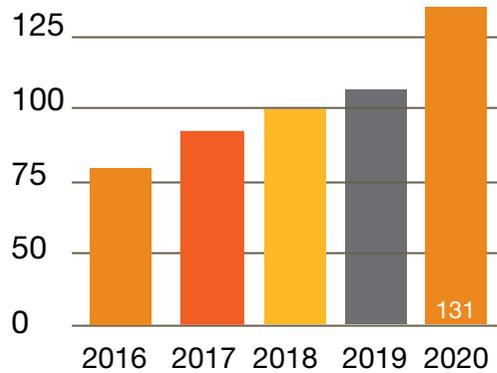




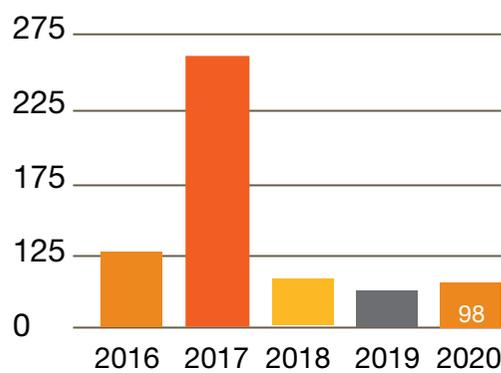
# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

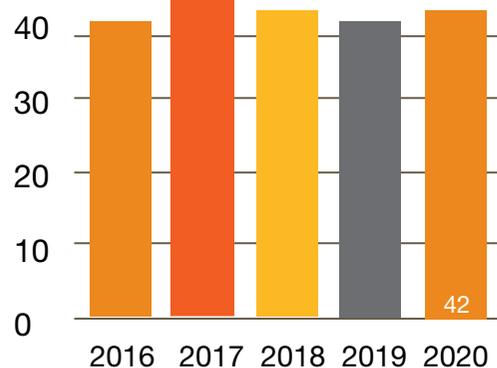
Business Retention Calls



New Projected Jobs

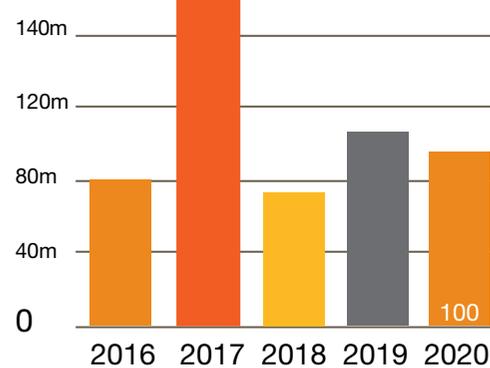


New Prospects



**O'Neal Steel --** Birmingham, Alabama-based O'Neal Steel opened a location in a new 64,000-square-foot facility, with a capital investment of about \$1 million. The company supplies a wide range of carbon and alloy steel, stainless steel, and aluminum products for companies nationwide. The St. Joseph location will supply steel for products made by Altec – which provides products for electrical utilities, telecommunications and tree care – and likely others. The new facility will employ eight people and plans to expand in the future, increasing the employee count to a couple dozen.

Investment



**139th Airlift Wing --** For several years, the Chamber and Community Alliance have worked with the 139th Airlift Wing to get funding for a full motion C-130H Hercules weapons system trainer simulator to be used for pilot training. The simulator itself has already been identified and procured and is undergoing upgrades for the Air Guard's use. The full motion simulator behaves just like a C-130, simulates various scenarios and moves as the pilots use the controls. Previously, pilots had to complete their training at other bases.

**Vertical Enterprises --** Vertical Enterprises broke ground in July on construction of a new ag-tech facility that will be used to cultivate, process, and manufacture medicinal marijuana products. The facility will only house the cultivation and processing operation – retail distribution will take place elsewhere. The project represents a total capital investment of almost \$7.9 million, with over \$4.9 million consisting of state-of-the-art temperature control equipment, special lighting, and other equipment for cultivation purposes. The project is expected to create 50 new jobs over a three-year period, opening by spring of 2021.

**Transport 360 --** Transport 360, which operates the St. Joseph Regional Port, is taking advantage of almost \$1 million in capital investment at the port facility by working with the wind turbine industry to unload blades, towers and components from barges. The blades will be staged at the port and transported to wind farms in northwest and northeast Missouri and eastern Kansas. The project will allow companies to avoid highway travel, and instead send the blades and components from the Gulf of Mexico up the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers to St. Joseph.

**Sealed Air --** A local tax abatement program put together by the St. Joseph Economic Development Partnership helped secure a commitment from Sealed Air for \$23 million in new equipment over a three-year period. The project will create about 12 new jobs.

