



# **Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois Launches \$3.2 Million Investment Campaign**

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The Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois has announced it is entering the public phase of its "One Voice. United for Growth." investment campaign aimed at generating \$3.2 million to support the Council's most critical programs as it ramps up the economic development engine in Southwestern Illinois. Working quietly behind the scenes in recent months, the Leadership Council has already secured commitments for over \$850,000, enabling it to enter this phase of the campaign with more than 25 percent of the total goal already secured. Those early commitments represent widespread support for the campaign from regional allies and partners on both sides of the Mississippi River.

Among the largest donors to date are Madison County, St. Clair County, Southern Illinois Construction Advancement Program (SICAP), the St. Louis Regional Chamber, Illinois American Water, Enterprise Holdings, Southwestern Illinois Building and Construction Trades Council, The BANK of Edwardsville, Holland Construction Services, Impact Strategies, Ameren, the Regional Business Council, Americas Central Port, Phillips 66, Metro East Industries, First Clover Leaf Bank, The Korte Co., J.F. Electric, BRiC Partnership, LLC, Hortica, East County Enterprises, Coldwell Banker Brown Realtors, Bernardin Lochmueller & Associates, The Hauser Group, SCI Engineering, Inc., Community First Bank, Oates Associates, Inc., Bank of O'Fallon, NAI DESCO, Terra Properties, and Huntleigh Securities.

The primary focus for the funds raised will be on continuing efforts to protect and enhance Scott Air Force Base. The Leadership Council will work in concert with the St. Clair and Madison County Board Chairmen through a recently established task force to take the proactive steps needed to continue to grow and retain the missions at Scott and to ensure the region is prepared for the Base Realignment and Closure anticipated in the 2015 - 2016 timeframe.

Funds raised also will support the Leadership Council's initiatives to foster multimodal job growth and investment; coordinate regional economic development efforts to retain manufacturing and grow entrepreneurship; serve as One Voice driving the region's public policy agenda and help to ensure the re-accreditation of the levees protecting the American Bottom by 2015.

"It's been 10 years since we've needed to raise outside funds to support our work, but the aggressive work plan we believe is essential to keeping our region on track for the future requires that we do so now," noted Bruce Holland, president of Holland Construction Services and co-chair of the 2013 investment campaign. "Thanks to the support already demonstrated in the early weeks of the campaign, we are confident that we will meet our campaign goal and be strategically positioned to move our region forward in the years to come."

Holland is joined as co-chair of the investment campaign by Gerry Schuetzenhofer, president of Coldwell Banker Brown Realtors, and both are also among a group of Leadership Council board members who have signed up to serve as donor chairs focused on building support among the various sectors the Council's members represent. Schuetzenhofer is rallying the realtor community in support of the effort, while Holland is teaming with Mark Hinrichs of Impact Strategies to engage developers and members of the construction industry. Other donor chairs include Tom Holloway (Financial); Mike Riley (Healthcare); Bo Butters and Ken Diel (Accountants); Stacy Cutler (Hospitality); Mark Harms and David Oates (Engineers/Architects); Pat Mathis (Legal); Ronda Sauget (Manufacturing); Rich Sauget, Sr., (Archview companies); Jack Schmitt and Kathy Federico (Automotive); Dale Stewart (Labor), and Dave Kunkel (Defense Contractors).

Additional donors who have contributed to the campaign's early success include Validus Business Strategies, The Village of Troy, Heartlands Conservancy, Cecil Management Group, Louer Facility Planning, Raifort Properties, Plocher Construction, Johnson Properties, Eagle Marine, Barber Murphy Group, Inc., Miller & Maack General Contractors, Inc. and Rhutasel and Associates.

As the campaign enters its public phase, the Leadership Council will begin reaching out beyond its members to seek support from the State of Illinois, the various communities in the Metro East, and partners in the St. Louis region, as well as others who recognize the importance of protecting and enhancing Scott Air Force Base and benefit in other ways from the Leadership Council's ongoing work to unite Southwestern Illinois for growth. Anyone interested in donating to the campaign is encouraged to contact the Council at (618) 692-9745 or via email at [ellenkrohne@siue.edu](mailto:ellenkrohne@siue.edu).

The Leadership Council's last investment campaign raised over \$3 million and primarily supported the regional effort led by the Council to defend Scott Air Force Base during the 2005 round of Base Realignment and Closure. In more recent years, the Council has worked diligently with limited resources, responding to requests to take tough positions and address key challenges facing the Metro East and the broader St. Louis region. Highlights include advocating for the new Mississippi River Bridge and regional solutions to other critical infrastructure needs; launching and serving as administrator of the St. Louis Metro East Levee Issues Alliance, which is working to secure the reaccreditation of the Metro East Levees so businesses can continue to invest with confidence and so the lives and livelihoods of residents and businesses in the American Bottom are protected; and creating SITE, the Southwestern Illinois Transportation Enhancement effort focused on retaining and growing the multi-modal infrastructure that is key to this region's future success.

"The Leadership Council has proven time and again that with the right level of support, it truly can unite our region for growth," noted Schuetzenhofer, co-chair of the investment campaign. "At this time, our ability to be a more proactive force in economic growth in Southwestern Illinois is dependent on additional funds to support our comprehensive work plan focused on those priorities that will drive our region forward. We anticipate strong support and want investors to know that every dollar pledged is appreciated and will be put to good use."

#### About the Leadership Council

*The Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois is a member-based, economic development corporation representing Madison and St. Clair counties. The Council works to unite business, industry, government, education and labor for economic growth in Southwestern Illinois. These effective partnerships serve as a driving force behind successful economic development efforts throughout the Metro East region. [www.leadershipcouncilswil.com](http://www.leadershipcouncilswil.com)*