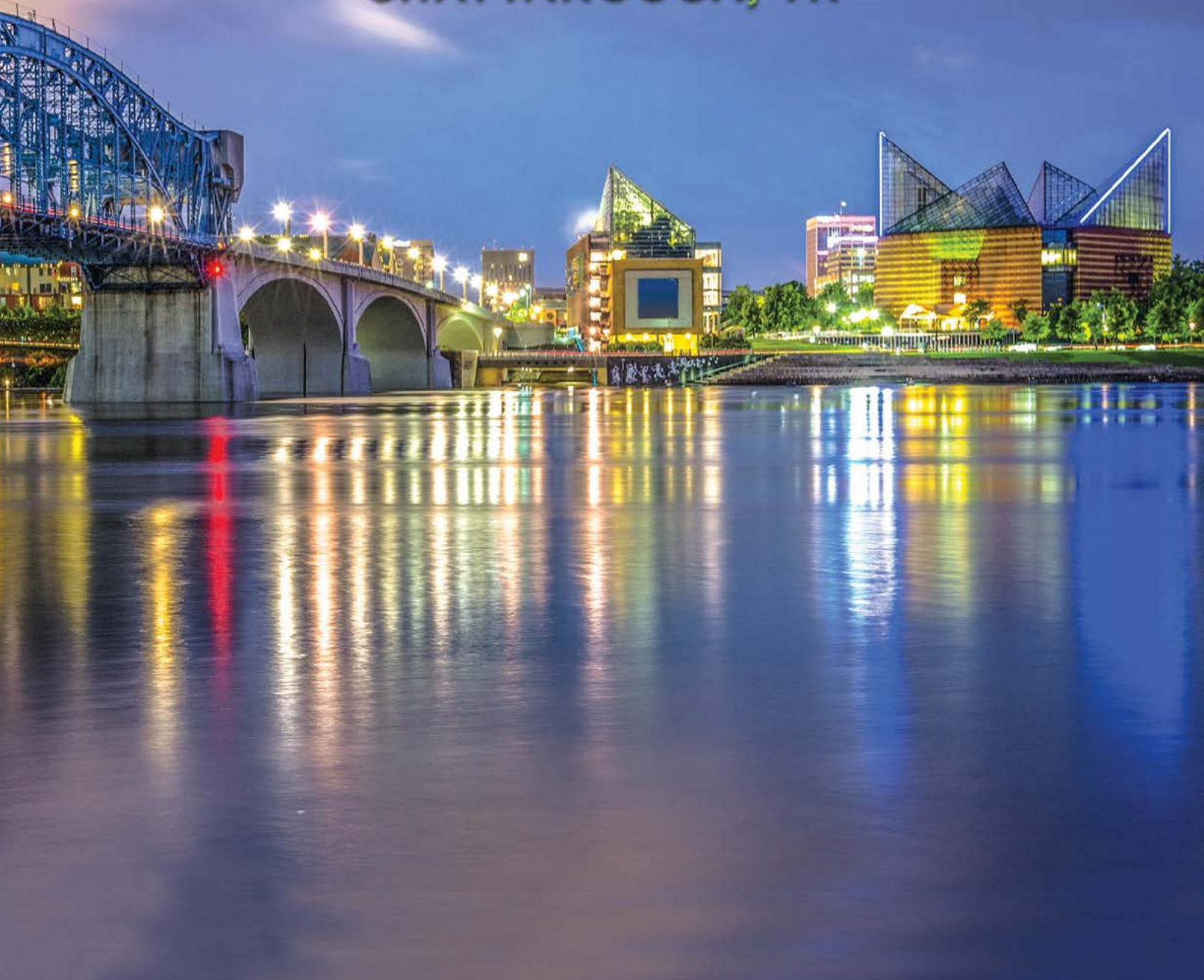




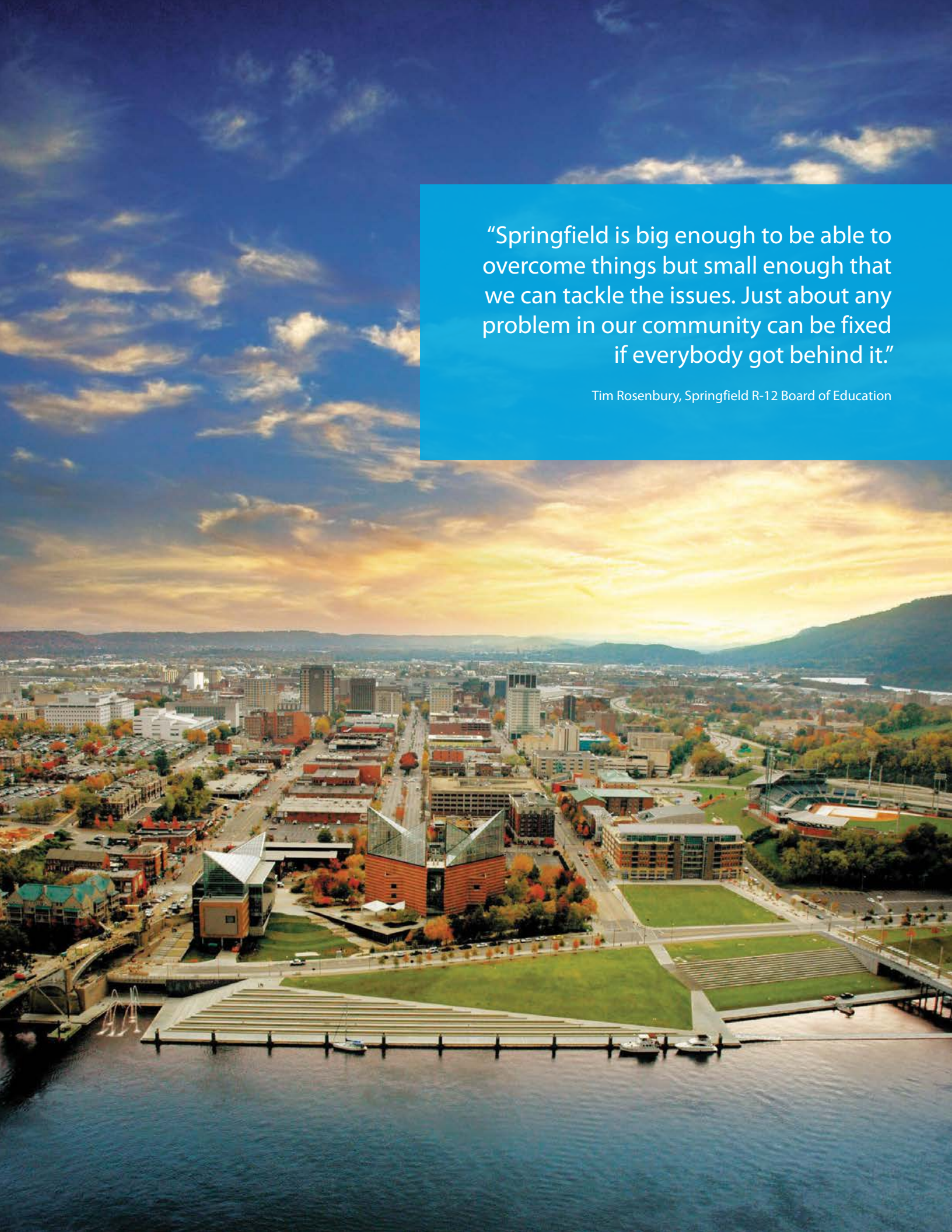
CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

# COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP VISIT 2018

CHATTANOOGA, TN







“Springfield is big enough to be able to overcome things but small enough that we can tackle the issues. Just about any problem in our community can be fixed if everybody got behind it.”

