

March 2025

www.winonachamber.com | (507) 452-2272 | 902 E. Second St., Suite 120, Winona, MN



**Welcome Home Winona: A New Talent Attraction Hub**

Christie Ransom, President & CEO  
Winona Area Chamber of Commerce

The Winona Area Chamber of Commerce is thrilled to introduce WelcomeHomeWinona.com, our brand-new talent attraction website designed to showcase everything that makes Winona the perfect place to live, work, and thrive. Whether you're a job seeker, a newcomer, or a business looking to attract top talent, this site is your go-to resource for discovering all that our vibrant community has to offer. Thanks to 3 amazing sponsors; Winona Health, WNB Financial, and Benchmark, we were able to bring this to life.

**Why WelcomeHomeWinona.com?**

Attracting and retaining talent is crucial for the growth of our local businesses and economy. Winona offers a unique blend of career opportunities, outdoor recreation, cultural experiences, and a strong sense of community—all things that professionals and families are looking for when choosing a place to call home. WelcomeHomeWinona.com brings these elements together in one easy-to-navigate platform.

**What You'll Find on the Site:**

**Job Opportunities**

Connect with top employers in the region

**Living in Winona**

Explore neighborhoods, housing, and cost of living

**Things to Do**

Discover outdoor adventures, arts, and entertainment

**Community Connections**

Find ways to get involved and build your network

**Relocation Resources**

Get help with moving, schools, and settling in

**For Businesses: A New Way to Attract Talent**

If you're a local employer, WelcomeHomeWinona.com is a powerful tool to showcase the benefits of living and working in Winona. By featuring your job openings and company highlights on the site, you can reach prospective employees who are considering a move to our area.

**How You Can Get Involved:**

**Post Job Openings**

Share your opportunities with job seekers looking to relocate

**Highlight Your Business**

Showcase why your workplace is a great place to grow a career

**Submit Resources**

Help newcomers transition smoothly by sharing housing, school, and lifestyle resources

**Winona Is Waiting for You!**

Whether you're looking for your next career move or considering relocating, WelcomeHomeWinona.com makes it easier than ever to explore the endless opportunities in our community.

**Local businesses:** Ready to feature your job listings? Contact us to get started!

**Job seekers:** Explore your next opportunity and discover why Winona is not just a place to work—it's a place to belong.

**Welcome home!**

**ABOUT THE CHAMBER**

**- OUR MISSION -**

To Serve Businesses How and When They Need Us

**- OUR VISION -**

Be the Foremost Resource and Advocate for Businesses in the Winona Area

**Officers:**

**Jon Olson** – Chair  
– Chair Elect

**Stan Breitlow** – Past Chair

**Amber Hamernik** – Treasurer

**Brian Sines** – At Large

**Retiring 2025:**

Stan Breitlow  
Amber Hamernik  
Jason Gamoke  
Kevin Ritz  
Mandy Hansel

**Retiring 2026:**

Jon Olson  
Ross Lexvold  
Tina Lehnertz  
Mike Puetz  
Shawn Beier

**Retiring 2027:**

Rod Baker  
Anita Cisewski  
Jennifer Shabel  
Brian Sines  
Neil Wieser

**Staff:**

**Christie Ransom** – President & CEO

**Kay Mathews** – VP of Finance and Operations

**Jacob Ransom** – VP of Workforce Strategy and Membership Development

**Travis Lybeck** – Director of Main Street and Member Relations

**WINONA AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
2025 BANQUET AWARD WINNERS**



**Business of the Year Award**  
Winona Family YMCA



**Main Street Business of the Year Award**  
Bay State Milling



**Outstanding Partnership Award**  
Project Fine



**Customer Service Excellence Award**  
Visit Winona

A huge thank you to all the generous donors and enthusiastic buyers who made our annual Dessert Auction a success! Your contributions helped raise vital funds for our workforce initiatives and the Synergy Academy workforce pipeline program.

To the bakers who shared their sweet creations and to everyone who placed a bid, we are incredibly grateful for your support. Because of you, we can continue to provide essential programs that benefit our community's workforce.



**Jacob Ransom – New VP of Workforce Strategy and Membership Development**

I attended the University of Oregon before deciding to move to Winona to pursue a passion for working on cars. Upon my return, I worked at Sugar Loaf Automotive. Following my time there, I joined the team at WinCraft where I spent my last two years in sales. I am excited to use the skills and experience I have developed over the years to help the Winona community grow.

Having volunteered at Chamber events in the past, I am excited to work more hands-on with staff and local businesses to make these great events even better. I am excited to connect with and hear more about current and future members of the Chamber and look forward to connecting and collaborating with each of you with the goal of growing Winona Businesses.

