

Jordan Bearden
Senior Manager, Corporate & Community Affairs – Runway Group

Jordan Bearden is the Senior Manager of Corporate and Community Affairs for the [Runway Group](#), where she is responsible for spearheading business recruitment and economic development initiatives for Bentonville, with a specific focus on cultivating entrepreneurship and investments in the outdoor recreation economy, cycling industry, and emerging smart mobility technologies.

Prior to this role, Jordan served five years under Governor Asa Hutchinson as the Liaison to the Arkansas Economic Development Commission, Director of Scheduling, and Special Assistant to the Governor. She previously worked on the Government Affairs team at BGR Group, a bipartisan lobbying and communications firm based out of Washington, D.C. and was employed by the U.S. House of Representatives on the legislative team of Congressman Steve Womack. She brings a decade of experience in strategic planning, project management, and public affairs at the state and federal level.

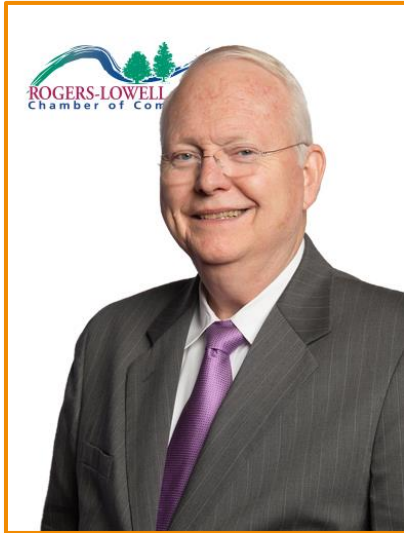


Jordan graduated from the University of Arkansas in 2012 with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with concentrations in Marketing Management and Economics. She has served on various non-profit event committees, young professionals' organizations, and as a volunteer for Arkansas Children's Hospital.



Raymond Burns

President/CEO, Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce



Raymond Burns is President/CEO of the [Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce](#) in Rogers, Arkansas. He is one of 275 Certified Chamber Executives in the nation. The Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce is a Five-Star Accredited Chamber, the highest certification of quality available in the industry. Only 132 of 7,022 chambers have earned this honor. He has served the Chamber for the past 35 years. He is actively involved with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Washington, serving on the Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100, the Accreditation Board, and he is past chairman of the SMU Institute for Organizational Management, the profession's leading training program for Chamber professionals.

He is past chairman of the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives Certified Chamber Executive (CCE) Commission and is past chairman of the Arkansas Chamber of Commerce Executives and the Arkansas Economic Developers. He currently serves on the Arkansas State Chamber of Commerce Board and Executive Committee, and the Northwest Arkansas Council Executive Committee. He served an 8-year term as a board member of the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport Authority. He is a member of Rotary International and a member of Central United Methodist church of Rogers. Raymond is married to his wife Katie has two children and three grandchildren.

Steve Clark
President and CEO, Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce

Steve Clark is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the [Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce](#). The Fayetteville Chamber is a five star nationally accredited chamber and serves as the Chief Economic Advisor for the city of Fayetteville.

Steve is a graduate of Arkansas State University and the University Of Arkansas School Of Law in Fayetteville. He is a distinguished alumnus of both schools.

Steve is a veteran and served as a commissioned officer in the infantry in both the active army and reserves. He is also the longest serving Attorney General of Arkansas, served as Chief of Staff to Governor David Pryor, was a Municipal Judge, and the founder of a national behavioral health company.



Steve has argued eight cases before the United States Supreme Court, was chosen as the most outstanding Attorney General in the nation and presented the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children's national Child Protection Award.

Steve has served as a law professor at 4 different law schools, served as a legislative consultant to the United States Nuclear Waste Negotiator, and President of the National Association of Attorneys General. He is a member of numerous boards and commissions in Fayetteville, Northwest Arkansas and the state, including the Northwest Arkansas Council, the Walton Arts Center, the Yvonne Richardson Center, the Northwest Arkansas Workforce Investment Board, the Northwest Arkansas Area Agency on Aging, the Fayetteville Police Department's Community Action Advisory Board and the Arkansas Good Roads Transportation Council.

Additionally, Steve is a member of the prestigious U.S. Chamber's Committee of 100. He serves on the National Policy Council of Chambers in Innovation and Clean Energy and the board of the Alliance for Innovation and Infrastructure.

