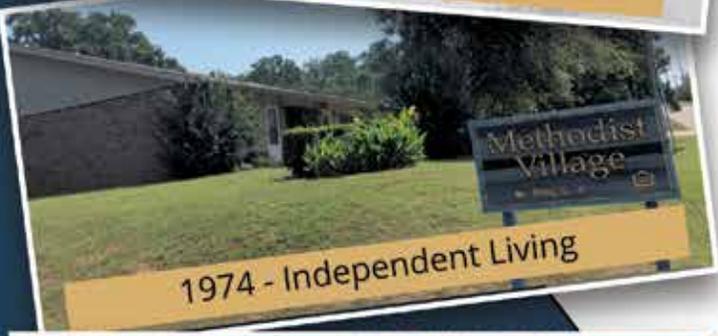




# LOOKING BACK ... MOVING FORWARD



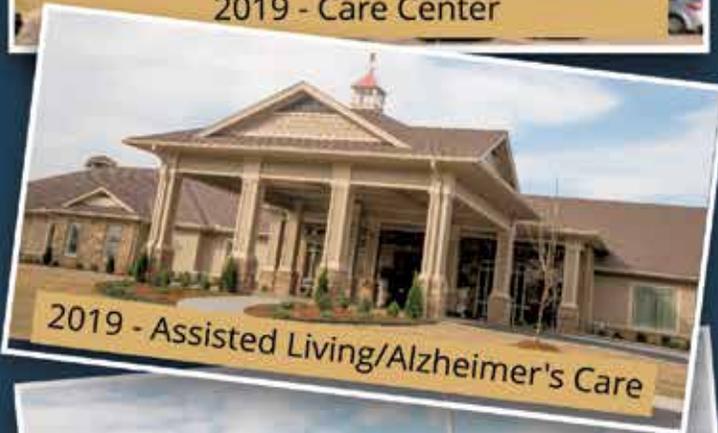
1961 - Care Center



1974 - Independent Living



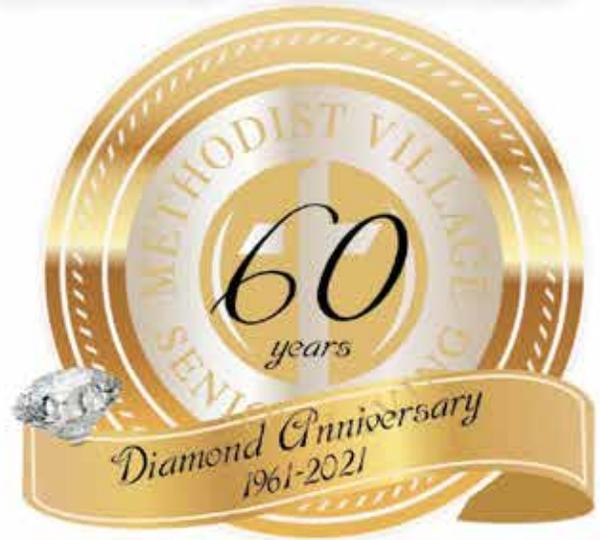
2019 - Care Center



2019 - Assisted Living/Alzheimer's Care



2022 - Care Center (Phase III)



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and Entertainment





# From the *President*

2020 was an interesting year for all of us! Like many businesses and organizations, the Chamber had to adapt in order to meet the needs of our members. The Chamber's resiliency powered through 2020 and kept its longstanding tradition of showing our membership that we're still here and serving our community. We were able to express appreciation and support to teachers and healthcare workers that are on the frontlines each and every day. The manufacturing sector has also faced challenges over the past year. Adjustments to operations, policies and procedures were necessary to keep facilities open and in production. While figuring out the new normal, our region had several companies that transformed their production lines to allow the production of PPE's. PRADCO manufactured face-shields, Rockline and Glatfelter partnered for the manufacturing of sanitation wipes, and Pernod-Ricard made hand sanitizer. Riverbend Industries supplied plastic bottles to hold hand sanitizer. With the help of the Chamber and volunteers, these supplies were delivered to local hospitals and nursing home facilities. This is an example of what makes our area a leader in collaboration, innovation and caring for others!

*Tim Allen, Chamber President & CEO, joined the Chamber staff in November 2011. Prior to becoming Chamber President in 2013, Tim served as the Chief Operating Officer. He is responsible for economic development for the Fort Smith MSA, overseeing Chamber staff and functions, and working with community leaders to improve the regional quality of place.*

Over the past 12 months, our area has experienced other successes. The Fort Smith metro experienced an increase in home sales in 2020. As cited by several media outlets, this is up 11.2% compared to the same period in 2019. The value of those homes sold was over \$387 million, up 12.4% compared with the same period in 2019. Businesses chose to invest over \$250 million over the past year. This is over double the amount invested in 2019.

The Fort Smith Chamber in partnership with Governor Hutchinson, Mike Preston, Clint O'Neal, Bentley Story at the AEDC, Carl Geffken and the entire Fort Smith City Board of Directors, have had a great year in the midst of a pandemic, leading the state in several economic development announcements. By now, you are familiar with most of them which include the Gerber expansion/retention project, the recruitment of COVIA, Inc. Corp, which is the FIRST opportunity zone project in Western Arkansas, and the groundbreaking of the Veteran's Clinic to name a few.

The Chamber recognizes the importance and continues to be committed to workforce development. The Chamber facilitated the securing of a \$2.1 million grant from the State of Arkansas to help fund the PEAK Innovation Center. The PEAK Innovation Center is a state-of-the-art K-12 career technical education center. Recruiting and retaining talent is crucial for our economy. We will continue to partner with industry leaders and the educational system to ensure that we are working together to achieve this goal.

I truly appreciate our members for their continued support of our Chamber!

Sincerely,

*Tim Allen*

President & CEO



# FORT SMITH MSA POPULATION: 280,507

Source: statisticalatlas.com/metro-area/Arkansas/Fort-Smith/Population

## 2020 CITY OF FORT SMITH POPULATION ESTIMATE : 87,891

Source: Vintage 2019 Population Estimates

**MEDIAN AGE: 35.9**  
**UNEMPLOYMENT RATE: 3.7%**  
**MEDIAN HOME PRICE: \$110,300**

Source: www.bestplaces.net/city/arkansas/fort\_smith



**MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME \$41,724**

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE: \$121,800**

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**TOTAL HOUSING UNITS: 39,983**

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**NUMBER OF FIRMS: 7,993**

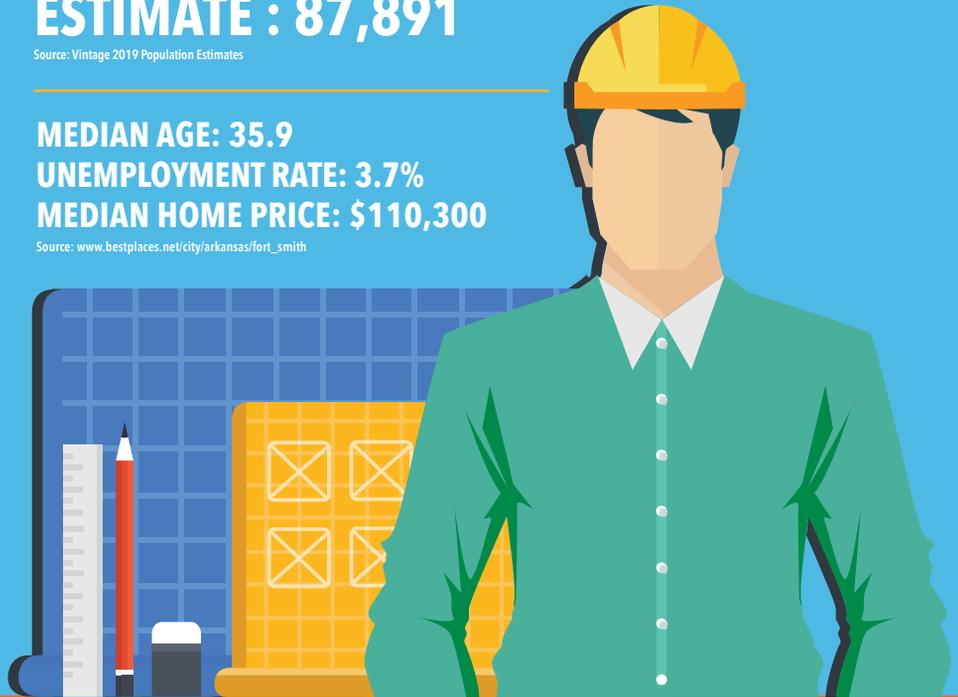
Source: 2012 Survey of Business Owners: Company Summary

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: PERCENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR HIGHER: 81.6 %**

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH A BROADBAND INTERNET SUBSCRIPTION: 75.0 %**

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



Index comparisons from BestPlaces.net. 100 = U.S. Average. Below 100 means cheaper than the U.S. average. Above 100 means more expensive.

FORT SMITH	BENTONVILLE	FAYETTEVILLE	LITTLE ROCK	TULSA	DALLAS
Cost of Living: 76	Cost of Living: 95.2	Cost of Living: 92.9	Cost of Living: 82.5	Cost of Living: 83.2	Cost of Living: 101
Food: 93.7	Food: 100.5	Food: 100	Food: 95.8	Food: 94.9	Food: 99.1
Housing: 47.7	Housing: 101.6	Housing: 95.4	Housing: 61.9	Housing: 51.3	Housing: 92.9
Median Home: \$110,300	Median Home: \$235,000	Median Home: \$220,500	Median Home: \$143,000	Median Home: \$118,700	Median Home: \$214,700
Utilities: 94.8	Utilities: 98.4	Utilities: 92.6	Utilities: 95.1	Utilities: 100	Utilities: 100
Transportation: 73.4	Transportation: 95.5	Transportation: 100	Transportation: 95	Transportation: 139	Transportation: 139

**FORT SMITH**  
*cost of living*

**20%**  
less than

the national average

Source: BestPlaces.net

**YOUR BUSINESS CAN GET YOUR CONCEPT OUT SOONER AND FOR MUCH LESS.  
YOUR COMPANY HAS TIME TO GROW IN FORT SMITH.**

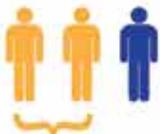




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Consumers are **10%** more likely to think products of companies involved in their chamber are better than the competition.

When consumers know that a small business is a member of the Chamber of Commerce, the business sees:

- 49%** Increase in consumer favorability
- 73%** Increase in consumer awareness
- 68%** Increase in local reputation
- 80%** Increase in likelihood that consumer will patronize your business

From a national survey conducted by The Shapiro Group, commissioned by the American Chamber of Commerce Executives.

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- Professional Development Workshops
- First Friday Breakfast (FFB)
- Business to Business Lunch (B2B)
- Leadership Fort Smith
- Junior Leadership Academy
- Business & Career Expo

Visit our website for current event calendar or visit our Facebook page:  
[Facebook.com/ftsmithchamber](https://www.facebook.com/ftsmithchamber)

### ENGAGE

Giving your business exposure and credibility

- Your business listing on our website gives you additional visibility and better Google Analytics to aid in online search results for your business
- Post events, job openings, specials, or news about your business
- Support the Chamber and market your business through sponsorship of Chamber programs

### ADVOCATE

Advocating for a business-friendly environment

- Serving as a voice for business:
- Ongoing staff visits to state legislators
  - Legislative trip to Washington, D.C. with local business leaders
  - Collecting your business concerns and monitoring legislation

### GROWTH

Growing the local economy

- Fostering a thriving economy to create more business opportunities for everyone:
- Supporting existing business expansions
  - Pursuing new jobs and capital investment in our community
  - Providing economic development research to inform business decisions

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# Education

ETHAN NAHTE' - Special to the Times Record



PEAK Innovation Center rendering of building updates, center to open late 2021.

Fort Smith is rich in educational opportunities for area residents from its K-12 districts, including an award-winning public school system serving over 15,000 students to its long-serving private and thriving charter schools. Additionally, the city has a treasure trove of higher education options from skills trade certifications, a four-year University, master's programs, and a growing medical school.

Schools faced a challenge in 2020, very much like any business, requiring temporary closure, tasking educators and students to adapt to working in a virtual environment. Some schools were able to return to in-person classes before the end of the 2019-2020 year, while others remained virtual. Completing courses was a must for students to advance. Seniors endeavored to graduate on time in a world filled with more uncertainties than any other time throughout the 21st century.

The Fort Smith Public Schools (FSPS) adapted by the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, ensuring viable options throughout 19 elementary, four junior high, and two high schools, plus one alternative learning center, and an adult education center. Roughly 3,000 students (20%) took advantage of the virtual option offered for grades K-12, attending classes online.

In part, virtual education was made possible by FSPS looking to the future. They approved their current strategic plan in 2017. A millage increase was placed on the 2018 ballot and passed by Fort Smith voters.

Tim Allen said, "When I'm selling Fort Smith to a corporation about why Fort Smith is the right place

for them, they're always looking at the educational system. I tout for the first time in nearly 30 years, we've passed a \$120 million bond that's rebuilding, basically, Northside and Southside high schools, as well as other schools and the PEAK Innovation Center." [see PEAK, page XX]

Allen stated if Fort Smith believes in itself enough to invest in its education, companies considering either building or relocating to the area will recognize the effort, sharing in the belief the city is progressive, looking to the future, and doing something about it.

Part of the monies went to upgrading the security and safety measures at each school. Improving teaching/learning methods was another part, including purchasing one-to-one devices, in this case, Google Chromebooks. Students were already allowed to take Chromebooks home to assist with schoolwork, unwittingly providing an easier transition to virtual classrooms. After the initial purchase, FSPS will refresh with newer devices every three-to-four years.

Technology alone does not guarantee success. FSPS superintendent Terry Morawski said, "We developed a program in late fall 2020 called On Track. Several students were struggling either through quarantine or learning the virtual environment. We developed On Track to help get students caught up on their work. We have drastically reduced our number of students who were struggling in the fall. For some students, it was one class; some, it was several classes. That's one thing I think that sets us apart."

FSPS received recognition from Arkansas

Secretary of Education Johnny Key stating other communities "...could look to Fort Smith as a model..."

Morawski added, "Numerous districts across our state and nation were struggling with the same thing. Fort Smith developed a plan, went at it, and came out on the other side with students caught up."

To prevent educators from pulling double duty, FSPS hired additional teachers specifically trained in teaching within a virtual system. FSPS purchased the Pearson Connexus curriculum, which is different from that offered in-person. The students still meet state standards and district requirements, but the curriculum is purposely designed for the virtual environment. The CARES Act and other funds helped with the expenses.

Morawski believes there is a place for virtual education in the future, but it's not for every student. "It's a lot of pressure on parents, especially if they're either working or a single-parent household. It takes a significant amount of discipline on the student's part."

He expects the virtual students to decrease once COVID-19 vaccines become more common.

The new school year saw the launch of the Health Sciences Academy (HSA) at Darby Middle School (sixth-eighth grade). The three-year program partners with both Baptist Health and Mercy hospitals.

Morawski said, "The popular program is an introductory level experience of what students would experience at PEAK and high school."

HSA students will take their core classes and some electives alongside the regular student body but will have other classes solely for HSA students, including at hospital facilities.

The district has added two competition gym facilities, each with a seating capacity exceeding 2,300. A state tournament has already been booked, which will bring athletes, families, and fans, all of which produce thousands in revenue to the area. The facilities can also serve as event venues.

FSPS is also proud of Susanna Post, Arkansas's 2021 Teacher of the Year. Post teaches math and business technology at Belle Point New Tech Academy. Morawski believes it says a lot about the district, a district that's met recent challenges with success.

Morawski said, "We aren't getting off course from our strategic plan. I didn't feel it was time to reset, but to continue and get the work done."

## K-12 PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL OPTIONS

The Future School of Fort Smith is a tuition-free, public charter high school. Initially serving 10th-12th grade, the school will open to ninth grade for the first time, beginning in fall 2021. It is the first Big Picture Learning school in Arkansas.

The school renovated the Girls' Club/Belle Grove Community Center in the Belle Grove Historic District, opening on August 22, 2016. The school began with 58 students, increasing enrollment to 230 students in 2019.

Superintendent Boyd Logan said, "We anticipate having 325 next year when we enroll ninth graders."

If families prefer an option outside of the public school system, Fort Smith has many other schools to choose from.

The Future School believes in the potential for each student to identify interests, cultivate in-demand skills, and graduate ready for the real world. It has partnerships with local K-12, higher education, and an internship affiliation with nearly 200 companies and businesses.

Logan said, "Future School can't wait for all the new things coming in the 2021-22 school year! First, we have a beautiful new facility in the heart of downtown Fort Smith. In addition, we'll be able to partner with Fort Smith Public Schools and UAFS to send students to both WATC and PEAK for new programs and further career exploration. As always, we promise a supportive school environment, real-world internships, and personalized advising for every student."

Union Christian Academy is the only fully accredited (ACSI, ANSAA, AdvancED, NFNSSA) K3 preschool-12th grade private Christian school in the

River Valley.

Superintendent Ricky Massengale said, "You can start here and finish here. The school family is like an extended family where everyone is knit together and cares for one another."

Union is providing a successful Advanced Hybrid Education for the 2020-2021 school year.

Massengale said, "We long for all of our students to, one day, be back on our campus, but our students and teachers have done well adopting this new model. It requires a true partnership between the teachers and our families."

"With our particular hybrid model, we do not ask students to pick between a virtual or on-campus experience but give them the flexibility to choose both. On a daily basis, students and families can determine which model suits them best based upon the family's comfort level, student's need, and other factors"

Union live streams courses for middle and high schoolers, so virtual students are receiving the same instruction from the same teacher at the same time as their peers. There is no lapse in instruction, no alternative curriculum, no missed educational opportunities.

For K5-fourth grade, students have online daily content from one of the school's teachers, along with helpful tools and the ability to call or email the teacher.

"While this has required numerous new policies and practices, this approach has been an incredible blessing because it has allowed us to confidently and continually ensure our students remain on track. This has also been incredibly important for us because we do not just care about preparing our students academically but spiritually, so we're able to make sure our lessons contain a Christian

Worldview and for our students to hear and see the teachers that care so much for them."

Harvest Time Academy (HTA) is another private Christian school option. HTA begins accepting children as young as three-months-old and offers classes through grade eight.

One primary objective is to help students grow spiritually in every subject, not just Bible class or chapels. HTA's academic standards and expectations are high but not unrealistic.

A key element in their educational philosophy is a healthy, supportive, and effective relationship between the home and HTA. Parents expect and appreciate direct and regular communication from faculty regarding their child. In return, teachers expect parents to be responsive to their suggestions regarding their child.

Fort Smith has three Catholic schools, all part of the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Little Rock (est. 1843). The diocese encompasses the entire state, overseeing 26 Catholic schools. Each school welcomes students of every religious belief, race, and ethnic origin.

Christ the King Catholic School (CTK) is one of the region's two elementary schools, serving students from ages 18 months – sixth grade. To help prepare for the 21st century, students attend a technology specialty class to learn skills appropriate for their age. With the help of Technology Partners, grades 4 – 6 have a 1:1 Chromebook use. Pre-K – third grade students have access to iPad learning centers in the classroom and access to an iPad cart equipped with a classroom set of iPads. All CTK classrooms use Smartboard technology to enhance teaching instruction.

Immaculate Conception School, likewise, serves children 18 months-old – sixth grade. Founded



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as a parochial school (1930) and a ministry of Immaculate Conception Church on the site where the log home of future president Gen. Zachary Taylor resided (1841-1844) while supervising the construction of Fort Smith. The Sisters of Mercy helped found the church in 1867. They created the first school in 1875 on the burned remains of Taylor's former home.

Immaculate Conception's current elementary school encompasses two classes at each grade level. The school has a highly-qualified staff of accredited teachers and an engaging curriculum that includes top-notch art and technology programs for modern-day students.

In 1986, Fort Smith's Catholic parishes, Christ the King, St. Boniface, and Immaculate Conception, combined their resources to form Trinity Catholic Junior High (TCJH) for grades 7 - 9. Immaculate Conception served students in K - sixth until the 2007- 2008 school year when preschoolers were accepted.

TCJH's original location was at Immaculate

Conception. In 1996, the school moved to its current location on the grounds of St. Scholastica.

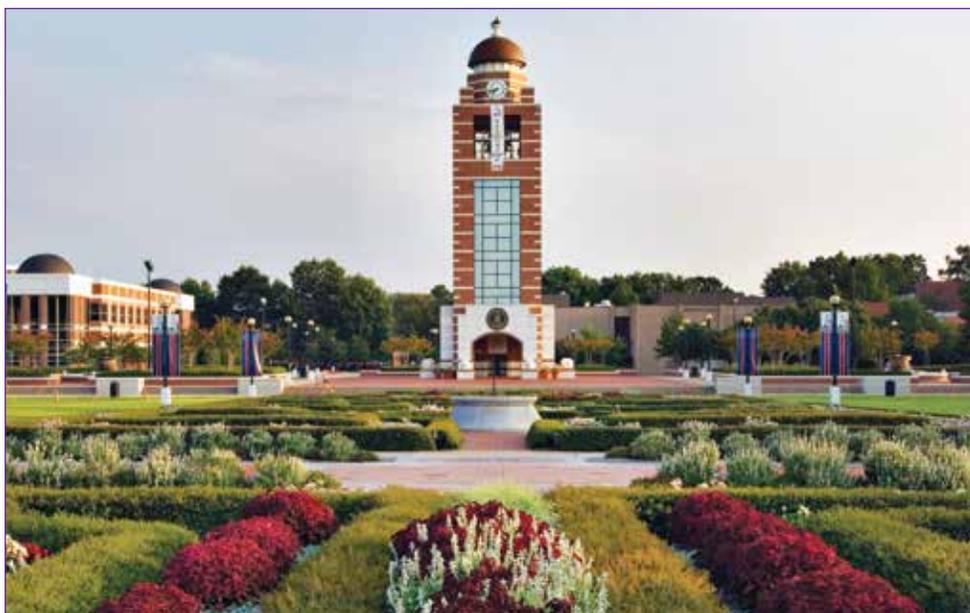
TCJH's standardized test scores rank consistently superior. Many of their graduating students are recognized at the high school level as top-ranked scholars, athletes, and musicians. The faculty and staff are committed to providing the highest quality Catholic education for each student. The school is dedicated to equipping students with the tools necessary to be successful in the 21st century.

St. Scholastica Monastery played a role in the Fort Smith Montessori non-profit private school, dating back to the fall of 1969. Sister Kevin Bopp, a nun at St. Scholastica Monastery, opened St. Scholastica Montessori School in the building once housing St. Scholastica High School. It was the second Montessori school in Arkansas.

In 1988, the decision to close the school prompted a group of families to purchase all of the materials from the Sisters. They reopened as Fort Smith Montessori (FSM) that fall in a house on Duncan Street and remained for three years.

In 1991, the Board of Directors purchased a former church, the school's present location at 3908 Jenny Lind Road. The building has undergone multiple renovations, the most recent in 2018. FSM is the only Montessori school in the River Valley.

In a Montessori environment, children ages 3-15 are empowered to do for themselves at age-appropriate levels. The classrooms are designed so that as children get older, they are given more responsibility and greater independence to manage their learning. Classrooms do not resemble traditional preschools/daycares nor elementary schools. Students are confident, competent learners who are intrinsically motivated, academically prepared, creative, and able to communicate effectively. FSM students consistently achieve their academic goals. Data analysis indicates students can compete on a national level academically, learning far more than the required Arkansas or Oklahoma curricular benchmarks.



*The University of Arkansas - Fort Smith featuring the on-campus Donald W. Reynolds Bell Tower.*

## **POST-SECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES**

Students don't have to relocate after graduating high school. Students from other parts of Arkansas and beyond will also find ample post-secondary opportunities in Fort Smith.

For 30-plus years, Vista College has been providing cost-effective training programs that have helped thousands of people reach their career goals. The college is located at 1200 S. Waldron Rd., between Central Mall and UAFS.

Vista College offers small classes in a wide range of Degree, Diploma, and Certificate programs in rapidly growing career fields (e.g. medical assisting or dental assisting, HVAC, industrial maintenance, business administration, and information technology) to ensure students get the personalized training that will make a meaningful difference in their academic and professional success. Their teaching methodology includes a blend of classroom and hands-on training for a well-rounded educational experience. They also offer some online degree programs.

