

# Q1

# 2023



## 2023 YP Summit was our biggest & best event ever!



The Young Professionals Summit (YP Summit) 2023 held at the CHI Center in Omaha on March 24, was a resounding success with 1,600 attendees. The summit featured keynote speakers Ben Nemtin, author and motivational speaker and Symone Sanders-Townsend, a renowned political strategist, and commentator, who inspired and motivated the audience with her insights on leadership and advocacy.

The summit also included several breakout sessions that allowed attendees to dive deep into specific topics and engage with industry experts. From personal brand and creation to maximizing impact, attendees had the opportunity to learn and network with their peers. The event was a testament to the vitality and energy of Omaha's young professionals' community and beyond. It brought together young professionals from various industries, provided networking opportunities and inspired them to take their careers to the next level.

### Member Engagement and Development

The Chamber executed over 30 opportunities for members to expand their professional network, gain new insights and knowledge, and connect with potential clients or partners so far in 2023. These opportunities drew nearly 2,500 members during the first quarter.

The Chamber continues its popular monthly networking series Coffee & Contacts. In February, an All Chambers Together Coffee & Contacts which brought together over 300 business professionals across 16 regional chambers to build relationships, expand their network and promote their business.

Other events focused on providing valuable insights into the Omaha business and political climate. The Chamber's Annual Meeting drew over 600 attendees and included a panel discussion with community leaders on their journey and keys to their success. As the Legislative session got

underway, the Public Policy staff provided numerous updates to economic development groups and Leadership Omaha participants. The Chamber also held the Young Professional (YP) at the Capital event in partnership with the Lincoln Chamber to engage future leaders in the legislative process.

The Chamber's CODE program also had an active quarter in its professional development efforts related to diversity, equity and inclusion. As part of its Education Series, CODE held a four-part New American Integration Series focused on providing a welcoming community to immigrants and refugees. CODE also held three Employer Coalition events, its first CEOs for CODE meeting, and expanded partnerships with local companies and HBCUs as part of its Growing Home program.



## Chamber Prioritizes LB 754

At the end of the first quarter, there were 107 priority bills in the regular session of the 108th Legislature. Of those, 39 remain in committee, 58 were available for first-round debate, and ten had advanced to the second round. One of the Chamber's priority bills related to tax reform that has advanced is LB 754. Key provisions of this bill include:

- Phase in reductions of the individual income tax's third and fourth bracket rates to 3.99 percent by 2027. (Currently, those rates are 5.01 and 6.64 percent).
- Phase in reductions in the corporate tax rate to 3.99 percent by 2027.
- Allow a tax deduction for qualified child care costs.
- Provide for a 15-day exemption from taxation of nonresident employees and board members visiting Nebraska.
- Include state and local taxes in itemized income tax deductions.
- Allow a deduction from federal adjusted gross income a portion of federal retirement annuities.
- Restore a tax deduction for research and development activities.
- Accelerate the phase-out of Social Security taxation to 2024.

### Mayor of Fremont, Nebraska announces first inland port authority board

The state of Nebraska's longest serving governor, Dave Heineman is among Mayor Joey Spellerberg's appointees to Fremont's first inland port authority board. The proposed 1,500-acre industrial site and logistics hub is a long-term effort to promote economic development in eastern Nebraska, including greater Fremont and the Omaha metropolitan area.

For more information visit:  
[www.fremontcodev.org](http://www.fremontcodev.org)



### Greater Omaha Named 'Great American Defense Community'

Greater Omaha, home to Offutt Air Force Base, is one of five communities across the country selected as a 2023 Great American Defense Community.

"We are incredibly excited to honor Greater Omaha as a 2023 Great American Defense Community," ADC President Karen Holt said. "Greater Omaha is a great example of how communities are working tirelessly to ensure America's military can be proud of where they call home."



# Q2 2023



## Lawmakers Pass Chamber Supported Initiatives



The Legislature adjourned after a session that was trying, but in the end successful for many of the Chamber's longstanding priorities. Senators faced a budget year with a record surplus which provided an opportunity to address the state's tax burden and economic/community development.

