

THE EXECUTIVE

THE STATE CHAMBER 
Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry
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Meet Your State Chamber Board

The State Chamber's Executive Council is comprised of the chairman, chairman-elect, past chairman, treasurer, president and six district vice chairmen. The vice chairmen represent each of the six geographic districts on the Executive Council. These officers are elected for a one-year term by the full Board. In this issue of *The Executive*, we feature the vice chairs from Districts II and IV.

Julie L. Krebs is in her first year as District IV vice chairwoman. She is the vice president and co-owner of Falls City-based AIRLANCO, a designer and manufacturer of air management equipment. AIRLANCO is the nation's leader in aeration products, including axial and centrifugal fans, ductwork and other aeration products.



Julie L. Krebs

Krebs has worked in the accounting field for more than 20 years, with more than half of that time as owner of

her own business specializing in entrepreneurial development and consulting. She has held a position on the Greater Falls City Economic Development "Roadmap to Success" steering committee, which helped form the Falls City Economic Development and Growth Enterprise.

Krebs helped work for the passage of several legislative issues that have provided Nebraska with key economic development tools, including the state and local tax exemptions for machinery, equipment and related services, as well as the Nebraska Advantage Act.

Krebs joined the State Chamber Board in January 2006 and was elected to serve on the Executive Council in January 2008. She is active in many community projects, including Playground Partners, an organization devoted to providing safe play equipment for children. Krebs and her husband, Ron, have five children and four grandchildren.

Tonn M. Ostergard is in his first year as District II vice chairman. He is president and chief executive officer of Lincoln-based Crete Carrier Corporation, which is one of the largest privately-held carrier groups in the United States with 5,700 trucks and 13,000 trailers

nationwide. Ostergard also serves as vice chairman of Hunt Transportation, an associated company of Crete Carrier.

A graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Harvard Business School's Owner/President Management Program, Ostergard has been with Crete Carrier since 1985, when he was named vice president and chief financial officer. Prior to his arrival at Crete Carrier, Ostergard spent five years in public accounting.

Outside of his employment, Ostergard sits on several association, business, non-profit and philanthropy boards. He served as chairman of the Young Presidents Organization and the Nebraska Motor Carriers Association. He is a director and past chairman of the St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center Board and a director with the Boy Scouts of America Cornhusker Council. He also serves as a member of the Board of Counselors for the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Ostergard also works closely with the 2015 Vision Group, a group of Lincoln business leaders whose work involves planning a new Lincoln arena and fostering research at the university. He has been a member of the State Chamber board since 2005, and was elected to serve on the Executive Council in January 2008. Ostergard and his wife, Holly, have two children, Halley and Winston. ■



Tonn M. Ostergard

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State Chamber Views...
Guest Editorial by Jay Timmons
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"Time To Talk Energy"

Achieving an affordable and sustainable energy supply is essential to our economy, our national security and our citizens.

Rising energy costs have already contributed to the loss of more than three million U.S. manufacturing jobs since 2000. The chemical industry has shed more than 100,000 jobs because of high natural gas prices, and fertilizer manufacturers have shuttered American plants. U.S. manufacturers and their employees are disproportionately affected by energy price instability because our sector consumes roughly one-third of America's available supplies.

The price of oil is being driven by demand fueled by strong global growth and reliance on sources in potentially unstable regions. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) projects that energy demand in America alone is expected to climb 30 percent by 2030. Common sense dictates that we must produce more oil and natural gas domestically using environmentally-sound techniques.

Although the United States has vast resources of oil and natural gas, we still rely on imports for more than 60 percent of our consumption. We can do better. The Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) has enough oil reserves to drive 85 million cars for 35 years and enough natural gas to heat 100 million homes for 60 years. The Arctic Natural Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) in Alaska also has abundant domestic oil and natural gas supplies. But politics always gets in the way.

Responding to rising energy costs and the need to protect the environment, U.S. manufacturers have introduced a variety of innovative technologies, new business processes and enlightened management techniques to encourage greater efficiency in the industrial use of energy. Impres-

sively, energy efficiency in the United States has doubled since 1970. But our country's need for energy has risen 47 percent due to a growing economy.

Energy intensity – the amount of energy it takes to produce one dollar of goods – has declined by 1.9 percent per year since 1992. Roughly half of the reduction in energy intensity can be attributed to energy efficiency improvements. While continuing to boost efficiency gains and investing in new energy sources will play critical roles in meeting our country's energy demands in the future, increasing access to domestic sources of reliable energy is essential to the long-term health of U.S. industry and the American worker.

