Don’t Miss TODAY’S 2017 State Chamber/AIA Legislative Reception

Don’t miss the 2017 State Chamber/AIA Legislative Reception! Presented by Arkansas Learns, Cox Communications, Southland Park Gaming and Racing and Stephens Inc., the 2017 Legislative Reception will be held from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. TODAY, Tuesday, January 17 under the big tent in the State Chamber/AIA north parking lot.

We would also like to thank and recognize the other sponsors of this event:


Host: Arkadelphia Regional EDA, AOG/Stephens Production Company, Black Hills Energy, Community Health Centers of Arkansas, Farm Credit Services of Arkansas, Gerdau Special Steel, Nabholz Construction Services, Southwestern Energy Co. and Tyson Foods.

Supporting – Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation, Great Lakes Solutions - A Chemtura Business, Cross County Economic Development Corp. and AEP Southwestern Electric Power Company.

In-Kind – Arkansas Beverage Association
The Annual Legislative Reception is a don’t-miss event that draws hundreds, including state legislators, constitutional officers, state officials, State Chamber/AIA member representatives, officers and board members, Leadership Arkansas alumni and others, and provides a great opportunity for members of the state’s business community to network and interact one-on-one with state legislators and other elected officials.

We also look forward to recognizing our sponsors as well as those member companies who are helping grow our Political Action Committees at the event.

Are You on Board?

Many thanks to those State Chamber/AIA members who have stepped up and supported our Political Action Committees (PACs) in these last few months! You have made a difference in what we have been able to do with those funds, and we are confident it will make an impact for the business community during this legislative session.

However, we need more of you on board to show the true strength of this organization. Our PACs are the best vehicles to help communicate the business community’s goal of economic prosperity in Arkansas to those running for, and currently holding political office.

If you haven’t already, will you please make a donation to ASCC PAC or AIA PAC today?

Click here to donate to the ASCC PAC or here to donate to the AIA PAC. Or, you can bring your donation to the State Chamber/AIA Legislative Reception today to the PAC table we will have on site. With your help, we can make meaningful, bold change in our state government!

The New Marijuana Law and Your Workplace

Thursday, February 23, 2017 | 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. | Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce

Now that Arkansas is the latest state to have a medical marijuana law on the books, Arkansas employers must be prepared to address this issue in the workplace. What specific actions can Arkansas businesses take to help ensure compliance? How do you respect the rights of an employee who has permission to use medical marijuana, yet protect other staff and customers?

In this session, Wright Lindsey Jennings labor and employment attorney Stuart Jackson will explore the implications of Arkansas’s new medical marijuana law in the workplace. He will provide an overview of the current law and expected legislative activity in the regular session, as well as address employment-related compliance issues, such as:

- Differing obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Arkansas Civil Rights Act;
• Protections for “qualifying patients” in the hiring, termination and discipline processes;
• Compliance concerns for federal contractors; and
• A to-do list to prepare your workplace.

Cost is $50 for State Chamber members and $75 for non-members. Registration fee includes a light lunch. To register, click here.

This session will be led by Stuart Jackson with Wright Lindsey Jennings’ Labor and Employment Team. Stuart advises employers on compliance with civil rights laws and developing personnel policies, employment agreements and covenants not to compete. Jackson also defends employers in federal and state court litigation and appeals involving claims under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Family and Medical Leave Act and the Arkansas Civil Rights Act. Jackson is listed among The Best Lawyers in America, Chambers USA “Leader in the Field” and Mid-South Super Lawyers, and has an AV® Preeminent™ 5.0 out of 5 Peer Review Rating through Martindale-Hubbell.

West Memphis/Jonesboro Sites of Next Leadership Arkansas Class XI Session

Leadership Arkansas Class XI will hold Session V: Economic Development, Infrastructure & Agriculture on Feb. 22-24 in West Memphis and Jonesboro. Southland Park Gaming & Racing is sponsoring the session.

The Underwriting Sponsor for the 2016-2017 Leadership Arkansas program is The Citizens Bank of Batesville. The Presenting Sponsor is ARcare, and Statewide Program Sponsors are Farm Credit of Arkansas, Nucor Steel-Arkansas, Southland Park Gaming & Racing and Walmart.

