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semiconductor innovation
in Spokane Valley**

SEE PAGE 14

2026 Greater Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce Magazine

A Journal of Business Supplement



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Chud Wendle
Hutton Settlement

MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR

Dear Valued Members and Friends,

As the Board Chair of the Greater Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce, it is my pleasure to welcome you to a new chapter in our journey. We are excited to announce the hiring of Jessica “Jessie” Laughery as our new President and CEO. Her exceptional leadership and passion for our community will be instrumental as we continue driving growth and innovation in the region.

The Chamber plays a vital role in fostering a thriving business environment, advocating for our members, and building strong connections across our region. From supporting local entrepreneurs to spearheading initiatives that enhance workforce development, our efforts contribute to a vibrant economic landscape that benefits everyone.

I have seen firsthand our membership united in a

shared vision for making the Greater Spokane Valley a prosperous and thriving region. While our community is at a crucial crossroads, facing challenges such as workforce shortages, infrastructure strains, and an evolving business climate, the trust, strength, and determination among our members inspire dynamic, pivotal change.

We continue to be a powerful collaborator, ensuring that every voice is heard and every idea valued. Driven by the Chamber’s mission to be the region’s catalyst for building relationships, driving collaboration, and championing opportunity, I encourage you to see every engagement with the Chamber as an opportunity to help shape the Greater Spokane Valley’s future.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to our mission.

Warm regards,

Chud Wendle
Chair, Board of Directors
Greater Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce

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WELCOME

Growing up, I had a front-row seat to the realities of running a small business.

My family owned and operated a small automotive business in a small community, and from an early age, I learned that success was about much more than products or services. It was about relationships. It was knowing your customers by name, supporting community events, showing up for neighbors and understanding that when local businesses succeed, entire communities benefit.

Those lessons have stayed with me throughout my career and have become even more meaningful as I step into the role of President & CEO of the Greater Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Communities thrive when people trust one another.

Trust is built through relationships, shared experiences, honest conversations, and a willingness

to work together toward common goals. It is built when businesses, educators, healthcare leaders, elected officials, nonprofits and community members come together around a shared commitment to the future of the place they call home.

That is the work of the Chamber.

For decades, the Greater Spokane Valley Chamber has served as a convener, bringing together people from across industries and perspectives to strengthen our local economy and improve quality of life throughout the region. Today, that role is more important than ever.

My own understanding of that role began as a student in Clarkston, Washington. Through DECA, I had the opportunity to work on a project with the Clarkston Chamber of Commerce and local economic development leaders focused on revitalizing downtown Clarkston. It was my first experience



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seeing how chambers can bring together business leaders, educators, government and community members around a shared vision. The project ultimately earned recognition at the international level, but the lesson I carried forward was simple: communities make progress when people work together.

That belief continues to guide our work today.

The Chamber's greatest strength has never been a single event, program or initiative. Our strength lies in our ability to connect people, foster dialogue and create opportunities for collaboration that lead to real solutions.

Trust and collaboration are essential, but they are not the end goal. Their purpose is to create action.

The opportunities ahead of us will require more than awareness of the challenges we face. They will require leaders willing to step forward, organizations willing to partner in new ways, and a community willing to move from conversation to action. The most successful regions are not those without obstacles. They are the ones with the courage and commitment to tackle them together.

That is the opportunity before us. Not simply to understand what needs to be done, but to take ownership of shaping what comes next.

Across our work, that commitment is reflected in the partnerships we continue to build and strengthen. Through our Government Affairs efforts, we elevate the voice of business and advocate for policies that support economic growth and opportunity. Through initiatives focused on healthcare, public safety, education, manufacturing and workforce development, we create spaces where leaders can

share challenges, explore solutions and learn from one another.

One area of particular opportunity is the connection between education and industry. Few communities can point to the level of collaboration that exists among our Valley school districts, businesses and civic organizations.

Looking ahead, there is tremendous opportunity before us.

Our region continues to grow and evolve. New businesses are investing here. Existing employers are innovating and expanding. Community leaders are working together to address workforce needs, infrastructure, housing, healthcare access and economic development. The Chamber will continue to serve as a trusted partner and connector, helping bring diverse voices to the table and ensuring that business perspectives remain part of the conversation.

Most importantly, we will continue investing in the relationships that make progress possible.

The future of the Spokane Valley will not be shaped by any one organization, industry or individual. It will be shaped by our collective willingness to listen, collaborate and work toward shared goals. When trust exists, communities become more resilient. When relationships are strong, challenges become opportunities. And when people come together with a shared vision, big things get done.

Thank you to our members, partners, volunteers and community leaders for the trust you place in the Chamber. I am honored to build on the strong foundation that already exists and excited for what we can accomplish together.

OUR MISSION

We are the catalyst for building relationships, driving collaboration, and championing opportunity for the Greater Spokane Valley.



Jessica "Jessie" Laughery

President & CEO

Greater Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce

SETTING THE CORNERSTONES FOR TRANSFORMING OUR REGION'S COMMUNITIES



Partners INW

Development and capital projects are built not only on impactful storytelling and fundraising, but also on powerful collaboration. Shaping a landscape takes invaluable people, hours, effort, and relationships to move ideas from brainstorming to blueprints. Convening the right people for life-changing visions, Valley Chamber members demonstrate the caliber of interpersonal and regional coordination that moves the needle on capital projects.