A robust, comprehensive and forward-looking energy policy must have five critical elements. First, we must make a national commitment to further reduce the energy intensity of the U.S. economy and educate consumers. If the United States wants to set an example for the world, our lawmakers should establish a national goal of decreasing the energy intensity of the U.S. economy by 30 percent (or 2.5 percent per year) by 2021. The best way to raise our energy efficiency is by focusing on public-private partnerships,

not mandates.

Second, we must strengthen public-private research and development efforts. That's why the NAM supports permanent extension of the R&D tax credit and initiatives to boost the number of U.S. engineer graduates.

Third, we must rationalize existing statutes and regulations that affect the supply, distribution and use of energy. The NAM supports actions that require federal agencies to provide an analysis of any adverse effects on energy supply, distribution or use and offer reasonable alternatives. The problem, though, isn't just with newly proposed regulations. In 2005, federal costs for environmental and energy regulation were \$224 billion. Costs associated with pollution abatement compliance amount to a 5.2 percent tax on U.S. industry, placing our country at a competitive disadvantage.

Fourth, we must increase domestic power generation. Since electricity demands will continue to rise, America must turn increasingly to coal and clean coal technologies, nuclear energy and "renewable" power, such as wind and solar.

Finally, we must increase domestic energy supply. The best way to accomplish this is to expand accessible production on the OCS – building on the important first step taken by Congress in Dec. 2006 — and in the ANWR. We also need to augment U.S. oil and natural gas reserves with alternative and unconventional fossil fuels and expedite the use and production of ethanol, biodiesel, biomass and waste-to-energy projects. ■

Sibley Recognized for 40 Years at State Chamber



Former State Chamber chairmen Gary Warren of Aurora (2005) and Robert B. Harris of Lincoln (1987) talk with longtime State Chamber Office Manager Carol Sibley during a recent celebration held to honor Sibley's 40 years at the association. Sibley's career with the State Chamber began in July 1968. To recognize Sibley's service, State

Chamber staff was joined by several board members and past chairmen at Wilderness Lodge in Lincoln.



State Chamber Staff Completes CPR/AED Training

On July 3, State Chamber staff members completed a training course for CPR and the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). The course, taught by an American Red Cross instructor, provided staff members the skills necessary to operate the new AED device now located in the building housing the State Chamber's headquarters. In addition to operating the AED, staff members were taught basic steps on how to give immediate care to an ill or injured person until more advanced medical care arrives. Pictured above are State Chamber staff members Jamie Karl and Kay Koch practicing CPR on a Little Anne resuscitation manikin.

Coming Soon: The State Chamber's Fall Legislative Forums

The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry wants to hear from you this fall as we plan to visit more than 30 communities statewide for our annual Legislative Forums. The forums begin Aug. 28 and continue through Oct. 14.

This year's program will focus on the Legislature's recent session – including developments involving taxes, labor law, workers' compensation and economic development – as well as providing a snapshot at how Nebraska compares to other states in key competitiveness rankings.

These forums are your opportunity to visit with your state senator and meet legislative candidates, who will be invited to forums in their districts. State Chamber elected leaders and executive staff will be present to answer questions regarding the issues impacting Nebraska's business community.

And employers should take note: the State Chamber Legislative Forums are an excellent opportunity to give employees a firsthand look at the legislative process while meeting their elected representatives and candidates. Enclosed with this issue of *The Executive* is the final schedule of forum locations and dates. For more information, please contact the State Chamber office at (402) 474-4422. ■

Nebraska Ranked in Top 15 of Pro-Business States

Nebraska is one of the nation's top 15 pro-business states, according to the 2008 Pollina Corporate Real Estate, Inc. survey unveiled earlier this year. Nebraska dropped five spots from the 2007 Pollina study, while three surrounding states – South Dakota, Wyoming and Kansas – made this year's top 10.

According to economist Dr. Ron Pollina, who spoke in Omaha recently to members of the State Chamber's Leadership Nebraska program, global competition has become extremely intense. "Our clients tell us that if they are to remain in the United States, they must be in the most pro-business states," Pollina said. He noted that Nebraska's drop in the survey had more to do with the pro-business actions of other states.

The Pollina study considers 29 factors, including taxes; human resources; unemployment insurance and workers' compensation costs; business incentives; and ability to respond to new and existing companies.

The study is limited to factors over which state government has control. According to Pollina, the list reflects state leadership that "truly understands the importance of producing the best job opportunities available for their

constituents." "The state governments at the top of the list understand that they must be very pro-active in the international battle to keep and attract jobs," Pollina said.