## **UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS - FORT SMITH**

The University of Arkansas-Fort Smith (UAFS), the sixth largest university in Arkansas, offers 51 bachelor's and associate degrees, two master's degrees, and 36 certificate programs to nearly 7,000 enrolled students: applied and traditional baccalaureate degree programs, one- and two-year associate and technical programs, and non-credit business and industry training programs.

UAFS is divided amongst five institutions: College of Applied Science and Technology; College of Business; College of Health Sciences, includes the Carolyn McKelvey Moore School of Nursing; College of Communication, Languages, Arts and Social Sciences; College of Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics, which houses the School of Education.

The Western Arkansas Technical Center (WATC) is a secondary center located on the UAFS campus. WATC provides technical training for regional high school juniors and seniors, serving 20 school districts in five counties, allowing students to earn

concurrent high school and college credit.

Similarly, UAFS is partnering with FSPS, participating in the PEAK Innovation Center, opening in fall 2021.

UAFS was recently named the safest college campus in the state. The accolade refers to the security of students and staff from physical harm. Health safety is also of importance to UAFS, especially regarding COVID-19.

Terisa C. Riley, chancellor of UAFS said, "Our obvious concerns are as much as anyone else's. We aren't connecting with each other in the way we are accustomed to."

Classes are convening more face-to-face again, strictly following the Arkansas Department of Health and CDC guidelines, plus NCAA guidelines for the athletics departments.

Riley said, "The important thing is we are convening safely. Education is probably secondary to the fact people have to be healthy in order to approach the educational experience."

Enrollment during fall 2020 was down about 5%. UAFS expected a decrease in personal attendance with so many classes offered online. Only about 10% of courses in the fall were face-to-face. Students sat distanced and wore masks. The instructors had plexiglass around the consoles.

Riley said, "Students want the campus experience. We continue to offer them face-to-face engagement."

For those learning virtually, she said, "We had a lot that was synchronous, meaning we were all online at the same time together, interacting with one another. That was a great deal of the percentage of the classes. There was a smaller subset that was asynchronous, meaning at their own time schedule.

"Faculty were using online one-on-one appointment times. Their office hours became virtual. It was almost a complete change in how we were doing business."

UAFS invested a lot in technology, assisted by CARES Act funding received last spring. They purchased laptops, video cameras, Wi-Fi hotspots, and all the things needed for students and faculty to have access.

"Many faculty members worked much harder and had to be accessible 24/7 because students were contacting them that frequently."

An on-campus writing center was developed. The

center made a massive switch to providing support to students, both in-person and online. It reviews papers, provides ideas and feedback. The number of students using the service has increased. Riley believes the writing center has aided in improving grades and completion of coursework.

When it comes to completion, the university's health sciences program students cannot get out into the field and clinicals fast enough to meet the demand, according to Riley. Healthcare providers are treating the students more like peers and colleagues instead of simply teaching them.

Riley said, "The students feel they are hitting the ground running and prepared for professional work after they leave the clinical experience."

Health sciences students and faculty were eligible to receive a vaccination at an on-campus pharmacy. Approximately 100 of 350 eligible members were vaccinated. Many had already had vaccinations in the clinical environment.

The demand for teachers has also increased. Riley stated, "Our students who are getting teacher licensure are either out face-to-face in schools or they are learning to work remotely. That's exactly what teachers are facing."

Others studies successfully continuing involve students in research laboratories, welding labs, computing, and business majors out doing marketing. A lot of the work can be accomplished remotely, allowing for internships and part-time jobs.

In 2020, the UAFS Department of Music was named one of the nation's best values in undergraduate music education by Great Value Colleges.

Riley said, "That speaks volumes about the university. We are accessible. We are affordable. Our music department received accolades for that. I think you can insert any department. If they were being judged amongst their peers, they would say, 'excellent accreditation, not only of the whole university but also the individual discipline.'"

UAFS is expanding opportunities in Fort Smith's

## ARKANSAS COLLEGE OF HEALTH EDUCATION

Healthcare professionals will always be in demand. The anticipated graduation of the first class of new recipients of the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (ARCOM) degrees in May 2021 has been, for some, a long time coming to see the visible results of the Arkansas Colleges of Health Education (ACHE) stated mission.

The visible growth of the campus has been a source of pride for the entire region. This continuing expansion of classroom and laboratory buildings, student housing, and related development is slated to continue as programs and enrollment grow.

Since its founding in 2014, the ACHE has grown

## PEAK INNOVATION CENTER

Phase I of PEAK is on track to open in late 2021. It will be a regional career and technology center with a focus on instructional strategies within the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math) disciplines for grades 9-12.

PEAK will operate as an extension of WATC, which has approximately 350 students. PEAK will be open to 22 districts in West Arkansas, with roughly 300 junior high and high school students participating, doubling student capacity entering directly into the workforce. PEAK is not a replacement to WATC but complementary to the current system. There will be roughly 150 students learning before lunch, and



Construction continues at the PEAK Innovation Center opening late 2021.

renowned Bakery District. Their Center for Business and Professional Development will locate there, providing workforce training to CEO development programs. Their network of experts assists companies through a logical process of evaluating where the bottlenecks are in whatever process they are running.

The Bakery District will also house the university's Family Enterprise Center, assisting family-owned and managed businesses.

A partnership to be the home of an Arkansas Small Business Technology Development Center is the last

piece of the puzzle for 2021.

Riley stated, "They are required to partner with a university. We have signed an MOU (memorandum of understanding) where we will share the expenses of salary and operations for a professional who will help people who are interested in starting or sustaining small businesses."

By learning and being flexible to roll with the changes, UAFS, its partners, and alumni have their eyes set on a successful future.

its campus to 430 acres. The former Golden Living headquarters building was acquired, in southwest Fort Smith, to further support the research and wellness aspects of the ACHE mission.

As the anticipated first graduation of a class of new osteopathic physicians approaches, it is noteworthy that the Arkansas Colleges of Health Education conferred the Master of Science in Biomedicine (MSB) degree in May 2020. Planning is underway for additional professional healthcare degrees. The Doctor of Physical Therapy program plans to admit its first cohort of 40 students to begin training on June 1, 2021. The Doctor of Occupational Therapy anticipates a beginning cohort of 36 students in early 2022, and the Master of Physician Assistant

Studies should begin by 2023.

The economic impact which the ACHE has on the Fort Smith region continues to increase. The construction of facilities, employment of salaried professionals, and the attraction of students from throughout the nation have already demonstrated more than \$400 million according to a 2019 study completed by Histecon Associates. As student enrollment in other programs grows, more than 1000 students will be enrolled, and faculty and staff will increase proportionally.

To get an early start in healthcare education, as well as in IT or manufacturing, students have the option of attending the new PEAK Innovation Center.

another 150 students after lunch.

PEAK is the culmination of five years of work and brainstorming to figure out how to take a fresh look at career technical education from an industry and economic development perspective to increase workforce quality. The process was helped by educators coming to the table with the students' best interest in mind. This has been heavily influenced by industry in terms of facility, curriculum, funding, and donations.

Chamber President and CEO Tim Allen said, "When we started the technical training discussion, it was basically myself, human resource business partner Jason Green with ABB, and a couple of other educators. We got Governor Asa Hutchinson

and Jim Walton, chairman of the Walton family's Arvest Bank involved early on."

PEAK is housed on 17 acres in the former 180,000 square feet Hutcheson shoe distribution facility for Walmart at 5900 Painter Lane. The building was donated to the school district by the William L. Hutcheson Jr. family. Prior to the donation, the goal was to create a 50,000 square foot facility.

Involved parties reconsidered how to serve more students and how to do it better than they thought they could. The treasury sources signed on and supported with funding. Gov. Asa Hutchinson pledged \$2.1 million in state funding from the Office of Skills Development of the Arkansas Department of Commerce to help build the center. Many other



*Kim Miller, President of Baptist Health Western Region and Ryan Gehrig, President of Mercy Hospital Fort Smith announce PEAK Innovation Center \$1 million collaborative investment for Healthcare Science Wing at the new center.*

sponsors have backed PEAK.

Morawski said, “The corporate partners have been at the table and a part of the meetings. They’re as excited about this program as we are.”

Phase 1 includes a visual arts program, required by the building donor, for middle schoolers. The gateway program creates an opportunity for them to engage and hopefully open kids’ eyes to the opportunities.

The career concourse wing contains the 25,000 square feet advanced manufacturing wing. It includes automation and industrial technology, and the new computer-integrated machining lab space. The two sponsorships for this sector were \$1 million apiece.

Phase 1 will include administrative office space for PEAK and WATC personnel. Only 80,000 of the 180,00 square feet will be utilized in Phase I, leaving 100,000 square feet to add training for trades such as HVAC, construction technology, construction trade, license trade for plumbers or electricians, energy auditing, and green energy.

Morawski said, “One unique thing is we built PEAK specifically, both design-wise and architecturally, so it could expand differently than a typical high school. It might need to be something different in five years or 10 years as the industries or needs change in the region.”

To stay viable, PEAK has to be flexible and provide students with the latest and greatest equipment.

Riley said, “We’ve had so many investors, and people who want to invest now in this program. We have our Gene Haas Foundation CNC Lab, which is ranked 13th in the nation. Some of our faculty wrote and received \$630,000 in grants for equipment. People believe in what we’re doing and what we have the capacity to do.”

## WORKFORCE NEED

Allen said, “As with many other regions in the country, we often hear from industries that there

are not enough people. The overall view of the emerging talent pipeline is something a community has the most control over; how we capitalize is we make sure students upon graduation have the skill set that industries demand to contribute to the local economy. All of the things we’ve done, in terms of expanding, is kind-of built around the emerging talent pipeline industries.”

PEAK will closely replicate a professional workplace environment for students, operating from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. there’s an opportunity for adults to upgrade their skills. Allen said, “They’re training on the equipment they will use in a real-world environment. We’ll seamlessly try to integrate them into workforce apprenticeships and life-long careers.”

“Economic development is a very competitive business. As an example, we were able to show Hytrol Conveyor Company that we have a strategy being implemented in the high school educational system that introduces career paths as early as the 9th grade.” That separates communities from the competition—by solving the workforce dilemma.”

Morawski said, “The facility’s goal is to provide a regional source for students to come in and experience lab-based courses taught by professors who have experience in the workforce in those particular areas. It is a gamechanger for our area and the community.”

FSPS has been working with their counselors and school staff to help the students understand and be excited about available programs. Students can also view more information about careers through the website platform Edge Factor. Featuring short, exciting digital content highlighting real people in real roles with local companies.

Allen said, “Whether you enter the workforce early or proceed to high education after high school education the key is to have a plan.

Riley said, “No matter where I look in this entire community, we are educating the employees, those

businesses, and organizations. The foundation of what they can do, as businesses, rests in the hands of the faculty on the PEAK campus. We want UAFS to be the place where you automatically want to go to for education, no matter at what level. We want to be the place you think of when it comes to educating and training your workforce. The PEAK innovation center and our partnership with the Fort Smith Public Schools are tantamount to that type of foundation. PEAK will be offering programs to students who might not pursue a four-year degree immediately upon graduation from high school. They will have an opportunity to pursue technical certificates or associate degrees.”

Arkansas is doing what other successful regions are doing. We are engaging students earlier in thinking about careers. PEAK is not designed to create a bunch of generalists, but to allow students an opportunity to dive deeper in a curriculum.

Riley said, “We are the educational partners for that program where we bring the credentialed educational opportunities for the high school students in nursing, advanced manufacturing, and computer science. We’ll be teaching those collegiate courses. The transcripts the students will receive comes from UAFS. While they’re in high school, they’ll be earning college credit at no cost to them.”

Riley and the Fort Smith Chamber believe families that harbor a stigma about technical education won’t once they see the amazing things students can do with what they learn at PEAK.

Riley said, “There are people who get a certificate for welding after a couple of years and go out and earn more than people with doctoral degrees.”

The Modern engaging space will help students upon graduation to go to work earning a competitive salary. That company may pay them to pursue a bachelors degree while working. Low student-to-equipment ratios are going to be a key to learning.

Morawski said, “It’s also going to be paired with internships. Get them into the workplace, in addition to the lab. We want them to be able to see it, access that, and not feel like they have to leave town or the state to find an opportunity.”

Riley expressed, “When you leave high school having a skill set and a plan doesn’t just change your livelihood, that changes your life forever. Individuals who receive certificates or degrees from PEAK or UAFS are able to afford life’s basic necessities—housing, food, and healthcare provided by their employers. They are not likely to depend on government assistance. They are more likely to be involved in civic organizations within our community. These are the people you’re going to see contributing in a positive way, hopefully giving back to the community. I see it coming full circle and how this cycle can really break a cycle of poverty we have faced in this region. In many pockets of the country, I encourage them to consider adopting this strategy where we’re all in this together. A rising tide is going to lift all the boats.”

## ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

Glatfelter Consultant Larry Balch said, “What we hope happens is we start to educate students in middle school through high school about the opportunities in manufacturing. Most people think manufacturing is just manual work. Most

of the repetitious work is automated. Where we need people is to help problem-solve, do the maintenance, and help do programming. If students can see the jobs, they might discover they like that field. Some of the jobs we've got in manufacturing are very high tech."

Those jobs are requiring more skills using math and computers for companies like Glatfelter, ABB, and several other companies in the region.

Allen said, "It's really not about a stronger back; it's about a stronger mind. That's how you get to the career you want."

For instance, PEAK has a computer-integrated machining lab: 32 machines, including manual mills, lathes, and CNC machines; 3D printing; an IRB 4600 robot, the fastest palletizing robot in the world, which seniors will have the opportunity to operate.

PRADCO Outdoor Brands has five or six CNC machines in their building. Vice President and General Manager of the Fishing Division Bruce Stanton said, "It's hard to find those skills right now. They're in short supply. If a company tries to hire someone for their tool room or a manufacturing maintenance person, good luck."

Allen said, "PEAK is going to be the feeder for all those high in-demand jobs for industrial manufacturing."

Stanton said, "It's not something you're born with. It's something you have to learn, mentor under people, and be an apprentice. Fortunately, UAFS and PEAK will have those tools to teach young people those skills we need."

Balch said, "In the old days, a lot of factory workers punched the clock, did the job, and punched out. Factories of today are integrated and you've got to be able to solve problems."

"PEAK will show students they don't have to leave Fort Smith. PEAK will also do that with

medical and IT."

## **MEDICAL**

The healthcare science wing will cater to many in-demand entry-level fields, including RNs, CNAs, LPNs, respiratory therapy, and lab technicians.

In February 2021, Mercy Fort Smith and Baptist Health announced a collaborative \$1 million investment in PEAK. The gift will benefit healthcare-related career and technical education.

"We are excited to be partnering with Fort Smith Public Schools and Baptist Health to provide local students with the opportunity to learn more about healthcare," said Ryan Gehrig, president of Mercy Hospital Fort Smith. "Healthcare workers are a vital part of all communities, and this innovative educational partnership will help strengthen our workforce and provide opportunities for students in the River Valley."

Kim Miller, president of Baptist Health Western Region, said, "Our \$500,000 investment will contribute to expanded programming and square footage as well as the purchase of state-of-the-art equipment for the Healthcare Sciences programs that will be housed at PEAK."

"Our goal for Baptist Health joining the River Valley back in November of 2018 was to compliment the quality of care that the River Valley had come to expect. PEAK is perfectly set up to help us provide even better care to this area."

"Most every hospital across the country is experiencing staffing shortages. The COVID-19 pandemic just highlights an already existing problem of a shortage of healthcare workers—especially nurses. Having an opportunity to introduce more people, especially the younger generation, to healthcare the better chance we have to gain more talented caregivers who feel called to serve."

PEAK will have the only LPN Pilot Program in Arkansas. It's piloted by the board of nursing in Fort Smith. Students have the opportunity to take the classes, including the clinical hours, to become a Licensed Practical Nurse. They'll graduate in May. They have to wait until their 18 to take the LPN NCLEX exam in August.

The LPN program takes place in the High-Fidelity Sim Lab, with high-fidelity mannequins and replicated bed stations. The teacher's desk resembles a hospital nursing station. There's a testing room for students to practice in and an observation room where the teacher will sit. They will observe the student in their bedside exercise, practicing the skills independently.

Dr. Katherine Irish-Clardy, UAMS West program director, said, "It will certainly increase the number of people in the professions in the future. There's always a need for nursing staff in both doctor offices and hospitals."

The second lab space includes a donated ambulance from Fort Smith EMS. It will be connected to power so students can practice on real equipment.

PEAK is looking to grow the CNA capacity. There will be an EMR/EMT program and a flex lab space that would be great for studies such as pharmacy technicians or lab assistants for future programming.

## **IT & ROBOTICS**

PEAK will have an IT wing, as well as a class for unmanned air systems, with plans for a net cage to fly the drones inside the facility.

A related course is taught at UAFS by Lisa Cady, professor for the College of Applied Science and Technology. If a high school student is earning associated credits at PEAK, applying them to a college like UAFS makes perfect sense.



*ABB engages their local Apprentices in learning IT Robotics during training sessions. PEAK Innovation Students will have access to similar Advanced Manufacturing hands-on training.*

Cady, one of 21 people to complete this pilot program, recently became the first person in Arkansas to earn the National Geospatial Certification. She is the only professor at UAFS with this specialty.

Rachel Rodemann Putman, UAFS associate director for strategic communication, said, "Cady instructs her students daily. She's not only equipping students with how to fly the drones but also careers they can go into upon graduation. They are using GIS's (geographic information system) to monitor crop health."

GIS is a framework for gathering, managing, and analyzing data. It's rooted in the science of geography, integrating many types of data. GIS

analyzes spatial location and organizes layers of information into visualizations using maps and 3D scenes.

The PEAK skills would also be useful for those planning to enter the military. Like any other vocation, they sometimes have trouble filling technical career field positions.

Colonel Leon Joseph Dodroe, Commander, 188th Wing, Arkansas Air National Guard, Ebbing Air National Guard Base, said, "Geospatial and different things along those lines fit in the computer field. The MQ-9 RPA (remotely piloted aircraft) and the ISR (intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance) have a heavy computer focus. Our communications squadron is huge. The IT network

and infrastructure that goes into the Ebbing Air National Guard Base are pretty vast.

"PEAK has the ability to develop a fundamental thought process to make applicants better skilled and test higher so they can get into those critical career fields. It could spearhead their career."

PEAK's automation lab has 10 IRB 120 robots for students to learn on. ABB's multipurpose IRB 120 robots are ideal for a wide range of industries, including the electronic, food and beverage, machinery, solar, pharmaceutical, medical and research sectors.

Additional to computer-integrated machining, another new program is network engineering technology, responsible for network performance, optimization, upgrades, and security.

**SUMMARY**

Advanced manufacturing, information technology, and healthcare are the three market segments representing 30-35% of Fort Smith MSA's Gross Domestic Product.

Allen said, "Companies looking to relocate here ask me to help them understand where the workforce is going to come from. That's when I'll take them to PEAK."

Morawski said, "I'm really jealous of these students and the opportunities they have in place that weren't there when I was in school."

A lot of people across the country are curious about what Fort Smith is doing.

Allen said, "We're excited about it. We're getting a lot of attention for the right reasons."



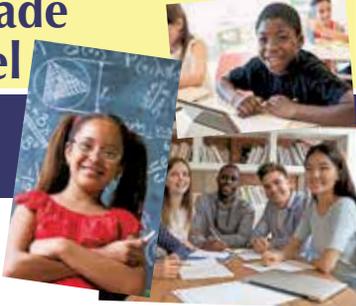
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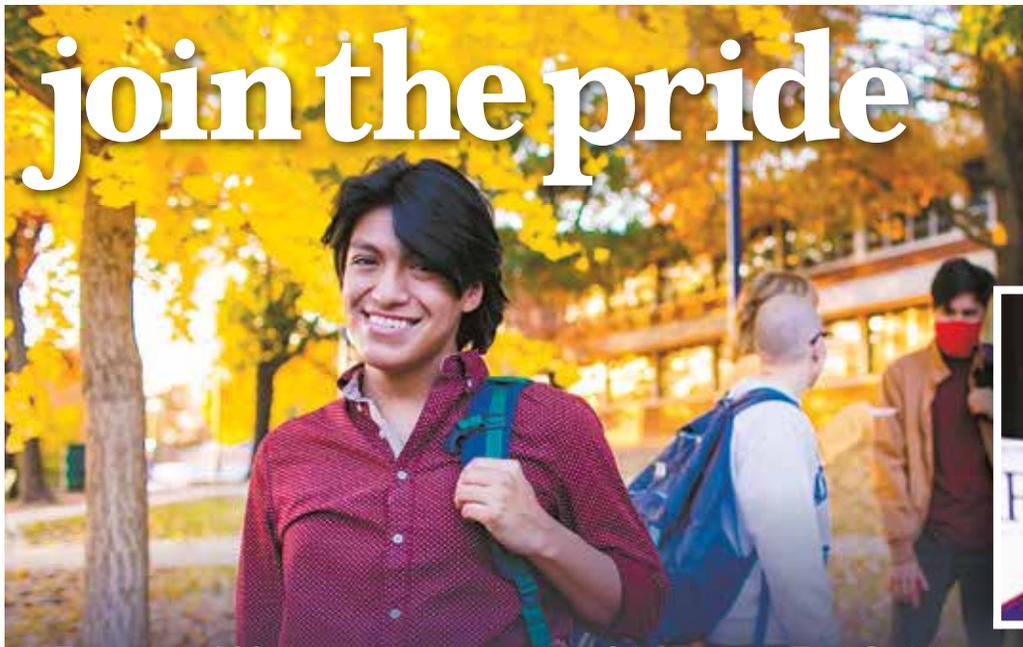
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# Manufacturing

ETHAN NAHTE' - Special to the Times Record



Glatfelter Advanced Materials Chad Colley Boulevard.

Fort Smith may be the second-largest city in Arkansas, but when it comes to manufacturing, the Greater Fort Smith Region is the state's manufacturing hub for about any industry imaginable. Manufacturing jobs and the exported products help to drive the state's economy. The industry provides approximately 8,000 jobs with such companies as OK Foods, Inc., ArcBest, ABB, Rheem Manufacturing Co., Gerdau, USA Truck, and Gerber Products Company, a Nestlé S.A. subsidiary, as some of the largest employers.

Data from the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicated 16,800 employees worked in manufacturing in the Greater Fort Smith Region in Jan. 2021. Of the area's 118,900 civilian laborers, manufacturing accounts for >14% of the workforce.

The Fort Smith Regional Chamber of Commerce assists many manufacturers. The Chamber's role is to retain and attract companies to the River Valley. We assist with their transition, locating resources, or connecting both new and longstanding businesses to form symbiotic relationships.

Larry Balch, a consultant for Glatfelter-Fort Smith, has seen growth and renewal in Fort Smith's manufacturing plants. Balch, who has been with the chamber since 2005, is the chamber's outgoing Board of Directors Chair. Balch and Chamber President Tim Allen traveled throughout the country to companies that might want to relocate to Fort Smith.

Balch explained, "Economic development is a big part of what the chamber does. I've seen growth in an old facility [Georgia-Pacific], maintaining jobs. I've seen it in a new facility [Glatfelter] with The Cham-

ber's key role is economic development."

Kayembe "KT" Tshitenge, plant manager of Covia ISP (Industrial Specialty Products), said, "There was a lot to learn about who supplies what and where to get it. The chamber helped make those connections for us."

For example, Allen organized a meeting of all the environmental and utility companies serving Fort Smith. Covia basically managed to have everything organized and set up that same day.

KT said, "That was helpful. We're trying to use more of the local Fort Smith businesses to operate our business, from marketing to shipping."

The company is the first manufacturer to take advantage of the Opportunity Zone in Fort Smith, one of 85 Opportunity Zones across Arkansas...where new investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for preferential tax treatment.

Covia's Fort Smith industrial plant is only one of approximately 40 of their facilities throughout North America. They are a leading supplier of minerals and material solutions to the industrial and energy markets. The Fort Smith plant opened on June 1, 2020, opposite Gerber in the former Saint-Gobain NorPro plant. Saint-Gobain NorPro made ceramic material used in natural gas and oil extraction known as hydraulic fracturing proppants.