Laying the Groundwork for Life-Changing Opportunities

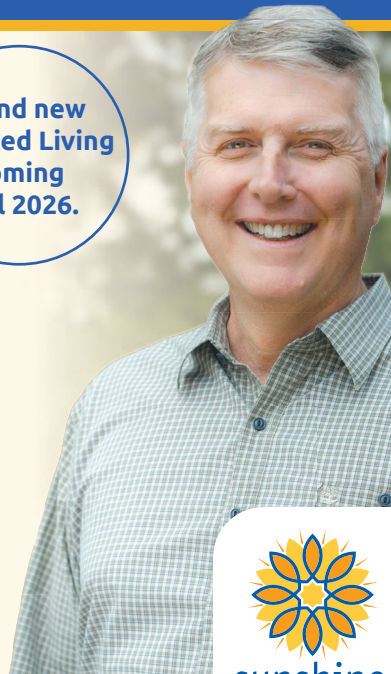
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Dr. Nathan Dikes Owner/ CEO



Seeking to positively transform lives, Helping Captives plans to reclaim a former strip club and develop it into a prevention and resource center for human trafficking survivors. Creating a safe space to heal and rebuild lives takes great strides with key partnerships, including Trek Architecture, Baker Construction & Development, Altmeyer Financial, Walker Furniture, Jess Ford, Merit Electric, and many other supporters. Having nearly completed its funding goals, the initiative is expected to strengthen the community by increasing awareness of human trafficking, expanding access to support services, and fostering collaboration among local organizations and businesses. Working against public perceptions, one of the greatest challenges was helping people understand the vision behind what a development could become. Validating the power of collaboration and communication,

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support grew as more people came to understand the mission and potential for great impact. What Helping Captives hopes will leave an impression for generations to come, the space aims to offer greater care and services for human trafficking survivors, while community members can engage in meaningful solutions. Helping Captive's Founder and CEO, Caleb Altmeyer, said, "Beyond its immediate impact, the project serves as a powerful symbol of redemption and demonstrates that communities can reclaim spaces and repurpose them for hope, healing, and restoration."

With a dramatically increasing need for food, clothing, diapers, and emergency assistance, Partners INW has seen a community of businesses, government partners, churches, foundations, volunteers, and individual donors take on the responsibility of creating a safety net for their communities. As food insecurity increased more than 400% since COVID, Partners recognized its current facility couldn't meet the growing community need. Partners INW Director of Development, Sarah Henderson, said, "The vision behind this capital project was to create a larger, more efficient facility that would allow us to expand storage capacity, increase access to services, strengthen community partnerships, and ensure we can continue serving families for decades to come." Partners needed nearly \$11 million to make this vision a reality, and support came from every level, including federal, state, county, city, corporate, foundation, and individual donors, said Henderson. "This project has truly become a community effort, and the relationships built throughout the process have been just as meaningful as the funds raised." Together, the individuals, businesses, and organizations investing time, resources, and continued support will create a stronger Inland Northwest, ensuring that every neighbor has help when they need it most.

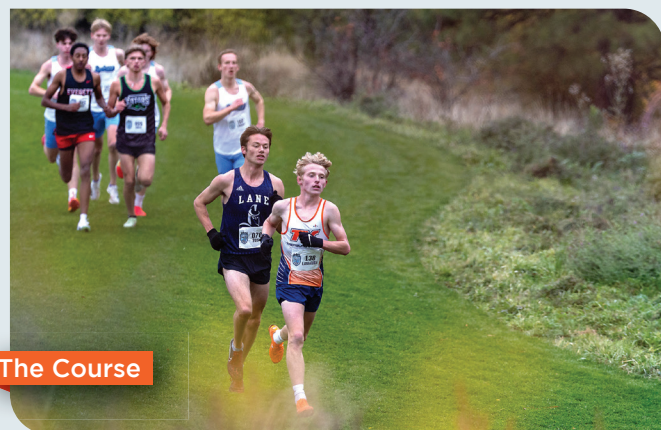
Paving the Way to Bold Community & Economic Outlooks

Creating new amenities for healthier youth, families, and communities, the Greater Spokane Valley has seen several projects in recent years, including the highly anticipated Ice Sports Facility, projected to open in June 2027. "We are thrilled to see Spokane Valley take this important step forward. The new youth ice sports facility will open doors for countless young people in our region, giving kids greater access to participate in hockey, figure skating, and recreational skating close to home, all while driving economic growth," said Innovia Foundation CEO Shelly O'Quinn in an April 2026 press release from the City of Spokane Valley. Innovia Foundation,



The Course

Photo Credit: Sockeye



The Course

Photo Credit: Keith Webber



Helping Captives



Helping Captives

Garco Construction, City of Spokane Valley, and private donors are curating this space, imagined in 2016 as part of the city's first Tourism Strategic Plan and reaffirmed in the 2023 update. Coming to fruition with remarkable speed, the Ice Sports Facility's success underscores the city's forward-thinking approach and highlights Spokane Valley collaborators as a catalyst for economic vitality.

The development of the Ice Sports Facility, alongside the recent completion of The Course, the city's new premier cross-country venue, transforms our region into a youth sports destination. Spokane Valley saw the completion of The Course in late 2026, brought together by the City of Spokane Valley, Spokane Sports, community stakeholders, and industry



partners. To move the project forward, collaborators consistently shared the project's unlimited potential through community engagement, strategic partnerships, and media outreach. The local amenity also doubles as a championship-level venue and has already stacked an exciting event lineup, including the Nike Cross Regionals Northwest, NWAC Championships, and the 2027 NCAA Division I West Regional Championships. Ashley Blake, Spokane Sports CEO, said, "We're excited to continue building on that momentum, growing participation opportunities for local athletes, and further establishing Spokane Valley as a premier destination for cross country competition in the western United States."

What also began with a vision to transform twenty acres into a community recreation site, the HUB Sports Center's "Fields for Our Future" project had been years in the making. Major milestones involved acquiring land, securing approvals and partnerships, and finally illuminating two multi-use synthetic turf fields. Now, after its first year of operation, the HUB shifts focus to carrying the momentum with plans for two additional fields, "allowing us to serve more local athletes, schools, tournaments, and community organizations while strengthening the Greater Spokane Valley and Liberty Lake's position

as a regional sports destination," said HUB Executive Director Phil Champlin. This project's growth advances the community with projections of generating millions in economic activity through visitors frequenting local hotels, restaurants, and businesses. The project faced some hurdles, such as helping the community understand that this venture was not simply constructing fields but long-term investments in youth development, community health, and regional quality of life. "Perhaps the most rewarding milestone came in 2026, when the fields hosted more than 600 activities and over 73,000 visits from athletes, families, and spectators," reflected Champlin.

