



September 20 – 24, 2010

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Next Small Business Council Meeting to Cover “Financing for Small Businesses”

The next State Chamber/AIA Small Business Council Meeting will be held this Thursday, September 23rd from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. at the Greater Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce. Lunch will be provided, followed by a legislative update on Issues 2 and 3 provided by Paul Young of the Arkansas Municipal League. A presentation on “Financing for Small Businesses” will be provided by Al Hodge, Senior Vice President Lending for Arkansas Capital Corporation Group. This will be a catered function, so reservations are required no later than Wednesday noon, September 22nd. To RSVP, contact Jeff Thatcher at jthatcher@arkansasstatechamber.com or 501-210-4205.

The final meeting of the year will be held on Tuesday, November 30th from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. in the State Chamber Conference Room. Jenny Bradford, an attorney with Regions Insurance, will provide a presentation on “Cyber Liability.”

Thanks to **Arkansas Capital Corporation Group**, meal sponsor for all 2010 Small Business Council meetings.

Small Business Council meetings are open to all members of the State Chamber/AIA.

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State Chamber/AIA Announces Leadership Arkansas Class V Selections

A total of 53 individuals from throughout the state were recently selected to participate in Leadership Arkansas Class V. The individuals selected to participate in Class V are a diverse and interesting group of extraordinary business, educational and political leaders. Over the past four years, Leadership Arkansas has been fortunate to have the support of the Arkansas General Assembly with the former Speaker of the House serving as a class chairman and members of the General Assembly participating in the classes.

Created by the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce and Associated Industries of Arkansas, Inc., Leadership Arkansas introduces its participants to a statewide view of the economic and political challenges that face our great state. Over a nine-month period, participants receive the equivalent of a postgraduate degree in “how Arkansas works” in a program that allows them to see firsthand the challenges and accomplishments of our local communities. Leadership Arkansas also expands the impact of community leaders across the state and builds a sense of statewide community by identifying and training individuals with the passion and commitment to become personally engaged in issues, programs and activities aimed at building a better Arkansas.

C. Tad Bohannon, a partner in the law firm of Wright, Lindsey & Jennings LLP will serve as Leadership Arkansas Class V Chairman. Bohannon, a graduate of Leadership Arkansas Class II and past Chairman of Leadership Arkansas Class IV, has been repeatedly named as one of the *Best Lawyers in America*. He is also a graduate of Leadership Greater Little Rock, Class XVI; a member of the Board of Directors of the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce.

Leadership Arkansas is sponsored by **Southern Bancorp**.

[To view the roster, click here.](#)

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Vote for Issues 2 & 3 on the November Ballot

The State Chamber/AIA has taken a leadership role in The Committee for Arkansas’s Future to get Issues No. 2 & 3 passed on the November ballot. A vote for Issues No. 2 & 3 is a vote to create more and better jobs in Arkansas.

Issue No. 2 – Arkansas is at a competitive disadvantage due to out-of-date interest rate laws. Our interest rate limits are tied to the federal discount rate that was at double digit levels when our current laws were adopted 30 years ago, but the discount rate is now almost zero as part of the effort to stimulate the economy. Our laws are the most restrictive in the United States. They were aimed at protecting consumers but now, unfortunately, restrict credit in the state, and impede the ability of local governments to finance important public projects. As a consequence, our laws often increase costs by restricting financing alternatives, rather than protect the public and consumers.

Issue No. 2 would:

- Remove the existing method of determining the interest rate cap on all governmental bonds and loans, and permit restrictions to be adopted by the Legislature that could be

- modified as required by changing economic and market conditions,
- Eliminate the current below market interest rate cap on consumer and other loans that effectively prevents local businesses from offering credit to customers, while preserving the existing interest rate cap at 17 percent and,
 - Allow local governmental units to save public funds by providing an effective method of financing energy savings products.

The current law severely restricts, and in many cases prevents, state government and municipalities from raising money through bond issues for important projects such as police and fire stations, hospitals, streets and roads, recreation facilities, and economic development infrastructure. The proposed amendment would offer flexibility for state government and municipalities to actually lower the interest paid on bonds by being able to take better advantage of low interest rate environments.

Issue No. 3 – Arkansas deserves the same economic development tools as our competitors. Arkansas voters resoundingly passed Amendment 82 (commonly known as the Super Project Amendment) in 2004, but technical restrictions have kept the amendment from being of any value in today’s rapidly changing economic environment.

Issue No. 3 would:

- Authorize the General Assembly to issue bonds to help recruit jobs and remove the requirement of \$500 million in capital investments and 500 jobs for a single project.
- Offer much greater flexibility for this valuable economic development tool while preserving the existing cap on the annual amount of money that can be dedicated to bond repayment.

Arkansas has been unable to compete for certain projects with states like Mississippi, Alabama, South Carolina and Texas. These states operate without our restrictions. The projects in which we were not competitive did not satisfy the dollar investment or number of employees currently required by Amendment 82. The proposed amendment would broaden the application of economic development funding, thereby producing a greater statewide impact and benefit.

