

2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT



POWERED BY BUSINESS

POWERED BY YOU

Mission

To develop and promote the economy and quality of life in the Abilene area.

Our Value Proposition

The Abilene Chamber helps businesses propel the regional economy through advocacy, talent development, connections and education.

Core Purpose

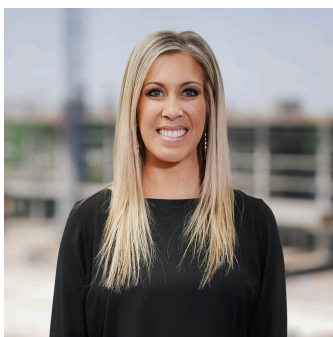
To create and sustain the very best environment for businesses to thrive, grow, add jobs and drive our economy.

Partnership 2027 Update

This report marks the third year of a multiyear strategy that guides investments and projects to position Abilene's business community for the future, guided by three main goals: bold leadership, talent expansion, and regional vibrancy.



CHAMBER LEADERSHIP



Kelsi Mangrem
Chamber Chair
Holland Hearing Center



Brad Benham
Chair-elect
Hendrick Health



David Bailey
Secretary/Treasurer
First Financial Bank



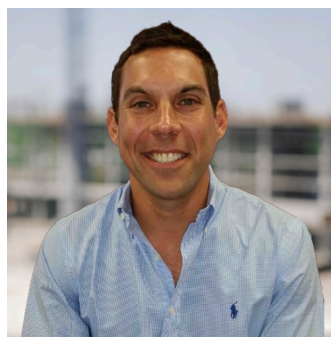
Kelly Jay
Immediate Past Chair
Texas Media, Inc.



Will Dugger
Executive Committee Member
Jacob | Martin, Ltd.



Doug McIntyre
Executive Committee Member
Hardin-Simmons University



Mike Perez
Executive Committee Member
Abilene Environmental Landfill



Doug Peters
President & CEO
Abilene Chamber of Commerce

2024-2025 Board of Directors

AFFILIATE AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

- Abilene Convention & Visitors Bureau: Travis Ruiz, Nexstar Media Group, Inc
- Abilene Cultural Affairs Council: Stephen Jones, Clear Fork Bank – Abilene Office
- Abilene Regional Growth Alliance: Will Dugger, Jacob | Martin
- Abilene Young Professionals: Stephanie DeLaGarza, Alvarez Drywall & Acoustics
- Business Advocacy Council: Gary Grubbs, Lawrence Hall Abilene
- Hispanic Business Council: Aida Pantoja, Telemundo Abilene
- Leadership Programs: Noreen White, Betty Hardwick Center
- Military Affairs Committee: Greg Blair, Retired

TERM ENDS 2025:

- Matt Beard, Maverick Saw Cutting & Core Drilling
- Ted Evans, Lone Star Dry Goods
- Shanna Kevill, Arrow Ford
- Keith White, DATROO Technologies, LLC

TERM ENDS 2026:

- Ken Hogan, Abilene Association of Realtors
- Doug McIntyre, Hardin-Simmons University
- Mike Perez, Abilene Environmental Landfill, Inc.
- Kimberly Prater, Gary's Floral
- Fran Stone-Beale, A-Town Cleaners

TERM ENDS 2027:

- Tim Cooper, Clear Fork Bank – Abilene Office
- Gerardo Duarte, AbiMar Foods, Inc.
- Nathan Hathorn, Silverthorne Insurance
- Cristal Hita, KTXS
- David Kasselmann, Grain Theory
- Clint Wilson, Communities of Abilene Federal Credit Union

MEMBERS AT LARGE (one-year term expires Sept. 30, 2025):

- Emily Elias, Victory Spinal Care
- Kyle Felan, AgTrust Farm Credit
- Andrea Jackson, Jackson Law Firm

EX-OFFICIO (Non-Voting):

- Eric Bruntmyer, Hardin-Simmons University
- Emily Crawford, Abilene City Manager
- Phil Crowley, Taylor County Judge
- Heather Hicks, Cisco College
- Linda Hinshaw, Abilene State Supported Living Center
- John Kuhn, Abilene Independent School District
- Stan Lambert, State Representative – District 71
- Joey Light, Wylie Independent School District
- Lynne Murray, McMurry University
- Justin Price, Texas State Technical College
- Amelia Reeves, Workforce Solutions
- Phil Schubert, Abilene Christian University
- David Smith, Small Business Development Center
- Col. Seth Spanier, 7th Bomb Wing Commander – Dyess AFB
- Anthony Williams, Black Chamber of Commerce

