

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MISSOURI CHAMBER OF COM

INDUSTRY

MISSOURI

BUSINESS

SUMMER 2021

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30 years old, more
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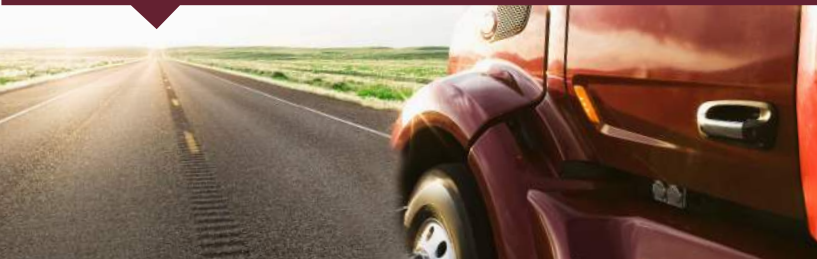
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COVER STORY

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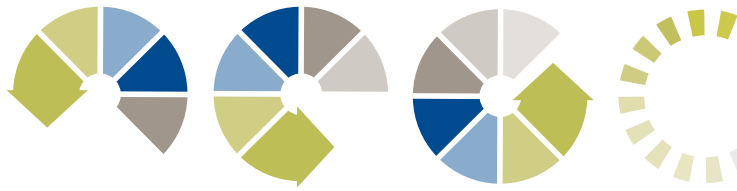
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23 30 Years of Leadership Missouri

Since 1990, Leadership Missouri has identified current and emerging leaders and enhanced their leadership skills while deepening their knowledge of the state.



A reason for optimism: Missouri2030 progress

How about some good news? The Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry is now five years into our statewide **MISSOURI2030** strategic vision and the latest competitiveness numbers show Missouri is making strong progress.

It all started in 2015 when we did a deep dive into how Missouri stacks up compared to other states. The numbers weren't good.

In the decade leading to 2015, our state ranked 43rd in GDP, 39th in per capita income and 42nd in job creation.

These statistics provided a much-needed wake up call. While Missourians had perhaps gotten comfortable being a middle-of-the-road state, the data showed we'd slipped out of the middle — we were now lagging badly.

This realization led the Missouri Chamber to create a positive vision for our future with **MISSOURI2030**. Our initiative was backed by research and direct input from our state's leading job creators. We built bold policy and programmatic goals around preparing our workforce, connecting through infrastructure, competing for jobs and uniting the business community.

We then used our vision to rally support from across Missouri and brought our vision directly to policymakers who joined us in helping bring **MISSOURI2030** into reality.

It's a nice anecdote, but the actual proof is in the numbers — the same numbers that had sounded our wake-up call just a few years prior.

So, how are we doing?

As I said before, in the ten years before **MISSOURI2030**, our state ranked 43rd in GDP. Not good. But in the five years since, we've moved up to 36th. Our income ranking rose from 39th to 34th. In job creation, we've moved from 42nd to 22nd.

While these are all strong improvements, that last number is the big one. Jobs are the leading indicator. As Missouri keeps moving up the ladder in job creation, our income and GDP numbers will naturally climb as well.

We've come a very long way in five years. While we're far from done, this data validates our approach with **MISSOURI2030**. It also illustrates how Missouri is in a much better position to capitalize and grow in the post-pandemic economy.

These numbers — in addition to our strong pro-jobs progress in Jefferson City this year — should give Missourians a strong sense of optimism for our state's future.

We should feel good about where we are today, with every reason to believe Missouri will continue to rise in the rankings as we benefit from the new laws passed this year. This includes laws that will repair and modernize our transportation system, stop frivolous COVID-19 lawsuits, provide sales tax fairness, better train Missourians for in-demand jobs and help ensure we have reliable, affordable utilities.

Missouri is getting closer to running on all cylinders, and it couldn't have come at a better time. I'd like to thank Gov. Mike Parson and all the policymakers who have helped take us this far. And I'd especially thank the business leaders who supported **MISSOURI2030** and helped us push this initiative forward.

But we aren't there yet.

I still believe Missouri can be a top 10 state in GDP, income and job creation. That remains our ambitious target for the year 2030 — and we have a long way to go.

With our track record of success, we will be working to grow our **MISSOURI2030** coalition and push even harder for progress.

What seemed like an impossible goal just five years ago is now getting closer. *Let's keep moving forward.*

Daniel P. Mehan, President and CEO
Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry

CAPITOL Chat

A PODCAST FROM THE MISSOURI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

Join your Missouri Chamber Governmental Affairs team for a regular look under the dome with a focus on the latest developments concerning pro-business legislation.

Visit mochamber.com/capitolchat to listen.



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ROAD TO RECOVERY

Missouri Chamber champions historic transportation funding legislation

When it comes to transportation funding, Missouri has long been traveling down a rocky road.

With a fuel tax ranking second lowest in the nation, the state has spent far below the national average on its crumbling transportation system. This left Missouri with more than 2,000 deficient bridges and residents collectively losing \$8 billion annually due to various infrastructure problems.

But finally, Missouri is ready to put these statistics in the rearview mirror.

After years of discouraging setbacks on transportation funding, the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry led this year's successful push for funding – using new research to highlight the need for funding and creating a broad, bipartisan coalition to support the effort.

On May 11, the Missouri General Assembly passed legislation that will raise much-needed funding to repair and improve the state's transportation system.

It started with the Missouri Chamber Foundation's Transportation2030 report, which contained 22 recommendations for strengthening Missouri's transportation assets.

Calling transportation funding the "elephant in the room," Transportation2030 noted that the

state's funding levels were "antiquated and barely adequate to maintain the existing system, much less support infrastructure enhancements."

This was clearly a crisis for the state.

As a central state, Missouri's economy has always thrived on its connections. The state sits at the axis of trade across North America – with past generations having built the highways, rail lines, river connections and air hubs that power Missouri's economy today.

Sen. Dave Schatz, the President Pro Tem of the Missouri Senate, has long been a leader in the state legislature on transportation funding. This session, Schatz filed Senate Bill 262 which would become the bill to eventually pass.