Tax initiatives include LB 754 which reduces the top individual and corporate income tax rates to a competitive level. This will increase investment, job creation, and prove vital in workplace attraction and retention. LB 243 increases tax credits and replaces community college general fund levies with state funding.

Budget increases for economic and community development initiatives include funding for the Omaha airport business park from \$60 million to \$90 million. DED is authorized to issue awards to high tech manufacturers eligible under the federal CHIPS Act, and businesses will be able to use ImagiNE credits to finance port authority revenue bonds. Building on last year's federal ARPA economic and community development efforts, this session saw approval of LB 531, a measure aimed at protecting high poverty areas, particularly in North and South Omaha.

Transportation initiatives authorized the use of bonding for large state highway projects. LB 706 (amended int LB 727) provides for \$450 million in bonds.

While over 200 bills were passed this session, many Issues remain for 2024 and beyond. These include workforce attraction, industrial site development and enhancing the Omaha Metro's reputation as a welcoming place.

## 2023 Business Excellence Awards



**Excellence is a way of life in Greater Omaha.** Each year, we recognize dozens of deserving businesses and nonprofits with our Business Excellence Awards. We asked the community to nominate those whose contributions elevate Greater Omaha and make it a better place to do business, work and live. From those nominations, our volunteer selection committee chose the best-of-the-best as our award winners. In addition to honoring excellence, we also applauded businesses celebrating major milestone anniversaries. This is our way of putting the spotlight on those that have earned it. Information about this year's winners is available on the Chamber's website:

<https://www.omahachamber.org/2023-business-excellence-award-winners/>



The Greater Omaha Chamber announced the members of Leadership Omaha Class 46 following a rigorous selection process and continuing a forty-six-year tradition of cohort-based leadership development. The class of 46 will spend the next 10 months focusing on community trusteeship, community awareness, and leadership styles, ultimately joining a network of more than 1,900 Leadership Omaha alumni.

# BUSINESS GROWTH

## Key Annual Benchmarks:

- \$1 Billion in capital investment, creation of 1,500 new jobs and \$100M in new payroll
- Support and drive forward 11 key projects from the Urban Core Strategic Plan
- Completion of the MIT REAP (Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program)

## Q2 Results

- The Housing Subcommittee presented their final recommendations to the full Urban Core Committee. The plan looks at a balanced development mix of market rate and affordable housing within the core.
- The Omaha MIT REAP team participated in the global workshop in Perth, Western Australia. They are working on a final strategy, plan and report for competition of the program.
- While landed projects are down for the first half of 2023, the pipeline of active projects remains strong. Across the 8-County Partner region there are 155 active projects with potential for over \$27 billion in capital investment and 16,000 jobs. This includes 8 large projects with \$1 billion in projected capital investment, 100 new ventures or new-to-market companies, and 55 existing business expansions.



# MEMBER SERVICES

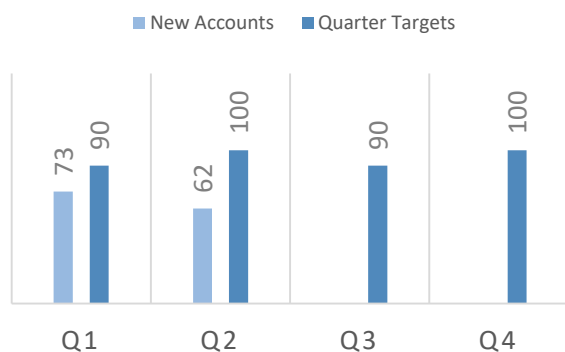
## Key Annual Benchmarks:

- 360 new member accounts and an 87% or better retention rate
- 5,900 attendees at 24+ small business education sessions events and 7 signature events; 40+ award winners, and 2,000 Hours of educational and technical service
- 150+ sponsorships secured

## Q2 Results

- Dues from 62 new membership sales were 36% below budget for the quarter. YTD new dues are down 29%. The retention rate for the year is better at 90% compared to the 87% end of year goal.
- During the first two quarters, the Chamber has executed 53 events targeted at small business and entrepreneurs. In all, there have been 2,890 participants engaged for 7,450 hours of education and 1-on-1 consulting.
- During this quarter two signature events (Business Excellence Awards and Business on the Green) engaged 33 sponsors, bringing the YTD total number sponsor partners to 113 organizations. YTD, just over \$550,000 has been raised for the seven signature events on a goal of \$608,500.