Steve is married to Suzanne Clark, a chemical engineer and litigation attorney and President of the Arkansas Bar Association. They have two daughters and five grandchildren. Steve notes his only real claim to fame is being Suzanne's husband and AJ's, Jacob's, Hannah's, Jackson's and Campbell's grandfather.



Graham Cobb
Walton Enterprises



#CLVinNWA

Jeannette Balleza Collins
Entrepreneurship – Northwest Arkansas Council



Jeannette is focused on building an ecosystem that connects ideas, people and resources to ensure entrepreneurial vibrancy—put another way, to highlight and support the brilliant creative potential of NWA and its inhabitants (current and future). As the primary contact for the StartupNWA program, she works with region-wide stakeholders on goals including connectivity, capital access, talent growth, university-industry engagement, resource navigation and story sharing. Originally from Little Rock and currently in Fayetteville, she's a true champion of the limitless opportunities of NWA.



Krista Cupp
Vice President, Community Affairs – Runway Group



Krista Cupp is Director of Communications for [Runway Group](#) in Bentonville, Arkansas, where she is responsible for communications and marketing across Runway's businesses, investments and executive leadership.

Her previous roles include Vice President of The Herald Group, a public affairs agency in Washington D.C.; Corporate Identity and Executive Communications lead for Tyson Foods; and Senior Elections and Grassroots Coordinator for the National Rifle Association. She also served as Communications Specialist for U.S. Senator Kit Bond.

Krista sits on the Leadership Circle for the Independent Women's Forum and is a member of the Arthur Page Society. She grew up in Missouri and earned a political science degree from William Jewell College.

Krista is active in her church's women's ministry and is a firm believer in servant leadership. She enjoys outdoor activities, including hiking, cycling, jogging, and being on the water. She married her high school sweetheart Cameron and lives in Bentonville with her two children.

Nate Green

Communication, Northwest Arkansas Council

Nate amplifies the good work being done to move NWA forward as the primary press contact for the [Northwest Arkansas Council](#). As an accomplished attorney, he's a skilled communicator and storyteller. In his current position, he drives content and messaging for the Council. Born in Camden and currently living in Rogers, he loves experiencing the local culture, from public art to food trucks.



Allyson de la Houssaye
Executive Director, Women of Oz

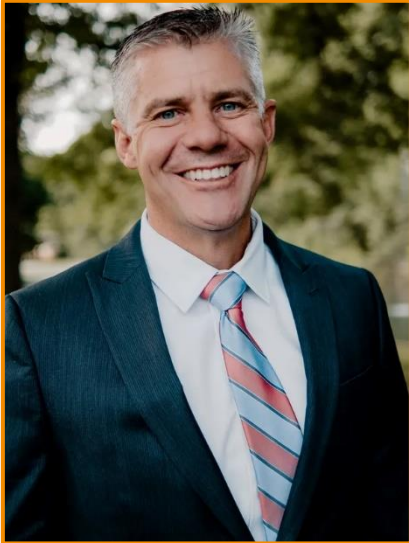
Allyson de la Houssaye is the Executive Director of [Women of Oz NWA](#), an inclusive non-profit organization that works to get women on mountain bikes by breaking down barriers. Established in February 2019, Women of OZ NWA is a primarily volunteer-based organization of women looking to build a strong community of women riders. Understanding that it truly takes a village to start a movement, we are led by a board of 9 that is supported by 40 women who comprise the steering committee members and serve as ride leaders. Women of Oz creates a welcoming and non-intimidating environment for all women regardless of background or skill level and has had over 3000 participants in their programming.



An avid athlete, mother and wife. Allyson is a Sports and Documentary Producer from Chicago. Having always ridden a bike at one point or another in her life she recently discovered mountain biking thanks to the beautiful OZ Trails system in NWA. She now considers herself a recovered road cyclist with a passion for bringing women together through mountain biking.

Arthur Hulbert

President and CEO, Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce



Arthur Hulbert is the President/CEO of the [Siloam Springs Chamber of Commerce](#). In this role, Arthur reports directly to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors and oversees all operations and work of the Chamber, and manages staff members and volunteers. Arthur specializes in networking and business start-up education. He can help you start your business, inform you of current grants and tax credits, and connect you with the right people to set you up for success. Arthur would love to get to know you so be sure to come by the Chamber!

Arthur Hulbert received a Bachelor's degree in Health Science and a Master's Degree in Physical Therapy from the University of Central Arkansas followed by a Doctorate from Rocky Mountain University in Provo Utah. He has taught for several universities, been a published author in a research journal, started and run several successful businesses as well as helped lead a publicly traded company on the NASDAQ in 37 states and Puerto Rico.



