



# VOICE OF BUSINESS

## We've seen growth in 2023, optimism for 2024



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with my family in Clearcreek Twp.; I can honestly say that this is one of the most exciting and optimistic economic growth periods that I have experienced in this region.

Over the past 18

This past year was an exciting time to be part of the Dayton area business community. I was born and raised in Kettering, and I now live months, the Dayton region has realized the two largest economic development announcements in the State of Ohio. Joby Aviation will be building the first aircraft manufacturing facility in the region and the Honda/LG joint venture will produce electric vehicle batteries in Fayette County. Collectively, these projects are generating over \$4.5 billion in direct investments, over \$100 million in infrastructure investments and over 4,700 advanced manufacturing jobs in the Dayton region.

These "mega" investments create vast eco-

nommic stimulus, but we cannot forget about the smaller businesses and suppliers that are an integral part of the fabric of our community, and support the success of these investments. In 2023, our region secured continued state support for minority owned businesses through the Minority Business Assistance Center to provide access to capital, certification and business assistance to local companies.

A first-of-its-kind professional development cohort in the Dayton region was launched to support early career pro-

fessionals at Dayton area businesses to ensure they have the tools for success and growth. Additionally, on September 29th United Airlines launched new daily air service non-stop from Dayton-Denver, so our local business community and the defense industry would have vital air service access to the West.

This support is only possible if we have the right legislative environment that is conducive to business growth. Continued advocacy and government affairs on behalf our local business community was a top priority in 2023.

Your chamber of commerce lobbied for the passage of a \$125 million Ohio Innovation Hub fund, battled the federal government over a frivolous government shutdown and mandatory pilot retirement ages and filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging the federal government's ability to set prices for private businesses.

The Dayton region is well positioned for economic growth in 2024 and our business community is stepping up to the plate to drive this growth. Local business leaders are our neighbors, parishioners, co-workers, family

and friends. These business leaders know that we achieve economic and business growth through collaboration, partnerships and a collective voice. This corporate success has a direct impact on the quality of life in our community for all of us and our families.

2024 will realize the next level of these opportunities and I'm excited to be a part of a community where everyone is succeeding together.

Chris Kershner is the CEO and president of the Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce.