

# AWARD APPLICATION



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*Making a Difference*

*ACCE's Chamber of the Year Award: Recognizing chamber excellence  
in Leading Businesses. Leading Communities.™*

Send three (3) copies of the completed application and supporting materials, each in its own binder. The full application with entry fee must be received by June 2, 2008.

Entry fees are based on your annual dues category:

Under \$200,000: \$260 \$200,000-499,000: \$360 \$500,000-\$1M: \$460 Over \$1M: \$535

Mail your entry to: ACCE, Attn. Chamber of the Year, 4875 Eisenhower Ave., Suite 250, Alexandria, VA 22304

If you have any questions about the application process, please call ACCE at (800) 394-2223.

## SECTION 1: CONTACT INFORMATION

Chamber Name Tulsa Metro Chamber  
Person Submitting Entry Matt Pivarnik  
Address Two West Second Street, Suite 150  
City Tulsa State OK Zip 74103  
Contact Person Email MattPivarnik@tulsachamber.com  
Contact Person Matt Pivarnik

President Michael S. Neal  
President's Email MikeNeal@tulsachamber.com

CFO Tiffany Day  
CFO's Email TiffanyDay@tulsachamber.com

Board Chairman Stanley A. Lybarger, President and CEO  
Chairman's Company Bank of Oklahoma and BOK Financial  
Address PO Box 2300  
City Tulsa State OK Zip 74192  
Email SLybarger@bokf.com  
Phone 918 - 588 - 6627

Entry Category (choose one):

- Annual dues income of:
- Under \$200,000
  - \$200,000 - \$499,999
  - \$500,000 - \$1 million
  - Over \$1 million

Board Size (Do not include ex-officio) 83 Staff Size (FTEs) 51

## SECTION 2: ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

*Excellent organizations follow sound financial, operations, human resources, and other procedures. 50 points.*

In your binder, submit each of the following under Section 2:

- The chamber's most recent financial audit.
- The chamber's 990 tax forms from 2005, 2006, and 2007.
- The chamber's current annual budget.
- The chamber's current financial statement.
- The chamber's current strategic plan.

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	Yes	No
1. Does your chamber comply with annual federal, state and local income tax filing requirements?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Is your annual budget approved by your board? If so, what month? <u>November</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Does your chamber have a long-range strategic plan? If so, please include a copy.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Please use a separate sheet of paper to answer the following:

4. Reflect on your most recent business plan or strategic plan and briefly explain what worked, adjustments you made, and the final or to-date outcome. (300 word maximum)
5. Describe an internal chamber program used within the past year that had an impact on the chamber staff or operations. This program may have helped to increase productivity, solve internal problems, address staff needs, etc. (200 word maximum)
6. How do you engage your board/volunteers to further the mission of your chamber? (200 word maximum)

## SECTION 3: MEMBER SERVICES & CONNECTIONS

*Membership is at the core of the chamber industry. 50 points.*

In your binder, submit each of the following under Section 3:

- Two consecutive issues of your newsletter, e-newsletter, or magazine (hard copy and electronic).
- Two printed communication/marketing pieces. Examples include direct mail, brochure, advertising, etc.

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The following information will help us to better understand your chamber's program and communication for its members. (200 word maximum per answer)

1. What is your chamber's strategy in member retention? Briefly explain it and its effectiveness.
2. How does your chamber communicate with members? List three examples. How effective are they?
3. How does your chamber choose which potential members to recruit?
4. What do you do to ensure that your chamber's programs, products, and services support your organization's mission?
5. Does your chamber systematically assess member needs and satisfaction? Describe one example and explain your results.

## SECTION 4: Leading Businesses. Leading Communities.™

### Leading Businesses. Leading Communities.™

Chambers of commerce exist to build stronger, vibrant businesses and communities. Chambers lead the charge in creating a climate of success and growth for all, and are knowledgeable and involved in important business, civic and social priorities.

“Leading Businesses” reflects the historic success and core equity of the chamber. It also represents what businesses become as a result of participation in the chamber and its programs. “Leading Communities”

speaks to the expanded role that chamber’s play in today’s communities, as well as what communities become as a result of strong, healthy chambers.

Please select two programs you’ve completed in the past two years and write two synopses, following the outline below. The first synopsis should address a program from the area of impact, advocacy, or focus. The second synopsis must address a program from the area of economic opportunities. In your binder please clearly separate the two synopses and supporting materials. *100 points.*

#### Step 1: Select Programs/Products/Services within a Core Chamber Strength

<b>Economic Opportunities</b> The Chamber enhances and leverages the talents and resources of its members to improve economic opportunities for all.	<b>Impact</b> The Chamber provides unique opportunities for individuals and businesses to make a difference by connecting them to important community issues.
<b>Advocacy</b> The Chamber is an advocate for its broad and diverse member businesses, creating a climate of growth and success that benefits all.	<b>Focus</b> The Chamber helps build stronger communities by staying focused and involved in the top business, civic, and social priorities.