## NEW MEMBER ACCOUNTS



Date	Signature Event	Participants
January	Annual Meeting	625
March	Young Professional Summit	1,466
May	Business Excellence Awards	130
May	Business on the Green	169
	YTD	2,690

# PEOPLE

## **Key Annual Benchmarks:**

- Engage over 700 participants in Leadership, Young Professional, and Workforce programs
- Expand CODE programming: CEOs for CODE participation (25% increase), Conference attendees (15% increase), Networking & Education (22 events, 100+ education hours), Education Series (800 attendees)
- GroW Navigators serve 1,350 employee clients

## **Q2 Results**

- The 49 participants of Leadership Omaha Class 45 graduated in June. The LO Selection Committee selected 49 participants for Class 46.
- CEOs for CODE 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter meeting hosted 94 attendees from 77 companies. Discussed “How to Create an Inclusive Omaha by year 2035”.
- GroW Navigators served 240 new and 181 returning clients for a total of 421 in Q2. YTD, 446 new and 259 returning clients were served for a total of 705 in all.
- YP Showcase hosted 83 registrants who networked and collaborated with YP Organizations in the community.

### **Leadership Programs**

Leadership Lab	28 participated in the April Leadership Lab.
Mindset/Propel	A new cohort of 18 participants completed the first session in June.
LeadDIVERSITY	The 24 members of Cohort 4 graduated in June.

### **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Division**

Education Series	127 attendees from 88 companies.
Growing Home Program	Matched 16 scholars with mentors.
Employer Coalition	274 attendees registered from 182 companies.
CODE Connections	117 attendees from 56 companies.

# PLACE

## **Key Annual Benchmarks:**

- Unicameral Representation Lobbying the interests and advancing the Greater Omaha Chamber members’ agenda
- Military Expanding and extending workforce initiatives for Veterans

## **Q2:**

- Chamber priority bills on taxes, economic/community development and transportation were passed in the 2023 legislative session.
- Hosted the Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Executive Director and a member of the Board of Directors for the ADC for a Greater Omaha community immersion.
- Military/veteran workforce activities during the second quarter including meetings with Veteran ERG leaders, presentations on creating a veteran friendly workplace and partnering with UNO and Nebraska Tech Collaborative to develop curriculum to address skill gaps.



**Q3 2023**



## Honoring Omaha's Business Past and Present



Since 1993, the Greater Omaha Chamber has honored business leaders whose commitment, ingenuity and grit have resulted in major contributions to our community. Honorees were selected from nominations submitted by community members and business leaders. Over 400 attendees celebrated our annual Omaha Business Hall of Fame Gala at the Holland Center for Performing Arts.

The inductees in the 2023 Omaha Business Hall of Fame class are:

- Ron Carson – Founder & CEO Carson Wealth
- Greg Cutchall – Founder & CEO Cutchall Management Company
- David Karnes – President & CEO The Fairmont Group Inc
- Beverly Kracher, Ph.D. – Founder Business Ethic Alliance
- Mary Ann O'Brien – Founder & CEO OBI Creative



## The Chamber Welcomes Heath Mello as New CEO

On August 2nd Heath Mello joined the Greater Omaha Chamber to lead the organization as its next President/CEO. Mello brings experience in public policy, fundraising, and community leadership to the Chamber. Mello served as a Nebraska state senator for eight years and was chairman of the Legislature's Appropriations Committee for four years. Mello has also served on various state and regional Boards and Councils, including as Chair of the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry Education Policy Council; and service on the Nebraska Chamber's Board of Directors.