Not only is there visible growth taking place across the region, but the relationships and shared vision helping move that progress forward in the Greater Spokane Valley is ultimately about people and community.



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52 Years	Spokane County Library District	69 Years	Vera Water and Power
52 Years	Spokane Valley Fire Department	70 Years	Kaiser Aluminum Washington
55 Years	Spokane Colleges	71 Years	The Spokesman-Review
57 Years	Arby's Roast Beef Restaurant 233/7159	77 Years	Inland Empire Paper Company
58 Years	Mirabeau Park Hotel & Convention Center	78 Years	Avista
58 Years	MultiCare Valley Hospital	78 Years	Central Pre-Mix Concrete Products
59 Years	American Medical Response	78 Years	Modern Electric Water Company
63 Years	Banner Bank	78 Years	Bank of America
67 Years	Sunshine Health Facilities, Inc.	80 Years	WM
69 Years	Inland Power and Light Company		

MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES

25th	Oxford Suites	75th	Tracy Jewelers
25th	Premier Manufacturing	75th	Union Gospel Mission
50th	Visit Spokane	80th	Kaiser Aluminum Washington
50th	Altek, Inc.	90th	BECU
55th	Kiemle Hagood	90th	Fisher's Technology
70th	Longhorn Barbecue	115th	Inland Empire Paper Company
75th	Baker Construction & Development, Inc.		

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SPOKANE VALLEY RIBBON CUTTINGS

1. Cowles River Landing
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**2. Storage Solutions and
Liberty Sip Coffee**
May 1st, 2025

**3. Spokane Valley
Farmer's Market**
May 16th, 2025

4. Two Men and a Truck
May 21st, 2025

5. Wilder Dentistry
June 11th, 2025

6. Hayden Homes
June 18th, 2025

7. Dave & Buster's
August 11th, 2025

8. Play It Again Sports
August 28th, 2025

**9. Spokane County
Fair & Expo**
September 5th, 2025

10. Timberline Dental
September 15th, 2025

11. The Baldwin Group
September 25th, 2025

12. Pet Savers
October 25th, 2025

13. Swire Coca Cola
October 29th, 2025

GROUND BREAKINGS

**14. Pines Road / BNSF
Grade Separation**
October 16th, 2026

15. Solstice Advance Materials
December 2nd, 2026



6



8



10



12



14



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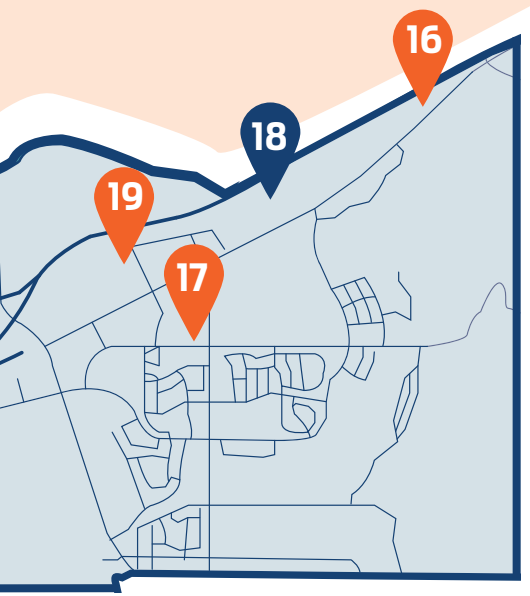
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LIBERTY LAKE RIBBON CUTTINGS



16



17



19



**16. NW Trends
Fabrication Studio**
June 26th, 2025

**17. Sketchbuilt Innovative
Cabinet Design**
August 20th, 2025

18. Hormann Northwest Doors
September 9th, 2025

19. Garner Hotel
November 5th, 2025

NOT LABELED

Plastic Surgery Northwest
March 20th, 2025
530 S Cowley St,
Spokane, WA 99202

WM's SMaRT Center
April 22nd, 2025
2902 S Geiger Blvd,
Spokane, WA 99224

BECU
April 29th, 2025
2501 E 29th Ave,
Spokane, WA 99223

Cambria Hotel
July 8th, 2025
4611 S Dowdy Rd,
Spokane, WA 99224

Fred's Appliance
December 18th, 2025
1716 E Renshaw Dr,
Spokane, WA 99218

WM's SMaRT Center



BECU



Cambria Hotel



Fred's Appliance





SHOP. COMPARE. GO!

SPOKANE VALLEY'S AUTO ROW

Spokane Valley's Auto Row is a cornerstone of the Spokane Valley economy, serving as a primary driver for the City's general fund revenues through substantial sales tax contributions. Of the top five retail sales-generating industries, auto sales is number one, accounting for about 14% of all retail sales tax the City receives into its general fund. The City uses general fund revenues to provide services the community needs and wants, such as public safety, parks, code enforcement, etc.

Auto Row on Sprague Avenue is a two-mile stretch from Thierman Road to Herald Road, hosting 12 national-brand new-car dealerships, numerous used-car dealerships, and various businesses providing supporting sales and services. At the eastern end of Auto Row, AutoZone will construct a mega-hub store and warehouse directly west of Spokane Valley City Hall. The construction of this new automotive supporting service will only add to Auto Row's vitality. The construction costs of the mega store will be roughly \$3.8 million. The new store will offer 34,000 sq ft of retail and large-scale parts storage, built on a long-vacant lot at 102 S. Dartmouth Road.

If you haven't noticed other expansions such as AutoNation adding Land Rover, or the change in Nissan dealership to Cortes

Nissan, it's time you go visit Auto Row!

Helping this industry to continue to grow and thrive in Spokane Valley is critical to our economic and community vitality. At the end of May, the City began a media campaign to remind the greater region how easy it is to shop Spokane Valley's Auto Row for their next vehicle!

