

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Chamber Members,

As the 2025 Board Chair of the Brookings Area Chamber of Commerce, it is an honor to represent our region's incredible business community. This past year, the Chamber has continued its vital work in advocating for local businesses, fostering connections, and enhancing the Brookings area as a premier place to live and work.

In 2024, we expanded our focus on workforce retention through innovative programs like the SDSU Work Ready Boot-camp and the ever-growing New Resident Welcome initiative. It has been rewarding to see the participation in our educational opportunities, such as leadership development through Women in Leadership and the largest Leadership Brookings class to date. These programs, combined with events from committees like Public Affairs, Ag Relations, and Volga, continue to strengthen the bond between businesses and the community. We also had another successful year with our Downtown at Sundown series which helps build a vibrant community and a place where people want to live and work.

Our efforts in 2025 will build on these successes, with an emphasis on helping our members thrive in the evolving economic landscape. I am proud to work alongside our City Partners, the Board of Directors, staff, and our dedicated members as we continue to shape a prosperous future for Brookings.

Sincerely, Paul Gilk, Board Chair



PAUL GILK
DAKTRONICS, INC.
2025 Chairman, Brookings
Area Chamber of Commerce
Board of Directors



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Chamber Members,

Founded in 1938, the Brookings Area Chamber of Commerce is proud to stand as the community's oldest, largest, and most effective business advocate. We help to unite all sectors of business and community activity at the heart of Brookings County. Our Board of Directors and dedicated staff work tirelessly on behalf of our members and the community, striving to realize our vision of "a vibrant and collaborative business landscape."

Collaboration is at the core of what we do. We proudly partner with key organizations like the Brookings Economic Development Corporation, Research Park, Visit Brookings, the City of Brookings, and Downtown Brookings. These partnerships create a powerful support network for businesses, both new and established, fostering a thriving environment for commerce and community life. The resources we collectively offer are unmatched for a community our size, made possible by your support and investment.

Our commitment to providing the highest level of service to our members and the Brookings community is unwavering. Driven by our mission "To promote, advocate, connect, and enrich the Brookings area business community," we actively engage with all levels of government on issues that impact our members. Our advocacy efforts are focused on creating a business environment where opportunities can flourish.

We also see ourselves as the connector of choice for our membership. Networking within our community is essential for growth, and we are dedicated to creating opportunities where those connections can start and strengthen. Whether through ribbon cuttings, young professional meetups, forums, trainings, or signature events, we provide platforms that bring together business and industry leaders, government officials, and the wider community. Our goal is simple: to help you strengthen and grow your business.

We have been particularly focused on workforce retention and development, recognizing the importance of building a strong talent pipeline. Our efforts in collaboration with South Dakota State University have been making strides. We engaged with nearly 2,000 SDSU students in 2024 through our programs and events, showcasing what Brookings has to offer as a place to build a career and a life. The percentage of students planning to stay in Brookings after graduation has been rising year-over-year since we started tracking in 2022, reaching 14.64% in 2024. We've also worked with hundreds of new residents this past year, ensuring they have the right resources to feel connected to and build roots in our beautiful community.

We're here for you, our members, and we encourage you to reach out if you have any questions or ideas. Your continued support and involvement are what make our Chamber and our community strong. If you like what we're doing, please spread the word. We appreciate your membership and look forward to another year of growth and success together.



Kelsey Doom-Bjornestad
President & CEO

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

FUN STATS

AWARDS



PROGRAMMING + EVENTS

7 COMMITTEES
WITH 102 VOLUNTEERS

92 EVENTS

21,500+ ATTENDEES



MEMBERSHIP

548 MEMBERS

58 NEW MEMBERS



SDSU STUDENT INTERACTIONS

2,735 STUDENTS ENGAGED

14.6% WANT TO STAY IN BROOKINGS



\$14,000+

CHAMBER BUCKS REDEEMED

Head to page 26 for more info!

AMBASSADOR OF THE YEAR:

HEIDI ANSHUTZ

Mills Property Management

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR:

LAURA SCHWARZ

Falcon Plastics

NEW THIS YEAR

SALES TRAINING

(#2 issue businesses are facing according to 2023 member survey)

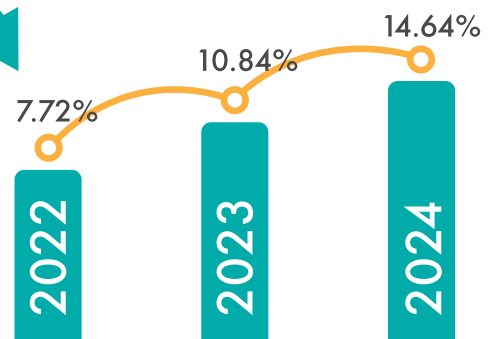
Business to Consumer & Business to Business Sales Training Courses

NATIONAL CIVICS BEE

The National Civics Bee® is an annual competition that encourages young Americans to engage in civics and contribute to their communities.

AI TRAINING WITH 70+ ATTENDEES!

Keep an eye out for an AI series in 2025!



STUDENT RETENTION RATES

LIVE IN BROOKINGS

LIVEINBROOKINGS.ORG is a great tool to share with new employees to your business. Get to know the community and available opportunities. The following data was collected to show the effects of our ongoing efforts to **gain and RETAIN** new residents. This data from 2024 shows exciting and impactful strides in our work across a variety of events and interactions!



9,288 NEW & POTENTIAL RESIDENTS REACHED IN 2024

6,347 VISITS TO **LIVEINBROOKINGS.ORG**

2,191 NEW RESIDENT POSTCARDS SENT

102 INTERACTIONS WITH NEW BROOKINGS COUNTY RESIDENTS

Make a big impact with

Signs, banners & vinyl graphics that catch your eye... and don't let go.

- Exhibit and trade shows graphics
- Paper, vinyl or canvas banners
- Grand Opening banners
- Point-of-purchase signs
- Event booths and displays
- Vehicle graphics
- Outdoor solutions
- Window clings and more



Contact us to get your project started!

605-697-5170

orders@allegrabrookings.com



1 - Multi-dimensional aluminum sign | 2 - Perforated vinyl window graphics
3 - Vinyl on contour cut PVC with standouts | 4 - Retractable banner