Covia does not produce fracturing products, but they do work with sand. Covia has a sand mine in Guion, Ark. The silica sand ships to the Fort Smith plant via railroad.

Manufacturing depends on growth and expansion:

employees, products, manufacturing lines, and sales are all keys to a company's survival. A company's growth can result in Fort Smith's growth.

Glatfelter had several options on where to locate their new facility. Allen, the AEDC, and the Governor's office worked aggressively to bring a proposal.

Balch said, "They wouldn't have come to Fort Smith if not for the effort of the chamber, particularly Tim, meeting with the site consultants."

Glatfelter-Fort Smith started production in fall 2018, primarily manufactures a hygienic, soft, and absorbent non-woven substrate. Approximately 75% goes to Rockline Industries in Booneville, Russellville, and Springdale for producing baby wipes. The remainder goes into the tabletop industry to make a high-end paper napkin similar to cloth.

The facility is only half-utilized, with room to put another production line in. They have increased their employee base by roughly 20% since opening.

"It's a state-of-the-art building. Our paper machine fits perfectly. It's probably the most automated paper machine in North America and maybe the world. Most facilities of that size would have double the employees we've got. There are numerous robots doing packaging, labeling, core cutting, and things that would take more manual labor."

Balch, who worked for Georgia-Pacific for 27 years, including the Dixie facility in Fort Smith, stated that not only is it the oldest manufacturing facility in the area but, "It's one of the oldest facilities and probably has as many robots as any other plant. It's been modernized to do the repetitious work that people don't

want to do, ergonomically challenging, or very heavy. That's where the robotic application comes in."

It may appear robots would mean fewer jobs, but automation protects Glatfelter and GP from the competition, allowing for further growth and more jobs.

Balch explained, "You've got to have somebody to maintain or program those robots. People have to teach them what to do, then tweak and modify them to do new jobs. That's where the high-tech jobs come in. With technology comes the ability to maintain and advance that technology. Companies are replacing some of the manual labor with higher-tech jobs."

Another local company using technology to a cost-effective advantage is PRADCO Outdoor Brands. PRADCO, an acronym for Plastics Research and Development Corporation, has produced top-selling lures for over 75 years with names like YUM Baits, BOOYAH, Rebel, Arbogast, and several other popular brands.

The company's 3D printers have improved the research and development (R&D) process. They can inexpensively create a lure and test performance. It saves thousands of dollars determining whether a new design is worth the time and cost to create a mold to mass produce, first with aluminum for more R&D, then to steel, which will last for years. The printers can help the company determine in a couple of weeks, and with little expense, what would typically take six months or more.

The Natural State has over 100,000 miles of streams and rivers, 600,000 acres of lakes, and over 3.2 million acres of public land. Annually, hunters and anglers alone generated more than \$1.6 billion. Besides fishing, PRADCO's headquarters in Birmingham, Alabama, produces hunting equipment.

At PRADCO, sales, employment, and manufacturing are all growing in the Fort Smith region. The COVID-19 pandemic has unexpectedly been beneficial to the company as families spend more time outdoors where they can socially distance themselves and still enjoy activities. Instead of downsizing, PRADCO flexed their Monday–Thursday shifts to a 24-hour operation, hiring multiple shifts.

Bruce Stanton, vice president and general manager of the fishing division, said, "We've hired Friday, Saturday, and Sunday operations, something we'd never done, running three 12-hour shifts. We've grown from 200 to 400 employees. To keep things safe, we have around 50 office employees working from home and have spent \$70,000 on upgrading breakrooms and altering office space to COVID-friendly areas.

"Seven days a week, all of our machines are on, churning out hard plastic and soft plastic fishing lures and Balsa wood floats. We have fishing products in about 4,000 Walmart stores. Dick's reopened and tripled their fishing business. The same thing with Bass Pro."

By February 2021, PRADCO has had nine straight record months. They are filling several million dollars of orders every month. Considering lures are \$2–\$4-dollar items at cost, it takes several lures to equal \$1

million.

"There's such a demand for it right now. It's an awesome time to be in the business, but at the same time, we're humbled that people are struggling," said Stanton.

He doesn't expect to back off employment in 2021 as they study trends and patterns. He believes the fishing uptick could lead to some product or brand launches. That will not only increase production employees but in marketing and other areas.

Worldwide, companies have had to adapt and be flexible during the pandemic, overcoming adversity. The company's origins go back nearly 100 years. Covia was created in 2018 through the merger of Unimin and Fairmount Santrol.

KT said, "We make a specialty product of engineered stone from ultra-white sand for a product called Luminex. The color of the sand changes drastically. Our primary markets are engineered countertops, tiles, and paints for industrial use. One thing that makes us special is most of those products are imported. We cut out the import market and sell it locally to meet the demands."

The plant has not seen a loss in employees or man-hours due to COVID. As Covia prepared to open the Fort Smith plant, the company already had procedures in place. They take the temperature of everyone who comes to the plant. All personnel is required to wear masks or a respirator. Everyone who signs in must leave their number to expedite contact tracing if an issue occurs.

Covia has a strict policy, to begin with, requiring respirators and plenty of dust collectors. The company strives to achieve a zero-dust environment. Each month they do a dust sampling on individuals to measure how much each job category gets exposed to the fine silica particles. They also test areas with heavy machinery to measure sound levels.

During these difficult times, companies such as OK

Foods stepped up to help by donating nearly 160,000 pounds of chicken. The River Valley Regional Food Bank helped, organizing the Great Chicken Giveaway food distribution to families in need.

Glatfelter recognized an increase in demand from a health perspective. Glatfelter was running full-bore before COVID. The demand for hygienic products was already high and has witnessed an increase since spring 2020. Their customer, Rockline, converted one of their baby wipes lines to a sanitation wipe line.

Pernod Ricard-Hiram Walker assisted the community, beginning in their Fort Smith plant. The manufacturer, which blends and packages spirits like Malibu Rum and Blake Shelton's Smithworks Vodka, began making hand sanitizer for the Federal Emergency Management Administration. Within a couple of weeks of the coronavirus invading America, Pernod was producing 4,500 gallons weekly. Production increased to 5,700 gallons by the end of March 2020. Three of the company's other U. S. facilities followed suit. Overall, by May, they were producing up to 13,400 gallons every week to be donated wherever there were shortages.

Around the same time, during PRADCO's one-week shutdown to perform a deep-cleaning, Stanton was watching a news story about people creating Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), making face shields with a digital printer. Stanton spoke with PRADCO engineer Travis Watson, who designed a face shield using their two digital printers.

Simultaneously, production manager Danny Stoner had the idea to produce hand sanitizer. PRADCO has a bottling operation to make their YUM spray fish attractant. With production halted, Stoner went online to the CDC website and gathered all the ingredients to make a 70% isopropyl alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Stanton said, "We decided the local medical community is struggling. Let's make those and give us



The PRADCO Outdoors' staff and Tim Allen of the Fort Smith Chamber deliver PPE supplies to area hospitals at the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic in spring of 2020.



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something to feel good about while we're trying to figure out what to do with our business."

Roughly 10 people spent the entire week the company was off to perfect moldings, face frames, shields, and sanitizer. Upon reopening the next week, production employees mass-produced the PPE.

PRADCO partnered with Tim Allen. There was a tremendous need for PPE throughout the healthcare industry. PRADCO set up a distribution area in the front of their facility. Healthcare facilities would call and request what PPE supplies they needed and the PRADCO team would deliver it to their cars.

Stanton estimated that over four-months, they gave away about \$200,000 in PPE and sanitizer to frontline workers in over 20 states. They sold another \$100,000 to non-healthcare workers before PPE materials became more readily available and supply chains reengaged, allowing PRADCO to return to manufacturing the fishing supplies growing in demand.

National fishing license statistics recorded 8 million people came back into fishing nationally. On average, 40 million people buy licenses. It's estimated 65 to 70 million Americans fish, including people over 65 and people under 16 who aren't required to purchase a fishing license. In the United States, fishing is the No. 2 consumer group for outdoor activities, behind running, jogging, and walking.

"The American Sportfishing Association, which is our legislative body, did a consumer survey. Ninety percent of the people on the exit survey who were coming into fishing for the first time would continue, no matter what."

It requires a strong transportation infrastructure to handle the materials necessary for manufacturing, retail, and exports, especially as business increases. Fort Smith's location is a vital shipping logistics factor for manufacturers. It has an airport and sits at the crossroads of three interstates and major highways along the Arkansas/Oklahoma border. It's not too distant from Kansas and Missouri, also accessible by railroad lines. The Arkansas River is another mode of cargo transportation.

One of the main reasons Covia came to Fort Smith is due to the infrastructure and skill set of workers in the area. They currently use trucks to ship their products to customers and are in the works to use rail for bulk orders. They employ roughly 30 people with plans to hire more for their two plants and a lab.

KT said, "Our main focus for last year and this year is to get Plant 1 up and running. In the near future, we plan to open Plant 2, which is larger. It might quadruple the headcount at the plant."

Glatfelter relies heavily on transportation to import their two raw materials: BiCo, which stands for bicomponent, is a blend of polyethylene and polypropylene. It's made in Georgia and trucked here in bales. The second is fluff pulp, purchased from GP or another paper maker. It's shipped by railcar and stored in a local warehouse, then shipped to the factory on trucks as needed.

Other materials smaller in capacities, such as latex for the napkin materials are transported in tanker trucks or totes. For Glatfelter, 75%-80% is trucking. The remainder is railcar. Their location puts them

within easy reach of their customers.

Balch said, "We're within 75 miles of our Rockline customer plants. We were shipping the product out of Gatineau, Quebec, Canada. Imagine the transportation costs? There are a lot of opportunities in every direction from Fort Smith."

Many of the local manufacturers also strive to be environmentally sustainable. ArcBest, for example, actively explores and implements green initiatives that improve energy efficiency and reduce harmful emissions. From building an eco-friendly corporate headquarters to governing tractor speed and embracing aerodynamic truck designs, they're focused on creating a culture of environmental awareness.

Opening Covia's Fort Smith plant required an extensive air permit process to get the plant repurposed. Covia reinforced the wastewater lines throughout the plant and brought everything back up to environmental standards.

Some of the silica dust can be repurposed. The unusable silica remnants go to the landfill. Governed by MSHA, the Federal Mine Health and Safety Act, the plant is inspected at least twice per year.

Worldwide, Gerber has reduced its packaging volume by 6-plus million pounds. 80% of their packaging is recyclable. They have partnered with Terracycle to move toward 100% recyclability nationwide, striving to achieve their goal of 100% recyclable or reusable packaging by 2025. They are also working towards zero waste, have cut carbon emissions and water usage by 35% since 2010, and have made upgrades to reduce energy needs. They help restore nutrients to the soil with best-in-class crop rotation practices. Their fruit and vegetables are all Non-GMO.

Glatfelter's environmental impact and carbon footprint are major considerations. The company is widespread throughout the U. S., Canada, and Europe, where they are much larger. The housekeeping and the pest control program are near food-grade quality from a cleanliness viewpoint.

Their sustainability policy is to prevent products from going to landfills. They trim the edge, so the customer gets 100% usage of the roll. Those trimmings off the jumbo rolls get baled for other customers who want clean, soft, absorbent trimmings for usage in products such as packaging, cat litter, or pet bedding.

Balch said, "We've worked hard. Over 90% of all our by-products stay out of the landfill. Glatfelter and Georgia-Pacific do a lot to protect and sustain the environment. This year, as plant consultant, one of our projects is to get out of landfills completely. I expect by March 2021 we won't be in landfills at all."

Most paper machines use water to transport the fiber. For example, toilet paper, traditionally, when it's wet, falls apart, which is good for that application and septic systems. Baby wipes have to have wet strength. The airlaid process Glatfelter-Fort Smith mostly uses is more conducive to making that product. The air carries the fiber, producing a softer and more absorbent sheet with wet strength. The air is cleaned, humidified, and moistened. Then it drives the fiber to the web. The air is recycled and cleaned again.

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Rendering of the PEAK Innovation Center's Advanced Manufacturing learning wing.

manufacturing machines, computers, and robots. To get a head start, area students have learning options at Western Arkansas Technical College (WATC) or the PEAK Innovation Center. PEAK is the area's newest state-of-the-art educational facility opening in late 2021, which will supplement WATC in increasing skilled workers.

Balch said, "In the old days, a lot of factory workers punched the clock, did the job, and punched out. Factories of today, it's a team approach. It's so integrated and you've got to be able to solve problems.

"PEAK will show students they don't have to leave

Fort Smith to pursue great jobs."

Stanton is looking forward to the students who will participate in PEAK. "When we started expanding, it was easy to hire people. We were hiring direct and using temp agencies. We're lucky if we get four or five people per week to apply now. I think that's an indicator of how well the Fort Smith manufacturing sector is doing. In a typical year in Fort Smith, our unemployment runs low relative to other portions of the country. It's hard to hire the type of person we are looking for compared to spring 2020."

Covia has a college internship program, but col-

lege isn't mandatory. Still, finding employees that are more advanced than the entry-level utility or process operators was difficult.

KT said, "When Covia started in Fort Smith, one problem we had was finding qualified maintenance and electrical workers because we're surrounded by manufacturers. Qualified workers are already taken."

Covia also has kiln operators, who act as crew leads. They operate the kiln for thermal processing, converting silica into the desired mineral.

"If you can produce enough heat, you can change the crystal structure. It can become another product or material. We change the silica into cristobalite, which is a mineral rarely found in nature. The thermal process breaks the structure and prevents light from getting through the final product."

The human eye cannot always detect color change or impurities. It requires a high-powered microscope.

"We've got a fully-staffed lab where someone can take a sample to the lab. The lab runs it through a process. We check the color value of the sand being produced and seek impurities. In two or three minutes, we have an answer. A degree is not required. The computer can detect whether we're running within spec or not."

Covia is testing other product possibilities that cannot be disclosed, but it has the potential for more hiring.

PEAK, along with WATC, will help the chamber and Fort Smith to retain and attract more high-tech jobs to the area. In turn, that will allow more students to remain in the region instead of moving away to find work.

Fort Smith corporate growth in 2020 includes Gerber. The company invested \$30 million in a new line during summer, adding 50 more full-time jobs and maintaining the 480 already employed. Other manufacturers are either preparing to expand or relocate to Fort Smith.

Balch explained, "A few years ago, Fort Smith lost Whirlpool. That was a major loss to this area. I think the city learned from that experience. If you travel throughout Fort Smith instead of one large manufacturer, you will see many great companies. Those companies include Glatfelter, Silgan, Hytrol, and Covia just to name a few. These are different industries with more diversity and with less risk of a major downturn like we had with Whirlpool. That was all driven by the city and the Chamber. It's very important to the success of Fort Smith.

The major focus of the Chamber is economic development. People might not realize how important that is to the city. You've got to have the keys to that development. There are hundreds of options on where to go."

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# Military

## Army National Guard and 188th Air Wing

ETHAN NAHTE' - Special to the Times Record



The Fort Smith Chaffee Joint Maneuver Training Center holds a training drill on its 64,000 acres base.

The Fort Chaffee Joint Maneuver Training Center (FCJMTC) is a training environment like no other in the military, featuring a combat intensive, mission critical, and reliable military readiness training facility right here in the community of Fort Smith.

Colonel Dwight Ikenberry, Fort Chaffee Garrison Commander for the FCJMTC, represents the Army National Guard. Ikenberry explained, "In the last 20 or so years, what you have seen Fort Chaffee develop into is one of the best regional training sites for the Guard, the Army Reserve, and all components of the military. On any given year, we'll have active component units that come into Fort Chaffee to train."

In addition to the Arkansas National Guard,

military from several states utilize the high-demand training site.

"Bigger installations like Fort Hood, Fort Sill, Fort Benning, and similar places are pretty slammed with a lot of units on and a lot of units in neighboring areas that can't get range time, field time, or maneuver space. That's really the selling point to Fort Chaffee. We're a place that hosts units that need to come in and train: engineering, infantry, artillery, aviation, etc."

Chaffee is one of the very few installations that have a river. Ikenberry said, "We've got property on both sides of the Arkansas River. One of the key tasks of engineer units is mobility on the battlefield, to bridge and get through obstacles. Being able to span rivers is really important. It's a

formidable river and crossing it is different than a lake, which is still. We're one of the premier locations where engineer units come in and do river crossings."

Chaffee's 64,000 acres make the location somewhat unique. Due to its size, there is large ordinance that can be fired with room to spare. That's not feasible at other bases around the country.

There is also an eighteen-building urban village, which has various floorplans. Some resemble municipal buildings a few stories tall, schools, or religious buildings and stores.

The base has units coming to train regularly. Its ease of accessibility makes a big difference in selling military units on using FCJMTC.

Ikenberry said, “Pre-COVID, we would’ve had two brigade-plus size training events. These are national events. They’re called XCTC (Exportable Combat Training Center) Rotation. They bring in observers, evaluators, a group to play the opposing force, instrumentation (e.g. laser simulation on every person and every vehicle). It has a pretty nice price tag. It would have been about seven thousand people per rotation for about a month each.

“That’s a little bit outside of the norm. When a battalion comes in, they bring four or five hundred people. When a brigade comes in, they bring twelve hundred to thirty-two hundred. Any given weekend, you’ve got various companies, which is about one hundred people.”

Tim Allen, Chamber of Commerce President and CEO said, “When you see seven thousand people coming to the area, you can see the economic impact. We know the full economic impact of the military in the Fort Smith MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area) market is four hundred fifty million dollars per year, as it stands today. When we have these large exercise units come to town, many times, if you were to compare Chaffee to other bases across the country, we hear over and over the men and women like coming here. They can train on the base, then the city of Fort Smith’s ten minutes away.”

Logistically, the proximity is more cost-effective for the vendors and the units to buy supplies.

Ikenberry said, “This is one of the most military-friendly communities I’ve seen. The community knows what we do. They, by and large, support it. The Guard responds across the state but having that capability right here and close is an asset to the community.”

Allen said, “The chamber and Fort Chaffee have recently completed a video, planning to use it as a marketing tool to send to other base commanders to train here. The more we do that, the more the region sees the economic impact. Fort Chaffee generates income from it because the training units have to lease to use the space. The community benefits from the impact of the new money in town. The goal is to get the word out to infantry, engineering, artillery, and aviation units. Especially those units that can’t shoot their weapons system, basically due to the size restrictions of their installation (e.g., the long distances larger artillery can be fired, inadequate air space, etc.).”

The second issue is most active-duty installations have the size needed, but their calendars are full. FCJMTC has the ability to schedule units for training. The more usage for FCJMTC, the more funding they can obtain. The units are bringing hundreds or even thousands of people for two or three weeks at a time, which brings money to the Fort Smith region.

## **188TH AIR WING**

The various branches do joint maneuvers quite often. Ikenberry explained, “The Navy,



*Pictured is a MQ-9 Reaper RPA as used in current 188th Air Wing missions.*

a lot of what they do works in hand-to-hand with what the 188th does. The Naval Special Warfare Group, the Navy Seals, there’s a lot of training between those two units. Seals on the ground always need air support and intelligence provided by air units. The Seals sometimes train with our artillery units, too.”

In 2013, the 188th was selected to convert from an A-10C Thunderbolt II fighter mission to an MQ-9 Reaper remotely piloted aircraft (RPA), intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) and targeting wing. This included the world’s first-ever space-focused targeting squadron. The 188th Fighter Wing became the 188th Wing due to its transition from a fighter mission to multiple primary mission sets.

The new mission featured the activation of one new group and three new subordinate squadrons as well the reassignment of one squadron under the 188th Wing’s flag. The 188th ISR Group as well as the 153rd Intelligence Squadron (targeting), 288th Operations Support Squadron and 188th Intelligence Support Squadron were activated. The 123rd Intelligence Squadron relocated from Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, to the 188th’s Ebbing Air National Guard Base, Fort Smith, Arkansas.

The Razorback Range, an aircraft bombing and targeting range at FCJMTC, was officially transferred over to the Arkansas Army National Guard on Sept. 30, 2017.

Colonel Leon Joseph Dodroe, Commander of the 188th Wing at Ebbing Air National Guard Base, said, “In the past fifteen years, the technology continues to accelerate. The Air Force is looking at the MQ-9 sunset in 2030. There is a multitude of projects in the works that can continue that lifespan.”

Looking to the future, MQ-9 and RPA are extremely capable and most lethal for the current warfare we’re engaged in counterterrorism. The MQ-9s are deployed through a GCS (ground control station) located throughout the United States and the world. Fort Smith has such a station, allowing them to fly MQ-9s in overseas operations from their GSC, beyond the line of sight. The video feed has less than a two-second delay.

Dodroe said, “Over the past four-and-a-half years, the 188th Air Wing has contributed more to national defense and more of a national strategic impact than in the past sixty years. It has been overwhelming. We are truly contributing to the effort. I’m proud of that.”

Ebbing is also in competition for obtaining a military sales contract as one of five U.S. Air Force finalist sites. The contract is for a long-term pilot training center supporting F-16 and F-35 fighter planes purchased by Singapore, Switzerland, Norway, and other countries participating in the Foreign Military Sales program.

Dodroe said, “The decision will not be made until a new secretary of the Air Force is appointed. We have signed an MOU (memorandum of understanding) with Memphis Center that, if Fort Smith is chosen, they will elevate our current ceiling of 29,000 feet to 50,000 feet. That is one of the key components for flying F-35s. We were meeting most of the requirements, but we weren’t meeting the vertical. The elevation is a big win.”

Memphis Center is one of 22 United States Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Area Control Centers. Their primary responsibility is sequencing and separation of over-flights, arrivals, departures to ensure safe, orderly, and expeditious flow of aircraft under IFR (instrument flight rules).



188th Air Wing explains technology used to control RPAs in their on-base training simulator.

Currently, Ebbing Air National Guard Base is operated solely by the Air National Guard. If they win the contract, the active-duty Air Force will become a component to help host the project.

Dodroe explained, “I am, as commander of the 188th Air Wing, with a thousand personnel in Fort Smith. I am also the installation commander of Ebbing Air National Guard Base. That would be a joint mission hosted at Ebbing. They would be like a tenant unit on our installation. The 188th would help support them with civil engineers, mission support, security, and airfield support. The Air Force would bring many new personnel, primarily contractors, but also active-duty personnel to assist Singapore and the other countries rotating through with their mission and training.”

Tim Allen said, “We code that as Project Phantom. It’s one of those once-in-a-career types of things for people like me. It’s nearly a billion-dollar-a-year impact.”

Dodroe jumped on the opportunity. “I was highly interested. Our current mission set has a shelf life.” Meaning the base could run its course and be lost to the area. “I’m looking at the continued future of the base. The F-35 foreign military sale is the dream piece that solidifies that base and the second wing within the state. Currently, there is no plan by big Air Force to have F-35 Air Force, whether it be active or Air National Guard. I’m looking down the road, and what we have now, is F-16 foreign military sales. We have co-located basing between active U.S. forces and foreign military sales into one base within the continental United States. In the future, I foresee that being the same.”

Currently, the 188th Wing’s MQ-9 mission has a potential sunset date of 2030. Dodroe believes that if the contract is acquired and all the F-35 infrastructure is here, it would make a perfect

place to put an active air squadron here 10-years down the road.

Dodroe said, “I believe there is nothing but goodness by bringing that here. One, the economic impact on Fort Smith, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. Second, the continuance of the Arkansas Air National Guard.”

The Tulsa Air National Guard’s 138th Fighter Wing has F-16 fighters similar to the F-16s that Singapore is currently flying. Other bases have F-16s, but they are entirely different—the engines, air avionics, and other technical variances. Part of what the 188th has to offer is they have experts for the near-identical aircraft only a 20-minute flight away from their base.

#### IMPACT

Last October, after a virtual presentation that lasted over two days between the military, the Fort Smith Chamber of Commerce, and the State of Arkansas, Allen and Dodroe found those unfamiliar with what Fort Smith had to offer with air space and quality of life a bit surprised.

The training units would live here, along with their families, if the contract comes to fruition. The Singapore trainees will bring an estimated 600 people to the area with their squadron of F-16s: 30-plus pilots, families, the individuals to maintain the aircraft.