## Google Invests in Local Data Centers

Google announced an investment of additional \$350 million in its Council Bluffs data center complex which is already described as one of the largest in the world. Additional expansions of the Papillion and northwest Omaha data centers were also announced that are expected to cost a total of \$600 million. These projects are in addition to the \$5 billion that Google has invested in the metro area over the past 20 years with the support of the Chamber's regional economic development partnership.

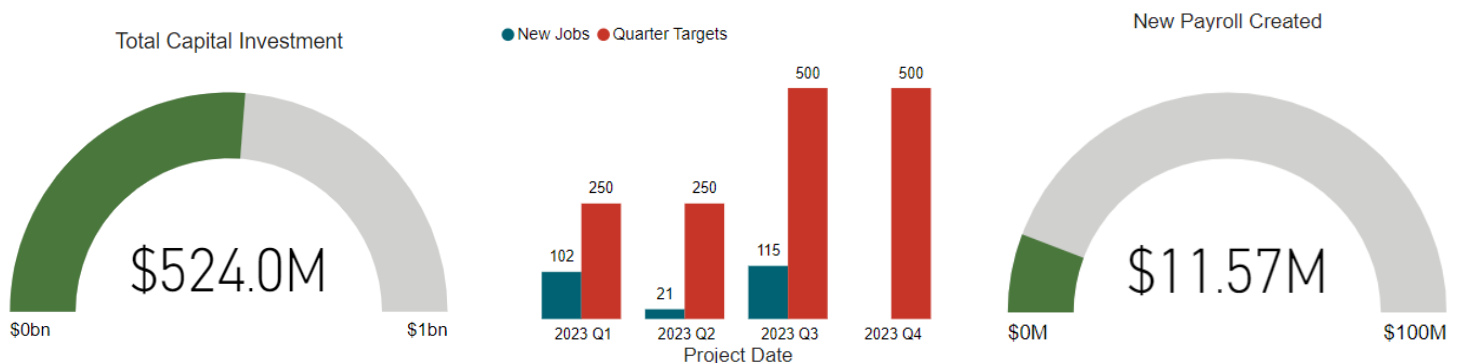
# BUSINESS GROWTH

## Key Annual Benchmarks:

- \$1 Billion in capital investment, creation of 1,500 new jobs and \$100M in new payroll
- Support and drive forward 11 key projects from the Urban Core Strategic Plan
- Completion of the MIT REAP (Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program)

## Q3 Results

- The Chamber hosted two planning meetings for the North Omaha Business Park in association with the Omaha Economic Development Corporation. The Master Planning process will be completed in November which will provide the framework to access the \$90 million allocated for implementation in the last legislative session.
- Start Up Omaha Week had 15 signature events focused on building a stronger startup ecosystem in the area. The Showcase and Pitch Competition attracted 150 attendees.
- Results from economic development project activity are down compared to goals in 2023. The team is working over 150 active projects across the region representing over \$15 billion in potential capital investment. This includes 68 new projects that were opened in 2023 through the third quarter.



# MEMBER SERVICES

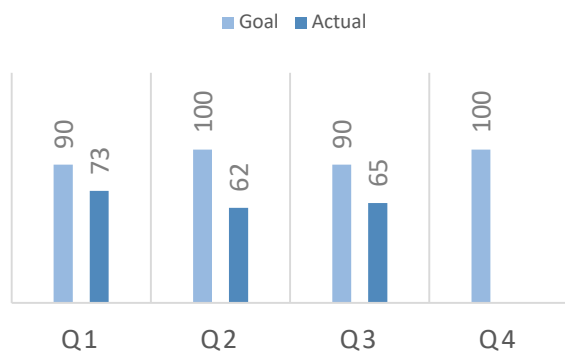
## Key Annual Benchmarks:

- 360 new member accounts and an 87% or better retention rate
- 5,900 attendees at 24+ small business education sessions events and 7 signature events; 40+ award winners, and 2,000 Hours of educational and technical service
- 150+ sponsorships secured

## Q3 Results

- Dues from 65 new membership sales were 26% below budget for the quarter. YTD new dues are down 28%. The retention rate for the year is better at 89% compared to the 87% end of year goal.
- In Q3, the Chamber executed 9 events targeted at small business and entrepreneurs. 497 participants were engaged for a combined total of 1,703 hours of education and 1-on-1 consulting.
- The Business Hall of Fame occurred during the third quarter bringing the YTD total number of sponsor partners to 155 organizations. YTD \$643,700 has been raised in signature event sponsorships on a goal of \$608,500.

