

## Matt Morrow

Matt Morrow has served as president of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce since 2014. The Chamber is the region's lead business advocacy and economic development organization, serving as the voice of business on behalf of its nearly 1,500 member companies.

Prior to leading the Chamber, Matt served 14 years as CEO of professional trade associations of home builders in Springfield and in Birmingham, Alabama. Matt's earlier professional background was as a small-market radio broadcaster and station manager, before serving from 1996-2000 as Missouri Press Secretary and District Director for then-U.S. Senator John Ashcroft.



Matt holds a bachelor's degree in Communication and a master's degree in Business Administration (MBA) from Southwest Baptist University. His wife, Rachael, teaches in the Communication Department at SBU. Matt and Rachel are proud parents of a daughter, Annie, and son, Alex.

## Logan Aguirre



Logan Aguirre is Publisher/Owner of Whitaker Publishing, the company that produces 417 Magazine, 417 Home, 417 Bride and Biz 417. Logan's parents bought the magazine in 2001 and she joined the business in 2006 after a career in New York and St. Louis in marketing and public relations. At 417 she has served in roles in sales, marketing and events, eventually becoming Associate Publisher, then President before purchasing the business from her parents Joan and Gary Whitaker, in September 2020.

Logan graduated Magna Cum Laude from the University of Missouri School of Journalism. She is the 2021 Chairman of the Board of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce. She currently serves on the Friends of SPS Steering Committee, is a former board member and sustainer of Junior League of Springfield and has served on the Foundation for Springfield Public Schools Advisory Board, Care to Learn Advisory Board, Lost & Found Grief Center Junior Board and CoxHealth Young Professionals Advisory Council. She is a graduate of Leadership Springfield Class 31. In 2017, *Folio: Magazine* named her a Top Women in Media in the Corporate Visionaries category and she is a member of the 2008 class of *Springfield Business Journal's* 40 Under 40.

Logan is married to her husband of 16 years Dave Aguirre, and together they have a daughter Lucy, 13, and a son Cruz, 9 who attend Springfield Public Schools and the Springfield Little Theatre Academy. When not cheering for her kids on a stage or a field, you can find her in hot yoga classes or on a boat with her family at Table Rock Lake.

## Mary Lilly Smith

Mary Lilly Smith has nearly 40 years of experience serving in planning and economic development with the City of Springfield. She began her career with the city's planning department in 1982 and rose through the ranks to become principal planner.

She was named the city's Economic Development Director in 1998 and spent more than 16 years in that role, spearheading the city's efforts to attract new businesses and encourage existing business development. She then moved over to become Planning & Development Director in 2015, a position she held until her retirement in July 2021.



During her career with the city, Mary had a hand in nearly 100 key economic development projects and business attraction, retention and expansion initiatives; and two long-range comprehensive planning efforts: Vision 2020 and Forward SGF. Most recently, she championed the concept of placemaking through the hiring of staff focused on reimagining and reinventing public spaces and community development, with the ultimate goal of enhancing pride of place.

Mary holds a bachelor's degree in urban and regional planning from Missouri State University. She has received numerous honors, both locally and statewide, including being named by SBJ as one of Springfield's Most Influential Women in 2006 and Business Advocate of the Year in 2014.

## Tim Rosenbury



Tim Rosenbury has served as the City of Springfield's Director of Quality of Place Initiatives since March 2020. In this position, he works to provide leadership and assume primary professional and management responsibility for integrating quality of place initiatives into the City's infrastructure project development, policy formulation and related activities. The goal of quality of place initiatives is to make Springfield a more desirable, competitive and economically vibrant place to live. City Council identified "Quality of Place" as one of five priorities.

He previously served as a partner and architect with design firm BRP Architects (formerly Butler, Rosenbury & Partners). In business since 1978 in Springfield, BRP is a nationally ranked design firm offering architecture and planning services for business to

business, civic, community, hospitality, retail and entertainment clients locally, nationally and internationally.

Tim graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture from Mississippi State University in 1980 before joining colleague Geoffrey Butler in 1984. His leadership experience includes project management and serving as principal in charge of many of BRP's civic and community projects. He is an active community advocate and has served on a number of civic task forces and committees, including Vision 20/20 Center City Focus Group.

He served two terms on the Springfield Public Schools Board of Education. He has served on the community advisory board of the Salvation Army, is a Leadership Springfield alum and is a former chairman of the board of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce.

## Gary Gibson

Gary Gibson, P.E. is the President and CEO of City Utilities of Springfield, Missouri. City Utilities of Springfield is a progressive, community-owned utility serving 320 square miles in southwest Missouri since 1945 with electricity, natural gas, water, broadband, and public transportation services. City Utilities is overseen by a governing board composed of local citizens. Over 111,000 customers enjoy electricity prices among the lowest in the United States, the convenience of one bill for all utilities, and dependable hometown services delivered with a personal touch.

As the Chief Executive Officer for City Utilities, the President serves as the strategic leader for City Utilities' vision and mission, provides overall direction for the efficient operation of City Utilities, and advises and makes recommendations to the Board of Public Utilities.



Gibson holds a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from the Missouri University of Science and Technology. He has formerly served as Chairman of the Missouri Association of Natural Gas Operators, Chair of the Board of the MEA Energy Association, the Board of the American Public Gas Association (APGA) and Chair of the APGA Research Foundation. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of The Energy Authority.

## Jeff Schrag



Jeff Schrag is the founder and owner of Mother's Brewing Company in downtown Springfield, Missouri. His other businesses include The Daily Events and Pioneer Formal Accessories.

He has never spent the entire night in the Greene County jail.

He and his wife Mary live in Springfield.

## Jason Dale

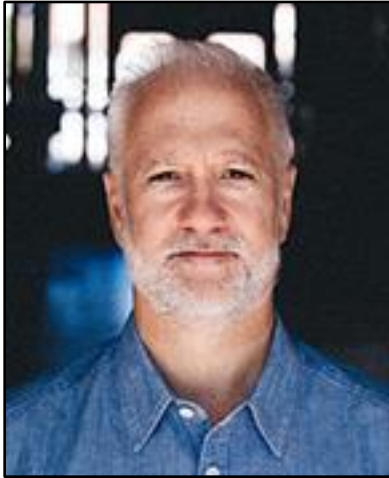
Jason is the chief operating officer (COO) of Vital Farms, a Certified B. Corporation with a mission to bring ethical food to the table. In his role as COO, Jason has the privilege of leading both the operations and talent functions, which include Egg Central Station, Vital Farms' world-class egg washing and packing facility in Springfield. In his seven years with Vital Farms, Jason has held multiple senior leadership roles including Chief Financial Officer (CFO). He has been instrumental in Vital Farms' growth to a national consumer brand. Jason is most passionate about developing and empowering the company's immensely talented crew members to fulfill Vital Farms' aspirations to improve the lives of people, animals, and the planet through food.



Jason has had a decades-long career in consumer food. Prior to Vital Farms, he served as COO and CFO for Michael Angelo's Gourmet Foods, a founder-led specialty food business with an array of products distributed in major retailers, clubs, and military throughout the U.S. and Mexico.



## Shawn Askinosie



In 2005, Shawn Askinosie left a successful career as a criminal defense lawyer to start a bean to bar chocolate factory and never looked back.

Askinosie Chocolate is a small batch, award-winning chocolate factory sourcing 100% of their beans directly from farmers. The only chocolate maker working directly with cocoa farmers on four continents, Shawn travels to regions of Ecuador, the Philippines and Tanzania to source cocoa beans for his chocolate. This allows the chocolate to be traced to the source and labeled authentic single origin. It also enables Askinosie Chocolate to profit share with the farmers.

Recently named by Forbes "One of the 25 Best Small Companies in America," Askinosie Chocolate has also been featured in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, on Bloomberg, MSNBC and numerous other national and international media outlets.

The company is currently sustainably feeding over 1,600 students per day in Tanzania and the Philippines, without any donations. They are one of few chocolate makers in the world who press their own cocoa butter (to make their chocolate truly single-origin) and the only American craft chocolate maker to produce a natural cocoa powder; they were the first American craft chocolate makers to create white chocolate, as well as a chocolate hazelnut spread.

Shawn was named by O, The Oprah Magazine, as "One of 15 Guys Who Are Saving the World." Shawn was named Top Business Leader of the Year in 2013 by the Specialty Food Association. He has been awarded honorary doctorates from University of Missouri-Columbia and Missouri State University. In 2015, Askinosie Chocolate was awarded a complimentary membership to the Clinton Global Initiative for the company's social efforts around the world.

Askinosie Chocolate has received 3 Good Food Awards, considered to be the Oscars of food; 6 silver awards from the Specialty Food Association; and 7 International Chocolate Awards, including the Gold World Award for the Dark Chocolate + Licorice bar. The small team at Askinosie works directly with all of their retailers and sells their chocolate into specialty food stores, luxury boutiques, and high-end grocery chains throughout the US in nearly all fifty states and across the globe.

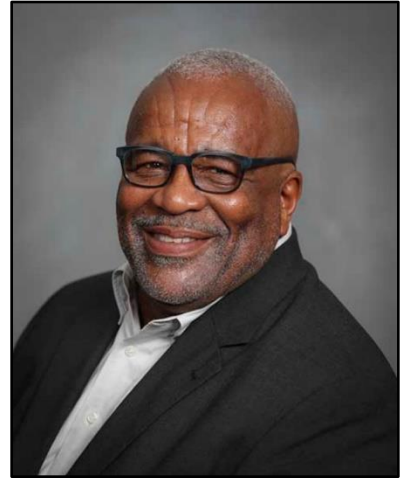
Shawn's book, recently released, co-written with his daughter Lawren, published by Penguin titled "Meaningful Work: The Quest To Do Great Business, Find Your Calling, and Feed Your Soul," is an Amazon #1 New Release. He is a Family Brother at Assumption Abbey, a Trappist monastery near Ava, and the co-founder of Lost & Found.



## Dr. Lyle Foster

Dr. Lyle Foster is a professor, small business owner and community activist. He is the founder and owner of Big Momma's Coffee and Espresso Bar, which has helped to spur a cultural and economic revitalization of historic Commercial Street.

Dr. Foster also utilizes his academic and entrepreneur expertise as an assistant professor of sociology with Missouri State University to address issues of social justice, inclusive excellence and individual empowerment. His passions as an educator and community advocate are fueled through his belief in the power of education and his capacity to teach critical thinking skills and build collaborative relationships. Dynamic classroom experiences, open dialogue forums and civic projects are just some of the ways that Dr. Foster creates pathways for student success and a collective journey toward justice, equity and healthy communities.



## Heather Zoromski



Heather Zoromski serves as executive director of the Darr Family Foundation.

Heather is a life-long resident of southwest Missouri and has 18 years of experience in non-profit administration, grant-writing and grant-making. Before coming to the Darr Family Foundation, she served as Grants Administrator of Skaggs Foundation in Branson, Missouri and as Executive Director of Children's Miracle Network Hospitals of CoxHealth in Springfield, Missouri.

She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Child and Family Development, and a Master's Degree in Public Health, both from Missouri State University, as well as a certification in grant writing from the American Grant Writer's Association.

Along with her work at the foundation, she teaches adjunct for Evangel University in the College of Business and the College of Adult and Graduate Studies. She serves on the boards of Ozarks Teen Challenge, Kyle Bruton Foundation, Elevate Branson, Nixa Public Schools, and holds a Community Advisory Council position with Missouri Foundation for Health.

## Megan Stack

Megan Stack serves as foundation and philanthropy advisor at Bass Pro Shops. In her role, she is responsible for establishing funding priorities and long-term goals of philanthropic programs, restructuring the giving process to reach strategic goals, implementing a grants management system, and rebranding the company's community and conservation programs.

She also has spearheaded the Finley Farms & Ozark Mill redevelopment project in Ozark. Located on the banks of the Finley River, Finley Farms is restoring and reimagining the historic Ozark Mill property to create a sprawling gathering place featuring farm-forward restaurants, vibrant event venues, a riverside wedding chapel and an urban farm.



Megan has a bachelor's degree in sociology and psychology from the University of Colorado and a master's degree in nonprofit management and technology entrepreneurship from the University of Washington Evans School.

## Dayle Duggins



Dayle serves as marketing manager for Finley Farms; she is responsible for the creation and implementation of Finley Farms' marketing plan, branding guidelines and marketing budget, as well as promoting the Finley Farms brand through advertising, public relations efforts, social media, email marketing, websites and beyond.

She previously spent eight years with 417 Publishing, serving as digital director and then audience development director for the organization. She is a magna cum laude graduate of Missouri State University with a bachelor's degree in print and Internet journalism.

## Brad Erwin

With vast experience encompassing all aspects of project development, Brad Erwin, AIA, LEED-AP, has built a reputation for his innovative approach. With an ability to facilitate consensus on highly technical and specialized projects, Erwin founded Paragon in 2010. From the beginning, the firm has consistently delivered a high-quality product that meets not only the needs of the client but also the needs of the users and the community. It is the desire to improve communities through design that drives Erwin, as evidenced by his specialized knowledge in the sustainable architectural design of civic, public safety, education and laboratory facilities.



Erwin has been recognized for his work with tornado safe room design, which is technically based and functionally complex and combines challenging and involved programmatic relationships. Currently, Erwin assists communities in securing grants, and to date, he has helped secure funding for more than 40 safe rooms. Erwin was named by *ENR Midwest* as one of their Class of 2014's Top 20 Under 40, in part for this area of specialization. Having received his Master's Degree in Architecture from the University of Illinois, Erwin has spent his career perfecting the ability to assimilate data and disseminate information to transform concepts into real-life solutions. It is that approach that has been instrumental in making him a leader in the industry and has helped build Paragon's innovative and sustainable foundation.

## Jeff Houghton



Originally from Iowa City, IA, Jeff Houghton is a four-time Emmy Award winning television host. He's also a writer, actor, and improviser. Jeff hosted *The Mystery Hour*, a syndicated late night talk show he created that aired on FOX, ABC, NBC, and CW affiliates across the country, for 10 seasons. Jeff has worked with brands like Walmart, 7-Eleven, Fossil, H&R Block, Nestle, Canada Goose, Hellmann's, Virgin Mobile, Bass Pro Shops, Aflac, and many more.

Jeff worked for the Late Show with David Letterman and more recently helped to create and star in the viral hit, "Instagram Husband," which now has 60 million views, was covered by the media worldwide, and along the way coined a new phrase. Jeff works with brands to create both humorous and meaningful

videos as creative director for The Writers' Room Creative Comedy Agency. In that role, Jeff has been nominated for a Webby Award and received a Silver Telly Award. Jeff has also been hired to work as talent in a variety of videos and commercials.

Jeff travels nationally and internationally hosting events for companies and organizations. He has performed stand-up at the Comedy Store and trained at the Upright Citizen's Brigade. Jeff was a member of The Skinny Improv mainstage cast for several years where he performed at the home theatre every weekend and traveled the country performing improv. Jeff has also created two podcasts, *Make Something Where You Are* and *The New Hip*.

Jeff was named *417 Magazine's* Entertainer of the Year, *Biz 417's* 10 for the Next 10 and *Springfield Business Journal's* 12 People You Need to Know, as well as 40 Under 40. Jeff also received the Navigator Award from the Missouri Department of Tourism. Awards are nice, but kinda small in comparison with his wife, Michelle, and sons Elias and Rew.

## Meg Wagler

Meg Wagler is a midwest visual artist, illustrator and muralist featured internationally for her colorful art and hand lettering. Her bold work is recognized for its vibrant palettes, striking compositions and messages of self love.

Alongside her independent art career, Meg is working to build MIDxMIDWST, a new arts and culture initiative in Springfield, focused on connecting the dots between public art, music, placemaking and economy.

A St. Louis native, Meg received her BFA from Missouri State University in 2011 and after a career start in graphic design and art direction, shifted in 2019 from agency work to independent art focused on social impact.





## John McQueary



John was born and raised in Springfield and attended Greenwood Laboratory School. He then attended Missouri University of Science & Technology and received a bachelor's degree in Computer Engineering in 2002.

After graduating, he joined the family business, McQueary Bros. Drug, where he and his brother, Billy, were the fourth generation to participate in this family business.

The business was acquired in 2008 and after a few years of writing software with his brother, they were inspired by the resurgence of Downtown Springfield and started to pursue the concept of Hotel Vandivort, which opened in 2015.

In 2017, John founded the Springfield Identity Project, which created a new proposed city flag that can now be seen in many forms around Springfield. In 2019, an expansion building for Hotel Vandivort was completed, which also features the Vantage Rooftop Lounge.

## Heather Hardinger

Heather Hardinger serves as business solutions & talent strategy officer for Connell Insurance, and she was elected to Springfield City Council General Seat A in 2021.

She is a workforce and economic development consultant for a national firm focused on adult educational and career achievement. She spent the last five years as a workforce strategist for Taney County Partnership at the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce where she specialized in implementing workforce development and talent attraction strategy, advocated for the development of affordable workforce housing, and served as a community advisor on equity, diversity, and inclusive workplace policies. Heather also has experience developing talent pipelines to the Springfield regional area for major employers through higher education partnerships in mainland U.S., Puerto Rico, and around the globe.



She was appointed to chair the Mayor's Commission on Human Rights and Community Relations in 2017 and was appointed by Missouri Governor Mike Parson to the state Census 2020 Complete Count Committee and has served on the Leadership Council for the Chamber's Network for Young Professionals since 2020. In 2019, she completed a U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation fellowship program focused on workforce development and closing the skills gap.

Originally from Fairbanks, Alaska, she moved to Springfield in 2005 and is married to her husband, Aaron.

## Clif Smart



Clifton "Clif" M. Smart III has served as the 11th president of Missouri State University since June 27, 2011.

Under Smart's leadership, the university has:

- Set new records in numbers of graduates, graduate employment rates, and overall enrollment
  - Enhanced diversity of faculty, staff, and students
  - Maintained affordability for students
  - Significantly upgraded campus facilities
  - Developed new bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs
  - Achieved a Silver STARS rating from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
- Set records in state appropriations, private gifts and grant funding

In recent years, Smart has served as the president of the Council on Public Higher Education in Missouri, on the NCAA Division I Board of Directors, on the Mercy Health Springfield Communities Board of Directors, on the Board of Directors for the Hawthorn Foundation, and on the Board of Directors for Missouri Partnership. He has also served on boards and committees for the Missouri Department of Higher Education, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, CoxHealth, Arc of the Ozarks, Springfield Innovations, Inc., Isabel's House, First Baptist Church and numerous other professional and community organizations.

Smart has lived in Springfield, Missouri for more than two decades. Before his presidency, Smart served as the university's general counsel. Before coming to Missouri State University, Smart had a private legal practice in Springfield.

Smart and his wife, Gail, have two sons: Murray, who along with his wife, Amy, both graduated in 2012 from Southwest Baptist University and live in Rogers, Arkansas with their daughters Addy, Emery and Miriam and sons Parker and Leeland; and Jim, who recently graduated from Lewis and Clark Law School.

## Rachel Anderson

Rachel Anderson has over 15 years of leadership and management experience gained from working in multiple sectors. She joined Missouri State University in 2015 and currently serves as the Director of the efactory, an innovation, entrepreneurship, and business resource center. She is also the manager for Shaun Munday, a soul musician.

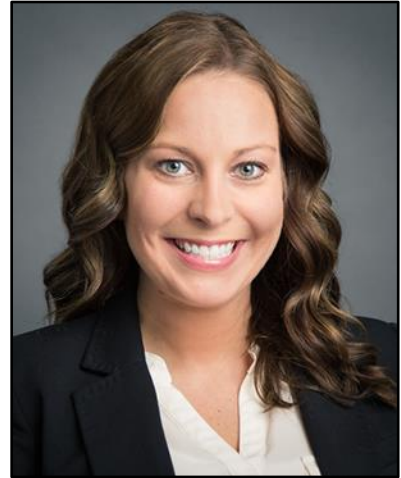
Rachel is the cofounder of Rosie, an organization that supports, assists, and serves as an advocate network for current and prospective female founders, business owners and leaders in the Greater Springfield area.

Previously, Rachel was the head of marketing and business development for a global consulting firm based in Los Angeles. She used extensive Lean and Six Sigma principles and results-driven processes to produce value impact for clients. Services included: executive search, human capital consulting, board placement, market intelligence and talent mapping. Clients spanned a broad range of sectors, industries, and fields from private equity to automotive.

She cofounded Alumni Spaces, an EdTech startup company and has also held roles in research, fundraising, governmental relations, alumni relations and recruiting.

She is a Board Member of the Alzheimer's Association – Greater MO Chapter; Executive Board and Ambassador Board Member for the Gillioz Center for Arts and Entertainment; Advisory Board Member for the Entrepreneurship Strand of the Greater Ozarks Centers for Advanced Professional Studies (GO CAPS); Advisory Board Member for the Hillcrest Business Management, Education, and Cybersecurity Academy and part of the founding core group of NEXT Missouri.

She has been recognized by Biz 417 as "10 for the next 10" and the Springfield Business Journal's "12 People You Should Know." Rachel is a graduate of the University of Missouri, where she served as student body president. She received a BGS in Business, Communication and Political Science and a minor in Public Service and Leadership.



## Clayton Rothschild



Clayton Rothschild is co-founder and chief architect of CloudPano, a SaaS company that connects buyers and sellers through immersive 360° virtual tours. CloudPano transforms how homes are bought and sold, cars are test-driven, and vacation homes are marketed. CloudPano is an integration partner of Realtor.com and Dealer.com and boasted more than 22 million views in 2020.

CloudPano's growth during the pandemic allowed Clayton to move his family back to his hometown of Springfield. Previously, Clayton spent a decade in technical consulting for Fortune 500 clients in Houston, Texas at PriceWaterhouseCoopers and at Pariveda, a boutique, nationally-recognized firm with specialties in energy and healthcare.

Clayton is a graduate of Baylor University and lives near Lake Springfield with his wife Caroline and three boys.

## Nic & Ali Lamphear

Alison Lamphear was born in Canada and raised all over the province of Ontario and the state of Michigan. She attended undergraduate classes at Western University in London Ontario before being accepted into Detroit Mercy's school of Dental Medicine. She graduated with honors in 2009 with a Doctorate of Dental Surgery. Alison practiced as a dentist in Michigan and Ohio before relocating to the Ozarks and accepting the position as Chief Dental Officer for the Department of Justice at the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners.



Nic Lamphear was born in Green Bay, Wisconsin and raised in Ozark Missouri. He graduated from Kansas State University's school of Architecture Planning and Design in 2007 with a Bachelor's of science in Architecture. After graduation, Nic practiced architecture in Austin, Texas and Kansas City, Missouri before moving back to the Springfield area to work as an architect for the Department of Justice at the U.S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners.

In April of 2020 Alison and Nic founded MiddleCoast Media LLC with intent of fighting extreme pandemic boredom by building websites and web-applications. During their first year of operation they were presented with the opportunity to write a large-scale web application to educate inmates in an attempt to lower the recidivism rate. This experience, along with insights from their efactory appointed business advisor, Dan Cobb, helped them realize their unique position to write web-based applications for federal, state and private correctional environments.

In May of 2021 Alison and Nic refined their business focus and created MiddleCoast Solutions LLC to focus on that market; Alison serves as CEO while Nic is the director of development. At three weeks old MiddleCoast Solutions LLC pitched for acceptance into the efactory's Cohort 5 accelerator program. Since their acceptance to the program in July, they have been feverishly working to design, code and market their first application, HeroHub, for release by the efactory's demo day on November 12, 2021.

When not occupied with their first, second or third jobs they enjoy blind taste testing wines from Aldi and working on their never-to-be-complete 1950's house remodel. They are accompanied in this crazy life by their beautiful nine-year-old daughter, Colette, their bossy dog, Remi, and their grumpy cat, Sushi.



## Dan Cobb



Dan Cobb spent his professional career building healthcare information technology companies from startup through exit. As a co-founder of HealthMEDX, he retired as Chief Technology Officer after its sale to private equity. In the beginning, he designed the flagship product and oversaw its development and rollout. As the company grew, he at various times managed product development, research, technical support, customer implementation, sales, marketing and the data center. Prior to HealthMEDX, he was an original employee and minority owner of Management Software, later purchased by McKesson. His focus at Management Software was primarily the design and development of its software offerings. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Information Systems at Missouri State University, magna cum laude.

He is vice chair of the board for the Missouri Technology Company, which provides startup and seed funding to technology, biotech and ag-tech companies and supports entrepreneurial services organizations throughout the state. He currently chairs its Investment Committee. He is also on the Springfield Innovation Inc. board as well as a number of charitable non-profits in the area.

Dan spends his professional time mentoring startup companies and owns equity in over a dozen local companies in the real estate, restaurant and technology industries.



## Tim Baynes

Tim Baynes is founder and CEO of Compat.io. He's an expert on enterprise software, specifically product configuration systems, also known as CPQ or configure-price-quote systems.

Over a career spanning more than 22 years, Tim has worked for and with the world's leading software companies and manufacturers. He has designed, built, implemented and helped companies select CPQ systems that scale to millions of users. He has a passion for customized products, or any solution that can be tailored to the end user's exact needs, and believes that this capability should be woven into all commerce channels so that everyone can get exactly what they want.

Tim has a background in cognitive science and organizational behavior. He's also a gearhead who loves to build and tweak his own stuff: motorcycles, bicycles, audio equipment, and airplanes. He lives in Springfield with his wife Leslie. He's an instrument-rated private pilot and avid cyclist, with a love for anything with wheels, wings, or sails.



## Jena Holtberg-Benge



Jena is the general manager for John Deere Reman in Springfield. She has more than 20 years of experience with John Deere companies, working for the organization in various locations around the U.S. and internationally.

She has served in leadership roles with various business and community organizations, including as president of the Springfield Business Development Corporation and on the Board of Directors for the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce. She is also a former vice chair of the Reman Industries Council and Reman Association Alliance Lead, vice chairperson of the Deere Employees Credit Union, and a co-chair of the United Way of the Ozarks campaign.

Jena holds a bachelor's degree in International Studies from Vassar College and a master's degree in international business, and management from Thunderbird, The American Graduate School of International Business.

## Dr. Hal Higdon

Dr. Hal Higdon is chancellor of the Ozarks Technical Community College System and president of the OTC Springfield Campus. In these roles, Dr. Higdon oversees the strategic direction of the institution and works to strengthen its resources and funding. Prior to his time at OTC, Dr. Higdon served 13 years in administration with Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. He also worked in human resources and workforce training at Alabama's Faulkner State Community College and spent several years in private business.



Throughout his career, Dr. Higdon has been heavily involved in a variety of community service organizations. He currently serves as vice president for the Board of Directors of CoxHealth Systems and as treasurer of the Burrell Behavioral Health Board. He is a member of the Phi Theta Kappa Advisory Board and the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce Board. He is also part of the Junior League of Springfield's Community Advisory Council and Springfield's Downtown Rotary Club.

Dr. Higdon previously served as vice-chairman of economic development for the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. He was a member of the Springfield Business Development Corporation and the Community Relations Board of the U. S. Medical Center for Federal Prisoners. Dr. Higdon also served as chair of the Presidents and Chancellors Council of the Missouri Community College Association (MCCA), which represents community college interests in the state legislature and professional and governmental agencies.

Born in Decatur, Alabama, Dr. Higdon holds a degree in business from the University of Alabama and a master's and Ph.D. in higher education from the University of Southern Mississippi.

## Dr. Grenita Lathan



Dr. Grenita Lathan is superintendent of Missouri's largest school district, which serves 23,500 students and employs about 3,500 individuals. She began her tenure at Springfield Public Schools July 1, 2021.

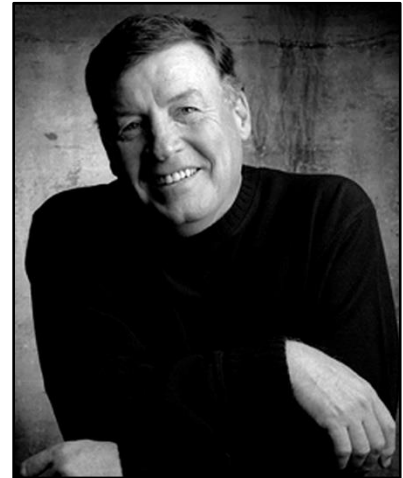
As an educational leader and advocate, Dr. Grenita Lathan focuses on enhancing public education and positively impacting students, staff and families. During her 30-year career in education, she has helped school districts improve academic achievement and implement changes to support all learners.

For the three years prior to joining SPS, Dr. Lathan served as interim superintendent of Houston Independent School District. HISD is the largest school district in Texas and the seventh-largest in the United States. She joined HISD in 2015 as Chief School Officer for Elementary Transformation Schools and later served as Chief Academic Officer. Under Dr. Lathan's leadership, HISD made significant improvements in academic achievement.

She is passionate about supporting philanthropic work in the community and mentoring young women to reach their personal and professional potential. She credits Girl Scouts for instilling the fundamental leadership skills and confidence that empowered her to pursue her goals.

## Jack Stack

Jack Stack is founder, president and CEO of SRC Holdings Corporation. Jack has been called the “smartest strategist in America” by *Inc. Magazine* and one of the “top 10 minds in small business” by *Fortune* magazine. A pioneer of the leadership model known as open-book management, Stack is the author of two books on the subject, The Great Game of Business and A Stake in the Outcome. His expertise in using the open-book model has helped SRC Holdings Corporation start, acquire, and own over 60 businesses and created thousands of jobs since 1983. Along the way, SRC’s stock value has increased 360,000%.



Jack has served as a world judge for the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awards Institute and as an advisor for this group since 1998. Jack designed the first ever United Way Entrepreneurial Fund to encourage innovation within the non-profit community. He has also served as a contributor for *Inc. Magazine* and *The New York Times* and has addressed thousands of audiences on the topic of open-book management. Jack is the father of five children and grandfather of six.

SRC Holdings Corporation is a 100% employee-owned company employing over 1,200 people, with sales of over \$450 million located in Springfield, Missouri. While SRC’s chief business is remanufacturing, the company is best known for being the birthplace of open-book management. Once a failing division of International Harvester, SRC made national headlines when Jack used unconventional measures to turn the company around.

Under Stack’s leadership, employees started playing “The Great Game of Business.” The game was a way to teach employees how business worked in a way that was unintimidating and would make sense to everyone: using the analogy of a game. Using this method, SRC became one of the biggest turn-around stories of its time.

Thirty years later, SRC Holdings Corporation operates 31 business units including joint ventures with John Deere, Case New Holland and Navistar, and maintains two venture capital incubator funds. SRC Holdings Corporation has received international recognition because of its success, including the Top 100 Companies to Work for in America, WorldBlu Most Democratic Workplaces, the National Business Ethics Award and the Business Enterprise Trust Award.

## Danny Collins



Danny Collins is a founder, master guide and wilderness first responder with 37 North Expeditions. Get him in a canoe with his wife and his two huskies and he is right where he wants to be.

Danny grew up in the Ozarks, graduating from Glendale and Drury. After graduation, he moved to New York City for four years and later moved to Ecuador where he worked as the Expedition Manager for a National Geographic Unique Lodge of the World.

Family led him back home to Springfield, and his passion for the outdoors led him to start 37 North Expeditions.

## Mary Kromrey

As Executive Director of Ozark Greenways, Inc. Mary directs the membership-based organization under the guidance of a twelve-member Board of Directors.

Mary leads the organization in board development, implementation of the Parks, Greenways, and Openspace Element of Vision 20/20, special events, donor development and engagement, land trust activities including easement acquisition and annual monitoring, and local advocacy including engaging citizens for support of initiatives. Mary also develops and implements the communication plan for the organization including a printed newsletter, website, and social media platforms.



She works closely with partners in local government at both the city and county levels, the Chamber of Commerce, City Utilities, public & private universities, local, state, and regional nonprofits, and private developers.

Mary is also a graduate of Leadership Springfield, and was named to the Springfield Business Journal's Lists of 40 Under 40 & Most Influential Women. She also serves on several local and state-wide boards. Mary holds a Master of Science in Health Promotion & Wellness Management from Missouri State University.



## Kurt Hellweg



Kurt Hellweg is the former CEO of International Dehydrated Foods (IDF) and American Dehydrated Foods (ADF). He received his B.S. degree in Engineering from the University of Nebraska.

He currently serves on the board of directors for The Hatch Foundation. The foundation, formed in 2019, focuses on nurturing a sense of community through innovative solutions. By building upon its inherent attributes, Hatch is helping Springfield reach its full potential, thus improving the quality of life of Springfieldians.

Kurt also serves on the CoxHealth Board of Directors and is Vice Chairman of its Quality Committee. He previously served on the boards of directors for the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, Springfield Regional Arts Council, and Springfield Symphony.

## Bob Belote

The Springfield-Greene County Park Board named Bob Belote its Director of Parks in the Summer of 2012. Prior to his appointment, Bob had served as Interim Director for a six-month period and as Assistant Director for the Park Board since 2006. In his time with the Park Board, Bob has also served as Ownership Representative to the Springfield Lasers World Team Tennis Franchise.



Bob grew up in Springfield but worked professionally for 13 years managing parks departments in Missouri and Iowa before returning home to Springfield in 2004. During that time, Bob served as Director of Parks and Recreation for the Cities of Independence, Missouri, and Sioux City, Iowa, and as Assistant Director in Blue Springs, Missouri. Through the years, Bob has been very involved professionally with the Missouri Park and Recreation Association and served as its president in 2003 to 2004. Bob was recently honored with MPRA's top award, the 2013 Fellow Award, for his ongoing contributions to the parks and recreation field.

Bob received his bachelor's degree in Psychology from Missouri State University and his master's degree in Parks, Recreation and Tourism from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) through the National Recreation and Park Association and a past graduate of NRPA's Executive Development School. Bob is also a graduate of Leadership Springfield (Class 25).

Bob met his future wife, Deana, while working for the Park Board many years ago as Youth Baseball Coordinator. They have two children, Alex and Abbey, and their family was recognized as the United States Tennis Association's "Tennis Family of the Year" for the Missouri District in 2011. In addition to his passion for our local parks, Bob also enjoys following the local music scene and going to the lake with family and friends.

## Senator Roy Blunt



Building on a background as a public servant, university president and teacher, U.S. Senator Roy Blunt was elected to the Senate in 2010.

Senator Blunt serves as the Chairman of the Senate Republican Policy Committee and as the Ranking Member of the Senate Rules Committee. He also serves on the Senate Appropriations Committee; the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee; and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. He is also the Ranking Member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education.

The people of Southwest Missouri overwhelmingly elected Senator Blunt seven times to the U.S. House of Representatives. Senator Blunt was elected the Majority Whip earlier in his career than any Member of Congress in eight decades, and he was elected to the Senate leadership during his first year in the Senate. Before serving in Congress, he was a history teacher, a county official, and in 1984 became the first Republican elected as Missouri's Secretary of State in more than 50 years. Senator Blunt also served four years as the president of Southwest Baptist University, his alma mater, in Bolivar, Missouri. Senator Blunt earned an M.A. in history from Missouri State University.

Senator Blunt is a member of the Smithsonian Council for American Art and is a Trustee of the State Historical Society of Missouri. Senator Blunt is also a member of the Kennedy Center Board of Trustees.

The Senator is married to Abigail Blunt and has four children: Matt Blunt, Amy Blunt, Andy Blunt, and Charlie (age 16). Blunt has six grandchildren: Davis Mosby, Ben Blunt, Branch Blunt, Eva Mosby, Allyson Blunt, and Brooks Blunt.

## Christina Angle

As CFO & VP Group Services for the Erlen Group, Christina leads aggregates, logistics, and real estate businesses.

Christina is a Washington & Lee University graduate and a Certified Public Accountant in the state of Virginia. She has an extensive background in IFRS and US GAAP accounting and audit for publicly traded multinationals.



## David Cameron



David Cameron serves as city administrator for the City of Republic. Originally from Miller, Missouri, David earned his bachelor's degree in Organizational Management from John Brown University.

He has devoted his working career to the public sector addressing infrastructure and environmental challenges. Mr. Cameron served ten years as City Administrator in Siloam Springs, Arkansas. Under his leadership, Siloam Springs completed several projects highlighted by the sale of the publicly owned hospital resulting in a new \$42 million facility. In addition, Siloam Springs constructed a \$25 million wastewater plant, had over \$9 million in street improvements and realized substantial residential and commercial growth.

## Tom Rankin

Tom Rankin, CCIM, has lived in southwest Missouri for over 45 years. In 1990, he started Rankin Company, specializing in the general brokerage of commercial real estate. Soon thereafter, he launched Rankin Development, specializing in the development of industrial projects. In 2006, Rankin Company affiliated with the national brokerage firm SVN and in doing so, became the only nationally recognized real estate company with an office in southwest Missouri. SVN/Rankin Company has repeatedly attained the distinction of having one of the top 10 most productive offices (out of over 160) in SVN nationwide and most recently in 2015.



His most recent development projects are North Creek Business Park, a 108-acre distribution and warehouse project, a 15-acre retail project called The Shoppes at James River and a 98 acre retail project called Springfield Plaza. Tom has developed over 600,000 sf of industrial built-to-suit projects ranging in size from 40,000-108,000 sq. ft. for many national and regional companies.

He is highly involved in the community, including service with the following organizations:

- Springfield Business Development Corp. – Past President
- Springfield Chamber of Commerce – Past Board Member
- Burrell Behavioral Health – Current Board Member
- Central Bank – Current Director
- Mercy Hospital Board – Board Member
- Mercy Health Foundation – Past Board Member
- Fellowship Of Christian Athletes – Current Board Member
- Board of Public Utilities – Past Chairman
- Breast Cancer Foundation of the Ozarks – Past President
- Southeast Rotary – Past Board Member
- Community Blood Center of the Ozarks – Past Board Member
- Boys and Girls Club of Springfield – Past Treasurer
- Phi Delta Theta Missouri Epsilon Foundation – Past President

## Mayor Ken McClure



Ken McClure was elected Mayor of the City of Springfield in April 2017 and re-elected in both 2019 and 2021. He was first elected to General Council Seat D of City Council in April 2015 and elected as Mayor Pro Tem by his fellow councilmembers. He received the 2020 Government Excellence Award from Missouri State University for strong leadership amidst the COVID-19 pandemic and community development projects.

Ken retired from Missouri State University in July 2015, having served as Vice President for Administrative and Information Services. Ken's previous experience includes serving as Chief of Staff and Transition Director for former Governor Matt Blunt, as well as Associate General Manager – Administration for City Utilities. He also was appointed by former Governor John

Ashcroft as a member, and later as Chairman, of the Missouri Public Service Commission.

Ken was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Army Reserves and honorably discharged with the rank of Captain in 1980. He received his bachelor's degree in History from Missouri State University and his master's degree in History from the University of Missouri.

Ken has two grown daughters, two grandsons and two granddaughters that he enjoys spending time with.



## Francine Pratt

Francine Pratt has an extensive knowledge in serving communities through program/project development and management with several years of experience leading government, private, public and non-profit organizations. She currently serves as the Prosper Springfield Director and oversees the community's two major goals: Increase additional education beyond high school (postsecondary attainment) to 60% and reduce poverty by five percentage points – both by 2025.

She serves as a board member for the Missouri College Access Network and serves as a member of the MO Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development Equity Project, a multi-year initiative that will define and drive a statewide agenda for equity in postsecondary attainment. She is co-owner of a consulting business, Pratt Consultants. Francine has called Springfield home since 2007 with her husband Wes Pratt after living in Baltimore, MD and California for most of her life. They have a blended family of six adult children and nine grandchildren.



## Dr. Tyrone Bledsoe



Dr. Bledsoe is the founder of Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB), a national organization established to enhance the experiences of and instill a "spirit of care" in African American males in high schools, colleges and universities around the country. Dr. Bledsoe served as Vice President for Student Life and Special Assistant to the President at The University of Toledo as well as various other positions for institutions of higher education.

After leaving the position of Vice President for Student Life and Special Assistant to the President at The University of Toledo, he transitioned to the role of Executive Director of the SAAB National Headquarters.

Dr. Bledsoe resides in Springfield, Missouri. He was born and raised in Grenada, Mississippi. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree and Master's of Education degree from Mississippi State University. He earned his Ph.D. in Counseling and Student Affairs Administration from the University of Georgia and was chosen as the Outstanding Doctoral Student in the State of Georgia and was most recently recognized as the Outstanding Doctoral Alumnus by the University of Georgia. He is a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. and is very active in the arena of higher education. Dr. Bledsoe is highly recognized by several professional associations for his research, publications, presentations and scholarly work in the U.S. and around the world.

Most importantly to him, he is the father of three adult sons, Tyrone Jr., Exon and Ronnie.

## Richard Ollis

Richard Ollis was appointed to City Council's General Council Seat D in May 2017 and was elected to the seat in April 2019. He currently serves on the Community Involvement Committee and the Finance and Administration Committee.

Ollis currently serves as CEO and Chairman of Ollis/Akers/Arney Insurance Agency, founded in 1885. He regularly writes for the Springfield Business Journal, the Springfield News-Leader, and has hosted the radio talk show "Insurance Talk."

Ollis has served as chairman of the Board of Directors for the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce and as President of the Board of Directors for Springfield Little Theater. He also has served on boards for Commerce Bank, Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, Springfield-Branson National Airport, Springfield Sister Cities, Ozarks Regional YMCA, Wellness Council of America, the Healthy Living Alliance, and the Safety Council of the Ozarks.

A U.S. Navy veteran, Ollis received his bachelor's degree in Finance from Missouri State University and serves on their College of Business Advisory Board. He is a fourth-generation Springfield resident, is married to Teresa Ollis, and has two daughters, Kelsey and Sabrina.

