

# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2022

Sauk Valley Area  
Chamber of Commerce



211 Locust St., Sterling, IL 61081  
(815) 625-2400  
[saukvalleyareachamber.com](http://saukvalleyareachamber.com)



# Our Mission

## To Enhance the Economic Climate and Quality of Life in the Sauk Valley Area.

### Strategic Priorities:

- Provide Value to Membership
- Strengthen the Local Community
- Enhance Community Leadership



### A letter from the Director:

On behalf of the Sauk Valley Area Chamber, I thank you for your investment of financial resources, time, guidance, and support as we work to develop strategies and implement our strategic priorities to help our members and this community thrive.

In 2022, we focused on issues that were important to you - our members. Those areas included: workforce development, shopping local, riverfront redevelopment, advocacy, making connections and building relationships.

As we move into 2023, our commitment to our members remains the same. We will work diligently to help your business or organization thrive, and make sure the Sauk Valley business community's voice is heard at the local, state, and national level.

***Kris Noble Executive Director***

## Membership at a glance:

**406 members representing 13,183 employees in 31 cities**

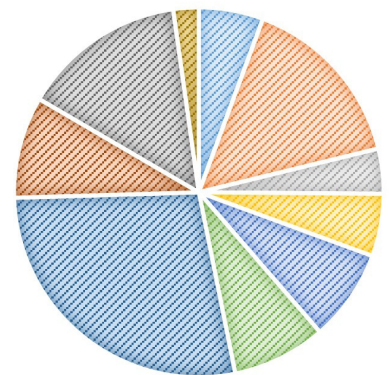
93% retention rate

48 New Members in 2022

47 Ribbon Cuttings celebrating new members & landmark occasions

12 Customer Service Awards given to members

- Education
- Agriculture
- Manufacturing
- Professional & Personal Services
- Retail
- Not for Profit
- Health Care
- Finance
- Restaurants
- Recreation & Tourism



## 2022 Board of Directors:

Lance Buser - Walmart DC #7024  
Tim Determan – Pinney Printing  
Pam Fluck – Self Help Enterprises  
Ryan Olson – Ward Murray Pace & Johnson  
Josh Johnson – Whiteside Area Career Center  
Dave Knie – Knie Appliance and TV  
Mike Loos – Edward Jones  
Rebecca Munoz Ripley – YWCA of the Sauk Valley  
Steve Munson  
Sheila Martinez – US Bank  
Jon Mandrell – Sauk Valley Community College  
Alejandro Rivera – RE/MAX Sauk Valley  
Geoff Wright – CGH Medical Center  
Amy Williamson – Holiday Inn Express and Suites  
Rick Turnroth – Turnroth Signs  
Violet Nava- Sauk Valley Bank

## A letter from the Board President:

In advancing the mission of the Sauk Valley Area Chamber in 2022, it was made possible through the support and loyalty of our members. We are proud to provide added value to your membership through resources, workforce development initiatives, events, and always advocating for our local businesses. Our size is our strength here in the Sauk Valley and we look forward to a great 2023 in providing even greater service to your business, your goals, and our outstanding community.

***Dr. Jon Mandrell***

## Community Investment:

Community Investment **\$37,000** given back, including:  
\$13,750 for scholarships  
\$23,250 to education, non profit organizations & service clubs

## At the Chamber:

Our committees do "the work" of the chamber, as public facing individuals who roll up their sleeves to support various causes and build connections between our membership base and the community. They are the individuals planning events, raising funds, and providing opportunities for growth with in the Sauk Valley.

Our committees include:

- Ambassadors
- Agri-business
- Education
- Golf
- Hispanic Business Leaders
- Professional Women's Network
- Sights & Sounds

More information on each committee can be found at [saukvalleyareachamber.com](http://saukvalleyareachamber.com)

**128 Individuals Volunteered on a chamber committee in 2022.**

**301 members volunteered at community events.**

## In the Community:

The SVACC collaborates with a number of groups in the Sauk Valley Area including:

- Regional Manufacturing Group
- Welcome Home Campaign
- Friends of the River Front Task Force
- Sauk Valley Leadership Program
- Whiteside County Healthier Communities Partnership
- NCI Works
- Sauk Valley Keystone Group





## 56th annual Charles Farnham Golf Outing.

Thanks to the incredible support of sponsors and 123 golfers, we can continue to fund scholarships for local students.