Shop. Compare. Go! Spokane Valley's Auto Row <https://discoverspokanevalley.com/auto-row>. You may notice streaming ads on social media, in your news feed, as well as hear spots on your favorite streaming music station.

We look forward to seeing you on Auto Row in Spokane Valley!



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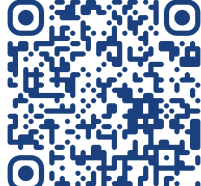
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SOLSTICE ADVANCED MATERIALS

MADE IN SPOKANE VALLEY, GLOBAL IMPACT

By: Charlie West, Plant Manager

Right at the corner of Euclid Avenue and Sullivan Road sits a low-slung, modest-looking building that, for decades, had a Honeywell sign out front. Last fall, that sign came down and ours went up. Honeywell spun out its advanced materials business, and we became Solstice Advanced Materials — a new, independent public company.

As a company, we support a wide range of industries from refrigeration and data centers to nuclear power, to ballistic armor, and healthcare packaging. But right here in Spokane Valley is where some of our most advanced materials are made.

In Spokane, our 300 skilled employees are helping build the technology of the future. They produce what are known as “sputtering targets.” Admittedly,

these are products you’ve almost certainly never heard of, but one you cross paths with nearly every minute of every day. If you have a computer, a tablet, a phone, a car, or just about any other piece of modern technology, our work is in your hands.

A sputtering target is a specialized material used to create the ultra-thin coatings that make modern electronics possible. These coatings are essential to how semiconductors function, and as devices become more advanced, the materials we produce here in Spokane play an increasingly important role.

As the industry has evolved, so have the expectations for materials like these. The push for smarter, faster, and more efficient technology — whether that’s artificial intelligence or next-generation electronics — means there’s little margin for error. That puts a real focus on doing this work right every time, which is exactly what our team here in Spokane does everyday. It’s not work most people see, but it’s critical to keeping our modern society moving forward.



From left to right: Marcus Riccelli, State Senator; Pam Haley, Former Mayor of Spokane Valley; Eric Saunders, Vice President and General Manager, Semiconductor Materials; Simon Mawson, Senior Vice President, Electronic & Specialty Materials (ESM); Johnathan Weatherly, Senior Vice President, Manufacturing; Leonard Christian, State Senator

Investing in Local Manufacturing Growth

As semiconductors appear in more parts of daily life, demand for what we make here in Spokane keeps growing. So, we’re investing in growth! In August 2025, just before the transition from Honeywell to Solstice, we announced a \$200 million investment to expand and upgrade our facility. By 2029, we expect to double production capacity at the site to meet that

rising demand. For our customers, that means faster delivery, greater consistency, and the confidence to keep innovating, backed by improved lead times and enhanced traceability.

More importantly, this isn't just an investment in our future. It's an investment in Spokane Valley and the broader Washington community. This is a great place to live and work, and we're proud to keep building here. What we're doing strengthens the region's manufacturing base, supports supply chain resilience, and helps position Washington as an important part of the country's semiconductor ecosystem.

All that growth also means jobs. The expansion will create 80 new positions, and we're investing in further upskilling our existing workforce, the team whose commitment and expertise have brought us to where we are today. That will include specialized training in automation and robotics so they can thrive in the advanced manufacturing environment of tomorrow.

Suppliers and contractors in the region stand to benefit, too. Nearly half of that \$200 million will be spent locally, supporting businesses, skilled trades, and jobs across the region. These partnerships underscore our commitment to local business and to driving economic growth in the Pacific Northwest.

A Commitment to Spokane Valley's Values

Beyond its economic impact, this project reflects our strong commitment to sustainability and resource stewardship. The investment will allow us to reclaim and reuse metals from used sputtering targets supplied by our customers, reducing reliance on virgin raw materials and conserving valuable resources. This circular manufacturing approach aligns closely with Washington State's priorities around innovation, sustainability and responsible industrial development.

Our facility improvements are also

expected to cut CO₂ emissions by more than 300 metric tons per year by the project's completion, which is comparable to the carbon captured by more than 5,000 tree seedlings grown for a decade.

A Bright Tomorrow, Together

Spokane Valley is a true hub for advanced manufacturing, and we're proud to be part of it. Most importantly, this work is powered by the people here — the teams who show up every day to build something meaningful. We've called Spokane home for many years, and we're excited to keep growing alongside this community.

To learn more about Solstice
Advanced Materials, please visit
www.solstice.com

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EMERGING LEADERS IN MANUFACTURING COMMITTED TO THE TRADES, COMMUNITY, AND FAMILY

According to the City of Spokane Valley, over 1,200 manufacturers operate in the Greater Spokane Valley region. Emerging leaders from these companies are driving mentorship, opportunity, and workforce continuity for the

trades. Rooted in generational experience or trailblazing new paths, the Greater Valley's evolving legacies among manufacturers share a deep investment and commitment to Inland Northwest communities.

Spokane Seed Company



Founded in 1908, Spokane Seed Company has seen five generations join the family-owned and operated business. Growing, processing, and supplying dried peas, lentils, and chickpeas to some of the largest food companies in the world. Father and son, Andrew and Brandon Fontaine, reflected on Spokane Seed's legacy. "We have been in the region for 118 years, so there have been several moments that have connected us to the Spokane business community," said President and General Manager Andrew Fontaine. Entering the 5th generation of their family business, Andrew's son, Brandon, said,

"Recognizing the dedication and the sacrifices that were made to create the foundation of what we have today gives you a deep sense of perspective. It is an honor to move the legacy forward." As Spokane Seed Co. passes on leadership and industry knowledge, it continues to experiment and modernize. This year, Spokane Seed Co. wants to simplify workflows with AI agents, and recent projects in development focus on reducing herbicide residues for crops. Deeply connected to family and agriculture, Andrew Fontaine attributes the transfer of leadership as the backbone of Spokane Seed Co's success.