For more information on Issues No. 2 and 3, click [here](#).

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“Door-to-Door” Regional Meetings Continue

The State Chamber/AIA continues its show on the road with “Door-to-Door” Regional Meetings throughout the state. The meetings feature presentations on state and federal governmental affairs issues and State Chamber/AIA programs and events.

The remaining 2010 slate of planned “Door-to-Door Regional Meetings includes:

- Siloam Springs – September 21st beginning at 7:00 a.m. at the Signature Bank Community Room
- Fort Smith – September 21st from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Phoenix Expo Trade and Event Center
- Searcy – September 22nd from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Founder’s Room at Harding University

- Jonesboro – September 28th from 7:30 to 8:45 a.m. at the Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Blytheville – September 28th from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn
- Russellville – October 12th from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. at the LakePoint Conference Center
- Batesville – October 13th from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at a location to be determined

The State Chamber/AIA is seeking sponsors for these meetings. If your company would like to be a sponsor, contact Bill Watson at bwatson@arkansasstatechamber.com or 501-802-1740.

Reservations are required to attend these meetings. To make a reservation or for additional information, contact Deb Mathis at dmathis@arkansasstatechamber.com or 501-210-4212.

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Leadership Arkansas Class V Slates Program Sessions

Leadership Arkansas Class V will kick off with a Class Retreat and Tourism Session on October 3-5 at LakePoint Conference Center in Russellville.

Additional sessions scheduled for the class include:

- Session I – November 16-17, State Chamber/AIA Annual Meeting, Peabody Hotel, Little Rock
- Session II – January 20-21, South Arkansas, Camden
- Session III – March 17-18, Northwest Arkansas, Siloam Springs
- Session IV – May 19-20, Fort Smith Region, Fort Smith
- Session V – June 23-24, Northeast Arkansas, Jonesboro
- Session VI – June 24, Graduation, Jonesboro

The State Chamber/AIA is seeking sponsors for these sessions. If your company would like to be a sponsor, contact Bill Watson at bwatson@arkansasstatechamber.com or 501-802-1740.

For additional information on the Leadership Arkansas program, contact Susie Marks at 501-210-4206 or smarks@arkansasstatechamber.com.

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Save These Dates

The Governor's Quality Award Banquet will be held on Monday, November 15th at the Peabody Hotel in Little Rock beginning with a Reception at 6:00 p.m. followed by Dinner at 6:45 p.m. For more information, contact Sue Weatter at sweatter@arkansasstatechamber.com or 501-372-2222.

The State Chamber/AIA Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 16th also at the Peabody Hotel in Little Rock. Please watch your e-mail for additional information. For more

information, contact Deb Mathis at dmathis@arkansasstatechamber.com or 501-210-4212.

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American Freedom Foundation Announces Benefit Concert for Armed Forces

The American Freedom Foundation is bringing the Rowdy Friends 2010 Tour to Verizon Arena in North Little Rock on Saturday, October 2nd at 7:00 p.m.

Hank Williams Jr. will join Jamey Johnson, Colt Ford, Josh Thompson and The Grascals for the annual tribute to veterans and current members of America's Armed Forces.

Tickets for the event are now on sale. Ticket prices are: \$27, \$41.50, \$61.50, \$81.50 and \$131.50 and are available at the Verizon Arena Box Office, all Ticketmaster outlets, via charge by phone at 800-745-3000, or online at www.ticketmaster.com.

For more information, click [here](#).

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Arkansas Arts Council Announces Annual Statewide Conference

The Arkansas Arts Council, an agency of the Department of Arkansas Heritage, is holding its annual statewide conference on the arts for artists, educators, arts administrators and community leaders.

"ArtLinks 2010: Our Role in Cultural Sustainability" will explore the future role of the arts in making our communities in Arkansas thrive culturally and economically.

The conference, co-sponsored by The THEA Foundation, will be held October 25th at the Statehouse Convention Center. Several sessions will be presented in regard to how art districts can revitalize communities, the impact of art projects in Arkansas, how to raise awareness of Arkansas's creative economy, how to successfully advocate for the arts in a tough economic climate, etc.

The keynote speaker will be Rory Turner, Ph.D., academic director for the Cultural Sustainability Master of the Arts program at Goucher College in Maryland. In addition, awards will be presented to the artists who received Individual Artist Fellowships at the luncheon.

Panel discussions will include out-of-state leaders in the arts, as well as local and state leaders such as Vincent Insalaco, Gary Newton, Daniel Hintz and Rick Chrisman. An early-bird discount rate is available for those who register by October 8th.

Detailed conference information, including a downloadable registration form, can be found by clicking [here](#).

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Arkansas Workforce Centers' Career Expo Scheduled for November 3rd

Business leaders and their human resources staff are invited to attend the 2010 Arkansas Workforce Centers' Career Expo from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. on Wednesday, November 3rd at Verizon Arena in North Little Rock. The Career Expo will provide a forum to connect employers that offer career opportunities in Arkansas to candidates, including dislocated workers, college graduates and those looking to advance their career. The goal is to hold an event that allows employers and candidates to match interests and employment objectives.