Tim Rosenbury, Springfield R-12 Board of Education

## THE CHATTANOOGA WAY

For 25 years, the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce has taken a delegation of community and business leaders to visit one of our peer cities. The goal: Learn from its highs and lows and determine what best practices can be put to use to help Springfield grow and thrive. For 2018, our delegation made a return trip to Chattanooga, Tennessee. Here’s what we learned.

Collaboration.

The word is thrown around by those who lead groups of all shapes and sizes to describe themselves and their organizations. But it can carry a heavy burden. Look at the definition:

***“The action of working with someone to produce or create something.”***

Working together may not be easy, but most successful organizations can do that part pretty well. It’s certainly true for nearly all the cities to which the Springfield delegation has traveled over the history of its Community Leadership Visit.

That second part, though ... that’s where people get tripped up. Because that’s the follow-through. Turning words into actions. Putting your money where your mouth is. Often, it’s where great ideas go to collect dust on a shelf.

Not in Chattanooga. In Tennessee’s fourth-largest city, collaboration isn’t the way they do business. It’s a way of life.

The Chattanooga Way.

The city has changed tremendously over the years. It’s no longer the place Walter Cronkite famously called “The dirtiest city in America” half a century ago. And it’s no longer just a city built around a famous train. That doesn’t mean residents and leaders have forgotten those aspects of their history; they just refuse to be defined by them.

And the city has certainly faced its own share of issues, just like any other city. Some – the vestiges of industrial pollution, sprawling tracts of undeveloped land without a plan – have been solved. Others, like poverty and education, are in the midst of improvement.

But as the following pages demonstrate, whenever an issue needs to be addressed, leaders from all sectors—government, nonprofit, business—have come together to make a plan ... and then act on it.

Collaboration, in the truest sense of the word. It’s the Chattanooga Way.



# WORKING THE PLAN – TOGETHER

Kim White, president and CEO of River City Company, says the “Chattanooga Way” is built on striving for quality and encouraging citizen involvement.

It’s been that way since the 1980s, when she was in school at University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. No one went downtown in those days ... at least, not if you could help it. Even current Mayor Andy Berke left after high school. “My thought in the late 1980s was, ‘Goodbye, so long, I’ll come back and visit,’” he added.

Even then, change was brewing – and it came from the community.

Chattanooga began a visioning process in the mid-80s, built around the idea of reconnecting to its biggest natural asset: the Tennessee River that flows through the heart of the city (see page 7).

“Reconnecting with the river was a big undertaking,” White said. “But 1,700 people helped dream big dreams about our community. Visioning is community-led. We want opinions.”

A 20-year master plan was developed for the 22-mile riverfront district, with residents envisioning what the city could be when the next millennium began. “Members of the community – not led by City Hall – said, ‘We’re not going to let history wash over us,’” Mayor Berke said. “We’re going to take control and dream of what we could be.”

White says the city has always recognized the importance of having everyone at the table. “When you get community buy-in, big stuff

happens,” she said. “You get community involvement, you have discussions, and then you move forward.”

## **Making it happen**

But developing a master plan is one thing. Those who had helped create Chattanooga’s plan decided someone needed to focus all their efforts on bringing that plan to life.

So in 1986, the River City Company was created. This nonprofit, capitalized with \$12 million from local foundations and financial institutions, was tasked to wake up each day and implement the plan.

Sometimes that has meant taking risks that neither the public sector nor private investors would normally gamble. Case in point: the Tennessee Riverwalk, which runs the length of the river through the city.

River City Company fronted the starting money for that project because of its controversial nature. But the results speak for themselves; the last three miles of the project opened in 2017, and \$225 million of private investment had been completed before the last phase of the park even opened.

## **The centerpiece**

The most high-profile of River City Company’s projects was one dreamed up by University of Tennessee design students and recommended in the 20-year master plan: the Tennessee Aquarium. It was also a project heavily supported by John “Jack” Lupton, the heir to the fortune created by the sale of the Dixie Coca-Cola Bottling Company Plant.







River City bought and donated the land for the aquarium, and Lupton donated his own money and money from his family's charity, the Lyndhurst Foundation, to spur the project. Dubbed "Jack's Fish Tank" by naysayers, the aquarium opened in May 1992 and brought in 1.5 million visitors its first year.

But the aquarium was just the beginning. When U.S. Sen. Bob Corker was mayor in the early 2000s, he wanted to build on the momentum of the aquarium development. "I realized that we had been bragging about our waterfront, but it was really just a hot parking lot with litter blowing across it next to the aquarium," he joked.

He did what Chattanooga leaders always do. He brought citizens together

and asked for their help. More than 300 people helped lay out plans for what they wanted to see, and Mayor Corker used those ideas to announce a \$120 million development plan ... to be completed in 35 months ... debt-free. The city pulled it off, too.

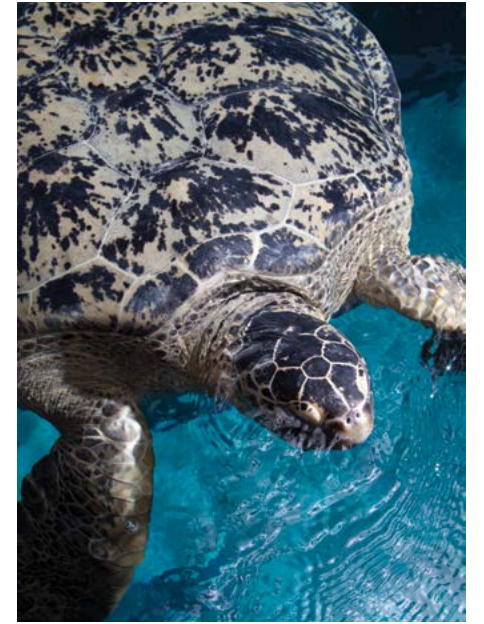
The project included renovation of the Hunter Museum of American Art, the Riverwalk expansion, renovation of the Walnut Street pedestrian bridge and more, funded by private donors and a new hotel-motel tax.

Those efforts have been the core of a development explosion. In the 26 years since the Aquarium opened, \$5 billion in private investment has been made in downtown Chattanooga, including \$1 billion of private investment just since the beginning of 2017.

#### Intent and collaboration

Chattanooga's downtown is thoughtful and intentional. Aesthetics, function, and environmental impact were all taken into consideration thanks to the Chattanooga Design Studio. Founded in 1981, it's comprised of a group of architects and urban planners who ensure that developments in the downtown and riverfront areas meet urban design and aesthetic requirements.

"We have four licensed architects thinking about how we build the city today and tomorrow," says Studio Executive Director Eric Myers. "We try to build collaboratively; without an organization like ours, that doesn't happen."