David Johnson

David Johnson is the Executive Director of the Fayetteville Public Library and has served in this position since 2012. Prior to this role, he served over 14 years as a Project Leader at Tyson Foods. He earned his Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Communication at the University of Arkansas, and his Masters of Library Science at the University of Tennessee. David received the Barbara Broyles Champion for Literacy award, issued by the Ozark Literacy Council, in 2016.



Cindy Lasater
Executive Administrative Assistant – Brightwater

Brightwater Executive Administrative Assistant Cindy Lasater is originally from Shreveport, La., and in high school developed a respect and understanding for food and food systems by working at Sunshine Fruit Markets in Springfield, Mo., where she helped purchase goods from local growers.

Cynthia taught special education in Waldo, Stephens and Camden, Ark., as well as Missouri and Oklahoma. She was also a certified meeting planner for the Federation of American Hospitals, a trade association out of Washington, D.C., planning conferences, trade shows and meetings across the United States.

After retiring in Northwest Arkansas, Cynthia decided that joining Brightwater in 2018 would allow her the opportunity to work for a business where she could meet new people and still be involved in education. As an administrative assistant at Brightwater, she enjoys interacting with students, instructors, chefs and community members.



"Whether you are a professional chef or love cooking recreationally for your family and friends, Brightwater provides Northwest Arkansas with a unique, state of the art opportunity to hone your skills and learn new ideas and techniques," says Cynthia.

In her free time, Cynthia enjoys reading, camping, sewing, traveling and spending time with her children.

Mike Malone

Vice Chancellor for Economic Development, The University of Arkansas



Mike Malone joined the [University of Arkansas](#) as vice chancellor for economic development on April 18, 2022. In this role, he leads the university's efforts to expand economic opportunity and improve quality of life across Arkansas.

A talented economic development professional, Malone holds nearly three decades of experience building coalitions and partnerships to advance community and economic development opportunities. From 2016 until his appointment at the U of A, he served as vice president for corporate and community affairs for Runway Group, overseeing a wide range of community development projects and direct investments in Northwest Arkansas, including workforce development, talent attraction and business recruitment, outdoor recreation and philanthropy. From 2006-2016, he served as president and CEO of the Northwest Arkansas Council, leading the creation and implementation of regional growth and development

strategies that resulted in significant employment gains, economic growth and improved quality of life in Northwest Arkansas.

Prior to his work in Arkansas, Malone held senior staff leadership positions in the White House, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Senate, and the House of Representatives. He also serves on the boards of directors of Heartland Forward and the Bentonville Chamber of Commerce and is a member of the board of trustees of Hendrix College. He holds a Master of Arts in Public Affairs from the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota and is a cum laude graduate of Hendrix College having received a bachelor's degree with distinction in political science.

Kristin Mann

Film / TV / Commercial Producer



Kristin Mann is a freelance film, television and commercial producer currently residing in the Northwest Arkansas region. Prior to this role, she worked as a producer on multiple films, music videos, broadcast shorts, and more in Austin and Los Angeles. Kristin earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communications / Film & Theatre from the University of Central Arkansas. Kristin is currently producing a film in Northwest Arkansas starring Meg Ryan and David Duchovny.



Duke McLarty
Workforce Housing – Northwest Arkansas Council

As executive director of the Northwest Arkansas Workforce Housing Center through the [Northwest Arkansas Council](#), Duke collaborates with community partners to address housing affordability in the region. Duke is passionate about collaborating with community partners to develop workable solutions that fit the unique needs of each city.

The Council announced the workforce housing center in March 2021 to address housing affordability in Northwest Arkansas. The goal of the center is to promote well-designed housing options and mixed-income, walkable and transit-accessible neighborhoods for the region's workers and their families.



McLarty joins the center after serving as the director of government affairs and community relations for AIR Communities, a real estate investment trust focused on the ownership and management of apartment communities in the U.S. In his role at AIR, McLarty developed and implemented legislative and government affairs and community engagement strategies for one of the country's largest owners and operators of apartments in 17 states and more than 40 cities.

Prior to joining AIR Communities in 2018, McLarty worked in several roles within the Federal Housing Administration of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development focusing on large-scale urban renewal development and multifamily development.

A Missouri native, McLarty earned his bachelor's degree from Missouri State University and Juris Doctor from the University of Arkansas School of Law.

