



# **Ronda Sauget tapped to head Leadership Council**

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**Edwardsville IL Oct. 29, 2015** - The executive committee of the Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois today announced that Ronda Sauget has been hired to serve as the next executive director of the organization, effective Dec. 1. Sauget takes the reins from Ellen Krohne, who has served as executive director of the economic development

organization since July of 2012 and has led the Council through a time of tremendous growth and progress. Krohne is stepping down at the end of November to spend more time with her family.

Sauget, President of Validus Business Strategies, LLC., and former executive director of Archview Economic Development Corporation, has more than 20 years of experience in executive management, corporate strategy development and political and community outreach. She is a longtime member of the Leadership Council, has served on the executive committee since 2011, and served as president of the organization in 2013.

“As a member of our executive committee and several of our working committees over the last several years, we have appreciated Ronda’s thoughtful counsel and input on the various issues in which we have been engaged,” said Mike Riley, president of the Leadership Council. “She understands our organization, is deeply committed to this region and has a passion for achieving the strategic objectives of the Leadership Council. We are thrilled to welcome her as our new executive director.”

Over the past two decades, Sauget has gained organizational management experience in the areas of economic development, transportation infrastructure, marketing communications, legislative outreach, strategic collaboration/partnerships and community engagement, all of which are relevant for her new role.

As president of Validus Business Strategies, LLC, Sauget has spent the past 10 years competitively positioning diverse clients in their respective profit and non-profit sectors. Clients served include East County Enterprises, Southern Illinois Healthcare Foundation and Touchette Regional Hospital. From 1999-2012, she also served as volunteer executive director for Archview Economic Development Corporation in Centerville, Ill. In this capacity, she developed and implemented the strategic plan and communications strategy for the regional economic development initiative for five Metro East communities, growing the organization to 116 business and community members.

Key accomplishments during this time included helping to secure passage of legislation enabling growth of the Illinois Aviation Industry, which contributed to \$80M of new business investment expansion and the creation of over 400 new sustainable jobs. She also was instrumental in the planning, implementation and launch of an economic development campaign to maintain and attract business to the Route 3 Corridor area, helping to secure more than \$200 million in new investment, including the \$150 million Center Ethanol Plant and other projects.

Sauget has served as an adjunct professor at Webster University’s GHW School of Business and Technology since 2010, where she instructs an MBA final integrated Capstone course in Business Policy and Strategic Management as well as the BJC

Executive MBA Leadership Program focused on healthcare and public policy issues. She also has served as an adjunct professor at Lindenwood University-Belleville.

She earned a BSBA in Finance and Marketing and an MBA, both from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. Her educational achievements also include earning her Doctorate of Management in Strategic Management and Executive Leadership from Webster University. She has earned numerous awards for her work in the marketing and communications arena and is a 2008 recipient of the “Winning Women Executives Influencing Now” Regional Economic Development Award recognizing her contributions to the economic development of the St. Louis region.

“I am excited and honored to have been selected as the executive director of the Leadership Council and look forward to working with the dedicated executive committee members and the full board to ensure we continue on our path of uniting the region to bring about sustainable, long-term growth for Southwestern Illinois,” said Sauget.

Krohne announced her plans to retire in August, and committed to working with the organization through the search and hiring of her replacement to help ensure a smooth transition.

“Ellen has done a remarkable job over the past three years as she has strengthened this organization and brought renewed focus to our work, and we are so thankful for her willingness to assist with the search and onboarding of our new executive director,” said Riley. “We greatly appreciate her contributions to our organization and the region, and wish her all the best as she begins what we’re sure will be an active retirement.”

### ***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).*