In its final form, the bill phases in an increase in the gas tax by 2.5 cents each year over five years. The legislation also phases in increased fees on electric vehicles. These changes will raise an estimated \$500 million per year in transportation funding for state, county and city projects.

While funding bills can be a tough sell, the Missouri Chamber assembled a broad coalition to show Missouri lawmakers that transportation funding had widespread support: Missouri Can't Wait. The campaign united business and labor, rural and urban interests and Republicans and Democrats behind the need to repair the state's

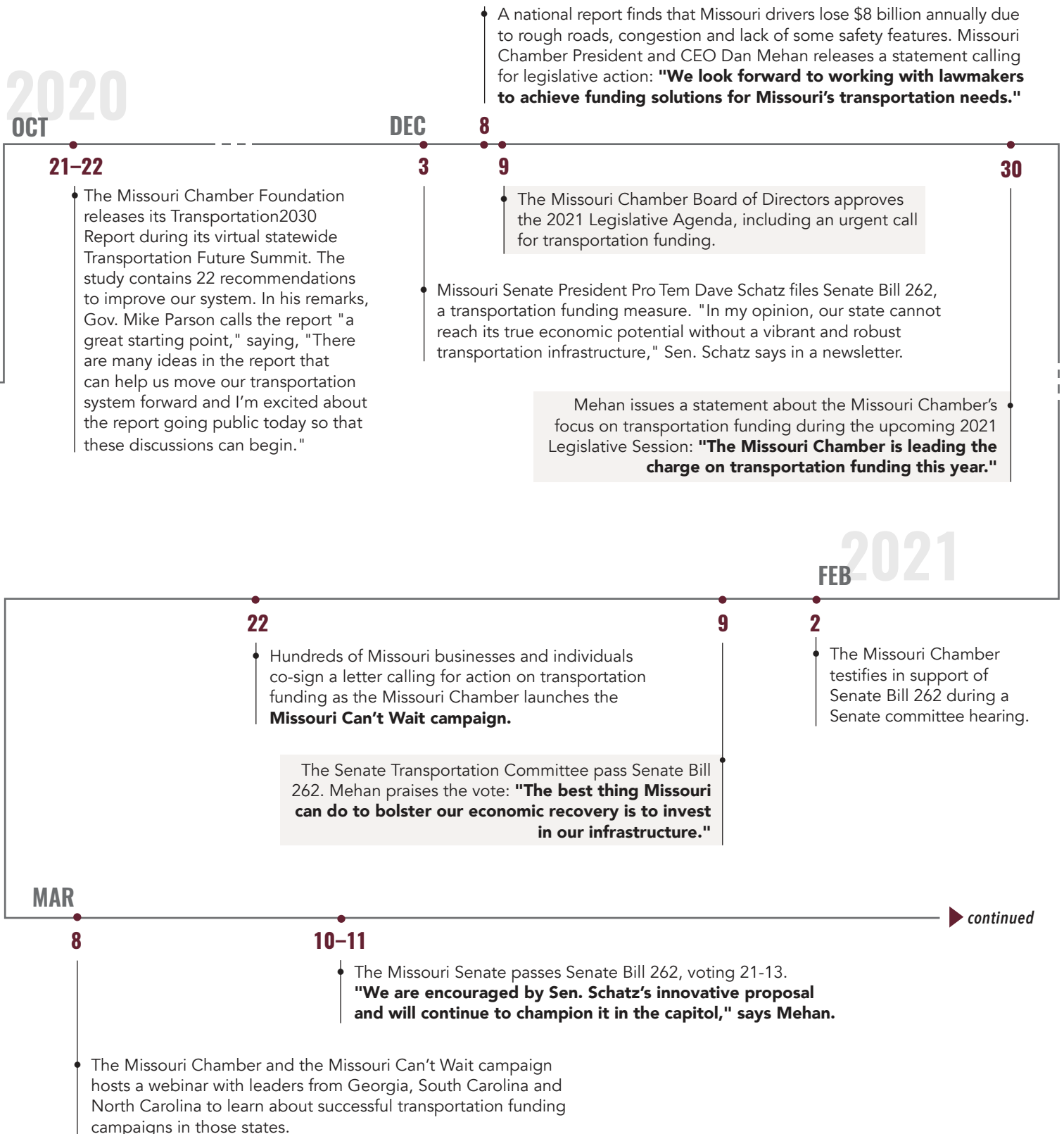
roads and bridges. Hundreds of businesses and individuals co-signed the Missouri Can't Wait letter urging lawmakers to pass transportation funding. The coalition also funded a statewide media campaign. Critically, the Missouri Chamber and Missouri Can't Wait also released an economic impact study showing how transportation investment is vital to boosting the state's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The report revealed that passing Senate Bill 262 would create a \$1.8 billion positive impact on Missouri's economy and generate more than 17,000 jobs.

These facts helped the bill pass both chambers of the legislature by healthy margins, with the Senate passing the bill 21-13 and the House giving it final approval with a 104-52 vote.

Senate Bill 262 is written specifically to give Missouri drivers a choice. Anyone who doesn't want to see transportation improvements in Missouri can use the rebate provision to get their dollars back. The legislation will cost them nothing.

However, the Missouri Chamber believes that most drivers won't mind paying a little more at the pump to make needed investments in our transportation system. Moving forward, the Missouri Chamber will continue to promote the urgent need for transportation funding and the transformative impact this legislation will have in our state.

