



ST. JOSEPH
Chamber of Commerce

Position Profile
President & Chief Executive Officer
St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce
St. Joseph, Missouri

The Opportunity

The St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce (“the Chamber”) in St. Joseph, Missouri, is seeking a dynamic leader to become its next President & Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”). The new executive will work with an engaged Board of Directors and committed staff to fulfill the Chamber’s mission “to create an environment that allows business to thrive and the community to prosper.” The Chamber serves the 74,000-population St. Joseph and Buchanan County (87,000 population) as well as the broader regional market. The organization serves the 7th largest market in Missouri but is the 3rd largest Chamber by membership in the State with over 1,300 members. The St. Joseph area benefits from a diverse and growing economy that includes manufacturing, food processing, animal health, services, retail, healthcare and higher education.

The CEO will oversee and manage all aspects of the Chamber, with a particular focus on maintaining the Chamber’s engagement with leaders of the organization’s membership, which ranges from Fortune 1000 corporations to professional service firms, from entrepreneurial businesses to the area’s major healthcare institution. This executive will drive initiatives to make Chamber membership more valuable and relevant; will engage in collaborative relationships with a broad public and private constituency; guide efforts to expand the St. Joseph economy through business retention, expansion and active business recruitment in partnership with the City of St. Joseph, Buchanan County and regional organizations along with other area communities and developers; and communicate as the voice of the collective business community, articulating and advocating the Chamber’s position and vision on regional, community, public and political issues.

In addition, the selected candidate will function as the Chamber’s collaborative team leader and creative thinker – especially regarding fundraising, communication and messaging, economic development, strategy and overall program development. The Chamber serves as the convener of the city’s private, educational, nonprofit and public sector to address and collaborate on strategies to move the community and region forward. The Chamber served as a critical resource during the COVID 19 pandemic, providing timely information, access to resources, and creative programming to assist businesses of all sizes. Recognized as the leading business voice in the community and a champion of progress and momentum, this CEO position represents an exciting leadership opportunity to help guide the development of the St. Joseph region and impact the area’s continued growth and positive impact on quality of life for the community.

The St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce

The St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce has supported the area’s business community for almost 160 years and has achieved the prestigious 5-Star Accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The organization serves as the key economic and community development organization in St. Joseph and Buchanan County, while providing additional broad membership support and impact to contiguous counties.

The Chamber’s \$2.2MM budget is generated from members and investors from throughout the St. Joseph region along with revenue from Chamber events and programs. In addition, the Chamber receives public-sector support from the City of St. Joseph and from Buchanan County for economic development attraction, retention and expansion activities. The Chamber has an annual Total Resource Campaign and endeavors to help members grow their businesses by offering a variety of networking, training, and marketing opportunities. Thoughtful stewardship of resources has contributed to a strong financial position with healthy reserves.

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The Chamber's Diplomats Club is an active group of volunteers that promotes membership services and enhances goodwill for the Chamber throughout the community. Members of the Diplomats Club serve as the Chamber's public relations team and are highly visible within the Chamber and the business community. With numerous monthly meetings and seven active subcommittees, the Diplomats Club is open to all Chamber members and serves as an important support to the Chamber CEO.

The Chamber also has an extensive legislative agenda and interaction with local, state and federal elected officials (including a DC Fly In) and sponsors the Community Alliance of St. Joseph. The Alliance is a unique community partnership organization that includes the Chamber, City of St. Joseph, Buchanan County, School District of St. Joseph, St. Joseph CVB, Missouri Western State University, Mosaic Life Care (area's healthcare provider), 139th Airlift Wing of the Missouri National Guard and the United Way of Greater St. Joseph. The Alliance has developed an exciting strategic focus as it shepherds the *Imagine St. Joseph 2040* future plan.