Nebraska received high grades (grade A) in the areas of right to work, inventory taxes, and state economic development efforts, including state government websites. The Cornhusker State scored poorly (grade F) in the areas of corporate taxes, individual income taxes, sales and gross receipt taxes, and unitary taxes.

Pollina said the most competitive states are found in the Midwest and Southeast. He mentioned Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina as states others might aim to emulate.

2008 Pollina Pro-Business States Study

1. North Carolina
2. Florida
3. Virginia
4. South Carolina
5. Wyoming
6. South Dakota
10. Kansas
15. **Nebraska**
16. Missouri
25. Iowa
27. Colorado ■

Leadership Nebraska Accepting Applications

The State Chamber's Leadership Nebraska program is in its second year of developing a cross-section of leaders who will use their talents and abilities to foster a new spirit of energy, enthusiasm and vitality throughout the state.

Each year, a class of up to thirty Nebraska leaders – in their 20s, 30s, 40s, and 50s – is selected to participate in the program. Those selected must have demonstrated skills and experience in civic activities, public affairs and in their professional careers.

The selected participants will be from different regions of the state, have varied backgrounds and possess diverse talents. But all must have one common characteristic: an abiding interest in Nebraska and its future.

Applications for the 2009 Nebraska Leadership class are being accepted now until mid-October. Sessions for the next class will begin in late February 2009. For more information on Leadership Nebraska, call Don Mihovk, Executive Director, at 402-474-4422 or e-mail dmihovk@nechamber.com.

To download the application form, go to www.nebraskaleadership.nechamber.com. ■

Business Magazine: Nebraska No. 4 For Quality of Life

Nebraska has the fourth best quality of life according to the 2008 *Business Facilities* Rankings Report. From a year ago, Nebraska's ranking improved from 9th to 4th place. *Business Facilities* Magazine bills itself as "the leading source of intelligence on corporate expansion and relocation since 1968."

The publication's annual look at the top-ranked localities reflected "the fierce competition driving economic development across all regions," according to the magazine's editors. To measure the quality of life, *Business Facilities'* staff looked at 20 key factors, including quality of public schools; crime rates; material well-being (including average income levels, tax rates, and personal bankruptcy rates); job security; arts and recreation; pollution; commute length; health care premiums; occupational accident rates; climate; and the cost of living.

Quality of life is a key component of the publication's overall Business Climate ranking, according to *Business Facilities'* Website, since "employers and employees who are happy outside of work will contribute to a better bottom line through increased motivation, morale, productivity and retention." ■

State Chamber Welcomes New Investors

Membership in the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry is an investment in Nebraska's economic well-being. This month, the State Chamber welcomes the following new members and encourages members to consider doing business with fellow Chamber members.

BRULE

McGinley-Schilz
Feedyard Ltd.
Dennis Schilz

Sponsor: Marion Kroeker,
Ogallala/Keith County
Chamber of Commerce

COLUMBUS

Husker Steel Inc.
Mike Rowe

Technik Mfg. Inc.
Dennis L. Carstens

CURTIS

BSB Construction, Inc.
Norma Lashley

Sponsor: Rod Hooker,
Hooker Brothers Construc-
tion Co.

ELK CREEK

Gottula Propane Service,
Inc.
Kathryn A. Gottula

GORDON

Modern Farm Equipment
Tom Bonous

LINCOLN

Aramark
Paul Rose

Architectural Design
Associates, P.C.

Richard Bergt
Sponsor: Bob Caldwell,
Hampton Enterprises, Inc.

Lincoln Medical Education
Partnership
Larry Renecker

Madonna Rehabilitation
Hospital
Linda Sullivan

Sponsor: Bob Harris, RB
Harris Co.

National Arbor Day
Foundation
Matt Harris

Nebraska Concrete and
Aggregates Association
Jereme Montgomery

Premium Protein
Products
Kevin Miller

NORFOLK

Invest Nebraska
Corporation
Brandon D. Theophilus

Midlands OB/GYN, PC
Mark Davis, M.D.

OMAHA

Boone Brothers Roofing
Allan E. Boone

Booz Allen Hamilton
Mark Himler

Capital Express, Inc.
Jack Johnson

Clarkson College
Louis Burgher, M.D.

Enterprise Properties Inc.
Douglas D. Doering

SUTHERLAND

Midwest Renewable Energy,
LLC
Troy Gavin