Here's how the Missouri Chamber led the push to pass Senate Bill 262 this session:



2021
APR

- 8 Spearheaded by the Missouri Chamber, the **Missouri Can't Wait** coalition launches a statewide digital advertising campaign urging immediate action on transportation funding.
- 9 In response to a proposed federal transportation funding package, Gov. Parson tells reporters that Missouri should continue pursuing its own funding solutions: "We have to stand on our own feet. We can't be reliant on the federal government all the time for everything."
- 12 A Missouri Chamber news release highlights the broad **Missouri Can't Wait** coalition pushing for transportation funding. The coalition includes business and labor, Republicans and Democrats, as well as urban and rural interests. **"We hope by showing lawmakers just how far-reaching this call for action is, they will work to resolve this critical need," says Mehan.**
- 21 The Missouri Chamber releases an economic impact study showing that Senate Bill 262 would create a \$1.8 billion positive economic impact and create more than 17,000 jobs.
- 27 The Missouri House Transportation Committee passes Senate Bill 262. **"We now call on the Missouri House to finish the job," says Mehan.**

MAY

- 5 Ahead of a House Rules Committee vote and an expected debate on the Missouri House floor, the Missouri Chamber releases a statement from Mehan: **"With less than two weeks remaining in the legislative session, Missouri lawmakers have a chance this year to truly ignite our economic recovery by passing Senate Bill 262."**
- 6 Senate Bill 262 is tied for first in a list of the Missouri Chamber's top "Seven Issues to Watch" during the final week of the legislative session. The Missouri Chamber urges Missourians to contact their House members via the chamber's Policy Action Center.
- 11 With a vote of 104-52, the Missouri House finally passes Senate Bill 262 and sends it to Gov. Parson to be signed into law. **"This is a monumental achievement that will help ignite our state's economic recovery...Passage of this bill is a huge step toward ensuring that Missouri remains a leading transportation hub in the Midwest," says Mehan.**



WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE HAVE PASSED A HISTORIC BILL TO REPAIR AND MODERNIZE MISSOURI'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.

This was made possible by the broad Missouri Can't Wait coalition of stakeholders who united behind fixing our state's transportation funding crisis.
Let's continue working to build a better Missouri!





WE STOPPED THE WAVE

*With victory over COVID-19 lawsuits, employers
can reopen with greater confidence*

The Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry came into the 2021 session sounding the alarm about a major threat to the state's economic recovery — a rising wave of COVID-19 lawsuits.

After a key late session push, the Missouri Chamber succeeded as lawmakers passed legislation to protect employers from being dragged into court by trial attorneys hoping to cash in on the pandemic.

The new law is urgently needed as trial attorneys have been working overtime to convert the pandemic into a massive payday for themselves.

A report at the beginning of the year counted more than 5,800 COVID-related complaints that have been filed across the country — a number expected to rise dramatically as trial attorneys advertise to recruit plaintiffs for new COVID-19 lawsuits.

As always, employers were squarely in the crosshairs. While people became ill with coronavirus, trial attorneys began searching for ways to pin the infections on things that happened in workplaces. Such accusations could form the basis for an unprecedented number of liability lawsuits around the country.

This would significantly imperil our economic rebound from the pandemic, causing businesses to think twice about reopening due to the potential for legal jeopardy.

The Missouri Chamber noted this threat very early in the pandemic, calling for urgent action to stop opportunistic COVID-19 litigation as part of its Uniting for Recovery plan published in April of 2020.

The Missouri Chamber then successfully urged Gov. Mike Parson to call a special session on COVID liability. Those early discussions helped familiarize lawmakers with the issue and laid the groundwork for success during the 2021 Legislative Session. Sen. Tony Luetkemeyer (R-Parkville) championed the cause in the legislature by sponsoring Senate Bill 51, which included language to stop COVID-19 lawsuits. Sen. Bill White (R-Joplin) and Rep. John Wiemann (R-O-Fallon) also played key roles in the bill's passage.

Passage of this bill became the Missouri Chamber's number one priority for the legislative session.

The focus on this issue followed employer concern about being left exposed to these lawsuits while they were trying to reopen and keep their businesses alive during the pandemic. When the Missouri Chamber wrote a letter calling for action on COVID-19 lawsuits, roughly 800 employers and Missourians joined as cosigners.

However, trial attorneys and other interest groups worked actively during the session to stop Senate Bill 51. Misinformation about the bill was widely spread online and on social media — complicating the legislature's work to pass the bill quickly.

In response, the Missouri Chamber continued to stress the need for protection as Missouri reopened. The risk was especially serious in Missouri, where courts and court rules have long had an anti-business slant. In fact, our state's statute of limitations allows plaintiffs to wait several years before filing a suit. Thus, if employers were left exposed to COVID-19 litigation, it could have been years before Missouri could even begin to assess the quantity and scope of the litigation caused by the pandemic.

But fortunately, after more than a year of work, the legislation was finally passed on May 14 and sent to Gov. Parson to be signed into law.

Once enacted, the law should help Missouri employers feel confident as they reopen and power our economic recovery.

"The threat of this litigation has loomed over every employer in Missouri. It has long been clear that we needed to protect our employers as they seek to reopen," said Daniel P. Mehan, President and CEO of the Missouri Chamber. "With this bill now passed, employers should have greater confidence as they get Missourians back to work. Once enacted, employers in Missouri can operate knowing they are safe from the kind of COVID-19 litigation that is spreading rapidly across the country. We thank the many business leaders from across Missouri who stood with us to fight for this issue. It took a truly united front to pass this critical bill and finally put these protections into law."



<header>

READY TO WORK

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*New laws and funding
will help break down
barriers to employment*



As employers seek to rebound following the COVID-19 pandemic, widespread workforce challenges are making it harder to return to normal.

This is illustrated by the state's job market numbers, which this spring showed more than 115,000 open jobs and 130,000 unemployed Missourians. Yet the answer isn't as easy as plugging workers into available positions. Many employers are looking for workers with specific technical training or experience, making it more difficult to find a match for their opportunities.

For years, the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry has been pushing for reforms to help improve the state's workforce and equip Missourians with the skills they need. This focus emerged through the Missouri Chamber's **MISSOURI2030** strategic initiative, which shed a light on the state's workforce issues even well before the pandemic.

Recent years have seen a number of positive workforce reforms led by the Missouri Chamber, a trend that continued during the 2021 legislative session.

A growing number of Missouri employers are turning to apprenticeships to help develop talent for in-demand jobs. Missouri ranks second in the nation for new and completed apprenticeships, with the Missouri Chamber working to enhance this status through a \$6 million federal grant that is expanding tech apprenticeships as well as through Missouri Apprentice Connect, a statewide apprenticeship matching service created in partnership with the Missouri Dept. of

Higher Education and Workforce Development.

This year, the Missouri Chamber provided a further boost to apprenticeships in the state by successfully championing a bill that will allow the state's 529 college savings plan to also be used for apprenticeship expenses. This will make apprenticeships even more accessible to Missouri workers.

