m so glad I can pursue that interest while also staying with Winona Health. I’m excited to be part of the surgical care team, whether it’s caring for patients while assisting during a procedure in the office, in the OR, or providing follow-up care in the clinic.”

Engler earned her Masters of Physician Assistant Studies with a Path of Distinction in Rural Medicine at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In addition, she received a Certificate from the Mayo School of Health Sciences in Rochester, Minnesota. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Clinical Laboratory Science from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. Engler is certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). In her free time, Engler enjoys kayaking, hiking, lifting weights and practicing yoga. To learn more about Holly Engler or other healthcare providers and services at Winona Health visit winonahealth.org and click Find a Provider.

NEW MEMBERS



Alayah Mae Photography is a wedding and lifestyle photographer based in Winona, Minnesota. Her approach to photography is a mixture of lifestyle, editorial, and journalism to capture your story in a timeless style. But photography for her is about way more than just taking pictures. It’s about forming genuine connections and documenting your sweet moments of connection and raw beauty.

To learn more about Alayah Mae Photography, visit her website at www.alayahmaephoto.com



WeCare is a dedicated social service organization, specializing in providing comprehensive support to individuals aged 18 and above. The holistic approach ensures that every facet of their clients’ needs are addressed, enabling them to lead fulfilling and joyful lives, specializing in Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services (ARMHS), Housing Stabilization Services, and Personal Care Assistant (PCA) Services. WeCare is committed to making a difference in the lives of those they serve by providing comprehensive, personalized, and compassionate care to empower individuals and help them thrive in their communities.

To learn more about WeCare, visit www.wecaremn.org or call 320.241.9307



Women in Business in Winona, MN is here to inspire women of diverse occupations and to provide opportunities for personal and professional growth through leadership education and networking.

To learn more about Women in Business visit www.wibwinona.org or email wibwinona@gmail.com



Kickass Beef Jerky is a family-owned premium beef jerky and snack company providing unparalleled quality and service. Using family recipes from many generations, their flavors are matched by no other. Kickass products are made in the US and are made using only top-quality ingredients. Kickass products include beef jerky, snack sticks, pickled products, vodka, apparel, and more!

To learn more about Kickass Beef Jerky, visit www.kickassbeefjerky.com



Thank you

The Winona Area Chamber of Commerce and the Nelson family can’t thank you enough for all of your support and hard work that made the 2023 Family Night on the Farm event a huge success. Without you it wouldn’t have been possible!



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Winona County Sheriff’s Office
Winona State University
Winona Steamboat Days Assoc.
WNB Financial

Special thanks to the 2023 Agribusiness Committee and Family Night on the Farm planning team

Kyle Rupprecht - Chair, Brady Boyum, Dave Erickson, Jordan Frederick, Ryan Grobe, Dustin Lano, Jared Literski, Tina Lehnertz, Kay Mathews, Christie Ransom, Anne Schultz, Kaleb Storm, Jim Vrchota, Duane Wirt, Liz Wirt, Michelle Woodard