## NEW MEMBER ACCOUNTS



Date	Signature Event	Participants
January	Annual Meeting	625
March	Young Professional Summit	1,466
May	Business Excellence Awards	130
May	Business on the Green	169
Aug	Business Hall of Fame	411
	YTD	2801

# PEOPLE

## Key Annual Benchmarks:

- Engage over 700 participants in Leadership, Young Professional, and Workforce programs
- Expand CODE programming: CEOs for CODE participation (25% increase), Conference attendees (15% increase), Networking & Education (22 events, 100+ education hours), Education Series (800 attendees)
- GroW Navigators serve 1,350 employee clients

## Q3 Results

- The 48 participants of Leadership Omaha Class 46 completed Orientation in August and Opening Retreat in September.
- CEOs for CODE: Strategic Doing for an Inclusive Omaha hosted 72 attendees from 64 companies. CODE partnered with Methodist College to offer the Strategic Doing Model to CEOs to develop 12 projects that will help create a more inclusive Omaha.
- The HIRE Conference was held in August and attracted nearly 200 attendees. This event is targeted at talent acquisition and HR professionals to provide recruiters with new tools and best practices.
- Implemented monthly YP Development Series for personal and professional development based on YP suggested topics.

### Leadership Programs

Mindset/Propel	The cohort of 18 participants completed Q3 sessions
LeadDIVERSITY	25 members of Cohort 5 were selected, completed orientation and attended the first session

### Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Division

Education Series	119 attendees from 97 companies.
Employer Coalition	144 attendees registered 91 companies.
CODE Connections	Partnered with UNO to create Foundations DEIAB course that will launch in 2024.

# PLACE

## Key Annual Benchmarks:

- Unicameral Representation Lobbying the interests and advancing the Greater Omaha Chamber members' agenda
- Military Expanding and extending workforce initiatives for Veterans

## Q3:

- Cohosted the annual Federal Legislative Summit, which featured the presentations by members of the Nebraska federal delegation and several hundred business representatives in attendance.
- Hosted a gathering of members and elected officials to mark the enactment of LB 754, which reduced Nebraska's income tax rates.
- Hosted a film crew from the Association of Defense Communities (ADC). A video is currently in the works for presentation at Installation Innovation Forum scheduled for November in Orlando.
- Conducted 4 Veteran Round Table events on what makes a veteran friendly workplace. Shared results with the Government, Military, and Veterans Affairs Committee of the NE Legislature during testimony on LR 142.



# Q4 2023



## Navigating Economic Growth

The annual Economic Outlook event in November featured Gallup's Chief Scientist, Workplace Management & Wellbeing, Jim Harter, Ph.D. Dr. Harter presented research on current workforce trends and actions managers can take to engage and retain workers. Heath Mello also presented insights from a recent survey of Greater Omaha Chamber members. Survey highlights include an optimistic outlook on growth for their business (68.4%), with talent acquisition and retention as top concerns. Over half of respondents have hybrid work schedules which is consistent with national data provided by Dr. Harter.



## The Conference Celebrates Success

The Conference attracted over 720 attendees. The event featured keynote speakers Soledad O'Brien, an accomplished journalist, entrepreneur, and host, alongside Shalynne Jackson, Principal Consultant at Shalynne Jackson Consulting. O'Brien and Jackson delivered impactful speeches, providing insights into navigating contemporary challenges and leveraging opportunities in today's professional landscape. Attendees had the opportunity to engage with 15 breakout sessions.