Other planned sessions include:

Session VI: Education
March 30-31, Hot Springs, Arkansas.
Sponsored by the Arkansas School of Mathematics, Sciences and the Arts and Seiz Signs.

Session VII: Regional Development
April 20-21, Fayetteville, Springdale & Bentonville, Arkansas
Sponsored by Black Hills Energy and Northwest Technical Institute

Session VIII: Leadership, Planning & Graduation
May 18-19, Little Rock, Arkansas
Sponsored AEP/Sweopeco and Regions Insurance

If your company or organization would like to help sponsor Leadership Arkansas Class XI or one of the sessions, contact Bill Watson at bwatson@arkansasstatechamber.com or 501-802-1740.

For more information on Leadership Arkansas, click here.
GQA Program: Take Advantage of Professional Opportunities for Your Employees!

The Governor's Quality Award Program is now accepting applications for the 2017 Board of Examiners. Examiners assess award applications for the Governor's Quality Award. New examiners receive three days of training at no charge learning skills for analysis of organizational processes with a focus on results and linkages. Skills developed in analytical and consensus-building and a systems perspective can be applied within your own organization.

Training for Arkansas examiners is modeled after the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP) which received the first-place award in the government and military category of the Leadership 500 Excellence Awards, an annual recognition of the world's best leadership development programs and initiatives. The Baldrige Program raises awareness about the importance of performance excellence in driving the U.S. and global economy; provides organizational assessment tools and criteria; educates leaders in businesses, schools, health care organizations, and government and nonprofit organizations about the practices of national role models; and recognizes those role models with the Baldrige Award.

If you would like to take advantage of this professional development opportunity and provide service to business in Arkansas, go to www.arkansas-quality.org and click on 2017 Board of Examiners Application.

Award Application Writing Services are now available for Governor's Quality Award Applications!

If you have wanted to apply for a Governor's Quality Award and not had the time or personnel to write an application, application writing services are now available at the Challenge and Commitment level of award for 2017. The process of writing an award application can help in preparation for other accreditation processes such as ISO 9001:2016. Contact Sue Weatter at sweatter@arkansasstatechamber.com or call at 501-372-2222 for more information on how you can apply, receive recognition and feedback from the Governor's Quality Award Program.
The State Chamber/AIA has partnered with Staples Business Advantage to bring you a best-in-class business supply discount program that delivers value through negotiated savings and superior customer service.

Our partnership with Staples Business Advantage, the world's largest office products company, is designed to give you exclusive pricing on all of your business supply needs.

Since companies can spend $200-$300 per year for each employee in office supplies, $800 in printing, and $1,200 in technology, you are investing heavily in necessary office costs for each of your employees. Leveraging our member-only Staples Business Group Purchasing Program, you can now save between 15-30 percent.

Additionally, you will have a dedicated Staples team that will ensure this program delivers significant savings, spending reports and unmatched levels of service.

- Members save an average of 15-30 percent off Staples’s already low prices
- Best buy list of 2,500 most frequently purchased items
- Free delivery for orders over $50
- More than office supplies- a fully integrated solution with discounts on furniture, technology, facilities, breakroom, and promotional products
- Print solutions: $0.02 black/white, $0.23 color copies, 50% off finishing services

More than office supplies

Staples offers much more than just office supplies. Through the Staples Advantage Program, members can save on cleaning and breakroom supplies, office furniture, technology, promotional products and print solutions.

To enroll, click here.

For more information, contact Shelley Short at sshort@arkansasstatechamber.com or 501-210-4206.