Roughly every two years, there would be a new training group from another country. Dodroe believes the F-35 training would continue for at least 30 years. F-16s were developed in the ‘60s. F-35s haven’t reached full production yet. The F-35 is the newest aircraft that is just being fielded, according to Dodroe.

Dodroe said, “I think that’s going to factor in. I’m hoping the announcement of the new elevation will be the final item to make the difference. The Air Force has compiled data and formulated a way to present the contract to the new Secretary. Fort Smith stacks out near the top of the list for a multitude of reasons.”

Many training bases that Ebbing is competing against are very distant from the runway, some with a 120-mile trek one-way before they can “train like they fight.” That requires time and a lot of fuel. Razorback Range allows aircraft to be over its 66,000 acres at FCJMTC within four miles.

Dodroe explained, “It’s so close, you don’t have enough time, as a pilot, to fence in the aircraft and be wheels up. By the time you’re raising the gear, you’d have to be configuring it to field and deploy weapons to attack a ground target. The planes have to circle to complete their checklist before they can actively engage. It takes about ten minutes, which is a big plus.

“In addition, the 188th Wing is the primary user of our range, so we can control the scheduling. Many of the other ranges have to compete for the air space and training times.

“If we get the foreign military sales, it’s additive in nature. Nobody is losing out,” Dodroe said. “The 188th is here to stay.”

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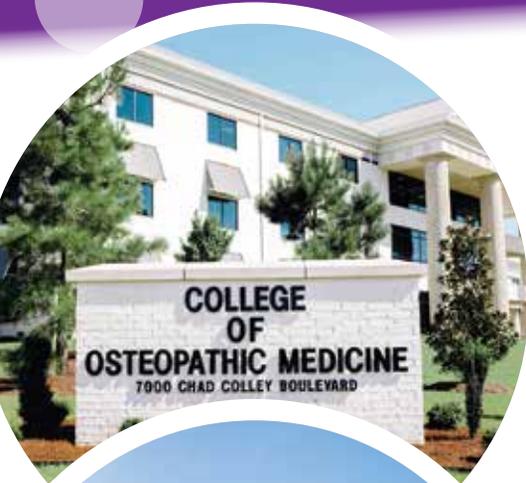
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# Healthcare

ETHAN NAHTE' - Special to the Times Record



First responders in Fort Smith's healthcare field have battled non-stop since the pandemic hit in early 2020. The area is fortunate to have several healthcare facilities and professionals to attend to the community's needs, great or small.

In addition to the current workforce, there is always a need for the future workforce. Area youth will have the opportunity to begin learning about medical professions at an early age while receiving credit thanks to programs such as the PEAK Innovation Center that will commence classes in August 2021 or the Health Sciences Academy that began this school year at Darby Middle School. For those who have progressed beyond secondary education, there is Arkansas Colleges of Health Education (ACHE), founded in 2014. The medical future looks bright ahead.

ACHE will graduate their first class of new recipients of the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (ARCOM) degrees in May 2021. The campus, which began with 228 acres, has nearly doubled in size, now spread across a 430-acre campus. The college is growing through architecture, medicine, and education (see EDUCATION).

## CAMPUS GROWTH

The most visible impact of ACHE involves the dramatic progress of campus development. Groundbreaking was held in March 2015 for the initial building to house the Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine. Few would have imagined that a formidable complex of educational buildings, student housing, retail enterprises, and residential housing would have emerged in less than six years.

To complement the 102,000 square foot Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine, which serves as the focal point for the institution, a 66,000 square foot College of Health Sciences adds to what is anticipated to become an educational quadrangle within the central campus. The College of Health Sciences was specifically designed to house programs in physical therapy, occupational therapy, and physician assistant studies while also housing a pro bono clinic where faculty and students may serve the public as part of their training.

Both the Arkansas College of Osteopathic

Medicine and the College of Health Sciences build-ings received the "Outstanding Design: Postsecondary" by the American School and University/Architectural Portfolio in 2017 and 2020 upon completion of each facility. Both these facilities were designed by Risley Architects and constructed by Beshears Construction.

Student housing needs include The Residents, located immediately adjacent to the main buildings and containing more than 160 units configured in both one and two-bedroom apartment designs. Special amenities in this complex include a pool, dog park, exercise facilities, and strategically lo-cated group study rooms for use by students. Additional student housing is incorporated into the development of The Village at Heritage, which includes first-floor retail space, and a state-of-the-art fitness center to support the growing campus. Two buildings are complete and occupied, while a third will begin construction in 2021.

Residential housing, the Celebration Gardens and Wellness Park, and trails to link the campus and community all address the healthy living environment imperative.

The fully operational Mercy Clinic serves campus and community while the 50-bed inpatient rehabilitation hospital being developed by Mercy in partnership with Kindred Healthcare on the ACHE campus will enhance clinical training opportunities for students in occupational and physi-cal therapy upon completion in 2021.

## COVID-19 IMPACT

When the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic descended on the nation and world in March of 2020, its effect on institutions of higher education was swift and powerful. ARCOM students engaged in clinical assignments in hospitals and clinics throughout the region saw their training inter-rupted as health care providers struggled to meet the PPE needs of their regular staff.

Students and faculty immediately transitioned to on-line instruction using the technology platform, which is an integral part of education at ACHE—with or without a pandemic. Students received synchronous instruction from their residences—in Fort Smith or elsewhere—as if they

*Arkansas Colleges of Health Education (top) will see its first degrees of Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (ARCOM) conferred in May 2021. Baptist Health Fort Smith (second) continues the longest tradition of health care as successor to the oldest hospital in Arkansas. Mercy Fort Smith (third) recently reintroduced 24-hour neurosurgical coverage to the area. The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences' new Family Medical Clinic (bottom) offers high-tech telemedicine with physicians in Little Rock. [Courtesy photos]*

were in classrooms on campus. The technology design, which is part of the ACHE delivery model in all programs, was ready to support the instant transition to remote instruction.

As the pandemic impact has continued, clinical sites have resumed their work with students. A well-coordinated COVID management protocol has been implemented for campus operations. This method has allowed for the delivery of the critical elements of instruction by faculty and allowed students to become comfortable with those practices which are part of their medical training and future careers.

**SUMMARY**

The Arkansas Colleges of Health Education began with a resolute dream in the minds of key local decision-makers. Few observers would have expected the rate of growth that the young institution has demonstrated. Facilities, programs, and building an institutional presence and culture have provided visible and measurable milestones of progress.



ACHE's College of Health Sciences was specifically designed to house programs in physical therapy, occupational therapy, and physician assistant studies while also housing a pro bono clinic where faculty and students may serve the public as part of their training.

**Fort Smith is fortunate to have not just one, but two regional hospitals and the new University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences West Family Medical Center at the corner of South 12th and E streets in Fort Smith. Also coming soon a new veterans healthcare facility on Phoenix Avenue.**



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*Mercy Hospital Fort Smith's Covid Unit healthcare workers receive encouragement and thank you gifts during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.*

## **MERCY FORT SMITH COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

The challenges of COVID-19 have been felt throughout the country, including the Fort Smith region. Throughout the pandemic, Mercy Fort Smith has taken steps to help protect its patients, co-workers, and the community, including limiting visitation, requiring masks, and implementing social distancing at its main hospital location, rural-area hospitals, and clinics.

COVID testing for the public began in March 2020 and continues to be available for area residents. Mercy's hotline (479-289-6508) is available for those needing testing or for those who have questions about the virus. Mercy continues to provide care for COVID patients in its ICU and hospital rooms, as well as with Mercy's innovative COVID Care@Home program.

In addition, Mercy has expanded its video visits in order to provide alternatives for patients.

Mercy began administering COVID-19 vaccinations to its frontline co-workers who have been caring for patients since the beginning of the pandemic in December 2020. Other Mercy co-workers have since received the vaccine.

In January 2021, Mercy began offering vaccination clinics for those in the community who are eligible to receive it and will continue to provide the vaccine throughout the year as the state moves into different eligibility phases. As the pandemic continued during 2020 and into 2021, the Fort Smith

community expressed its appreciation to Mercy and its frontline workers by providing meals, gifts, discounts, and other donations. Mercy leaders and co-workers are grateful for this outpouring of support!

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

Working with organizations within the community is important to Mercy. Mercy Fort Smith also collaborates with the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Arkoma to provide a home-like environment for parents whose babies are being treated in Mercy's neonatal intensive care unit. The Ronald McDonald Family Room is located within Mercy Hospital Fort Smith and provides space for four families.

This collaboration continues to expand, as RMHC broke ground on a new, 11-bedroom Ronald McDonald House in December 2020. Construction is underway on the new house, which will be located just behind Mercy's Labor & Delivery department at Mercy Hospital Fort Smith. It is expected to open later in 2021.

Mercy Fort Smith also continues to provide outreach for many of the area's vulnerable and underserved populations through flu and vaccine clinics and through Mercy Clinic Primary Care at the HOPE campus.

Mercy also works with The CALL, an area foster-care program, by providing Mercy's Bag-got Street House as a location where foster-care children and their biological families can hold meetings in a safe, comfortable environment.

## **IMPROVING CARE**

Providing quality care for patients is

Mercy's No. 1 priority. Their staff and volunteers work tirelessly to provide a comfortable environment while treating their patients like family.

In order to provide 24-hour neurosurgical care in the community, a remodeled and expanded neurosurgery department opened at Mercy Fort Smith in October 2019. Now, the program has expanded again with the addition of a third neurosurgeon and second neurohospitalist to its staff. Dr. David Hunton, president of Mercy Clinics Fort Smith, called the growing neurosurgical department "part of our commitment to this community and continuing to serve it."

Mercy's Nurse Residency program has attracted recent nursing school graduates from all over the region. Mercy's Labor & Delivery department provides exceptional care for safe delivery and care of infants after birth.

In addition, Mercy's OB-ED provides emergency care for expectant mothers, while high-risk patients are treated through the maternal fetal medicine clinic run by Dr. David Deschamps. This means high-risk mothers can receive care in the Fort Smith area instead of traveling to another location. Mercy's neonatal intensive care unit is a Level IIIA unit, the highest level available in the region. Mercy's NICU can treat babies as young as around 26-weeks gestation or weighing around 1.65 pounds.

Additionally, expectant mothers who are uninsured or underinsured can find the care they need through the McAuley Clinic, which provides prenatal care such as screenings and checkups throughout pregnancy, as well as peace of mind.

In April 2020, Mercy Life Line air ambulance service relocated to Fort Smith, expanding Mercy's ability to care for trauma patients, with neonatal air transports on the horizon. Mercy Fort Smith has also been named a "Grade A" hospital for patient safety by the Leapfrog Group for five years straight.

## **NEW TECHNOLOGY, LOCATIONS, & FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS**

Mercy Rehabilitation Hospital Fort Smith is one of the latest additions to River Valley health care. Scheduled to open in May 2021, the 52,967-square-foot facility on land donated by the Arkansas Colleges of Health Education will care for adults recovering from conditions such as stroke, neurological disease, injury to the brain or spinal cord, and other debilitating illnesses or injuries. The 40-bed hospital will feature all private rooms; a secured brain injury unit with private dining and therapy gym; transitional living apartment; a therapeutic courtyard with golf, pickleball, and corn hole; specially designed rooms to treat dialysis patients; specialty programs dedicated to neuro, stroke, brain

faith

social

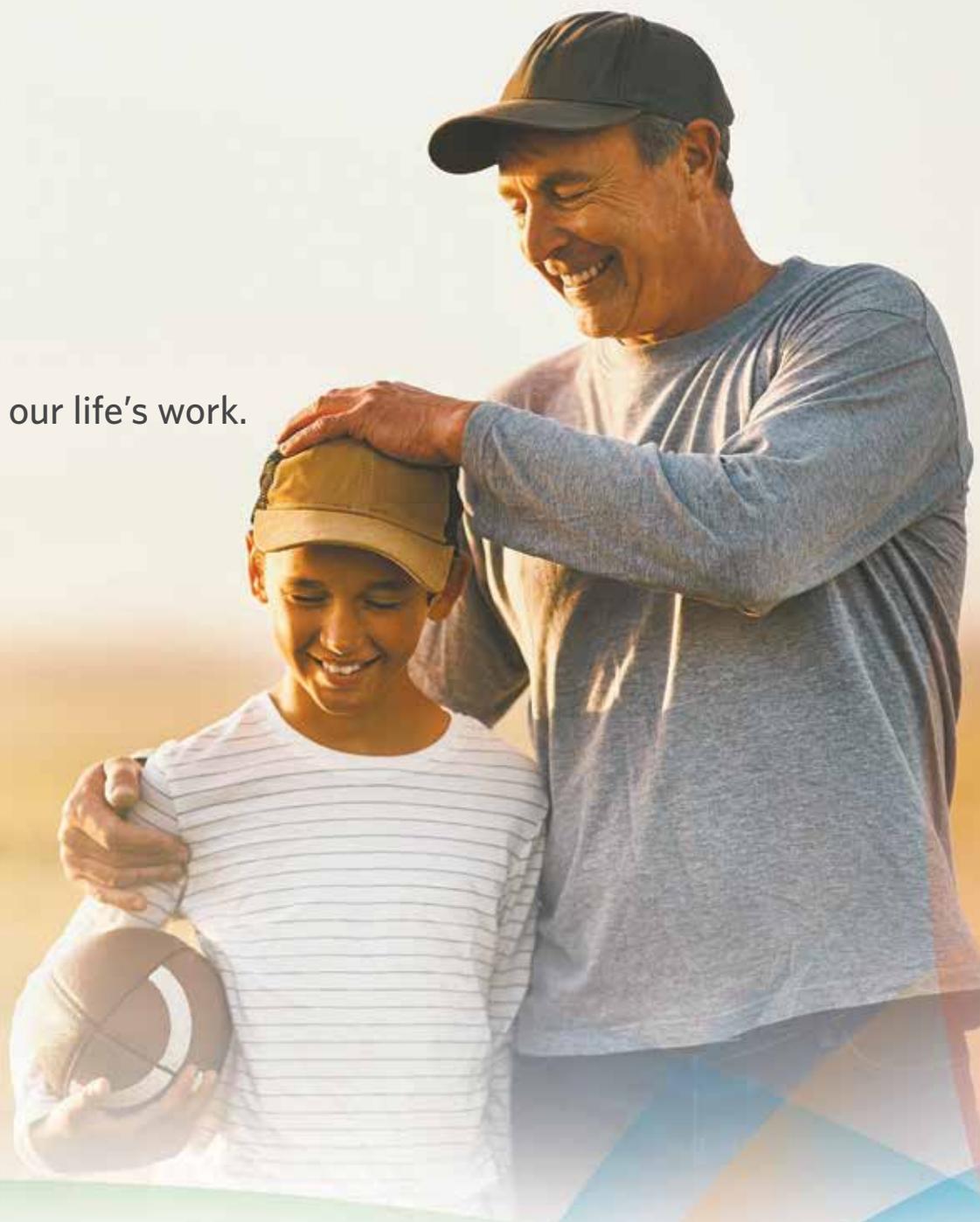
Your **family** life is our life's work.

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Mercy is here in Fort Smith to care for you and everyone you care for most.

Find a full range of care close to home at [mercy.net/FortSmithChamber](https://mercy.net/FortSmithChamber)

*Your life is our life's work.*



injury and amputation; and more.

In March 2020, Gov. Asa Hutchinson helped Mercy cut the ribbon on the newly remodeled Mercy Hospital Ozark, which now features expanded physical therapy space, new equipment, and space for additional outpatient services.

Mercy Clinic Primary Care – Clarksville

## BAPTIST HEALTH

Baptist Health is always seeking ways to improve, lead, and partner during these uncertain times. It is the largest not-for-profit health care organization based in Arkansas, providing care to patients wherever they are through the support of approximately 11,000 employees, groundbreaking treatments, renowned physicians, and community outreach programs.

### COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Kim Miller, president of Baptist Health Western Region, said, “COVID-19 has changed and, in many ways, improved how we care for our patients in both the hospital and clinics. Our infection prevention measures are stronger than ever, and we continue to follow state and federal recommendations to provide the safest care possible for our patients.”

While Baptist Health has continued to provide care in person in their clinics thanks to screening precautions, the health system has also been able to utilize technology to provide an extra level of safety.

“The Baptist Health Virtual Care app has been a wonderful option for patients with questions about Coronavirus symptoms and for those who prefer to see their physician from the safety of their own home. It is available to patients and their families 24/7.”

Early on in the pandemic, Baptist Health partnered with Mercy Fort Smith and other city and county agencies to open one of the first testing sites in the River Valley at Ben Geren Park. Since re-locating to the Baptist Health Medical Plaza downtown in July 2020, Baptist Health has tested more than 30,000 patients in the community.

“Leaders from our own hospitals and clinics have had to work very closely with other healthcare providers, city, county, and state officials since the pandemic began to seamlessly provide community COVID-19 testing and vaccinations. This collaboration is a true testament of the type of genuinely caring people who live and work in the River Valley. We continue to come together with a common goal of making the health and safety of our residents a top priority.”

“The pandemic has also brought us together as a community. Over the last year, the outpouring of community support has come in many forms, including handmade

opened in August 2020 with Dr. Megan Minniear- Corrons accepting patients at Mercy’s newest clinic location.

Ground was broken in February 2021 for a brand new location for Mercy Clinic Primary Care – Poteau, which is expected to open later in 2021.

In addition to its newest locations, Mercy Fort Smith remains dedicated to using the latest technology in providing services to its patients. Mercy recently acquired a da Vinci robotic de-vice, designed to assist physicians performing surgical procedures in areas such as urology, gynecology, and general surgery.



*Baptist is one of the oldest hospital systems in the state turning 100 years old recently.*

masks, ‘Thank You’ cards, community prayer sessions, and hundreds of meals and snack items delivered for staff. It’s been amazing to see both local businesses and private citizens take the time to thank healthcare workers in this region.”

“We are so proud of our approximately 1,800 healthcare workers in Western Arkansas who keep showing up day after day, facing challenges head-on as they care for some of the sickest patients in the state.”

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

In addition to collaborating with community organizations in the fight against COVID-19, Baptist Health has also been able to join forces to strengthen health education services in this region.

Miller said, “We’re proud to partner with Fort Smith Public Schools and Mercy Fort Smith and to invest in Health Sciences programming at the Peak Innovation Center set to open in Fall 2021.”

### IMPROVING CARE

Improving access to quality, affordable and convenient health care for the region’s residents is an important part of Baptist Health’s mission. Over the last year, clinics have been added in areas where care was not available.

Baptist Health Family Clinic-Chaffee Crossing, located at 11300 Roberts Blvd., provides care for patients of all ages in a growing area of Fort Smith and Barling. It is conveniently located near major manufacturers, new neighborhoods, and the Arkansas Colleges of Health Education (ACHE).

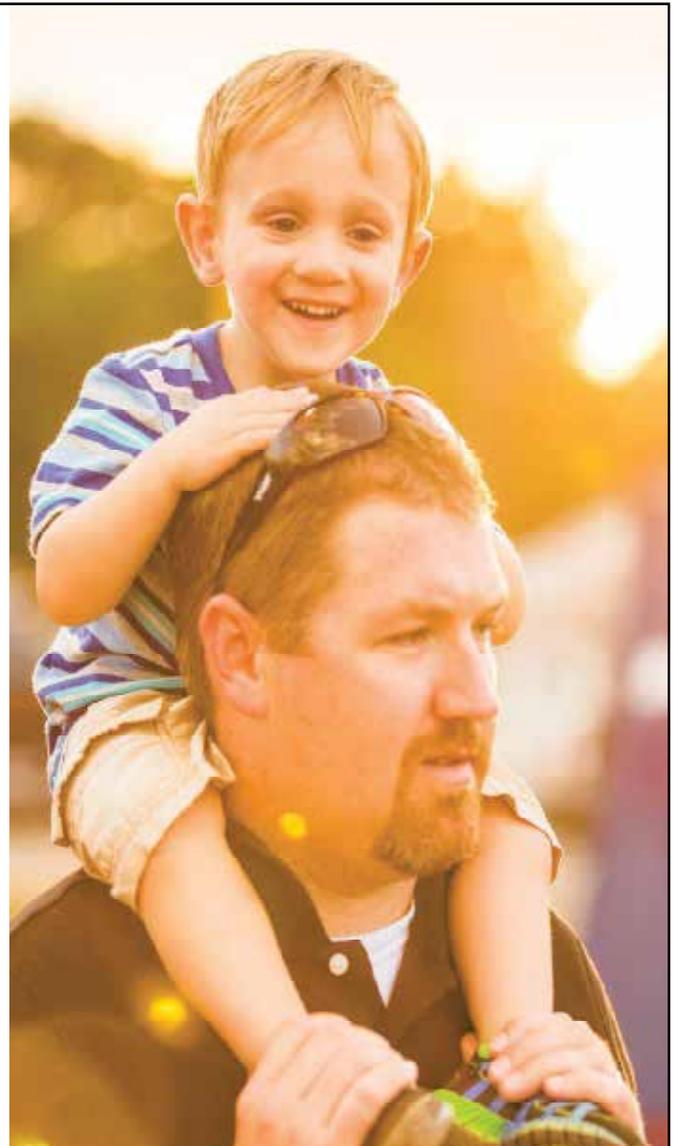
A second Baptist Health Urgent care is set to open in Summer 2021 and will be located at 1910 S. Zero Street.

“By offering extended hours in an area we do not currently have a clinic, we are better able to serve existing patients and new patients.

From sports injuries to acute illnesses, such as strep throat and ear infections, Baptist Health Urgent Care providers care for the entire family. Urgent care locations also offer occupational health services and school, sports, and camp physicals.

### NEW TECHNOLOGY AND FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

The Epilepsy Monitoring Unit at Baptist Health-Fort Smith opened in January 2021. It is a specialized unit featuring state-of-the-art, computer-based monitoring equipment that allows our technicians and physician to evaluate, diagnose and treat seizures or recurrent neurological spells. Opened in early



Expect amazing.

**You were born amazing, and at Baptist Health-Fort Smith, our mission is to keep you that way.**

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Access expert care with more convenience than ever before through the new myBaptistHealth App.



2021, it is the only one of its kind in Western Arkansas.

The program is overseen by Dr. Mohammad Owais, an epileptologist. The program may bene-fit patients who experience recurring, unprovoked seizures. Patients can discuss if epilepsy moni-toring is right for them with their neurologist or primary care physician, who will then make the re-ferral.

This year, Baptist Health has also expanded its weight loss surgery services by adding another surgeon, Dr. Eric Chung to the program.

Dr. Chung is able to utilize the da Vinci surgical system for these procedures. The system can al-so be used in a wide range of general, gynecological, and urological surgeries.

Miller said, "The da Vinci surgical system allows surgeons to perform complex, delicate op-erations with increased precision and

improved dexterity through four robotic arms. We have been the leader of robotic surgery in this region for more than 10 years."

The Baptist Health Foundation, as well as the auxiliaries at both hospitals in Fort Smith and Van Buren, continually looks for ways to serve their patients and improve their facilities.

"Most recently, we opened a newly remodeled pediatric unit thanks to the creativity of a local nurse and a donation from the Baptist Health-Fort Smith Auxiliary."

The auxiliary donated \$25,000 to go toward purchasing artwork and new furniture for the unit's playroom, waiting room, and patient rooms, which are now located on the second floor.

Leah Agent, RN, painted a beautiful marine life mural with various types of whales, tropical fish, jellyfish, an octopus, coral, and anemones in the waiting room. She named

the mural "Hattie's Fish" after her daughter. The auxiliary has also been instrumental in renovating and decorating portions of the Baptist Health Medical Plaza, including the atrium near the main entrance.

Marvin Altman Fitness Center at Baptist Health-Fort Smith has undergone recent renova-tions, including new laminate flooring throughout the fitness center lobby, hallways, cardiac and pulmonary rehab centers, as well as new rubber flooring in exercise rooms and the main fitness area.

Baptist Health's mission: "Baptist Health exists to provide quality patient-centered services, promote and protect the voluntary not-for-profit healthcare system, provide quality health educa-tion, and respond to the changing health needs of the residents of Arkansas with Christian compas-sion and personal concern."



