

**January 2022**

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

## MEET THE 2022 CHAMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Michael Charron**  
Hope Lutheran High School



**Andrea Northam**  
Winona State University



**Dave Pederson**  
Dunlap & Seeger, P.A.



**Kelly Pronschinske**  
Gundersen Health



**Andy Puetz**  
Chrysler Winona



**Dan Rivers**  
Rivers Hotel Group



**Kyle Rupprecht**  
Minnwest Bank



**Mike Dieter**  
Express Employment Professionals



**Randy Skarlupka**  
Miller Ingenuity



**Ellen Smith**  
WNB Financial



**Dr. Marsha Danielson**  
MN State College SE



**Janneke Sobeck**  
Winona Family YMCA



**Katrice Sisson**  
Winona Health



**Jared Literski**  
Winona Heating and Vent, Inc.



**Kendra Maggert**  
Gundersen Health

## 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:

**Andrew Puetz** – Chair  
**Katrice Sisson** – Chair Elect  
**Michael Charron** – Past Chair  
**Randy Skarlupka** – Treasurer  
**Kyle Rupprecht** – At Large

### Retiring 2022:

**Michael Charron**  
**Danny Rivers**  
**Kyle Rupprecht**  
**Randy Skarlupka**  
**Ellen Smith**

### Retiring 2023:

**Andrea Northam**  
**Dave Pederson**  
**Kelly Pronschinske**  
**Andy Puetz**  
**Mike Dieter**

### Retiring 2024:

**Dr. Marsha Danielson**  
**Janneke Sobeck**  
**Katrice Sisson**  
**Jared Literski**  
**Kendra Maggert**

### Staff:

**Christie Ransom** – President & CEO

**Kay Mathews** – Vice President of Finance and Operations

**Amanda Steine** – Membership Development and Programs Manager

**Ben Strand** – Main Street Program Manager



### Leadership Winona

Christie Ransom, President & CEO  
Winona Area Chamber of Commerce

Leadership is many things, but I see it as the art of motivating people to act toward achieving a common goal. Effective leadership includes those that are self-aware, focus on developing others, encourage strategic thinking, are ethical and civic-minded, and so much more. Leaders build excellence and accomplish this by first building

character. This year, 41 individuals, supported by their employers, took a step in building their character by taking part in Leadership Winona. Some of these individuals are already recognized as leaders within their organization, some of them didn't know the skills they had within them, but ALL of them grew together and learned more, not only about themselves, but also about one another. We are so proud to support leadership and celebrate with all these amazing and unique individuals who gave their time and made the commitment to be a part of this program. On November 17th, 41 people graduated from Leadership Winona. Help us in congratulating each of them!

## Winona Area Chamber would like to congratulate the graduates of 2021 Leadership Winona Class!



**Heather Moody** Altra Federal Credit Union  
**Preston Hoffer** Bluff View Estates  
**Cody Chambasian** Bremer Bank of Winona  
**Audrey Rivenburg** Catholic Charities of Southern Minnesota  
**Adam Larson** Catholic Charities of Southern Minnesota  
**Ashley Johnson** DCM Tech, Inc.  
**Jennifer Fruth** DCM Tech, Inc.  
**Julie Palubicki** DCM Tech, Inc.  
**Trissa Bertrand** Express Employment Professionals  
**Jessi Darst** Habitat for Humanity Winona - Serving Winona County  
**Carmen Nuland** Hal Leonard LLC  
**Fred Hoffman** Hal Leonard LLC  
**Mike Storsveen** HBC, Inc.  
**Lance Rusert** HBC, Inc.  
**Katrin Franzwa** HBC, Inc.  
**Amelia Malmberg** HBC, Inc.  
**Jared Witte** HBC, Inc.  
**Allen Neumann** HBC, Inc.  
**Jay Symopoulos** HBC, Inc.  
**Trystan Houzner** Market & Johnson