LEAD WITH A BOLD VOICE

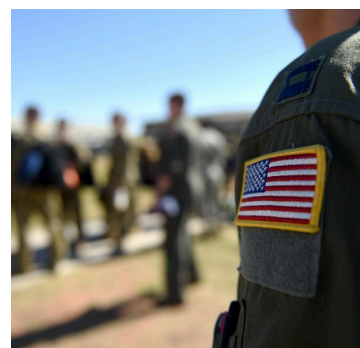
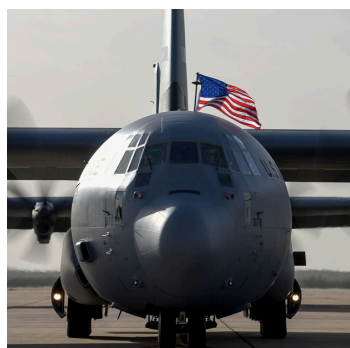
ADVOCACY

Successes in the 89th Texas Legislature supported by Abilene Chamber advocacy.

- Energy/Infrastructure – ACU's Molten Salt Reactor received \$120 million to help complete it.
- Childcare/Workforce – Secured \$100M in state funds to expand childcare access and support workforce needs.
- School Funding – Secured \$8.5B for public schools, with half for teacher salaries, plus an infrastructure endowment for TSTC.
- Water – The Legislature created the Texas Water Fund, allocating at least \$1 billion each biennium to expand sources and improve infrastructure.

MILITARY AFFAIRS

- MIR Grant – Facilitated a \$500K Military Installation Readiness grant to Dyess AFB for resiliency improvements across the installation.
- B-21 Prep – Led a fact-finding trip to Ellsworth AFB to capture lessons learned and prepare Abilene for the future bomber bed down.
- STEM Grant – Coordinated a \$75K STEM grant from the Northrop Grumman Foundation to benefit Abilene and Wylie ISDs.



ENGAGEMENT

- Membership remains strong with more than 1,100 members, including 153 new members and an 87% retention rate.
- Celebrated 75 member milestones with ribbon-cutting ceremonies.
- Hosted 68 programs and events supporting local businesses.
- Achievements made possible by the dedication of over 200 volunteers.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Grew the Monday Morning Memo subscriber base by 430 new readers this year — an increase of 100 more than last year's growth.
- Managed a combined audience of 116,214 followers across all Chamber and affiliate social media platforms.
- Supported local employers by posting 62 job opportunities to GrowAbilene.com.



EXPAND THE TALENT BASE

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Served 493 entrepreneurs with resources and guidance.
- Supported the creation and retention of 1,408 jobs.
- Conducted 1,232 one-on-one counseling sessions.
- Generated an estimated client economic impact of \$7.56 million.

**Numbers in partnership with America's SBDC at Texas Tech Abilene*

WORKFORCE & TALENT DEVELOPMENT

- In partnership with Livability.com, we continue to showcase Abilene as a prime destination for talent and business growth. In Year 3, Abilene content reached more than 356,000 people, generating 41,467 page views and 315,013 social media impressions.
- Our top traffic sources highlight both regional and national interest, with visitors coming from Dallas, Austin, Potosi, El Paso, Fort Worth, Houston, Miami, San Antonio, San Angelo, and Los Angeles.



IMPACT INVESTORS

Driving Our Mission Forward: These members invest \$1,500 or more each year to strengthen our Chamber and community.

Lead Investors



Market Investors

- AEP Texas
- Atmos Energy
- City of Abilene
- Coca-Cola Southwest Beverages
- Condley and Company, LLP
- Directors Investment Group
- First Bank Texas
- My Emergency Room 24/7 + Urgent Care
- Optimum
- Prosperity Bank
- United Supermarkets, LLC

Engage Investors

- Abilene Christian University
- Abilene Independent School District
- Abilene Teachers Federal Credit Union
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas
- Buffalo Gap Instrumentation & Electrical Co, Inc
- Clear Fork Bank
- DATROO Technologies
- Eagle Aviation Services
- Georgia Pacific
- Hardin Investments
- Hardin-Simmons University
- Higginbotham Insurance
- HPF Consultants Inc. / HPF Automation LLC.
- HYTORC of Texas
- Rentech Boiler Systems
- Terracon Consultants, Inc
- Texas Oncology – Abilene
- Velocity Tire
- Vital Care Urgent Care
- Wesley Court Senior Living
- West Texas Health, PLLC
- West Texas Rehabilitation Center