*The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences opened a \$10.5 million Family Medical Center to expand clinical care and health education services as well as train medical residents in primary care.*

## UAMS

Dr. Katherine Irish-Clardy, UAMS West program director, also practices as a family medi-cine physician. UAMS West, located next to Baptist Health-Fort Smith, serves as one of eight regional centers across Arkansas, providing a family medicine residency program, community education and outreach programs, and a comprehensive medical library.

Dr. Irish-Clardy prefers Irish to prevent confusion with her husband, Dr. Brian Clardy. Irish sat in for Clardy at a meeting at the beginning of the pandemic to discuss how UAMS

West could collaborate with Baptist Health, Mercy Fort Smith, and EMS, resulting in the regional testing at Ben Geren Park with drive-thru COVID testing. Some of the UAMS residents assisted at that site.

Irish said, "I think each medical provider in the community adapted and found new ways to try to see people with acute respiratory systems. At UAMS, we started a drive-thru clinic. We set up a tent for six months at the backside of our building, which is also an ambulance bay. Patients could drive up. It protected our staff and residents providers from the elements while screening patients."

Patients with potential COVID symptoms

were examined, tested, and treated in their cars.

"I think our practice took care of the first COVID patient in Sebastian County. It was kind of scary at first, not knowing much. It's not scary like it was because now we've got the appropriate PPE (personal protective equipment) on. One of the biggest challenges for the clinic staff or the resident staff was staff contracting COVID or quarantining because they were exposed. We had to double-staff."

## INTERACTIVE PLATFORMS

UAMS campuses transitioned to the Epic EMR platform in November 2020. The statewide platform allows for better coordination of patient care and integration.

Irish said, "Everything done is visible. It's helpful that Baptist Health and Mercy are also on the same platform. It's not as visible to the same degree, but it helps coordinate care and reduces the duplication of services."

The pandemic brought about changes in interviewing future residents and teaching.

Every year, UAMS interviews applicants hoping to become next year's residents. In 2020 the process became virtual, which was beneficial. Traveling nationwide and interviewing was an expensive endeavor for medical students when they apply to 10 or more programs for residency training.

## TEACHING

The classroom also became a hybrid of in-person and virtual learning. UAMS West al-ready had plans to update the facility's audio/visual equipment.

"We can now perform socially distanced didactics, which is more traditional teaching



*United States Congressman Steve Womack attends groundbreaking ceremony in Fort Smith, AR for new Veteran's Affairs Hospital to open*

with a group. We've had small groups in-person with the rest of the class attending virtually.

"If we had a hands-on simulation in a lab setting, we divided it up into smaller in-person groups. Most of the training for residents occurs bedside with patients. Residents follow the patients with the supervision of the faculty.

"I feel residency training is a conglomeration of where doctors are taking care of patients at the same time where faculty are teaching residents, who aren't students anymore. They are physicians who are getting their training for the first number of years to obtain their specialization. Our physician jobs changed to deal with the pandemic, but our teaching jobs changed, as well.

"Arkansas is in an interesting position now because of the two new medical schools. The pool of applicants going into residency has increased significantly."

Dr. Jim Clardy (no relation) is director of the UAMS Center for Graduate Medical Education (GME). GME is a specialty training after medical school.

Irish said, "Arkansas needs more physicians. We need to have larger numbers in training. Evidence shows physicians tend to stay within a certain radius where they did their graduate medical education or residency.

We need to expand slots for residency training in the state, not just in primary care, but in other specialties to improve the number of physicians training and staying in Arkansas."

Over the past five years, 65% of their residents have stayed in Arkansas. Since 1975, 60% of their students have stayed in Arkansas, with 41% staying in western Arkansas.

#### **WHY TRAIN IN THE RIVER VALLEY**

"We have two large hospitals. Part of residency involves having enough patient encounters to develop those skills in taking care of people. We have several patients requiring care in this area.

"One of the benefits of our residency program is it is an unopposed program at Baptist Health. Community hospitals tend to have better access for physicians in training than academic medical centers like in Little Rock. There are a lot of different specialties in training, so residents are competing for the same pool of patients. We don't have competing residencies. Our residents get to take care of the whole patient and the opportunity to have more experience in performing procedures."

"UAMS West has a broad patient population. We see from birth-to-grave. We try to give our residents patient panels that

include the entire family. Our core faculty has a lot of skills in different areas. We're a bit unusual that a number of our faculty do obstetrical care.

The volunteer faculty in this area helps keep UAMS West going. The specialists also take residents on and give them a rotation, providing them exposure to those areas of medicine.

"We're also looking to the future. Arkansas needs more physicians in rural areas. One area involves rural training tracks. Perhaps in a two-year residency program, some residents do one-year at the host program and are exposed to the specialty care they can't get in a rural area. Then they do two years in a rural area to become the physicians to augment or replace those rural physicians as they retire."

#### **RECOGNITION**

UAMS West has been recognized for years by NCQA (National Committee for Quality Assurance), a leader in healthcare accreditation, for Patient-Centered Medical Home and the Diabetes Recognition Program. They've also met the quality metrics for Arkansas Medicaid Patient-Centered Medical Home.

Irish concluded, "We're continually training the healthcare providers of tomorrow for Arkansas."

# Getting here from anywhere is easy!

## TRAVELER INFORMATION

[www.swtimes.com/weather](http://www.swtimes.com/weather)



72.7°

Fort Smith's average temperature for the entire year



AUG

Fort Smith's hottest month (average daily temperature, 93°)



JAN

Fort Smith's coldest month (average daily temperature, 29°)



45.5

Fort Smith's annual precipitation in inches



5.0

Fort Smith's annual snowfall in inches

For assistance during unusual weather connect with your local media resource.

A winter storm, thunderstorm or tornado warning means threatening weather is about to take place and people in the watch area should seek shelter.



### by ROAD

The Fort Smith Region is easily accessible from Interstate 40 – the nation's main east/west corridor stretching from North Carolina to California. The I-540 extension also allows for easy north/south travel especially between Fort Smith and northwest Arkansas including Fayetteville, Rogers and Bentonville. According to the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department, more than 32 billion miles are driven on these roads each year.

The Fort Smith Public Transit also provides public transportation and operates passenger mini-buses that run Monday through Saturday.

The service is only \$3.50 and offers curb-to-curb service along six routes through the city. The city also operates a 25-seat trolley that travels through Fort Smith's downtown and historic districts.

### CITY BUS TRANSPORTATION

Fort Smith Transportation Department

6821 Jenny Lind Rd.  
Fort Smith, AR  
(479) 646-2769

[www.fortsmithar.gov](http://www.fortsmithar.gov)



### by AIR

#### AMERICAN AIRLINES

(Serve Fort Smith with connections to Dallas/Fort Worth and Atlanta International Airports)

#### FORT SMITH REGIONAL AIRPORT

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(479) 452-7000

[www.fortsmithairport.com](http://www.fortsmithairport.com)



### by TRAIN

#### ARKANSAS & MISSOURI RAILROAD

813 Main Street  
Van Buren, AR  
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[www.amrailroad.com](http://www.amrailroad.com)



### by WATER

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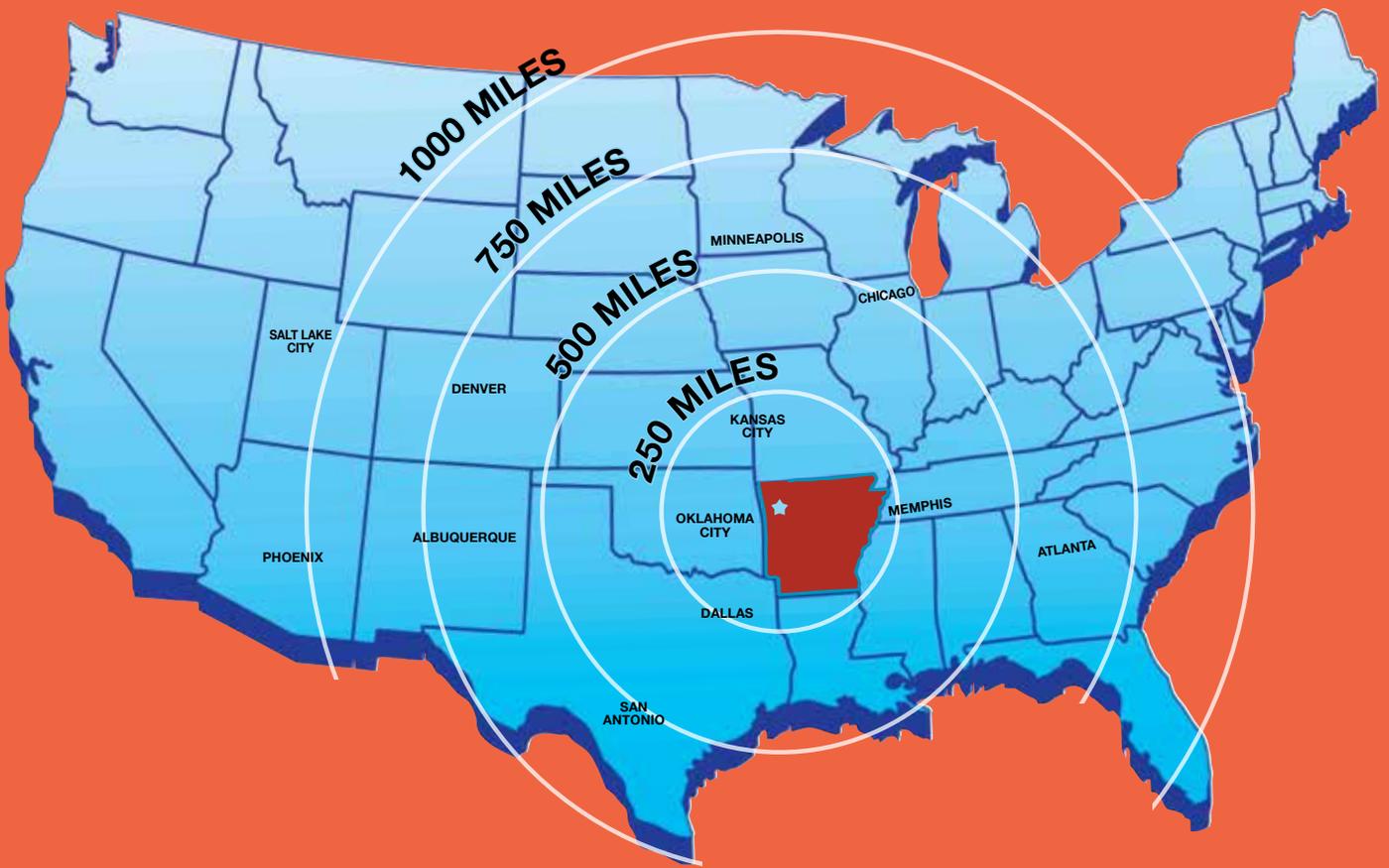
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Fort Smith is a just a day trip away from many metropolitan areas of the United States. With an East-West and North-South Interstate connection, as well as easy access by plane, truck, train or ship, transportation logistics make the region ideal for many companies. The city offers historic sites and a scenic riverfront downtown, not to mention thriving retail and culinary treasures.



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# COOL Spaces

ETHAN NAHTE' - Special to the Times Record



906 Cocktail & Cigar Lounge located at 906 Garrison Avenue.

Daytime! Nighttime! Any time is a fun time in Fort Smith when it comes to places to enjoy live performances or gathering with family and friends with a beverage in hand and the wonderful aroma of something tasty tantalizing the tastebuds. Many Fort Smith businesses have revitalized the region's historic buildings, utilizing them in myriad shapes and forms to give shopping, dining, and the nightlife a unique flavor while maintaining a historic feel.

## EATS, DRINKS, & MORE

Like many businesses affected by COVID, restaurants, clubs, and bars took a major hit. The temporary closures, limited operating hours and occupancy, took a toll on many independently-owned businesses. The majority of the large restaurant chains are still open, and several smaller chains and indies persisted, going with the flow while still providing a personal touch their customers have come to love.

Fort Smith has Southern down-home cooking, burgers, BBQ, or steak restaurants one would expect to find in the area, as well as Mexican, German, Italian, Hawaiian, and Indian cuisine.

There are also plenty of places to enjoy Asian cuisine. In addition to Japanese,

Chinese, or Ko-rean dishes, one can find Thai and Vietnamese restaurants.

Catch a game and hang in the numerous sports grills & bars. Prefer fine dining? Not a problem. Fort Smith has an abundance of options all across town.

## HISTORIC DOWNTOWN

There are several restaurants spread throughout old downtown. Try Doe's Eat Place for a high-ranked restaurant housed in the old Knoble Brewery. The three-story historic stone building, circa 1850, is not only a place to get great steaks, but their drink selection is quite astounding.

Less pricey is the family-friendly Bricktown Brewery with its craft beers and tasty food. Located inside what was once Adelaide Hall, the building was erected 150 years ago. It was renamed in honor of builder and one-term Arkansas Governor William Meade Fishback's wife Adelaide Miller Fishback. It's been the meeting place for historic events and weddings in Arkansas's history.

Imbibe more history at 21 West End, which was once the Hole in the Wall Saloon, not to mention being the first location for the Western District of Arkansas to hold court in 1871 after being moved from Van Buren. The building is where Judge Isaac C. Parker

first presided for the start of his 21 years in Fort Smith, beginning in 1875 in the largest federal court in the nation.

21 West End opened in 2007 and has a rather unique and eclectic menu, which CEO Kevin Do-rey describes as "...continental food in an upscale casual setting, meaning not the food you can get every day, everywhere, in a comfortable, relaxed, upscale environment. Comfortable service, to me, means letting someone know that you appreciate and are thankful the guest is there."

Feel free to ask the staff how the Hole in the Wall name came about while enjoying cocktails and a relaxed atmosphere.

A few blocks away is 906 Cocktail & Cigar Lounge. General Manager C.C. (Buddy) Kell invites people to come and enjoy music, food, and drinks, along with cigars in a nearly smoke-free atmosphere. Patrons can relax with finger foods and listen to either live jazz or blues, dependent upon the day of the week. Cigar-tasting events are a big draw that keeps customers coming back for more.

"I'm a bar that serves food; food that has won The Best of Fort Smith," said Kell.

The shotgun hall was purchased around four-years-ago and modified to house walk-in humidors, including VIP lockers and a laminar flow air system that recycles the air every four minutes, designed to keep the smoke out.

When you go home, your clothes won't smell like smoke because the air is blowing through you."

They will soon be adding an ionizing process to further improve the atmosphere



Dining setup for a recent event at 21 West End located at 21 North 2nd Street, Suite 102.



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*The multipurpose Bakery District is a multi-entertainment location with retail, coffee, dining, business offices, and special occasion events located downtown at 70 S. 7th Street.*

in "...a lounge where people can come sit in really nice, comfortable seats, with music playing right there and have a conversation without having to yell at each other."

No trip downtown is complete without visiting the historic Bakery District. The former bakery operated from 1921-1996 and was known for the mass production of bread. The building still has its original brick and mortar walls but is retrofitted with updated sound, lighting, and HVAC systems for live events and gatherings. The interior has been redesigned to host a catering kitchen and a beer garden with a bocce-ball court. There is an indoor/outdoor event space for live music, a photo gallery, and bi-monthly art exhibitions. The site also includes a food truck park that operates Monday-Saturday.

Shopping and retail can be found in the Bakery District, including Kindred Roots where you can buy live plants right off the shelves.

The Fort Smith Coffee Co. has two locations, one on Rogers Ave. and the second housed in the Bakery District. Enjoy artisan coffees roasted on-site from scratch, which includes house-made syrups and an assortment of fresh pastries. They also have breakfast sandwiches, crepes, and quiche.

You'll find Bookish, Fort Smith's only indie bookstore since 2018, that carries highlights local presses and the latest fiction and nonfiction books for sale. A second location is nearby on 10th St. at their Brunwick Place location. It focuses on local authors, new fiction and nonfiction titles, a curated selection of used books, and an expanding children's section with thoughtful and educational children's programming.

Read about some of the exciting things coming to the Bakery District in the UAFS profile that will be a boon to business owners, old and new.

Catch a concert or performance in the parks, as well as downtown venues. The former Masonic Temple, built in 1929, was converted to Temple Live in 2016. The

53,000 sq. ft. building has three banquet halls and an auditorium that can seat 1,100 people when maximum capacity is allowed. The theater was once leased by Paramount, serving as a movie palace. It contains 87 artistically and historically significant hand-painted backdrops. The Egyptian art and sarcophagi around The Sphinx Club housed in the building are eye-catching. Temple Live is the home of the first socially distanced concert in North America with Travis McReady performing, musicians such as Ronnie Milsap or comedians like Ron White are some of the acts scheduled to appear in 2021. Past performances include country acts such as Ashley McBryde, The Charlie Daniels Band; rock bands Buckcherry, Coheed and Cambria; Mongolian folk-rock band The HU.

### **ROGERS AVE./MIDTOWN**

From downtown, or by hopping off Interstate 540, Rogers Ave. is lined with restaurants, shopping, movie theaters, parks, the main library, and Central Mall. Art's BBQ & Burgers is a restaurant where patrons can enjoy licking the sauce from their fingers while possibly catching a Razorback or Sooner game playing on the screens situated around the restaurant.

Uncork'd has fine dining with a full menu, brunch, and tapas, which is an appetizer of Spanish cuisine. Found at the corner of Phoenix and Leigh Avenues, it features an enormous wine barrel ceiling, 40 craft beer taps, a wall of wine machines, a bourbon tap, an outdoor patio, cigar room, and live music.

On 87th St., close to the Rogers and Phoenix Avenue intersections, sits the Black Bison Coffee Company, a small-batch coffee roasting house and gift shop. They're primarily a gift store featuring daily coffee tastings with jewelry, toys, candies, and more.

For some indoor fun for pretty much all ages, the new Spartan Adventure Park is a trampoline and adventure park that includes padded trampolines, zip lines, dodgeball, and a climbing wall. Experience the thrill



*Sample craft beer, wine, bourbon, cigars, and fine food while enjoying live music at Uncork'd located at 5501 Phoenix Avenue.*

of virtual reality simulators, rings, ropes, basketball, Ninja course, and a small kids zone.

### **CHAFFEE CROSSING**

Once part of the property operated by Fort Chaffee, over 7,000 acres became a part of the community. The progressive result includes housing developments, manufacturing and industry, restaurants, retails, and schools, including ACHE.

The historic district includes a Vietnam Veteran's Museum and the Chaffee Barbershop Museum, to name a pair of interesting places. Elvis Presley was sent to Fort Chaffee after being inducted to the U.S. Army in Memphis, Tennessee. The "Haircut



*The new Spartan Adventure Park feature interactive and fun physical entertainment for all ages including a Ninja course, virtual reality simulators, and more located at 7601 Rogers Avenue.*

that Shook the World" was a memorable experience for his adoring fans. The King spent only three days at Fort Chaffee before shipping out to Fort Hood.

StoneHouse at Chaffee Crossing is a modern interpretation of an American Steakhouse, with indoor and outdoor dining complete with a serene, natural environment since 2015. The historic building was once the Maness School House, built in 1937. It was the only building in the area not moved or torn down when the Department of Defense built Fort Chaffee. There's more on the menu than juicy steaks to tantalize the tastebuds or the wide selection of cocktails and drinks.

What was once an Army warehouse has been repurposed as a taproom and production space to create JKC Cellars. The owners used as much reclaimed material as possible in their renovation of the space to keep the history alive and build a sustainable winery. For example, all the wood floors are original. The wood on the interior walls is reclaimed barn wood. The walnut bar top is the product of a fallen tree from the family farm in Northeast Arkansas. The grapes JKC uses may come from around the world, but the winemaking is all created in Fort Smith.

The Fort Smith Brewing Company tried something different during the beginning



JKC Cellars showcases wines produced and bottled in their renovated historic Fort Chaffee winery located at 7709 Ellis Street.

of COVID. They partnered with Jen's Kitty Rehab and the River Valley Film Society to overcome the closures and social-distancing ordinance. How? They turned their front parking lot into a drive-in movie, capable of holding 35-50 vehicles. It allowed them to serve their craft beers, many with names that incorporate local history, while people enjoyed movies and Superbowl LV.



River Valley native Quentin Willard Operations and Brewer of Fort Smith Brewing Company mixes one of Arkansas' best beers brewed locally at 7500 Fort Chaffee Boulevard.

### SOUTH FORT SMITH

On Highway 71 South, not far from I-549, on the way to Greenwood is Boondocks, where you can find burgers, po'boys, Southern entrees, and Cajun food. Kick back with non-alcoholic family favorites or enjoy a specialty cocktail or some wine with a slew of bodacious appetizers or dessert. There are live trivia nights, bingo night, and the weekends are a marvelous time to catch a live musical performance.

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# Eateries

## 21 West End

(479) 434-4213

## 906 Cocktail & Cigar Lounge

(479) 434-4343

## Andy's Frozen Custard

(870) 919-3721

## Art's BBQ and Burgers

(479) 452-2550

## Boondock's

(479) 646-9464

## Bricktown Brewery

(479) 434-2739

## Bruce & Terri Drive-In and Catering

(479) 452-8171

## Calico County

(479) 452-3299

## Chick-fil-A

(479) 484-5152

## Confectionately Yours

(479) 478-7223

## Doe's Eat Place of Fort Smith

(479) 784-9111

## Domino's Pizza of Fort Smith

(479) 434-6996

## Domino's Pizza of Fort Smith

479-785-0841

## Eureka Pizza

(479) 782-4545

## Fish City Grill

(479) 769-2400

## Five Guys

(479) 478-1007

## Fort Smith Brewing Company

(479) 242-3722

## Fort Smith Coffee Co.

(479) 226-2437

## Geno's Pizza Central Mall

(479) 452-2914

## Golden Corral

(479) 484-1040

## Great American Cookies

(479) 452-9999

## Gusano's Pizzeria

(479) 434-6444

## Hideaway Pizza

(479) 777-1777

## Jeff's Club House

(479) 308-9123

## Jerry Neel's Bar-B-Q & Catering

(479) 646-8085

## JJ's Grill

(479) 434-4555

## JKC Cellars

(479) 922-9463

## Western Sizzlin

(479) 452-8489

## Taco Bell

(479) 646-2053

## Kona Ice of Fort Smith

(479) 561-9966

## La Huerta Mexican Restaurant (Garrison Avenue)

(479) 783-3655

## La Huerta Mexican Restaurant (Rogers Avenue)

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# Fun Places

ETHAN NAHTE' - Special to the Times Record

Whether exploring or setting up shop in Fort Smith, you'll find a ticket to frontier history with an eye to the future.

## HISTORIC DOWNTOWN

Old downtown Fort Smith is a must, located adjacent to the Arkansas River. Oklahoma, known as Indian Territory during Fort Smith's infancy, is visible across the waterway. Before becoming president of the United States, Zachary Taylor once commanded the Fort Smith garrison in the 1840s. His home burned, but the chimney remains at 13th St. and Garrison Ave. The Immaculate Conception Church and St. Anne's Academy were erected at the site during the Civil War.

Across the street is the east entrance to downtown. Visitors are welcomed by statues of Isaac C. Parker, Frontier Judge & Community Leader; John Carnall, public educator, and Sister of Mercy, Mother Superior Mary Teresa Farrell, who represents the establishment of health care at Gateway Park. They stand where historic Garrison Ave. splits, retaining the Garrison name along the right fork and becoming Rogers Ave. along the left fork.

Both roadways lead to an array of political and civic buildings, museums, a variety of music and nightlife, artistry of every type, and plenty of restaurants to serve almost any taste, as well as breweries and coffee shops. You'll notice plenty of buildings over 150-years-old that have survived floods, fires, tornadoes, and more than a few rounds of ammunition from the fort's early history, fired upon by outlaws and military alike.

Some places have momentarily shut their



The Fort Smith National Historic Site is located along the Arkansas River where the first fort was established by the United States in 1817. [Fort Smith Convention & Visitors Bureau]

doors to the public due to the pandemic, but not all. There are still plenty of things to do around Arkansas's second-largest city. As you stroll, bike, or drive throughout downtown and the surrounding area, you'll notice colorful murals accentuating the sides of buildings, adding a colorful reminder of Fort Smith's history.

A block over, near the post office, is a statue of General William O. Darby, a decorated WWII hero born and raised in Fort Smith. Darby is interred at The Fort Smith National Cemetery, located at the far end of downtown.