**Nestle --** Nestle PTC will invest more than \$12 million to update its pilot manufacturing plant at the St. Joseph Nestle Product and Technology Center facility. The pilot plant manufactures small batches of products being developed for research and initial market trials.

**Boehringer Ingelheim --** A project by Boehringer Animal Health USA has increased its investment in a previously announced project by \$9 million to more than \$31 million. The project will upgrade the size of its chiller system to accommodate future increased manufacturing capacity.

**LifeLine Foods --** In September 2020, LifeLine Foods had a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the completion of its \$12 million project, which will add 13 new jobs. LifeLine's Masa flour is used to make tortillas, tamales, empanadas, cornbread and more.

New Company Opens in St. Joseph



Mo River Port Activity Rises



See the following figures for accomplishments just through the initial shut down period.

# *Virtually & Literally* **HERE FOR YOU**

**30**

## **VIRTUAL EVENTS**

We changed directions quickly to give you all the information you need from the safety of your home. Webinars, Town Hall Meetings, Public Affairs Coffees, Lunch & Learns, Business After Hours and more.

**43**

## **DAILY UPDATES**

When members couldn't find relevant COVID-19 facts, the Chamber & Community Alliance packaged the statistics with news, requirements, recommendations & more in a daily e-mail.

**8,400**

## **PPE**

Units of PPE distributed to members at cost. The Chamber made zero dollars from the endeavor to secure masks, hand sanitizer & cleaning supplies and get them to small businesses so they could reopen.

**76**

## **LOAN ASSISTANCE**

Businesses helped personally by two Chamber staff members who became experts on the topics of PPP and EIDL Loans.

**50**

## **BUSINESS FEATURES**

Businesses that took a starring role on the Chamber social media accounts with stories of essential employees, COVID experiences, as well as useful tips and info about the pandemic that relates to businesses.

**1,023**

## **MEMBER CHECK-UPS**

Phone calls or direct, personalized e-mails to members to determine how the Chamber can help best during COVID-19.

Diplomats Help with South Side Flood Relief



Member Profiles on Social Media



Shop Local Campaign Launches



Restaurant Week Debuts (Pre-COVID)



# ZOOM, MASKS & PIVOTING ON A DIME

In 2020, the Chamber and the community came together as never before. It was a year of extreme change with a strong desire for a return to normalcy. The health and wellbeing of our residents were of the utmost importance, but the need to keep our economy and essential businesses up and running was vitally important as well.

When the pandemic struck, the Chamber became the go-to resource for information about the virus in the community, loans, ever-changing requirements and recommendations, as well as a source for personal protective equipment. Chamber staff tried to reach all members to see how the pandemic affected them and found ways to help businesses survive.

The Chamber was able to pivot on a dime and move programs

and meetings online in order to communicate information clearly and continue to get business accomplished. The Chamber advocated for essential businesses and innovated platforms for small businesses.

One of the large initiatives of 2020 was the Champions of Commerce campaign, which informed residents about the importance of shopping local. An ad campaign, educational campaign, website and gift certificate program were launched to bring awareness of why shopping in St. Joseph matters.

In 2020, we were reminded of how important quick, concise communication is and added texting to the Chamber's arsenal of communication tools.

Even in the midst of a pandemic, regular Chamber activi-

ties had to go on, like the Total Resource Campaign. Without the TRC fundraising campaign, the Chamber wouldn't be able to provide services and programs for members. Although the campaign was delayed from its normal spring start, volunteers were still able to break their fundraising goal.

In the fall a Membership Event was held which brought in more than 200 new members. This amazing feat in a pandemic and the success of the fundraising campaign is a reflection of the importance the community saw in the Chamber's role during the crisis.

In economic development, local companies were still able to expand, adding capital investment and employees to their rolls. The Chamber continued its efforts in talent attraction,

working to bring qualified professionals in a variety of fields to the community. Workforce development initiatives like the My Success Event and Manufacturing Day moved online, but still inspired high school students to pursue local careers.

In December, St. Joseph was ranked first in the Best Places to Work in Manufacturing List. This national study by SmartAsset analyzed data on manufacturing jobs, employment growth, income growth and home affordability.

Also in December, the 14th annual Shop St. Joseph program wrapped up, giving \$10,000 away to a lucky shopper, but more importantly kept holiday shopping dollars in St. Joseph, which was more important in 2020 than ever.