That collaboration means having everyone involved – including the public sector for infrastructure improvements, and private developers to encourage them to blend their designs with their surroundings.

"How does a project ultimately lead to the best outcome for everyone involved?" Myers said. "We didn't just flip a switch, put a fish tank on the river and everything happened. It's a lot of work over nearly 40 years."

Much of that work is spurred by the nonprofit world. The Lyndhurst Foundation has made substantial donations to major development projects throughout the city. The Benwood Foundation funds numerous

projects as well, including part of the operating costs for the Design Studio.

"We try to be the community's social venture capital, to be entrepreneurial ourselves," said Benwood Foundation President Sarah Morgan. "We don't have to run for office or have quarterly returns for shareholders, so we should be able to take more risks. And Chattanooga's city culture also helps."

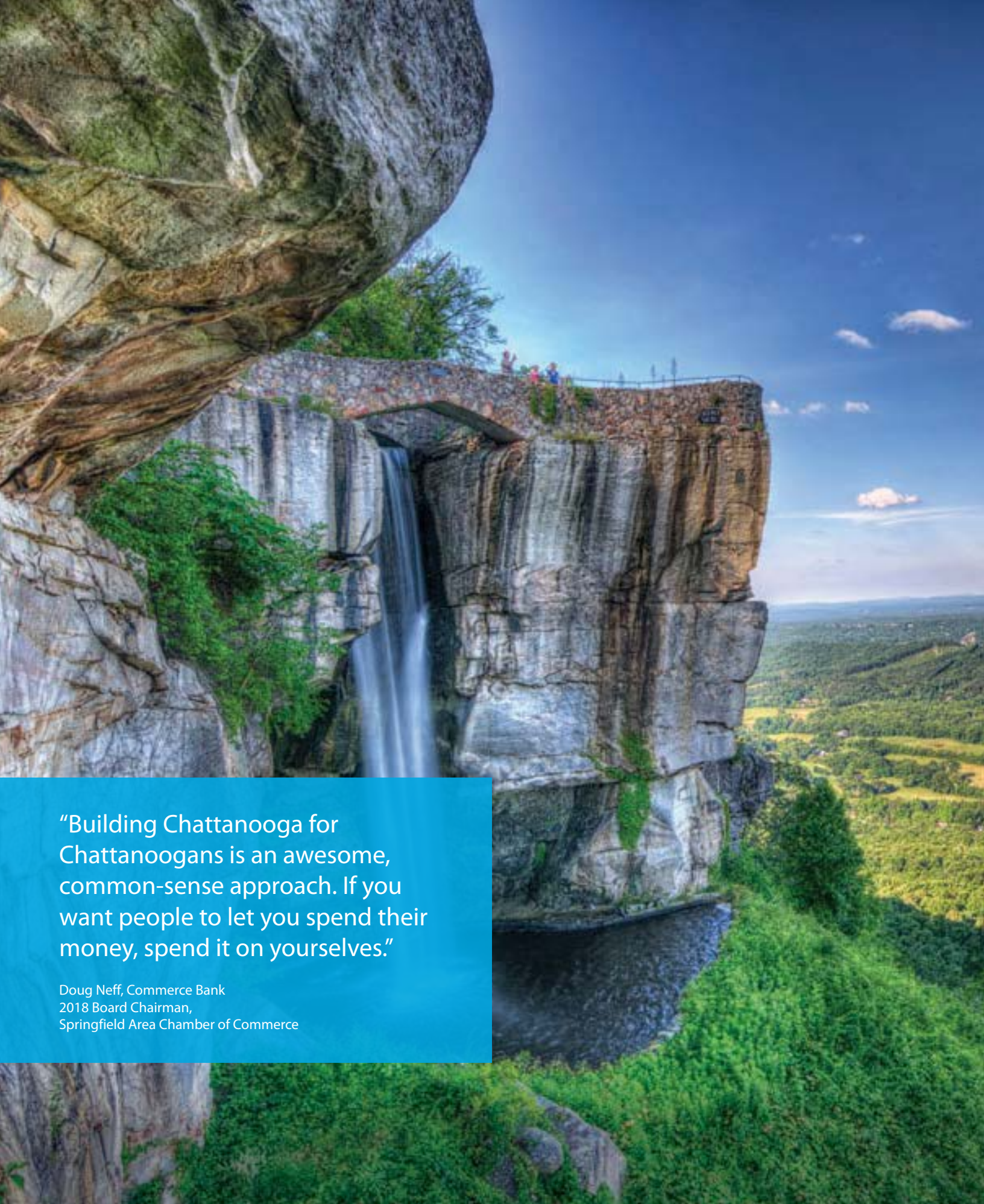
And what is that city culture? White sums it up best.

"We made a conscious decision to say, 'We're not building for tourists,'" she said. "We're Chattanooga; we're building for Chattanoogans. Tourists will love it if our residents love it."

"We have to be intentional with planning. If I'm thinking about moving my business somewhere, if I don't know what the long-term plan is in that area, I have a hard time pulling the trigger on that move."

Jonathan Garard,  
Grooms Office Environments





“Building Chattanooga for Chattanooga is an awesome, common-sense approach. If you want people to let you spend their money, spend it on yourselves.”

Doug Neff, Commerce Bank  
2018 Board Chairman,  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

## GETTING BACK TO NATURE

“To understand this place, you have to understand its geography – not unlike other cities,” said Jim Kennedy, director of admission at the private Baylor School in Chattanooga. “We’re at a bend in the Tennessee River, among a series of mountains and ridges.”

Between the Civil War and the mid-20th century, the city developed as a center for heavy manufacturing. The river transported products, but not much else. The factories created incredible pollution. “My father could show me who was making what by the color of the air – you could taste the air downtown,” said real estate developer Chris Crimmins.

It got so bad that the most trusted man in America, Walter Cronkite, devoted time on the evening news in 1969 to tell the country that Chattanooga was “the dirtiest city in America.”

City leaders and residents knew something had to be done. Their hand was somewhat forced by passage of the federal Clean Air Act and creation of the Environmental Protection Agency ... and by the economic environment.

“We took on environmental stewardship as a mission,” Mayor Andy Berke said. “But also, all the jobs that caused the pollution went overseas – there was cheaper capital and cheaper labor – and unemployment skyrocketed. We didn’t have the jobs we needed.”

### A new start

The city needed to find a new identity – one that could rekindle optimism and civic pride. As it turned out, the answer had been staring them in the face: the river.

“In March of 1985, Urban Land Institute came in to help us,” Crimmins said. “They told us, ‘You have a magnificent

resource flowing through your city! It was an asset that we had turned our back on.”

They wouldn’t repeat that mistake. From the creation of River City Company to the Tennessee Aquarium, the river and its natural beauty have been the focal point. “We’ve set up our city now to face the water instead of away from it,” Mayor Berke said. “At the time, it was very controversial. But over time, it paid off.”

The list of projects focused on leveraging that natural beauty is impressive, including the 13-acre Coolidge Park and the Ross’s Landing area that surrounds the aquarium and visitors center. It also includes the 21st Century Waterfront, the 130-acre “Phase Two” of the riverfront development completed under the leadership of then-Mayor Bob Corker.