Sonderen Packaging



While established in 1963, Sonderen Packaging has been in its current location since 1967. Siblings Matt and Keva Sonderen are now co-owners of the family business who continue to cultivate their trade, culture, and workforce. Sonderen Packaging, manufacturer

of custom paperboard packaging, has grown into a 130,000-square foot facility. Still holding close to its heart, its family-oriented culture is rooted in care, connection, and celebration. "We provide frozen turkeys for all employees at Thanksgiving,

celebrate work anniversaries and birthdays, and a themed winter party including significant others, and much more,” said Keva. “We love to have fun and create ways to connect with one another as humans, not just co-workers.” Taking the helm as the family’s third generation, Matt and Keva are always identifying training and mentorship opportunities to engage, mentor, and train the next generation of workers and leaders. Sonderen has utilized resources such as Spokane Colleges, The Machinists Institute, Gonzaga’s Center for Lifelong Learning, equipment vendors, and other industry partners. Keva stated that mentorship and training are deeply rooted in

their culture. Since many of the roles are developed from the ground up, Sonderen Packaging creates training pathways for employees who begin in entry-level positions and show mechanical aptitude, initiative, and leadership potential. What’s rooted in balancing human connection and business operations, Sonderen’s dedication to its employees and family continues to shape its operations today. Keva said, “We remember spinning around in dad’s chair, and going to the family picnics. Perhaps the most epic memory was when we had a rollerblading birthday party for Matt in the new warehouse we were building.”



For the Marzetta family, what began 50 years ago as a tool and die company in the family garage evolved into a comprehensive manufacturing partner, adding plastic injection molding and precision machining. Founder of Altek, Inc, Al Marzetta, was a calculated risk-taker who successfully balanced business growth with long-term financial security. As these values pass to the first member of the third generation, Altek continues its strategic expansion into aerospace, medical, defense, technology, and deep-space markets. Invested in market growth and workforce development, Operations Development Manager and second generation, Andrea Larson said, “Altek is deeply committed to strengthening the community and advancing the future of manufacturing through

workforce development initiatives and partnerships with SCC, local high schools, and skilled trades programs.” As part of this commitment, the company recently launched the first phase of Altek University, beginning with its inaugural Co-Op Machining Internship Program and a comprehensive internal employee development system that includes standardized training, leadership workshops, mentorship, specialized instruction from industry experts, and off-site educational opportunities. Guided by the motto “Family Over Profit,” Altek prioritizes long-term relationships and integrity while remaining committed to carrying forward Al Marzetta’s legacy and the company’s future vision that has become their own legacy, said Larson.



Recognizing the value of relationships and people, Premier Manufacturing CEO Britt La Chance believes the Inland Northwest is filled with hardworking, resilient individuals who still believe in

craftsmanship, accountability, and community. “The greatest lesson I have learned is that leadership is about taking care of people,” said La Chance. “When employees feel valued, challenged, and supported,

incredible things happen. Not just for the business, but for entire families and communities.” Established in 2001, Premier Manufacturing is a precision sheet metal fabricator for several industries, including telecommunications, medical, military, aerospace, and utilities. La Chance envisions the Inland Northwest becoming one of the leading manufacturing regions in the United States, with skilled trades workers and young people thriving

in manufacturing careers. Premier Manufacturing’s mission goes beyond making parts or products and builds careers and strengthens communities. Looking at the qualities that are most important in those emerging as manufacturing leaders, La Chance emphasized humility, grit, adaptability, and a genuine commitment to people: “I learned early on that no leader succeeds alone and that investing in people will always produce the greatest return.”



Husband and wife, Daniel and Hailey Modin, began their venture in 2010. Modin Industries provides expert part design, CAD engineering, and precision

CNC machining for prototypes, short runs, and production parts. “Manufacturing is constantly evolving, and being willing to learn new technologies, improve processes, and respond to changing customer needs has been essential to our growth,” said Hailey Modin, Director of Operations. Delivering solutions when asked, “Is this possible?” creates a meaningful impact for the two and their business. Led by honesty, hard work, and valuing customers as partners, Modin Industries combines powerful ingenuity and engineering to reinforce its connection to the community. Hailey added, “What started with Daniel’s passion for problem solving, designing, and machining grew into something that now supports not only our family, but also manufacturers and innovators throughout the Spokane region.”

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From passing on traditions to developing them, the Inland Northwest’s rising manufacturing leadership is instilling principles in community, mentorship, and invention.

2025 CITIZEN OF THE YEAR



HUB SPORTS CENTER'S PHIL CHAMPLIN RECOGNIZED AS CHAMPION FOR PLAY

**By Nina Culver, originally published in The
Greater Spokane Valley Current, March 2026**

P Phil Champlin, longtime executive director of the HUB Sports Center, has been named the 2025 Harry E. Nelson Citizen of the Year by the Greater Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce, an honor that dates back to 2003.

Champlin, along with other award winners, will be honored at the annual Chamber Business Awards March 4 at 5 p.m. at the CenterPlace Regional Event Center.

The award is named after Nelson, one of the founders of the Spokane Valley Chamber of Commerce in 1921 who also served as the organization's president in 1926. Nelson also saw the need for a Spokane Valley newspaper and was co-founder of the Spokane Valley Herald in 1920. He was dedicated to bettering

Spokane Valley through the Chamber until he died in 1959.

Several notable Spokane Valley figures have previously received the Citizen of the Year award, including former mayors, business leaders and educators. It is the previous winners of the award who gather every year to select the newest honoree.

Champlin said he was surprised when he was told he was being honored with the award. "I looked at the names of people who have won in the past," he said. "I don't consider myself equal to that group. I've got a tremendous amount of respect for those people. Even just the consideration is very cool."

The HUB Sports Center is now a bustling facility in the midst of an expansion to add outdoor artificial turf multi-use fields, but it wasn't always that way. It originally opened as Sports USA in 2003, but closed in 2005. A group of community members worked to revive it in 2007, but the first few years were a struggle to break even and Champlin often wondered if he would be forced to close the doors.