The **Education Committee** continued to develop the chamber's Certificate of Employability workshops. This year, 83 high school students completed the session.



## 68th annual Fiesta Parade.

HBLC hosted another wonderful celebration of Hispanic heritage for an estimated 2,500 people to experience.



## Steak Fry in the Country.

The Agri-business Committee hosted the infamous dessert auction, raising over \$30,000 for local ag scholarships and education.

The **Professional Women's Network** organized two incredible workshops and a fun networking event in 2022.



## Manufacturing Dinner.

Bringing together several sectors to celebrate manufacturing in the Sauk Valley proved yet again, how crucial the industry is to our region.

## Provide Value to Membership

In addition to the aforementioned committees that the Chamber provides as extra opportunities through your chamber membership, we continue to expand our offerings in growing visibility for your business or organization. We worked, and will continue to work, to get your business or organization seen in the community and help create connections with other members in ways such as networking at Business After Hours, event sponsorship opportunities, and the first Shop Local Open House at Northland Mall.

Throughout 2022 we continued to advocate for our members at the local, state, and national level. Through our partnerships with the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, the United States Chamber of Commerce, the SBAC, and the IMA, we were able to bring information to our members regarding issues, topics, and legislation that would impact them. In April, the USCC presented virtually to our members and provided an update on supply chain challenges and solutions that allowed our members to be part of this national conversation. In addition, through our relationships with elected officials, we continued to be the voice of business for the Sauk Valley.

## Strengthen the Local Community

The Chamber has made great strides toward community development and support this year through areas such as workforce development, riverfront revitalization, and manufacturing industry growth.

Within workforce development, the SVACC engages with the Whiteside Area Career Center CEO Program as an investor, serving on the advisory board, speaking with the classes on what a chamber does, and partnering with the CEO West class for the SVACC Annual Dinner.

The Child Care Task Force is a recent addition to the Chamber. After hearing from employers and community members that the lack of child care is a barrier to employment, the SVACC brought together community partners to form a task force. This initiative brought together 30 partners representing education, employers, childcare providers, and hiring agencies. There are no easy answers, but the SVACC is committed to advocating and working with these partners to develop solutions in 2023 and beyond.

Additionally, the Chamber has expanded essential skills and career pathways training. In 2022, three schools participated in the Chamber's Certificate of Employability workshop. 83 high school students completed the session, connecting with 18 SVACC members to learn more about employers and businesses in our area.

Riverfront Revitalization has been a priority for the SVACC for years as it is critical for the growth of our community. In 2022, the City of Sterling selected Gorman & Company and Studio GWA to develop the "Riverfront Reimagined" project, committed \$6 million to keep moving forward and also appointed a Riverfront Commission. The SVACC continues to be a voice for our members and the business community on this commission. Through data/information gathered by the Friends of the Riverfront Task Force in 2021, we were able to present amenities that were noted as high priority by the community for the riverfront park area.

## Enhance Community Leadership

Two leadership programs the chamber support are the Sauk Valley Community Leadership Program (SVCLP) and the Sauk Valley Keystone Initiative.

The SVCLP is a collaborative effort with Sauk Valley Community College, Discover Dixon, Rock Falls Chamber, and the SVACC. The program, which provides leadership training and dives into key community issues, has graduated 89 participants since its start in 2016.

The Sauk Valley Keystone Initiative began in 2018 and is made up of member ages 20-40. The group meets quarterly, discussing housing issues, riverfront revitalization, and local murals, and the Welcome Home campaign, which aims to attract residents to the Sauk Valley.