Lawmakers also passed language to establish a statewide plan for enhancing career and technical education in the state, helping to make this training even more valuable to high school students.

In addition, the state budget invests in many important workforce initiatives. This includes funding to help adults receive high school diplomas, certificates, credentials and degrees; assistance for employer-driven training programs, like Fast Track; funding for computer coding training; and expanding the ACT WorkKeys® curriculum in Missouri. These investments were made even as lawmakers fully funded the state's education formula and increased funding to higher education institutions.

"We have been hearing for years that workforce is one of the biggest issues facing Missouri employers. As we come out of the pandemic, these concerns are intensifying due to the growing skilled worker shortage," said Daniel P. Mehan, Missouri Chamber president and CEO. "The bills and funding passed this year are breaking down unnecessary barriers and will help Missourians attain the knowledge and training they need to join our workforce and power our economic recovery."

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“Wayfair fix” legislation will ensure sales tax law is applied fairly



▲ Photos provided by the office of Governor Mike Parson.

Since the arrival of e-commerce, physical stores in Missouri have been competing at a big disadvantage. However, in response to the Missouri business community united under the Missouri Chamber, state lawmakers have finally put all retailers on equal footing by requiring out-of-state online sellers to collect sales tax.

This concept, commonly called the “Wayfair fix,” comes in response to a 2018 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *South Dakota v. Wayfair*, which determined that economic nexus rather than physical proximity is all that is needed to require sales tax collection.

Missouri was the last state to adopt this change, which is made even more relevant now due to the economic hardship Missouri-based employers have faced during COVID-19 — including the pandemic trend of online shopping over patronizing local stores.

The issue has been a top legislative priority of the Missouri Chamber as well as the Missouri Chamber Federation, its grassroots network of nearly 200 local chambers of commerce across the state. The legislation is Senate Bill 153, sponsored by Sen.

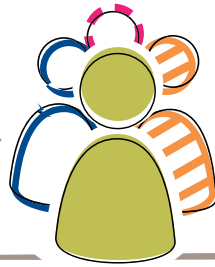
Andrew Koenig (R-Manchester).

“It never made sense to place our own Missouri employers at a disadvantage.”

— Dan Mehan

“This bill is especially timely as we work to reopen businesses across the state. It never made sense to place our own Missouri employers at a disadvantage. With the risks of the pandemic starting to dissipate, creating a level playing field will help encourage Missourians to patronize local stores and reinvigorate our economy,” said Daniel P. Mehan, Missouri

Chamber president and CEO. “Sen. Koenig’s work was instrumental in getting Senate Bill 153 passed and we’re grateful for his leadership on this issue. We are proud to finally have Governor Parson’s signature on this important legislation.”



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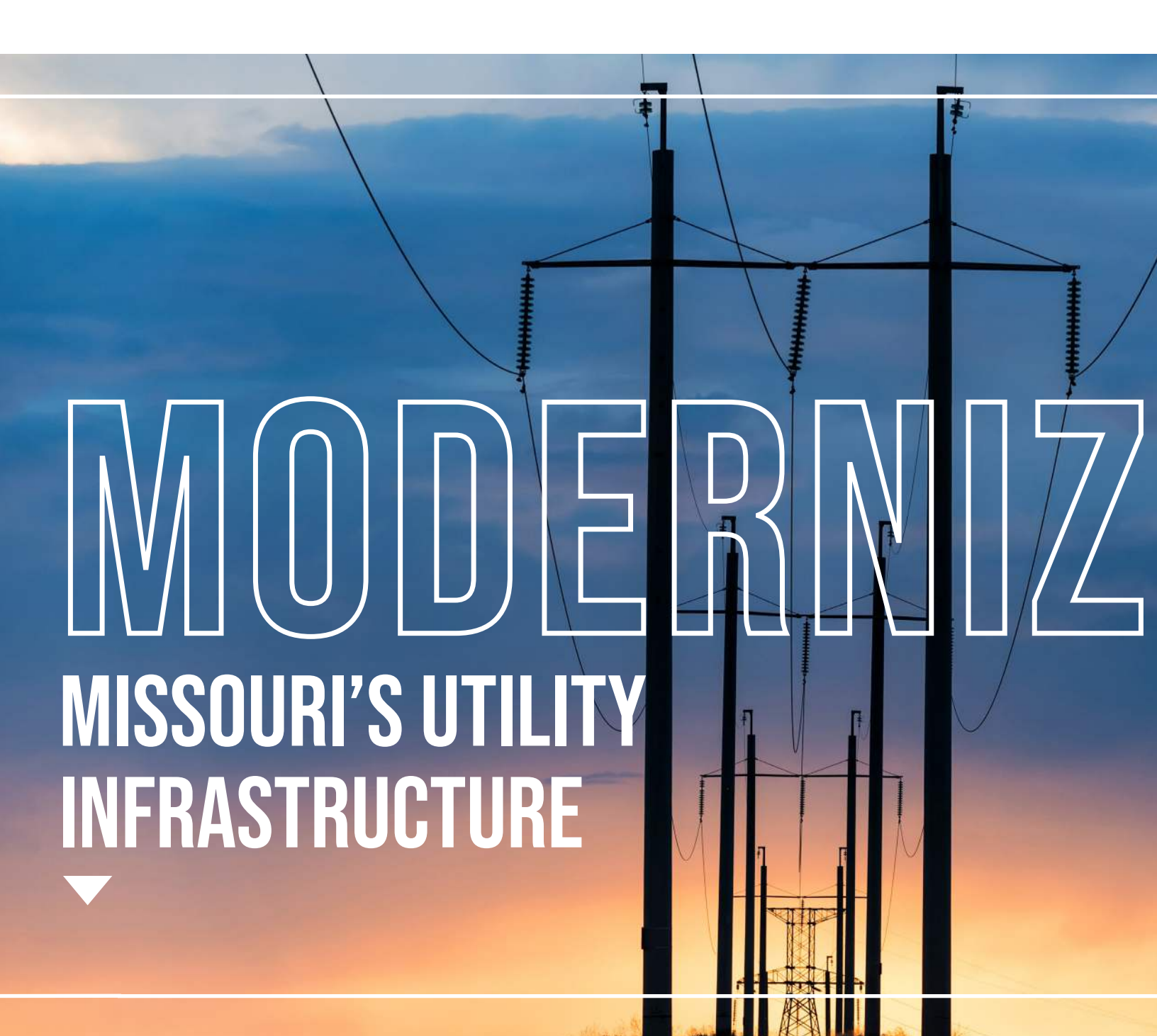
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INFO
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ST. LOUIS


(virtual option available)

We are closely monitoring the COVID-19 infection rate in the state of Missouri and will be sharing new dates soon!



