



ABILENE CHAMBER

DAILY BUSINESS BRIEF

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ABILENE INDUSTRIAL FOUNDATION COMPLETES HIRING IN KEY POSITIONS

The Abilene Industrial Foundation (AIF), the longstanding economic development arm of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce, is pleased to announce the appointment of two new members to the Develop Abilene team.

Helen Usera, Ph.D., will serve as Director, Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) for the AIF, while Brent Schroeder will serve as Director, Emerging Business.

The product of the recent realignment between the AIF and the Development Corporation of Abilene, these two key roles will assist in bringing focus to the AIF's responsibilities of existing business retention and expansion, workforce and talent development and retention, downtown revitalization, entrepreneurship and retail recruitment.

"I want to thank those leaders within the Chamber and AIF for participating in the selection process. It is because of their hard work we are able to add the caliber of talent that both Helen and Brent bring to the organization," said Doug Peters, President & CEO of the Abilene Chamber of Commerce. Peters also serves as president of the AIF.

[Read more.](#)

MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CONGRATULATES 2019 RECIPIENT OF THE ABILENE TROPHY

The Abilene Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee (MAC), in conjunction with the Air Mobility Command (AMC) Office of Public Affairs, announced the winner of this year's Abilene Trophy during the Airlift/Tanker Association (ATA) virtual convention, Oct. 27-30, 2020. This year's recipient of the Abilene Trophy is the Leadership Council of Southwestern Illinois – Scott Air Force Base.

"For over 100 years, the Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois has demonstrated their commitment to Scott Air Force Base, its mission, their airmen and families," said Shaun Martin, Vice Chair of Abilene's Military Affairs Committee. "Their past, current and future mission of Uniting to Serve Those Who Serve is unwavering. Whether it is leading the charge and uniting the region for license reciprocity, uniting students as part of its STEAM & Cybersecurity programs or uniting total community support in numerous other ways, Abilene is proud to recognize the exceptional legacy and ongoing support and commitment they have for Scott Air Force Base, its mission and its people."

In conjunction with the AMC, the MAC administers the annual competition for the "Abilene Trophy" among all communities supporting a local AMC base/unit. Early in the calendar year, communities submit their nomination packages to the MAC. A selection committee chooses their top three selections and sends the packages to the Commander of AMC

who makes the final decision and announces the winner at the AMC Spring Rally usually held in April. Due to COVID-19, the announcement was postponed until late Oct. and held during a virtual event.

[Read more.](#)

TEXAS JOB GROWTH

The most recent employment data indicates that the pace of hiring in Texas has slowed. In September, 40,700 net new jobs were added, compared to 111,900 in August. Moreover, the unemployment rate rose and is now higher than the national level. Not great news, but not unexpected.

Texas employment peaked in February 2020 at about 13.0 million. By April, 1.4 million jobs had been lost to the pandemic. As of September, Texas employment stood at almost 12.3 million, down from over 12.8 million in September 2019. Although over 660,000 jobs have been regained, that's not quite half of the number lost since before the pandemic. In addition, all growth that would otherwise have occurred has been foregone. Thus, the losses from where the state should be are even greater.

Unfortunately, it's not surprising that hiring has slowed. The first few months of opening the economy involved resumption of businesses such as retail stores and restaurants which involve large numbers of employees. Essentially, those jobs were the low-hanging fruit.

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WHAT WE'RE READING

Ag Economy Barometer rises to record high

The Purdue University/CME Group Ag Economy Barometer, which is based on survey responses from 400 U.S. agricultural producers, rose 27 points to a reading of 183 in October and set an all-time high for the index. The reading easily eclipsed the previous record high set in February, before the onset of the coronavirus pandemic.

[Read more.](#)

Abilene city manager encouraging people to wear a mask, slow spread of COVID-19

Abilene City Manager Robert Hannah is encouraging people to wear a mask in an attempt to slow spread of COVID-19.

[Read more.](#)



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You don't want to miss these upcoming event for your business.

NOV 5 VIRTUAL LONE STAR ENERGY FORUM Texas leaders and top political analysts will discuss what the election will mean for the industry and how Texas can continue as the Energy Capital of the World. [Register here.](#)

NOV 17-19 CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP CONFERENCE: BUSINESS SOLVES

A virtual event —held in conjunction with the 21st annual Citizens Awards—about confronting the extraordinary economic and health challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the call for inclusion and equity that has swept our communities and workplaces into a new era, all while trying to build a more sustainable world. Discussions will focus on how business will lead through our recovery and chart a resilient path forward, working hand in hand with cross-sector partners to help our communities emerge stronger. Featured speakers will include Blackrock CEO Larry Fink, Khan Academy founder & CEO Sal Khan, Ad Council President & CEO Lisa Sherman, and more [Register here.](#)

NOV 20 ENERGY AND ECONOMY CONFERENCE The Federal Reserve Banks of Dallas and Kansas City will host their fifth joint energy conference on November 20 virtually. Leading energy experts will join Dallas Fed President Robert Kaplan and Kansas City Fed President Esther George in conversation about the state of the energy sector, the outlook for global oil and gas markets, opportunities and risks of the global energy transition, challenges in energy finance, and the changing U.S. energy landscape. [Register here.](#)

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