

April 2023

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



Volunteer Appreciation Month – Thank you!

Christie Ransom, President & CEO
Winona Area Chamber of Commerce

We are blessed with an amazing staff, but our staff is small and the work that we do is so big! Our success reflects the ever-increasing dedication and enthusiasm our volunteers display on a continual basis. There is no way that we could accomplish the things that we do without an army of people who generously serve our mission and give of their time and talents to make things happen.

Our amazing Board of Directors sets the tone for the Chamber. They are the visionaries who see our organizational potential and encourage our success. Beyond them, we have 9 committees and several events made possible by volunteers. They bring passion. They inspire us. They bring diversity. They are our champions to whom no gratitude is ever enough.

**To the doers, the servant leaders,
the amazing people who selflessly give
their time to help get things done...
THANK YOU! We appreciate you!
The world needs so many more of you!**

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 Sobock
- Katrice Sisson
- Jared Literski
- Kendra Maggart

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



WINONA AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

THANK YOU!

To all of our amazing volunteers, without YOU our organization wouldn't exist.

Board of Directors Executive Committee

- Board Chair** – Katrice Sisson, Winona Health
- Past Chair** – Andy Puetz, Chrysler Winona
- Chair Elect** – Stan Breitlow, Watlow
- Treasurer** – Amber Hamernik, Bremer Bank
- At Large** – Andrea Northam, Winona State University

- Dave Pederson, Dunlap & Seeger
- Dr. Marsha Danielson, MN State College SE
- Janneke Sobock, Winona Family YMCA
- Jared Literski, Winona Heating & Vent
- Jason Gamoke, Morgan's Jewelers
- Kelly Pronschinske, Gundersen Health
- Kendra Maggart, Gundersen Health
- Kevin Ritz, WA Group
- Mandy Hansel, Riverside Integrated Solutions
- Mike Dieter, Express Employment Professionals

Agri- Business Committee

- Chair** – Kyle Rupprecht, Minnwest Bank
- Anne Schultz, Hy-Vee
- Brady Boyum, Peoples State Bank
- Dave Erickson, Northwestern Mutual
- Duane & Liz Wirt, Wirtland Dairy
- Dustin Lano, WA Group
- Glen Groth, Winona County Farm Bureau
- Jim Vrchota, Oakwood Bank
- Jordan Frederick, Merchants Bank
- Kaleb Storm, Minnwest Bank
- Michelle Woodard, F & M Community Bank
- Ryan Grobe, Bremer Bank
- Tina Lehnertz, Lehnertz Family Farm

Business Education Network (B.E.N.) Committee

- Chair** – Randy Skarlupka, Miller Ingenuity
- Ben Adank, Itehra
- Brian Cashman, Perkins Consortium
- Calvin Clemons, MN State College SE
- Corey Hancock, Benchmark Electronics
- Dawn Lubahn, MN State College SE
- Jeff Rogness, Benedictine Living Community
- Joanne Thompson, MN State College SE
- Madeline Hoesley, Home and Community Options
- Meg Krinke, MK Group Consulting
- Shannon Schroetke, Affinity Plus Federal Credit Union

Public Policy Committee

- Chair** – Dave Erickson, Northwestern Mutual
- Andrew Guzzo, Merchants Bank
- Branden Yates, Market & Johnson
- Dave Vaselaar, WNB Financial
- Dave Pederson, Dunlap & Seeger
- Jack Richter, Honorary Lifetime Member
- John Eckerman, RSP Architects
- Linda Seppanen, Garvin Heights Vineyards
- Mike Charron, Hope Lutheran High School
- Ross Lexvold, Xcel Energy
- Dr. Scott Olson, Winona State University
- Steve Christopherson, Merchants Bank
- Tony Piscitiello, Honorary Lifetime Member

Economic Development Committee

- Chair** – Mike Dieter, Express Employment Professionals
- Amber Hamernik, Bremer Bank
- Chris Callahan, WNB Financial
- Conn Walters, WNB Financial
- Dave Pierret, Merchants Bank
- Janneke Sobock, Winona Family YMCA
- Jen Olson, MN State College SE
- Julie Kiehne, Winona State University
- Rick Jaacks, Merchants Bank