### A new identity

Corker was interested in more than just developing the waterfront property. He had a vision of Chattanooga as a national outdoor destination – a vision he developed while on a bike ride on his 50th birthday.

“I rode 100 miles on my bicycle, and I saw people kayaking, hang gliding, bouldering, trout fishing, running, biking, and I thought, ‘This is unbelievable,’” he said. “So I went on talk radio the next Monday and I said we were going to become the Boulder of the East.”

Corker’s administration, with public input, created Outdoor Chattanooga to leverage natural resources to benefit the community, both economically and in terms of public health.

“We were formed to promote the outdoor lifestyle for our community’s

residents, to recruit people to stay longer if they’re visiting, to encourage people to move here and to use it as a recruiting tool for business,” said Executive Director Philip Grymes.

The organization worked to bring nontraditional sporting events to the area – cycling, boating regattas, Ironman competitions – and worked with the Convention and Visitors Bureau to garner multiple accolades for the city, including “Best Outdoor Town Ever” honors twice from *Outside* magazine and Best Places to Live lists from *Livability* and *U.S. News & World Report*.

City leaders continue to build on the outdoor lifestyle theme, with projects like the recently completed Miller Plaza that features shared offices facing a new public greenspace, and programs like the CVB’s Noontunes, a weekly midday series with local musicians offering free concerts.

The efforts have paid off in attracting both visitors and those who may be thinking of relocating ... people like Max Poppel. “I grew up outside of Boston – I hated the winters and loved the rock climbing of Chattanooga,” he said. “But honestly, I just wanted a place to fund my rock climbing and sushi habits.”

He now calls Chattanooga home and runs two successful businesses: the Crash Pad, a hostel for climbers visiting the area, and Flying Squirrel, the restaurant and bar next door.

Stories like Poppel’s are what make Corker enthusiastic about the future. “In our community, with the physical changes, the outdoors, the redevelopment, young people want to stay now,” he said. “That’s what makes me think that the best is yet to come.”



# POWERING NEW IDEAS



The Electric Power Board (EPB) was established by the Tennessee legislature in 1935 to provide power to Chattanooga and its residents.

Eighty years ago, legislators couldn't have imagined that the organization would be the jumping off point for the city's entrepreneurial revolution – or that it would have started with technology roughly the width of a human hair.

"When we were formed to distribute electricity to customers in the [Tennessee] Valley, our mission was clear – bringing electricity improved quality of life," said Katie Espeseth, EPB's vice president of new products. "By the 90s, everybody had electricity. So, what was our mission?"

The organization turned to improving the quality of its service by installing a Smart Grid – a system that would constantly monitor electricity usage – in an effort to better respond to outages and reduce down time, which cost about \$100 million in lost productivity and wages annually to midsize cities like Chattanooga.

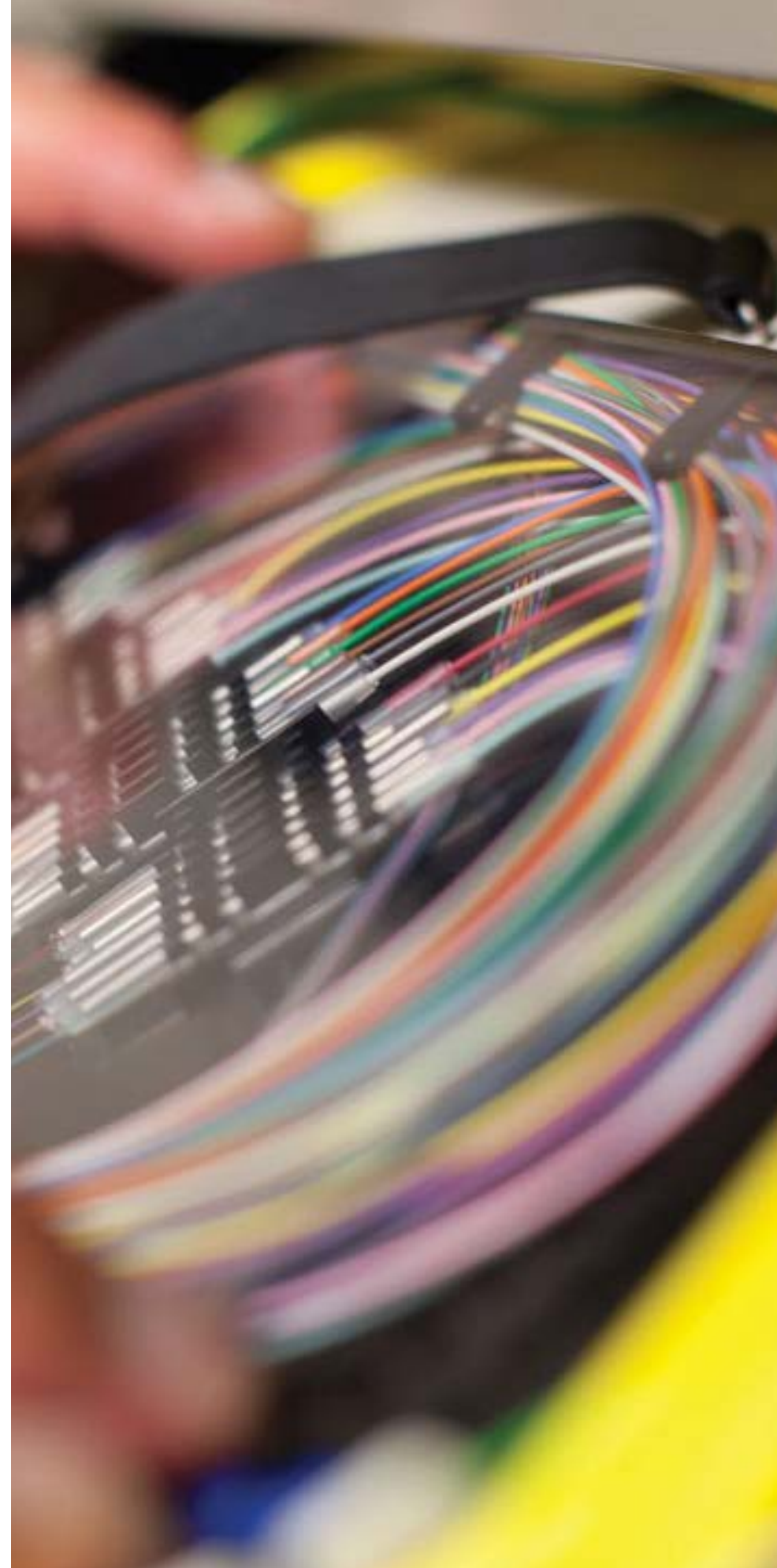
But a Smart Grid wouldn't be cheap, especially if built using the best technology: 9,000 miles of fiber optic cable. It carried an initial price tag of more than \$200 million.

The answer, somewhat counterintuitively, was to expand the project to include Internet service. A citywide gigabit Internet service, dubbed "the Gig," would help defray construction costs and, in theory, lure tech companies to build offices and create jobs in Chattanooga.