Patt Lilly has served as the Chamber's President & Chief Executive Officer for over 18 years during two different employment stints and has announced his plan to retire at the end of 2021. The Board of Directors has embarked on a national search to recruit a new CEO who will guide the Chamber and continue to lead its significant leadership activities in the St. Joseph region.

More information on the Chamber and affiliates:

- St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce: www.saintjoseph.com
- St. Joseph Economic Development Partnership: www.choosesaintjoseph.com
- Imagine St. Joseph 2040: www.imaginestjoseph2040.com

St. Joseph, Missouri area

Located in Northwest Missouri off Interstate 29 and just 40 miles north of the Kansas City metropolitan area, St. Joseph is a unique community with a historic past that residents and visitors appreciate. The region benefits from a diverse business climate with strong manufacturing, food processing, animal health, services, retail, healthcare and higher education. A 2020 study by *smartasset* named St. Joseph the #1 best metropolitan area to live for those seeking work in manufacturing. Located between the Platte River and the Missouri River, St. Joseph is the third largest exporter in the state, beyond only St. Louis and Kansas City.

Known as "St. Joe" to the locals, residents believe it is the ideal place to call home and are proud of their community brand: "Made with Uncommon Character." For many communities located in Northwest Missouri, St. Joe serves as the regional hub of healthcare and retail with shopping experiences ranging from unique boutiques to favorite national chains. Four distinct weather seasons allow for a variety of leisure and cultural activities year-round with easy access to Kansas City 45 miles to the south and Omaha 125 miles to the north.

History runs deep in St. Joe as it is recognized as the starting point of the Pony Express for early settlers headed across the great plains during westward expansion. St. Joseph's historic downtown boasts many properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Within the city there is a strong sense of community, a bustling arts and entertainment scene, year-round events and festivals, local wineries, and a revitalized downtown. For professional sports enthusiasts, the Kansas City Chiefs hold their pre-season training camp in St. Joe on the campus of Missouri Western State University and major league baseball and soccer are less than an hour's drive. Boasting of a cost of living well below the national average, affordable homes, low unemployment, and ample green space, it is a wonderful place to live, work and raise a family.

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More information about the St. Joseph area can be found:

- St. Joseph Convention & Visitors Bureau: www.stjomo.com
- City of St. Joseph: www.stjoemo.info
- Buchanan County: www.co.buchanan.mo.us

The Position

Location

The President & Chief Executive Officer position is located at the Chamber office building at 3003 Frederick Avenue, St. Joseph, Missouri 64056; telephone 816.232.4461.

Reporting Relationships

The President & Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) of the Chamber reports to the Chair of the 28-member Board of Directors. The CEO is a voting member of both the 8-member Executive Committee, which meets as needed, and the full Board, which meets monthly.

The CEO will lead the 9-member Chamber staff: Senior Vice President-Membership, Vice President-Administration, Vice President-Economic Development, Director-Communications & Marketing, Director-Community Alliance of St. Joseph, Director-Workforce Development, Membership Specialist, Executive Assistant, Programs Assistant.

Other important interactions include executives and employees of Chamber member organizations; county and municipal elected and appointed officials; state and national elected officials; representatives of other public and private sector organizations with related community and economic development missions (this includes the Kansas City Area Development Council and the Missouri Partnership); education officials; and members of the media.

Position Charter

The President & Chief Executive Officer serves as the executive head of the Chamber, responsible for the daily administration, programs and operations of the organization. This executive will work in close cooperation with the Board of Directors, committees, and staff of the Chamber and serve as advisor to the Chair of the Board, the Executive Committee, and the Board of Directors on any matters of established or proposed policies of the Chamber. The CEO will have the responsibility of executing the employment, promotion, and discharge of the staff of the Chamber as well as responsibility to execute the approved annual budget for the organization. The President & CEO shall be accountable to the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors to perform all duties as specified in this Position Profile and otherwise inherent in the responsibilities of the office.