The Human Resource Association of the Midlands (HRAM) honored Omaha-based organizations for their efforts in embracing inclusion, diversity, equity, advocacy, and leadership (IDEAL) in their business strategies, policies, and practices. Feedback from attendees include:

*"I came home with lots of excitement for change in my workplace!"*

*"I love these opportunities to connect and learn with people doing this work."*

*"There were some things that really hit home for me, and ways of looking at things that I hadn't thought through completely. It was very helpful to me in that regard, and a great reminder of our shared humanity."*

## 2023 Business Retention & Expansion Results

The Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program in the Greater Omaha area actively engages with businesses, addresses key challenges, facilitates connections to programming and resources, and contributes to substantial capital investments, fostering economic growth and sustainability.

Over 275 Business Retention and Expansion Visits were conducted. The program resulted in positive outcomes, including 59 new economic development relationships, 28 instances of business assistance provided, 45 referrals to Greater Omaha Chamber programming, 64 referrals to community programming, and 12 new economic development projects.

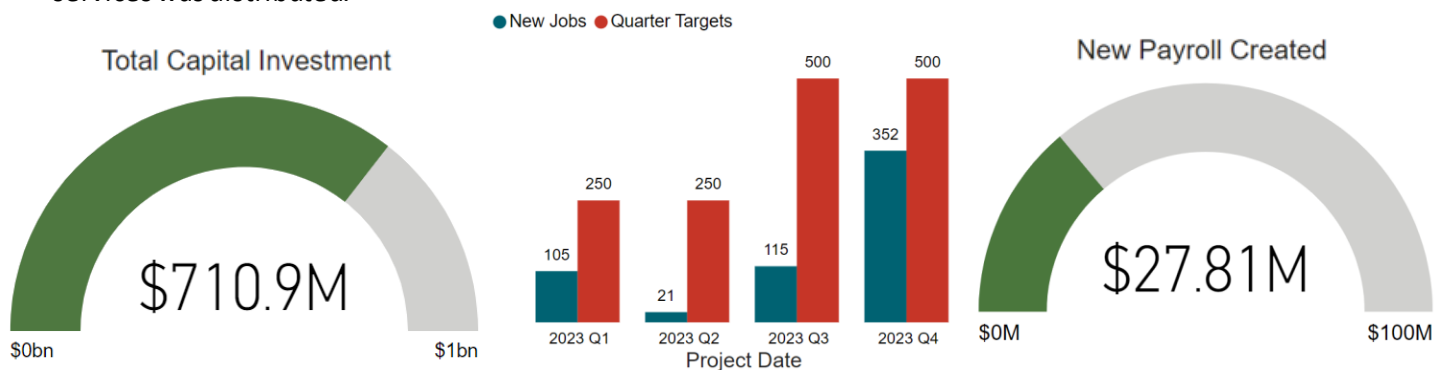
# BUSINESS GROWTH

## Key Annual Benchmarks:

- \$1 Billion in capital investment, creation of 1,500 new jobs and \$100M in new payroll
- Support and drive forward 11 key projects from the Urban Core Strategic Plan
- Completion of the MIT REAP (Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program)

## Q4 Results

- Landed projects for the year represent over \$700 million in capital investment, nearly 600 new jobs and \$28 million in new annual payroll.
- 140 new projects were opened during 2023 which is about on par with the previous 2 years but still below pre-pandemic levels. Those 140 projects represent over \$20 billion in potential capital investment and 13,000 new jobs continuing the trend of projects in the pipeline.
- The Omaha MIT REAP Team completed the two-year long process with a final presentation of the strategic plan at MIT in Boston through the collaborative effort of many regional stakeholders.
- The Board approved the completed Urban Core housing study, and an RFP for Urban Core marketing and branding services was distributed.