Chris Moore

VP of Government Relations – Canoo



Chris Moore is Vice President of Government Relations at Canoo – an American manufacturer of award-winning electric vehicles. Chris is an experienced advocate for business interests in Washington and around the world. He has led successful global and national legislative and public affairs campaigns at top industry associations, including the National Association of Manufacturers. He previously worked on Capitol Hill and held senior positions in the State Department and the Executive Office of the President. He is a graduate of Emory University and the London School of Economics. In his spare time, Chris serves on the boards of multiple non-profit organizations – including

HelpAgeUSA, which advocates for the rights of older people across America and worldwide. He is married and lives in Washington, DC.



Heather Nachtmann

Associate Dean for Research, College of Engineering – The University of Arkansas

Dr. Heather Nachtmann is a professor of industrial engineering and associate dean for research in the College of Engineering at the University of Arkansas. She holds the Earl J. and Lillian P. Dyess Endowed Chair in Engineering. Dr. Nachtmann serves as director of the Maritime Transportation Research and Education Center (MarTREC), a U.S. Department of Transportation University Transportation Center, and the Mack-Blackwell Transportation Center. Her research includes smart mobility, data science for transportation systems, and economic and operations analysis of inland waterways. Dr. Nachtmann has published more than ninety peer-reviewed publications and led over eighteen million dollars

in research grants as principal investigator. She is a Fellow of the American Society for Engineering Management and the Institute of Industrial and Systems Engineers, a member of the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department Research Advisory Council, and Editor-in-Chief for The Engineering Economist journal. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Pittsburgh.



Nelson Peacock

President and CEO – Northwest Arkansas Council



Nelson Peacock has served as President and CEO of the [Northwest Arkansas Council](#) since July 2017. In this leadership role, Nelson ensures the Council meets the goals and objectives defined by the executive committee. He works closely with top organizations in Arkansas, including its largest employers, state leaders, educators, local government officials and chambers of commerce. The initiatives he's most proud of are those that set up NWA for inclusion and growth: the Bella Vista bypass, the Health Care Transformation Division and EngageNWA. A native Arkansan, Nelson enjoys being able to balance an exciting career with the low-stress lifestyle of NWA.

Peacock grew up in Arkansas and earned degrees at the University of Arkansas and University of Arkansas School of Law. Most recently before leading the Council, Nelson served as a senior vice president of government relations for the University of California Office of the President. In the role, he oversaw all aspects of state and federal governmental relations for the \$32.5 billion University of California system, which includes 10 UC campuses, five academic medical centers and three national laboratories.

Prior to this, Nelson was appointed by President Barack Obama to lead the Office of Legislative Affairs for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). In this role, he was responsible for all aspects of the department's interactions with Congress on issues related to counter terrorism, immigration, cyber security and natural disasters. He oversaw the congressional teams of seven operational agencies of DHS, including the United States Coast Guard, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the U.S. Secret Service, Transportation Security Administration and the Federal Emergency Management Administration.

Nelson also served as senior counsel to Senator Joe Biden on the Judiciary Committee of the United States Senate where he advised the future President on homeland security, crime and intellectual property issues.

Nelson is just the third president and CEO hired to lead the 27-year-old Northwest Arkansas Council. He has a Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctorate from the University of Arkansas and Masters of Arts from the George Washington University School of Law.

Peacock, his wife Susan and their two young daughters currently reside in Northwest Arkansas.



Ross Phillips

Senior Vice President of Community Development – Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce



Ross Phillips has served as the Senior Vice President of Community Development for the Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce since 2020. Prior to this role, he served with the Rogers-Lowell Chamber as their Vice President of Community Development and Director of Community Development. In his current role, Ross organizes and manages the various leadership programs at the Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce and implements diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. Ross earned his Bachelor of Science in Public Relations, Advertising, and Applied Communication at the University of Central Arkansas. In 2021, he was named to the Northwest Arkansas Business Journal's Forty Under 40 class.

Bill Rogers

President, Springdale Chamber of Commerce



Bill Rogers is the President of the [Springdale Chamber of Commerce](#). Bill grew up in Monticello, Arkansas, and has worked for the Chamber since 1998. He has been a Public Relations professional since 1981, spending 17 years in the Media Relations Department for the Arkansas Razorbacks. He received his Bachelor of Science in Education from the University of Arkansas, is a 2002 graduate of the University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute. In 2007, Bill graduated from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Institute for Organization Management. In his free time, you can find Bill playing golf, officiating basketball games or traveling



Joe Rollins

Workforce Development – Northwest Arkansas Council

Dr. Joe Rollins leads the workforce development efforts of the [Northwest Arkansas Council](#). Joe works with educators and businesses to develop and strengthen NWA's career and technical education programs. He connects colleges, technical schools and high school training programs with potential employers and facilitates meeting their workforce needs. This makes him a valuable resource to both students and schools, supporting and promoting career opportunities. The Springdale native also advocates for regional training and partnership needs with area chambers of commerce.



