

Learn more about the **Covington Business Council's**
Events | Accomplishments | Volunteers | Community Impact



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR PAT FREW



The work of the Covington Business Council continues to grow and flourish. Standing significantly above the 500-organization member mark, the organization's depth matches its breadth.

The Council is seeking to broaden its outreach to represent a diverse audience representing ethnicity, sexual orientation, income, age, developmental disabilities, etc., celebrating all perspectives. This approach is incorporated in the creation of a CBC Diversity Statement approved recently by our board. In addition, our organization invested in the development of the first-ever State of NKY Black Business report by Sparklight Creative Group. The CBC has also doubled assigned funds directed at initiatives to welcome and engage more black businesses in 2024.

The CBC is also creating plans to quantify the economic firepower the combined resources of our members make to the community. This is designed to amplify the voice and impact of the positions and activities the CBC undertakes to better represent those businesses.

The CBC aligned with meetNKY and the City of Covington to strategize, conceptualize and create vibrant new wayfinding signage that will be unveiled this spring. This activity is long overdue and comes at a time when the unparalleled economic growth in the form of new development (Covington Central Riverfront, the One NKY Center) can take advantage of this way-making. Thanks to the Carol Ann & Ralph V. Haile, Jr. Foundation for funding the wayfinding design work in addition to the installation of the 70 CBC planters adorning the Madison Avenue Corridor.

We hope these new developments will catalyze your support for the CBC and encourage you to elevate your involvement. There is no way the CBC could have achieved its growth of the past decade without the support of our members.

Pat Frew
Executive Director
Covington Business Council

LETTER FROM 2023 CBC BOARD CHAIR JAY FOSSETT

2023 was a busy year for the Covington Business Council as the organization continued to grow its membership and the services it provides its members. To continue our growth and relevancy to our members, the CBC Board of Directors retained an outside consultant to help it create a four-year Strategic Plan. The consultant first conducted an extensive survey completed by more than 200 member representatives to identify community challenges, how the CBC can address those challenges and how well we are meeting stakeholder needs. This person also interviewed nearly 20 community/business leaders to delve further into these topics. The CBC Board then held a day-long retreat to craft and adopt a Strategic Plan to help us fulfill our mission of actively promoting and building a positive business environment in Covington. This Strategic Plan seeks to Champion (elevate the voice of the Covington business community), Connect (facilitate opportunities to create impactful relationships), and Celebrate (promote the uniqueness of Covington and its businesses and influence its future). Over the next two years, the Board and the CBC staff will work diligently to accomplish the objectives outlined in this plan.

Jay Fossett
Board Chair
Covington Business Council



MEET OUR STAFF



PAT FREW
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



JENNIFER DANNER
OPERATIONS MANAGER



AMANDA CARLESKI
MARKETING & EVENTS MANAGER

MEET THE 2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



JAY FOSSETT
CITY OF DAYTON, KY



EMILY BADGER
LISSE STEAKHOUSE



CARA BROOKS
DUKE ENERGY



DR. FERNANDO FIGUEORA
GATEWAY COMMUNITY &
TECHNICAL COLLEGE



BRUNO GIACOMUZZI
ST. ELIZABETH
HEALTHCARE



SCOTT GUENTHER
ADAMS LAW, PLLC



JULIE HOPKINS
CINCINNATI
CHILDREN'S



JOHN KELLER
PNC BANK



JULIE KIRKPATRICK
MEETNKY



TONY MILBURN
THE MILBURN
GROUP, LLC



GREG PAETH
COVINGTON
NEIGHBORHOOD
COLLABORATIVE



ROGER PETERMAN
DINSMORE & SHOHL



JACKIE ROBERTO
MADISON DESIGN



JEANNE SCHROER
CATALYTIC
DEVELOPMENT FUND
OF NKY



DALE SILVER
C-FORWARD



KEN SMITH
CITY OF COVINGTON



KEN WEBB
REPUBLIC BANK



BETSY WEBER
DBL LAW



WILL WEBER
SOUTHBANK PARTNERS



MARY WILLENBORG
PARK PLACE
BUSINESS
IMPROVEMENT
STRATEGIES

ABOUT THE COVINGTON BUSINESS COUNCIL



With a member-centric focus, the Covington Business Council provides access and connections to the dynamic growth of Covington, Kentucky by fostering a culture that promotes one-on-one attention. CBC delivers an experience that is personal and focused on the success of its members. Covington Business Council provides educational programming, impactful assistance and meaningful opportunities for its members to advance their business and professional growth.

Reasons to Join and Renew

Covington Centric

Relationship Driven Culture

1-1 Assistance

Broad Membership

Impactful Connections

Relevant Programming

Our Vision

The Covington Business Council maximizes the potential for economic growth in the City of Covington.