There was only one problem: Silicon Valley wasn't interested. But Chattanooga leaders banded together and turned their focus inward.

"Maybe the answer isn't Apple and Facebook – maybe the answer is us," said Mayor Andy Berke. "We need to provide the opportunity to people and invest in them."

So after EPB launched its Internet service in 2009, the nonprofit Enterprise Center took on the task of inspiring innovation and entrepreneurship. The group has focused on three



areas: creating an Innovation District, improving research and application development, and increasing digital equity and inclusion.

"It's not just 'build it and they will come,' but what the Gig has become is a huge tool in our toolbox," said Enterprise Center President and CEO Ken Hays. "To have the next generation in communications, combined with our other tools – the outdoors, great political leadership – it's a huge tool."

The Gig has sparked an entrepreneurial explosion, with more than 5,200 new jobs created in the first five years of its existence. And in true Chattanooga fashion, a whole financial support network has sprung up in recent years to support that new business growth.

One example is Ted Alling, co-founder of Access America, a logistics company that grew into a \$500 million operation and eventually merged with a subsidiary of UPS. He and his fellow founders used proceeds from their successful merger to create venture capital firm Lamp Post Group, which has invested \$36 million in the local economy over the last seven years. Those funds were largely invested into helping local entrepreneurs succeed with their start-ups.

"We're very thoughtful about getting capital together in the same place. When we make money, we immediately reinvest it back to the community," he said. "We're not a small pond, but it's like we're a medium-sized pond that's very deep."

Individual angel investors get in on the act, too, like with JumpFund, a women-led group started in 2013 to focus on providing capital to women-led ventures. They've raised more than \$5 million almost exclusively from local female investors.

"This work is not for the faint of heart, but it is doable," said JumpFund founder Kristina Montague. "It takes leadership in the community. But it's not just Silicon Valley. It's about how we can activate more capital to spur development."

One company that has benefitted from all of this largess is Bellhops Moving, which started in 2011 as a small company where college students would help other college students move in and out of their dorms. It has since grown into a nationally recognized company serving customers in more than 25 cities.

Kyle Miller, the company's head of brand and communications, says it's all because of Chattanooga's collaborative spirit. "Whether you're raising money, working in business or trying to make your name as a city nationally, you have to collaborate," he said. "If any one of us is successful, it helps us all tell our story a little bit better."

And according to Marcus Shaw, chief executive with startup accelerator CO.LAB, that story is still being written.

"It's a combination of government, private business and philanthropic efforts all coming together," he said. "You find the cheapest real estate, the youngest, smartest risk-seeking kids, and surround them with the kindest, richest older people you can find ... and then you press 'play.'"

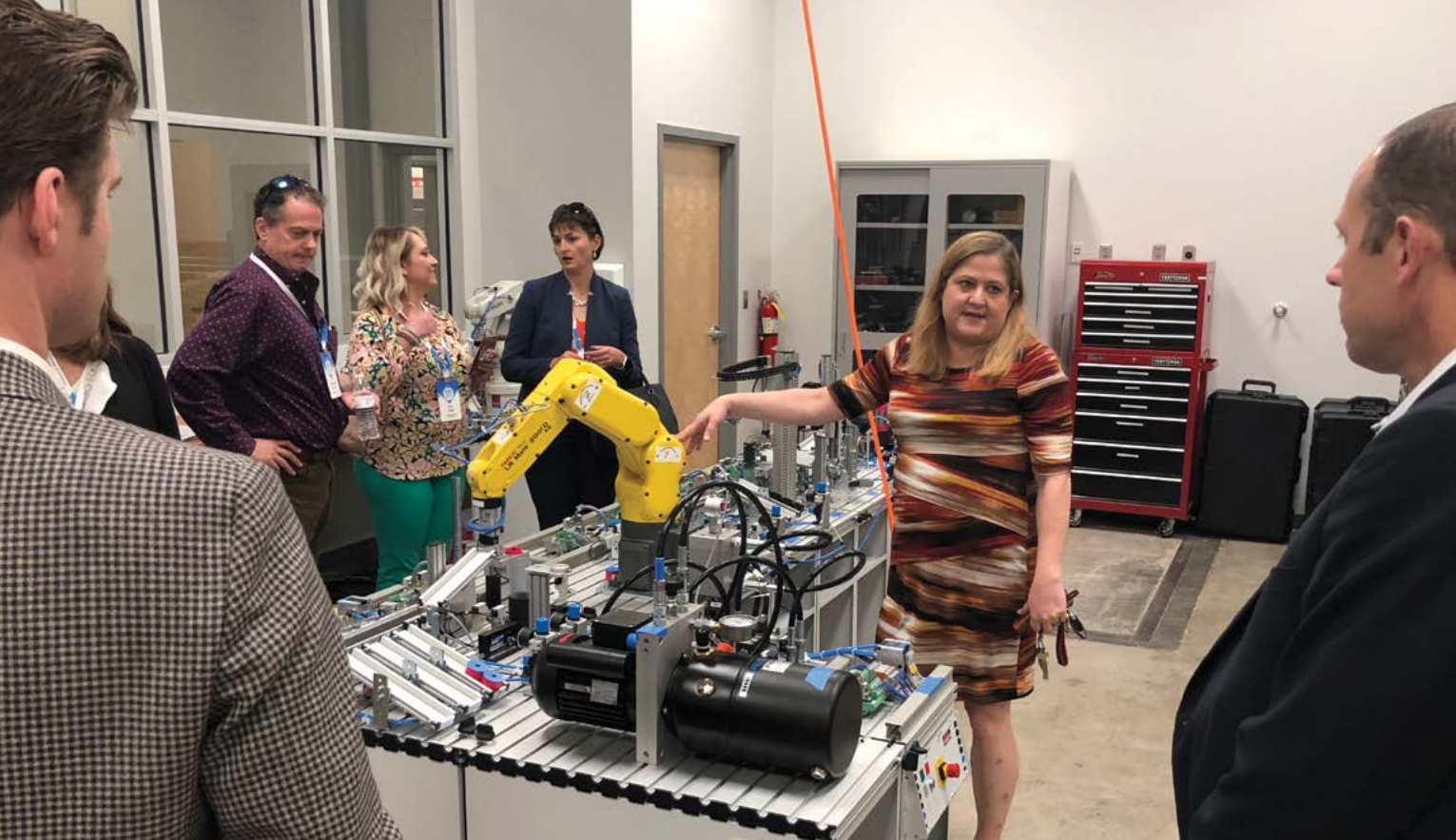
---

*"All the speakers were telling the same story: Everyone has a voice, and this is what we're working on. In the end, it boiled down to messaging – we have to be able to effectively tell people what we're doing."*

*Robin Robeson, Guaranty Bank  
2019 Chairman-Elect,  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce*

---





## BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

Chattanooga has some key natural and financial advantages over other cities. But as there are in all communities, there are also challenges – and developing the future workforce is at the top of that list.

For years, K-12 education has been a struggle, but after years of being labeled a failing district, and a difficult consolidation process into what is now the Hamilton County School District, many educators and community leaders feel they are at least on the right track, although there is a long way to go.

For superintendent Dr. Bryan Johnson, who joined the Hamilton County district in summer 2017, the key is a combination of being honest about issues and bringing a business approach to school management.

“We’re a \$400 million organization, and we want to operate like a high-reliability business,” he said. “How do we become more effective at what we do, while

keeping the focus always on those students?”

One of his first initiatives was the creation of the Opportunity Zones focused on the strategic improvement of the 12 lowest performing of the district’s 79 schools. Jill Levine, former district principal, leads their oversight after having helped turn one of the worst-performing schools in the district into a school that families relocated to just to attend.

While the work is ongoing, the district feels it is turning a corner.

“We’re creating better core education, but also enriching our schools with STEM opportunities, robotics labs, the arts – things that will better engage students and make them more successful for the future,” Levine said.

STEM options have been expanded to include their own standalone magnet school – STEM School Chattanooga

– offering a project-based learning environment based around science, technology, engineering, the arts, math and medicine.

It’s an approach that has led to many partnerships with businesses.

“We don’t know what the future holds, so we have to sit with business leaders and use their expertise to determine where their gaps are and prepare our students better,” Johnson said.

One partnership is Future Ready Institutes (FRI); 13 different high schools offer these programs, funded by area businesses, that expose students to a variety of different career options while they’re still in school.

“I’ve always believed that not every kid needs a four-year college degree,” said Tom White, senior vice president of investor relations for Unum Group, an FRI supporter. “If you start at a little bit younger age and introduce them to a

health care program, a nursing program, an IT program, they see there’s a real-life job that can come out of that.”

Of course, the need to expose people to job options doesn’t stop in high school – and getting high school students excited about future jobs won’t help with the immediate and pressing needs of the workforce.

That’s why the Hamilton County schools and Chattanooga State Community College (CSCC) are working in a variety of areas to get students certifications ASAP.

One example: a work-based learning program for advanced manufacturer Gestamp. High school students can work in a Gestamp facility and take online classes to get both their degree and a certification. The program recently became the first in Tennessee to earn the U.S. Department of Labor’s registered apprenticeship designation.

“We’re trying to teach young folks the soft skills and work ethic they’ll need to have,” said Gestamp Chattanooga HR Director Tony Cates, who noted that more than 60% of students in the program are considered at-risk. “If we can build a pipeline of students and get kids excited about manufacturing from an early age, it’s key.”

Meanwhile, CSCC is working directly with businesses as well. Volkswagen, for instance, has a three-year mechatronics program that the college helped develop and

is housed in a 167,000-square-foot space in Volkswagen’s Chattanooga manufacturing facility. After five semesters in school and four semesters working for the company, students graduate with a degree.

“Springfield has awesome assets: OTC, the universities, the health systems, WOW. What we don’t have is someone coordinating everything. Chattanooga has really gotten everyone at the table, so you have that vision – and it’s communicated to everyone.”

Logan Aguirre, 417

That program led directly to the creation of a second program for chemical engineering firm WACKER, which located in Chattanooga largely because of the area’s proven success in developing skilled workers.

“At the time, we didn’t have a chemical technology program – we had to develop an entirely new program for that,” said Dr. Jim Barrott, executive vice president at CSCC. “We didn’t even own a building when they came to us. We spent a lot of time telling our story, and they understood and were able to buy into that. All that happened because of our response to what VW needed.”

These efforts are driven in part by state initiatives like Tennessee Promise, a last-dollar scholarship for high school seniors to attend community college or technical school, and Tennessee Reconnect, a similar program for adults to re-enter the school and earn certifications or degrees. Significant state funds are invested in these and other programs because Tennessee has made this a top priority in order to prepare their workforce; they know that an available, skilled workforce is key to attracting jobs for the foreseeable future.

All of these efforts are encouraging to longtime Chattanooga resident and developer Chris Crimmins, who sees developing the future generation as the city’s biggest need.

“We’ve had incredible leadership, both public and private, over the years. But how do we grow and engage that next generation of leaders?” he said. “We need to be conscious of that and make sure they catch that bug. You never really arrive – you hit the next rung and then you see what’s next.”





## TAKING THE NEXT STEP



German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said, "He who knows no foreign languages knows nothing of his own." And so it is with the Community Leadership Visit – we better understand Springfield by learning from other communities.

So what did we learn about Springfield by learning the language of Chattanooga? What can this vibrant city – sitting by the water's edge, floating on a current of fiber optic information, exploding with new possibilities – tell us about our home?

"We have the assets in place and good people that care. Now is our opportunity to move forward. We've been doing this for 25 years; it's time to get off the bench and get in the game."

Jeff Childs, SVN/Rankin Company  
2019 Board Chairman,  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

The cities may look different. Springfield was never driven to urgency by a national shaming about pollution. We don't have a river flowing through our downtown, and we may not have gigabit Internet service to every home. But look at what we do have.

• **Outdoor beauty and amenities** Chattanooga made itself into the "Boulder of the East." Well, Springfield is in the heart of the Ozarks, surrounded by lakes, rivers and mountains with natural beauty that could rival that found anywhere.

• **Technological capacity** – In Chattanooga, they've made a conscious decision to invest in tomorrow's technology today, and it gives them an advantage. We can learn from that. And we have some great assets in our community on which to build.

• **Entrepreneurial spirit** – Chattanooga has done an incredible job encouraging, supporting and reinvesting in its young professionals and business startups. We have amazing creators and innovators here, too. Springfield has tremendous opportunity to continue to grow our own success stories.

• **Public schools and higher education** – Springfield's schools are one of our greatest assets. Springfield Public Schools, the largest district in the state, is strong and matches up favorably with nearly any city our size in the country. The Ozarks Technical Community College's Center for Advanced Manufacturing and Technology is set to break ground, and Missouri State University's Springfield campus has grown enrollment in 20 of the last 22 years.

Because ultimately, it's not the water or the download speeds that have spurred Chattanooga's success. It's the people. It's the fact that Chattanoogaans came together to celebrate their successes, boast their unique advantages and tackle problems together.

And then – and this is the kicker – they set about doing it. They took their plans and made concerted efforts to make them reality. Every day. That's the difference. They built Chattanooga for Chattanoogaans, and Springfield came to learn how.

It's true collaboration. It's the Chattanooga Way. It could be the Springfield way, too.