AEDC’s Manufacturing Solutions Hosting Cybersecurity and Fraud Seminar

Manufacturing Solutions, a department of the Arkansas Economic Development Commission’s Existing Business Resource Division, will host a cybersecurity and fraud seminar for small businesses from 1 to 5 p.m. Thursday, February 16 at the Wyndham Riverfront Hotel, 2 Riverfront Place, North Little Rock. Five speakers who are experts on cybersecurity-related issues such as cybersecurity fraud and liability, internet safety, financial risk mitigation, ransomware, safe banking procedures, and use of social media in the workplace, will offer practical solutions to address these serious and costly problems facing small businesses.
Attendees will learn ways to strengthen their cybersecurity framework, prevent hacks and mitigate cyber-related losses. The average cost of a cybersecurity breach on an affected small business was an average of $38,000 in 2015, according to a study by cybersecurity company Kaspersky Lab.

“Reports of massive data breaches among small businesses are becoming increasingly more common and affect the growth and development of our economy,” said AEDC Executive Director Mike Preston. “While cybersecurity is a concern among all businesses, the majority of all targeted cyberattacks in the past year were directed at small and mid-sized businesses. It is especially threatening to these businesses, about 60 percent of which have been reported to go out of business within six months of the attack. We want to do whatever we can to keep Arkansas’ small businesses safe so they can continue to grow and reach their full potential.”

The cost of the seminar is $25 per person, and refreshments will be served. For more information on the seminar or to register, please visit http://www.mfgsolutions.org and click on the “training calendar” tab at the top of the page.

Groups Now Registering for 2017 Blue & You Fitness Challenge Contest

Groups are now registering for the 2017 Blue & You Fitness Challenge. The contest, hosted by Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, the Arkansas Department of Health and the Arkansas Department of Human Services, is a free-to-enter, three-month competition, from March 1 – May 31, aimed at increasing cardiovascular activity.

Beginning in March, participants can log their activity on the Challenge's website, www.blueandyoufitnesschallenge-ark.com, to earn points. As their points accumulate, they will receive motivational messages and virtual medals. If they’re on a team, their points are combined with those of their teammates. Scores are displayed on the site’s leaderboard where teams can see how they rank. Winning teams are named base on accumulated points.

Businesses use the event as part of their wellness programs, while friends and family use the contest as a chance to stay or get in shape, remain connected and have fun. With eligible activities that range from walking to wheelchair wheeling, people can accrue points doing almost anything.

The Challenge offers free resources, including:

- Administrative guides and checklists
- Art for posters and banners
- Templates for motivation messaging
- A mobile-friendly website with reporting functionality
- Optional email reminders and newsletters with health tips
In the past, participants have reported a reduction in blood sugar levels, cholesterol, blood pressure and weight. Those committed to the 2017 Challenge can expect similar benefits. To complete the Challenge, participants must log at least 30 points. The maximum number of points is 276.

Group registration for the Challenge ends February 14; the deadline for individuals to register is February 28. All participants must be age 13 or older.

Individuals who wish to participate but don’t have a team or group may register under the team, Me, Myself & I Workout, using the group code: workout. For more information, call 1-800-686-2609 or log on to www.blueandyoufitnesschallenge-ark.com.

Thanks to Our New and Upgraded Members

Thanks to the following new members that have recently joined the State Chamber/AIA and to those members that have recently upgraded their membership investment in our organizations:

Arkansas Physicians Management

Thanks to Our Pinnacle Members

Thanks to our more than 120 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.

If your company or organization is interested in upgrading its membership investment to the Pinnacle level, contact Membership Development Representative Marcus Turley at mturley@arkansasstatechamber.com or 501-210-4203.

APEX
Deltic Timber Corporation
Entergy Arkansas, Inc.
Southland Park Gaming & Racing
Walmart Stores, Inc.

SUMMIT
Nucor/Nucor-Yamato Steel
Tyson Foods, Inc.
XTO Energy, Inc.