Our Mission

To actively promote and build a positive environment in Covington, Kentucky.

OUR YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

516

Members

105

New Members

100+

Events

57%

Email Open Rate

1,586

Monthly Website Views

3,883

Total Attendance in 2023

2023 Social Media Statistics



2,298
Followers



1,173
Followers



1,062
Followers



1,174
Subscribers

MONTHLY LUNCHEONS



MONTHLY LUNCHEON IMPACT

11

MONTHLY LUNCHEONS

1,639

TOTAL ATTENDEES

In 2023, the CBC hosted eleven luncheons, with a cumulative attendance of 1,639 attendees and averaging 164 attendees per luncheon. This year, our luncheons topics included: *State of the County with County Executive Kris Knochelmann; The OneNKY Center, Bankers Overview of Market Conditions; The State of the City with Mayor Joe Meyer; Covington-Based Businesses Not On Your Radar*, as well as our *Annual Legislative Luncheon*.





CBC CONNECTS

SPONSORED BY:

first

first financial bank



GATEWAY
COMMUNITY
& TECHNICAL COLLEGE

CBC CONNECTS IMPACT

44

EVENTS HELD IN 2023

924+

CONNECTIONS MADE



CBC CONNECTS

CBC Connects is easily one of the more popular CBC events. Held every Wednesday at the First Financial Bank in Covington, we averaged 21 attendees each week. Each meeting delivers a rich experience in a relaxed and super-friendly atmosphere. Attendees are successful, enthusiastic, and sincerely want to do business with you!

THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 CONNECTS LEADERSHIP TEAM

Steve Tracy, At Work Personnel

Jillean Hughes, Midwest Pay Link

Melissa Frazier, Waterleaf Solutions

Matthew O'Bryan, Lifetime Financial Solutions

Lauren Moore, UM Cincy

Zach Willmes, ZW Insurance

Connie Flynn - Erigo Employer Solutions

Laila Gonzalez, Millenial Title/Freire & Gonzalez

SPRING GOLF OUTING



SPECIAL EVENTS



This year the CBC hosted two successful Golf Outings - one in the Spring and another more relaxed event in the Fall. We were fortunate for beautiful weather for both events.

TOTAL SPRING GOLF ATTENDANCE: 162
TOTAL FALL GOLF ATTENDANCE: 96



SIGNATURE EVENTS

CBC ROUNDTABLES

In 2023, we hosted three roundtable events. Events hosted included *How to Access Capital for your Business Via Loan, Grant, and Flexible Financing Strategies*, *What Can the CBC Do to Enhance Diversity and Inclusion*, and a roundtable on *How to Effectively Network*.

TOTAL ROUNDTABLE ATTENDANCE: 65

AFTER HOURS SOCIALS

This year members had numerous opportunities to network and develop relationships with other CBC members. Social venues included: Second Story Bar, Juniper's, Hotel Covington, Bircus on Pike, The Hannaford and the Opal Rooftop Bar.

TOTAL AFTER HOURS SOCIAL ATTENDANCE: 296

NONPROFIT LUNCH AND LEARNS

Generously hosted by VonLehman CPA & Advisory Firm, this year's topics included *The Importance of Operating Efficiencies*, *Successful Ways to Expand Your Nonprofit's Donor Base*, and *Synergies in Service: Exploring Corporate Partnerships for Nonprofits*. We also hosted numerous Nonprofit Happy Hours.

TOTAL NONPROFIT LUNCH & LEARN ATTENDANCE: 65

HARD HAT TOURS

This year we had the opportunity to tour the Deagan Square Apartments, former Bilz Insurance Building, transforming into a distillery/events center, the Welding Center at Gateway Community College Urban Campus as well as 135 W. 38th Street (former Latonia Shopping Center).