Major Duties and Responsibilities

- **Strategic and Annual Planning:** Develop and draft an annual Action Plan and multi-year Strategic Plan, with the assistance of the Directors, Officers, and staff, and supervise the carrying out of such Plan, providing direction for the short and long-term activities of the chamber and allocation of resources.
- **Fiscal and Administrative Management:** Prepare an annual budget which shall be explanatory and related to the Action Plan, showing expenditures for each activity and the various sources of revenue, including the Total Resource Campaign. Present financial statements to the Executive Committee and Board; ensure that financial records are audited annually. Maintain responsibility for all administrative matters of the organization. Monitor the Chamber’s organizational structure and culture to ensure that the Chamber is effectively geared to function with optimum efficiency.
- **Economic Development:** Provide general oversight and actively participate in various economic development and workforce development programs. Work with community and regional partners on the recruitment of new industry to the region. Maintain and enhance relationships with other regional and statewide marketing partners/economic development leaders, and other key organizations at the community, county and state levels.

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- **Member Relations:** Provide general oversight of membership programs and events and offer support to membership staff as needed. Motivate members to financially support Chamber programs, analyzing and interpreting the needs of members and recommending revisions and enhancements in order to improve service and assistance and to make membership more valuable and relevant.
- **Communication:** Serve as spokesperson of the Chamber in cooperation with the Chair of the Board and coordinate with volunteer leaders and staff specialists for assistance in such duties, as necessary and appropriate. Clearly communicate the organization's position and vision on community, regional, public and political issues. Fairly facilitate open discussion and understanding among affected constituents. Serve in a highly visible role as a speaker to various community organizations to continuously keep Chamber relevant. Position the Chamber as a leader and positive influencer of the future direction of the Greater St. Joseph area and Northwest Missouri region. Maintain active marketing, social media and communication efforts and a strong public relations program.
- **Chamber Staff:** Directly responsible for the overall Chamber programs and services, including all administrative, personnel, operational, and fiscal needs and requirements of the organization. Responsible for the employment, supervision, evaluation, training and leadership of all Chamber staff. Assure that staff members are prepared to successfully implement programs, and pro-actively provide information to the Chamber's constituencies. Foster a daily working environment that values ethics and teamwork. Ensure the highest levels of customer service.
- **Relationship Management:** Maintain harmonious working relationships with volunteers, staff members, appointed and elected government officials, and other organizational officials. Seek to capitalize and maximize the collective experience and expertise of these key players, including:
 - Board of Directors:** Responsible for preparing meeting agendas, carrying out approved plans and programs in accordance with established policies, serving as representative of the Board for all contacts with staff, initiating programs for Board consideration, and advising the Board on all matters under consideration.
 - Government Officials:** Maintain strong communications and relationships with elected and appointed officials and their staffs in St. Joseph, Buchanan County and other municipalities, communities and counties throughout the region. Maintain a high level of ongoing communication with officials at the State of Missouri and Federal levels. Play a key role in advocacy on behalf of the Chamber.
 - Related Organizations:** Maintain and/or initiate effective working relationships with organizations within Northwest Missouri.
 - Community:** Through personal contacts with key regional and community leaders, help shape the future direction and well-being of the St. Joseph community. Take a strategic leadership role in local and regional issues, projects, or community organizations to assure presence and involvement of the Chamber to accomplish its mission.
 - Education:** Continue to foster stronger relationships with representatives of higher education institutions including Missouri Western State University, private and community colleges and area school districts.
 - Media:** Serve as the official spokesperson of the Chamber with print and electronic media outlets.
- **Advocacy:** Directly responsible for implementing an effective governmental advocacy program to pursue outcomes that support the local business community. Monitor issues of strategic importance to business and develop implementation plans for support or opposition as necessary. Work with Board leadership and key public policy staff to develop positions and report information on public policy issues of concern to the Executive Committee, Board, and membership. Develop meaningful relationships and communication with elected officials to provide information and advocacy on behalf of the Chamber's members.
- **Governance:** Serve as the primary Chamber staff liaison to the Executive Committee, Board, and Chamber committees. Work in concert with the Board on key volunteer leader identification and training. Encourage active participation and engagement of Board members and other volunteers.

