

Getting Involved in Your Community Pays Off



By Barbara Sue Grass, Program Coordinator for NWILED

As a person moves through their career, joining an organization's board, such as Northwest Illinois Economic Development (NWILED), can offer a range of beneficial personal and community benefits, including the opportunity to make a significant impact, expand your network, gain insights into corporate governance, and potentially enhance your career. It can also be an excellent way even as a retiree to play a key role in assisting in determining the strategic direction of an organization, shaping decisions that impact its mission, vision, and long-term objectives.

As a non-profit organization, NWILED's board is tasked with ensuring that the organization fulfills its mission while adhering to legal and ethical standards. They also have a fiduciary duty to protect the organization's assets, to provide governance, strategic direction, and oversight for an organization, ensuring it operates effectively and ensuring that management aligns with these goals.

NWILED's main focus is the regional development of Jo Daviess and Carrol counties in Northwest Illinois, which concentrates on growing the economy and public/private partnerships to achieve these goals. Furthering the board's commitment to NWILED's success is the public and private memberships that helps NWILED support, expand, enhance and continue the goals and objectives for the county's growing communities.

Board members for NWILED come from all walks of life, business backgrounds and professional personal interests.

According to NWILED's Regional Director, David Schmit, board representation from both Carroll and Jo Daviess counties and other municipal leaders give credibility to NWILED.

“Our board members with financial expertise allow our clients access to various funding opportunities. Our cornerstone members such as Highland Community College and JCE Co-op imbeds NWILED in workforce development and site selection services,” Schmit explains. “Other board members come from sustaining level members looking to have a greater voice in the northwest business community and help round out the board's regional reach and ability. Together board members come together every other month to weigh in on an agenda of topics, to approve letters of support, and to best drive initiatives of interest to the organization.”



NWILED's current executive committee includes William Jahnke, Chair (President, Napcor Corporation); Mike Casper, Vice Chair (President and CEO, JCE Co-op); Amy Baker, Secretary (President and CEO, Citizens State Bank); and Aimee Schoenhaar, Treasurer (CEO, COO, and CFO, Riverport Railroad). Board members include Chelsea Beyer (Business Lending Consultant, Dupaco Community Credit Union); Diane Gallagher, Jo Daviess County Board; Susan Jacobs (Carroll County Board); Chris Kuberski (President, Highland Community College); Matt Oldenburg (City Administrator, City of Dubuque; Patrick Powaser (Founder & President, Gradient Coaching & Consulting; and *UMB Open Seat to be announced.*

For more information on becoming a member or eligibility for being considered for an upcoming NWILED board seat, contact David Schmit, Regional Director, at dschmit@nwiled.org. NWILED also has a website, www.nwiled.org, and an active on-line presence on Facebook and LinkedIn.