# 2018 SPONSORS

PRESENTING SPONSOR

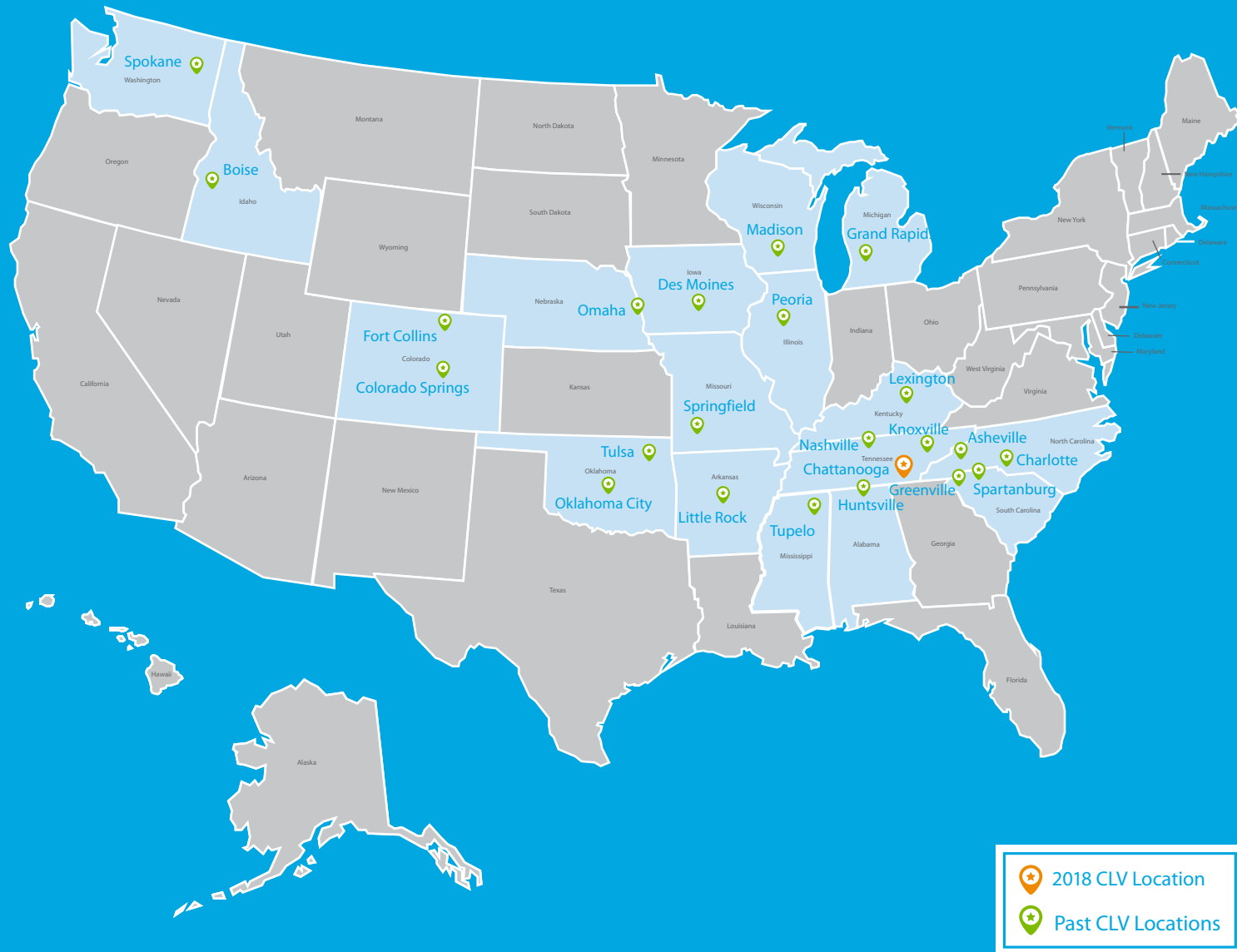
# BKD

CPAs & Advisors





# LEADERSHIP VISIT LOCALES



“The Community Leadership Visits, now spanning 25 years, have been the catalysts for several of the most positive and significant changes for our region.”

Jim Anderson, Retired President  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

# LOOKING BACK - 25 YEARS OF COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP VISITS

From Washington to Wisconsin, from Colorado to the Carolinas, the Chamber’s Community Leadership Visit has crossed the country learning best practices of our peer cities.

The scope of the trip has changed over the past two-plus decades—growing from a small handful in the beginning to nearly 80 of Springfield’s movers and shakers in recent years.

But the core focus has always remained the same. Bring together Springfield leaders from all sectors of the community to connect with each other, look at what others are doing well and where they have struggled, find out how we can improve ourselves and reaffirm what we are doing well.

“Some organizations only react to change. The Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce creates change,” said former Chamber President Jim Anderson, who participated in the trip for two decades. “The Community Leadership Visits, now spanning 25 years, have been the catalysts for several of the most positive and significant changes for our region.”

### Learning from others

One of the most amazing aspects of these visits is that many of the same themes continue to appear over and over, regardless of the setting. Here, in no particular order, are some of the biggest:

- **Cooperation and partnerships are key to success** – Nearly every city we have visited has pointed to the importance of collaboration in every facet of society: between the public and private sectors, with the not-for-profit and philanthropic community, between business and education. Success is nearly impossible without working together.

- **Successful development goes beyond the city limits** – Many cities, including Boise, Spokane, Charlotte and Little Rock, have drawn significant success from the fact that they aren’t limited by their city limits. Success of the region lifts everyone – a lesson Springfield has learned as well.
- **Start in the center** – A strong building has a strong core, and so does a strong city. Over and over again, the cities we visit have stressed the importance of revitalizing the city center as a catalyst for the rest of the region.
- **Retain, attract and develop talent** – The Chamber added workforce development as a strategic area of focus a few years ago, to reflect a reality that we – and many other successful cities – have been working on for years. Focusing on quality of life and initiatives that will encourage employees to relocate and young professional to stay is crucial.
- **Start young** – On a related note, developing those talented young professionals is also a key to success. Many of the cities we have visited have emphasized the importance of support and investment, both the message.
- **Embrace the outdoors** – Several of the cities we’ve visited, including Boise, have made a concerted effort to capitalize on their natural beauty and use it to enhance quality of life, both for residents and for visitors.
- **Find yourself** – Whether it’s the outdoors enthusiasm of cities like Boise and Colorado Springs, or the ability of cities like Huntsville to become “Rocket City” and Greenville to “find their waterfall,” thriving cities have found a way to develop a unique, positive identity. And everyone in their city shares the message.

## MAJOR INITIATIVES IMPACTED BY COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP VISITS

- Springfield Regional Economic Partnership
- Jordan Valley Park
- Wonders of Wildlife Museum
- The new airport terminal
- Renaming of Springfield-Branson National Airport
- Jordan Valley Innovation Center
- The Network for Young Professionals
- The Facing Racism program
- The Community Focus Report
- Community-wide visioning initiatives
- State-level workforce development programs



# 25 YEARS OF KEY TAKEAWAYS

## WHAT DO SUCCESSFUL CITIES HAVE IN COMMON?

1 Collaboration and partnerships



2 Regional development

3 Downtown/center city development



4 Capitalizing on natural beauty

5 Focus on talent attraction and YPs

6 Support for education and workforce

7 An environment for entrepreneurs



8 A spirit of philanthropy

9 Bold leaders willing to take risks



10 A high-quality airport system

11 Embrace assets and create a unique identity

public and private, for education and workforce development.

- **Encourage entrepreneurs** – Attracting large employers to your city is obviously important. But the vast majority of the economy is small businesses, meaning it's just as important to develop an environment where start-ups and young businesses can grow and thrive.
- **Giving back** – Loving your city means giving back to it. The successful cities we have visited show a strong philanthropic spirit, supporting a wide range of community initiatives from education to the arts to the environment.
- **Look to the skies** – Several cities, including Colorado Springs, Des Moines and Boise, noted the importance of their airport to business development. It's a lesson Springfield learned as well, with the development of its own new terminal and renaming of its airport.
- **Be bold in leadership** – Perhaps it's our nature as residents of the Show-Me State, but we tend to proceed cautiously in decision-making. But many of these locales have shown a willingness to take calculated risks ... to make a decision and then boldly forge ahead.