The Fort Smith Trolley Museum is a stone's throw from the cemetery. Visitation is available by appointment only. It gives an in-depth view of Fort Smith's history advancing from the horse and buggy to electric streetcars that connected most of Fort Smith as well as the mile-long crossing over the Arkansas River to adjoin Van Buren. Trolleys still tour the cities. The museum also has a track along with unusual trolleys and a collection that will interest train enthusiasts.

Nearby is the River Valley Artisan Market and The Park at West End, easy to locate with its Ferris wheel. The park contains a new

splash pad for children to play. Across the street is a parking lot used for the seasonal Fort Smith Farmers Market.

Downtown runs alongside the Belle Grove Historic District, a 22-block area on the National Register of Historic Places. Many lovely homes and churches dating back to the 19th century are nestling amongst flower gardens and ancient trees.

## KEEP ON THE LOOKOUT

The historic Miss Laura's Visitor Center sits adjacent to the Arkansas River. Out of seven "row houses" that lined Fort Smith's Old West red light district, Miss Laura's is the only house of ill-repute that stood the test of time. Now, it is the only former bordello on the National Register of Historic Places. It has been fully restored to its original grandeur. Although the Fort Smith Convention and Visitor center still operates within, the house is temporarily closed to the public. They suggest keeping an eye on their website and social media for updates.

It's a hop, skip, and jump to the Fort Smith National Historic Site Visitor Center, which



William O. Darby Monument in Fort Smith. [Fort Smith Convention & Visitors Bureau]

contains the courthouse where Judge Parker presided, among many other historical structures. The building remains temporarily closed to the public, but where it is possible to adhere to the latest health guidance, the park grounds and trails will remain open. Check out the National Park website for updates. The Trail of Tears Overlook is in the process of being rebuilt after the historic flood of 2019 took its toll.

**OUTDOOR AND INDOOR RECREATION**

For a city, recreation is more than exercise and staying active. It’s a way of attracting locals and non-locals to come to enjoy what the Fort Smith area has to offer, boosting the economy.

Traveling along the road parallel to the river, people can enjoy the Riverfront Skate Bike and Park, offering a 12,000 sq. ft. park overlooking the Arkansas River. It offers pump tracks, a 12 ft. vertical wall, a Plexiglas wall, art as skating apparatuses, a mountain bike playground, and more.

A few places to fish around the immediate area include the Arkansas, Poteau, and Mulberry rivers. There is the Fort Smith fishing pavilion; Wells Lake; Carol Ann Cross Lake, located at the park eponymously named; and Torraine Lake, situated at Ben Geren Regional Park (BGRP).

BGRP has tennis courts; disc golf; sand volleyball; softball and soccer fields; Gator Golf, the area’s only 27-hole championship mini-golf course. They have a paved multi-use trail (ADA-accessible through the first mile)



*Ben Geren Park has plenty of outdoor fun including a multi-use trail system with connected paved trails and natural surface trails for mountain biking.*

currently 7.49 miles with ongoing expansions. Additionally, BGRP has one of Arkansas’s 11 premier mountain biking trail systems with 14-plus miles of rugged-terrain mountain biking trails. Near the park entrance is the Parrot Island Waterpark, providing fun for all ages.

Enjoy golfing? Play the Ben Geren Golf Course, known throughout Arkansas as one of the state’s premier public golf courses with 27 holes.

Half-an-hour outside of Fort Smith is more

fishing, camping, and recreational areas. Near Mulberry are Bluff Hole Park and Vine Prairie Park. Not far, nestled in the Boston Mountains, is Lake Fort Smith State Park, a beautiful multi-use park and a starting point for hikers to enjoy part or all 156.7 miles of the Ozark Highlands Trail.

The adventure will also have you driving across parts of the Arkansas Wine Trail, where visitors can tour wineries.

Swing back to the metro area where activities include gun clubs; pickleball; paintball; several more parks, miles of trails for walking, hiking, biking; bowling; movie theaters; rock climbing gyms; and a pair of casinos.

For other interests check out the Civil War site known as the Massard Prairie Battlefield Park; the Janet Huckabee Arkansas River Valley Nature Center, operated by the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission.



*The Riverfront Skate and Bike Park in Fort Smith features a fast-paced Velo Solutions Pump Track in a beautiful setting near the Arkansas River downtown.*

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# Arts, CULTURE & Entertainment

*ETHAN NAHTE' - Special to the Times Record*

Arts, culture, and entertainment might be considered a luxury, but it's a valuable part of learning, social interaction, and an important dynamic in social behavior, whether you are observing or a creative participant. It is a flexible form of expression that means something different to everyone and touches everybody in a personal way.

## **FORT SMITH CONVENTION CENTER**

The Fort Smith Convention Center had several concerts and conventions scheduled as the pandemic began forcing the closure of public facilities. Like many others, they attempted to allow performances and meetings with limited groups in the beginning. As mandates and CDC guidelines became stricter, the convention center temporarily closed. They re-opened June 1, 2020, following strict guidelines, including the ArcBest Performing Arts Center. Events for 2021 include both public and private happenings, including exciting performances from the Western AR Ballet, the Community School of the Arts (CSA), dance competitions, recitals and proms, the Miss Arkansas USA/Miss Teen USA competition, the Fort Smith Symphony, and concerts.

## **FORT SMITH SYMPHONY**

Music Director and conductor John Jeter has spent 24-years leading the Fort Smith

Symphony (FSS). For the past decade, he has also worked as the FSS executive director. Jeter and the board of directors stated the FSS is energized and fully committed to presenting a socially distanced, safety-conscious 2020-2021 concert season. Following their official website is recommended for further guidelines and any changes.

FSS has chosen to perform twice on each performance day to a limited audience of no greater than 400 in the audience to allow for social distancing and allowing all of their sponsors and subscribers to attend. Performances will also be limited to an hour in length with intermission.

Following their upcoming Film Score Festival in May, the FSS will join Arkansas Colleges of Health Education (ACHE) in their effort to fuse arts and culture with health and wellness. Starting in summer 2021, the FSS will move its offices to the Research Institute Health and Wellness Center on Fianna Way. In addition to the updated office spaces in a state-of-the-art renovated facility, FSS will have the opportunity to work more closely with ACHE and other community arts organizations.

"It has been a challenging year for the arts, and I am grateful for the support from ACHE," Jeter says about the opportunity.

"We look forward to continuing to provide musical arts to our community."

"The Fort Smith Symphony has provided top-notch entertainment for nearly a century and is very appreciative of all our supporters," FSS Board President Bill Hines commented. "We are experiencing an increase in young audience members and families. It is likely that our audience continues to expand as we strengthen our relationship with ACHE and with the young medical students currently enrolled, as well as all those who value high-quality entertainment and are supportive of the arts."

The two organizations are exploring what this collaboration will look like for seasons to come. Lifetime Symphony Board Member Lavon Morton said, "John Jeter and the Symphony Board of Directors, past and present, have long believed that there is a connection between exposure to the arts and overall wellness. Working from Symphony offices, generously provided by ACHE in the new Research Institute, will enhance the ability of the two organizations to collaborate on future wellness initiatives."

The FSS look forward to continuing their mission of improving the life and enrichment of the community. Since their founding in 1923, the ways FSS serve Fort Smith may have changed but has always remained rooted in artistry and education. Now, they can add health and wellness to their dedications.

"It is my hope that the relationship between ACHE and the Fort Smith Symphony grows stronger and deeper each year," Hines added. "With strong collaborative partnerships, such as with ACHE, the Fort Smith Symphony can grow on its 98-year history and can envision another rich century of first-class classical music for our community."

## **U.S. MARSHALS MUSEUM**

The U.S. Marshals Museum has not yet officially opened to the public, but special events have been held at the facility. While the very-modern building that sits just north of historic downtown is complete, the Museum is still raising funds to tell the story of the 230+ year story of the U.S. Marshals. Meanwhile, there have been stimulating and



*The Fort Smith Symphony offers classical, pops and youth concerts year-round*

educational online live events providing in-depth historical outlooks about male and female marshals, American Indians, Black history, and marshals in general. If you missed the events, they are available for viewing on the non-profit museum's site.

The memorial wall is quite a sight and tastefully presented. Shiny brass plaques adorn the wall honoring U.S. Marshals prior to Parker's era to modern-day lawmen.

The five-point badge skylight makes for a gorgeous evening view after watching a beautiful sunset fade below the Oklahoma horizon as you look across the Arkansas River.

Meanwhile, the 25-foot-high statue of one of Bass Reeves, one of the most famous Black U.S. Marshals, is available for viewing as you make your way from the museum towards the Fort Smith National Historic Site. The statue of Reeves upon his horse stands in the Ross Pendergraft Park.

### WINDGATE ART & DESIGN

Windgate Art & Design Building sits on the University of Arkansas-Fort Smith campus. Due to campus restrictions due to COVID at press time, the gallery has no exhibits booked for Spring 2021.

Art Department Head and Associate Professor Katie Waugh expressed, "We are excitedly looking forward to opening up next fall."

The Windgate Gallery hosts exhibitions and events for the benefit of the public. It also showcases a collection of regional, national and international artists. The gallery features a combination of permanent and touring works of art throughout three galleries: Windgate Gallery, Don Lee Student Gallery, and the Nadine & Bob Miller Pre-Function Gallery.

The gallery plays an important role in the teaching mission of the Department of Art and the College of Language, Art & Social Sciences. It serves the entire Fort Smith community and River Valley Region.

### FORT SMITH RAM

The Fort Smith Regional Art Museum (RAM) has been a home for artists for 70 years. The current building that stands at 1601 Rogers Ave., a short distance from the Gateway Park statues, was a 16,000 square foot bank donated by Arvest Bank in 2009. The RAM opened to the public in Jan. 2013, meeting with the American Alliance of Museums standards.

The RAM is an award-winning museum that facilitates nationally and internally recognized traveling exhibitions and rotating exhibits of works by local and regional artists. Works include paintings, photography, sculptures, and more.



The Fort Smith Regional Art Museum (RAM) has been a home for artists for 70 years located at 1601 Rogers Avenue.





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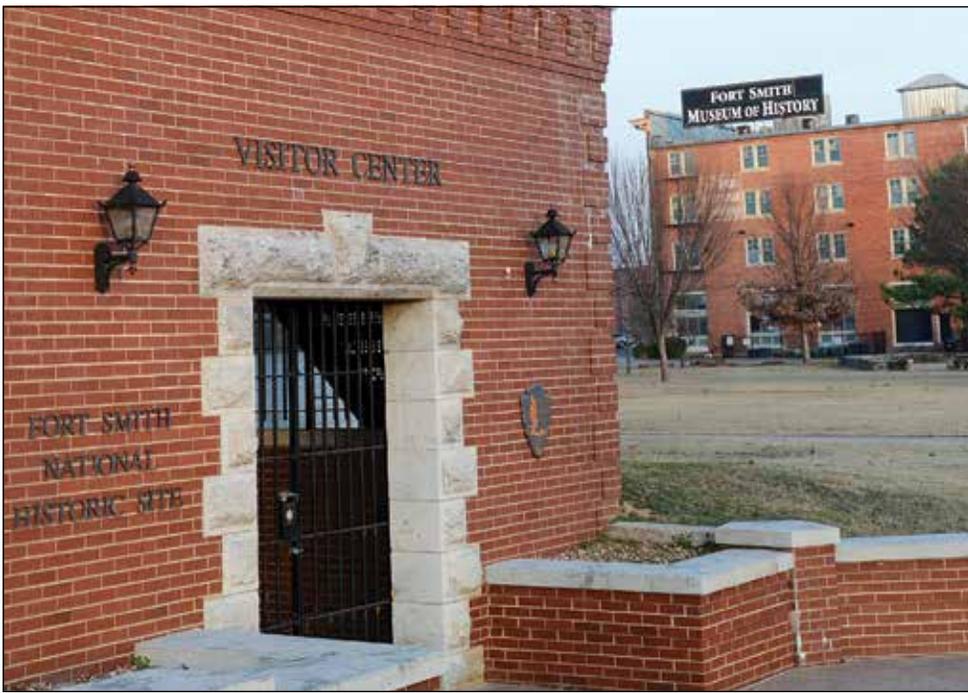
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The United States Marshals Museum is located along the Arkansas River in downtown Fort Smith. [Fort Smith Convention & Visitors Bureau]

In addition to ongoing exhibitions, the museum offers classes, lectures, opening receptions, children’s art camps, galas, free Saturday programming, after-school programs, and artist-led workshops. The museum offers facility rentals and a specialty gift shop featuring one-of-a-kind items created by local and regional artists.

The RAM meets national standards and has greatly-contributed to cultural growth in the region.

**CSA**

Community School of the Arts (CSA) serves the Fort Smith area by providing high-quality instruction in music, theatre, dance, and visual art for a variety of age groups, from preschool to 12th grade. CSA also has

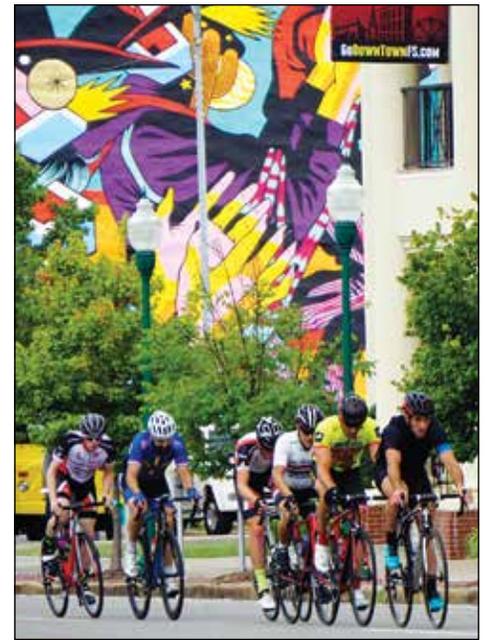
some programs that adults can participate in, such as Fiddle Folk and private lessons. They are also offering virtual lessons for the foreseeable future.

Shrek the Musical and their Stars on Stage series are scheduled for 2021, showcasing student talent.

CSA specializes in curriculum activities for children and young people that explore their artistic talents and develop their social skills in positive and exciting ways. The organization offers a line-up of professional faculty who are leaders in their field and love working with young people. CSA is celebrating its fourth season in 2020.

**OZ Art ARkanvas**

OZ Art ARkanvas is curated by Justkids,



Cyclists race in downtown Fort Smith to the backdrop of beautiful UNEXPECTED curated murals. [Fort Smith Convention & Visitors Bureau.]

in partnership with UNEXPECTED. It is a statewide engagement, bringing public art by world-renowned artists to The Natural State. ARkanvas is 13 artworks by 12 artists under the theme Unite. The organization, based in Bentonville, showcases their Unite works across 450 miles of Arkansas and includes a water tower at Chaffee Crossing on Wells Lake Road that was a fading, cracked red and white checkerboard design. It is now bursting with colorful flowers and insects on a black background around the circumference. A solid coat of pale blue over the dome tops it off. The art is by DABSMYLA, an Australian husband-wife team that has worked together for over a decade. They employ a shared design language that dictates subject matter, positioning, color theory, and perspective. Their vibrant works, both interior and exterior pieces, are colorful panoramas. They currently reside in Los Angeles.

“We wanted to do something to celebrate the arts, support artists, and create some excitement in our communities during this incredibly challenging time,” said Olivia Walton. She is leading the project along with Elizabeth Miller, OZ Art manager. “We love that murals bring art to everyone, and we hope that these projects will inspire, spark conversation, and promote civic unity.”

**TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED**

Due to safety concerns, some schools, performing art companies, and venues are temporarily suspending events. These include the Classic Charitable Foundation, the Fort Smith Little Theatre, the Artist, Audience & Community LIVE, and the Fort Smith Chorale. Keep checking their websites and social media for updates.



Community School of the Arts (CSA) recently broke ground on its Center for the Creative Arts that will be located next to the United States Marshals Museum along the Arkansas River.



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Northwest Fire  
Protection, Inc.  
(479) 646-8934

Professional Security, Inc.  
(479) 785-9333

Securitas Security  
Services USA, Inc.  
(479) 452-3829

**Staffing Services**

C.F.S.I. Employment  
Services  
(479) 782-7563

Drivers Select  
(479) 434-5743

Express Employment  
Professionals  
(479) 452-6400

FirstStaff Inc.  
(479) 452-9292

My HR Professionals  
(479) 474-7752

Penmac Staffing Services  
(479) 478-9106

SMX Staffing  
(479) 221-0377

Snelling Personnel  
(479) 782-4911

TEC Staffing Services  
(479) 785-3022

WorkSource, Inc.  
(479) 646-3868

**CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS  
& CLUBS**

**Associations & Clubs**

Arkansas Industrial Traffic  
Association  
(479) 782-0323

Believe in Fort Smith  
(479) 886-1657

Christian Business Men's  
Connection  
(479) 452-5597

Christmas Honors  
(479) 926-0939

Classic Charitable  
Foundation  
(479) 452-8944

Cowboys Regional Rodeo  
Association  
(918) 869-8351

Fort Smith Board of  
Realtors  
(479) 783-0655

Fort Smith Downtown  
Business Association  
(479) 651-0193

Girl Scouts-Diamonds  
of Arkansas, Oklahoma  
and Texas  
(800) 632-6894

Greater Fort Smith  
Association of Home  
Builders  
(479) 452-6213

Hardscrabble Country Club  
(479) 782-7211

NWAAA  
(479) 445-3903

Optimist Club of Fort Smith  
(479) 926-1707

Riders United 4 Children  
(479) 276-5658

River Valley Food Truck  
Association  
(479) 883-3828

River Valley IT Professionals

River Valley Landlords  
Association  
(479) 461-3832

**Chamber of Commerce**

Alma Area Chamber of  
Commerce  
(479) 632-4127

Altus Chamber of  
Commerce  
(479) 468-4684

Arkansas State Chamber  
of Commerce  
(501) 372-2222

Booneville Development  
Corporation (Booneville  
Chamber of Commerce)  
(479) 675-2666

Clarksville-Johnson County  
Chamber  
(479) 754-2340

Fort Smith Regional  
Chamber of Commerce  
(479) 783-3111

Greenwood Chamber  
of Commerce  
(479) 996-6357

Lavaca Area Chamber  
of Commerce  
(479) 739-2482

Mena/Polk County  
Chamber of Commerce  
(479) 394-2912

Ozark Chamber of  
Commerce  
(479) 667-2525

Paris Area Chamber  
of Commerce  
(479) 963-2244

Poteau Chamber of  
Commerce  
(918) 647-9178

Sallisaw Chamber of  
Commerce  
(918) 775-2558

# FORT SMITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Van Buren Chamber of  
Commerce  
(479) 474-2761

World Trade Center  
Arkansas  
(479) 418-4800

## CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES, SUPPLIES & EQUIPMENT

### Builders & General Contractors

Action, Inc.  
(479) 452-5723

Baldwin & Shell  
Construction Company  
(479) 845-1111

Beshears Construction, Inc.  
(479) 646-0846

Blake Construction Co. Inc.  
(479) 461-9983

Capital Structures  
(479) 783-8666

CDI Contractors  
(479) 695-1020

Cobblestone Homes  
(479) 646-7444

Crawford Construction  
Company  
(479) 474-9955

Edmondson Steel  
(479) 648-3242

Felix Thomson Company  
(479) 646-7321

Flintco LLC  
479-306-6280

Forsgren, Inc.  
(479) 782-1061

Justin Green Custom  
Homes  
(479) 242-0469

Kaelin Contractors, LLC  
(479) 650-7334

Kajacs Contractors, Inc.  
(501) 221-1131

Meadows Construction  
(479) 478-6788

Mr. Handyman  
(479) 309-0989

Multi-Craft Contractors, Inc.  
(479) 927-4220

Nabholz Construction  
Services  
(479) 358-8002

Newton's Heating and  
Air LLC  
(479) 214-1106

Petree Construction  
(479) 242-4410

Rausch Coleman Homes  
NWA, LLC  
(479) 455-9090

SSI Incorporated  
(479) 646-2901

Steve Beam  
Construction Inc  
(479) 484-1634

Superior Construction LLC  
(479) 769-5159

Time Striping, Inc  
(479) 474-0452

Turn Key Construction  
Management  
(479) 709-0044

Wear Construction  
Mgmt. Inc.  
(479) 646-7676

### Construction Equipment

AAA U-Rent-It, Inc.  
(479) 646-4341

Holmes Erection, Inc.  
(479) 646-4331

Hugg & Hall Equipment  
(479) 648-3322

### Residential & Commercial Building Supplies

A & D Supply Company  
(479) 668-2069

A Clean Potty  
(479) 783-4333

Acme Brick Company  
(479) 782-7974

Ferguson Enterprises  
(479) 782-7901

J & B Supply, Inc.  
(479) 649-4915

Star Mechanical Supply  
(479) 785-1168

## FAMILY & COMMUNITY SERVICES

### Community Services

Alzheimer's Association,  
Arkansas Chapter  
(800) 272-3900

American Heart Association  
(479) 439-6800

American Red Cross of  
Missouri and Arkansas  
(479) 782-1056

Crawford-Sebastian  
Community Development  
Council Inc.  
(479) 785-2303 ext. 107