MODERNIZ

MISSOURI'S UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE



OFTEN, IT'S THE MOST BASIC THINGS IN LIFE WE TAKE FOR GRANTED.

Clean running water. Reliable electricity. Fast internet. Fortunately, this year the Missouri General Assembly made it a priority to pass bills that will improve and expand these critical services while maintaining affordability.

Senate Bill 44 by Sen. Bill White (R-Joplin) allows water and wastewater management providers to upgrade and repair systems proactively — saving ratepayers money.

“Businesses across the state depend on us for clean, safe, reliable, and affordable water and wastewater service,” said

Debbie Dewey, president of Missouri American Water. “However, much like our roads and bridges, many water and sewer pipes are 70-100 years old and need to be replaced as they reach the end of their useful life. The Missouri Water and Sewer Infrastructure Act will help us attract additional capital to the state so critical water and wastewater infrastructure replacement projects can be done more cost-efficiently, improving reliability and saving businesses money long-term. We appreciate the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry’s support for Senate Bill 44 and applaud the legislature’s passage of the bill.”

House Bill 734 by Rep. Michael O'Donnell (R-St. Louis) contains several impactful utility measures as well, including



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language to create a renewable natural gas program. This will allow utilities to capture methane gas to be used as biogas, a renewable source of energy. The capture and use of biogases from landfills and agricultural operations will improve the air quality near facilities while providing more energy for the state.

Lawmakers also approved a measure that will stop local municipalities from limiting their consumers' power choices. If an energy source is available, consumers will have the ability to use it.

Another measure establishes a financing mechanism for electric utilities that will yield access to new renewable energy sources while minimizing ratepayer costs.

Jason Klindt, director of government affairs at Kansas City-based energy provider Evergy, said the legislation was unique in that it had support from utilities, environmental groups and large industrials alike.

"Securitization is simply a financial tool to help reduce costs of financing unrecovered assets — that is, power plants that still have costs to be recovered," explained Klindt. "It's a win-win tool that allows the utility to recover those costs and for customers to realize a savings. It allows the utility to retire older, less efficient generation, save customers money and re-invest in Missouri."

And not to be overlooked is the economic significance of broadband service. The COVID-19 crisis was a stark reminder of the need to having modern internet connectivity available across Missouri. As schools and businesses closed, students and workers were forced to rely on their local broadband infrastructure. Unfortunately, in some communities the connections were not up to the job.

To help address this, lawmakers allocated \$10 million of federal funding for rural broadband internet grants in the state budget. The language was included in House Bill 7, sponsored by Budget Chairman Cody Smith (R-Carthage).

This budget line item has the potential to address obstacles for internet providers such as low population density in certain areas and the high cost of burying cable.

"We're always assessing the federal opportunities as it relates to broadband and to see how we can put together a good proposal to secure additional federal resources for broadband expansion in Missouri," said Tim Arbeiter, Missouri director of broadband development. "Compared to 2019 when Missouri ranked 41st in the nation for broadband access, in 2020 we ranked 32nd, which is up by nine slots. But we still have a way to go."

With utility companies around the state eager to modernize and expand, the Missouri Chamber is pleased to see the legislature focus on facilitating these upgrades.

"We tend to take reliable utilities for granted in Missouri. However, if we want this advantage to continue, we need to modernize our systems and help our providers invest to prepare for the future," said Daniel P. Mehan, Missouri Chamber president and CEO. "The Missouri Chamber was a leader in passing these bills. Thanks to this progress, our whole state will benefit from having strong, affordable utility services."





▲ Photos provided by the office of Governor Mike Parson.

AN END TO EASY PILL SHOPPING

Statewide PDMP gives providers a long-sought tool



Sen. Holly Rehder's passion for protecting Missourians from prescription drug addiction was first sparked at home.

Rehder, a Sikeston business owner, is mother to a daughter who fought an addiction to prescription medication and is now sober. However, this experience showed Rehder that Missouri was missing a vital safeguard that could have helped prevent substance use disorder from taking hold in the first place.

Until now, Missouri has been the only state in the nation that lacked a statewide system that allows clinicians to monitor how many prescriptions their patients are taking from other providers.

Rehder's campaign to resolve this issue began in the Missouri House of Representatives when she was elected in 2012. Every year since — through her tenure as a representative and now as a senator — she has filed legislation to establish a statewide prescription drug monitoring program (PDMP) in Missouri.

PDMPs allow medical professionals to view what other prescriptions their patients have been taking before they prescribe more. Having access to this information lets doctors identify substance use disorder early and provide appropriate care for patients with or at risk of addiction. PDMPs also help hospitals with early detection and treatment for children born with opioid dependence.

The problem is so severe in Missouri that the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration has called Missouri the "pill mill of the United States."

"Enabling our physicians — our medical professionals — to understand their patient's history is vital to being able to prescribe safely," Rehder said. "We really have to address the root of this problem which is recognizing addiction on the front end and allowing our medical professionals to handle it from there."

Rehder's nine years of tireless work finally paid off on May 11, 2021 when her Senate Bill 63 passed the legislature.

The Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry has advocated alongside Rehder for this measure.

"This is a big step forward for Missouri and finally puts this longstanding issue to rest. Having a statewide PDMP will help physicians and pharmacists identify patients who pill shop — and help stop the trends of addiction that harm so many Missouri families and workplaces," said Daniel P. Mehan, Missouri Chamber President and CEO. "This legislation will help prevent deaths and address the opioid epidemic in our state. Drug addiction impacts Missouri employers directly. It



affects productivity, safety and morale at work. It also drives up employer-paid prescription costs. We thank the legislature for passing Senate Bill 63 and we applaud bill sponsor Sen. Holly Rehder on her years of leadership and commitment to this issue."

