

# MILWAUKEE COMMERCE

Fall/Winter 2025 – Volume 104, No. 2

## **ONWARD**Milwaukee

*A path toward competing in a changing economy*

**Driving  
progress**  
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**Opportunity  
for all**  
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**Attract,  
retain, grow**  
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Reinhart has a long history of commitment to Metropolitan Milwaukee and the Southeastern Region of Wisconsin. This is our home, and we are deeply integrated into the business community, with strong relationships at all levels of government. For more than a century, we have been helping clients build their businesses here. We know this region is a great place to thrive and grow. The workforce is highly educated and has a tremendous work ethic. Our state has extensive infrastructure and a wealth of natural resources. All the ingredients are here for local companies looking to invest in new facilities, workforce expansion or growth through acquisition. Those qualities also draw national developers, manufacturers, retailers, distributors, franchisors and other enterprises entering Wisconsin for the first time. The MMAC and Milwaukee 7 play unique and valuable roles in

amplifying and supporting the unique benefits of doing business here, driving the creation of new jobs and expanded opportunities.

Like anywhere, of course, an experienced and knowledgeable guide is invaluable to navigating the intricacies of the local landscape. Developers need to clear zoning boards, planning commissions, and other arms of city and county government. Energy companies must seek approvals from state regulators. Manufacturers must comply with various environmental regulations, obtain relevant state and local permits, and manage the impact of state tax provisions. Retailers face state and local licensing rules, and distributors and franchisors will need to comply with statutory and regulatory regimes. Reinhart clients across all these industries and more have come to understand and value the power of our deep and specialized expertise, strong and long-standing relationships and a reputation for excellence, integrity and partnership. We are ready to apply that commitment for you.



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## Letter from

# The President

## Onward.

MMAC develops a path forward with  
regional strategic plan

January marks a double milestone — two years in this role and two years since I was entrusted with my first major initiative as President and CEO.

Then-Board Chair Austin Ramirez didn't waste any time asking us to develop a strategic plan for the region. That request wasn't about creating another report to sit on a shelf, but rather ensuring southeastern Wisconsin is prepared to compete and thrive in a rapidly changing economy.

We now have that document: Onward: A Plan for Regional Growth, recently approved by our full board and introduced to membership at our All Member Meeting in October.

### Why does this matter?

Because regions that plan and execute outperform those that don't. Across the country, cities and metros are investing in their futures with clear strategies to attract talent, grow their economies and improve quality of life. If we want southeastern Wisconsin to be the strongest economy in the Midwest, we must do the same — and do it with urgency.

This plan is built on three pillars: talent, growth and livability. These are not abstract ideas; they are foundational to our regional competitiveness. Without a skilled and growing workforce, we fall behind. Without strategic investment and business growth, we lose ground. Without livability, including housing, culture and infrastructure, we struggle to attract and retain talent.

During the course of developing this plan, we studied more than 50 peer regions. What we found is that Milwaukee has real strengths, especially in manufacturing, career opportunities and cultural assets. We also have real gaps, particularly in population growth, wealth disparities and educational outcomes.

This plan is our response. It's a framework to guide how we invest, collaborate and advocate. It's about aligning public and private efforts to ensure we're not just reacting to change but helping to shape it.

You can find the plan on our website. We invite you to engage with it, share your insights and help us move it forward. Implementing and executing this plan is something we must tackle as a collective to ensure we build a stronger, more competitive southeastern Wisconsin.



Scan the QR code  
to view the MMAC's  
Strategic Plan



**Dale Kooyenga**  
MMAC President & CEO



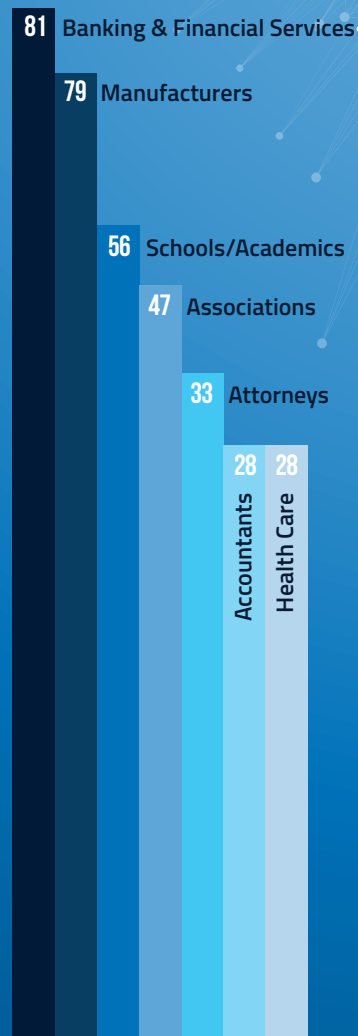
# DRIVING PROGRESS

The impact of our collective  
success in Milwaukee's business community

This dynamic snapshot of key metrics showcases the growth, engagement and achievements of our membership. They reveal the powerful story of our collective impact—driving progress, fostering collaboration and fueling positive change within Milwaukee's business community in 2025.

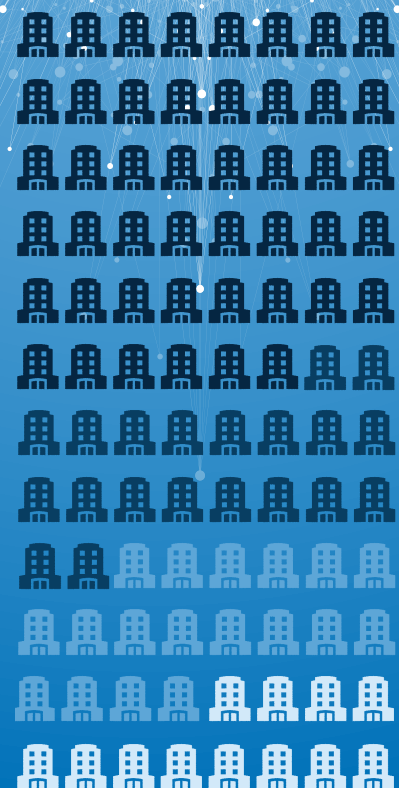


**22**  
**YEARS**  
AVERAGE LENGTH  
OF MEMBERSHIP



TOP INDUSTRIES

**1,958**  
MEMBER  
BUSINESSES



**BUSINESS SIZE**  
BASED ON NUMBER  
OF FULL-TIME  
EMPLOYEES

1-25
25-99
100-299
300+

**155** NEW  
MEMBERS  
SINCE NOV  
2024



## INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION

REPRESENTING

1,046,192

FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES



NUMBER OF EVENTS  
HELD IN PAST 12 MONTHS

100+

TOTAL NUMBER  
OF ATTENDEES

10,153

BUSINESSES USING UHC  
INSURANCE PROGRAM

1,306

TOTAL LIVES  
INSURED

36,035

PAC/CONDUIT CONTRIBUTIONS

\$36,750

M7 EXPANSIONS &  
RELOCATIONS PROJECTS



147

SINCE M7'S  
INCEPTION

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4,017

MMAC NEWSLETTER  
SUBSCRIBERS

7,279

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# OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

## Region of Choice 2.0 impacts area's talent, growth and livability

In 2018, the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce (MMAC) recognized a gap in the hiring and advancement of Black and Brown individuals in southeastern Wisconsin.

Region of Choice (ROC), a five-year initiative borne of that recognition, was created. About 130 companies pledged to increase the number of Black and Brown individuals they hire and promote. It was a success, meeting and surpassing its goals one year ahead of schedule.

The initiative's success prompted calls for a second phase, one that will cast a wider net and help the region attract and retain the talent necessary to compete in tomorrow's economy, an economy very different from the one that shaped earlier generations.

"ROC was a win for the companies that pledged, the individuals they hired and our economy as a whole," said **Dale Kooyenga**, MMAC President and CEO. "Moving forward, the principles of ROC won't be limited to a particular program but will make certain our regional economy is serving all members of our community. ROC will no longer be a stand-alone program. It will be interwoven across MMAC's talent, growth and livability priorities throughout the organization and the region."

One of those helping guide this process was **Jonas Prising**, Chairman and CEO of ManpowerGroup and co-chair of ROC 2.0.

*"ROC will no longer be a stand-alone program. It will be interwoven across MMAC's talent, growth and livability priorities throughout the organization and the region."*

"ROC shone a light on an issue we needed to be honest about, brought people together to address that challenge and provided real results. Our city and region are better for it," said Prising. "I'm confident ROC 2.0 will bring that same level of success and propel southeastern Wisconsin forward in the economy of tomorrow, benefiting everyone living and working in our community."

"ROC 2.0 will focus more broadly, approaching inclusion with a wider lens," said MMAC Vice President of Talent and Community Affairs **Corry Joe Biddle**. "While there will be metrics embedded, they will not be exclusive to any class or race. They will instead paint a picture of how we are faring compared to peer regions in attracting and retaining talent."

Biddle said the broader scope is meant to ensure that more employees can see themselves reflected in the work. That wider approach also signals that inclusion and belonging are regional priorities benefiting people across roles, identities and industries.

*"ROC shone a light on an issue we needed to be honest about, brought people together to address that challenge and provided real results."*

"Our competitiveness depends on our ability to attract and keep talent, and belonging is central to that," she said. "Ensuring that residents of all demographics feel connected to the region is essential to supporting future growth."

Population data and the talent pipeline those numbers impact, makes a broader reach imperative when designing ROC 2.0. Milwaukee's metro population has grown by less than 1% since 2010, while similar regions grew by more than 4%.

The shift in approach also coincides with a national dialogue that has grown more complicated. Employers today are navigating cultural pressures and new legal interpretations that have emerged since ROC began.

"ROC 2.0 reflects a very different moment than when we launched in 2018," Biddle said. "In phase one, goals made sense because they are the language of business. But today, goals can be misinterpreted as quotas, even though they never were. We adjusted our approach so the intent is clear, the risk is removed and employers can continue this work with confidence."

Biddle added that ROC 2.0 will convene organizational leaders, human resources professionals and other

**ROC  
2.0**

**TALENT**

**GROWTH**

**LIVABILITY**

**MMAC**



*"Our competitiveness depends on our ability to keep and attract talent and belonging is central to that," she said. "Ensuring that residents of all demographics feel connected to the region is essential to supporting future growth."*

stakeholders to focus on practical experience-sharing and skill-building. One priority will be strengthening management practices across participating organizations. She said corporate leadership was consistent in its view that managers have a disproportionate impact on culture and employee experience.

"CEOs were very clear that the biggest shifts in employee experience happen at the manager level. Managers sit at the heart of culture," she said. "If we can train hundreds, even thousands, of managers to lead inclusively and create belonging on their teams, the impact would be transformative."

Bolstering the talent pipeline by connecting participating companies to students will also be a focus.

"Our region is strongest when young people can see a future here," Biddle said. "Making it easier for employers to connect with schools helps students gain real exposure to careers and helps companies build a sustainable pipeline."

As ROC 2.0 unfolds, Biddle said the work will rely on broad participation and a clearer shared understanding of what inclusion and belonging look like in practice.

"This phase creates an opportunity for everyone to see themselves in the work," she said. "Inclusion and belonging are not responsibilities held by a small group. They benefit all of us."

The aim, Biddle noted, is to expand the sense of ownership so that employees of all identities and roles understand that inclusion is both their responsibility and their benefit.

"When people see that the culture they help build is the same culture that supports their growth, the region moves closer to workplaces where everyone can thrive," she said.

**Greg Wesley**, Greater Milwaukee Foundation President and CEO and co-chair of ROC 2.0, sees ROC 2.0 as the next chapter in strengthening our talent pipeline.

"People's lives were changed because of the important work done as part of ROC," said Wesley. "Looking at the first phase as a springboard for what's to come provides me even more hope. The fruits of this work will be seen in the next generation of talent, helping to make our region the most successful in the Midwest and beyond."

## Region of Choice as a throughline initiative permeates MMAC's work

Growing our region's economy and providing opportunities for all in southeastern Wisconsin go hand in hand at the MMAC. Throughout the association – be it our affiliations, advocacy, investments and elsewhere – the spirit of our Region of Choice initiative is evident.