Donald W. Reynolds Cancer  
Support House  
(479) 782-6302

Donald W. Reynolds Crisis  
Intervention Center  
(479) 782-1821

Fort Smith Public Library  
(479) 783-0229

Goodwill Industries of  
Arkansas  
(479) 434-4717

HOPE Campus  
(479) 668-4764

Literacy Council of  
Western Arkansas  
(479) 783-2665

Next Step Homeless  
Services  
(479) 242-5100

Project Compassion, Inc.  
(479) 783-2273

Project SEARCH Arkansas:  
ACCESS Initiative  
(501) 529-1332

Restore Hope Arkansas  
(479) 353-2683

River Valley Ovarian  
Cancer Alliance  
(870) 897-8111

Ronald McDonald House  
Charities of Arkoma  
(479) 756-5600

STEPS Family Resource  
Center  
(479) 782-7837

The Arc for the River Valley  
(479) 783-5529

United Way of Fort Smith  
Area, Inc.  
(479) 782-1311

### Family & Youth Services

1st Choice River Valley  
Pregnancy Medical Center  
(479) 484-5244

Arkansas Family  
Supports, Inc.  
(479) 763-0314

Arkansas Single Parent  
Scholarship Fund, Inc.  
(479) 434-6171

Child Care Aware  
River Valley  
(479) 222-6930

Comprehensive Juvenile  
Services, Inc.  
(479) 785-4031

Fort Smith Boys &  
Girls Club  
(479) 782-7093

Girls Inc.  
(479) 782-0622

Harbor House, Inc.  
(479) 785-4083

Heart to Heart Pregnancy  
Support Center  
(479) 452-2260

The CALL  
(479) 353-0767

The Young Homes  
(479) 222-6770

### Food Assistance

Community Services  
Clearinghouse Inc.  
(479) 782-5074

River Valley Regional  
Food Bank  
(479) 785-0582

### Shelter

Community Rescue Mission  
(479) 782-1443

Fort Smith Children's  
Shelter  
(479) 783-0018

The Fort Smith Boys Home  
(479) 646-2819

## FINANCIAL SERVICES

### Bank, Mortgage, & Credit Unions

Arkansas Best Federal  
Credit Union  
(479) 649-2060

Arkansas Federal  
Credit Union  
(479) 782-1000

Armstrong Bank  
(Hwy. 71 South)  
(479) 424-2370

Armstrong Bank  
(Main Branch)  
(479) 484-7000

Armstrong Bank (Old Gwd)  
(479) 424-2390

Armstrong Bank (Waldron)  
(479) 424-2300

Arvest Bank (74th St)  
(479) 709-6467

Arvest Bank (Alma Hwy)  
(479) 573-1750

Arvest Bank (Garrison)  
(479) 573-1630

Arvest Bank  
(Greenwood, AR)  
(479) 996-3510

Arvest Bank (Hwy 71)  
(479) 573-1610

Arvest Bank (Kelley)  
(479) 709-6430

Arvest Bank (Main Branch)  
(479) 573-1100

Arvest Bank (Midland)  
ATM Only  
(479) 573-1104

Arvest Bank (Parklane)  
(479) 709-8829

Arvest Bank  
(Rena Road Branch)  
(479) 709-6400

Arvest Bank (Zero 1)  
(479) 709-6410

# FORT SMITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Arvest Bank (Zero) (479) 573-1780	Farmers Bank (Barling) (479) 484-7878	First Western Bank (479) 424-2626	<b>CPA, Tax, &amp; Business Management Services</b>	New York Life (479) 452-9100
BancorpSouth (Alma) (479) 632-2258	Farmers Bank (Bonanza) (479) 996-4171	Firstar Bank (479) 551-2600	BKD, LLP (479) 452-1040	Northern Star Financial Group (479) 755-9944
BancorpSouth (Grand) (479) 784-8024	Farmers Bank (FS South) (479) 649-3000	FirstTrust Home Loans (479) 668-0436	Day & Associates, Ltd. (479) 783-8088	October Wealth Advisors, Inc. (479) 452-0996
BancorpSouth (Greenwood) (479) 996-9082	Farmers Bank (Hackett) (479) 996-4171	Gateway Mortgage Group (479) 763-0725	Elite Tax Relief LLC (479) 242-7499	Raymond James & Associates, Inc. (479) 494-3880
BancorpSouth (Hwy 71) (479) 649-1015	Farmers Bank (Hartford) (479) 639-2211	Grand Savings Bank (479) 289-7200	Hankins & Company (479) 646-6730	Stifel (479) 782-2527
BancorpSouth (Main Branch) (479) 785-4700	Farmers Bank (Huntington) (479) 928-1500	Regions Bank (Jenny Lind) (479) 668-3930	James and Company, CPAs (479) 452-6222	The Stephens Group, LLC (501) 377-3401
BancorpSouth (Riley Park) (479) 648-9140	Farmers Bank (Lavaca) (479) 674-4000	Regions Bank (Main Branch) (479) 494-1012	Landmark PLC, Certified Public Accountants (479) 484-5740	United Financial Advisors (479) 242-7466
BancorpSouth (Rogers Ave 2) (479) 484-4460	Farmers Bank (Main) (479) 649-3000	Regions Bank (Rogers Ave 2) (479) 401-2700	Lawrence, Schluterman & Schwartz Ltd. CPAs (479) 484-7211	ValueMetrik CFO (479) 242-1236
BancorpSouth (Van Buren) (479) 471-2104	Farmers Bank (Mansfield) (479) 928-1900	Regions Bank (Rogers Ave) (479) 494-1104	Lawson Accounting Group (479) 648-3680	Wells Fargo Advisors (479) 452-6760
Bank of England Mortgage (479) 461-4720	Farmers Bank (Rye Hill) ATM Only (479) 649-3000	Regions Bank (Zero) (800) 734-4667	Norris Taylor & Co. CPAs (479) 782-3670	<b>Payment Collections &amp; Services</b>
Bank OZK (479) 478-4300	First Financial Mortgage (479) 782-9300	Simmons Bank (479) 226-5945	Parrish Tax Service (479) 452-0765	Advantage Recovery Services, Inc. (479) 782-9230
Bank OZK (Phoenix) (479) 424-2482	First National Bank (Chaffee Crossing) (479) 788-4600	Simmons Bank (Rogers) (479) 785-4331	Przybysz & Associates, CPAs and Wealth Management (479) 649-0888	Credit Service Company (479) 782-7236
Bank OZK (Zero) (479) 424-1299	First National Bank (Grand) (479) 788-4378	Simmons Bank (Zero) (479) 648-1000	<b>Financial Advisors &amp; Investment Services</b>	Guardian Payment Systems (479) 434-4338
Centennial Bank (Boston) (888) 372-9788	First National Bank (Hwy 71 S) (479) 788-4391	Spiro State Bank (918) 962-2453	Ameriprise Financial/ Siebenmorgen and Associates (479) 478-1000	World Pay- RMS (479) 434-0373
Centennial Bank (Main Branch) (479) 358-8692	First National Bank (Main Branch) (479) 782-2041	Supreme Lending (479) 226-8300	Carl Norris, Partner, B2BCFO (479) 461-2321	<b>FITNESS, SPORTS &amp; RECREATION</b>
Centennial Bank (Old Gwd) (479) 494-3350	First National Bank (Midland) (479) 788-4376	SWBC Mortgage, NMLS #256669 (479) 783-4400	Edward Jones- Chrissy Nguyen (479) 649-9800	<b>Fitness</b>
Centennial Bank (VB branch) (479) 441-1156	First National Bank (Old Gwd Rd) (479) 788-4362	United Federal Credit Union (Alma) (479) 646-0114 x5869	Edward Jones-Libby Meyer (479) 494-7119	Fort Smith Athletic Club (479) 452-4031
Chambers Bank (Main Branch) (479) 478-9877	First National Bank (Rogers Ave #2) (479) 788-4386	United Federal Credit Union (Rogers Ave.) (479) 646-0114 x5798	Landmark Financial, LLC (479) 484-5173	HOTWORX (479) 242-8575
Farm Credit of Western Arkansas (479) 434-4040	First National Bank (Rogers Ave) (479) 788-4384	United Federal Credit Union (Van Buren) (479) 646-0114 x5848	McMillan Financial Services, Inc. (479) 785-5151	Orangetheory Fitness Fort Smith (479) 769-2052
Farmers Bank (1310 Center) (479) 996-4171	First Security Bank (479) 289-6000	United Federal Credit Union 35840 (479) 646-0114 x5748	Merrill Lynch - Scott Price & Associates (479) 441-2142	Planet Fitness (479) 755-9888
Farmers Bank (71 Center) (479) 996-4171				River Valley Fitness (479) 648-9400
				World Class Fitness (479) 646-4022

# FORT SMITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

## **Sporting Equipment**

Infinity Sports & Outdoors  
(479) 632-6360

Play it Again Sports-  
Fort Smith  
(479) 308-9090

True Grit Running  
Company, LLC  
(479) 434-3571

## **Sports & Recreation**

Ben Geren Regional  
Golf Course  
(479) 646-5301

Fort Smith Juniors  
Volleyball Club  
(479) 459-2452

Pajaro Gun Club  
(479) 414-0685

Thermold Magazines  
(480) 371-6676

Vertical Horizons  
Rock Climbing Gym  
(479) 242-2789

## **FOOD & BEVERAGE**

### **Bakeries & Desserts**

Andy's Frozen Custard  
(870) 919-3721

Confectionately Yours  
(479) 478-7223

Great American Cookies  
(479) 452-9999

Kona Ice of Fort Smith  
(479) 561-9966

Smallcakes Fort Smith  
(479) 769-2837

### **Bars & Wineries**

906 Cocktail &  
Cigar Lounge  
(479) 434-4343

Boondock's  
(479) 646-9464

Fort Smith Brewing  
Company  
(479) 242-3722

JKC Cellars  
(479) 922-9463

Post Familie Vineyards  
& Winery  
(479) 468-2741

Uncork'd  
(479) 434-5000

### **Beverage Suppliers**

Belle Point Beverages, Inc.  
(479) 782-3511

Burford Distributing, Inc.  
(479) 783-8979

Coca Cola Bottling  
Company  
(479) 646-0571

Coffee Wholesale USA  
(866) 570-0498

Hiland Dairy  
(479) 782-0383

Mountain Spring Water Co.  
(479) 648-9696

Pepsi Beverages Company  
(479) 646-0123

Platinum Distributing, Inc.  
(479) 646-7632

### **Coffee Shops**

Black Bison  
Coffee Company  
(479) 551-2880

Fort Smith Coffee Co.  
(479) 226-2437

Sweet Bay Coffee Co.  
(479) 785-0685

### **Food & Equipment Suppliers**

Fort Smith Restaurant  
Supply Co.  
(479) 646-1606

Markham Restaurant  
Supply Co., Inc.  
(479) 782-3233

Poultry Direct  
(479) 434-6969

Tankersley Foodservice  
(479) 471-6800

### **Restaurants & Caterers**

21 West End  
(479) 434-4213

Art's BBQ and Burgers  
(479) 452-2550

Blue Ember  
Smokehouse

Boondock's  
(479) 646-9464

Bricktown Brewery  
(479) 434-2739

Bruce & Terri Drive-In  
and Catering  
(479) 452-8171

Calico County  
(479) 452-3299

Chick-fil-A  
(479) 484-5152

Doe's Eat Place of  
Fort Smith  
(479) 784-9111

Domino's Pizza of  
Fort Smith  
(479) 434-6996  
479-785-0841

Eureka Pizza  
(479) 782-4545

Fish City Grill  
(479) 769-2400

Five Guys  
(479) 478-1007

Geno's Pizza Central Mall  
(479) 452-2914

Golden Corral  
(479) 484-1040

Gusano's Pizzeria  
(479) 434-6444

Hideaway Pizza  
(479) 777-1777

Jeff's Club House  
(479) 308-9123

Jerry Neel's Bar-B-Q  
& Catering  
(479) 646-8085

JJ's Grill  
(479) 434-4555

JRAN, INC.  
(479) 452-8489

K-Mac Enterprises, Inc  
(479) 646-2053

La Huerta Mexican  
Restaurant  
(Rogers Avenue)  
(479) 478-6425

Marco's Pizza  
(479) 719-8742

McAlister's Deli  
(479) 452-2622

McDonald's Restaurant  
#11594  
(479) 785-0726

McDonald's Restaurant  
#1330  
(479) 646-7911

McDonald's Restaurant  
#16196  
(479) 452-1204

McDonald's Restaurant  
#18761  
(479) 648-3939

McDonald's Restaurant  
#29430  
(479) 646-7047

McDonald's Restaurant  
#33471  
(479) 709-9107

McDonald's Restaurant  
#4173  
(479) 452-5500

McDonald's Restaurant  
#36558  
(479) 646-7006

Outback Steakhouse  
(479) 452-0900

Papa's Pub & Pizzeria  
(479) 783-9941

PT's Manor  
(479) 322-8415

Raising Cane's Chicken  
Fingers  
(479) 452-2640

Ralph's Pink Flamingo BBQ  
(479) 649-7427

Rialto Restaurant  
(479) 769-2406

River City Bistro  
(479) 434-6474

Rolando's  
(479) 573-0404

Stonehouse at Chaffee  
Crossing  
(479) 668-2828

Tacos 4 Life  
(479) 226-8152

Taliano's Italian Restaurant  
(479) 785-2292

Taste & See Cafe  
(479) 755-7414

TGI Fridays  
(479) 484-0906

Walk-On's  
Sports Bistreaux  
(479) 974-9255

Zapata's Mexican Grill  
(479) 434-2669

### **Vending Suppliers**

Booneville Vending  
(479) 675-3849

Glidewell Distributing  
Company  
(479) 649-3999

## **GOVERNMENT & EDUCATION**

### **Education**

Academy of Salon & Spa  
(479) 782-5059

Arkansas Colleges of  
Health Education  
(479) 308-2289

Arkansas Division of  
Workforce Services-  
Rehabilitation Services  
Division  
(479) 755-3300

Arkansas Tech University  
Ozark Campus  
(479) 667-2117

Christ The King  
Catholic School  
(479) 782-0614

Edge Factor  
(716) 805-3343

First Lutheran Church  
& School  
(479) 452-5330

Fort Smith Adult  
Education Center  
(479) 784-8185

# FORT SMITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Fort Smith Montessori School (479) 646-7225	Judge David Hudson (479) 783-6139	<b>HEALTH CARE</b>	Fort Smith Pediatric Dental Group (479) 785-5437	Peachtree Village, LLC (479) 785-5544
Fort Smith Public Schools (479) 785-2501	Office of U.S. Senator John Boozman (479) 573-0189	<b>Chiropractors</b>	Moore Dental Care (479) 484-5050	Senior Care Alliance (479) 459-0418
Fort Smith Wellness (479) 648-1107	Representative Cindy Crawford (479) 883-1667	Balkman Chiropractic Clinic 479-646-3984	New Health Dental (479) 478-6060	Van Buren Legacy Heights LLC (479) 262-6466
FSPS-Community Partnerships (479) 785-2501	Senator Tom Cotton (479) 751-0879	Seubold Chiropractic Clinic (479) 484-7200	Parklane Family Dental (479) 782-0080	Visiting Angels (479) 434-4634
Future School of Fort Smith (479) 431-8695	<b>Government</b>	<b>Counseling &amp; Mental Health Services</b>	Riley Farm Dental (479) 226-3500	<b>Healthcare Support Services &amp; Suppliers</b>
Greenwood School District (479) 996-4142	188th Wing (479) 573-5300	Anchored Hope Counseling (479) 561-7600	River Valley Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery (479) 484-1011	Arkansas Blood Institute (479) 452-5880
Harvest Time Academy (479) 434-3211	Arkansas Economic Development Commission 479-474-1541	Covenant Coaching & Wellness (479) 650-8375	River Valley Smile Center (479) 646-0706	Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care, Inc. (479) 649-8501
Head Start Child and Family Services, Inc. 479-474-9378	Arkansas Job Corps (501) 618-2574	Fort Smith Therapy, Health & Wellness (479) 323-2424	Udoug Orthodontics (479) 782-3021	ARORA (479) 422-4706
Immaculate Conception School (479) 783-6798	Central Business Improvement District (479) 784-2201	Fresh Roots Family Counseling (479) 226-8403	<b>Elder Care, Assisted Living, &amp; Nursing Homes</b>	USA, Inc. (479) 782-0197
Lincoln Childcare Center (479) 782-4997	Cherokee Nation (918) 776-0416	Healing Tree Women's Counseling Center (479) 883-2223	Area Agency On Aging of Western AR, Inc. (479) 783-4500	C & H Medical Waste Management (479) 414-3866
Trinity Junior High School (479) 782-2451	City of Barling (479) 452-1550	River Valley Teen Support Center (479) 345-8336	Ashton Place Health & Rehabilitation (479) 452-8181	Legacy Services Group 479-434-5500
Union Christian Academy (479) 783-7327	City of Fort Smith (479) 784-2201	Springwoods Behavioral Health (479) 973-6000	Brookdale Fort Smith (479) 484-5556	Mercy Health Foundation Fort Smith (479) 314-1133
University of Arkansas - Fort Smith (479) 788-7000	City of Greenwood (479) 357-1132	The Guidance Center (479) 452-6650	Brookfield Assisted Living at Fianna Oaks (479) 649-7100	PRN Medical Services (479) 785-9222
University of Arkansas - Fort Smith Foundation (479) 788-7020	City of Van Buren (479) 474-1541	Valley Behavioral Health System (479) 494-5700	Butterfield Place (479) 484-5200	Shared Services Center (479) 226-5424
University of Arkansas - Fort Smith, College of Business (479) 788-7807	Division of Services for the Blind (479) 782-4555 x3224	Womens Center for Health and Wellness (479) 459-6528	Central Arkansas Nursing Centers, Inc. (479) 783-4672	Snell Prosthetic & Orthotic Lab (479) 785-1881
Vista College (479) 434-2180	Division of Workforce Services (479) 783-0231	<b>Dental Care Providers</b>	Chapel Ridge Health and Rehab (479) 452-1541	The Gregory Kistler Treatment Center (479) 785-4677
<b>Elected Officials</b>	Fort Chaffee Joint Maneuver Training Center 479-484-2610	Arkansas Dentistry and Braces - Fort Smith (479) 782-7080	Golden Living (479) 201-2000	<b>Holistic Health</b>
Arkansas Secretary of State (501) 682-3409	U. S. Army Recruiting Ft Smith (479) 452-1598	Criswell Clinic (479) 474-7076	Mercy Crest Retirement Living (479) 478-3000	33 Supply, LLC (479) 242-1024
Boyd, Justin (479) 221-5864	United States Marshals Service - Western District of Arkansas (479) 424-5037	Dentures Today/Fort Smith (479) 646-4499	Methodist Village Senior Living (479) 452-1611	CBD American Shaman (479) 763-1680
Congressman Steve Womack (479) 424-1146	Western Arkansas Planning & Development Dist.	Fort Smith Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery Group, PA (479) 484-0200		Cryoshock (479) 551-2303
				Hempetics (479) 719-7121

Massages by Jennifer @  
Elite Therapeutic Massage  
(479) 459-0005

Will & Powers - Massage  
Therapy and Hypnosis  
(479) 459-2700

**Medical Hospitals &  
Primary Care Services**

Avicenna Health  
(833) 284-2362

Baptist Health-Fort Smith  
(479) 441-4000

Good Samaritan Clinic  
(479) 783-0233

Keystone Family Clinic  
(479) 434-6140

MedExpress Urgent Care  
(479) 494-7443

Mercy Clinic-Fort Smith  
Communities  
(479) 314-1109

Mercy-Fort Smith  
(479) 314-6000

Premise Health  
(479) 434-3333

River Valley Primary  
Care Services  
(479) 431-2057

River Valley Primary  
Care Services Eastside  
Family Clinic  
(479) 434-4747

UAMS West  
(479) 785-2431

**Medical Specialty Clinics**

ACENTA  
(479) 242-4220

Arkansas Heart Center  
(479) 484-1010

Center for Hearing, LTD  
(479) 785-3277

The Center for Pediatric and  
Adolescent Medicine  
(479) 785-2825

Johnson Dermatology  
Clinic, PLLC  
(479) 649-3376

KIDS FIRST  
(479) 785-9091

Premier Pediatrics  
(479) 763-3050

Radiologists, P. A.  
(479) 452-9416

The Belinga Clinic  
(479) 250-1562

**Medical Transport  
Services**

Air Evac (Air Med Care)  
(479) 438-4771

Fort Smith EMS  
(479) 783-1078

Pafford Air Med  
(844) 324-7367

TAC Air  
(479) 646-1611

**Optical Providers**

Arkansas Retina  
(479) 452-1000

Eye Group, LLC  
(479) 782-8892

Royal Eye Care  
(479) 785-0010

Steven Stiles, O.D.  
(479) 452-2020

**Pharmacies**

AllCare Pharmacy  
(877) 420-9400

Coleman Pharmacy, Inc.  
(479) 783-5171

Health Depot Pharmacies  
(479) 646-7875

Laws Drug Store  
(479) 452-6116

MediSav Pharmacy  
(479) 452-0278

Walgreens #3  
(479) 646-5208

**Rehabilitation, Physical  
Therapy, Home Health,  
& Hospice**

Around the Clock  
Home Care  
(479) 242-2273

BIG Physical Therapy  
(479) 434-4033

Bost, Inc.  
(479) 478-5600

Elite Home Health  
(479) 494-7273

Encompass Health  
(479) 785-3300

F & S Physical Therapy/  
Wellness Physical Therapy  
(479) 484-1100

FHE Health  
(479) 561-5501

Heart of Hospice  
(479) 494-0100

Home Instead  
(479) 434-6960

Kindred at Home  
(479) 452-0424

Legacy Health &  
Rehabilitation Center  
(479) 783-3101

Manes & Miracles at  
Chaffee Crossing  
(479) 970-8351

Select Specialty Hospital  
(479) 441-3980

Therapists In Motion  
(479) 222-1425

Thera-Play Pediatrics  
(479) 856-6400

Total Rehabilitation, Inc  
(479) 452-7773

Van Buren Health & Rehab  
(479) 474-8021

**Weight Loss Support**

Jenny Craig  
(479) 452-1213

Roller Weight Loss and  
Advanced Surgery  
(479) 434-6222

**INSURANCE**

**Insurance**

AAA Auto Club  
(479) 452-2010

Accident Fund Insurance  
Company of America  
(866) 206-5851

Arkansas Blue Cross &  
Blue Shield  
(479) 648-1635

Arkansas Health &  
Wellness Solutions  
(501) 954-6100

BHC Insurance  
(479) 452-4000

Business Insurance  
Consultants, Inc.  
(479) 783-7005

Chitwood Consultant  
(479) 650-7543

Cigna  
(800) 244-6224

CorVel Corporation  
(501) 255-6200

Covenant Benefits and  
Insurance Specialists  
(479) 461-1894

Cross Pointe Insurance  
Advisors LLC DBA JMR/  
PFP Insurance  
(479) 785-2912

DaleyCare  
(479) 444-0444

Direct Auto and Life  
Insurance  
(479) 441-3000

Direct Auto and Life  
Insurance (Grand Ave)  
(479) 242-7411

Direct Auto and Life  
Insurance (Hwy 71)  
(479) 782-6971

Engstrom Insurance  
(479) 420-4032

Everett Agencies of Liberty  
National Life Insurance  
(479) 883-1762

Falkner Insurance Agency  
(479) 452-1159

Farm Bureau Insurance  
(479) 646-3446

Farmers Insurance -  
Elizabeth Johnson Agency  
(479) 782-3276

Farris Insurance Agency  
(479) 926-0423

First Western Insurance  
(479) 424-2788

GBS  
(479) 452-3000

Konecny Insurance Services  
(479) 646-9400

Nationwide Insurance/  
Lamberson Agency  
(479) 782-0000

Nelson Insurance  
Agency, Inc.  
(479) 782-8718

OneDigital Health & Benefits  
(479) 434-6556

QualChoice Health  
Insurance  
(800) 228-7111

Shelter Insurance/  
Brent Lovell  
(479) 646-1700

State Farm Insurance -  
Craig Gigerich  
(479) 434-4844

State Farm Insurance -  
Ethan Gammill Agency  
(479) 783-2588

State Farm Insurance/  
Brad Thomas  
(479) 452-4320

State Farm West Central AR  
Sales Territory  
(479) 856-1273

The Employers' Advanced  
Cooperative on Healthcare  
(479) 431-6762

Windsor Insurance  
Services LLC  
(479) 648-9949

**IT &  
TELECOMMUNICATIONS  
SALES & SERVICES**

**IT & Telecommunications  
Sales & Services**

Apex Communications  
(AT&T)  
(479) 646-8877

AT&T  
(479) 785-6610

CE Workforce /  
dba T-Mobile  
(602) 550-8332

Cox Business  
(479) 573-2206

Custom Computer Source  
(479) 769-0177

Datamax Inc.  
(479) 782-5546

DCS Radio  
Communication Inc.  
(479) 646-6445

Digital Business  
Solutions, Inc.  
(479) 783-4980

Dixie Digital Imaging, Inc.  
(479) 783-6600

Hammer Solutions Inc.  
(479) 431-6890

Mainstream Technologies  
(479) 439-5700

MobileOne LLC  
(479) 452-2327

Orbiter Inc  
(253) 627-5588

Pinnacle IT Services  
Pinnacle Telecom  
(479) 242-0000

# FORT SMITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Preferred Office Technologies  
(479) 782-7991

Progressive Business  
Systems, LLC  
(479) 471-1771

Verizon Wireless  
(479) 222-3122

Wight Office Machines  
(479) 782-8256

WOW - World of Wireless  
(479) 478-6616

## JANITORIAL SUPPLIES & SERVICES

### Janitorial Supplies & Services

Acme Janitor &  
Chemical Supply  
(479) 646-8956

DOW Building Services  
(800) 791-2902

Elmers Chemdry  
(479) 646-8800

Fort Smith Medical &  
Janitorial Supply  
(479) 783-8929

Fort Smith Paper Company  
(479) 646-6171

Joe Martin Janitorial, Inc.  
(479) 461-0583

Morgan Supply, Inc.  
(479) 646-3922

Office Cleaning Department  
(479) 561-5414

Sigma Supply, Inc.  
(479) 785-0367

## LEGAL

### Legal

Alford Law  
(479) 494-5682

Daily & Woods, P.L.L.C.  
(479) 782-0361

Elder Law Practice  
(479) 434-3531

Friday, Eldredge and Clark  
(501) 376-2011

Gean, Gean & Gean  
(479) 783-1124

Hardin, Jesson & Terry  
(479) 452-2200

Hayes, Johnson & Conley,  
PLLC  
(479) 242-8814

Jeremy D Wann,  
Attorney at Law  
(479) 242-3320

Jones, Jackson, Moll,  
McGinnis & Stocks, PLC  
(479) 782-7203

Kevin Hickey, Attorney  
at Law  
(479) 434-2414

Ledbetter, Cogbill, Arnold  
& Harrison, LLP  
(479) 782-7294

Robertson, Beasley, Shipley  
& Robinson PLLC  
(479) 782-8813

Taylor King Law Offices  
(479) 668-2829

WALKER LAW GROUP,  
PLC  
(479) 783-5000

Wright Lindsey Jennings  
(501) 371-0808

## LODGING, TRAVEL & TRANSPORTATION/LOGISTICS CARRIERS

### Lodging

Candlewood Suites  
(479) 424-3800

Cherokee Casino &  
Hotel Roland  
(918) 427-7491

Choctaw Casino &  
Resort Pocola  
(918) 436-7761

Comfort Inn & Suites  
(479) 434-5400

Courtyard by Marriott  
(479) 783-2100

DoubleTree by Hilton  
Fort Smith City Center  
(479) 783-1000

Fairfield Inn & Suites  
(479) 755-3111

Hampton Inn  
(479) 452-2000

Hampton Inn - Van Buren  
(479) 471-7447

Holiday Inn Express  
(479) 452-7500

Home2 Suites by Hilton  
(479) 452-2100

Homewood Suites By Hilton  
(479) 452-7100

La Quinta Inn & Suites  
(479) 484-0303

Quality Inn  
(479) 484-0227

Quality Inn & Suites -  
Alma, AR  
(479) 632-4141

Residence Inn by Marriott  
(479) 478-8300

William O. Darby RV Commu-  
nity/TRCP Investments LLC  
(479) 242-0799

### Transportation/Logistics Carriers

ArcBest  
(479) 785-6000

Carco Rentals, Inc.  
(479) 441-3230

Carman, Inc.  
(479) 646-8486

Consolidated Terminals  
and Logistics  
(479) 474-7931

Evans Distributing Company  
(479) 783-3025

Five Rivers Distribution  
(479) 410-1557

Fort Smith Railroad Co.  
(479) 782-2511

Hoss Transportation LLC /  
Landstar Transportation Agency  
(479) 420-0999

Marrlin Transit, Inc.  
(479) 474-2325

Maverick  
Transportation, Inc.  
(479) 648-3769

Propak Logistics  
(479) 478-7800

Scranton Transfer  
(479) 782-3483

USA Truck  
(479) 471-3446

Utility Tri-State, Inc.  
(479) 997-1111

### Travel

Arkansas & Missouri  
Railroad Company  
(479) 751-8600

Fort Smith Regional Airport  
(479) 452-7000

Fort Smith Visitors Bureau  
(479) 783-8888

Hertz Local Edition  
Licensee  
(479) 649-0961

Universal Travel  
(479) 785-1800

## MANUFACTURING & PRODUCTION

### Environmental & Recycling

Davis Iron & Metal Inc.  
(479) 783-8931

Fort Smith Plating  
Company, Inc.  
(479) 646-5266

JEI, Inc.  
(833) 650-0477

Smurfit Kappa  
(479) 646-8922

WaterTech, Inc.  
(479) 649-7447

Yaffe Iron & Metal  
Corporation  
(479) 782-8294

### Glass, Mirrors, & Lighting

Arkansas Glass & Mirror  
(479) 782-8611

Arkansas Lighting  
479-474-0876

Dillmeier Enterprises, Inc.  
(479) 474-7733

### Industrial Electrical Suppliers

Corley Electric Inc.  
479-646-6214

Elliott Electric  
(479) 648-1902

Upchurch Electrical Supply  
Co. a division of Mayer  
Electric Supply Co.  
(479) 648-1276