Ambassadors Committee

- Chair** – Jordan Frederick, Merchants Bank
- Al Mulyck, Honorary Lifetime Member
- Angela Bunke, Honorary Lifetime Member
- Autumn Herber, Career Force
- Bev Keiper, Honorary Lifetime Member
- Bob Bambenek, Winona County Recorder
- Conn Walters, WNB Financial
- Danielle Homola, WA Group
- Dave Jensen, Farmers Insurance
- George Cipov, Honorary Lifetime Member
- Jan Brosnahan, Winona Health
- Jim Vrchota, Oakwood Bank
- Jose Pelaez, Pelaez Creative
- Julie Kiehne, Winona State University
- Julie Kosidowski, Engrav's Decorating
- Kaleb Storm, Minnwest Bank
- Katrice Sisson, Winona Health
- Ken Bittner, Honorary Lifetime Member
- Latonia Schmitt, WNB Financial
- Mary Ellen Erlandson, Family & Children's Center
- Pam Simon, Leighton Broadcasting Winona
- Patrick Smock, WNB Financial
- Paula Beyer, Gerard's Small Engine Service, Inc.
- Sharon Davy-Gamer, Horihan Insurance

Main Street Program Committees

- Steering Committee**
- Anita Cisewski, Altra Federal Credit Union
- Christie Ransom, Winona Area Chamber of Commerce
- Dan Rivers, Rivers Hotel Group
- Dustin Sanborn, Bay State Milling Co.
- Nick Larson, City of Winona Port Authority

Main Street Economic Vitality

- Dustin Sanborn, Bay State Milling Co.
- Luke Sims, City of Winona
- Marisa Capezzuto, Colliers International
- Steve Kovala, Merchants Bank

Main Street Design Committee

- Carlos Espinosa, City of Winona
- Dave Dicke, HBC Inc.
- Lew Overhaug, Winona County
- Michael Todd, WNB Financial
- Pam Eyden, City Council

Main Street Promotion Committee

- Ashley Harrison, Merchants Bank
- Debi Wildenburg, Baker Shoes
- Heather Peterson, Melangé Resale & Boutique
- Jose Pelaez, Pelaez Creative

CHAMBER CHAMPIONS

- VISIONARY -



- PREMIER -



- EXECUTIVE -



Winona Health



Workforce Shortage

Emma Ebbinger, Director of Workforce and Business Development

With the ongoing issue of a workforce shortage, learning how to attract, engage and retain high-performance employees in a hot talent market is essential. In today's market, attracting the best talent isn't easy, as you and all other companies are competing for the same candidates. Every company has the same goal of attracting the best talent and keeping that talent engaged long-term, but making the best monetary offer isn't the most strategic way to do it.

Workplace culture encompasses the values, beliefs and attitudes that guide an organization. It sets expectations for how employees operate and interact with one another as they perform day-to-day responsibilities and contribute to the company's overall mission. Creating a culture that is built around the company values will not only attract the talent you are looking for, but will also retain that talent, enhance performance metrics, and create an environment where employees feel valued and appreciated. Getting involved and volunteering creates a sense of belonging and pride in your community. When people feel a connection to their environment, they take care of it and invest in it. Getting involved strengthens the fabric of our community and makes Winona a place that people want to live, work and play. They stay and they thrive.

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BIZ BITES



Lucas Stangl has been promoted to Treasury Management Consultant at **Merchants Bank**, according to Nick Benz, Treasury Management Consultant Lead.

"Lucas has been a dedicated member of the Treasury Management support team for several years now," said Benz. "His familiarity with current customers and understanding of their digital banking and security needs make him a perfect fit for this new role."

In banking since June 2011, Stangl started as a Service Manager at Wells Fargo in Winona. He became a member of the Merchants Bank family in April 2013 as a Lead Electronic Banking Specialist and moved to the Treasury Management area in July 2019, assisting business customers with technical support including system access, administration and day-to-day questions. Now, as a Treasury Management Consultant, Stangl will help businesses find the right Treasury Management tools for efficiency, security and more. While officed in Winona, Stangl will also serve businesses in the Lanesboro, Rushford, Red Wing, St. Charles areas.

"I am truly honored to have this opportunity," said Stangl, "The most rewarding part of this position is the relationships I build with my customers. I look forward to providing dedicated service as I help them meet all their treasury needs." Stangl currently lives in Winona with his family. He is an active volunteer for the Boy Scouts of America and MidWest Music Fest and also currently coaches the Winona Youth Mountain Biking Team. In his free time, he enjoys spending time with his family, whether hiking, biking, swimming, or golfing. He also is a member of the band The Sugarloafers.



