



September is always a month that marks new beginnings - from the start of school or back to work, to the beginning of shorter days and cooler weather. And for the Chamber we are excited to launch several of our new initiatives - Meditation Mondays and our 2021 Spotlight Celebration! More to come on these soon. But for now, from everyone at the Chamber, we hope you had a restful and safe Labor Day long weekend!

#chamberLOVE



Liz Holt
Executive Director



COMMUNITIES

Wednesday Sept 8, 11:30am-12pm - Ribbon Cutting at Studio of Art

Come celebrate with us at this week's ribbon cutting at **Studio of Art!** Welcome this new business, take pictures of the actual ribbon cutting with the staff, and enjoy networking with our amazing business community!

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)

Friday Sept 10, 12-12:30pm - Takeout Stakeout lunch pickup at the Daly Bagel

Come join your fellow Chamber members for our next Takeout Stakeout, this time at the **Daly Bagel!** In this event, we convene at a designated restaurant to pick up our takeout lunch choices, and get to see each other for a bit while we're at it in a socially-distanced meet-up. Like our Tuesday Tasting lunch series from which this springs, lunch is a flat \$16 including tax and tip. Menu at registration.

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)

Tuesday Sept 14, 5-7pm - Business After Hours at the Oak Park Conservatory

Join us at our regular monthly networking event, Business After Hours (BAH), on the second Tuesday of every month. This month's BAH will be hosted at **The Oak Park Conservatory**, operated by the Park District of Oak Park with the support of the Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory. All members and non-members are welcomed. (Members are free.)

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)

Wednesday Sept. 22, 11:30am-12pm - Ribbon Cutting at Personalization House

Come celebrate with us at the ribbon cutting at **Personalization House!** Welcome this new business, take pictures of the actual ribbon cutting with the staff, and enjoy networking with our amazing business community!

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)

Friday Sept 24, 12-12:30pm - Takeout Stakeout lunch pickup at La Borra Cafe

Come join your fellow Chamber members for our next Takeout Stakeout, this time at the **La Borra Cafe!** In this event, we convene at a designated restaurant to pick up our takeout lunch choices, and get to see each other for a bit while we're at it in a socially-distanced meet-up. Like our Tuesday Tasting lunch series from which this springs, lunch is a flat \$16 including tax and tip. Menu at registration.

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)

Wednesday Sept 29, 12-12:30pm - Ribbon Cutting at YogaSix

Come celebrate with us at this week's ribbon cutting at **YogaSix!** Welcome this new business, take pictures of the actual ribbon cutting with the staff, and enjoy networking with our amazing business community!

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)



2021 Professional Development Webinar Series brings you monthly webinars with helpful and practical tools to navigate the new normal.

2021 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WEBINAR SERIES

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

A discussion with Ameren Energy about how they implemented their DEI policy

SEPT 15, 11AM-12NOON

KRISTOL SIMMS
Director
Energy Efficiency, Strategy & Innovation
AMAREN ILLINOIS

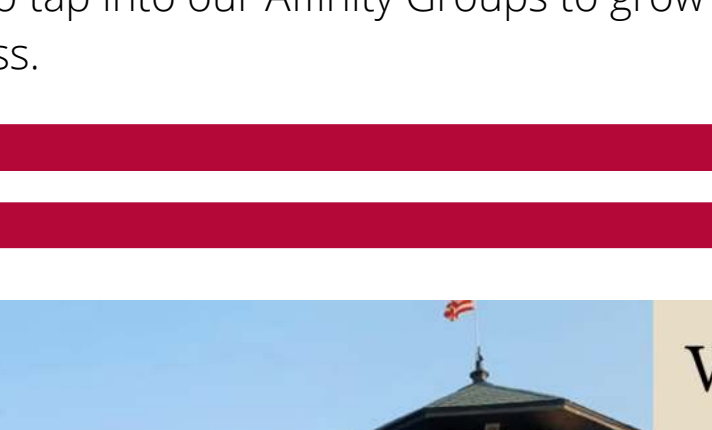
The Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program is continuously exploring innovations focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion to bring benefits to customers and families throughout central and southern Illinois. As a company, Ameren Illinois has also found opportunities to bring new job seekers and resources to help expand the energy-efficiency workforce. In just the past three years, the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program has also grown its spend with diverse vendors by 8-fold.

Join Kristol Simms, Director, Energy Efficiency, Strategy & Innovation, from Ameren Illinois, in partnership with the Illinois Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (IACCE), for an informative webinar about how the Ameren Illinois Energy Efficiency Program successfully implemented diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies and how you can put these strategies and innovations to work for your business or organization.