"2012 was really the year we turned that corner and figured out how to be self-sufficient," he said. "When I started, the board met every week because we didn't know what that week would bring. It's fun today to sit back and see how far we've come."

Champlin took over the role of executive director of the HUB in late 2009. He was fresh off a decade spent working for a youth sports camp company, five years in California and five years in Spokane. When his position was lost to restructuring, Champlin said he worried he wouldn't be able to find a job that would let him be involved in youth sports.

He found an ad for the HUB position in the Sunday paper and immediately applied. Champlin said he was grateful to find a way to continue doing what he loves.

"That's really where my passion is," he said. "This position has given me the opportunity to lean into those passions."

Today the HUB Sports Center hosts just about every sport played with a ball and some that don't, including basketball, pickleball, volleyball, martial arts, wrestling, table tennis and boxing. The facility

includes five full-sized basketball courts that can be configured in a variety of ways.

“We can do so many different activities here,” he said. “You’re not boxed in that you can only do basketball, you’re not boxed in that you can only do volleyball. And as much as my pickleball players don’t like to hear it, you’re not boxed in that you can only do pickleball. We get to serve a wide base of the community because of all the things we can do.”

The HUB has always been focused on indoor sports, but that changed when a donor approached Champlin in late 2021 and offered to donate enough money to buy 17 acres of vacant land next to the facility for outdoor fields.

“After I picked my jaw up off the floor, I said okay,” he said.

Even though he was excited about the possibilities, Champlin still did his due diligence. He researched if there was a need for outdoor synthetic fields, if it was feasible to build the fields and if they would be sustainable. The answer to all three was yes.

Phase 1 was purchasing the land. In Phase 2, two fields and a parking lot were put in. At that time,

there were only two synthetic turf fields in Spokane County, though that has since changed. Three synthetic fields were just installed at Plantes Ferry Park and more are planned in Spokane.

“Our research showed the necessity of synthetic fields,” Champlin said.

In this climate, grass fields are usually unusable between October and March or April. Using grass fields when wet risks damaging them, as does not allowing the grass time to recover between uses. All that can be avoided with a synthetic turf field, Champlin said.

The synthetic fields can be used year-round in all types of weather. “We can schedule back to back to back events,” he said.

The fields are lined for soccer, lacrosse and football and can be configured for other uses as well.

Phase 2 was paid for with a combination of private donations and funding from Spokane County and the Washington State Recreation Conservation Office. The facility sits just inside the boundary of Liberty Lake and the city contributed money from its Tax-Increment Financing (TIF) district.

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Champlin is currently seeking funding for Phase 3, two more synthetic turf fields. The estimated cost of the project is around \$7 million and so far Champlin has secured a \$1.5 million Youth Athletic Facilities grant. “We’ve got possibilities out there,” he said. “We’re always looking for more.”

Champlin said it’s important to raise the money so the HUB doesn’t have to take on debt, which would likely force an increase in prices. It’s too important that the HUB remains affordable and provides a place for local kids to play, he said.

While Champlin was surprised to find himself among the distinguished winners of the Citizen of the Year award, Spokane Valley Chamber CEO Lance Beck said he’s not surprised that the committee of former winners selected him.

“He was on my board for seven years,” Beck said. “I’ve seen Phil operate directly. I think he’s very deserving of this recognition by the committee.”

Champlin has had a far reaching impact in the community both through his work with the HUB Sports Center and his time spent serving other local organizations, including the Valley Chamber, Beck said. “He’s always been engaged in the community,”

he said.

People trust him, which is one reason the ongoing expansion to outdoor fields has been successful. “Phil got the field project over the hump to the halfway point,” Beck said. “Sixty thousand additional kids got to play on those fields in the first 12 months.”

Beck first met Champlin when Beck worked with the Spokane Shock arena football team and was looking for a place for the team to practice. He asked Champlin if the team could use the HUB. Champlin turned him down because he wanted to keep the facility available for kids, Beck said. “He’s been able to lead with grace and understanding while still staying grounded,” he said.

Champlin said he doesn’t deserve all the credit. “It’s not just me,” he said. “I’ve got a team here. I’ve got an amazing board of directors.”



HOW DID YOU COME TO THE HUB SPORTS CENTER?

A: I have been blessed to be around sports and youth for most of my career. In August 2009, my role as VP of Operations with a youth sports camp company was eliminated and so I was searching for

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another position, ideally something involved with youth and sports, but I wasn't sure that would be available. I was doing most of my job search online. I found an ad for the E.D. position with HUB Sports Center in the Sunday paper. I applied for the position at the end of September 2009. After a couple rounds of interviews, I was offered the position and started at the end of October.

Q: WHAT COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS ARE YOU CURRENTLY INVOLVED IN?

A: I am on the board of directors for ESD 101, a member of the Mead School District CTE Advisory Committee, on the leadership team for the Spokane Christian Generosity Council. I'm a member of Greater Spokane Valley Chamber, GSI, and Post Falls Chamber.

Q: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY?

A: To be a good steward of our facility. To seek out opportunities to collaborate for the betterment of our youth and community. I believe that

together we can achieve more than what we can do on our own. How can I facilitate connection between groups and help individuals and organizations better serve their constituents/clients and therefore better our community?

Q: WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IS YOUR PRIMARY GOAL AS HEAD OF THE HUB?

A: To be a good leader for the organization and fulfill our purpose, "To provide events that have a positive impact on youth and the community." To empower our team to be a good steward of our resources and maximize the usage of our facilities, whether this is through strategic partnerships and collaborations or programs we create to fill a gap in service.

Q: WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR FAVORITE PART OF RUNNING THE HUB?

A: Hearing and seeing stories of impact from events and activities facilitated by and/or hosted at HUB Sports Center. To be able to move from an organization with uncertainty for its future to a valued community resource. And to be recognized for the work we are doing and given the opportunity to expand our capacity to serve.