**Jordan Frederick** Merchants Bank of Winona  
**Tirzah Warren** Merchants Bank of Winona  
**Ashley Harrison** Merchants Bank of Winona  
**Amy Kalamber** Merchants Bank of Winona  
**Brent Fransen** Miller Ingenuity  
**Pamela Zimmerman** Minnesota State College Southeast  
**Karl Hoppe** RTP Company  
**Mark Bennick** RTP Company  
**Greg Cagle** RTP Company  
**Mike Haines** RTP Company  
**Jessica Wenzlaff** Sport & Spine Physical Therapy of Winona  
**Channing Tipton** VCS Technologies  
**Lisa Engfer** Winona Family YMCA  
**Heidi Monson** Winona Health  
**Trisha Gould** Winona Health  
**Lucas Coalwell** Winona ORC Industries, Inc.  
**Jennifer Breitlow** Winona Volunteer Services  
**Kurt Olson** WNB Financial  
**Sidney Brunholz** WNB Financial  
**Conn Walters** WNB Financial  
**Kevin Brackin** WNB Financial

## CHAMBER CHAMPIONS

### - VISIONARY -



### - PREMIER -



### - EXECUTIVE -





**December 2021**

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## BIZ BITES



**Mark Swenson** has joined **Merchants Investment Services** as a Financial Advisor, according to Andrew Guzzo, Winona and Southeast Regional President. "Our clients recognize that investment strategies are an important piece of a well-rounded financial plan, which has allowed us to grow our wealth management services area. We are fortunate to be able to offer the experience and knowledge Mark will bring to our clients as a trusted advisor for their investment strategies," said Guzzo. Swenson focuses on in helping clients with 401(k) rollovers, Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs), college savings plans, investment tax strategies, higher interest cash preservation options, and income strategies during retirement, as well as estate and legacy goals. He was most recently a Financial Advisor with Edward Jones, following a leadership career in the military and corporate world. "Merchants believes in being a financial partner and doing what's best for the client, which aligns with my personal philosophy and approach. I'm looking forward to helping people prepare for retirement and beyond," said Swenson. Swenson holds Series 7 and 66 registrations in addition to his Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa insurance license certifications for Accident & Health, Life, Variable Life & Variable Annuities. He will be officed out of the Merchants Bank location at 102 East Third Street in Winona but will meet with clients at any of our Merchants locations in Caledonia, Spring Grove, Rushford, Lanesboro or St Charles. He is an active volunteer for Houston Independent School District Board and Houston Lions Club International. Swenson, who grew up in the area, resides in Houston with his wife and three children.



**WNB Financial** is pleased to announce that **Jenna Zinter** has joined the Bank as Branch Retail Lead in Altoona, Wis. Zinter is responsible for the management and leadership of the WNB Retail Banking Team in Altoona. She brings six years of banking experience to WNB Financial as a Lead Teller, Personal Banker, and Service Manager. "We're excited to continue our growth in the Chippewa Valley with such a great addition like Jenna leading our Retail Team," said Tom Seaholm, WNB Financial Community President – Chippewa Valley. "Her level of experience and commitment to customer service fits well with our brand of Service, Solutions, and Community." "I'm really excited to be part of such a great company," Zinter said. "WNB Financial has made an impact in every community it calls home, and I'm looking forward to helping build deeper community roots and expand our outreach." Zinter was born and raised in the Eau Claire area. She spends her free time with her husband, Adam, and enjoys reading, traveling, and volunteering in the community.



**Greg Evans**, President & CEO for **Merchants Bank** and **Merchants Financial Group, Inc.** has been appointed to serve as Minnesota's representative on the American Bankers Association's (ABA) Government Relations Council. Council members are appointed by ABA's chair with typically one representative from each state. Each serves a one-year term with the possibility of appointment to one additional term. The Government Relations Council (GRC) is the leadership committee with the exclusive responsibility for recommending annual policy priorities to ABA's Board of Directors. The Council provides ongoing policy guidance to ABA leadership as policy issues arise during the year. Its diverse membership is reflective of the industry at large, representing banks from across the country of varying asset size, charter type, and business structure, making it a critical committee in representing both the specific interests of the industry segments and the broader industry. GRC members also participate in ABA's political engagement programs. Most importantly, Evans and other members of the GRC serve as essential advocates of ABA's policy positions before members of the legislative and executive branches and related agencies, local media and fellow bankers. "I am humbled by the opportunity to serve on this important council," said Evans. "I look forward to participating and helping further the critical role our nation's banks, especially community banks, play in both their communities and the broader economy."



**Ellen Morehouse** has been promoted to Vice President/Credit Administration Manager at **Merchants Bank**, according to Cindy Harrison, Senior Vice President and Director of Credit Administration. "With a decade of experience in credit support, Ellen has been a true leader for our behind-the-scenes team as we help individuals, families and businesses through the loan process," said Harrison. "She has demonstrated exemplary leadership skills and innovation as we continue to improve our processes for the best possible customer experience." Morehouse joined Merchants Bank in 2011 as a Credit Analyst. She was promoted to Credit Support Manager in 2019, overseeing the Credit Support area and ensuring that the backroom processes for the credit administration of consumer and business loans are completed accurately and efficiently. This promotion brings two additional departments, Document Preparation and Credit Analysts, under Morehouse's supervision. "I am excited to continue supporting our consumer and business lending teams here at Merchants," Morehouse said. "We have a great team that works hard every day to help our customers fulfill their hopes and dreams." Morehouse graduated from the Merchants Bank "I Believe Leadership Series" in 2020. The "I Believe Leadership Series" is a home-grown leadership development training program for Merchants Bank employees to strengthen and grow their leadership skills.



### Main Street January Newsletter

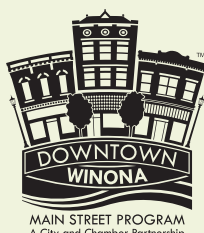
Ben Strand, Program Manager  
Main Street Program

Since we're in the beginning of a new year, I wanted to talk about some of the great things that have happened downtown since the pandemic begin. Downtown Winona has a lot of positive momentum going right now and it's been truly amazing to see all the growth in the last year-plus.

There have been a dozen new businesses that have opened, from new restaurants to retail shops to a youth gymnastics club and fitness center. Unfortunately, three businesses have closed since the pandemic started, but a net gain of 9 new businesses reinforces that our downtown continues to move in a positive direction. Winona's small business community is resilient, looks out for one another, and continues to find ways to adapt with the seemingly everlasting changes. The Main Street

Program was also able to host every one of its events and shopping promotions, both critical components to the vibrancy and growth of our historic downtown. Our Light Up Downtown project has been a huge success and allowed us to bring a brand new 17-foot-tall holiday tree to our downtown that was constructed by a combination of welding students, auto body students, and truck driving students at Minnesota State College Southeast.

I want to thank everyone and all the businesses that contributed in some capacity to what the Main Street Program did this year. Without the abundance of community support we receive each year we wouldn't be able to do what we do, and that means so much to us! We can't wait to see what 2022 has in store for us.



## RIBBON CUTTINGS



**Wagner Oehler, Ltd.** celebrated the opening of their new office located at 65 Johnson Street in Downtown Winona with an Ambassadors Ribbon Cutting. The Chamber Ambassadors were honored to help welcome Wagner Oehler, Ltd. to downtown Winona and to the Winona business community!

Pflughoeft, Pederson & Johnsrud, LLP law firm will be transitioning their practice to Wagner Oehler, Ltd. as the attorneys from Pflughoeft, Pederson & Johnsrud, LLP begin to retire. Pflughoeft, Pederson & Johnsrud, LLP has been a part of the southeastern Minnesota area for more than 80 years and Wagner Oehler, Ltd. intends to fill the void they will leave upon their retirement.

All real estate, estate planning, estate administration, probate, and business law files will be transitioned to Wagner Oehler, Ltd. Wagner Oehler, Ltd. is a Rochester based law firm with additional offices in St. Charles and now in Winona.

Please join us as we congratulate Wagner Oehler, Ltd. on their great success and bid them a BIG welcome as they transition into the downtown Winona!

**Looking to learn more about Wagner Oehler, Ltd.? Give them a call at (507) 288-5567, email them at [info@wagnerlegalmn.com](mailto:info@wagnerlegalmn.com), or check them out online at [wagnerlegalmn.com](http://wagnerlegalmn.com).**

*Pictured with Chamber Ambassadors: From left to right- Phoebe Wagner, Dana Guderian- Office Manager, Shannon Decker-Legal Assistant, Alyssa Jerde-Attorney/Managing Attorney of the Winona, Bill Oehler- Attorney, and Jason Wagner-Attorney, President of the firm.*



**It's not just business as usual in Winona. The potential dividends from an investment in the Winona Area Chamber of Commerce are unlimited, because what develops at the Chamber is every one's business.**

If you are interested in leading the way with us, go to [www.winonachamber.com](http://www.winonachamber.com) and complete the online form.

To set up an appointment to explore the advantages of Chamber membership or to learn more about available resources at the Winona Chamber contact us at (507) 452-2272 or email [info@winonachamber.com](mailto:info@winonachamber.com)