Certified Physician Assistant **Lynn Spindler-Ebensperger** has joined **Winona Health** and now sees patients of all ages in Urgent Care on the first floor of the clinic at 855 Mankato Avenue in Winona.

"I care for each person as an individual with unique characteristics, and I believe in the importance of listening to fully understand their concerns. My goal is to empower them to be involved in their medical care and make educated decisions about their treatment," said Spindler-Ebensperger. "I appreciate a collaborative, team approach, clearly explaining options and sharing knowledge for an optimal outcome."

Spindler-Ebensperger earned her bachelor's degree in the Physician Assistant program at Touro College of Health Sciences in Manhattan, New York, and her master's in Physician Assistant Studies from the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha, Nebraska. She is certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). She also noted "It is an honor and privilege to serve in the United States Army Reserves, and I am passionate about caring for Veterans."



Certified Physician Assistant **Zachary Cigich** (pronounced Sig-ich) has joined **Winona Health** and will be part of a team caring for people in the hospital.

"I thought that pursuing a career in healthcare was a good way to contribute to the common good. During a job shadowing opportunity, I realized that providing direct patient care interested me the most," said Cigich. "My goal is to listen, answer questions and explain things in a way that helps each person understand how to improve or protect their health."

Cigich earned his bachelor's degree in Microbiology from the University of Wisconsin -La Crosse and his Master of Physician Assistant Studies from St. Catherine University in St. Paul, Minnesota. He is certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). In his free time, he enjoys hiking, rock climbing, spending time with friends, and he recently developed an interest in painting.



Horihan Insurance Agency is celebrating 15 Years in Winona! Our Winona office is staffed with – **Sharon Davy-Gamer**, CISR who came on board with us in 2014 with 30+ years of experience. **Irene Sing**, who came aboard with us in 2017 with over 11 years of experience. **Emily Smith**, CSA, who came aboard with us in 2017 with over 12 years of experience in Health/Medicare. That's a combined 53+ years of experience in our office! We have multiple locations in Southeast MN with our Main Office in Rushford MN since 1988. Being an independent agency, we work with multiple companies to find the best fit for our clients' needs.

Stop in and help us celebrate at 123 County Rd 32, Minnesota City MN.



Christopher Callahan, MD, has joined the **Winona Health** medical staff and cares for people in the Emergency Department.

As an Emergency Medicine physician, Dr. Callahan said, "So many things happen that are common to us, but are not common to the person it's happening to. I try to be the best part of someone's worst day."

A life-long Minnesotan who grew up in the Albert Lea area, Dr. Callahan earned his Medical Degree at the University of Minnesota Medical School and completed his residency in Emergency Medicine at the Mayo Graduate School of Medicine. He earned his bachelor of science in Physiology at Minnesota State University-Mankato.



In celebration of its heritage, **Saint Mary's University** presented awards to one faculty member, two staff members, and two outstanding seniors at its annual Founders' Day celebration Tuesday, March 14, on the Winona Campus.

Andy Robertson, executive director of GeoSpatial Services, received the Distinguished Lasallian Educator Award. Presented each year, the award recognizes a member of the faculty, staff, or administration who exemplifies the ideals of Saint John Baptist de La Salle, expressed in the Twelve Virtues of a Good Teacher.

Sarah Haugen, interim director of the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT), received the Brother Louis DeThomasis, FSC Award. Presented every two years, the award recognizes a full-time SGPP staff or faculty member who demonstrates excellence, innovation, and ethics in their work and build community by serving as a model of the Lasallian Catholic spirit.

Michael Ratajczyk, associate professor of Business and program director for the Masters of Business Intelligence and Data Analytics, received the Brother Charles H. Severin, FSC Award. Presented every two years, the award recognizes tenured College faculty members who carry forward Brother Charles' legacy of sustained excellence and creativity in teaching.

The university also announced its Outstanding Male and Female Seniors during the Founders' Day celebration. Outstanding Seniors have demonstrated the ideals of scholarship, character, leadership, service to colleagues and the university community, as well as genuine concern for the needs of others.

This year, the honor went to **Catherine Pierpont**, of Holt, Mich., and **William Sepsis**, of Lombard, Ill. The eight other students nominated for Outstanding Senior included **Grace Howard**, **Christa Ingabire**, **Mackenzie Kelly**, **Sophia O'Neil**, **Catherine Pierpont**, **Guy Cardinal**, **Brady Lindauer**, **Brandon Merfeld**, **Joseph Schauf**, and **William Sepsis**.