**Leading Businesses.  
Leading Communities.™**

Examples of programs that could fall into one or more of the core chamber strengths:

- Small business development services
- Workforce development programs
- Economic development programs/campaigns
- Public policy/advocacy
- Tourism campaigns
- Community pride programs
- Networking programs
- Special events
- Membership or total resource campaigns

In each entry synopsis, be sure to address each of the elements below, clearly labeling each heading and subheading as listed below. Background and supporting material should also be included. For a sample synopsis, visit [www.acce.org/coy](http://www.acce.org/coy).

1. Program/Service name.
2. The Core Chamber Strength(s) addressed.
3. Program/Project summary.  
Please summarize the nature of and the key outcomes of your program. (125 words maximum)
4. Needs Identification. (175 words maximum)
  - a. Identify your target audience(s) and the needs your program/service meets. Needs should be clearly identified and ties to the organizational mission should be demonstrated.
  - b. Discuss your needs identification and data collection process for your project or program.
  - c. Include as exhibits your anecdotal or formal evaluation results, such as research, key facts, figures or trends about your community or target audience, situational analysis and/or copies of any survey instruments if used.

5. Program objectives. (125 word maximum)
- a. Discuss the goals and objectives for the program, relative to your identified needs and target audiences. Objectives should be clearly stated, specific, measurable, and time-sensitive ("SMART"). Goals and objectives must relate to the achievement of at least one of the following statements:
    - The chamber is an advocate for its broad and diverse members businesses
    - The chamber leverages and enhances the talents and resources of its members to create a climate of growth and success in the community
    - The chamber offers unique leadership opportunities, volunteer efforts and business-building programs focused on critical business, civic and social priorities
    - The chamber improves the economic vitality and quality of life for its members and the community
  - b. Include electronic and/or hard copies of strategic or project plans as supporting material.
6. Methodology. (175 word maximum)
- a. Discuss the methods used to reach the objectives. Please list specific actions taken.
  - b. A detailed budget should be included, indicating expenses, revenues, and in-kind contributions.
7. Communications. (175 word maximum)
- a. Provide an outline of your chamber's communications strategy for the program or service, including specific marketing, communications, advertising, and/or public relations vehicles (if used).
  - b. For each description of the communications vehicle, include the communications points and/or call to action communicated as well as the target audience you intended to reach.
  - c. Briefly describe how your chamber developed and then executed its communications strategy to inform your intended target audience(s) about your program/service.
  - d. Appropriate supporting materials include the web page(s) describing the program, ads, brochures, guides, press releases, speeches, etc.
8. Evaluation. (300 word maximum)
- a. Demonstrate the impact your program or service had on your community and/or membership. Outcomes of your program or service should be related to your stated program objectives. Partial or projected information is acceptable.
  - b. Demonstrate the outcomes of your communications related to your program or service. Partial or projected information is acceptable.
  - c. Appropriate supporting materials include data about increased sales, awareness, and membership; participation and satisfaction survey results; member or participant testimonials.

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Include in your binder, under Section 4, one copy of each of the following for the programs described above:

- A hard copy of program materials.
- A hard copy and electronic copy (on CD) of the marketing materials for the program.
- A hard copy of the budget, listing revenues and expenses, for the program.

## **SECTION 4, Q1-3 ■ Select Programs/Products/Services within a Core Chamber Strength.**

“The availability of skilled labor has become the single biggest challenge facing local businesses.”

**1. Program/Service name:**

The new Ec Dev: Workforce Attraction

**2. The Core Chamber Strength(s) addressed:**

Economic opportunities – The chamber enhances and leverages the talents and resources of its members to improve economic opportunities for all.

**3. Program/ Project summary:**

The Tulsa metro region perfectly balances convenience and affordability with the advantages of a talented workforce, a central location, and a pro-business atmosphere which makes the region an ideal home for progressive companies competing in a global economy.

However, there is a critical issue holding the region back. While we have had good success creating jobs, it has become increasingly apparent that local employers are having a difficult time finding skilled workers at all levels.

The availability of skilled labor has become the single biggest challenge facing local businesses.

Key outcomes include:

- A comprehensive workforce program focused on retention and attraction efforts to assist the Tulsa region’s diversified industry clusters.