PEAK
Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield
Arvest Bank
AT&T Arkansas
CenterPoint Energy
Central Moloney Inc.
Citizens Bank
Electric Cooperatives of Arkansas
Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company of Arkansas, Inc.
Koch Companies Public Sector, LLC
McGeorge Contracting Company Inc.
Oaklawn Jockey Club
Southwestern Energy Company
State Farm Insurance
Winrock International

CROWN
AEP Southwestern Electric Power
Aerojet Rocketdyne Corporation
Albemarle Corporation
American Greetings Corporation
Anthony Timberlands Inc.
ARcare
Arkansas Department of Workforce Services
Arkansas Farm Bureau Federation
Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department
Arkansas Learns
Arkansas Oklahoma Gas Corporation
Arkansas Petroleum Council
Baldor Electric Company
Baptist Health
Bear State Bank
Ben E. Keith Company
Big River Steel
BKD, LLP
Bryce Corporation
Caterpillar Inc.
Center for Toxicology & Environmental Health, LLC (CTEH)
Central States Manufacturing, Inc.
Clean Line Energy
The Clorox Company
Communications Sales & Leasing (CS&L)
ConAgra Foods
Conway Corporation
Cooper Communities Inc.
Dassault Falcon Jet Corp.
Delta Dental of Arkansas Inc.
Denso Manufacturing Arkansas, Inc.
Domtar

El Dorado Chemical Company

Energy Transfer/Fayetteville Express Pipeline

Evergreen Packaging Company

Farm Credit Services of Arkansas

Fidelity National Information Services

First Community Bank

FutureFuel Chemical Company

Garver

Glad Manufacturing/A Clorox Company

Golden Living

Goodwill Industries

Great Lakes Solutions – A Chemtura Business

Hackney Ladish, Inc.

Harrison Energy Partners

Hino Motors Manufacturing USA, Inc.

Hot Springs Village POA

Hytrol Conveyor Company Inc.

Image Works Commercial Interiors

International Paper Company

Kimberly-Clark Corporation

Kimble Mechanical Systems

Kinco Constructors, LLC

Kutak Rock LLP

Lennox International

Lexicon Inc.

LifePlus International

Little Rock Port Authority

LM Wind Power - Arkansas

Lockheed Martin Missiles & Fire Control

Mainstream Technologies, Inc.

Martin Marietta Materials

McKee Foods Corporation

MISO

Murphy Oil Corporation

Murphy USA

Nabholz Construction Services

National Center for Toxicological Research

Novus Arkansas, LLC

OG+E

Ozark Mountain Poultry

Parts Warehouse, Inc. /Replacement Parts, Inc.

Pernod-Ricard - USA

Philander Smith College

Powers of Arkansas

Pro Window & Door
Rheem Air Conditioning
Riceland Foods, Inc.
Rivendell Behavioral Health Services of Arkansas
Russellville Steel Company Inc.
Schickel Development Company
Signature Bank of Arkansas
Simmons First National Corporation
Simmons Foods, Inc.
Snyder Environmental
Southwest Power Pool
Stephens Inc.
Teladoc
The Roberts Group
Trinity Rail
UAMS
Union Pacific Railroad
USABLE Life
U.S. Bank
Verizon Wireless
Waste Management of Arkansas
Windstream
Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation
Wright Lindsey & Jennings LLP
W&W/AFCO Steel LLC

Calendar of Events

January 17  State Chamber/AIA Annual Legislative Reception
4:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Under the Big Tent
State Chamber North Parking Lot
Little Rock

February 2  Marijuana in the Workplace Seminar
Registration Closed – Full Capacity
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Bob Lamb Conference Room
State Chamber Building
Little Rock

February 22-24  Leadership Arkansas Class XI Session V
Economic Development, Infrastructure & Agriculture
West Memphis and Jonesboro
February 23  Marijuana in the Workplace Seminar  
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Bob Lamb Conference Room  
State Chamber Building  
Little Rock

March 16  Marijuana in the Workplace Seminar  
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Bob Lamb Conference Room  
State Chamber Building  
Little Rock

March 30  Hiring Our Heroes Job Fair  
Little Rock Air Force Base

March 30-31  Leadership Arkansas Class XI Session VI  
Education  
Hot Springs

April 20-21  Leadership Arkansas Class XI Session VII  
Regional Development  
Fayetteville, Springdale and Bentonville

May 4  27th Annual Small Business Awards Luncheon  
11:45 a.m. – 1 p.m.  
Embassy Suites Hotel  
Little Rock

May 18-19  Leadership Arkansas Class XI Session VIII  
Leadership, Planning & Graduation  
Little Rock

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