

City Recognizes To the Stars Kansas Business Award Winners

At a recent Garnett City Commission meeting, ten businesses and non-profit organizations were recognized for the contributions they make to the well-being of our community, including jobs, added amenities, community involvement, sponsorship of various activities, economic impact and more. Each of these entities were recognized on the state level back in April. The awards were to be presented in 2021 but were delayed due to Covid-19.

The Kansas Department of Commerce invited 178 nominees to attend regional award banquets to be recognized. All ten of the businesses and organizations nominated in Garnett and Anderson County were honored at the Southeast Kansas Regional to The Stars – Celebrating Kansas Business Awards Banquet on April 20th in Parsons where Lieutenant Governor and Commerce Secretary David Toland presented the awards. The City of Garnett nominated six business and organizations for these honors. The Garnett Area Chamber of Commerce also nominated three businesses, and an employee of Goppert State Service Bank also nominated an award winner. Here are highlights of the nominations:

Anderson County Hospital – Hospital/Non-Profit Organization Merit Award.

With nearly 210 employees, Anderson County Hospital is one of the largest hospitals in this area providing 24-hour Level IV (4) Trauma Center/Emergency Management Services, serving around 3,000 patients annually. Their outreach specialty clinics provide patient access to 18 area specialties, plus access to 65 specialty services through Saint Luke's. ACH has a 30-bed Residential Living Center. In the last 10 years, Anderson County Hospital has a capital investment of over \$31.4 million at the local facility in Garnett.

Dutch Country Café – Retail Merit Award.

This restaurant, bakery and coffee bar specializes in traditional Pennsylvania Dutch cooking using generations of family recipes. Dutch Country employees 43 people and is considered a destination business, bringing repeat visitors from both near and far away. During Covid-19, they got creative in providing a walk-up, pick-up window where customers could call or email their orders. Some in the community literally took carry-out dinners to the doorsteps of people who were in quarantine, giving them a good, homecooked meal complete with homemade dessert. They also tore down the old motel next door to expand their parking lot and improving the aesthetics of the US 59 corridor.

Wilson Chiropractic Clinic – Service Merit Award.

This family-owned, second-generation clinic opened its doors in 1966. It moved to its current location in 1971 and an addition was built on in 1992. The Wilson family business has invested thousands of dollars in updating equipment, employs 4 people, and has been a great supporter of events and local charities. They are one of the unsung heroes of the community, who clinic treats patients like family, advocate a healthy lifestyle and they practice what they preach. If you drive Lake Garnett, it isn't uncommon to see Dr. Wilson running the lake road!

Garnett Area Chamber of Commerce – Non-Profit Merit Award

This organization's mission is to help local businesses succeed with sustaining 100 or more business members annually. During the Covid-19 shutdown, the Chamber Director, Kris Hix, facilitated the Community Give Back Program, a partnership with ACDA and the City of Garnett

to help local businesses thrive through the challenging time. The Chamber Director also got a grant through the Kansas Beats the Virus to promote a Healthy Bodies-Healthy Minds-Healthy Spirits initiative. The Chamber Director also is the Garnett Farmers' Market Manager, improvising during Covid with a drive-thru market. The Chamber helps, in numerous ways, many events and organizations, including Anderson County Economic Development's Morning Mingle, Love What's Local, Anderson County Fair, Lake Garnett Grand Prix Revival to name a few.

The Chamber Players Community Theatre – Non-Profit Merit Award.

Established in 1991, the live dinner theatre produces 4 dinner productions, for 7 times per production, per year bringing in an annual audience in excess of 2,000 people. They also host an autumn elementary school tour and Youth Theatre Camp each summer. Housed in the historic 1869 former Presbyterian Church, the theatre is all volunteer and has raised over \$70,000 for local charities and organizations through their dessert fundraiser initiative.

Bauman's Cedar Valley Farms/ANCO Poultry Processing/Butcher Block/Mobile Meat Market – Southeast Kansas Regional Retail Award.

In the past 10 years, the Bauman family has invested over \$750,000 in infrastructure and equipment to expand their services and operations. They now have an automated slaughter line that has doubled the number of employees and allows them to process larger quantities of grass-fed beef, pastured chicken, pork, lamb, turkey, duck and free-range eggs to more families. Covid-19 challenged them to create a Mobile Meat Market, selling product in Olathe, Overland Park and Lawrence farmers' markets, and the local Garnett Farmers' Market. They have a Meat Investment Card (MIC) that instantly pays back 6% at their Butcher Block retail location, Mobile Meat Market and Pre-Order shop online. Their mission statement: "Honoring God daily, keeping faith, cherishing family. We're living the dream – It's called Farming!" Congratulations to Bauman's for receiving the Regional Retail Award.

The Garnett Area Chamber of Commerce nominated the following award winners and provided their nomination information as follows:

Garnett Family Dental – Service Merit Award

Garnett Family Dental employs a team who are professionals, but also consider each other family. They strive for excellence in the personal care they give to each patient. They balance work and life daily and support their community by donating to 4-H and purchasing from the Premium Livestock Sale at fair time. They have provided continuing education for staff, as well as adding more general dentists for a total of 5, to expand their business. They are an asset to the business community.

East Kansas Agri-Energy- Manufacturing Merit Award

EKAE has expanded internally by increasing capacity from 35 million gallons per year to 50 million gallons per year. They added a hammer mill, CO2 scrubber, and extra grain storage. They have increased their employees from 32 to 53 since 2011. EKAE supports high school activities via sponsorship and donations, they are major sponsors of the Anderson County Fair, Cornstock, LGGPR, and other local fairs as well as sponsoring golf tournaments, GACC Annual Banquet, Anderson County Fire Department, and Anderson County Hospital Foundation. EKAE employees are motivated innovators who search for new ideas daily, and work alongside the agricultural community to keep Garnett thriving!

Trustpoint Insurance & Real Estate – Service Merit Award

Trustpoint Insurance & Real Estate was established in 2009, and expanded to Emporia (2015), Burlington (2017), and Garnett in 2018. They are well trained in both insurance options and real estate. Their staff go above and beyond daily to meet customer's needs, provide education for

staff, and support the communities they serve. They were featured in KIA & B magazine in 2020 for meeting challenges and achieving success. They support multiple schools, 4-H, County Fairs, Cornstock, LWL Garnett, GACC, and so much more! They have set the standards high for customer service, personal touch, and community pride.

Also, GSSB employee Skyla Pankey nominated the Goppert State Service Bank for the Business Innovation Award. During Covid-19 pandemic/shutdown, GSSB administered the PPP Loan Forgiveness Program, handling many applications that helped Anderson County businesses survive. The City would also like to recognize and thank Skyla Pankey for nominating her employer. GSSB received the Innovation Merit Award.

For more information about the “To the Starts – Celebrating Kansas Businesses, please visit <https://www.kansascommerce.gov/celebrate/>, or visit the City’s webpage: <https://www.simplygarnett.com/bam-2021-awards.html>.

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