April Roy
Founder, femPAQ



April Roy is the Founder of [FemPAQ](#), a women-owned business that provides menstrual period emergency kits. FemPAQ was created after a girls trip to Los Angeles with April's best friend, where she unfortunately got her period unexpectedly. The pair searched for a quick solution to provide security and comfort on the flight back to New York, but there was nothing. When April returned home, she began researching to understand why there were not resources for these emergency situations. Afterwards, this became more than a product; it became a movement. A movement to end period stigma and create period equity for all menstruators. FemPAQ works with many different industries to provide these kits, including manufacturing, travel and hospitality, women in sports, outdoors, education, and the military.



Erin Rushing
Executive Director, NWA Trailblazers

Erin Rushing is the Executive Director of [NWA Trailblazers](#), a non-profit organization that designs and develops multi-use trails for cycling, running, walking and most importantly, discovering the beauty found all across NW Arkansas. Growing up on a cattle farm in rural north central Arkansas, Erin was exposed to nature his entire childhood in the Natural State. He loved being outdoors (hiking, fishing, camping and hunting) but it wasn't until he moved away from it to Kansas City, Missouri, out of college, that he really appreciated it. Erin quickly became addicted to the open space and wonderful greenway trail system his new hometown had available to him. When he moved back to Arkansas five years later, he found myself searching for opportunities to develop and introduce greenway trails into a growing community that had none. Today, there are over a hundred miles of pedestrian trails within Northwest Arkansas which Erin is very blessed to have been a part of their development.

Professionally, Erin is a 1995 Landscape Architect graduate from the University of Arkansas who has been providing design consulting work within the Northwest Arkansas market for the past 20+ years. He has numerous design awards for work he has completed in Northwest Arkansas.



He has been designing/consulting on parks and recreation projects in this region for many years, including 25+ miles of Greenway Trails and 50+ miles of natural surface trails. Erin is verse in all aspects of land development and has a strong back ground in site/civil related development projects with an emphasis in bicycle / pedestrian facilities.

Clint Schaff

Founder, FIXIN Media & Experiences

Clint Schaff is an award-winning producer of audio, television, film and live-event projects. He works independently, with media and journalism organizations, and with brands and companies. In 2020, Adweek honored Clint as one of its Creative 100, which celebrates the 100 most inspiring minds in marketing, media and culture, and as one of ten honorees in the category of Media Innovators.



Best known for his work as Vice President of Strategy and Development at the Los Angeles Times, Clint was the first employee of L.A. Times Studios, and responsible for the development and programming of various audio, video and experiential projects. Successful projects include the immensely popular Dirty John podcast and two seasons of Dirty John, the television series franchise (which aired on Bravo and USA networks for Seasons 1 and 2, respectively). Clint has led development and business-side operations around many successful podcasts, including Man In the Window, Larger Than Life, Room 20, Chasing Cosby, It Was Simple: The Betty Broderick Murders, The Trials of Frank Carson, Asian Enough and The Times: Daily news from the L.A. Times. Before the expansion of his roles and responsibilities, he led an array of strategic initiatives including L.A. Times Studios programming development, founding of the Newstory storytelling festival, and vertical-specific product and idea generation for the news organization.

Prior to Los Angeles Times, Clint was U.S. General Manager directing all domestic operations, creative and account activities for Vision7 integrated advertising teams in Los Angeles and New York. Before that, Clint served as a Vice President for digital at two leading global agencies, Edelman and Golin. Over the course of his career, he has earned praise and awards for his work with high-profile brands and organizations including Procter & Gamble, Activision, Nintendo, Nestle, POM Wonderful, FIJI Water, Wonderful Pistachios, the Clinton-Gore White House, David Bowie, and the New York Yankees.

Clint has a BA in Communications & Political Science from the University of Minnesota and a MA from the University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communications and Journalism. After earning his graduate degree from USC, he returned to USC Annenberg for 10 years to teach as an adjunct instructor.

Clint lives in Bentonville, Arkansas, with his wife Jessica, and enjoys hosting a weekly radio show on 103.3 KOBV, rapping hip hop karaoke, attending live sporting events and concerts, and nature walks with his puppy Mia.