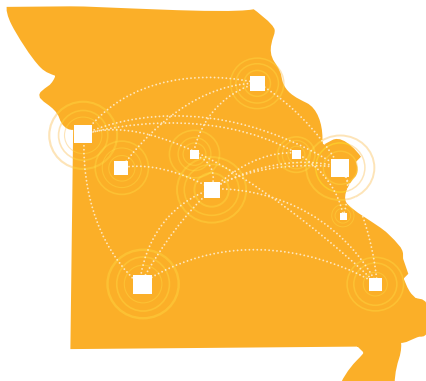
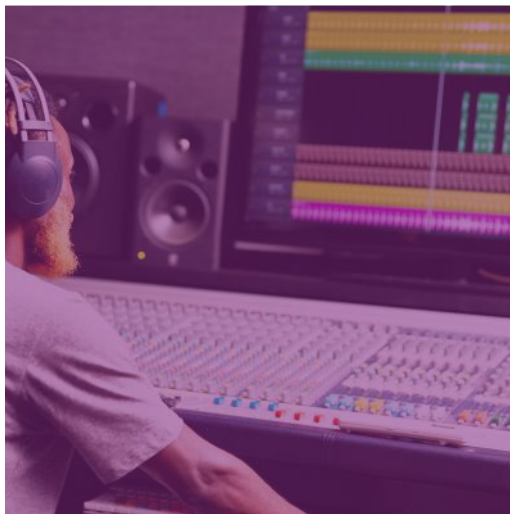
While creating a statewide PDMP has long been an important goal of the business community, the issue is also deeply personal for many Missouri families.

"I love you to our parents who refused to give up, no matter how hurtful their stories were to tell," Sen. Rehder said at the bill's June 7 signing, referring to several people who have experienced the loss of a loved one due to the opioid epidemic and have long urged lawmakers to pass the legislation.

Jim Marshall, who lost his 20-year-old son Cody to a Xanax and heroin overdose, is one of them. Marshall now works as a substance use disorder prevention advocate. For many years he has gone regularly to the Capitol in Jefferson City to testify in favor of PDMP legislation.

"I really believe this law can help doctors prescribe safer and it closes a front door to addiction," said Marshall. "By front door, I mean where people start using and developing dependency. Eighty-five percent of all heroin users start with a prescription pill addiction... I'm glad Missouri joined the other 49 states in using a system that is a preventative attempt to curb substance use disorders. Kudos to Sen. Rehder for her persistence and passion."

During the years that Missouri lacked a statewide PDMP, a county-by-county system developed that currently covers about 85 percent of Missourians. The new law will fill gaps in areas not covered by this PDMP effort and provide further privacy protections by creating a task force of licensed medical professionals to oversee the data.



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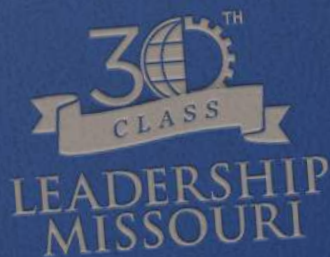




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CLASS OF 2021

The Missouri Chamber is celebrating three decades of its exclusive professional development program.

Founded in 1990, Leadership Missouri identifies current and emerging leaders to enhance their leadership skills and deepen their knowledge of the state. ▶

▼
A new class kicked off June 16 in Saint Louis. This summer, participants are traveling to Kansas City, Joplin, Jefferson City, Cape Girardeau, Chillicothe and Osage Beach to explore Missouri's strengths and opportunities firsthand. Due to the program being postponed for pandemic safety reasons in 2020, the 2021 participants comprise the 30th class.

"Leadership Missouri was created to help leaders connect across our state's diverse portfolio of industries. We designed it to elevate the talent of Missouri's leadership pool and establish a forum for sharing ideas and best practices. Over the past 30 years, all of our expectations for this program have been met — and more," said Daniel P. Mehan, Missouri Chamber President and CEO.

"Leadership Missouri is no less vital today than it was at its founding. Right now, Missouri needs strong leadership to help us confront important economic competitiveness issues. We need leaders who can work across industries and regions to unite our state. That is exactly the type of experience that Leadership Missouri provides and the Missouri Chamber is proud to be offering this experience for the 30th time."

Brian Hammons, President/CEO of Hammons Products in Stockton and 2015 Leadership Missouri Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, recalled his experience in the inaugural class held in 1990.

"The Leadership Missouri program was a visionary idea in 1990 to connect leaders with issues that impact all our communities and businesses throughout Missouri. We were told that the 'Charter Class' would be the first of many to come, and it's great to see that the program has developed into a must-do for leaders in our state," said Hammons. "In 1990 I was relatively new in my career, and I've continued to draw upon the insights and connections, and to reflect fondly upon the experiences from those monthly sessions. As I've now served on the Missouri Chamber board for several years, I appreciate even more the impact that Leadership Missouri has for our state."

The common trait all successful applicants share is a strong drive to not only develop professionally, but to improve their industries and communities as well.

"We were ready to take our careers to the next level — how do we become the leaders in our industry? How do we become the leaders in our community?" said Ken Franklin, manager of government and regulatory affairs at Missouri American Water and a 2019 Leadership Missouri alum. "I knew the state pretty well from previous roles, but understanding the current situations, what people are doing on the ground, was very helpful to see in action."

His colleague Senior Manager of Finance Andie Cokel, who also went through the program in 2019, found the experience equally valuable.



"I'm not a Missouri native, so part of my experience — what I wanted to do — was learn more about the local Missouri government. And we've had a lot of opportunities to meet with different elected officials," said Cokel.

Many leaders of local chambers of commerce have taken part over the years as well.

"I had a very specific view of my own community, but to be able to broaden that and take it to a state level has really just made me think about things differently," said 2018 alum Lara Vermillion, president of the Blue Springs Chamber of Commerce.

Alum Crystal Narr is the president of the Chillicothe Area Chamber of Commerce.