**2.3 MILLION**  
**SHOP ST. JOSEPH TICKETS**

**HELD ST. JOSEPH'S**  
**1ST RESTAURANT WEEK**

**No. 1** **MANUFACTURING**  
**COMMUNITY IN U.S.**

**1,300** **CHAMBER**  
**MEMBERS**



## Sarah DeGarmo

Owner and Designer  
Rise by Design

2020 Chamber Chairman of the Board

# A YEAR NONE OF US WILL FORGET

When you recap 2020, it's hard to choose a point at which to begin. It began much like any other year in January, the Chiefs won the Super Bowl in February and then came March. The global pandemic due to COVID-19 struck, causing a health crisis unlike any seen in generations. Businesses closed, some temporarily and some, unfortunately, for good.

The Chamber of Commerce became a hub of information, communication, ideas and education. These are things the Chamber always offers, but during this time of crisis, the staff of 10 shifted into overdrive. From March through May alone, the Chamber:

- offered 30 virtual events that brought crucial advice on loans, regulations and more
- created two web pages, one to communicate COVID-19 news and one to encourage spending with local businesses who needed the most help.
- sent out daily updates with timely COVID-19 statistics and recommendations.
- became a provider of personal protective equipment (PPE), distributing 8,400 units at cost to help businesses reopen after the shut down.

When summer came, the pandemic-related work didn't stop. The Chamber continued to check in on members, publish features on businesses and provide crucial updates on COVID-19. Knowing many retailers and restaurants were struggling and on the brink of going out of business, the Chamber developed the Champions of Commerce campaign.

Champions of Commerce transformed the Couch and Click website to showcase businesses including information about curbside pickup and delivery, but also added information about mask requirements. It also launched a full-fledged marketing campaign with billboards, radio, TV, and digital advertising encouraging residents to spend money locally in order to keep businesses open and residents working. This campaign intensified into the Christmas holiday season, adding a gift certificate program that allowed large employers to give gift certificates to employees to spend with local businesses. The success of the gift certificates showed the will of the community as a whole to persevere. Seeing large employers helping small businesses through consumers was a highlight of the year.

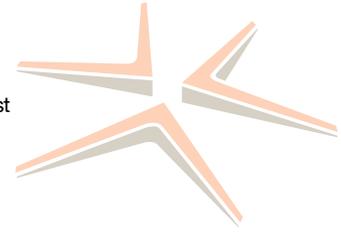
Despite all of the new priorities the pandemic created, the Chamber didn't slow down on its regular duties, including economic development and workforce development. Read more about those endeavors inside this report.

Everything looked different in 2020. As I look back on my time as Chairman of the Board, I could not have predicted in January what was to come. I'm proud of how the Chamber led the business community through the year and how Board members and volunteers gave their all.

## Administration

Since its inception, the St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce has been the catalyst for economic growth and development in Northwest Missouri. The Chamber's mission is "to create an environment that allows business to thrive and the community to prosper."

Chamber membership is an investment that not only can help better your business, but supports initiatives that sustain and improve the quality of life in St. Joseph. Thank you for your support.



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## 2020 Board of Directors

### Chairman of the Board

Sarah DeGarmo, **Rise by Design**

### Chairman-Elect

Bill Severn, **News-Press NOW**

Ashley Albers, **Nor-Am Cold Storage**

Col. Ed Black **139th Airlift Wing, Mo. Air National Guard**

Jody Carlson, **Missouri American Water**

Kelly Crawford, **E.L. Crawford Construction, Inc.**

Colby Edwards, **Altec Industries, Inc.**

Dr. Bernd Eichenmueller, **Boehringer Ingelheim**

Patti Eiman, **First American Title**

Kevin Kelly, **LifeLine Foods, LLC**

Dr. Elizabeth Kennedy, **Missouri Western State University**

Jennifer Kneib-Dixon, **Fairway Independent Mortgage Corporation**

Carrie Koelzer, **Evergy**

Bill McMurray, **City of St. Joseph**

### Secretary/Treasurer

Brett Carolus, **Hillyard Companies**

### President & CEO

R. Patt Lilly, **St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce**

Terri Modlin, **Room 108**

Ronan Molloy, **Innovation Stockyard**

Michael Pulido, **Mosaic Life Care**

Amy Ryan, **Commerce Bank**

Lee Sawyer, **Buchanan County**

Stet Schanze, **Gray Manufacturing Co. Inc.**

Martial Thevenot, **Perka Building Frames by Business Logistics, Inc.**

Don Tolly, **Tolly & Associates Inc.**

Dr. Doug Van Zyl, **St. Joseph School District**

*Immediate Past Chairman*, JL Robertson, **Rupp Funeral Home**

*General Counsel*, Mark Woodbury, **Polsinelli**

*Diplomats Club Representative*, Todd Joe, **John Joe Insurance**