A VIBRANT REGION

ARTS & CULTURE

- CALF 2025 – 5,443 attendees from 165 Texas cities and 22 states.
- Clear Fork Bank Storybook Gardens Expansion – Raised \$1M+ to expand downtown gardens; Phase One debuted at CALF 2025, Phase Two with Winnie-the-Pooh sculptures opens June 2026.
- Youth Programs – Children's Performing Arts Series reached 4,000+ families; Young Audiences of Abilene served 8,800+ youth through residencies, performances, and library programs.

TOURISM

- Direct Travel Spending – Tourism generated \$567.7 million in direct visitor spending, fueling Abilene's economy.
- Employment Impact – Supported 3,790 local jobs directly tied to the tourism and hospitality industry.
- Tax Revenue – Produced \$16.4 million in local tax revenue, helping fund essential city services and community improvements.

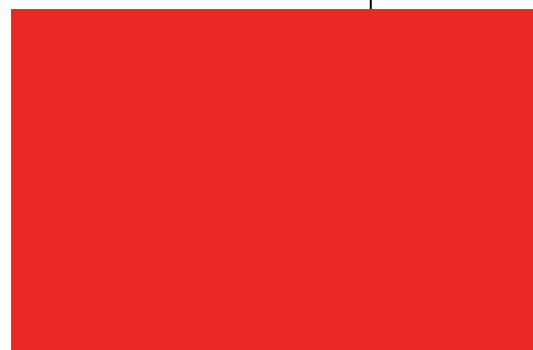


DOWNTOWN

- Burger Brawl – Hosted our best-performing Burger Brawl to date, generating an economic impact of \$46,380 for local downtown businesses and selling 3,068 burgers.
- Mayor's Pub Crawl – Launched the first-ever Mayor's Pub Crawl, drawing 200+ participants and creating a new tradition that highlights downtown Abilene's vibrant nightlife and hospitality sector.

RETAIL RECRUITMENT

- Facilitated 105 retail connections this year, linking potential developers and retailers with opportunities to grow in the Abilene market.
- Supported the launch of 2 new businesses in Abilene through direct communication and engagement, helping them take root in our community.





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CHAMBER STAFF

Executive Team

- Douglas Peters, President & CEO
- Frances Williamson, CFO
- Lynn Barnett, VP, Cultural Affairs Council
- Ashley DiMauro, Senior Director of Operations, Chamber
- Robert Lopez, VP, Abilene Convention & Visitors Bureau
- John Nichols, VP, Military Affairs

Cultural Affairs Team

- Beth Beam, CALF Director & Assistant Director of Development
- Tracie Hartmann, Co-Director, Young Audiences
- Vikki Head, Director of Operations
- Sidney Levesque, Marketing Director
- Emily Lomax, Co-Director, Young Audiences
- Dawn Ripple, Executive Director, Children's Performing Arts Series
- Susan Steele, CPAS Box Office Manager and Grants Administrator

Growth Alliance Team

- Kodi Collett, Marketing & Communications Manager
- Cameron Sloan, Talent & Emerging Business Specialist

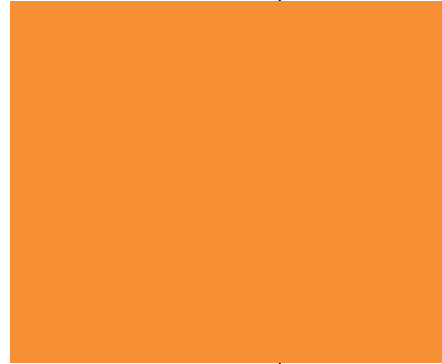
Visitors Bureau Team

- Kim Bosher, Sales Director
- Ashli Brooks, Communications Specialist
- Sierra Davenport, Sales & Operations Manager
- Terri Owens, Office Administrator
- Pam Sites, Visitor Experience Director
- Kailey Valadez, Sports Tourism Manager

Membership Team

- Nathaniel Ellsworth, Office & Events Logistics Manager
- Hudson Ewing, Member Development Manager
- Jennifer Kent, Director of Programs
- Kendal Subia, Events Manager
- Doug Williamson, Government Affairs Director





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