### In our affiliates ...

#### **African American Leadership Alliance Milwaukee (AALAM)**

Founded in 2017, non-profit AALAM serves as a cross-sector network of community stakeholders dedicated to developing, supporting and positioning Milwaukee's talent pool. Its signature leadership program has helped develop the talent of hundreds of professionals in the region.

#### **Hispanic Collaborative**

Since 2019, the Hispanic Collaborative has worked to advance outcomes in the region with a vision of making the community one of the best in the country for Latinos. They do this by collaborating with regional stakeholders to drive innovation and systemic change to realize that vision.

#### **The Business Council**

This non-profit helps ethnically diverse businesses develop relationships and cultivate opportunities with the larger business community. Since its founding, it's provided benefit to well over 500 businesses.

### In our advocacy ...

#### **Scholarship funding tax credit**

MMAC's top priority in advocating for our membership in Wisconsin is ensuring the state opts in to an unprecedented federal tax credit for residents and businesses, which would help fund scholarships at schools of all kinds – public, private and charter.

#### **DACA Licensing**

MMAC supports occupational licensure for noncitizen Dreamers allowing businesses to tap into a highly motivated workforce in areas with critical labor shortages, fueling innovation and furthering economic growth.

### In our investments ...

#### **All-In Milwaukee**

MMAC, in partnership with UnitedHealthcare, made a four-year, \$600,000 commitment to All-In Milwaukee to support area students attending public, private and charter schools in the city and assist them on their paths to graduate from a local college and enter the workforce in southeastern Wisconsin.

#### **Milwaukee Development Corporation (MDC)**

Another affiliate of the MMAC, this catalytic real estate developer focuses much of its efforts on much-needed housing in disadvantaged communities throughout the city of Milwaukee, while also considering place-based development opportunities across the M7 region.



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# Navigating Economic Uncertainty in Commercial Real Estate Lending

As economic uncertainty persists, the commercial real estate (CRE) market is adjusting to new challenges. Banks like Wintrust Financial Corporation are refining their lending strategies to manage risk while supporting growth. Despite inflation, labor shortages, and interest rate volatility, Wintrust remains committed to financing development through disciplined underwriting and market-focused solutions.

Specializing in construction loans for multifamily, industrial, and medical office properties — typically with 12+ month timelines — Wintrust has strengthened its risk management practices. “We are placing greater emphasis on contingency and interest reserves within borrower budgets and conducting stress tests under higher interest rate scenarios,” said John Johannes, Executive Vice President at Wintrust. These measures ensure developers are prepared for cost overruns or lease-up delays, reducing the need for additional capital mid-project.

Following a post-pandemic boom fueled by low interest rates and strong housing demand, the commercial real estate market faces a temporary oversupply in sectors like speculative industrial, leading to elevated vacancies. Rising interest rates have further strained project viability and refinancing efforts. “At the same time, elevated interest rates have made it more difficult for new projects to achieve viable returns, leading to a slowdown in new starts,” Johannes explained.

In response, Wintrust has intensified its review of market fundamentals — including rent growth, vacancy rates, and employment trends — and is conducting more detailed stress testing around construction costs and lease-up periods.

Multifamily remains a bright spot, with stabilizing rents and declining vacancy rates, while office and speculative industrial developments pose higher risk due to shifting workplace trends and oversupply.

Still, Wintrust is well-capitalized and poised for strategic growth. The bank continues to prioritize multifamily projects, anticipating that slower construction in 2024–2025 could tighten housing supply and drive above-average rent growth.

To help borrowers navigate interest rate volatility, Wintrust supports the use of hedging tools like interest rate caps and swaps. These don’t lower borrowing costs but offer predictability. Loan evaluations remain rooted in fundamentals such as developer experience, liquidity, and capital structure.

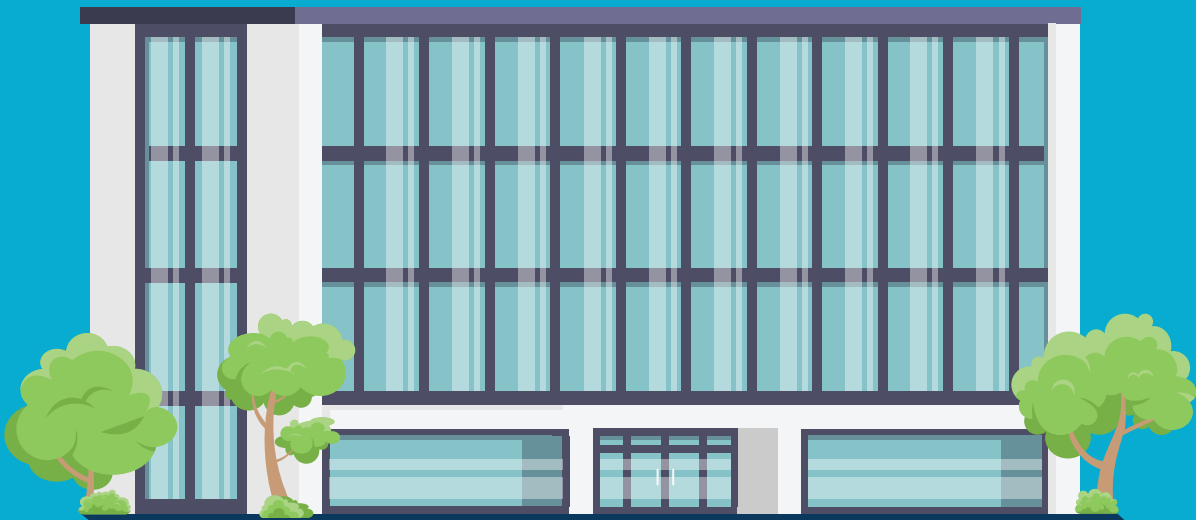
Looking ahead, Wintrust expects increased activity in multifamily, industrial, and medical office sectors. The build-to-rent (BTR) trend is also gaining traction, offering alternatives for renters seeking more space without the burdens of homeownership.

With a relationship-first approach, Wintrust aims to support clients through all market cycles. Johannes emphasized, “Our goal is to support our clients throughout the entire real estate cycle, not just during periods of growth.”

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# IGNITE THE SPARK



## ILLUMINATING THE PATH TO EDUCATION

### **Ignite the Spark award program honors Milwaukee educators**

In October, MMAC launched **Ignite the Spark**. This teacher appreciation award program highlights Milwaukee educators who are sparking curiosity, confidence and growth in the lives of their students.

This school year, MMAC will honor 10 classroom teachers representing all Milwaukee schools (public, private, charter) and all grade levels (elementary, middle and high school).

A nomination form was open to submission from Oct. 6 - Nov. 21. All educators with primary classroom teaching or co-teaching responsibilities operating in a building within the city limits of Milwaukee were eligible for consideration.

A selection committee composed of Milwaukee education trailblazers will review each nomination and select 10 honorees. The honorees will be announced during 2026 Teacher Appreciation Week. Each will receive an incentive package that includes, but is not limited to, a monetary contribution from MMAC to be invested into the classroom and/or to be used for professional development purposes, tokens of appreciation from the business community and an invitation to participate in meaningful dialogue around the state of education in Milwaukee.

Together, we are celebrating those individuals who are inspiring Milwaukee's next generation, one teacher at a time.

Have questions about Ignite the Spark?

Reach out to MMAC's Career Pathways Manager, **Dom Portis** at [dportis@mmac.org](mailto:dportis@mmac.org).



## BE THE SPARK

# BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

## Be the Spark: Teamship strengthens talent pipelines

By: Allie Shane, Content Manager

The "New Hire Readiness Report 2025," authored by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and College Board, compiles survey data from 500 hiring managers representative of small, mid-sized and large businesses. The report reveals the current sentiment concerning entry-level workforce preparedness.

Look at the following data points\*:

**97%** of survey respondents agree that high schools should teach more professional career skills such as communication, collaboration and critical thinking.

**83%** of survey respondents are more likely to hire an entry-level employee if they have previous internship or work-study experience.

**92%** of survey respondents said there should be more business courses in high school.

**84%** of survey respondents agree that most high school students are less prepared to enter the workforce compared to previous generations.

The report paints a clear picture. Hiring managers are eager to see prior professional experience, and ideally, this experience should begin at the high school level.

So how can our region's next generation gain real-world workplace experience and build the necessary skills to prepare them for the workforce?

**Be the Spark: Teamship** is the answer.

Powered by the nonprofit organization District C, the Be the Spark: Teamship reimagines a typical internship experience. High schools are paired with business partners to solve real business problems.

**Teamship benefits both students and business partners in meaningful, tangible ways. Students gain real-world experience while building the collaboration and problem-solving skills essential for their future careers.**

*Danielle Mayber, District C*

"Teamship benefits both students and business partners in meaningful, tangible ways. Students gain real-world experience while building the collaboration and problem-solving skills essential for their future careers," said District C Senior Partnerships Manager **Danielle Mayber**. "Meanwhile, businesses invest directly in their local talent pipeline and gain fresh perspectives from the next generation. It's a true partnership model that develops future talent and creates lasting impact on students' lives and the community."

Elkhorn Area High School recently concluded its first Teamship cycle.

***I watched one of the pitches and you couldn't tell that those were high school kids. It was incredible. The dialogue that occurred between the student groups and the employer was just like any organization or employer would have around problem-solving.***

**Chris Trottier**, Elkhorn Area School District

"We believe in ensuring all kids are future-ready, and part of that is getting them experiential opportunities to interact with employers..." said Elkhorn Area School District's Director of Strategic Partnerships, **Chris Trottier**.

Trottier met with the Elkhorn Area High School principal to establish a leadership course taught by two career and technical education instructors. This course served as the foundation for the Teamship experience. Approximately 15 Elkhorn students who participate in career and technical student organizations, like Skills USA, DECA and FCCLA, registered for the class.

Advocate Health Care was chosen as Elkhorn's business partner. The students were tasked with helping Advocate create an organizational system that would enable employees to find and process documentation following its merger with Atrium Health.

The students broke into small groups where they explored the business problem, met with Advocate to ask questions and presented a business pitch to the employer.

"I watched one of the pitches and you couldn't tell that those were high school kids," said Trottier. "It was incredible. The dialogue that occurred between the student groups and the employer was just like any organization or employer would have around problem-solving."

**Kevin Stagl**, a solutions architect in Advocate's information technology department, shared his personal experience working with the Elkhorn students.

"I really enjoyed working with the students. Seeing their creativity and problem-solving skills in action was very inspiring, and they generated many good ideas. I spoke with a group of students after the presentations concluded, and they mentioned that the problem statement, which Danielle and I worked on, took them out of their comfort zone and helped them realize how they had to think differently than in their classes or other extracurricular activities to come up with some possible solutions. I think this program is a great example of why it's important to offer students a variety of perspectives and opportunities as they prepare for their future careers."

Trottier hopes that this is the first of many Teamship experiences at Elkhorn Area High School.

***I spoke with a group of students after the presentations concluded, and they mentioned that the problem statement took them out of their comfort zone and helped them realize how they had to think differently than in their classes or other extracurricular activities to come up with some possible solutions.***

**Kevin Stagl**, Advocate Health Care

Want to get involved?

Contact **DOM PORTIS**, Career Pathways Manager  
at [dportis@mmac.org](mailto:dportis@mmac.org)

To learn more about  
Be the Spark: Teamship, visit:  
**MMAC.ORG/**  
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DISTRICT 

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\* [uschamber.com/workforce/new-hire-readiness-report-2025](https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/new-hire-readiness-report-2025)





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# A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF MMAC'S GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS TEAM

By: **JJ Sherman**, Director of Governmental Affairs & **Andrew Davis**, VP of Governmental Affairs

Representing the business community in Wisconsin's State Capitol means no two weeks are ever the same. From policy drafting and testimony to countless conversations with lawmakers, our MMAC Governmental Affairs team works to ensure the voice of Milwaukee-area employers is heard where decisions are made. Here's a glimpse into one recent week.

## MONDAY

The week kicks off in the office with a stack of bills and a long to-do list. From drafting testimony on emerging issues like artificial intelligence and data centers to reviewing proposals on teacher licensure, student eligibility for school choice and research and development (R&D) tax credits, the team spends the day preparing materials and strategy ahead of a busy stretch of legislative hearings.