**CHAMBER  
CHAMPIONS**

**- VISIONARY -**



**- PREMIER -**



**- EXECUTIVE -**



**BE SEEN • BE HEARD • BELONG  
JOIN THE CHAMBER!**

**BIZ BITES**

**WNB Financial Announces Promotion of Erica Jerowski**



WNB Financial is pleased to announce that Erica Jerowski has been promoted to Executive Vice President, Chief Operating Officer.

In her new role, Erica will take on the additional responsibility of overseeing the Retail, IT, and Wealth Management Departments of the Bank. Erica will continue to oversee Investment Services and the credit functions.

"I've had the privilege of working with Erica for 20 years" said David Vaselaar, President, Chief Executive Officer. She's an outstanding leader and community banker dedicated to our coworkers, clients, and the communities we serve. I'm confident Erica will do an excellent job in her new role."

"It's been very rewarding to work for such a great organization for the past 25 years." Jerowski said. "I'm looking forward to continuing to work with our talented teams and helping to continue the Bank's long tradition of providing excellent service and financial guidance."

Erica is a Winona native who has spent her career at WNB Financial holding the positions of Business Banker, Business Banking Manager, and Chief Credit Officer before her most recent position of Senior Vice President, Chief Operating Officer. She earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and her M.B.A. from the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota. Erica currently serves on the Cotter Board of Directors and has formerly served on the Boards of the Winona Area Chamber of Commerce, Saint Anne of Winona, Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center, and the Winona Area Youth Hockey Association. She lives in Winona with her husband Mitch and children Jack and Elle.

**WNB Financial Welcomes Eric Wilttrout as Chief Community Banking Officer**



WNB Financial, a full-service financial institution committed to providing excellent service and banking solutions, is pleased to announce the appointment of Eric Wilttrout as the new Chief Community Banking Officer (CCBO). With a proven track record in the banking industry and a passion for customer service, Eric brings over 20 years of experience and expertise in management, leadership, and commercial lending.

"I'm excited to welcome Eric to our Leadership Team" said David Vaselaar, President/CEO of WNB Financial. "He brings a wealth of experience and a proven track record in community banking, which will be invaluable as we continue to grow and serve out communities. Eric is known for his commitment to customer service, developing new business, and strong leadership skills."

In his role as CCBO, Eric will lead the key growth initiatives for WNB Financial by working directly with the Bank's Community Presidents, Business and Mortgage Managers, and Treasury Management Advisor.

Eric began his banking career in Fargo, ND, through the management trainee program at Community First National Bank. Over the years, he gained experience working at several banks including Community First National Bank branches in Arizona, South Dakota, and Minnesota, BlackRidgeBANK in Brainerd, MN and First Bank & Trust in Cambridge, MN, where he served as Community Bank President for the past 11 years. Throughout his experience, he has developed a deep commitment to community-focused banking. Eric holds a degree in Business Administration with an emphasis in Finance from the University of Sioux Falls. He is a 2014 graduate of the University of Wisconsin's Graduate School of Banking.

"I've always has a passion for community banking and believe that community banks play a vital role in the growth and development for our communities," Wilttrout said. "My family and I are thrilled to join the WNB Financial team and look forward to being part of an organization that is dedicated to building strong relationships with its employees, customers, and the communities it serves."

Eric has been actively involved in his communities throughout the years, coaching youth sports and serving on various community boards and foundations. He is looking forward to being involved in the Chippewa Valley. Eric, lived in Eau Claire with his wife Shari and son Emmit. They also have twin daughters Maraya and Evelyn who are in college.

**RIBBON CUTTING**



**Our Chamber Ambassadors and Mayor Scott Sherman helped celebrate Home and Community Options 50th anniversary!**

Congratulations on half a century of providing essential services and support for individuals with developmental disabilities so they can thrive in their communities.

To learn more, visit [hco.org](http://hco.org)



**WINONA AREA**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**BE SEEN  
BE HEARD  
BELONG  
JOIN THE  
CHAMBER!**



**WINONA AREA**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
**PEER 360 CEO ROUNDTABLE**

**PEER 360: CEO ROUNDTABLE  
LAST CHANCE TO JOIN FOR 2025!**

Step into Peer 360: CEO Roundtables—where top leaders connect, share insights, and tackle challenges together. Experience the power of peer-driven success!

**Contact Christie Ransom  
to Learn More About  
This Exclusive Opportunity**



**WINONA AREA**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
**PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

**THE BUSINESS ADVOCATE:  
POLICY NEWS YOU CAN USE**

Stay informed with our **NEWEST member exclusive** newsletter, The Business Advocate! Your go-to source for policy updates, insights, and tools to empower Winona's business community. Policy news you can use—delivered!

**Contact Christie Ransom  
to To Get Connected**



**NETWORK  
NITE**  
**MARCH 13**  
5-7PM  
HOSTED BY



**Benedictine**  
LIVING COMMUNITY | **WINONA**

**1455 W. Broadway, Winona**  
NETWORK NITE IS OPEN TO  
ALL CHAMBER MEMBERS  
& THEIR EMPLOYEES