Marshall Shafkowitz

Executive Director, Brightwater: A Center for the Study of Food



Marshall Shafkowitz is the Executive Director of [Brightwater: A Center for the Study of Food](#). Brightwater serves as a hub for food training, activities, events and business in Northwest Arkansas and is an academic department of Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC).

Brightwater Executive Director Marshall Shafkowitz is originally from New York and credits his mother for opening his eyes to food exploration. He's traveled the world as a cook and chef, learning and exploring before settling in Chicago for 15 years. In 2019, he moved to Northwest Arkansas to join Brightwater at NWACC.

He chose to work at NWACC because he believes that Brightwater does culinary school differently. As the executive director, he's enjoyed being able to do more than just talk about food systems, the craft and the business, but give students the opportunity to experience it in a practical manner.

"Brightwater's vision to make the study and craft of food accessible to all - creatively, sustainably, and in the entrepreneurial sense - clearly defines who we are as a school. It all shows in how we interact with our students and the community," says Marshall.

Marshall has a Bachelor of Science in Culinary and a Master's in the Art of Teaching. He also attended the Alan Shawn Feinstein Graduate School at Johnson & Wales University. Marshall was awarded the ACF Chicago Culinary Educator of the Year in 2016.

In his free time, Marshall enjoys rock climbing, motorcycle riding, mountain biking, hiking, woodworking and exploring nature with his family.

April Seggebruch
Chief Strategy Officer and Co-Founder, Movista



April Seggebruch is the Chief Strategy Officer and Co-Founder of [Movista](#). She oversees the Product Development, Product Management, Quality Assurance, and Finance teams of the company.

Problem solving is one of her superpowers. She's adept at actively listening to the challenges clients are facing in the marketplace, then striving to find ways to tackle and overcome those problems. With the collaboration of Movista's world-class product team and developers, those innovative ideas become reality – resulting in a growing feature set on a software platform that is ever improving, designed to harmonize the retail ecosystem... creating visibility, accountability and consistency in execution of work.

During her time at the University of Arkansas, where she received her bachelor's degree in marketing, April leveraged her natural leadership skills and winning spirit into her role as Captain of the Lady Razorbacks basketball team. After earning her undergraduate degree, she went on to earn her MBA from the University of Arkansas' Sam M. Walton School of Business.

April remains active in the UofA's business school, in addition to mentoring with the Brewer Entrepreneurship Center, and she serves as a leader on several non-profit boards and educational missions worldwide.



Toby Teeter
Director, The Collaborative – The University of Arkansas

Toby Teeter serves as the director of the [Collaborative](#), a University of Arkansas education and research presence and catalyst to propel the state's innovation ecosystem in Bentonville. Toby was named the inaugural director of this organization in July 2021.

The Collaborative — situated in the Greenway Office Park adjacent to the Razorback Greenway, the Momentary contemporary art space, and the 8th Street Market — is a spoke of the newly developed Institute for Integrative and Innovative Research, envisioned to co-locate certain key functions to meet current and future community needs as well as plan for future outreach expansion. It is also home to the U of A Global Campus operations in Bentonville, which provides educational and enrichment opportunities, professional development, computer and technology training from university faculty, industry experts or experienced instructors, certification programs and customized training.



Teeter joined the U of A after serving as president and CEO of the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce since 2018. In this role, he managed economic development, fostered a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem, championed innovation culture and attracted both talent and new industry to the Joplin area. Prior to his work with the Joplin Chamber, he founded Omni Brands LLC, a portfolio of e-commerce outdoor apparel brands. He also was the founder and president of Litmus Media, an online advertising network acquired by Little Rock-based Inuvo in 2006. He also has held leadership positions in corporate law and private equity investing.

Teeter holds a Juris Doctor from the University of Missouri School of Law and a Bachelor of Science degree from Missouri State University.

Gary Vernon

Program Officer, Walton Personal Philanthropy Group – Walton Family Foundation



Gary Vernon serves as the Senior Program Officer for the [Walton Personal Philanthropy Group/Walton Family Foundation](#). Gary has had a significant impact on the immense trails system in Northwest Arkansas and continues to build upon this infrastructure, brand and overall success to grow the outdoor focus within the region.



Jim Walton

Jim Walton is an American business, currently the heir to the fortune of Walmart, the world's largest retailer. He is the youngest son of Sam Walton, founder of Walmart and Sam's Club. Jim currently serves as the Chairman and CEO of Arvest Bank. He and his wife Lynne reside in Bentonville and have four children.