## SECTION 4, Q4 ■ Needs Identification.

“Tulsa is essentially at full-employment maintaining a 2.8 percent unemployment rate...”

### 4. Needs Identification:

The Tulsa Metro Chamber’s mission is economic vitality and one of the most critical issues facing businesses today is the inability to find and hire workers of all levels.

Situation analysis: According to the Tulsa Metro Chamber’s economic research manager, Tulsa is essentially at full-employment maintaining a 2.8 percent unemployment rate. In 2006 and 2007, the MSA grew approximately 18,200 net new jobs and is forecasted to grow an additional 1.5 percent in 2008. In comparison, the population is only expected to grow 0.9 percent.

Approximately 60 percent of all Tulsa-area job creation through 2010 will be produced by existing employers.

However, if Tulsa could attract the workers needed to fill current job vacancies, Tulsa employment would grow an estimated 2.2 percent or 2,600 jobs and the economy conservatively would have an additional \$400 million of income each year. (See support documentation: 2008 Economic Profile)

In today’s job seekers market, there are unlimited target audiences, however the Chamber narrowed its focus on the following three:

1. Young professionals
2. College graduates
3. Skilled aerospace workers

## SECTION 4, Q5 ■ Program Objectives.

“It’s a new era of economic development and today’s market demands an equal balance between recruitment of jobs and recruitment of people.”

### 5. Program Objectives:

The Chamber improves the economic vitality and quality of life for its members and the community.

A truly great Chamber is adaptable and must continually reinvent itself based on the needs of the community it serves. It’s a new era of economic development and today’s market demands an equal balance between recruitment of jobs and recruitment of people.

The objective:

- The Tulsa Metro Chamber will attract, retain and recruit a workforce with the skills required to address the needs of the regional economy by increasing Tulsa’s visibility in the national job marketplace by 2012 resulting in a 15 percent increase to the 66.1 percent of employed population 18 years of age or older as noted in the 2007 10-county MSA Labor Market Survey.

## SECTION 4, Q6 ■ Methodology.

“More than 4,800 members belong to the Chamber’s Tulsa’s Young Professionals...”

### 6. Methodology:

Business succeeds—or fails—on the talent of its human capital. The following methodologies were applied in 2007 to reach the target audiences:

1. Ambassadors Crew – Tulsa’s Young Professionals (TYPros)
  - More than 4,800 members belong to the Chamber’s TYPros, and in 2007 its Ambassadors Crew launched a program to host visiting young execs to supplement recruitment efforts among employers.
2. Intern In Tulsa – College grad recruitment
  - TYPros expanded its demographic focus to include the attraction and retention of college students, while also supplying another workforce lifeline to our business community.
3. Contracted with NationJob – Workforce by design
  - The Chamber leveraged human resources’ marketing budgets by partnering with area companies on the nation’s largest community jobs resource online, NationJob.
4. Aerospace initiative – AeroJobsTulsa program
  - The Tulsa region’s largest employer is aerospace and answering the call from the business community, the Chamber launched an industry-specific recruitment program called AeroJobsTulsa.

\*\*\*See budget enclosed.

## SECTION 4, Q7 ■ Communications.

“...college graduates learn about the cost of living index and can search internship opportunities at all levels.”

### 7. Communications:

The Chamber dedicated resources to a communications strategy that would effectively reach multiple demographics and skill sets through the following:

#### 1. Ambassadors Crew

- Identified largest employers currently in a recruitment mode and offered to host visiting young execs. Promoted service at a Board meeting and quarterly in Chamber publications.

#### 2. Intern In Tulsa

- Launched website called InternInTulsa.com. Divided into a section for employers and a section for students, hiring professionals post internship opportunities; and on the student side, college graduates learn about the cost of living index and can search internship opportunities at all levels.
- Developed a guide for employers called HIRE Education. The guide provides sample evaluation forms, development suggestions and a staff's role in mentoring an intern.

#### 3. NationJob

- Developed a marketing brochure to secure additional partners for online jobs website, procured website URL at ChooseTulsaJobs.com for external marketing and developed career fair booth.

#### 4. AeroJobsTulsa

- Hosted the region's first-ever aerospace career fair advertised through print, radio and outdoor. Launched an AeroJobsTulsa.com website to supplement an outdoor campaign in Long Beach, Calif.

## SECTION 4, Q8 ■ Evaluation.

### 8. Evaluation:

Businesses and organizations in the Tulsa metro region are counting on a motivated workforce to help them succeed. The success of the community in attracting and retaining new talent will play a key role in the region's long-term economic health.