# MEMBER SERVICES

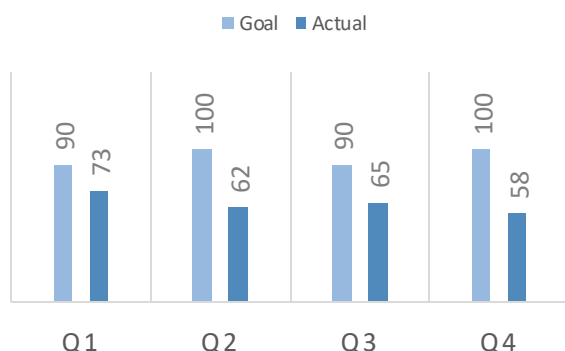
## Key Annual Benchmarks:

- 360 new member accounts and an 87% or better retention rate
- 5,900 attendees at 24+ small business education sessions events and 7 signature events; 40+ award winners, and 2,000 Hours of educational and technical service
- 150+ sponsorships secured

## Q4 Results

- The dues retention rate for the year is better at 90% compared to the 87% end of year goal. Dues from 58 new membership sales were 47% below budget for the quarter. The total new member accounts for 2023 ended at 258. YTD new dues are down 37%.
- Ten educational sessions and 10,000 hours of group and 1-on-1 education and consultation were completed. REACH helped participants receive contracts, financing, and grant dollars, including assisting a participant to execute a \$5M acquisition. Attendees for educational events totaled 3,858.
- The Conference and Economic Outlook events brought the YTD total number of sponsor partners to 162 organizations. During 2023, \$659,700 sponsorship dollars were raised on a goal of \$608,500.

## NEW MEMBER ACCOUNTS



Date	Signature Event	Participants
Jan	Annual Meeting	625
Mar	Young Professional Summit	1,466
May	Business Excellence Awards	130
May	Business on the Green	169
Aug	Business Hall of Fame	411
Oct	The Conference	721
Nov	Economic Outlook	272
Dec	Holiday Open House	492
YTD		4,286

# PEOPLE

## Key Annual Benchmarks:

- Engage over 700 participants in Leadership, Young Professional, and Workforce programs
- Expand CODE programming: CEOs for CODE participation (25% increase), Conference attendees (15% increase), Networking & Education (22 events, 100+ education hours), Education Series (800 attendees)
- GrOW Navigators serve 1,350 employee clients

## Q4 Results

- The Chamber engaged over 1000 participants in Leadership, Young Professional and Workforce Programs.
- The 48 participants of Leadership Omaha Class 46 completed the City Environment Seminar in October, Inclusivity Seminar in November, and Economic Development Seminar in December.
- During 2023, CODE executed 39 events with over 2200 attendees.
- Over 75 young professionals attended the “Unveiling the Future: Navigating Omaha’s Urban Core Strategic Plan for Young Professionals” at Millwork Commons.
- GrOW began their transition as an independent non-profit entity named The Work Lab, Inc. In 2023, GrOW served a total of 1,191 employee clients. 751 were new in and 440 were returning.

Leadership Programs	
Mindset/Propel	The cohort of 18 participants completed the program in December.
LeadDIVERSITY	25 members of Cohort 5 completed sessions in December.
Leadership Lab	38 attended the two-day workshop.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Division	
Employer Coalition	99 attendees registered 74 companies.
CODE Connections	Partnering with UNO to create Foundations DEIAB course that will launch in 2024.
Growing Home Program	Partnered with UNL NCPA/OASIS to host Professional Day with 25+ organizations and 300+ scholars

# PLACE

## Key Annual Benchmarks:

- Unicameral Representation Lobbying the interests and advancing the Greater Omaha Chamber members’ agenda
- Military Expanding and extending workforce initiatives for Veterans

## Q4 Results:

- Received briefings from Chamber members participating in the Governor’s legislative task forces on taxation, business development programs, and workforce development. Continued a series of member meetings on Nebraska’s business climate and economic development efforts.
- Hosted the State Chamber’s annual metro Omaha meeting with Chamber members, state senators and the Governor to discuss proposed legislation.
- Continued meetings with and assessment of candidates for public office in 2024 and possible PAC support. Stepped up emphasis on educating Chamber members on the value of supporting the Chamber PAC.
- The Greater Omaha Area was highlighted at Association of Defense Community’s (ADC) Installation Innovation Forum; video shown to more than 1,000 attendees; Omaha breakout session had 35 communities in attendance.