Wholesale Electric Supply  
(479) 646-2000

### Industrial Suppliers & Services

Air Compressor Equipment  
Company  
(479) 783-6181

Applied Industrial  
Technologies  
(479) 648-3597

Boyd Metals  
(479) 782-9060

CED dba Keathley-  
Patterson Electric  
(479) 648-3600

Evans Enterprises, Inc.  
(479) 648-1500

General Pallets & Crates  
(479) 648-1225

Global Energy Solutions, LLC  
(479) 434-5176

Grainger, Inc. #294  
(479) 646-6091

Hajoca Supply Company  
(479) 782-4018

J M Supply Inc.  
(479) 783-6220

JDS Supply Company LLC  
(479) 646-8493

Komar Screw Corp. -  
SW Division  
(479) 646-9328

Lowvorn Wholesale Lumber  
Corporation  
(479) 646-4685

Memco, Inc.  
(479) 689-4122

Motion Industries  
(479) 646-6868

Pro Insulation  
(479) 646-5644

R.G.A. - Fort Smith  
(479) 648-1150

Shamrock Bolt & Screw  
(479) 648-9401

Wiese Material Handling  
(479) 646-8937

Williams Enterprises, LLC  
(479) 782-9139

### Machine Works & Milling

Arkansas Mill Supply, Inc.  
(479) 783-8951 ext.3100

Bradley Stamping Corp.  
(479) 785-0730

Industrial Splicing and Sling  
(479) 649-8388

### Manufacturers

ABB  
(479) 646-4711

ADKO, Inc.  
(479) 646-2533

# FORT SMITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Alpha Packaging, Inc. (479) 996-2829	Kraft - Planters (479) 648-0100	Trane Technologies (479) 648-7400	CLEAN The Uniform Company (417) 623-7195	The Whole Pet (479) 452-3235
Applied Process Inc. (479) 358-8555	Mars Petcare US (479) 709-6900	Tucker Duck & Awning Co. (479) 783-7234	Unifirst Corporation (479) 646-5943	<b>Veterinary Services</b>
Arkansas Poly, Inc. (479) 474-5036	Metal Roofing Supply Manufacturing, Inc. (501) 728-2122	Twin Rivers Foods Inc. (479) 785-2600	<b>Warehousing &amp; Storage</b>	Eastside Veterinary Clinic (479) 452-5700
Bekaert Corporation (479) 474-5211	Mid-South Milling Co., Inc. (479) 222-0314	Tyson Foods of Fort Smith (479) 788-6030	Americold (479) 646-7757	Fort Smith Animal Emergency Clinic (479) 649-3100
Bryant Preserving Company (479) 632-2401	Midwest Automation and Custom Fabrication Inc (479) 782-6535	Umarex USA, Inc. (479) 646-4210	Arkansas Refrigerated Services, Inc. (479) 783-1006	River Valley Animal Hospital & Emergency Services (479) 242-7824
Cloyes Gear & Products, Inc. Corporate Office (479) 484-5555	Nidec Motor Corporation (479) 234-9012	WeatherBarr Windows & Doors (479) 646-7891	Arkansas Warehouse, Inc. (479) 648-3378	Rogers Avenue Animal Clinic (479) 452-4300
Cloyes Gear & Products, Inc. Distribution Center (479) 646-1662	OK Foods, Inc. (479) 783-4186	WestRock Company (479) 785-4750	Logistics Warehouse, Inc. 479-410-2611	<b>REAL ESTATE MOVING &amp; STORAGE</b>
Corrugated Specialties Inc. (479) 646-6225	Owens-Corning (479) 646-8000	<b>Oil, Gas &amp; Exploration</b>	M P Warehouse Inc. (479) 649-9080	<b>Apartments &amp; Multi-family</b>
Covia (479) 310-8545	Pepper Source, Ltd. (479) 474-5178	Frost Oil Company (479) 471-9992	Spartan Logistics (479) 358-9119	ChapelRidge of Fort Smith (479) 649-8400
Craig Box Corporation (479) 782-6700	Pernod Ricard USA (479) 646-6100	Hanna Oil & Gas Company (479) 782-8808	<b>PERSONAL SERVICES &amp; BEAUTY</b>	GardenWalk of Barling (479) 452-6041
Elite Comfort Solutions (479) 282-3150	PRADCO Outdoor Brands (479) 782-8971	Littlefield Companies (479) 646-0595	<b>Beauty</b>	Harbortown Apartments (479) 452-5082
Georgia-Pacific (479) 782-4001	QualServ Corporation (479) 646-8386	Magellan Pipeline Company, LP (479) 646-1721	Desert Bloom Salon (479) 739-8750	Huntington Chase Apartments (479) 242-4001
Gerber Products Company (479) 782-8671	Rheem Manufacturing Co. (479) 646-4311	Pruitt Tool and Supply Co., Inc. (479) 646-1641	M. Marie Beauty Lounge (479) 653-5203	Ivory House Lofts (479) 478-6788
Gerdau (479) 646-0223	River Bend Industries (479) 646-3473	Robert E. Miller Investments (479) 646-3858	The Parlour (479) 551-2373	Marina Apartments (479) 484-7266
Glatfelter Advanced Materials NA, LLC (479) 242-0754	Riverside Furniture Corporation (479) 785-8100	Robert Westphal and Co. (479) 783-3038	TransFormation Salon (479) 434-4545	Mid-Town Apartments (479) 783-1089
Graphic Packaging International, LLC (479) 441-1900	Silgan Plastic Food Containers Corp. (479) 646-2333	Ross Explorations, Inc. (479) 783-7022	<b>Dry Cleaners</b>	Oakwood Gardens (479) 782-5155
HSM Solutions (479) 646-6161	Simmons Prepared Foods, Inc. (479) 242-0754	Stephens Production Company (479) 783-4191	Mr. Rob's Inc. (479) 785-2481	Shadowbrook Apartments (479) 646-7850
Hytrol Conveyor Company, Inc. (870) 935-3700	SPF America, LLC (479) 646-7815	<b>Steel</b>	Brotherton Bro. Cremation Services (479) 434-3901	Southpoint Apartments (479) 648-1036
INEOS Composites (479) 494-1600	Stainless Innovations (479) 783-1900	Davis Structural Steel, Inc. (479) 783-0888	Cotner Monument (479) 783-3103	The Links at Fort Smith (479) 648-8080
International Paper (479) 646-8376	Stryten Manufacturing (479) 646-8341	Mainer Iron Works (479) 785-2577	Edwards-Fentress Funeral Homes, Inc. (479) 782-8203	The Reserve at Chaffee Crossing (479) 222-6322
Kopco, Inc. (479) 83-6962	Terra Aqua Gabions (479) 785-5344	Ryerson (479) 646-7331	<b>PETS &amp; VETERINARY</b>	Three Corners, LLC (479) 452-1063
		<b>Uniforms</b>	<b>Pet Services</b>	West End Lofts (479) 649-8400
		Cintas Corporation (479) 646-9647	Adorable Pets Inc. (479) 783-5600	
			Rover Valley Natural Pet (479) 222-5646	

# FORT SMITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Woodcrest Park  
Apartments, LLC  
(479) 452-4090

## **Moving & Storage**

Boss Bins, LLC  
1-844-626-7787

Koller Moving &  
Storage, Inc.  
(479) 782-2088

Lock It Down  
(479) 561-6920

Movemart Relocation, Inc.  
(479) 242-1118

RazorBox Storage  
(479) 551-3062

Reese Properties  
(479) 755-6552

Rogers Avenue  
Storage, Inc.  
(479) 452-5300

U-Haul  
(479) 785-4036

## **Realtors & Property Management**

2M Investments, LLC  
(918) 315-5596

Albanese Cormier Holdings, LLC  
(409) 892-0200

Asset Management of  
Fort Smith Inc.  
(479) 785-1500

Assurance Realty  
(479) 783-3110

Belmont Management  
Company Inc  
(479) 242-8900

CBRE Little Rock  
(501) 492-3447

Charlotte King with  
WEICHERT REALTORS -  
King Realty Group  
(479) 242-4000

Chuck Fawcett Realty Inc  
(479) 484-5588

Coldwell Banker  
Fleming-Lau Realty, Realtor  
(479) 782-7285

Cornerstone Realty  
Group, Inc  
479-420-5439

Dinah McCord with  
Warnock Realty  
(479) 461-3244

Envision Real Estate  
Group, LLC  
(479) 478-6755

ERC  
(479) 478-5103

Fort Chaffee  
Redevelopment Authority  
(479) 452-4554

Fort Smith Housing  
Authority  
(479) 782-4991

Ghan & Cooper Commercial  
Properties  
(479) 478-6161

Griffin Properties of Fort  
Smith, LLC  
(479) 783-5191

HDMS & Standard GIS and  
Bartlett Hicks Realty  
(501) 680-0016

Hobbs & Curry Family  
Limited Partnership  
(479) 785-0844

Ivey Management, L.L.C.  
(479) 414-9432

Jeff Beauchamp, Realtor  
with Sagely & Edwards  
(479) 719-5037

Jimmy Bell Real Estate  
Company  
(479) 474-9200

Jonella Graham with  
Weichert, Realtors -  
The Griffin Company  
(479) 459-5079

K & C Properties  
(479) 782-4930

KCP Real Estate & Property  
Management  
(479) 242-4001

Keller Williams Platinum  
Realty- Cassie Elwonger  
(479) 434-3000

Kelley Realty Company  
(479) 782-9179

Linsey E. & Co. Realtors  
(479) 431-4168

Marshall L. Yantis with  
Warnock Real Estate  
(479) 883-2302

McGraw Realtors  
(479) 226-3931

Melissa Hallmark with  
Chuck Fawcett Realty  
(479) 285-0871

Nunnelee & Wright  
Commercial Properties  
(479) 785-4343

O'Neal Real Estate  
(479) 242-4609

Phoenix Investors, LLC  
(414) 283-2600

Real Property Management  
First Choice  
(479) 242-0791

Rental Management, Inc.  
(479) 782-7268

Sagely & Edwards  
Company  
(479) 782-8911

Strategic Realty  
(479) 262-6655

Sue White Homes  
(479) 452-6045

The Commerce Park  
Companies  
(479) 646-0900

Trinity Property Manage-  
ment LLC DBA Trinity  
Multifamily  
(479) 452-1817

United Properties  
Management, Inc.  
(501) 280-0037

Waldon Properties &  
Ventures, Inc.  
(479) 522-3743

Warnock Real Estate  
(479) 434-2818

Wayne King with  
WEICHERT REALTORS -  
King Realty Group  
(479) 242-4000

Weichert Realtors-  
The Griffin Company  
(479) 242-4000

## **Title & Escrow**

Advantage Title & Escrow  
(479) 434-6801

Capital Abstract &  
Title Company, LLC  
(479) 782-4500

Guaranty Abstract &  
Title Co., Inc.  
(479) 783-7793

LeFlore County  
Abstract & Title  
(918) 647-2222

WACO Title River Valley  
(479) 573-2814

Western Arkansas Title  
Services, LLC  
(479) 478-6226

## **RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Religious Organizations**

Calvary Frontlines  
(910) 303-0504

Cavanaugh Free Will  
Baptist Church  
(479) 646-2806

Central Christian Church  
(479) 452-1901

Central Presbyterian Church  
(479) 783-8966

Community Bible Church  
(479) 452-9201

Covenant Presbyterian  
Church (PCA)  
(479) 242-7737

East Side Baptist Church  
(479) 452-1481

Evangel Temple  
(479) 782-9121

First Baptist Church  
(479) 788-6100

First Presbyterian Church  
(479) 783-8919

First United  
Methodist Church  
(479) 782-5068

Grand Avenue  
Baptist Church  
(479) 783-5161

Harvest Time  
(479) 646-6001

Immaculate  
Conception Parish  
(479) 783-7963

New Life Church  
(479) 484-4411

Sister  
(479) 783-4147

St. Boniface Church  
(479) 783-6711

## **RETAIL**

### **Clothing**

Clothologie  
(479) 926-9000

Crane Clothing Co.  
(479) 629-5712

Emi-Lee's Consignment  
Boutique  
(479) 452-5488

OHSOBOHO Boutique  
(479) 384-6388

Purple Poppy Boutique  
(479) 597-8398

### **Electronics**

Batteries Plus Bulbs  
Fort Smith  
(479) 439-8282

Bedford Camera and Video  
(479) 785-1212

Best Buy Co., Inc.  
(479) 709-8939

TonersAreCheap  
(479) 461-1216

### **Florist**

Expressions Flowers, LLC  
(479) 783-3210

Johnston's Quality  
Flowers, Inc.  
(479) 783-5146

### **Furniture**

American Freight (HWY 71)  
(479) 646-0687

American Freight  
(Rogers Ave)  
(479) 452-2869

# FORT SMITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

Hank's & More Fine Furniture (479) 646-6631	<b>Liquor</b> Four Corks Wine and Spirits (479) 310-8444	Designer Again (479) 782-8313	Myers Engineering, PLLC (479) 474-4412	Martin's Heating & Air, Inc. (479) 785-4444
Old Fort Furniture (479) 434-4969	Garrison Liquor (479) 222-6226	Hummingbird Boutique LLC (479) 420-4008	Polk Stanley Wilcox Architects (501) 378-0878	Oren Atchley Co., Inc. dba Atchley Air (479) 785-1111
Sherry's She Shed (479) 644-5547	In Good Spirits (479) 434-6604	Savers (479) 452-1984	Risley Architects (479) 452-2636	Sanders Supply, Inc. (479) 648-8747
<b>Grocery</b>	Shamrock Liquor (479) 783-2076	The Shops at BrickCity (479) 434-5858	RJN Group, Inc. (479) 709-9439	Ted's Air Conditioning, Refrigeration & Htg Inc. (479) 783-7857
10Box Cost- Plus Food Store (479) 783-3690	Sodie's Wine & Spirits (479) 783-8013	<b>SPECIALTY CONTRACTORS</b>	Studio 6 Architects (479) 782-4085	<b>Home &amp; Commercial Exteriors &amp; Installation</b>
Aldi, Inc. (913) 768-1119	<b>Outdoor &amp; Hardware</b>	<b>Architecture &amp; Engineering</b>	The Hill Firm, Inc. (479) 494-1808	Burton Pools and Spas (479) 648-3483
growfresh (479) 648-8885	Sutherland Lumber Co. (479) 646-7858	Architecture Plus, Inc. (479) 783-8395	<b>Asphalt, Concrete &amp; Paving</b>	Fort Smith Winsupply Company (479) 649-0863
Harp's Marketplace (479) 452-1007	The Mower Shop, Inc. (479) 646-5102	Crafton, Tull & Associates, Inc. (479) 878-5873	Arkhola Sand & Gravel Co. (479) 788-6342	Harris Siding & Windows (479) 452-5000
Olde Fashioned Foods (479) 649-8200	Yeager Hardware (479) 783-4629	Data Testing (479) 649-8378	Buckner Concrete Contractors, Inc. (479) 782-4351	Modern Fence Company (479) 649-6511
Paul's Meat Market (479) 648-1118	<b>Specialty</b>	E D M Consultants, Inc. (479) 782-0474	GCC Ready Mix (479) 782-0291	Morton Buildings (479) 217-1441
Sam's Club (479) 484-5454	Bookish: An Indie Shop For Folks Who Read (479) 434-2917	Hawkins-Weir Engineers, Inc. (479) 242-4685	Moore Contracting Company (918) 436-0606	Overhead Door Company of Fort Smith, Inc. (479) 783-0667
Walmart Neighborhood Market (479) 484-9122	Candy Craze (479) 484-1169	HDMS & Standard GIS, Inc. Headquarters (501) 374-5500	<b>Electrical</b>	Sawyers Inc. (479) 649-4600
Walmart Neighborhood Market #4579 (479) 289-6896	DBKJ Numismatics Rare Coins & Currency (479) 783-5881	HSA Engineering Consulting Services, Inc. (479) 452-8922	AC/DC Contracting Co. (479) 883-3631	Southwest Garage Door Company (479) 782-0178
Walmart Store #388 (479) 785-5964	Jake's Fireworks (479) 353-1651	Leraris Engineering (479) 452-5822	Bieker Electric, Inc. (479) 783-3086	The Gutter Guy (501) 827-6555
Walmart Super Center #141 (479) 452-3370	Scentsy/Jennifer Summers (559) 381-9851	Lewis Architects Engineers (501) 223-9302	Copeland Electric LLC (918) 413-1937	Waterproofing Specialties Co., Inc. (479) 474-6051
Walmart Supercenter #125 (479) 646-6382	The Party Place (479) 782-9494	MAHG Architecture, Inc. (479) 782-1051	Matlock Electric Company Inc. (479) 783-7777	Window World of The Ozarks LLC (479) 424-1330
<b>Jewelry</b>	The UPS Store (479) 783-5800	McClelland Consulting Engineers, Inc. (479) 434-5333	Mr Electric of Fort Smith (479) 974-4400	<b>Home &amp; Commercial Interiors &amp; Design</b>
Diamond Center (479) 452-0246	Winston's Pipe and Cigar Emporium (479) 434-5627	Mickle Wagner Coleman, Inc. (479) 649-8484	Thomas Electric, Inc. (479) 783-1019	Alford's House of Carpets (479) 782-8616
John Mays Jewelers, Inc. (479) 452-2140	<b>Variety Stores</b>	Mid-South Steam Boiler & Engineering Company Inc (479) 471-1468	Trotter Electric (479) 783-5198	
Newton's Jewelers, Inc. (479) 782-9123	Central Mall Fort Smith (479) 452-1866	Morrison-ShIPLEY Engineers, Inc. (479) 452-1933	<b>Heating and Air</b>	
	Cooper's Coin & Pawn, Inc. (479) 646-4001		Air-Pro Heating & Air (479) 646-9699	
			Blaylock Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc. (479) 782-8940	

# FORT SMITH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY



**1050+ Members**  
**150**

TOTAL CHAMBER EVENTS



**54**  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
EVENTS



**43**  
GROUNDBREAKINGS, RIBBON  
CUTTINGS, AND GRAND OPENINGS



**40**  
VIRTUAL EVENTS OFFERED



**50**  
NETWORKING EVENTS



**426**  
COMMERCIAL PERMITS ISSUED IN  
2020 UP 42% FROM 2019 PERMITS



**68**  
NEW MEMBERS

**\$265 MILLION INVESTED IN 2020**



**CREATING  
BUSINESS-FRIENDLY  
REGION**

Allison Sales Company, Inc.  
(479) 649-9989

Dean's Discount Carpets, Inc.  
479-785-4161

Diversified Design  
(479) 452-7852

Fort Smith Flooring Group  
(479) 289-7111

Home Outlet  
(479) 452-2708

Smith Hardwood Floors, Inc.  
(479) 783-2850

**Home & Commercial  
Pest Control**

Adams Pest Control  
(479) 280-0941

Five Star Pest Control Co., Inc.  
(479) 782-1530

Terminix Service  
(479) 648-1176

Tri-Hill Turf & Pest  
(479) 782-0404

Turf & Pest Pro USA  
(479) 474-5296

**Landscaping & Lawns**

B&B Lawnsapes  
(479) 226-6033

Ellis Landscape Services  
(479) 494-7346

Frank Sharum Landscape  
Design, Inc.  
(479) 646-6517

Greenview Lawns, Inc.  
(479) 242-0466

Juan's Tree Service  
(479) 285-9621

Sharum's Garden Center, L.L.C.  
(479) 649-0662

**Painting & Drywall**

CertaPro Painters  
(479) 587-1250

Five Star Painting of Fort Smith  
(479) 650-8400

Mid-South Painting of Fort  
Smith, Inc.  
(479) 783-0353

**Plumbing**

Malone's Mechanical, Inc.  
(479) 474-8094

Mr. Rooter Plumbing of Greater  
Fort Smith  
(479) 595-0411

Westark Plumbing & Expert  
Drain Cleaning Services  
(479) 646-5151

Restoration Services  
CK Restoration, LLC  
(479) 452-8282

ServiceMASTER by Quality  
Restoration  
(479) 242-5765

Wall 2 Wall Restoration  
(479) 252-6650

**Roofing**

Adams and Son Roofing and  
Construction LLC  
(479) 629-0986

Curb Appeal Roofing LLC  
(479) 259-1964

Dale Crampton Company  
(479) 782-7251

Elite Roofing LLC  
(479) 478-8668

Foster Roofing Inc  
(479) 751-2300

GRI Graham Roofing Inc,  
(479) 806-0548

Harness Roofing, Inc.  
(479) 785-1829

Top Notch Roofing LLC  
(479) 652-9432

**UTILITIES**

**Utilities**

Arkansas Oklahoma Gas Corp.  
(479) 783-3181

Arkansas Valley Electric  
Cooperative  
(479) 667-2176

CLEAResult Consulting  
(479) 352-0325

Inland Waste Solutions LLC  
dba: Orion Waste Solutions  
(479) 878-1384

Oklahoma Gas & Electric  
Company  
(479) 649-5301

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**Cherokee**  
CASINO & HOTEL

**ROLAND**

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