Karen Wagaman

Vice President of Downtown Development – Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce

Karen Wagaman is the Vice President of Downtown Development at the Rogers-Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce. She has served in this role since 2016. In this capacity, Karen works with stakeholders of Downtown Rogers while ensuring consistency with regard to execution and implementation of the Downtown Master Plan, partners with public and private leaders, and supports efforts to further grow and develop the Downtown Rogers area. She also is a freelance artist, including providing marketing and public relations expertise for community organizations and local businesses. Karen earned her Bachelor of Arts in Business and Studio Art from Drury University and her MBA from Washburn University.



U.S. Representative Steve Womack

U.S. House of Representatives (AR-3)



Congressman Steve Womack has proudly represented the Third District of Arkansas since his election in 2010. He is currently a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee, where he is the Ranking Member of the Financial Services and General Government (FSGG) Subcommittee and also sits on the Defense and Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Subcommittees. He formerly served as the Chairman of the House Budget Committee and has been on the Republican Whip Team since his arrival in Congress.

Womack is committed to ensuring that the voices of his constituents are represented and is widely known in the House for his perfect voting record. During his tenure, he holds the longest consecutive voting streak maintained by any current member of the U.S. House of Representatives. In his first four terms, while serving in the majority, Womack was the leadership's go-to member in presiding over the House floor. Womack was also tapped by Speaker Ryan to lead the 2018 16-member, bipartisan, bicameral Joint Select Committee on Budget and Appropriations Process Reform.

Womack has a strong record of public service to the Natural State, which has been defined by a lifelong philosophy to "lead by example and lead from the front." As the former Mayor of Rogers, he is credited with leading an unprecedented expansion of the Rogers economy with more than \$1 billion in local investment. He was the 2022 recipient of the "Dick Trammel Good Neighbor Award," the Rogers community's highest honor presented to individuals who have contributed to the betterment of Rogers and the region.

Womack retired from the Arkansas Army National Guard in 2009 at the rank of Colonel with more than thirty years of service. His deployment to Sinai, Egypt in 2002 marked the first time a National Guard unit performed the mission of the Multinational Force and Observers. Womack's Task Force received accolades from the highest levels of military and civilian leaders.

Womack is a graduate of Arkansas Tech University where he was inducted into the ATU Hall of Distinction in 2014. He is a member of the Arkansas National Guard's OCS Hall of Fame. His military awards include the Legion of Merit, the Arkansas Distinguished Service Medal, and, in 2015, Womack was presented with the Harry S. Truman Award, the highest award given by the National Guard Bureau.

He also serves as the Chairman of the West Point Board of Visitors (BOV), where he supports the U.S. Military Academy in its mission to train the next generation of Army officers. He was first appointed to the BOV in 2012 and subsequently elected BOV Chairman in 2017.

He and his wife, Terri, have been married for 37 years. They have three sons and three grandsons. They make their home in Rogers.

Blake Woolsey
Chief Communication & Development Officer, Heartland Forward



Blake Woolsey is the chief communications and development officer for [Heartland Forward](#) (HF), a “think” and “do tank” based in Northwest Arkansas with a mission of changing the narrative about the middle of the country (20 states) to kick-start economic growth.

Prior to joining HF, she spent three years as a corporate strategist and executive coach through her company Blake Communications. In her consulting work, she was able to spend time on a variety of dynamic projects such as the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library, Central Arkansas Water, St. Bernard’s Hospital, Single Parent Scholarship of NWA, the Walton College of Business at the University of Arkansas as well as “looking to the future” for the timber and supply chain industries in the state.

She was the executive vice president of Mitchell Communications Group for 10 years where Blake led the Center for Business, Training and Leadership Excellence, the Creative team as well as a team focused on activating campaigns for national companies at a hyper-local level.

Before joining Mitchell, she was partner and co-owner of Executive Communications Consultants, LLC. Blake also worked for more than a decade with the University of Arkansas, taking a lead role in the Campaign for the 21st Century, which exceeded its \$1 billion goal. Her greatest achievement was solidifying a gift of \$50 million from The Walton Family Charitable Support Foundation Inc., for the Sam M. Walton College of Business. At the time of the donation, it was the largest gift ever to an American business school.



