



**ST. JOSEPH**  
Chamber of Commerce

# 2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

## MEMBERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

### »»» TOTAL RESOURCE CAMPAIGN



Our group of talented volunteers worked hard during our Total Resource Campaign. Thank you for all that you do!

### »»» MEMBER RETENTION



The Chamber has a 92 percent retention rate, which is very good according to ACCE benchmarks. One of our retention programs is our Member Crawls, where we visit members, bring volunteers into their businesses and thank them for their membership.

### »»» NEW MEMBERS

Again, the Chamber added more than 100 members.

### »»» MEMBER SURVEY

Yearly, we conduct a member survey to determine areas of improvement. We received 87 percent in membership satisfaction in 2024.

### »»» MEMBER PORTAL

In 2024, we had 1,082 member portal log ins (as of 11.15.24). This is a big improvement!

### »»» ACCREDITATION

In 2024, Chamber staff re-applied for accreditation with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. We have a 5-star rating and plan on continuing that achievement. We will find out our rating in 2025. This process allows us to benchmark ourselves against other organizations.

### »»» CEREMONIES



By late November, we've conducted 50 ribbon-cutting ceremonies, helping businesses celebrate expansions, openings and anniversaries. Some major ones include Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health, Albaugh, the new air traffic control tower at Rosecrans Memorial Airport, the opening of MBFI and the Hillyard Technical Center projects (more info on another page.)

### »»» EVENTS



There are too many to put in this publication, but staff kept very busy this year bringing informational and networking events to the members and the public to help grow the local business economy. From the Chamber Classic and Lunch and Learns, to the Chairman's Breakfast and Small Business Summit, 2024 was a successful year for Chamber events.

### »»» 52 MEMBERS

We featured 52 Members in 52 Weeks on social media, telling the stories of mostly small businesses, exposing them to a larger audience.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



ST. JOSEPH  
Economic Development Partnership

## Announced Projects

### Nestlé PURINA

Nestle Purina is replacing and upgrading its current 3 oz retorts. This was critical to the sustainability of the factory. The new equipment also will allow for additional capacity.

Total estimated capital investment:  
\$53 million

### Sealed Air

This year a Sealed Air Customer Training Center will be created in the west building of its St. Joseph campus. The center is for customers who use the Sealed Air and Cryovac brand vacuum and other proprietary packaging processes. All customer training now will be done in St. Joseph.

Total estimated capital investment:  
\$1 million

### MBFi

Leaders in Science. Partners in Growth.

MBFi is a manufacturer and distributor of bio-stimulants, inoculants and green chemistry products that increase crop productivity. It's headquartered in South Africa. St. Joseph is the company's first manufacturing U.S. location.

Total estimated capital investment: \$6.5 million

Projected new jobs: 14  
Average annual wage: \$71,000

### **PARKWAY** *Distillery*

Parkway Distillery has opened in St. Joseph. Its investors made a total capital investment of \$1.6 million redeveloping a former garage into a state-of-the-art facility for manufacturing, bottling and distributing alcoholic liquors.

The project created four new jobs and has added a new amenity to downtown St. Joseph.



Interlock Steel Structures and Team Perka will expand its existing facility to increase productivity and enhance quality and innovation. The total capital investment is \$773,000. The project will create approximately four new jobs. This is the second recent expansion of the three-generation Thevenot Family business with the addition of a steel sheeting roll forming line.

## 2024 Announced Project Summary

Company	Type	Investment	Jobs	Avg. Salary
Nestle Purina	Expansion	\$52,900,000		
Sealed Air Corp.	Expansion	\$1,000,000		
MBFi	Attraction	\$6,500,000	14	\$71,000
Parkway Distillery	Attraction	\$1,600,000	4	\$51,111
Interlock Steel/Team Perka	Expansion	\$773,000	4	\$56,667
Elanco Animal Health	Expansion	\$130,000,000	70	\$87,249

### New Jobs

92

### Average Annual Salary

\$66,507

### Total Investment

\$192,773,000





# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

## MANUFACTURING DAY & MY SUCCESS EVENT



October is a busy month for workforce development events with both Manufacturing Day and the My Success Event happening. Between the two, thousands of students from St. Joseph and the surrounding areas learn about potential careers in St. Joseph, and how to attain the education to pursue those career paths.

## MARKETING EFFORTS



Marketing efforts continue in educating potential residents on reasons to live and work in St. Joseph. A variety of digital, print and even billboards are being used to bring people to our talent recruitment website and online job board. The above billboard is in five locations around St. Joseph to advertise the jobs board to our local residents.

## MAJOR EDUCATION SUCCESSSES



The Chamber was excited to be a part of the grand openings of the Houlne Center for Convergent Technology and the simulated manufacturing facility and the renovated health wing at Hillyard Technical Center.

All projects came from years of cooperation and drive by both educators and the business community to offer more career paths for our current and future workforce. The Chamber is proud to be a part of all of the projects.



## COMMUNITY EXCHANGE



The Chamber took around 23 leaders to Chattanooga, TN, in a Community Exchange program. Chattanooga has a lot in common with St. Joseph, with it being a manufacturing town that is out of land to develop, on a river and close to a major city, but far enough away to be a stand-alone community. We were able to gain valuable insights from their leaders. We hope to grow the trip next year. Please consider joining us.

## UNCOMMON LIFE



Uncommon Life is the Chamber's talent recruitment program, which includes marketing and events to welcome newcomers to St. Joseph. One of those events in 2024 was the Uncommon Life Intern Experience, where Chamber staff gave summer interns a taste of St. Joseph, showing them fun things to do in town and places to eat and drink. The day ended with a reception for Chamber members to meet the interns at Parkway Distillery, where they had food, drinks and played pickle ball.



# THOUGHTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

What a year to serve as Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce! In January, I encouraged everyone at the annual banquet to look around at the good in our community, to recognize the momentum and to lean in. I am so proud of what we have accomplished together in the last 12 months. In case you need a reminder, here are a few of our greatest hits.

The first class of medical students who earned their degrees in Saint Joseph graduated in December. The Houlne Center for Convergent Technology at MWSU took their first classes of students this fall and Hillyard Technical opened their expansion. Every single graduate from the MWSU nursing program passed their NCLEX certification on the first try. (My college roommates were nursing students, so I know that's a really big deal!) We hosted D2 Conference Volleyball and D1 Basketball at the Civic Arena. Last weekend, I was able to do a little Christmas shopping at four brand new retailers Downtown and in the Frederick corridor, as well as a few that have been established in the last couple of years. Opening and sustaining a small business is no easy feat, I'm proud that our community can sustain a variety of unique local shops, the entrepreneurs deserve to be celebrated as a success for our community as a whole.

There are too many amazing things happening in our community to list them all, but I want to give a special shoutout to one.

We have officially opened the InspireU Children's Discovery Center. This is an incredible example of a public, private and non-profit partnership. The Mosaic Foundation has worked tirelessly for years to garner support across the state and in our community to open this gem of a building debt free. This is what happens when our community works together. I was able to attend the Patron's Party in December and could not stop smiling. I woke up the next morning proud to be in St Joseph.

Behind the scenes at the Chamber, Natalie and our amazing staff have been building relationships with our state elected officials, economic development representatives, military representatives and anyone else that needs to hear our story. They have been building our brand and we are getting noticed. The hard work of our entire team has resulted in St Joe projects receiving funding from the State Dept of Economic Development as well as the Governor's Cost Share Program. Natalie has been appointed by the Governor to serve on the Military Preparedness and Enhancement Commission, and has received the Lt. Governor's Women of Achievement Award. I've always known that St Joe is a powerhouse, I'm glad the rest of the state is starting to catch on.



**ASHLEY ALBERS**  
VP OF HUMAN RESOURCES  
NOR-AM COLD STORAGE

The new year will be filled with continued momentum, it's not too late to lean in. The Chamber team is taking on critical projects like Workforce Housing, and The Felix Street Market. There will be new leadership at our School District and a new City Manager. As we look forward to the year ahead of us, I encourage you to find the positive in our community. There is something here for all of us to be passionate about, remember you are someone who can do something, get involved, lean in, and remember that St Joseph is a catch!

## 2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Chairman of the Board:** Ashley Albers, Nor-Am Cold Storage  
**Chairman-Elect:** Scott Gann, Scott Gann Construction  
**Secretary/Treasurer:** Nancy Potter Lyle, Taylor Siemens Elliott Creedy & Lyle P.C.  
**President & CEO:** Natalie Hawn, St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce  
**Directors:**  
 Jonathan Arens, Altec Industries, Inc.  
 Lute Atieh, FlyTech Pilot Academy  
 Rall Bradley, News-Press NOW  
 Brett Carolus, Hillyard Companies  
 Col. John Cluck, 139th Airlift Wing, Mo. Air National Guard  
 Kelly Crawford, E.L. Crawford Construction, Inc.  
 Dr. Gabe Edgar, St. Joseph School District  
 Todd Joe, John Joe Insurance  
 John Josendale, City of St. Joseph  
 Kevin Kelly, LifeLine Foods  
 Dr. Elizabeth Kennedy, Missouri Western State University  
 Carrie Koelzer, Evergy  
 Amy Kotwani, Americas Best Value Inn  
 Terri Modlin, Felix Street Specialty  
 Scott Nelson, Buchanan County  
 Kyle Phillips, Herzog Contracting Corp.  
 Dennis Pinkelman, Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health  
 Nancy Potter Lyle, Taylor Siemens Elliott Creedy & Lyle P.C.  
 Amy Ryan, Commerce Bank  
 Mark Woodbury, General Counsel, Polsinelli  
 Don Tolly, Immediate Past Chair, Tolly & Associates Inc.  
 Brett Steiner, Diplomats Club Representative, Nodaway Valley Bank

## ADMINISTRATION



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