"Being able to experience health care, education, agriculture — all the different facets that are part of our Missouri economy

◀ Class of 2021 smiles for a group photo outside Koller Enterprises, Inc. in Fenton.

Koller
Enterprises, Inc.



▲ Members taking a break in the Havana Conference room during a visit to Cortex in St. Louis.

LMO
Through the years...



▲ Members of the Class of 2005 enjoy an afternoon at the ballpark in Springfield, MO.



◀ Graduation dinner at the Country Club Hotel and Spa – Lake of the Ozarks. Photo taken October 16, 2008.



▲ Dana Miller, Chief Clerk in the House, addresses the Class of 2019 on the House floor.



▲ Missouri Chamber Director of Membership Brent Kahler with some new friends during a tour of Apples & Alpaca's, August 12, 2010.

◀ Members of the 2021 class on a tour of the St. Louis-Kansas City Carpenters Regional.

— has really opened my eyes to a lot of different facets in industry that I probably would have never been able to otherwise,” said Narr, another 2018 alum.

More than 1,200 people have completed the program since it was founded, creating a widespread Leadership Missouri Alumni Association. The running joke among graduates is the insistence that their own class is “the best class ever,” leading to some good-natured joshing among alumni at reunion events.

But jokes aside, the statewide alumni network is a valuable resource that helps facilitate connections and keep graduates engaged with the program. In 2018, alumni even spearheaded a campaign to fund restorations for the Governor’s Mansion, ultimately raising \$73,000.

Gaye Suggett, manager of regulatory affairs at Ameren,

currently serves as president of the alumni association.

“As a graduate of the class of 2007, I was able to experience firsthand what a terrific program Leadership Missouri is and I feel that I became a better leader because of that experience,” said Suggett. “As a member of the Alumni Board and now as President, I have been able to stay involved with each new class and attend each graduation. It is heartwarming each year to hear the stories of success from each of the graduates. I feel honored that I am able to contribute in a small way and help to mold the leaders of today and tomorrow.”

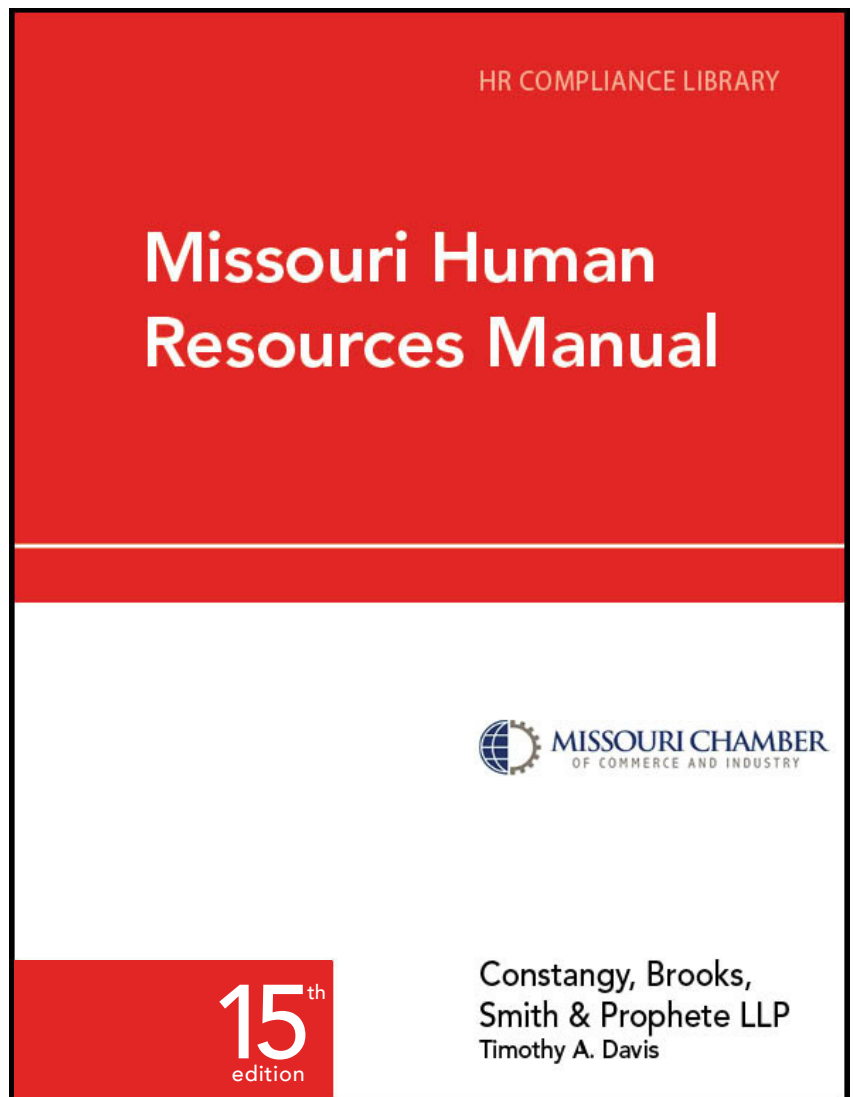
Even 30 years later, it’s clear that no matter your industry or career goals, Leadership Missouri yields lifelong dividends.

“I have connections now that I’ll keep way into the future,” said Nicole Hood, a MoDOT engineer and 2019 alum.

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BIZ TWEETS



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BREAKING NEWS

Pfizer & BioNTech Receive First U.S. Authorization for Emergency Use of COVID-19 Vaccine in 12-15-year-olds.



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Today, the BREAKING: Today, with [@BioNTech_Group](#), we announced [@US_FDA](#) expanded the Emergency Use Authorization of our [#COVID19](#) vaccine to adolescents 12 to 15 years of age. Learn more: <https://on.pfizer.com/33y7wJC>



From every corner of the global RGA family, stories emerged of individuals and teams persevering through unprecedented challenges and overcoming any obstacles necessary to serve clients, local communities, and one another."



