



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

Effingham County Chamber Announces 2022 Excellence in Business Recipients

The Effingham County Chamber will hold its Annual Chamber Gala and celebrate the Excellence in Business recipients on Saturday, January 29 at the Thelma Keller Convention Center. The Excellence in Business award was created to celebrate member businesses for the outstanding contributions they make to our communities and the local economy through continued growth, innovation, and community support.

The Chamber is pleased to recognize and honor two local businesses as 2022 Excellence in Business recipients: StangARTs and Washington Savings Bank.

StangARTs

Owned by Jamie Stang Ellis, StangARTs is a dream come true having recently celebrated their 11th anniversary in December 2021. With a team of incredible artists and instructors, an amazing support system from Effingham, surrounding communities, other states, and even Switzerland, and adults and kiddos of all ages who come to enjoy classes, etc., StangARTs is here and has reached far past their goal.

StangARTS has an incredible family of artists and is blessed with how busy they have been with custom art for great clients. They also stay busy with the StangARTs After School Program, which has given back \$150,000+ to local schools. It has been an awesome adventure educating and mentoring children in the fine art. With much success and growth, two employees, Haley & Megan Meyer (The Twins), of StangARTs have bought a portion of the company and lead the torch for the current after school program to make it their own.

StangARTs continues to grow with new youth programs in other areas as well as at the Downtown Effingham location. To be a part of this journey is a blessing. This journey and dream come true could not be possible without those believing in what StangARTs does around the clock.

Visit StangARTS at 112 W Washington St., Effingham, IL 62401, on Facebook @StangARTS, or by phone at (850) 960-0106.

Washington Savings Bank

In 1883, a group of business leaders established The Washington Loan and Building Association, whose primary purpose was to help its members purchase homes. 138 years later, it is known as Washington Savings Bank and is the largest and oldest customer owned bank in its two primary markets, Effingham, and Coles County. Consistent with the mission of its founders, Washington Savings Bank prides itself on serving its customer/owners, supporting home ownership, and providing capital for small business growth. The staff of the bank also prides itself on using its resources to provide financial literacy education to people of all ages and supporting not-for-profit causes with donations of time and money.

For 127 years, Washington Savings Bank had one facility. In 2010 the bank acquired its second facility in Effingham. Today, after completing two more acquisitions, the bank has 5 locations in Effingham, Mattoon, and Lerna. From the beginning of 2010 until today, the bank has grown from approximately \$212.0 million in assets to over \$580.0 million in assets.

Through all the growth, the bank has stayed loyal to its mission. This is most recently illustrated during the global pandemic, when the bank quickly took action to help the communities it serves by giving to local nursing homes, local teachers, and other local organizations in addition to helping secure PPP loans and continuing financial education during these unprecedented times.

Pandemic or not, Washington Savings Bank is also very committed to financial education. For over 10 years they have visited local schools teaching over 1,000 junior high students about saving and over 300 area high school students about the importance of credit. Washington Savings Bank is kicking off 2022 by partnering with the online Financial Literacy Provider, Banzai. With this partnership, the bank will be able to provide local schools and community programs with access to free online financial literacy programs and written materials that are relevant to all age groups.

Washington Savings Bank has always placed a strong emphasis on helping and supporting their communities and throughout the past two years of the pandemic that has proven true time and time again. For more information, please visit WashingtonSavings.net.

To attend the Chamber Annual Gala, reservations are required and accepted until Monday, January 24, 2022. Tickets and sponsorship information can be found on the Chamber website calendar at EffinghamCountyChamber.com/event or by calling (217) 342-4147.

About the Effingham County Chamber

Founded in 1917, the Effingham County Chamber is the county's leading advocate and champion for business. The Chamber works to create a climate of growth and success in our community by providing leadership opportunities as well as a volunteer programs and business-building initiatives that focus on the critical priorities of Effingham County businesses. By leveraging the support, talent, and resources of our members, the Effingham County Chamber is leading efforts to achieve business success and community growth.

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