[**CLICK HERE TO REGISTER**](#)

Members!

Be sure to take advantage of these member benefits and increase your digital and marketing presence!



[**REGISTER HERE**](#)

In this seminar we will go over all of your marketing benefits that come with your membership, including:

- how to maximize your e-blast benefits.
- the role of your Member Profile in your marketing advantage and how to track digital traffic.
- how to generate marketing collateral that can be shared in your social media.
- how to tap into our Affinity Groups to grow your network and feature your business.

Women In Business Networking Lunch

Friday September 17, 2021
12:00pm - 1:30pm

O'Sullivan's Public House
Forest Park

Hosted by:

Come along for a great meal and meet up with other fabulous women from our communities. Your host this month will be the fabulous Laurie Kokenes from the Forest Park Chamber of Commerce.

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)

OPRF CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Meditation Mondays

SEPTEMBER 20, 2021
12:15PM - 12:45PM

Take a Break with Us

We know that owning or working in a business has been particularly hard this past year and we are guessing that you could use some TLC!

Join us as we launch our **NEW Chamber program** aimed at taking care of you, our small business community. Welcome to our monthly Meditation Mondays! All it takes is half an hour (that's only 30 mins!) for us to help you put your to-do list aside, empty your head of all the chatter and truly look after yourself.

Who will lead the meditation?

We are thrilled to partner with the **Kadampa Meditation Center in Oak Park** to bring you this monthly meditation. The fabulous **Kelsang Chogo** will lead the meditation and talk you through every step. You don't need to do anything but show up and breath!

[**REGISTER HERE**](#)



Develop & Define Your Entrepreneurial Journey



Classes Begin
October 2, 2021

Register by
September 8, 2021



The **LGBTQ+ Biz Boot Camp** was founded by the LGBT Business Foundation of Illinois in 2019 to assist LGBTQ+ entrepreneurs with launching and growing sustainable businesses that will positively impact our local communities. The Boot Camp is designed for businesses with at least one-year of hands-on experience in operating their business, but all interested applicants are encouraged to apply.

Facilitated by Kristina Wynne of The Wynners Club, the eight-week cohort program will provide participants with broad practical skills and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge using skills such as critical thinking, communication, and collaboration to help them further develop and define their entrepreneurial journey. Participants will leave the program with a business plan and business pitch deck, while also accessing quality networking through mentorship and guest speakers.

In addition to leaving the program with a prepared business plan and pitch deck, students will have the chance to compete for a chance to win a valued prize worth more than \$1,770.

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER HERE](#)



Be sure to check out the Ideas Center on the Chamber Website for more grant opportunities.

[CLICK HERE](#)



\$5K – \$150K
Grants Available

**Supporting
a Strong, Equitable
Recovery for Illinois'
Small Businesses**



The **Back to Business (B2B)** grant program is a key component of Governor JB Pritzker's \$1.5 billion economic package designed to maximize the impact of American Rescue Plan Act funds provided to Illinois. It sets forth **\$250 Million** for businesses that have experienced losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic to support them in their recovery.

Here's What You Need to Know.

- **\$5,000-\$150,000** grants to cover operations/staff/overhead costs
- **Must have revenues of \$20 million or less in 2019 and a reduction in revenue in 2020 due to COVID-19**
- **Priority given for these businesses applying:**
 - **Hardest hit industries** – such as hotels, salons, fitness centers, restaurants, and more.
 - **Disproportionately Impacted Areas (DIAs)** – economically distressed communities which have had higher case counts of COVID-19.
 - **Businesses who have yet to qualify for state or federal assistance**, including the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), Restaurant Revitalization Fund (RRF), BIG, and more.

Application is fast and easy!

- New interface designed to help small business owners track and learn updates on their application status in real-time
- B2B application portal at www.illinois.gov/dceo
- **What You need:**
 - A copy of your business's 2019 **AND** 2020 Federal tax returns
 - Two business bank statements – one from the period March through December 2020, and your most recent statement
 - Business owner ID (ITIN accepted)
- **Applications will be accepted starting August 18, 2021**

Learn more
about **B2B**
Apply Today!
scan code



Need application assistance?

Help is available in every region of the state and in multiple languages. **Over 100 community navigators** stand ready to assist with grants applications. Find a community navigator near you www.illinois.gov/dceo.

Follow Us on Social Media



**Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity**
JB Pritzker, Governor

Printed by the Authority of the State of Illinois 500 8/21 ILDCSO

[Learn More HERE](#)

SAVE THE DATE!

Spotlight Soiree

October 12, 2021 | 5-7 PM

[Learn more HERE](#)