RGA

Gay Burns
Executive Vice President and
Chief Human Resources Officer



RGA
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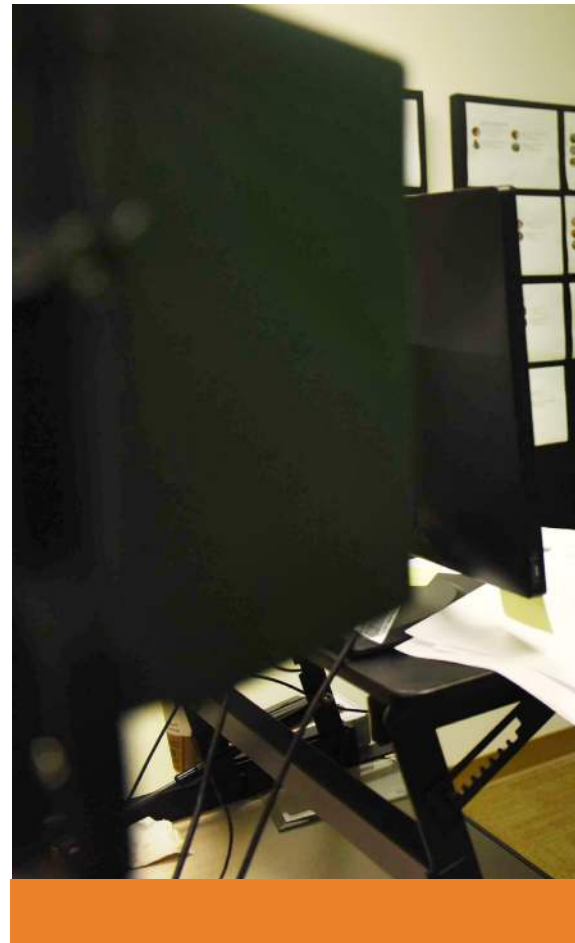
A purpose-driven culture empowered RGA to meet the many challenges of 2020 and serve the needs of our employees, our clients, and our communities. Gay Burns explains how the events of the last year brought out the best in our dynamic workforce. <https://bit.ly/33Wr6iS> [#RGAreview](#)

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SHOW-ME CAREERS COMING TO ST. LOUIS, KANSAS CITY, CAPE GIRARDEAU



Show-Me Careers, one of the Missouri Chamber's many workforce development efforts to expand educator and student career awareness, is growing this summer.



Led by Missouri Chamber Vice President of Education Programs Brian Crouse, the program offers a week-long experience where educators go inside a variety of companies that offer great career opportunities accessible to high school graduates. The program was created to

address the fact that educators usually have little exposure to career opportunities outside of those requiring a four-year degree. This can lead to significant career awareness gaps for students.

Tours for participating educators range from bio-life science research and production firms to advanced manufacturing operations to health care facilities and beyond. Participants also create lesson plans to bring their experiences their students. They are offered a

stipend for completing the program and afterward meet throughout the year for follow-up resources and support.

Approximately 160 educators, counselors and administrators, representing 15 school districts, are slated to participate in 2021.

"Since we launched this program in 2018 in St. Louis, we always intended to take it to more regions around the state. After successfully expanding to Kansas City last year, we are now proud to be offering the Show-Me Careers experience in Cape Girardeau as well," said Daniel P. Mehan, president and CEO of the Missouri Chamber. "It is more important than ever that today's students gain awareness of the wide range of modern careers available to them. This unique learning opportunity provides a more robust understanding of the abilities, behaviors and mindsets that students will need to thrive in today's professional environments. When we take educators behind the scenes of these workplaces, it gives them the interactive, firsthand experiences they need to effectively bring those career opportunities to life in the classroom."

"Cape Girardeau's employers are aware of



▲ Brian Crouse during a break at virtual Show-Me Careers Kansas City 2021.

their future workforce needs and familiar with the misleading perceptions of their industries,” said Kim Voelker, vice president of the Cape Girardeau Chamber. “Educators are some of the most important individuals influencing our future employees, and we are both excited and grateful for the opportunity to help bridge the gap between these audiences by participating in Show-Me Careers.”

The Show-Me Careers program was developed in partnership with the St. Louis Regional Business Council in 2018 to expand relevant and timely industry knowledge to education professionals. Since then it has grown with support from the Kauffman Foundation, STEMpact, St. Louis Community College, the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. After going virtual in 2020 due to the pandemic, out of an abundance of caution the program will largely remain virtual this year as well. Employer hosts include the Boeing Company, Spire, Ameren, PARIC, World Wide Technology, Saint Luke’s Healthcare System, Cerner, J.E. Dunn and many others.



Learn more:
mochamber.com/workforce/show-me-careers

// AUGUST 18-19 //

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UPCOMING EVENTS

**AUG
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Tech & Innovation Summit VIRTUAL EVENT

As the economy continues to recover and evolve, it is vital for Missouri to embrace emerging technologies and grow our existing tech sector. Our top ten tech job growth state is well-poised to take advantage of current trends in this exciting industry. Hear from leading innovators at this virtual conference.

**OCT
27**

Missouri MFG Summit ST. LOUIS *(virtual option available)*

Hear from top industry and political leaders about what's coming next in manufacturing. This hybrid event offers unique learning and networking opportunities to start the gears turning toward a stronger, united manufacturing industry.

TBA*

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion ST. LOUIS *(virtual option available)*

Employees and consumers alike are seeking out more socially responsible companies, and organizations have taken notice. More and more companies are taking intentional action to foster a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment for employees. During this hybrid conference, we will explore best practices and inspire frank discussion around these critical issues.

TBA*

Women in Leadership ST. LOUIS *(virtual option available)*

Unite with a rising generation of women leaders, learn how to inspire others, discover strength in networking and unleash your power to lead. This business-focused hybrid event is perfect for any businesswoman looking for the opportunity to enhance her leadership skills and network for professional growth.

* We are closely monitoring the COVID-19 infection rate in the state of Missouri and will be sharing new dates soon!

**NOV
16**

All Members Meeting ST. LOUIS

All members are strongly encouraged to join this event, which will serve as the annual meeting of the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This event will be a luncheon including keynote remarks and an awards ceremony. More details coming to mochamber.com/events.

Register for all upcoming events at mochamber.com/events.
For more information contact Ashley Schwab at aschwab@mochamber.com.