TOTAL HARD HAT TOUR ATTENDANCE: 114



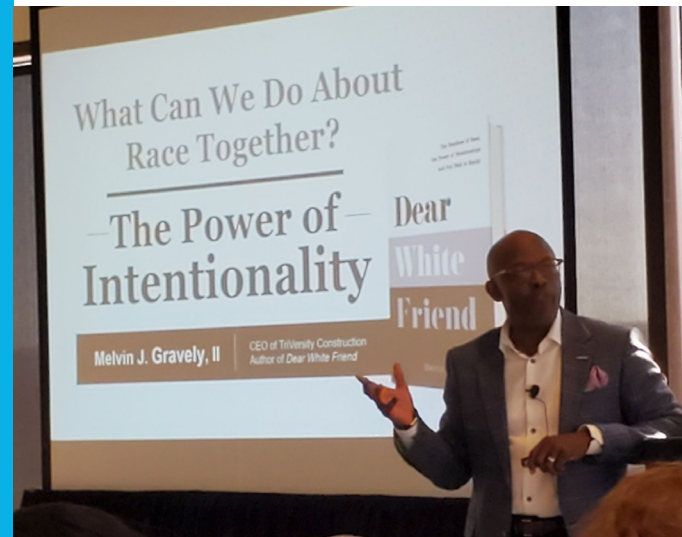
ADVOCACY INITIATIVES



State of NKY Black Business Report

The CBC has developed a Diversity Statement to give direction to its activities to recruit businesses led by people of different ethnicities/orientations. The Business Council also lent financial support for the creation of a document called the State of Northern Kentucky Business, created by Kareem Simpson of Sparklight Creative Group, a CBC member. The study shed light on the fact that the number of African-American led businesses is not keeping pace with the percentage of black residents in the Northern Kentucky region. Further, the report suggested renewed fiscal support from federal, state and local governments is needed to assist black people to help over what it called "the racial wealth gap." The study cited data showing on average, Black people have higher unemployment rates, lower earnings, lower rates of home ownership and pay more for credit and banking services.

The CBC was also a sponsor for a program staged by several leading nonprofit organizations, principally the Family Nurturing Center, Learning Grove, Brighton Center and Life Learning Center, featuring black entrepreneur and author Melvin Gravely. Gravely talked about his experiences in navigating difficult racial discussions and situations with his Caucasian acquaintances, detailed in his book *Dear White Friend*. The book and its suppositions were part of Gravely's talk followed by table group discussions about shared experiences from the racially-mixed audience. The result of the program was encouragement for all the organizations represented to develop support guidelines for making their companies more equitable and inclusive. The CBC intends to double its financial investment in programs in 2024 that help to support the Council becoming more DEI-directed.



The Council also began looking for opportunities to share its concerns about issues that effect the cost of doing business in the community. This fall the CBC urged the Covington Independent School Board to delay a tax increase to help pay for air-conditioning in school buildings, until the District comes up with a comprehensive facilities plan that better addresses creating and renovating spaces for the sole purpose of enhancing the learning experience for students. The District ultimately voted for the tax increase but the CBC continues to look for opportunities to help be a convener of business, civic and neighborhood interests that could come alongside the schools to create a detailed facilities plan.

2023 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CONCIERGE COMMITTEE:

Sarah Redmond, Tonya Wolfe, Matthew O'Bryan, Steve Tracy, Manny Hernandez, Briana Fry, Kristan Getsy, Austin Stevenson, Michael Stubblefield, Marc Price, Barry Henry, Connie Flynn

MEMBERSHIP EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE:

Joe Schlimm, Chair, Tom Lampe, Ashley Bielefeld, David Wolfer, Manny Hernandez, Jeanne Schroer, Barry Henry, Tom Schiller, Steve Tracy, Bob Berendsen, Anthony Bradford

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE:

Alecia Webb-Edgington, Fernando Figueroa, Wayne Hartke, Angela Billiter, Jay Fossett, John Keller, Roger Peterman, Jeanne Schroer, Rosanne Nields, Shane Noem, Margo Watroba, Scott Sedmak, Tommy Simendinger

CBC CONNECTS LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE:

Steve Tracy, Jilleen Hughes, Melissa Frazier, Matthew O'Bryan, Lauren Moore, Zach Willmes, Laila Gonzalez, Connie Flynn

MARKETING COMMITTEE:

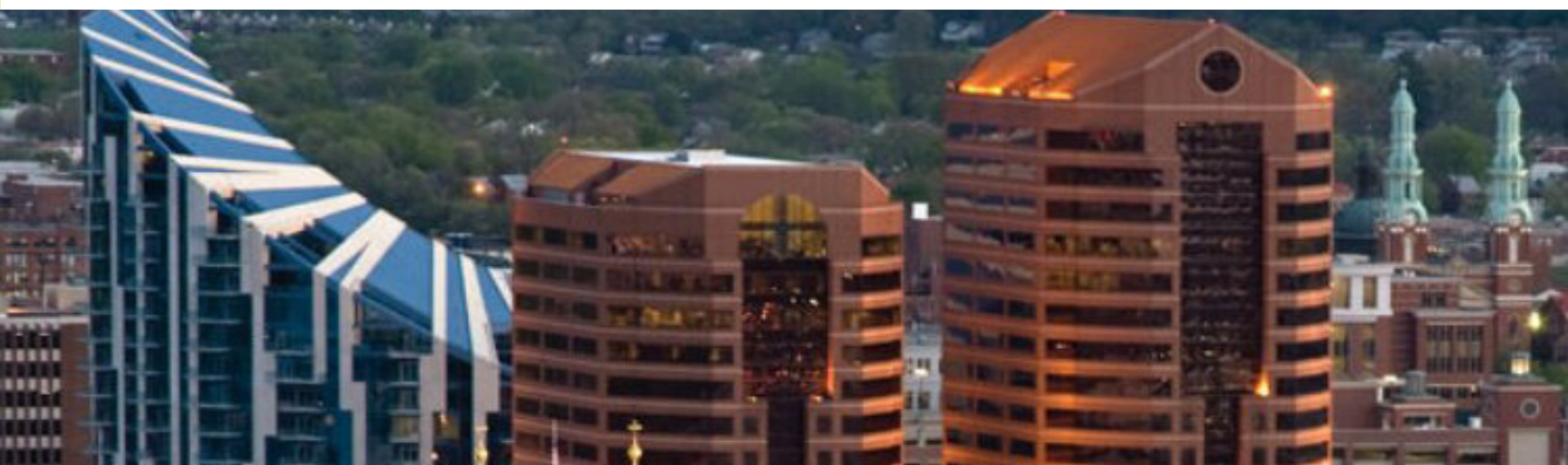
Jackie Roberto, Chair, Bob Berendsen, Nancy Knauf, Bill Powell, Anthony Lowe, Adam Koehler, Greg Paeth, Kevin Lawson, David Dalton

GOLF OUTING COMMITTEE:

Dale Silver, Julie Hopkins, Betsy Weber, Jon Hickman, Brian Roomes, Dave Wolfer

ANNUAL DINNER COMMITTEE:

Dale Silver, Julie Hopkins, Betsy Weber, Elizabeth Reeder



A&E Audio, Video and Event Services
AGAR
AI Software, Inc.
Alexia Zigoris Coaching
Alzheimers Association of Greater Cincinnati
Analytics That Profit
Arnzen Storm & Turner PSC
Bailout Systems
Barker Wealth Management Group Of Wells Fargo Advisors
Bayer Becker
Be Concerned
Best Version Media
Better Business Bureau
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Cincinnati
Biggby Newport
Black Tent Productions
Blue Chip Engineered Products
Brandstetter Carroll Inc.
Business Flare
Cancer Support Community Greater Cincinnati-NKY
Capstone Companies
Chappell's Masonry Restoration LLC
CI Foundations, LLC
Cincinnati Commercial Contracting
Commonwealth Seed Capital
Corken Steel
Cox Financial Corp
CT Consultants, Inc.
DAV
DaveVSDave LLC
DEI
Dietz Family Law, PLLC
Donovan Energy
Drawn to the Image
Durham Brand & Co
EducateNKY
Edward Jones
Emerging Leaders
Engineering Excellence
Enlivened Tech
eXp Realty - Aaron Smith Team
Federal Supply
G2 Internet Solutions
Gardner Street Commercial Real Estate Group
Greenway Innovations
Hangry Omars
HD Restaurant Group LLC dba The Well Covington
Insperity
Interlace Intelligence
Jones Lange Lasalle
Juniper's
Kentucky APEX Accelerator

Kentucky Small Business Development Center
Leda
Lee Hartke Autobody
Liona Enterprises, Inc.
Lost Art Press
Management Performance International dba MPI
Consulting
Maxim Crane
McGregor & Associates
Meridian Capstone Insurance
National Alliance on Mental Illness Northern Kentucky
(NAMI NKY)
Neal Pyszka- Huff Realty
Nexigen
NKU BizAccessHub
Northern Kentucky Bar Association
Northern Kentucky Water District
Opal Rooftop
Paylocity
Pella Windows and Doors
Premier Service Title Agency
Prosource
Reserve Squad
Richwood Investment Advisors, LLC
Right Angles Photography
Park National Bank
Roebeling Row/Towne Properties
RovelQ
S&ME, Inc.
Sanders Development Group
Scarlet Rose Books & Vintage Boutique
Second Story LLC
Sentinel Accounting LLC
SERVPRO
Southside Strength Co
SparkLight Creative Group
Strategic Orientation, LLC
Suhre & Associates, LLC
Sunrise Children's Services The Kable Group
The Matthew Magine Jr. Foundation
The PPS Group
Toast Inc.
Train with Rocco
The Chambers Group
The Family Chef LLC
The Kable Group
Transworld Business Advisors of Cincinnati
UpSpring
Vandalia Rental
Waddell & Reed
Walter814
Workplace Signs

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS



COVINGTON
BUSINESS COUNCIL