



Q1 2023 Economic Development Report



Breaking news: Octoberfest & License to Cruise recognized regionally

The Midwest Area Chamber Executives (MACE) have named **Appleton's Octoberfest and License to Cruise** as the region's Community Event of the Year! Representatives from the Fox Cities Chamber attended the MACE annual conference recently to accept the award, which recognizes Chamber-led community events that demonstrate value to the community and chamber, resonance within their community, and measurable results and innovation.



Staff attend Governor's Conference on Economic Development

The Partnership's **Eric Broten**, Director of Economic Development, along with the Chamber's VP of Government Affairs, **Jon Turke**, and Chief Financial Officer, **Tom Lehr**, attended the *Governor's Conference on Economic Development* in February. This is WEDA's biggest educational and networking event of the year, with sessions covering today's most important economic development challenges and opportunities, such as housing, tax credits, talent, redevelopment, and other topics key to creating a vital state and regional economy.

Local small businesses continue to take advantage of free membership

The Chamber's free membership level, **Connect Free**, continues to gain traction, with 65 small businesses joining in Q1. To date our total number of Connect Free members is 342. If you know of a small business who qualifies, please share this information and encourage them to join. Qualifications include businesses with 5 or fewer employees; nonprofits with 10 or fewer employees; and restaurants. They must be located in Outagamie, Calumet, or northern Winnebago counties. foxcitieschamber.com/connect-free-membership/

Get world economy updates delivered to your inbox weekly

The Regional Partnership recently launched **14 Fast Fact** in collaboration with bowtie economist Elliot Eisenberg. The weekly newsletter is emailed every Monday, filled with 14 informative and engaging tidbits on what's going on in the world. Here are a couple samples from a recent issue:

Lovely Labor - Net March job growth was 236,000, the smallest rise since December 2019, except for -268,000 in December 2020. Rising first-time unemployment claims, reduced job openings, and the decline in the work week, point to a softening but still strong labor market. Job creation remains double trend growth (source: FFF Research).

Technology Transitions - While generative artificial intelligence like ChatGPT may eliminate some white-collar jobs, the fear of large job losses is overblown. Electricity, telephones, the internet, and other innovations have never reduced the demand for labor and this tech breakthrough won't either (source: FFF Research).

To subscribe, scan the QR code at right.



Economic Development Report: Programs

Excellence in Education Shining Star Awards

In March our **Excellence in Education Shining Star Awards** honored Fox Cities educators who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to supporting students in and outside of the classroom, enhancing the educational experiences and outcomes of students. Congratulations to these amazing educators, from Pre-K to Secondary Education, who make our school systems a great place for our children. Visit our Hall of Honor page to see the list of 2023 recipients: foxcitieschamber.com/chamber-hall-of-honor/.

Economic Outlook Lunch

Elliot Eisenberg did not disappoint at our annual **Economic Outlook Lunch** in February. Results of the Fox Cities Economic Impact Survey were also revealed; you can view the report here: foxcitiesregion.com/economic-outlook-survey-2023. Mark your calendar for our 2023 EOL program: February 13, 2024.

“Dr. Eisenberg is probably only one of a handful of economists who can make the topic and presentation enjoyable to watch.” -- 2023 Attendee

Business leaders honored for achievements

Congratulations to the individual recipients of our Lifetime Achievement Awards in January, who were recognized at the Chamber’s Celebrate annual dinner:

- **Dennis Jochman**, Gus A. Zuehlke Distinguished Service Award
- **Marcia Erdman**, Joyce Bytof Exceptional Mentor Award
- **Laurie Butz**, ATHENA Leadership Award®
- **Terry Timm**, Fox Cities Business Leader Hall of Fame

Thanks to each of them for the impact they have on the Fox Cities.



Helping local businesses thrive through membership

New and current Chamber members are appreciating the **Membership Maximizer** program. This quarterly event is a great update on how businesses can take advantage of their Chamber membership. There is also ample networking time for attendees. The next program will be held on May 18, 2023; if you or someone you know is interested, visit the events page on our web site to register.

“The Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce does a great job helping new members understand their resources and the benefit they offer. The Maximizer event was warm, welcoming and very well done/helpful. I loved meeting Chamber staff and understanding their focus better.” -- Past attendee

Economic Development Report: Ongoing

Employee Friendly Workplace Certifications achieved

Congratulations to the Fox Cities employers who were certified by the Partnership as employee-friendly in the first quarter: **Ducommun, ThedaCare, and Weidert Group**. These employers are committed to creating a positive environment and work/life balance!



NEW! Fox Cities employers designated as Champions of Young Professionals (YPs)

Working with area employers to promote YP supportive workplaces is a goal of the Chamber's PULSE Young Professionals, which is why they have launched a Champion of Young Professionals program. Any Fox Cities company can apply to be classified as a YP champion and pledge to provide support and a positive work environment for YPs within their company.



The designation offers an opportunity for businesses to showcase their support of Young Professionals, and assist with their recruitment and retention efforts. Congratulations to **Miller, In-Sight Eye Care, and RGL Logistics** for receiving the designation in Q1.

Business Attraction Update

In Q1 the Fox Cities Chamber Regional Partnership conducted 21 **Business Retention & Expansion (BRE)** visits. BREs are free for any employers in the Fox Cities region, to help businesses identify needs, challenges, and opportunities.

The Partnership is continually active in business attraction projects to bring employers to the region. We assisted with the following projects this quarter:

- Project Loop
- Project Amber Waves
- Expansion of local medical clinic
- Local food production company
- Collaborating with ADI and City of Appleton to bring a downtown grocery store to Appleton
- Responded to 9 requests for Fox Cities economic data.



Questions?

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Interested in setting up a BRE?

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