Main Street Corner

Anna Sibenaller, Director of Main Street Programs

Alright, folks, we're springing into the busy season! And this year we have a little extra going on.

We're very excited that Winona's downtown will be hosting Rethos Minnesota Main Street's Buildings on Main Street conference at the end of April. This conference will bring community engagement leaders from all over the state to learn about the incredible ways our historic buildings have been given new life. The 2023 Minnesota Main Street Awards will be announced at this event, as well. If you're curious about the details, visit www.rethos.org/buildings-on-main-street.

This is also the time where our Main Street program really kicks it into high gear to organize some fun for your families and our local businesses. Here's what we have coming up:

Parade of Trucks – Saturday, May 20; 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Swinging in the Street – Friday, June 9; 5 – 9 p.m.

Winona in the Street – One Friday a month from July through September. Keep an eye out for more details on these events!

Crazy Days – Friday, July 14 – Sunday, July 16

And to wrap up the summer season, as always, we'll have **Big Muddy Brew n' Que** on Labor Day weekend. If you or your organization would like to be involved, don't hesitate to reach out! It takes all of us to make things happen for the community to enjoy.

We're excited for a fun season in downtown Winona; hope to see you out there!



NEW MEMBERS



PossAbilities of Southern Minnesota creates opportunities for children and adults with disabilities to contribute to and connect with the community.

"People with disabilities are thriving, valued and engage as community members. Our community is vibrant, inclusive, and advocates for all of its members. PossAbilities is an exceptional agency of caring leaders and experts providing innovative, person-centered supports and services for people with disabilities."

Day services assist people with disabilities to live a fulfilling life and these programs include the Life Enrichment Program, ArtAbilities Program, STARS Program, and the Employment Program. Home and community based programs enable people with disabilities to live independently and these include homemaker services, respite services, and individualized home supports with training, without training, and family training.

For more information on PossAbilities, visit www.possabilities.org, call 507.281.6116 or email posm@possabilities.org. The hours of operation are Monday-Friday 8AM-4:30PM.



VELOCITY
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Velocity Public Affairs is a full-service public affairs company that combines experienced leadership with market-leading, proprietary technology to help clients strategically address and manage public affairs challenges and opportunities. Effective public affairs today extends beyond relationships with elected officials, reporters or other key stakeholders, by being constantly aware of the environment an organization operates in, monitoring the way other interests are sharing or creating information, and then being able to quickly act or react.

Velocity Public Affairs brings together a strong core team of experts with extensive backgrounds and experiences to help clients deal with challenges and capitalize on opportunities. Velocity Public Affairs also taps a strong team of outside experts that allow the core team to meet the scale, scope, and intensity of any project.

To learn more about Velocity Public Affairs, visit www.velocitypublicaffairs.com or call 651.330.6002.

BENEFIT ADVISORS
INSURANCE AGENCY, LLC

Benefit Advisors Insurance Agency is your complete source for reliable insurance. The team helps you identify your insurance needs to develop the most comprehensive, cost-effective solution and takes pride in "outside the box" and creative thinking in conjunction with offering superior customer service.

Benefit Advisors Insurance Agency offers a full line of products to fit business's needs including health, dental, vision, life, disability, accident and critical illness coverage, deductible gap policies and HSA & HRA design assistance. Finding individual health insurance and benefits can be challenging, but Benefit Advisors provides guidance and education for your individual needs including health, dental, and life insurance.

To learn more about Benefit Advisors Insurance Agency visit www.benefitadvisorsinsuranceagency.com or call 608.779.0615.



Gordie's Towing & Repairs has provided total automotive care since 1970. Gordie's is Winona's only source offering towing and automotive repair with one call convenience when you have an unexpected problem.

Gordie's Towing & Repairs services all makes and models of cars and light trucks; they also provide a convenient courtesy shuttle! Services include oil changes, engine diagnostics, brakes, transmissions/clutches, towing, jump starts, flat tires, lockouts, and much more.

To learn more about Gordie's Towing & Repair, visit www.gordieswinona.com, call 507.452.3559 or stop in at 608 Huff Street. The hours of operation are Monday-Friday 7:30AM-5:30PM.