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- **Development and Fundraising:** Manage a comprehensive marketing process that promotes the Chamber, serves the investors and membership, attracts new members, and supports Chamber initiatives. Serve as the chief fundraiser for the organization directly responsible for formal campaigns such as the Total Resource Campaign and the Partnership for Success Campaign. The latter supports economic development activities and involves 150 local private sector employers raising approximately \$485K annually.
- **Strategic and Annual Planning:** Work with the Executive Committee, Board, and Chamber Staff to develop and annually update the Chamber's operational and strategic plans that provide direction for the long-term activities of the Chamber and for the long-term allocation of resources.
- **Other Duties:** Perform other tasks and duties as may be assigned from time to time by the Board.

Compensation

The President & Chief Executive Officer is expected to earn an attractive compensation package; appropriate benefits and relocation assistance will be provided.

The Candidate

A Bachelor's degree is required; an advanced degree in business, law, public administration or related field is desirable. If currently serving in a similar organization, a graduate of the U.S. Chamber's Institute for Organization Management, Certified Chamber Executive designation or Certified Economic Developer designation is desirable.

Professional Qualifications

The ideal candidate must have a proven track record of success and may come from a variety of backgrounds such as: the top executive of a progressive and comparably sized chamber of commerce, economic development organization, or related significant business association; experience as a "second in command" or other senior-level executive at a larger like-enterprise as noted above; an executive with a strong record of community involvement from a complex private or public-sector entity. Experience serving a regional marketplace along with significant Board interaction and experience leading large numbers of volunteers are all strongly desired.

Preferred Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

- **Executive leadership experience** (strong staff leadership, delegation and human resource development; has led a complex corporate, community or economic development organization).
- **Collaborative relationships** (track record of developing effective and trusting partnerships among all sectors).
- **Staff leadership** (demonstrated background of leading, managing and developing staff).
- **Economic development** (has worked collaboratively with established public-sector delivery systems and private sector resources to effectively promote the business growth of a community).
- **Planning** (proven track record of successfully developing and executing operational and strategic plans).
- **Public policy** (capable of advocating sound public policy and developing effective and even-handed working relationships with elected/appointed officials and their staffs).
- **Fundraising** (demonstrated success in resource development activities including capital campaigns, sponsorships and advertising, special events and other non-dues revenue campaigns).
- **Fiscal management** (budget conscious; demonstrated ability to develop revenue sources and control expenditures so as to preserve financial stability).
- **Community/regional development** (able to identify both local and regional issues and effectively manage interactions with and among regional organizations to achieve common goals).
- **Media/public relations** (ability to effectively articulate goals, objectives and policy positions of the Chamber to the media and the community).
- **Varied industries** (experience within a business environment with diverse industries including manufacturing, healthcare, food processing, animal health, transportation/logistics, retail, services, and higher education).

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- **Volunteer organization experience** (appreciates the value of voluntary organization structure and operating techniques; proven ability to motivate and utilize volunteers).
- **Governance** (significant involvement with Board recruitment and development and governance issues).
- **Private sector background** (leadership experience while working in for-profit industry desirable).