David Wright
Director, Bentonville Parks & Recreation

David Wright, Bentonville Parks and Recreation Director, is a 25+ year veteran of the public parks and recreation field. Prior to joining Bentonville Parks and Recreation, Wright worked ten years with Fayetteville Parks and Recreation, as well as stints with Fayetteville Youth Center and the Memphis Parks Commission. He is a Certified Parks and Recreation Executive by the National Parks and Recreation Association and serves on multiple national boards and committees overseeing recreation policy.



In 2008, Bentonville Mayor Bob McCaslin hired Wright to become Director of Bentonville Parks and Recreation, asking him to transform the department into a comprehensive Parks and Recreation system. Since that time, Wright has worked with many partners to open facilities including Orchards Park, Lawrence Plaza, the Bentonville Community Center, and more than 80 miles of trails including the Razorback Greenway and the Slaughter Pen Mountain Bike Park. In addition, Wright's department now offers more than 140 recreation programs per year serving more than 5,500,000 people annually. Under Wright's leadership, Bentonville Parks and Recreation has become a department generally recognized as one of the top municipal recreation departments in Arkansas.

Hunter Yurachek
Vice Chancellor, Athletics – The University of Arkansas

Mr. Hunter Yurachek serves as Vice Chancellor and Director of Athletics at the [University of Arkansas](https://www.uark.edu). Named to the position by Chancellor Joseph Steinmetz on December 4, 2017, Yurachek leads one of the nation's most successful intercollegiate athletics programs encompassing 465 student-athletes competing in 19 sports. Razorback Athletics is among a small number of financially self-sustaining athletics programs in the nation.

Prior to arriving at Arkansas, Yurachek served as Director of Athletics at the University of Houston (2015-17) and Coastal Carolina University (2010-14). He has also worked within intercollegiate athletics at the University of Akron, the University of Virginia, Western Carolina University, Vanderbilt University and Wake Forest University.

In April 2020, Yurachek was named by Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson to the Arkansas Economic Recovery Task Force, to help guide state reopening in the wake of COVID-19. He is also a member of the NCAA Football Competition Committee.

Yurachek earned his bachelor's degree in business management at Guilford College in 1990, where he was a four-year letter winner in basketball. He earned his master's degree in sports administration from the University of Richmond in 1994.



Matt Morrow
President, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce

Matt Morrow has served as president of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce since 2014. The Chamber is the region's lead business advocacy and economic development organization, serving as the voice of business on behalf of its nearly 1,500 member companies.

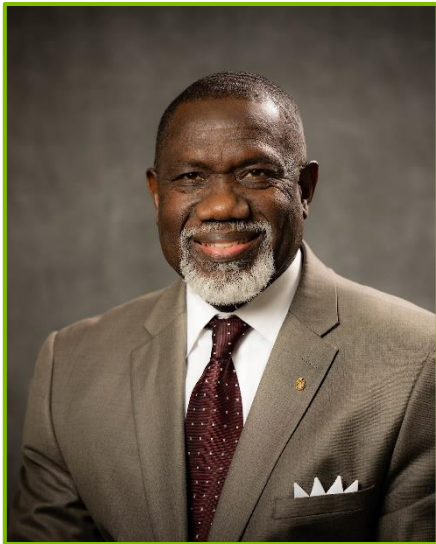
Prior to leading the Chamber, Matt served 14 years as CEO of professional trade associations of home builders in Springfield and in Birmingham, Alabama. Matt's earlier professional background was as a small-market radio broadcaster and station manager, before serving from 1996-2000 as Missouri Press Secretary and District Director for then-U.S. Senator John Ashcroft.



Matt holds a bachelor's degree in Communication and a master's degree in Business Administration (MBA) from Southwest Baptist University. His wife, Rachael, teaches in the Communication Department at SBU. Matt and Rachel are proud parents of a daughter, Annie, and son, Alex.

John Oke-Thomas

President, Oke-Thomas + Associates | Chairman, Springfield Chamber Board of Directors



John Oke-Thomas is president and CEO of Springfield architecture and design-build company Oke-Thomas and Associates. He has more than 35 years of experience in the construction industry, having received degrees from both Drury University and Polytechnic of Northern London in England. His company has worked on numerous recent public projects in Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska and Iowa.

John's company has received the Design-Build Firm of the Year award from the Minority Enterprise Development Council of Kansas City, and he has been named Minority Businessperson of the Year by the Small Business Administration's Kansas City District.

John is a member of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, the American Institute of Architects, the Royal Institute of British Architects, and the Design-Build

Institute of America, and he has traveled to the White House to speak on economic issues and trends in the Midwest.



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