Q: WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO DO IN YOUR SPARE TIME?

A: I enjoy spending time with my family and traveling.

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ANIMALS ★ EXHIBITS
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PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION:

STRENGTHENING THE GREATER SPOKANE VALLEY

Valley Chamber members and business leaders are spearheading initiatives to build a prosperous community through housing, education, and workforce opportunities. Anyone who visits, lives, or works in the Greater Spokane Valley will find themselves welcomed into a network of organizations passionate about working together toward cultivating the region. Built on trust and dedication, these partnerships define how meaningful undertakings can improve communities beyond the standard 9-5 operations among for-profits and nonprofits alike.

“We believe building strong communities goes far beyond building homes,” said Kaleb Simon, Regional Director of Hayden Homes. A home builder, Hayden Homes’ purpose, “Give As You Go,” leads its collaborative partnerships that help shape thriving communities where people can live, grow, and connect. In 2025, through a grant partnership with First Story, Hayden Homes provided funding to Safety Net InlandNW, a nonprofit organization that helps foster youth transition into adulthood out of foster care. When Safety Net had an additional need for resources, Hayden Homes stepped in as a partner, by also donating furniture to furnish apartments, creating comfortable, welcoming homes for young adults finding their footing in their next stage of life. Collaborations between organizations like Hayden Homes and Safety Net underscore the efforts the Greater Spokane Valley sees day to day, reflecting the dedication to providing opportunities for growth. “We remain committed to being an active community partner, listening, collaborating, and investing in initiatives that strengthen communities and help people lead fulfilled lives,” added Simon. “Together, we can continue building a strong community and more connected future for our area.”

Highlighting that long-term impact can’t be achieved alone, Numerica Credit Union’s Heroes Fund is another example of community coordination

coming together to support and honor veterans and military families. Amanda Swan, Vice President of Community Impact & Communications, said, “Lasting impact happens when organizations are collectively committed to trust and a shared purpose.” With the region home to 32,000 veterans, the Numerica Heroes Fund leaned on its partnerships with veteran-serving organizations to guide informed, relevant, and sustainable investments. In collaboration with the Spokane County Regional Veteran Services and Volunteers of America to help guide funding priorities, Numerica committed \$1 million over 10 years to support programs for veterans and military families. Its first investment of \$50,000 was made to Vets on Lacey, a housing community providing stability and support for veterans. “This isn’t just supporting individual projects,” said Swan. “It’s building a long-term commitment to the people who have served our country and the families who support them.” Since the first investment, the partnership has established six funding priorities: veteran housing and homelessness prevention; mental health and peer support services; employment and financial stability programs; veteran and family support services; legal aid and benefits navigation; community events; and veteran recognition initiatives.

With the word “communities” central to its mission and name, Communities in Schools of Northeast Washington (CISNEW) empowers students to stay in school and achieve success in life by working directly with public schools. Last year, CISNEW received a funding opportunity that allowed partnerships with East Valley, West Valley, and Central Valley School Districts. This opportunity expanded its programs from five to eleven public schools in the Greater Spokane Valley area. As this expansion has evolved, CISNEW site coordinators have been able to grow their resources when connecting Valley students and families to mental health services, family engagement opportunities, and academic interventions. Partnerships with organizations like

LaunchNW, which also champion student career success, help bridge gaps between students and future workforce opportunities across the region. “Student success depends on collaboration among schools, businesses, healthcare providers, nonprofits, and higher education institutions,” said Debra Raub, CISNEW Executive Director. “When every sector views student success as a shared responsibility, we create stronger outcomes for students, families, and our regional workforce.” By providing chances for career exploration, mentorship, and academic intervention, CISNEW stewards an active network driven by mutual respect and commitment to putting students first.

These initiatives are just a few of the many founded

in goodwill and compassion. While trust is the thread that ties them all together, each project and every person involved embodies authentic, action-oriented values that enrich and uplift the Greater Spokane Valley. Not only is there visible growth taking place across the region, but these projects also reflect something even more important: a shared commitment to building a stronger future together. Behind every new facility, expanded service, and community investment are individuals, businesses, nonprofits, public agencies, and philanthropists willing to contribute their time, expertise, resources, and leadership toward a common goal.

The challenges facing our communities cannot be solved by any one sector alone. Lasting progress



CISNEW



Numerica



Numerica



Numerica

requires partnership, trust, and a willingness to move beyond simply identifying problems to actively creating solutions. The projects highlighted here demonstrate what is possible when organizations align around a shared vision and take collective responsibility for advancing the quality of life, economic vitality, and opportunities available throughout the Greater Spokane Valley and Inland Northwest.



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2025 ANNUAL REPORT

149 NEW MEMBERS
ADDED IN 2024

814
TOTAL
MEMBERS

**2025 FINANCIAL
REPORT**

LARGEST MEMBER CATEGORIES



1 Business & Professional Services

6 Automotive & Marine

2 Family, Community & Civic Organizations

7 Real Estate, Moving & Storage

3 Construction & Contractors

8 Health Care

4 Shopping & Specialty Retail

9 Restaurants, Food & Beverages

5 Finance & Insurance

10 Government & Education



REVENUE

Total: \$1,123,212.14

Annual Dues
42%

EXPENSES

Total: \$1,072,186.09

Labor Expenses
74%

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

203

In 2025, the Valley Chamber hosted a variety of events and programs to our members to discuss, network, learn, and celebrate the business community. This year we held **The Amazing Shake**. This competition focuses on teaching students professional skills. It was held in **three** school districts in the Greater Spokane Valley, reaching **1,600** students. The **70** judge of the competition came from **54** member businesses.