Desired Personal Traits

- **Integrity** (honest; possesses the highest ethical and moral standards).
- **Leadership** (can manage, motivate, challenge and delegate to others; proactive versus reactive).
- **Collaborative/consensus-builder** (sees value in working with others to achieve positive results for the St. Joseph region; willing and able to work with and through others; inclusive versus exclusive).
- **Executive presence/credibility** (polished; self-confident; commands respect of community leaders).
- **Business acumen** (intuitive and applicable understanding of how business works; understanding of what drives profitability and cash flow with a market focused approach).
- **Communication skills** (excellent listener; outstanding written and oral communication skills; experienced with current social media tools and trends).
- **Interpersonal skills** (builds constructive and effective relationships; interacts easily with all levels from CEO to small business owner).
- **Energetic self-starter** (genuinely enthusiastic; possesses a strong work ethic and sense of urgency).
- **Judgement** (ability to make decisions while exhibiting sound and accurate judgement).
- **Politically astute** (can strategically navigate among local, county, state and federal leaders).
- **Persuasive** (able to synthesize various viewpoints and mobilize support for policy objectives).
- **Genuine** (sincere; authentic; trustworthy; transparent; self-aware; walks the talk).
- **Persuasive** (able to synthesize various viewpoints and quietly mobilize support for policy objectives).
- **Teamwork** (speaks of “we” first, not “I”; relishes in sharing credit with others).
- **Resilient** (able to bounce back from perceived defeats or criticism).
- **Executes for results** (proven track record of “getting things done;” holds others accountable).
- **Regional knowledge** (has or able to develop an appreciation for Midwestern US culture and ways of doing business).

Challenges and Opportunity

Key accomplishments and challenges for the new President & CEO in the first year and beyond include:

- Establish his/her presence as the Chamber’s CEO immersing him/herself into the details of the day-to-day operations of the Chamber and becoming knowledgeable about the work of its staff, finances, programs, Board members and committed volunteers.
- Initiate formal and informal introductions and connections with the Chamber’s membership and investors, as well in the community, through varied communications and in-person meetings. Communicate the Chamber’s relevancy and value to existing and prospective members by connecting investment with tangible outcomes.
- By listening and observing, form effective working relationships with key municipal, county, regional, state and national government leaders, entrepreneurial business owners and corporate executives, economic, community and tourism partner organizations, college and other educational officers, cultural arts leaders.
- Work with the Board and staff to evaluate the strategic direction of the Chamber and offer his/her vision for possible short and long-term changes. Continue Chamber’s leadership role in shepherding the Imagine Saint Joseph 2040 plan.
- Demonstrate progress in economic development “wins” evidenced by pipeline development of new business recruitment along with support of existing business retention and expansion activities. Utilize formal and informal partnerships in community and across the region to connect the entire Northwest Missouri region thereby increasing the Chamber’s visibility in rural communities to leverage talent resources.

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- In the area of talent development, work with other community leaders in efforts to improve K-12 public school education as well as develop stronger connections with Missouri Western State University and progress toward moving North Central Missouri College to St. Joseph.

The President & Chief Executive Officer position is an outstanding opportunity for a chamber of commerce, economic development, association, nonprofit or private sector executive to lead and grow a successful Chamber organization in an attractive and competitive region of Missouri with tremendous potential. The CEO will have the benefit of working with a highly committed and influential Board of Directors. This executive must set a pace and create a vision to tackle existing challenges and take advantage of future opportunities.

Many key private and public-sector organizations in St. Joseph have relatively new leadership and they collectively recognize their area is poised for a significant step forward. The person selected for the CEO position at the Chamber will be one of the community's key drivers for that to occur. The St. Joseph region has a track record of supporting important initiatives to move the city forward and the new CEO can count on an experienced and dedicated staff and enthusiastic volunteer leadership with a "get it done" attitude to support him/her in efforts to elevate the regional community to new levels of success. The Chamber CEO is a highly visible leadership position and, as such, the new CEO will have significant influence on the continued growth and development of the area in the years to come. The Chamber's volunteer and staff leaders are not content with status quo and have high expectations for the Chamber's new leader to lead them into "the next chapter" for the Chamber and the St. Joseph regional community.

Contacts

If you are aware of an outstanding executive who meets these requirements and would be interested in evaluating this dynamic opportunity, please email SJCC@Waverly-Partners.com or contact either consultant at WAVERLY PARTNERS, the executive search firm retained by the Chamber Board on this search and the "preferred provider" of executive search services of the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives.

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Executive Search Consultants

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