FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Southern Illinois Miners will be honored with a Marion Chamber Award of Excellence for Promoting Community Sportsmanship

MARION, Ill. (April 7th, 2022) – The Marion Chamber of Commerce will be celebrating milestones and our business community at its 101st annual awards celebration on June 24th, 2022 at the Pavilion in Marion. The program will feature presentations by the Chamber, elected officials, and our 2021 award winners. This event was originally scheduled for January 14th, but postponed due to COVID.

Members of the Marion Chamber of Commerce were asked to submit nominations in October for the Award of Excellence. The Award of Excellence is given to an individual or group who has gone above and beyond to serve the Marion community. This year’s award is sponsored by SouthernTrust Bank and Campbell Insurance.

We are excited to announce the 2021 Award of Excellence in Promoting Community Sportsmanship winner is the Southern Illinois Miners and Jayne Simmons.

Jayne Simmons is an American business owner and entrepreneur. She is President of AltonWorks, a development and social impact company in Alton, IL, and the former owner of the Southern Illinois Miners professional baseball team. Jayne manages her family’s business interests, investments and was active in the creation and operation of the national law firm Simmons Hanly Conroy.

Under the leadership of Jayne Simmons, the Miners led the Frontier League in attendance each of the franchise’s first four seasons, having been named “Frontier League Organization of the Year” three times (2007, 2009 & 2010) and captured the franchise’s first Frontier League Championship after the 2012 season. The Miners’ state-of-the-art home facility, Rent One Park, was constructed for the team’s inaugural season and saw a Frontier League record 259,392 fans come through the gates in 2007. The Southern Illinois Miners concluded their 2021 season with a 7-3 victory over the Gateway
Grizzlies at Rent One Park in Marion, finishing with a record of 54 wins and 42 losses. Jayne and her husband, John retired from Fronteir League baseball ownership in 2021.

The Simmons’ commitment to excellence has been illustrated by the growth of the community, hundreds of jobs and the caliber of the 60 players the team has sent to Major League Organizations. The team’s .574 winning percentage ranked first in league history for teams that have lasted more than one season.

The Simmons’ investment in the team and stadium has been a contributing factor to both Marion’s and the surrounding communities’ economic growth. Since 2007, four new hotels have opened as have dozens of locally owned and operated restaurants, businesses and miles and miles of connecting interstate that helped to fuel the economic growth of the community.

Jayne was part of the original investment group that purchased Alton Steel, Inc. Her involvement in the project helped bring more than 300 jobs to Alton. She, and her husband John, sold Alton Steel to the employees in 2019 after it became a growing and profitable steel company.

Jayne is active in a variety of community organizations and not-for-profit charities. She grew up in Roxana, Illinois. She attended Southern Illinois University Edwardsville and achieved a degree in business management from St. Leo University in Florida.

Jayne currently lives in Alton with John, their four children and grandchildren.

This year’s Award of Excellence winner will be celebrated at the 101st annual Marion Chamber of Commerce Awards Banquet & Auction ceremony on Friday, January 24 at the Pavilion in Marion. The event begins at 5:30 p.m. and tickets are available at www.marionillinois.com or calling 618-997-6311.

The first Award of Excellence was given in 1994 to Leo Dingrando for Service to Youth. Last year’s winners were Shawn Vincelette, Laborer’s Local 773, and Karen Mullins. Past winners of the Award of Excellence can be viewed at www.marionillinois.com/award-winners.

For more information, please contact the Marion Chamber of Commerce at 618.997.6311, visiting marionillinois.com or emailing director@marionillinois.com.