Last year's Career Expo was a significant success with more than 2,800 job seekers turning out for the event and almost 100 employers and educational institutions exhibiting with more than 2,200 jobs available for application.

The Arkansas Workforce Centers are seeking company participants that are diverse, ranging from small to large innovative firms which operate in a wide variety of sectors. If you have employment opportunities available or plan to add additional staff, please make plans to attend this event. Interview rooms are available for those employers wishing to do on-site interviews.

Register online for FREE today by clicking [here](#) or by contacting Scotty Adams directly at 501-978-3963 or scotty.adams@arkansas.gov.

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Little Rock National Airport Slates Ceremonial Groundbreaking

The Little Rock National Airport has scheduled a ceremonial groundbreaking for their 2020 Vision Plan at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, November 16th. A reception will follow immediately afterward.

State Chamber/AIA members are invited to this event. To RSVP, call 501-975-7224 or lra2020visionplan@cjr.com. Parking will be available in the Short Term East Lot.

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Welcome to Our New Members

Thanks to the following new members which recently joined the State Chamber/AIA:

Access Control Devices, Inc. (ACDI)
Dickey Machine Works
Energy Systems Group LLC
St. Joseph's Mercy Health Center
Tokusen USA Inc.
Wonder State Box

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Thanks to Our Pinnacle Members

Thanks to all of our Pinnacle investors, the respected companies that support the State Chamber/AIA at the highest annual investment levels. We appreciate all that they do for us.

APEX

**Entergy Arkansas, Inc.
Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.**

SUMMIT

**Chesapeake Energy, Inc.
Cox Communications
Southern Bancorp, Inc.
Tyson Foods, Inc.
XTO Energy, Inc.**

PEAK

**Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield
Arvest Bank
AT&T Arkansas
BP America, Inc.
CardinalHealth
CenterPoint Energy Southern Gas
Deltic Timber Corporation
Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas
FedEx Freight - East
Koch Companies Public Sector, LLC
Nucor/Nucor-Yamato
Oaklawn Jockey Club
Southland Park Gaming & Racing
Southwestern Energy Company
State Farm Insurance
Verizon Wireless
Welspun Tubular, LLC
Windstream Corporation**

CROWN

**Acxiom Corporation
AEP Southwestern Electric Power
Albemarle Corporation
American Greetings Corporation
America's Car-Mart, Inc.
Arkansas Department of Workforce Services
Arkansas Employees Federal Credit Union**

**Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation
Arkansas Oklahoma Gas Corporation
CenterPoint Energy Gas Transmission Company
Cherokee Casino West – Siloam Springs
Crossland Construction
Delta Dental of Arkansas Inc.
Delta Natural Kraft
Dynegy
Energy Transfer/Fayetteville Express Pipeline
Evergreen Packaging Company
Experian
Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company of Arkansas, Inc.
Fidelity National Information Services
Forest Oil Corporation
Glad Manufacturing/A Clorox Company
International Paper Company
Kimberly-Clark Corporation
Kraft Foods
Lion Oil Company
McKee Foods Corporation
Mid-America Packaging, LLC
Nabholz Construction Corporation
Nice-Pak
OG+E
PACO Steel & Engineering Corp.
Petrohawk
Philander Smith College
Riceland Foods, Inc.
Russellville Steel Company Inc.
Signature Bank of Arkansas
Stephens Inc.
Suez Energy North America
The Clorox Company
US Bank
Waste Management
Weyerhaeuser Company
Wright Lindsey & Jennings**

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Calendar of Events

September 21 Siloam Springs “Door to Door” Meeting
7:00 – 8:30 a.m.
Signature Bank Community Room

September 21 Fort Smith "Door to Door" Meeting
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Phoenix Expo Trade and Event Center

September 22 Searcy "Door to Door" Meeting
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Founder's Room, Harding University

September 23 Small Business Council Meeting
11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.
Greater Hot Springs Chamber of Commerce

September 28 Jonesboro "Door to Door" Meeting
7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.
Jonesboro Regional Chamber of Commerce

September 28 Blytheville "Door to Door" Meeting
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Holiday Inn

October 3-5 Leadership Arkansas Class V
Class Retreat and Tourism Session
LakePoint Conference Center
Russellville

October 12 Russellville "Door-to-Door" Meeting
7:30 – 9:00 a.m.
LakePoint Conference Center

October 13 Batesville "Door to Door" Meeting
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Location TBD

November 15 Governor's Quality Award Banquet
Peabody Hotel
Little Rock

November 16-17 Leadership Arkansas Class V
Session I
Peabody Hotel
Little Rock

November 16 State Chamber/AIA Annual Meeting
Peabody Hotel
Little Rock

November 30 Small Business Council Meeting
11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.
State Chamber Conference Room

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