TOTAL ATTENDEES 4,308

29 RIBBON CUTTINGS

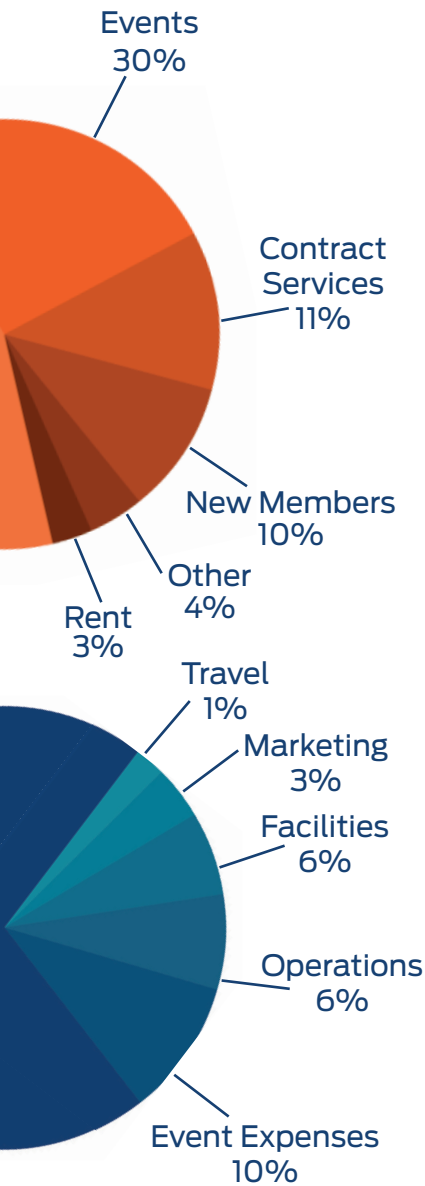
MEMBERSHIP BY LOCATION

46% Spokane Valley
32% Spokane
10% Liberty Lake
5% North Idaho
2% West Plains
5% Other

2%

32%

3 INVESTOR PARTNER 11 VISIONARY PARTNERS 34 CORPORATE PARTNERS



80% MEMBER RETENTION RATE



ADVOCACY EFFORTS



10 Government Action Committee Meetings
The Chamber advocated legislature for local businesses and schools during the **Olympia** and **DC** fly-ins.

11,000 SOCIAL MEDIA

followers across all platforms & **76** newsletters sent



CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN



1,818 completed through the Valley Chamber in partnership with the American World Trade Chamber of Commerce.

121 NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES



5 NETWORKING GROUPS



11 SIGNATURE EVENTS



5 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

CHAMPION BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE
QUALITY OF LIFE & COMMUNITY
COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE
EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

MANUFACTURING CONNECT TOURS

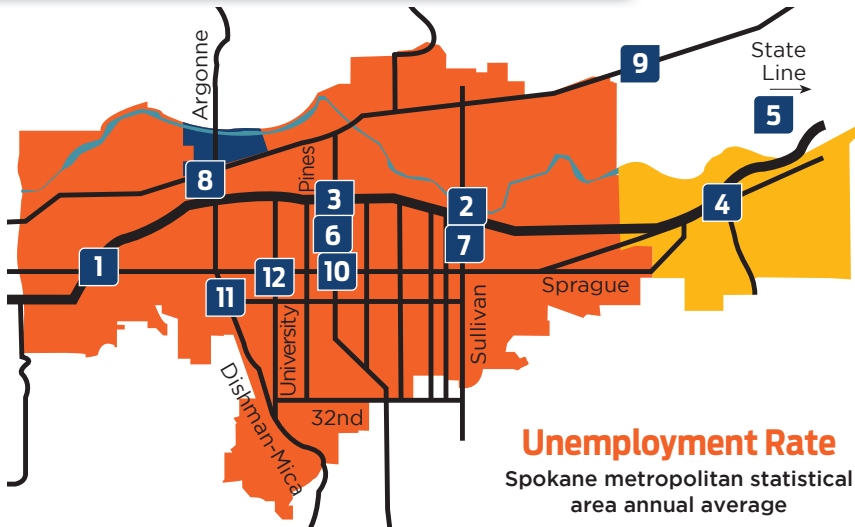


This program aims to inspire the next generation of innovators by exposing high school students to the dynamic career opportunities. During the 2025-2026 school year, **40** students toured **20** manufacturers in our region.

15 AMBASSADORS

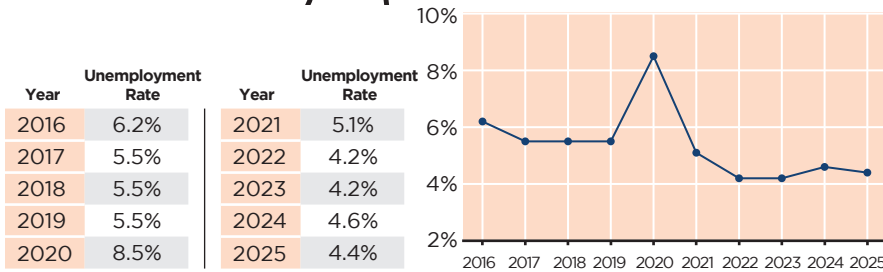


AREA FACTS



Unemployment Rate

Spokane metropolitan statistical area annual average



Source: Washington state Employment Security Department

Population of Spokane Valley:
110,200

Population of Millwood:
1,925

Population of Liberty Lake:
14,110

Daily traffic counts in both directions

1	I-90 at Sprague	106,000
2	I-90 at Second	123,000
3	I-90 west of Sullivan Road	102,000
4	I-90 at Pines Road	93,000
5	I-90 at Liberty Lake	80,000
6	I-90 at State Line	65,000
7	Division north of Garland	41,000
8	Division at North River Drive	49,000
9	U.S. 2 north of North Division "Y"	23,000
10	Pines Road north of Mission	40,000
11	Sullivan Road and Broadway	35,000
12	Greene Street Bridge	39,000

Sources: Washington State Department of Transportation, City of Spokane, City of Spokane Valley.

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**SPOKANE
VALLEY**
— ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT —

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