

Economic Development Report



Q2 2026

Chamber Strategic Updates

Chamber celebrates 2000th member; becomes largest Chamber in WI



The Fox Cities Chamber celebrated a major milestone in Q2 by welcoming its 2,000th member, a benchmark that makes it the largest community chamber of commerce in Wisconsin. To mark the occasion, Chamber staff surprised the landmark member – **R&R Insurance** in Neenah – with a surprise visit, including flowers, balloons, and a special welcome.

The achievement places the Fox Cities Chamber among the largest community chambers of commerce in the nation, ranking in the top 1% by member count.

Chamber “Recovery Guide” serves as resource after tornado

Following the recent devastating tornado and severe storms, the Fox Cities community quickly came together to support affected residents and businesses. The Chamber responded by creating a Recovery Guide that connects businesses and individuals with critical resources and helps amplify local assistance efforts: www.foxcitieschamber.com/recovery/. We are grateful for the many organizations and individuals who continue to step forward, and we remain committed to standing behind our businesses and the community throughout recovery.

Wied visits Chamber

The Fox Cities Chamber, in partnership with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, convened a round-table discussion with Rep. Tony Wied (WI-08) and local business leaders in June. The conversation focused on the importance of a new federal surface transportation bill to support Wisconsin's economy and communities.



Press conferences announces Octoberfest weekend lineup



The Chamber held a press conference to announce the lineup for Octoberfest Weekend's music lineup and highlights for 2026. Planned for September 25-26, the big news is that the festival is adding a highly-requested country music stage. The complete lineup features more than 15 local and regional acts across Friday night and Saturday, including the Love Monkeys in their final tour along with fan favorites Boogie and the Yo-Yoz and Glam Band. Octoberfest Weekend draws more than 300,000 attendees annually and generates an estimated \$42 million in economic impact for the Fox Cities region.

Q1 Events & Programs

Leadership Class Graduates

The **2025-26 Leadership Fox Cities** class concluded its nine-month leadership journey this quarter, earning a high NPS* of 92. Congratulations to:

Jacquelyn Adamicki, **McCarty Law, LLP**
Marcos Aguilar, **Kelly Services**
Micah Beck, **Community Foundation - Fox Valley Region**
Joe Benoit, **Neenah Police Department**
Angela Beyer, **Marion Body Works**
Karissa Buck, **Community Clothes Closet**
Matthew Chamberlain, **Goodwill NCW**
Addey Cronkrite, **WI Rapids Fire Dept./ She Hair Boutique**
Sara Dellise, **Arden Property Group Inc.**
Amber Duerwaechter, **Habitat for Humanity**
Sadie Dupont, **McCarty Law, LLP**
Sterling Feathers, **Coalesce Marketing & Design**
Frederick Fielding, **VF Corporation**
Dan Fochs, **Hawkins Ash CPAs**
Mel Gerrits, **ThedaCare**
Dawn Grenzer-Stumpf, **Miron Construction Co., Inc.**
Nicole Hardina-Wilhelm, **Neenah Public Library**
Lynn Hardy, **Fox Cities Performing Arts Center**
Matt Harper, **YMCA of the Fox Cities**
Jennifer Haydon, **American National Bank Fox Cities**
Aimee Herrick, **Fox Cities Chamber**
Megan Hietpas, **Baisch Engineering Inc.**
Aaron Hunnel, **St. Paul Elder Services**
Brian Hunter, **VF Corporation**
Kellie Johnson, **Van Zeeland Nursery & Landscape**
Drew Koepl, **Prevea Health**
Raquel Lamal, **Red Shoes, Inc.**
Shana Lammert, **Simplicity Credit Union**
Jada Leonard, **U.S. Energy**
David Maas, **Grand Chute Police Department**
Joe Maestas, **Johnson Financial Group**
Becky Pashouwer, **Network Health**
Sam Predayna, **Wipfli Advisory LLC**
Alexandria Quintana, **City of Appleton Fire Department**
Kirsten Rice, **YMCA of the Fox Cities**
Rachel Roloff, **VF Corporation**
Jennifer Rottier, **United Way Fox Cities**
Angela Savides, **Ascension**
Randy Shannon, **Midwest Communications**
Becka Szczepaniec, **Capital Credit Union**
Morgan Teal, **Community First Credit Union**
Kody Weisman, **Capital Credit Union**
Heather Zweiger, **National University**

Leader Lab also completed another successful cohort, with nine professionals earning certificates after completing the seven-session leadership development program. Participants gave Leader Lab an NPS* of 89.