## TUESDAY

An early drive to Madison kicks off a packed day. We start with a series of meetings with legislators to discuss priorities for the session before heading into the days round of hearings. Vice President of Governmental Affairs Andrew Davis testifies in support of extending Wisconsin's R&D tax credits, a bill that will strengthen Wisconsin's incentives to bring more innovation across manufacturing and technology sectors to our region. Across the Capitol, Director of Governmental Affairs, JJ Sherman provides testimony before the Senate Education Committee on legislation to allow rigorous summer school instruction to count toward student-teaching requirements — a practical fix to help ease the state's teacher shortage. Back in Milwaukee, Governmental Affairs Specialist Caitlin Kerschner is keeping an eye on local policy. She attends a Milwaukee Common Council meeting and closes out the day tracking the Wisconsin DOT's I-794 interchange public information session, ensuring MMAC remains engaged in key infrastructure discussions close to home.

## THURSDAY

With Andrew meeting locally with legislators on K-12 and workforce issues, JJ is back in Madison for another round of hearings and meetings. The morning begins with discussions on housing and economic development legislation, followed by providing testimony before the Assembly Education Committee. The bill, known informally as the "Once In, Always In" fix, ensures siblings can stay together in Wisconsin's school choice programs regardless of minor year-over-year changes in their income, a problem MMAC President and CEO Dale Kooyenga first encountered while helping a friend navigate a frustrating income-based eligibility gap. Later that day, the committee unanimously advances the companion bill on summer-school student teaching that was heard earlier in the week by the Senate. The day ended with notification that the Senate committee planned to advance the same bill on Monday the next week!

Meanwhile, Caitlin followed the adoption of the Milwaukee County budget after tracking weeks of community hearings on the details of the proposal.

## WEDNESDAY

The midweek pace doesn't slow down. The day begins with more meetings with legislators to keep several initiatives on track. Andrew heads to the Assembly Committee on Science, Technology and AI to testify on how Wisconsin can responsibly lead in data infrastructure and innovation. Meanwhile, JJ tracks a Senate hearing on legislation improving access to the federal tax credit for Scholarship Granting Organizations, an issue MMAC has led on in Wisconsin to expand educational opportunity for students. The afternoon brings more coordination with legislative offices and partners to line up support for upcoming votes. Back in Milwaukee, Caitlin participates in the MMAC Talent Summit, connecting workforce, education and business leaders to discuss talent pipeline strategies vital to the region's economic future.

## FRIDAY

The week ends the way it began, with follow-ups with legislators and members, policy research, tracking the Milwaukee Common Council adoption of the city budget and plenty of writing. There's time to catch up on notes, refine next week's priorities and reflect on a full few days of progress made on behalf of MMAC members, before gearing up to do it all again next week.



# ATTRACT, RETAIN, GROW

## A record year for the Milwaukee 7 Regional Partnership

If there is one thing companies discover upon their first meeting with the Milwaukee 7 Regional Partnership (M7) team, it is that there is no place like southeastern Wisconsin.

From a highly skilled workforce and centralized location to a diverse economy filled with high-performing industries like mechanical manufacturing, biotechnology and finance, this region is undoubtedly a hub of growth and innovation.

2025 was a standout year for M7. Under the leadership of Executive Director **Rebecca Gries**, the partnership assisted with eight (and counting) expansion and relocation projects in the M7 region.

Learn more about a few of these success stories:



### PEWAUKEE



Norwalk, Conn.-based Terex Corporation is a global leader in machinery design and manufacturing for the construction, maintenance and industrial sectors. In June, the corporation announced plans to expand its Pewaukee facility at N4W22610 Bluemound Road, to manufacture bucket trucks and digger derricks for the electric utility industry. Terex's investment in a new 60,000-square-foot production space is part of the manufacturer's strategic initiative to meet increasing customer demand.

**Projected impact: 100+ jobs**



### OAK CREEK



In June, exhibition and event industry leader Derse announced plans to expand operations with a new state-of-the-art facility in Oak Creek. The expansion will consolidate Derse's current Milwaukee headquarters and its Waukegan, Ill., facility into one site, creating a centralized hub for company operations. The facility is projected to open in 2027.

**Projected impact: 240 jobs**



### FRANKLIN



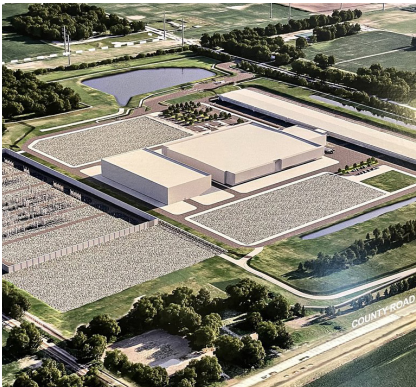
In June, the robotics manufacturer, Yaskawa America Inc. – Drives & Motion Division, announced plans to consolidate all Wisconsin and Illinois-based manufacturing and office locations into a single campus and North American headquarters. The 800,000-square-foot Franklin campus will serve as a hub for the domestic manufacturing of robot arms and controllers, shipping directly to customers and integrating into U.S. production lines.

**Projected impact: 700 jobs**





## MOUNT PLEASANT



In September, global technology leader Microsoft announced plans to further expand its planned data center campus in Mount Pleasant. This news comes on the heels of Microsoft's May 2024 confirmation of a \$3.3 billion investment by the end of 2026. Microsoft's commitment to phase two of development means an additional \$4 billion investment in the M7 region.

**Projected impact: 3000+ construction jobs during peak construction and hundreds of permanent jobs upon project completion**



## PORT WASHINGTON



Vantage Data Centers, a global provider of hyperscale data center campuses, in partnership with technology companies Oracle and OpenAI, announced plans in October to develop a data center campus in Port Washington. The campus, named Lighthouse, is a part of OpenAI and Oracle's goal of securing 10 gigawatts of planned IT capacity nationwide by the end of 2025. Campus construction is expected to be completed in 2028.

**Projected impact: 1,000 jobs**



## LOCATION TBD



In November, Rockwell Automation Inc., a global leader in industrial automation and digital transformation, announced plans to build a new manufacturing facility. Spanning over 1 million square feet, the manufacturing and warehouse space will house advanced automation, robotics and digital systems. Rockwell Automation previously announced plans to invest \$2 billion in plants, digital infrastructure and talent over the next five years. This facility is a pivotal step in this plan.

**Projected impact: TBD**

# SHARED VALUES

## Yaskawa America CEO, a Milwaukee native, provides thoughts on move to Franklin

Midwestern work ethic. It's a quality not lost on Yaskawa, a global manufacturer of industrial robotics, motion control products and more. For more than 50 years, their North American headquarters have been located just south of the state line in Waukegan, Ill.

Mike Knapek, CEO of Yaskawa America, said the company is hoping to further capitalize on that same work ethic over the next decade as it expands its footprint in southeastern Wisconsin, and in the process, move those headquarters to Franklin.

"The people are great, the salt of the earth, hard-working, you can trust them, and I believe those values are the same that Yaskawa has," he said of the regional workforce. "It's the same values we want to have long-term as a company."

*"The people are great, the salt of the earth, hard-working, you can trust them, and I believe those values are the same that Yaskawa has."*

**Mike Knapek**  
CEO, Yaskawa America



The transition, expected to be complete by 2035, will add about 700 jobs to the region.

"Companies across the globe are choosing Wisconsin to grow and expand because they know we have the best workers making the best products," said Wisconsin Gov. **Tony Evers** at the time of the expansion announcement. "Wisconsin is continuing to strengthen our position as a leader in advanced manufacturing, and we're glad to support this expansion and Yaskawa's continued success in our state."

Yaskawa's expansion in southeastern Wisconsin was supported by the Milwaukee 7 Regional Partnership, one of its eight corporate attraction or expansion wins in the region in 2025. Those wins will generate more than 1,600 full-time jobs and nearly \$20 billion in capital investment.

"We're delighted that Yaskawa has chosen southeast Wisconsin for its expansion and for the new location of its North American headquarters," said **Gale Klappa**, co-chair of Milwaukee 7, at the time



***"Companies across the globe are choosing Wisconsin to grow and expand because they know we have the best workers making the best products."***

**Tony Evers**  
Wisconsin Governor



of the expansion announcement. "This exciting investment is a testament to the region's strengths in automation and advanced manufacturing."

Upon completion, Yaskawa's Franklin campus will include its headquarters, labs, manufacturing, training and packaging facilities, a data center and space for production of its semiconductors and robotics.

Knappek said the move has been a years-long process, and one necessitated by more space due to consumer demand. There was also a need to find space for a campus that would allow for flexibility – one that the Franklin campus, when complete, will offer.

In addition to these considerations, Knappek said Wisconsin's business-friendly climate also played a role in the company's decision.

"It's the strength of (Wisconsin), the strength of its economic situation," said Knappek.

By 2035, he said about 65 percent of the company's North American operations will take place in southeastern Wisconsin.

***"This exciting investment is a testament to the region's strengths in automation and advanced manufacturing."***

**Gale Klappa**  
Co-chair, Milwaukee 7



**YASKAWA**  
[yaskawa.com](https://yaskawa.com)





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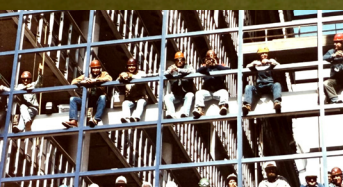
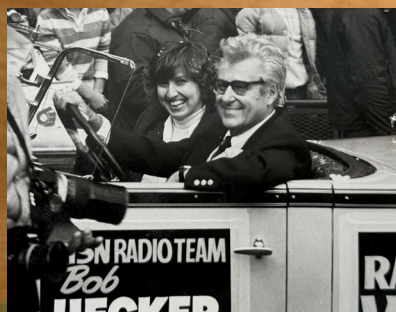




# ONE FOR THE AGES

## A look back at MMAC's iconic 1982 Brewers parade

By: Allie Shane, Content Manager



Let's go back in time.

It's October 1982, and after a remarkable season, the Milwaukee Brewers have secured their place in the World Series. The city is buzzing with excitement as players like Robin Yount, Paul Molitor and Ted Simmons take on the St. Louis Cardinals. The Brewers lose to the Cardinals in the seventh game, but the pride you feel for your hometown team is stronger than ever before. You celebrate alongside 100,000 other fans at MMAC's post-series parade.

When we imagine periods of history like the 1982 Brewers season, we are reminded of how Milwaukee is more than just office buildings and bustling highways; Milwaukee is a community of people who win and lose...together. Milwaukee is a team.

In an interview with former MMAC staff member Hilda Heglund, she shared what it was like to plan and execute the 1982 Brewers parade as head of the chamber's special events.

"The excitement for the team grew every single game," said Heglund.

Live game telecasts reached 22 countries, and listeners worldwide tuned into the radio play-by-play. John Duncan, the MMAC President at the time, wrote the following in MMAC's 1982 issue of *Milwaukee Commerce*:

***"Our champion Brewers' participation in the playoffs and the World Series brought hundreds of thousands of dollars into the community, millions in national publicity and a tremendous psychological boost for all of us."***

According to Heglund, excited fans would form parades in the streets after each World Series game. When the idea formed for an MMAC parade down Wisconsin Avenue, the decision to make it happen— win or lose — was a no-brainer.

In under 10 days, Heglund worked out the parade planning with the Brewers' Marketing Director Dick Hackett and Milwaukee Police Chief Harold Breier. It was decided that the police band would lead the parade, and players would ride in antique cars volunteered by Wally Rank, a prominent figure in Milwaukee's car scene.

On the morning of Oct. 21, 1982, just hours after losing the World Series, all of the players were loaded onto coach buses and taken to First Wisconsin National Bank, the parade's staging area.

"They were a rather glum crew," said Heglund in reference to the players.

However, their demeanor changed when they were greeted by the overwhelming support of fans.

"As soon as they saw the crowd, they were all happy," she said.

Flags, signs and other décor generated a festive atmosphere. Excited fans lined Wisconsin Avenue, cheering the players on.

The parade began at the corner of North Cass Street and Wisconsin Avenue, traveling all the way down to 10th Street before the players and other participants traveled to what was once the Milwaukee County Stadium for a subsequent appreciation event.

It was "one for the ages," said Heglund. "It was like no parade will ever be again, I think."



# A CONVERSATION ON LIVABILITY

## Area leaders discuss what sets MKE apart

What do you think of when asked what makes a region livable? Is it the schools? The tax climate? The weather? How about professional sports, the dining scene, outdoor recreation?

A region's livability is all of those things ... and more.

At MMAC's 164th All Member Meeting, MMAC President & CEO Dale Kooyenga convened a panel discussion of long-time residents and leaders in the region – Baird Chairman and CEO Steve Booth, Husco CEO Austin Ramirez and Visit Milwaukee President and CEO Peggy Williams-Smith – about this very subject.

The following conversation was edited for length.

**MMAC President Dale Kooyenga (DK):** When I have CNBC on, I often see Baird next to these prominent New York City firms, large firms from London and others from around the world. You somehow attract international talent right here in Milwaukee. How do you attract that talent?

**Baird Chairman and CEO Steve Booth (SB):** I'm now on my 31st year at Baird and my 30th year in Milwaukee. I moved from Chicago. When I moved, I learned the adage, it's really hard to get people to move to Milwaukee, but it's even harder, once they're here, to get them to move away. ... There's never been a better time to be in Milwaukee, and Milwaukee has so much going on. ... Collectively, our city has never been in a better place to attract young talent and keep them, whereas 30 years ago, I don't think we were as exciting as a Chicago. ... Today, downtown Milwaukee, regions around the city, there's a lot of excitement. It's just a great place to be for a young person, and we have a lot of young people coming to Baird as a result.

**DK:** Peggy, how do you pitch Milwaukee in your role?

**Visit Milwaukee President and CEO Peggy Williams-Smith (PWS):**

... We are in a place that is so accessible, that's what I talk about when speaking with people living here and moving here, not just to visit. We're one phone call away from speaking to an elected official. ... Someone just out of school can talk to a CEO, just one degree away from meeting someone who can make a difference and an impact in their life. That's so important when we're talking about how Milwaukee can remain successful.

**DK:** Austin, your family has dived in headfirst on the education front. Can you just talk about how that ties into livability in the region?

**Husco CEO Austin Ramirez (AR):** ... I think Milwaukee's a fabulous place to raise a family and have kids with its cost of living, access to all the fun things in the city, great sports and all of the things we've talked about. ... Unfortunately, there are too many people not in this room tonight who don't have access to these things because we have such a broken K-12 system in this city. That's a big focus of you personally, MMAC and everyone on this stage. We have to expand the things that make Milwaukee so amazing by giving access to all the children and all the families in this community. That's why we're so passionate about K-12.

**DK:** All of that really comes down to a lot of policy. We have candidates for governor here, alderman, alderwomen, senators, representatives. Let's say you were in any of those positions, what needs to be done to get us to the next level?

**AR:** For me, so much of this boils down to education. All of those elected officials, everyone in this room, need to take it personally. We should be ashamed of the disparities that exist in this city. There's no one single thing that's going to solve it all, but if we all take personal responsibility for making it better, then we'll fix it.





**PWS:** I've been working downtown for 30 years, and I've seen the incredible transformation of what's happened in the city. I know that we have problems, and I also know that people are working behind the scenes, but I've never seen a more collaborative approach than the one I've seen in the last five years. I've seen more people talking about the issues that we have to face; more people doing things to talk about them together. ... I have every hope within the next decade we'll find real solutions to the issues we're facing.

**SB:** What Austin said is really the fundamental issue facing our region. Taking a step back, I am a finance guy, and what I consider when looking at recruiting talent ... in southeastern Wisconsin, we're so close to Chicago, and you look at all the development that's taking place in Kenosha County, Microsoft in Racine, we have a fundamental disparity in our income tax rate relative to Illinois. Our top rate is 7.65 percent. Illinois is 4.95. That is a 55 percent differential. That matters to people who can live on one side of the border versus the other. For us, in terms of recruiting talent, recruiting great companies to locate here, it does matter. I know it was discussed in the most recent budget package, but I would love to see that gap narrowed.

**DK:** On a personal level, you've lived in many different places, in your career you've had the opportunity to move to different places. Why are you staying here? Why are you committed to Milwaukee?

**AR:** It's family. It's business. It's roots. This is home. We're committed to this city and this region and we're not leaving.

**PWS:** We are a city that punches above its weight in so many aspects. ... We've been on a national stage. Having the NBA championship in 2021, having the Brewers on this incredible playoff run, all of the things that people are looking for when searching for a place to come. The first time anyone comes to Milwaukee as a visitor, and how we sell the city is so important. ... Gabrielle (Finley-Hazle, Aurora Health Care President) came on stage earlier and said she moved here three years ago from Arizona, and people asked why. We need to stop saying why. We need to say that's great; we need more people like you here. That's what we need to continue to do.

**SB:** I would say, beyond what we've already talked about, there's no better place. Baird operates in 200 locations throughout the United States. I get to see a lot of different places and, frankly, relative to a lot of places we're operating, we're such a great place to live. While we focus on our issues, and we do need to focus on those, relative to what other cities are dealing with, Milwaukee is doing fantastically well. Point No. 2, one of the many reasons we love it here: We have great people who are here. We have great friends. Our children have great friends. It is just a great place to live, work and play.





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# 2025: A year of growth for the MMAC team

This year, the organization welcomed seven new employees to the office. Each staff member brings strong expertise in their specific field and, more importantly, a love for the region in which they live, work and play. As MMAC works to strengthen southeastern Wisconsin through its key pillars – talent, growth and livability – each individual will play a pivotal role in the organization’s success.



## **Amira Adams | Program Specialist**

As Program Specialist, Amira focuses on program management, event coordination, administration and member engagement. She is key in the support and implementation of young professional and talent development programming. Before joining MMAC, Adams held roles at local organizations including United Way, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Alive MKE/Milwaukee Fellows and the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee. Adams received her bachelor’s degree in communications and a double minor in creative writing and community engagement and activism (CENA) from Alverno College.



## **Becky Glass | Events and Programs Manager**

From coordinating monthly Business After Hours networking socials to large-scale events like the 2025 All Member meeting – and everything in between – MMAC Events and Programs Manager Becky Glass has a passion for creating exceptional experiences for MMAC members. She brings over 15 years of event and hospitality experience to her new role and holds degrees from Milwaukee Area Technical College and Wisconsin Lutheran College.



## **Caitlin Kerschner | Government Affairs Specialist**

Caitlin joined MMAC with a passion for public policy and governance. Among many experiences, Kerschner was a policy intern for the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities, worked with the Minnesota Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party as a campaign organizer and was a policy intern at The Hub Project. In her current role, Kerschner will focus on K-12 education and infrastructure policy at the local level. Kerschner received a bachelor’s degree in political science and public administration from Winona State University and a master’s degree in public policy from American University.



## **Megan Manian | Membership Program Manager**

Megan joined MMAC’s staff with over 15 years of experience leading initiatives that connect businesses, educators and communities across the region. In her role at MMAC, she oversees and grows the organization’s Networking Forum program. Manian earned a bachelor’s degree in business management from Cardinal Stritch University and an associate degree in graphic communications from Moraine Park Technical College.



## **Jane Mullarkey | Manager of Corporate Attraction and Expansion, Milwaukee 7**

As the M7 Manager of Corporate Attraction and Expansion, Jane Mullarkey assists with corporate attraction and expansion projects, coordinating marketing and communication as well as participating in state, county and local events to show support and commitment to partners. She is well-versed in the world of nonprofits, having spent three years at the International Parkinson Movement Disorder Society. Mullarkey holds a bachelor’s degree in communication and nutrition from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.



## **Dom Portis | Career Pathways Manager**

The future of the region’s business community is dependent on strong talent pipelines. MMAC Career Pathways Manager Dom Portis is a liaison between K-12 education and the business community. His leadership of the Be the Spark program, the Bucyrus Industry Readiness Initiative and the Career Readiness Program ensures that students can explore career options and develop key workplace skills. Before MMAC, he spent eight years on United Way’s Community Schools team. Portis graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a degree in community education and engagement.



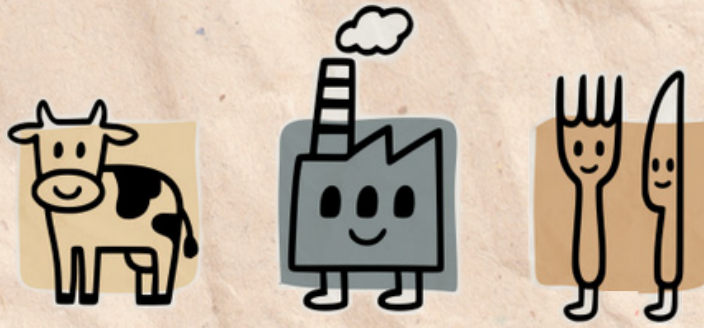
## **JJ Sherman | Director of Governmental Affairs**

From working as a committee clerk and legislative assistant to serving as senior policy advisor to the Wisconsin Senate president, JJ Sherman brings a decade of experience in legislative processes, strategic communications and public policy. As the Director of Governmental Affairs, he is focused on fostering legislative relationships at all levels of government to advocate on behalf of MMAC and its members. Sherman received a bachelor’s degree in political science from Arizona State University.

See the rest of MMAC’s amazing team by scanning the qr code:







# FARM-FACTORY-FORK

## GETTING A TASTE FOR THE INDUSTRY FaB event introduces students to career pathways

By: Allie Shane, Content Manager



What do you associate with Wisconsin? For some, it's cheese curds and brats, while for others it's beer and custard.

The strength of the state's food and beverage industry is undeniable, but to continue to transform farm-fresh ingredients into the delicious food and beverage items widely enjoyed, it is important to educate younger generations on the industry's career pathways. Food and Beverage (FaB) Wisconsin did just that at its annual **Farm-Factory-Fork** career discovery event.

High school students from across the state gathered at Lakeland University for a morning of exploration and connection. FaB Executive Director **Gina Balke**, university faculty and a Lakeland alum kicked off the event with an informational session about the importance of the industry and how universities like Lakeland offer industry-specific programming.



"We've always been recession-proof; people will still purchase food at higher prices and now we can say the industry is pandemic-proof. While other industries were told to stay home and suffered layoffs during the pandemic, food and beverage manufacturing companies were deemed essential and employees went to work every day during the pandemic to ensure our country was supplied with food and beverages. Food and beverage manufacturing is a solid industry within Wisconsin," said Balke.

Preparing individuals for a career within the industry begins with teaching the necessary skills. Lakeland's food safety and quality undergraduate program is the first of its kind. The program's blend of science and business-based curriculum prepares students for a successful career in food manufacturing.



"We have an amazing food safety program," said Lakeland University President **Beth Borgen**, D.B.A. "Within a 30-mile radius, there are several major employers that want our students to study food safety and quality."

Many of these employers participated in the career discovery galleria portion of Farm-Factory-Fork. Industry leaders and local universities set up booths in the Lakeland gym. Students visited each table, asked questions and participated in hands-on learning activities.

"Our state is home to nearly 19,000 food and beverage companies. These companies make Wisconsin one of the best places to start and grow a food and beverage industry career and business. We hold this event every year to encourage students to consider our industry as a career choice for their future," said Balke.

One business in attendance was FaB and MMAC member Sargento Food Inc. For over 70 years, the company has operated out of its Plymouth headquarters, growing to become a leader in cheese production.



***"Our state is home to nearly 19,000 food and beverage companies. These companies make Wisconsin one of the best places to start and grow a food and beverage industry career and business. We hold this event every year to encourage students to consider our industry as a career choice for their future."***

***Gina Balke, Executive Director, FaB Wisconsin***

"The benefits of doing events like this are for us to really connect with early talent and help them see the opportunities and careers there are in the food and beverage industry," remarked **Anne Troka**, Sargento's Senior Manager of Community and Workforce Development. "For us at Sargento, we have over 2,500 employees and over 13 different departments. Within those departments, there are many different teams, so there are so many careers for students that they don't even realize until they come to something like this."

Across the gym at the Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center table, students learned about agriculture career pathways and participated in a cow ultrasound simulation.

"At Farm Wisconsin, our goal is to help connect the dots from farm to table, and we are so happy to share the story on behalf of not only our farmers, but our processors here in the state," said Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center's Brand Manager **Abigail Winkel**. "Offering students a chance to explore careers along that agriculture career pathway is really important and essential to the success of agriculture in the future, and at Farm Wisconsin, we're proud to play a role in that process."

In addition to the career discovery galleria, students enjoyed a tour of Lakeland University and its state-of-the-art food safety and quality lab, as well as a "Let's learn about cheese!" presentation.







# 2025 HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE STARTUP ECOSYSTEM

By: **Anna Lardinois**, Managing Editor  
Milwaukee Startup News

This year marked steady, strategic progress for the Milwaukee 7 startup community as institutions, founders and industry partners worked together to expand opportunity and capitalize on regional innovations.

## New Anchor for Kenosha

In October, the region celebrated the grand opening of the **Kenosha Innovation Center (KIC)**. The 64,000-square-foot, \$23.5 million facility sits on a 3.5-acre portion of the former Chrysler Corporation engine plant site in the heart of Kenosha and marks a new anchor for the larger Kenosha Innovation Neighborhood redevelopment.



The facility is focused on economic development, offering support to entrepreneurs, startups and established companies. At the

ribbon-cutting, **Tony Evers** praised the project as a “game-changer” for southeast Wisconsin and underscored that the state’s Neighborhood Investment Fund helped catalyze the community-led vision.

## Microsoft AI Co-Innovation Labs

### Manufacturing Innovation

In June, the region made a bold leap forward with the unveiling of the **Microsoft Corporation AI Co-Innovation Lab** on the campus of **University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee (UWM)**, in partnership with the **Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC)** and **TitledownTech**. This marks Microsoft’s first AI lab focused exclusively on manufacturing innovation.

The facility allows Wisconsin-based manufacturers, startups and university teams to collaborate with top-tier AI engineers, prototype real-world solutions, from real-time fault detection to multilingual logistics assistants, without leaving the city. The lab exemplifies how the Milwaukee 7 region is shifting from planning for innovation to hosting the kind of foundational infrastructure that attracts and sustains it.

## Great Lakes Economy

Wisconsin-based startup powerhouse **gener8tor** was awarded \$13.4 million by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to launch the **Great Lakes Innovation Accelerator**. Over the next four years, the program is slated to support around 60 startups with non-dilutive funding, intensive mentorship and access to regional testing facilities and industrial partnerships focused on water technology, manufacturing supply chain and coastal resilience across the Great Lakes region.

This grant connects high-tech startup activity with the region’s expertise in manufacturing, freshwater systems and the Great Lakes economy.

**gener8tor**





### Startup Standout

One of the region's standout startup success stories this year was **Atomix Logistics**, which earned national recognition after ranking No. 9 on the 2025 Inc. 5000 list of America's fastest-growing private companies. With a remarkable three-year growth rate of 11,687%, Atomix claimed the title of Wisconsin's fastest-growing company. Founded in 2020 by **Austin Kreinz**, Atomix provides customized fulfillment solutions for e-commerce brands, a sector that continues to expand as online retail evolves.

The bootstrapped company's rapid growth continues. Atomix recently announced it is moving to a 150,000-square-foot facility in Oak Creek, with an additional location near Salt Lake City, and plans to expand into new markets.

### Tech Transfer Momentum

A key component of Milwaukee's innovation surge is the collaborative technology transfer teams from institutions like **Medical College of Wisconsin (MCW)**, **University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (UWM)**, **Concordia University Wisconsin (CUW)**, **Marquette University (MU)**, **Versiti** and **Milwaukee School of Engineering (MSOE)**.

The network showcases the most promising innovations at the annual **First Look Forum**, an event that brings together investors, industry leaders and budding entrepreneurs to showcase breakthroughs poised for real-world impact. The 2025 forum featured emerging technologies from robotics to RNA therapies to data science tools for hunger relief, underscoring the importance of universities in launching innovations into scalable ventures.

### First Look Forum



Wisconsin  
Technology  
Council

### Startup Visibility

Emerging companies in the Milwaukee 7 region had multiple opportunities this year to step into the spotlight and connect with customers, investors and peers. The **Summerfest Tech Pitch Competition** continued to grow, while the **Wisconsin Governor's Business Plan Contest** and the **Early Stage Symposium**, hosted by the **Wisconsin Technology Council**, provided structured pathways for founders to refine their pitches and gain exposure.

Locally, the MKE Tech Hub Coalition's **FOR-M** program offered early-stage support and community, and the **Midwest Founders Community** hosted regular Founders Forums that brought entrepreneurs together to share insights and build relationships. Together, these platforms help ensure that ideas developed here are seen, supported and given room to grow.

The progress made this year reflects a region investing in the future. As partnerships strengthen and new technologies develop, Milwaukee is well-positioned to launch the next generation of innovative startups.

**MKE  
Startup  
News**

Find more stories from the  
startup community at  
**MKEStartup.news**





## RIPPLES OF IMPACT

# MMAC's ALL MEMBER MEETING

**1** Nearly 1,200 regional business leaders gathered for MMAC's 164<sup>th</sup> All Member Meeting. Attendees heard local business and community leaders celebrate groundbreaking progress, address persistent challenges and set a path toward securing our region's future. Pictured: **Austin Ramirez**, Husco



**2. Andrea Medved** and **Kathy McLees**, MMAC; **Sophia McLees**, Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin; **Mindy Taffel**, TaffTel Consulting; **Linsay Fox**, MDC



**3. Brian Knox** and **Kris Naidl**, Laughlin Constable Inc.



**4. Gregory Wesley**, Greater Milwaukee Foundation

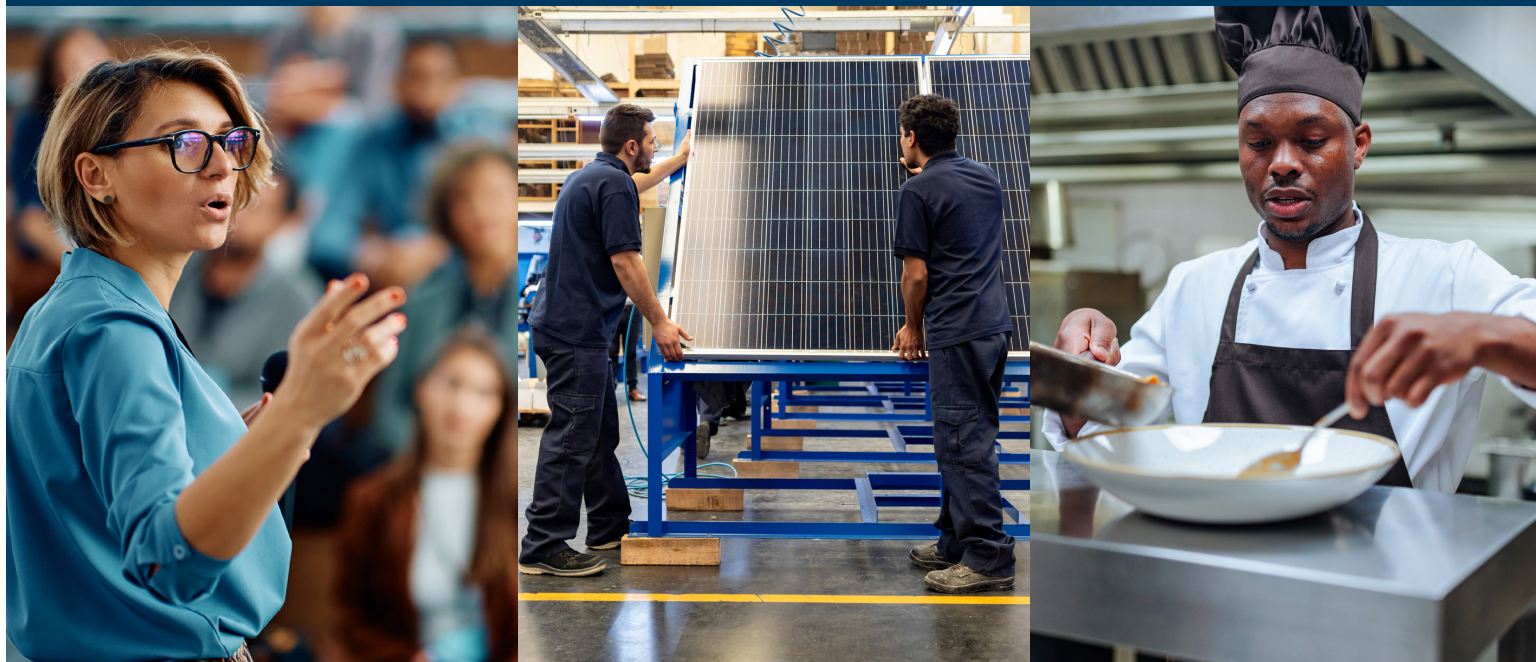


**5. Steve Booth**, Baird





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## RIPPLES OF IMPACT

# MMAC's ALL MEMBER MEETING

**1** *Bob Pipkin, Durable Controls Inc.; Michael Kotecki; Mike Szymaszek; and Paul Bartolotta, The Bartolotta Restaurants*



**2**



**3**

**2. Gabrielle Finley-Hazle, Aurora Health Care; Gale Klappa, WEC Energy Group**

**3. John Pattison, Vadar Alpha; and Rebecca Gries, Milwaukee 7**

**4. Melissa Spiering, Aurora Health Care**

**5. Krista Brookman, Northwestern Mutual; Nicole Angresano, United Performing Arts Fund; and Gina Santagati, United Way of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha**



**4**



**5**

JPMorganChase

Company Spotlight

JPMorganChase

**What should we know about JPMorganChase?**

For more than 185 years, JPMorganChase has worked with government and community leaders in Wisconsin to help drive economic growth. We do this by providing local expertise and support through our branches; lending to small, midsize and big businesses; hiring and providing market-competitive compensation and benefits; and financing hospitals, schools, grocery stores, homes, automobiles and governments.

**What are the challenges/opportunities in the banking industry?**

The banking industry is rapidly evolving, driven by technology and changing customer expectations. We see great opportunities in leveraging technology to make banking more accessible, secure, and convenient for everyone.

**What makes you optimistic about the Milwaukee region's future?**

The people of Milwaukee inspire us. The region is home to a vibrant, diverse community, strong educational institutions and a growing business environment. Milwaukee is well-positioned for growth thanks to its talented workforce, history of manufacturing innovation, affordable cost of living and excellent quality of life.

**What challenges do we need to overcome as a region?**

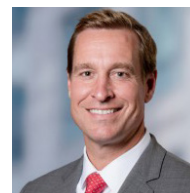
To ensure Milwaukee's continued prosperity, we must address key social and economic challenges, including expanding access to affordable housing and supporting small businesses. Collaboration among business, civic and community leaders is essential to tackle these issues.

**Why is JPMorganChase a member of the MMAC?**

JPMorganChase is deeply committed to Milwaukee and the surrounding region. MMAC plays an important role in driving economic development and fostering collaboration. As an active member, we support efforts to strengthen the local economy and enhance the quality of life for everyone in our community.

**Andy Keller**

Managing Director,  
Market Manager—Wisconsin  
JPMorganChase







## RIPPLES OF IMPACT

# MMAC's ALL MEMBER MEETING

**1** *Dale Kooyenga, President and CEO, MMAC*



**2**

**2. Sarah Neubauer**, Potawatomi Casino Hotel



**3**

**3. Jose Rosario, Cavell Samuels, Tania Trippler, and Ashley Stege**, Center for Urban Teaching; and **Dom Portis**, MMAC



**4**

**4. Rebecca Schimke**, Palermo Villa Inc.; **Anne Rettig and Neil Kiekofer**, Front Room Studios



**5**

**5. Edgardo Hernandez**, Eli Lilly and Company





Company Spotlight

# Eli Lilly and Co.

## What should we know about Eli Lilly and Company?

Lilly is a medicine company turning science into healing to make life better for people around the world. We've been pioneering life-changing discoveries for nearly 150 years, and today our medicines help tens of millions of people across the globe. Harnessing the power of biotechnology, chemistry and genetic medicine, our scientists are urgently advancing new discoveries to solve some of the world's most significant health challenges: redefining diabetes care; treating obesity and curtailing its most devastating long-term effects; advancing the fight against Alzheimer's disease; providing solutions to some of the most debilitating immune system disorders; and transforming the most difficult-to-treat cancers into manageable diseases. With each step toward a healthier world, we're motivated by one thing: making life better for millions more people.

## What are the challenges/opportunities in the pharmaceutical industry?

The pharmaceutical industry faces numerous challenges, including limited access to medicines, high research and development costs and complex global supply chains. Yet these challenges also present remarkable opportunities, and Lilly is at the forefront of driving innovation and solutions. From breakthroughs in biotechnology to refining business models that accelerate the delivery of medicines and expanding to meet global demand, Lilly continues to lead. Most recently, the company launched LillyDirect, a direct-to-consumer (DTC) digital healthcare platform designed to provide patients with medications, support and resources.

## What makes you optimistic about the Milwaukee region's future?

Wisconsin boasts one of the lowest unemployment rates in the U.S., reflecting a healthy job market and a strong workforce. The southeast Wisconsin region is a powerhouse in advanced manufacturing and technological innovation, with a robust industry presence that attracts both talent and investment. Our facility's proximity to multiple airports, along with other important infrastructure, made the Milwaukee-region an ideal location for expansion. When searching for locations, Wisconsin stood out above the rest thanks to its business-friendly environment and other strategic advantages. Every dollar we invest in the region is projected to generate five dollars in the local economy, thanks to vertical integration, a strong supplier network and the investment that naturally follows. Additionally, the speed of permitting (both state and local) in Wisconsin has been a key factor in accelerating our project and is driving growth. These strengths combined make it a region with a bright and promising future.

## What challenges do we need to overcome as a region?

Workforce development remains a high priority, with a continued need to attract and retain skilled professionals in high-demand fields. At Lilly, we are actively working to establish strong, long-term partnerships with area higher education institutions to invest in developing top-tier talent. As we work together to build this robust talent pipeline for the future, the region will need to continue working to modernize its infrastructure, including the affordable housing needed to support this kind of growth. Finally, continued collaboration between businesses, government and community organizations will be vital to reducing disparities and ensuring equitable opportunities for all residents. By tackling these issues head-on, the region can build a more resilient and prosperous future.

## Why is Eli Lilly a member of the MMAC?

Lilly's MMAC membership reflects its commitment to regional engagement and shared prosperity. While we are proud of the footprint we already have, our growth is just getting started, and we cannot do this alone. MMAC helps connect us with other local business leaders, contributes to important policy discussions and supports initiatives that drive economic development in southeast Wisconsin. Local partners like MMAC provide a platform for collaboration, advocacy and networking, aligning with Lilly's values and providing positive community

### Serafino Fabiano

Associate Vice President,  
Site Head Kenosha  
Eli Lilly & Co.







**RIPPLES OF IMPACT**

# MMAC's ALL MEMBER MEETING

**1** *Kevin Anderson, Old National Bank; and Greg Marcus, The Marcus Corporation*



**2. Sarah Muwonge**, The Opportunity Center

**3. Corry Joe Biddle** and **Lynn Olberding**, MMAC



**4. Ryan Barbieri**, M3 Insurance; **Jeffery Clark**, Waukesha Metal Products; **Steve Hughes**, Engineered Custom Coatings; **Michael Steger**, Waukesha Metal Products; **Scott Robb**, PS Capital Partners; **AJ Reno** and **Chris Zuzick**, Waukesha Metal Products

**5. Kimberly Kane**, Kane Communications Group; and **Peggy Williams Smith**, Visit Milwaukee





## Company Spotlight

# Marcus Corporation

## What should we know about Marcus Corp.?

We operate two divisions: Marcus Theatres and Marcus Hotels & Resorts. As the nation's fourth largest theatre circuit, Marcus Theatres leads the industry with state-of-the-art amenities and the latest technologies that elevate the moviegoing experience. Marcus Hotels & Resorts is a recognized leader in hotel management, development and food and beverage. Most know our Milwaukee hotels – The Pfister Hotel, which is arguably the grandest hotel in our region; Hilton Milwaukee, which just completed the largest renovation in company history; and Saint Kate – The Arts Hotel, an immersive arts destination for locals and visitors alike. We also own the Grand Geneva Resort & Spa as well as the Hilton Madison Monona Terrace, among others. We are deeply committed to the communities where our associates live and work, especially in Wisconsin and Milwaukee. In the past five years alone, Marcus Corporation has donated more than \$10 million in cash and in-kind contributions, along with hundreds of thousands of volunteer hours, to lift and strengthen communities across the state.

## What are the challenges/opportunities in the hospitality industry?

We are bullish on Milwaukee, which is why we have put more than \$160 million of our own capital to work on major renovations at our hotels in the region. That said, the hotel market remains challenged, with lower occupancy and RevPAR compared to our peer cities, only 20-25 nights a year when the city is close to being sold out, and several hotels that have been in financial distress either due to foreclosure or restructuring. Despite that reality, there's persistent discussion that we need more hotel rooms that will require significant public subsidy to be built. The lodging community was sold on the Baird Center investment because it was designed to address these challenges, not by attracting larger conventions, but rather to allow for conventions to be held back-to-back so that the space would always be active, and thus the hotels, restaurants, retailers and other tourism drivers would be consistently busy during what is mostly a seasonal, thus limited, demand period. At the end of the day, we aren't anti-subsidy, we just think the playing field should be equal. Otherwise, the same operators who advocated for the Baird Center and whose tax dollars financed it will be asked to pay for new hotel competition, incur lost business from new supply we do not need and create an even tougher environment to succeed. Rather than placing so much focus on a new hotel, we should be focused on the convention center's growth for the next generation. That was a gift the prior generation gave us, and we should provide to the next generation.

## What makes you optimistic about the Milwaukee region's future?

We have so much going for us. Welcoming culture, incredible restaurants, arts and entertainment, great quality of life, mostly pro-business environment (thanks to the work of MMAC). And over the past few years, people have really started to take notice. From increased business investment to our growing reputation as a great place to visit, Milwaukee is on the map like never before.

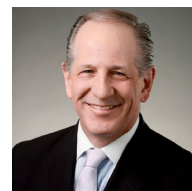
## What challenges do we need to overcome as a region?

Retaining and growing our talent pool needs to stay top of mind. We know Milwaukee is a wonderful place to live and work, with the region checking a lot of important boxes. Now, we need to keep the pedal to the floor and make sure we continue to support those who are already contributing to our growth and invite others to take part. That includes incubating more small businesses, improving our K-12 education so we graduate more who are workforce or college ready, creating rational investment and development strategies, and supporting the great work of organizations like Visit Milwaukee and M7 who are making important inroads in bringing more economic opportunity here.

## Why is Marcus Corp. a member of the MMAC?

As longtime champions and major investors for the city of Milwaukee, our commitment to our region's prosperity is directly aligned with the MMAC. As business and civic leaders come together to shape the future of our community, Marcus Corporation will be at the table advocating for those who have long dedicated their time, talent and resources to making Milwaukee the vibrant city it is today.

**Greg Marcus**  
President & CEO  
Marcus Corporation





# MKE IS TAKING OFF

**\$3.0 BILLION Total Economic Impact | 25,969 Total Jobs | 250+ Daily Flights**

Airlines add service where travelers board flights. So, flying from Chicago helps *Chicago* get more flights. In fact, Wisconsin travelers flying from O'Hare contribute \$233 million annually to the Illinois economy and support hundreds of jobs there.

Skip the tolls and unpredictable traffic in Illinois. Choose MKE instead. By flying from Milwaukee, you can help us attract more flights, create jobs for our neighbors, and keep more dollars in our community.

**Fly MKE, your locally-owned, hometown airport.**

**FlyMKE.com**



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## 2025 ALL MEMBER MEETING

### RIPPLES OF IMPACT

#### PRESENTING



#### RECEPTION



#### CHAIRMAN CIRCLE

#### BUSINESS CHAMPIONS

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American Roller  
Annex Wealth Management  
Ascension Medical Group  
AT&T  
BMO  
Center for Urban Teaching  
Concordia University Wisconsin  
Cross Management  
Deloitte

Delta Dental  
Diamond Discs  
Direct Supply  
Ernst & Young  
EUA  
Foley & Lardner  
Froedtert Health  
Grant Thornton  
Greater Milwaukee Foundation  
Husch Blackwell

Intec (Insulation Technologies)  
JWS Classics  
Kane Communications Group  
KPMG  
M3 Insurance  
Majic Productions  
Marquette University  
MEC  
Messmer High School  
Milwaukee Brewers

Mueller Communications  
Northwestern Mutual  
Operose Advisors  
OwnersEdge  
Palermo's  
PNC Bank  
PS Capital Partners  
PwC  
QPS  
Reinhart Boerner Van Deuren  
SIKICH

SysLogic  
T&M Partners and Fiduciary Real Estate Development  
The Bartolotta Restaurants  
Versiti  
Visit Milwaukee  
Waukesha Metal  
Waukesha County Technical College  
Wisconsin Data Center Coalition



# In Good Company

At ManpowerGroup, we believe meaningful, sustainable employment has the power to transform lives and communities.

As proud supporters of the MMAC, we're committed to helping Milwaukee grow as a region of opportunity where people, businesses and neighborhoods thrive together.

Explore more at  
[manpowergroup.com](https://manpowergroup.com)





# KICK OFF 2026 WITH THESE MMAC EVENTS

FUEL's  
**PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT  
BOOTCAMP**  
**Jan. 26 – 30**  
Various events  
Milwaukee

**MEMBER  
ORIENTATION**  
**Thurs., Feb. 5**  
**8:00 – 9:30 AM**  
MMAC Offices

Business After Hours  
**MILWAUKEE  
ADMIRALS**  
**Wed., Feb. 18**  
**6:00 – 9:00 PM**  
Milwaukee Admirals  
510 W. Kilbourn Ave.

Business After Hours  
**PEARL & CADE**  
**Thurs., March 12**  
**5:00 – 7:00 PM**  
Pearl & Cade  
219 N. Milwaukee St

**ECONOMIC  
OUTLOOK**  
**Thurs., March 19**  
**7:30 – 10:00 AM**  
Brookfield Conference Center  
325 S. Moorland Rd.

*Save  
the date!*

17<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL  
**BREWERS OUTING**  
**Thursday, June 18**

36<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL  
**GOLF OUTING**  
**Monday, Aug. 10**

**See more at [MMAC.org/Events](https://mmac.org/Events)**



## Building Milwaukee Since 1920

From the iconic Calatrava and Northwestern Mutual building to countless other projects shaping downtown Milwaukee, CG Schmidt has been defining the city's skyline for over a century. But we're looking far beyond today's horizon. Our projects are the foundations of the future—spaces where businesses thrive, medical innovations emerge, tomorrow's leaders are shaped, and communities come together.



MILWAUKEE // MADISON // ARIZONA

[cgschmidt.com](http://cgschmidt.com)



# New MMAC Members

APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2025

## **AccelerateGrowth45**

Katherine Breuss  
Found and CEO  
accelerategrowth45.com  
(262) 300-8487  
*Consultants*

## **AJ Development Group**

Kelly Jackson  
Owner  
ajdevelopmentgroup.com  
(414) 369-2890  
*Professional Services*

## **Alliant Insurance Services**

Rob Grant  
Senior Vice President  
alliant.com  
(224) 293-6490  
*Insurance Agents/Brokers*

## **All-In Milwaukee**

Allison Wagner  
Executive Director  
allinmilwaukee.org  
(414) 405-3013  
*Nonprofit Education*

## **American Companies**

Nathan Pape  
Director of Finance  
teamacs.net  
(262) 334-3811  
*Construction Companies*

## **AMPED**

ampedmke.com  
(414) 939-8592  
*Entertainment*

## **ASK Consulting Solutions**

Adam Kimmel  
Principal and Founder  
askconsultingsolutions.com  
(262) 989-5960  
*Business Growth Services*

## **ASMC**

Tony King  
Owner  
asmc.net  
(224) 207-8800  
*Distributors/Wholesalers*

## **AXE MKE**

axemke.com  
(414) 939-8592  
*Entertainment*

## **Bars & Recreation**

Marla Poytinger  
CEO  
barsandrecreation.com  
(414) 939-8592  
*Entertainment*

## **Benefit Advisors Insurance Agency**

Jan DenBoer  
Office Manager  
benefitadvisorsinsuranceagency.com  
(608) 779-0633  
*Insurance Agents/Brokers*

## **Blachford (DBA Milcut)**

Kendra Martin  
Human Resources Generalist  
blachford.com  
(262) 783-3300  
*Manufacturers*

## **Brillect**

Seth Wooll  
Client Solutions Director  
brillect.com  
(612) 895-2981  
*Consultants*

## **BUKU Branded**

Brian Floriani  
Founder  
bukubrande.com  
(989) 373-2366  
*Promotional Products*

## **CannedWater4Kids.org**

Greg Stromberg  
Founder & CEO  
cannedwater4kids.org  
(262) 246-8480  
*Water Companies-Bottled/Bulk*

## **CD Smith Construction**

April Krahn  
Senior Director  
cdsmith.com  
(920) 924-2900  
*Construction Companies*

## **Corporate Central Credit Union**

Will Valadez  
HR Business Partner  
corpcu.com  
(414) 312-4887  
*Financial Services*

## **Cutting Edge Fabrication**

Joe Seager  
President  
cefabrication.com  
(262) 930-1775  
*Metal Fabricators*

## **Davis Seasonal Maintenance**

Brad Davis  
Owner  
davisseasonal.com  
(414) 345-7785  
*Landscape Design*

## **Diamond Vogel**

Spencer Gorzalski  
Director of Operations  
diamondvogel.com  
(262) 502-7553  
*Coatings-Protective*

## **Eder Flag Manufacturing Co.**

Jodi Goglio  
Chief Operating Officer  
ederflag.com  
(414) 764-3522  
*Manufacturers*

## **Edward Jones**

Dan O'Heron  
Financial Advisor  
edwardjones.com  
(414) 764-4784  
*Retirement Planning Services*

## **Ehlers Pest Management**

John Ehlers  
Owner/CEO  
ehlerspestmanagement.com  
(414) 303-6926  
*Pest Control Services*

## **Exponential Power**

Todd Adams  
CFO  
exponentialpower.com  
(262) 946-1282  
*Power Equipment*

## **Fair Deal Home Buyers**

Amir Erez  
CEO & Co-owner  
fairdealhomebuyers.com  
(414) 409-8251  
*Real Estate-Residential*

## **FASTSIGNS**

## **Menomonee Falls**

Colleen Lake  
Visual Solution Consultant  
fastsigns.com/  
menomoneefalls-wi  
(262) 253-0799  
*Signs*

Continued on page 46

# New MMAC Members

APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2025

## **Federal Tool and Engineering**

Marcus Ellis  
General Manager  
federaltool.com  
(262) 377-7070  
*Manufacturers*

## **FOCUS Administrative Services**

Barbara Farrell  
Owner  
focusadministrative.com  
(414) 398-1834  
*Business Consultants*

## **FracCOOnow**

Brian Balboni  
Founder  
fractionalcoonow.com  
(262) 812-3398  
*Professional Services*

## **Fulcrum Education Solutions**

Rickie Yudin  
Partner  
fulcrumeducation  
solutions.com  
(773) 340-0542  
*Consultants/Leadership*

## **Game Show MKE**

gameshowmke.com  
(414) 939-8592  
*Entertainment*

## **Gilman Precision**

Paul Grekowicz  
CEO  
gilmanprecision.com  
(262) 377-2434  
*Manufacturers*

## **HB Strategies**

Rob Marchant  
hbstrategies.us  
(608) 721-6171  
*Public Affairs*

## **HH Agency**

Kyle Mayhugh  
Chief Operating Officer  
hhagency.co  
(920) 437-9661  
*Advertising Specialties*

## **HOLCIM (US) INC**

Kenneth Dooley  
Terminal Manager  
Holcim.com  
(414) 486-9323  
*Cement/Wholesale  
Manufacturers*

## **Hudson West Supply Chain Consulting**

Ronald Pisano  
Principal  
Hudsonwestgroup.com  
(262) 345-7754  
*Consultants*

## **Hunter Real Estate**

Matt Hunter  
Founder & CEO  
hunter-re.com  
(414) 931-9931  
*Real Estate-Commercial/  
Industrial*

## **INNOFAB**

Nathan Schnell  
Owner  
innofabusa.com  
(414) 406-9049  
*Manufacturers*

## **Jefferson Wells Corporate**

Mike Touhey  
Director of Communications  
and Marketing  
jeffersonwells.com  
(262) 957-3612  
*Consultants*

## **Jemmco**

Melissa Lang  
President  
jemmco.com  
(262) 512-9559  
*Industrial Equipment*

## **KForce**

Tony Sarnowski  
Market Manager & Senior  
Talent Partner  
kforce.com  
(414) 454-2000  
*Employment Agencies*

## **KG Stevens**

Michelle Delleman  
CFO  
kgstevens.com  
(262) 922-8372  
*Manufacturers*

## **Kunes Hope Chevrolet**

Megan Swaney  
Regional Marketing Manager  
kuneshopechevy.com  
(262) 762-7077  
*Automobile Dealer*

## **Lake Country Lutheran High School**

lakecountryhs.org  
(262) 367-8600  
*Schools*

## **Lannon Stone Products**

Hans Dawson  
President  
lannonstone.net  
(262) 251-1520  
*Construction Companies*

## **Live Nation**

### **Entertainment Premium Seating**

Andrew Brundage  
Director of Premium  
Sales & Service  
livenationpremium  
tickets.com  
(414) 455-9581  
*Entertainment*

## **Microbial Discovery Group**

Sona Son  
COO  
mdgbio.com  
(414) 235-3767  
*Biotech*

## **Milwaukee Careers Cooperative**

David Smulyan  
Agency Director  
mccjobs.org  
(414) 937-8260  
*Employment Agencies*

## **Milwaukee Lutheran Middle & High School**

milwaukeekeelutheran.org  
(414) 461-6000  
*Schools*

## **Mount Calvary Lutheran School**

mtcalvaryschool.org  
(414) 873-3466  
*Schools*

## **Next Electric**

Tony Lillibridge  
Project manager  
nextelectricllc.com  
(262) 393-1890  
*Electrical Contractors*



**Nine Below**

ninebelowmke.com  
(414) 939-8592  
*Entertainment*

**NorthSouth Club**

northsouthclub.com  
(414) 939-8592  
*Entertainment*

**One 5 Olive**

David Griggs  
Co-Founder  
one5olive.com  
(414) 213-1439  
*Real Estate*

**Parking Lot  
Maintenance**

Jim Olson  
General Manager  
plmpaving.com  
(414) 916-6397  
*Construction Companies*

**Reggae Cab**

Bobby Hamilton  
Owner  
reggaecab.com  
(414) 373-0092  
*Transportation Services*

**SecureFutures**

Brenda Campbell  
CEO & President  
securefutures.org  
(414) 273-8101  
*Nonprofit Education*

**Sight2GoLive**

Matt Medvecz  
Founder  
sight2golive.com  
(262) 308-5061  
*Business Growth Services*

**Slingshot Bar**

slingshotbarmke.com/  
(414) 939-8592  
*Entertainment*

**Splash Studio**

splashmilwaukee.com  
(414) 939-8592  
*Entertainment*

**Squash CPA**

David Carbajal  
Founder & President  
squashcpa.com  
(414) 245-2400  
*Accountants/CPA*

**TAPCO**

Eric Stangel  
President and CEO  
tapconet.com  
(262) 814-7000  
*Manufacturers - Signs*

**Taylor Tax Service**

Dionne Wolter  
President  
taylortaxllc.com  
(414) 943-0103  
*Accountants/CPA*

**The Ability Center**

Damian Buchman  
Co-Founder  
tacwi.org  
(262) 385-5738  
*Youth Organizations/Centers*

**The MRD Group**

Marcus Dumke  
Director of Growth  
themrdgroup.com  
(414) 672-4244  
*Recycling Centers*

**The New Fashioned**

newfashionedmke.com  
(414) 939-8592  
*Entertainment*

**The Opportunity Center**

Damian Buchman  
Co-Founder  
tocwi.org  
(262) 385-5738  
*Youth Organizations/Centers*

**TRIUN3**

triu3.com  
(262) 307-2055  
*Managed Services*

**United Community  
Center**

Laura Gutierrez  
CEO  
unitedcc.org  
(414) 384-3100  
*Nonprofit Education*

**Wauwatosa Lutheran  
School**

wauwatosalutheran.org  
(414) 258-4558  
*Schools*

**We Teach Truth**

Michael Waugh  
weteachtruth.org  
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*Education*

**Yes...AND**

Kim Walters  
yes-and-llc.com  
(262) 388-1244  
*Consultants & Trainers*

Support your fellow  
members **by doing  
business together.**

**MMAC.org/  
Directory**

Interested in joining?  
Contact **Jane Trenchard-Backes**  
jbackes@mmac.org



## A Conversation with Austin Ramirez of Husco

1

Austin Ramirez, Husco and Dale Kooyenga, MMAC

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Let us help supply, solve,  
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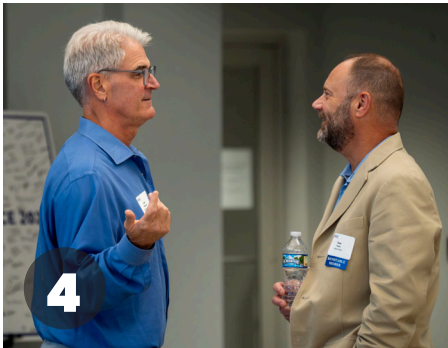
[OneWerner.com](https://www.onewerner.com)







- 2. **Kim Walters**, Yes...And LLC
- 3. **Todd Zakresk**, Husco; and **Jeffrey Clark**, Waukesha Metal Products
- 4. **Joe Skotarzak**, Big Bumper Company; and **Tom Posta**, Bader Rutter
- 5. Unidentified; and **Seth Wooll**, Brilllect



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## Connecting Leaders Protecting Wisconsin



The Wisconsin Institute of CPAs (WICPA) is Wisconsin's premier association for accounting and business professionals dedicated to enhancing the value and vitality of the profession.

The WICPA equips you and your business with resources to keep pace and excel:

-  **Professional development** to accelerate your career
-  **Cost savings** to boost your bottom line and help your business thrive
-  **FREE CPE** to stay informed, maintain an edge and renew your license

-  **Networking opportunities** to build valuable connections
-  **Members-only access** to WICPA Connect, the online community for WICPA members
-  **Fierce advocate** for safeguarding the profession and protecting you and your business

Learn more and join today at [wicpa.org/benefits](http://wicpa.org/benefits)







Welcome  
Milwaukee Night  
in  
WASHINGTON  
D.C.

# Milwaukee Night in Washington D.C.

1

Mayor Cavalier Johnson, City of Milwaukee; Andrew Davis, MMAC; Dale Kooyenga, MMAC; Marcelia Nicholson-Bovell, Milwaukee County; David Crowley, Milwaukee County; José Pérez, City of Milwaukee

**THANK YOU**  
**MILWAUKEE NIGHT IN WASHINGTON D.C.**  
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Harley-Davidson Motor Co.  
Marquette University  
Medical College of Wisconsin  
Michael Best & Friedrich  
Molson Coors Beverage Company  
Northwestern Mutual  
Potawatomi Hotel & Casino  
Rev Group  
Rockwell Automation  
Uber  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
Waukesha Metal  
WEC Energy Group  
Working & Productivity

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## UNLOCK A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUR BUSINESS & OUR COMMUNITY

When **your company** supports the Zoological Society of Milwaukee, you're not just making a difference—you're gaining valuable exposure to more than 1 million visitors annually, all while contributing to the community's future.

### BECOME A CORPORATE PLATYPUS CIRCLE MEMBER TODAY!

- Transferable Membership Cards to share with employees
- Name recognition with one of Wisconsin's top family attractions
- Special Zoo benefits and exclusive VIP event invitations for your employees
- Rental discounts and more!

Go to [BeAPlaty.org](http://BeAPlaty.org) to learn more.

### GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Help fund award-winning education programs, access initiatives for underserved populations and support both local and global conservation efforts.

### SPONSORSHIPS

Boost your brand visibility through event and attraction sponsorships. Strengthen customer engagement and show your commitment to the community.

### READY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Contact Mary Kay Gundlach at [marykayg@zoosociety.org](mailto:marykayg@zoosociety.org) or 414-918-6155 to learn more!



12746-25







2. **Margaret McInnis**, U.S. Rep. Marcy Kaptur; **Carrie Rodamaker** and **Dan Morse**, Taliesin Preservation
3. **Nicholas Bauer**, Operose Advisors; and **David Beightol**, Flywheel Government Solutions
4. **Buckley Brinkman**, WI Center for Manufacturing & Productivity; **Peter Burgelis**, City of Milwaukee; and **Scott Neitzel**
5. **Annie McCormick** and **Dominic Gambatese**, Les Aspin Center for Government

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## Working together to create a healthier Wisconsin

**Froedtert ThedaCare** is the largest health system based in Wisconsin, serving almost half of the state's population. Our Mission is to advance the health of our communities through excellence and discovery, *inspiring each person to live their unique, best life.*

Our team brings together the skills, knowledge and expertise to transform communities — urban, rural and suburban — through excellence in primary and specialty care. Our partnership with the Medical College of Wisconsin provides the academic medicine foundation to discover tomorrow's breakthroughs.

Patient care is at the heart of our 19 hospitals and more than 360 outpatient locations. Each Froedtert & MCW and ThedaCare site connects people to the right care, at the right time and place — while keeping them close to home.





## Business After Hours at Regal Ware

1

*Brenna Patton, Saladmaster, (a division of Regal Ware); Barb Esser and Mark Schmaling, Marketing & Branding Solutions.*

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# Shape the Future

## AI at WCTC

Waukesha County Technical College is committed to embracing emerging technologies and taking steps to train Wisconsin's workforce.

WCTC's state-of-the-art Applied AI Lab offers:

Classroom and  
lab space

Custom  
AI training

Entrepreneur/  
startup incubator



**LEARN MORE**

[wctc.edu/ai](https://wctc.edu/ai)

Hands-on  
Higher Ed





2. **Joe Poeschl**, Milwaukee Tech Hub Coalition; and **Milissa Rick**, Regal Ware

3. **Melissa Dietrich**, Regal Ware, Inc. and **Jay Zilinskas**, Iconic Brands Division

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**SPECTRUM  
PATHWAY**

GROUP 401(K) PLAN

# An Innovative 401(k) Plan Solution for MMAC Members

The Spectrum Pathway Group 401(k) Plan delivers powerful advantages that save time, streamline costs, and offer modern features.

**Simplified Administration**

**Shared Admin & Plan Costs**

**Easy Setup & Maintenance**

**Plan Design Flexibility**



**Spectrum Investment Advisors**

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# PEP Talk: A New Way to 401(k)

*Offering a great retirement plan can feel complicated. But Spectrum and the MMAC have partnered to provide a solution that takes the work off your plate.*



**Manuel Rosado**

President & Partner

Spectrum Investment Advisors

## What is a PEP?

A Pooled Employer Plan (PEP) is a type of 401(k) plan that lets many different employers join together in one large plan. Instead of each company running its own plan, they combine resources under a shared structure managed by professionals. Employers keep control over plan details like eligibility, matching, and vesting, while most of the daily management and administration is handled for them.

## Why Choose a PEP?

Joining a PEP can help simplify plan management. Here are a few reasons companies are taking a closer look:

- **Shared costs:** Employers pool resources, which can lower plan expenses.
- **Reduced workload:** The Pooled Plan Provider (PPP) handles many compliance & reporting tasks.
- **Professional oversight:** Fiduciaries manage plan administration & investments.
- **Consistent experience:** Employees get access to a well-managed plan with modern features.
- **Simplified audits:** One combined audit covers the plan, with costs shared among all participating employers.

## The Spectrum Pathway Difference

The Spectrum Pathway Group 401(k) Plan can help make retirement plans easier and more accessible for employers of all sizes. By working together, companies can offer a strong benefit without overloading their teams.

- **Dedicated 401(k) Professionals:** Our team manages setup, enrollment, operations, & compliance so you can focus on your business.
- **Streamlined Coordination:** The Spectrum Pathway Plan brings payroll, recordkeeping, & investments together in one streamlined process.
- **Financial Wellness & Fiduciary Advice:** Employees receive fiduciary advice, education, & one-on-one support.

	Single Employer 401(k) Plan	Pooled Employer Plan (PEP)
Plan Design	Fully customized plan tailored to company goals	Standardized, with customizable features
Plan Admin	Plan sponsor manages or outsources responsibilities	Managed by Pooled Plan Provider
Fiduciary Liability	Retained by the employer unless delegated to fiduciaries	Decreased liability
Cost	Costs based on plan size & provider fees	Pooled pricing shared across employers
Compliance & Filing	Employer handles own Form 5500, audits required (100+ participants)	One tax form, reduced audit costs
Best Fit For	Companies with unique needs, complex structures, or growth plans	Small to midsize businesses seeking simplicity

## Spectrum's Promise: Support, Service, and Strategy

Spectrum Investment Advisors is here to help you make the most of your retirement benefit. Our dedicated team acts as your partner in every stage of plan development and ongoing support, whether you're just starting out or enhancing your current plan.

# MMAC Member Milestones

APRIL – SEPTEMBER 2025

## 115 years

AT&T Wisconsin

## 95 years

Braeger Company of Wisconsin

Northwestern Mutual

Brookfield, Downtown Milwaukee,

Germantown and Mequon

Wilke Wealth & Investment Planning

## 85 years

Milwaukee School of Engineering

## 55 years

Stein's Garden Centers

## 50 years

Associated Bank

Herzing University

## 45 years

Charter Communications

DoubleTree by Hilton Milwaukee

Downtown

Packerland Rent-A-Mat

## 40 years

M Barrington Corporation

Newmark

## 35 years

Educational Credential Evaluators

Lindner & Marsack

SEEK Careers/Staffing

## 30 years

Absolute Custom Extrusions

Beyond Vision

Charter Manufacturing Co.

Charter Steel

Tax Airfreight

## 25 years

CHRYSPAC

Marking Services

Northern Trust Company

Skyline Catering Inc. featuring the

Bucyrus Club

TKO Miller

## 20 years

Building Service

Focus Training

Keller

Mitz & Rozansky

PKWARE

Waukesha Metal Products

## 15 years

BizStarts

Catalyst Construction

Columbus McKinnon Corp.

Dedicated Computing

Fastsigns Greenfield

Goldstein Law Group

Health Payment Systems

J.F. Ahern Co.

Kapco

Kohner Mann & Kailas

Littler Mendelson

Optimum Vehicle Logistics 'OVL'

Patina Solutions

Ries Graphics

Spin Group

Stainless Foundry & Engineering

The Firm Consulting

Wellpoint Care Network

Wm K. Walthers

## 10 years

AccuTrans Group

ARCOA Group

Bevco Engineering Company

Brew City Brand / Good Land Supply Co.

Building Advantage

Digital Edge Copy & Print Centers

Feldco Windows, Siding & Doors

Five Lakes Financial Inc dba Tech

Financial Services

Hayes Performance Systems

Kessler's Diamond Center

King Research

Meijer

OnMilwaukee/Lift Digital

Park Lafayette Towers

Sentry Equipment Corporation

The North End

The Omanhene Cocoa Bean Co.

TransformationServices

Vx Group

## 5 years

5G Benefits & GOEBEL Insurance

Apple Spice Catering Company

August Brown

Brown & Brown

Compassionate Personal Care Services

Enerpac Tool Group

First Citizens Bank

Forsite Benefits

Handle It

humanworks8

Infinity Benefit Solutions

Inpro

Johnson Insurance Services

Koru Health

Lutheran Social Services of

Wisconsin & Upper Michigan

MIB Health Insurance

MicroSynergies

MKE Tech Hub Coalition

MSA Professional Services

Nexus Pharmaceutical

Optimum Crush

Penta Technologies

Rose Pest Solutions

Schlitz Park/Lincoln Property Company

Sentinel Group

Stress Management & Mental

Health Clinics

TaffTel Consulting

The Insurance Center (T.I.C.)

The McClone Agency

Uber Technologies

Valor Technologies

Viking Communications

## 1 year

7Rivers

A3Travel Group with Dream Vacations

Arthritis Foundation - Wisconsin

Association for Corporate Growth

Wisconsin Chapter (ACG WI)

Barnett Leadership Group

BDO USA

Bel Air Growth Partners

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French American Chamber of  
Commerce - Wisconsin (FACC-  
Wisconsin)  
Gary Comer (GCI)  
Glojek & Steinberg  
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Academy  
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Legacy Platform  
Lockton Companies - Milwaukee  
MainSpring Sales Group  
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**uhc.com/mmac**



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# Reimagining health plans for better health and lower costs

As health care costs continue to rise — projected to increase by up to 8% in 2025<sup>1</sup> — employers face a critical crossroads: how to deliver better benefits without breaking the bank. At UnitedHealthcare, we believe the solution lies not in asking employees to bear more of the cost, but in rethinking what a health plan can and should do.

Today's workforce expects more than just coverage. They want affordability, clarity, convenience and compassionate care — all delivered through a seamless, consumer-like digital experience. Employers are responding. Nearly two-thirds are considering switching carriers in search of plans that can control costs and improve the member experience.<sup>2</sup>

## UnitedHealthcare: A part of that transformation

We're pioneering a new era of group health plan designs built around three guiding pillars: expanding access while reducing financial burden, increasing transparency and simplicity and tailoring solutions to meet diverse employee needs.

Take the Surest® health plan, for example. It works to make health insurance simpler and more affordable by harnessing the power of comparison shopping — so members can see their actual copays before making an appointment. And it's making a difference. Surest has delivered 50% lower average out-of-pocket costs for members<sup>3</sup> and up to 15% lower employer costs.<sup>4</sup>

## Stay connected

Through the UnitedHealthcare® app and myuhc.com®, members can compare prices, review provider quality ratings and schedule care with ease.

Affordability remains a top concern, which is why we introduced the Vital Medication Program, providing \$0 cost access to critical drugs like naloxone, albuterol, insulin and epinephrine. And we're helping employers implement strategies like wage-based cost-sharing and \$0 preventive medication coverage, working to help ensure that financial strain doesn't keep people from the care they may need.

But we don't believe in one-size-fits-all plans. Communities have different challenges — whether it's limited access to care, higher chronic condition rates or socioeconomic disparities. Our plans integrate high-performing provider networks, value-based care contracts and region-specific benefits to ensure higher-quality, lower-cost outcomes tailored to your workforce.

The future of health care goes beyond managing costs; it's about enhancing value. At UnitedHealthcare, we're helping shape that future.

Let's transform your employee health benefits — together.

Learn more at  
[uhc.com/wisconsin](https://uhc.com/wisconsin)

<sup>1</sup> Medical cost trend: Behind the numbers 2025. Pricewaterhouse Coopers. Available: <https://www.pwc.com/us/en/industries/health-industries/library/behind-the-numbers.html>.

<sup>2</sup> The State of Workplace Health. OneMedical, 2024. Available: <https://go.onemedical.com/report-the-annual-state-of-workplace-health-24>.

<sup>3</sup> Surest self-funded 2022 book of business plan sponsors with at least 12 months of incurred experience in 2022 and both medical and pharmacy data within our warehouse; compared to matched comparison groups from a nationally representative commercially insured database matched by gender, age, urbanicity, and zip3 code using exact matching. 141\_V03.

<sup>4</sup> Surest actuarial results through 2024.

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