### Bringing it home

The initiatives, programs and developments that have helped move the Springfield region forward in the last 25-plus years required a lot of heavy lifting by stakeholders from all sectors of the community.

The Community Leadership Visit program has been the spark for many of these programs, encouraged the continued growth of others, and helped reshape still others.

Here, again in no particular order, are some of the major area initiatives that have been created or impacted by ideas collected from a CLV trip:

- The **Springfield Regional Economic Partnership**, originally created as the Ozarks Regional Economic Partnership, was created as a direct result of feedback collected from the 1997 trip to Boise – and reinforced by subsequent trips to Spokane, Charlotte, Little Rock and others.
- Ideas for how to develop and best utilize **Jordan Valley Park** were sparked by several early CLV trips, most notably the 2000 trip to Spokane.
- The early development of the **Wonders of Wildlife Museum** was inspired by the 1998 trip to Chattanooga, among others.

“When you look back at what we have learned in 25 years, the body of knowledge we’ve accumulated is incredible.”

Matt Morrow, President  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

- The decision to rename the **Springfield-Branson National Airport** was inspired by our 2005 trip to Des Moines, while the decision to build the new **Midfield Terminal** grew from the 1999 trip to Colorado Springs.
- Downtown redevelopment has always been a key theme, but the **Jordan Valley Innovation Center** in particular was inspired by similar projects in numerous other cities.
- Young professionals play a key role in shaping our future; while **The Network for Young Professionals** is a locally grown program, several visits – including

the 2008 trip to Madison – offered best practices to shape the group.

- The **Facing Racism** program, initially established at the Chamber and now housed at Missouri State, was a direct response to efforts by officials in Grand Rapids to address diversity and inclusion.
- The **Community Focus Report** was inspired by Lexington's efforts to be more self-reflective and tackle their own hard-hitting issues.
- Multiple **community-wide visioning processes** have been shaped by community visits, including the Vision 20/20 process, Field Guide 2030 and the current Community Visioning Committee.
- The Chamber's continued efforts to advocate for enhanced **state-level workforce development programs** grew directly from the success of the Alabama Industrial Development Training program discussed in Huntsville.

### Moving ahead

So where do we go from here?

No matter the 2019 trip destination or who attends, one thing is certain: community leaders understand the value of taking time from their busy schedules to learn from their peers.

And they also understand the importance of working together – collaboration between the public and private sector, and the dialogues and conversations that occur organically between the participants, are some of the most valuable takeaways.

“When you look back at what we have learned in 25 years, the body of knowledge we’ve accumulated is incredible,” says Chamber President Matt Morrow. “That only happens because we’re willing to step back and take a look at ourselves. That’s not always easy to do, but I’m grateful to live in a community where our leaders want to strive to be better every day.”



# 2018 DELEGATION

**Logan Aguirre**  
417

**Rachel Anderson**  
MSU efactory

**David Atkisson**  
J.E. Dunn Construction

**Commissioner Harold Bengsch**  
Greene County Commission

**David Cameron**  
City of Republic

**Kristin Carter**  
Central Trust Company

**Jeff Childs**  
City Utilities Board of Public Utilities

**Danny Collins**  
The Vecino Group

**King Coltrin**  
CJW Transportation Consultants, LLC

**Tim Connell**  
Connell Insurance

**Anita Cotter**  
City of Springfield

**Chris Coulter**  
Greene County

**Janet Dankert**  
Community Partnership of the Ozarks

**C.J. Davis**  
Burrell Behavioral Health

**Emily Denniston**  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

**Craig Edwards**  
Bryan Properties

**Charity Elmer**  
CoxHealth

**Jeremy Elwood**  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

**Carol Embree**  
Springfield Public Schools

**Brad Erwin**  
Paragon Architecture

**Councilmember Phyllis Ferguson**  
Springfield City Council

**Councilmember Jan Fisk**  
Springfield City Council

**Brian Fogle**  
Community Foundation of the Ozarks, Inc.

**Jason Gage**  
City of Springfield

**Jonathan Garard**  
Grooms Office Environments

**John Gentry**  
OTC Board of Trustees

**Clay Goddard**  
Springfield-Greene County Health Department

**Regina Greer Cooper**  
Springfield-Greene County Library District

**Alex Greiwe**  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

**Bill Hammitt**  
Amprod Holdings, LLC

**Heather Hardinger**  
Taney County Partnership

**Dr. Hal Higdon**  
Ozarks Technical Community College

**Tyler Hobbs**  
The Office of U.S. Congressman Billy Long

**Sandy Howard**  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

**Dr. John Jungmann**  
Springfield Public Schools

**Jennifer Kennally**  
OTC Board of Trustees

**Sarah Kerner**  
City of Springfield

**Tracy Kimberlin**  
Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau

**Marshall Kinne**  
Med-Pay, Inc.

**Samuel Knox**  
Minorities in Business

**Troy Kukes**  
Pinnacle Sign Group

**Erica Little**  
Springfield-Greene County Health Department

**Jennifer McClure**  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

**Mayor Ken McClure**  
Springfield City Council

**Scott Miller**  
City Utilities

**Ryan Mooney**  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

**Megan Morris**  
Bass Pro Shops

**Matt Morrow**  
Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

**Doug Neff**  
Commerce Bank

**Ashley Norgard**  
Kutak Rock, LLP

**Jill Patterson**  
Springfield R-12 Board of Education

**Francine Pratt**  
Prosper Springfield

**Rob Rector**  
Ozarks Technical Community College

**Carrie Richardson**  
Leadership Springfield

**Robin Robeson**  
Guaranty Bank

**Tim Rosenbury**  
Springfield R-12 Board of Education

**Gary Schafer**  
BKD, LLP

**Councilmember Mike Schilling**  
Springfield City Council

**Jeff Schrag**  
The Daily Events/Mother's Brewing Company

**Cora Scott**  
City of Springfield

**Councilmember Matthew Simpson**  
Springfield City Council

**Clif Smart**  
Missouri State University

**Mary Lilly Smith**  
City of Springfield

**Larry Snyder**  
OTC Board of Trustees

**Stuart Stangeland**  
Mercy

**Steve Stodden**  
City Utilities

**Stephanie Summers**  
Ozarks Technical Community College

**Dean Thompson**  
City Utilities

**Joel Thomas**  
BatesForum

**Jay Titus**  
BancorpSouth

**Katie Towns**  
Springfield-Greene County Health Department

**Shanda Trautman**  
Old Missouri Bank

**Jaimie Trussell**  
Convoy of Hope/Springfield-Branson National Airport  
Board of Directors

**Randell Wallace**  
Kutak Rock, LLP

**John Wanamaker**  
Springfield Chamber Board of Directors

**Brian Weiler**  
Springfield-Branson National Airport

**Chris Weiss**  
Springfield Art Museum Board of Directors

**Jennifer Wilson**  
N-FORM Architecture

**Phyllis Wolfram**  
Burrell Behavioral Health Board of Directors