ETA meets at Miron

The Emerging Talent Alliance continued to strengthen connections between business and education by hosting its May meeting at **Miron Construction**. The session featured **Kaukauna Area School District** and **Little Chute Area School District** superintendents, who shared how their community cohort models are building stronger partnerships between schools, employers, and local organizations. Twenty-nine business and education leaders attended the event, which earned an NPS* of 60.

Quarterly Events

The Future Fox Cities Career Expo welcomed 1,900 students and 175 business professionals, creating valuable opportunities to explore career pathways and strengthen the region's future workforce. Students rated the event with an NPS* of 67, while participating employers reported an NPS* of 48. In May, the CEO Breakfast brought together 189 attendees for regional business insights and earned an NPS* of 75. June also marked the launch of the Chamber's new Launch: Summer Intern Series, providing local interns with professional development, networking opportunities, and a deeper connection to the Fox Cities community.

Fox Talks focuses on leadership

Nearly 40 people attended the February 2026 Fox Talk, Leadership in the Fox Cities: Paths, People, and Possibilities. Panelists **Chloe Kampo**, **Preston Kendall** and **Alicia Frank**, all past participants of Fox Cities Chamber leadership program shared real stories, lessons learned and the moments that shaped their leadership styles.

*An NPS (Net Promoter Score) uses a simple formula to measure customer loyalty by asking one key question: "How likely are you to recommend (this event) to others?" on a scale of 0-10. It's a worldwide tool for measuring customer satisfaction and loyalty. A score above 0 is considered positive; 0-30 is good; 31-69 is great; and 70+ is world class.

Q2 By the Numbers

Connect Free Memberships - **68** Fox Cities small businesses joined the Chamber at its Connect Free level in Q2. To date, **1,186** small businesses have taken advantage of this unique free membership opportunity. Overall, the Chamber has **2,050+** members.

YP Memberships - Membership growth remained strong for Pulse Young Professionals in Q2, with **22** new members joining and bringing total active membership to **894**. Pulse offered a variety of programs including Coffee & Conversation, professional development, volunteering with the Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance, and a Brewers Watch Party.

Pulse Champions - We continue to see strong support from local employers who recognize the value young professionals bring to both their organizations and the Fox Cities community. As of Q2, **11** Fox Cities businesses are participating as Champions of Young Professionals, demonstrating their commitment to attracting and retaining emerging talent.

Business Support - The Chamber held Business After Hours networking events at three member businesses in the second quarter: **Calavera's Fine Fusion, SECURA Insurance, and Community First Credit Union**. Ribbon Cuttings to celebrate various milestones were provided to: **Touchmark, Red Wing Shoe Store, Calaveras Fine Fusion, HOTWORX, VASA Fitness, Goldfish Swim School, Theisen's Supply, Landmark Credit Union, Down Syndrome Association of Wisconsin Fox Cities, and 7Brew Fox Cities.**



Employee Friendly Workplace (EFW) - **Appvion** celebrated 4 years as a gold level employee friendly workplace. **Great Northern – Laminations** celebrated 2 years as a gold level employee friendly workplace. **Hoffman Planning, Design & Construction Inc.** celebrated 3 years as a gold level employee friendly workplace. **Fox Communities Credit Union** celebrated moving from gold to the platinum level.



Questions or interested in setting up a FREE Business Retention & Expansion consultation?

Contact Jack Herkowski, Manager of Economic Development, Fox Cities Chamber: jherkowski@foxcc.net

Find us online:
FoxCitiesChamber.com

BRE Efforts: Chamber staff met with **56** Fox Cities businesses in the second quarter of 2026 for Business Retention & Expansion visits. Examples of projects we worked on are: temporary road signage due to construction, seasonal employment, staffing, business expansion planning, renovation, and relocation.

Media partnership supports local businesses: The Chamber featured the following members on Local 5 Live in Q2: **A-Mazing Events, AHA Heart Walk, R&R Insurance, and US Venture**. We also highlighted our new Summer Intern Series, Leadership Fox Cities, and businesses who recently held ribbon cuttings.

Economic Development Assistance: During the second quarter, staff assisted local employers with **5** customized wage analyses, **6** site selection and business attraction projects, and **9** economic data requests for employers, municipalities, developers, and community partners.