### Key Outcomes

Ambassadors Crew—in the first year of implementation, the Crew assisted with the recruitment of 84 new workers to the Tulsa region through the following:

- Established 68 relationships with human resource professionals to assist with recruitment activities.
- Successful completion of the first-ever "Tulsa Tour" directly assisting 12 companies with the recruitment of 76 employees from other regions.
- Ongoing communications with potential recruits secured an additional eight employees for six member companies.

Intern In Tulsa—served as the most effective workforce attraction project to engage area colleges and universities in the talent recruitment arena. Successes included:

- Hosted more than 150 college interns at a kick-off event at the Zoo, a party at City of Tulsa Mayor's home and Tulsa's Dfest music festival.
- Expanded college intern opportunities at area companies by 45 percent.

NationJob—In the eight months since launch, eighteen member companies have joined as area partners. The partners report a successful track record of approximately 65 percent return on investment resulting in a reported 235 jobs filled.

AeroJobsTulsa—In the first quarter of 2007, the Chamber launched an advertising campaign in Long Beach, California – an area hard hit by downsizing in aerospace. Their loss was Tulsa's gain as recruitment activities began with outdoor billboards directing prospects to AeroJobsTulsa.com for an updated list of available jobs and training resources. The first-ever Tulsa aerospace career fair resulted in the following:

- 1,200 in attendance exceeding initial goal of 500
- Individual exhibitors received 120 resumes and applications and more than 40 scheduled interviews.

## SECTION 4, Q1-3 ■ Select Programs/Products/Services within a Core Chamber Strength.

“The strategic process to develop new branding involved various phases, the first being aligning perceptions...”

**1. Program/Service name:**

Delivering Tulsa’s Brand Promise

**2. The Core Chamber Strength(s) addressed:**

Tourism campaign and Community pride program

**3. Program/ Project summary:**

The Tulsa Metro Chamber’s Convention and Visitors Bureau implemented a branding effort to enhance the internal and external perceptions of the Tulsa region. As a community pride program, the objective is to resurrect the pride factor and help citizens recognize the unique attributes and assets of the city. Tourism in Tulsa looks to benefit from new brand positioning and redefine Tulsa as a destination city.

The strategic process to develop new branding involved various phases, the first being aligning perceptions with the reality that is Tulsa and creating a brand promise. Key outcomes include current branding efforts through:

- Hospitality industry brand training
- Marketing and advertising campaigns launched in Tulsa and surrounding markets
- Other creative branding components reflecting a sense of community and discovery

## SECTION 4, Q4 ■ Needs Identification.

“To promote the community properly, Tulsa needed a consistent brand that is thoughtfully developed and continually reinforced.”

### 4. Needs Identification:

The target audience for the Brand Promise included Tulsa visitors and residents. Interviews and surveys were conducted among both audiences and the results transpired the need to develop a branding effort to overcome negative or absent perceptions of Tulsa’s offerings. To promote the community properly, Tulsa needed a consistent brand that is thoughtfully developed and continually reinforced.

Needs were identified through a telephone survey of 750 residents of Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana and a second survey of professional meeting planners. Two questions derived results pinpointing Tulsa’s need for new branding:

1. What is the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about Tulsa?
2. What have you heard about Tulsa?

Nearly half of the out-of-state respondents answered, *Do Not Know* to the first question. Approximately 76 percent of meeting planners responded *Nothing*, as to what they had heard of Tulsa.

A brand blueprint was created to outline Tulsa’s brand attributes as intimate, sophisticated and a fusion of cultural influence. Tulsa’s new brand effort would reflect the comfortably cosmopolitan brand promise and identify its unique assets.

## SECTION 4, Q5 ■ Program Objectives.

“...a strategic brand development that would strengthen the perception of Tulsa...”

### 5. Program Objectives:

*The Chamber improves the economic vitality and quality of life for its members and the community.*

The Tulsa Metro Chamber's Convention and Visitors Bureau created a strategic brand development that would strengthen the perception of Tulsa generating pride for the community and an increase in tourism.

The effort required two major objectives:

1. The Tulsa Metro Chamber will change the internal perception of Tulsa by helping citizens learn to reflect Tulsa's most valuable attributes.
  - Through brand culturalization and hospitality training, a brand council was formed from each of Tulsa's key touch points to oversee these efforts and benchmark satisfaction results before and after the brand launch during fiscal year 2007 effectively improving citizen's perception of Tulsa by a minimum of 20 percent.
  
2. The Tulsa Metro Chamber will improve the visitor perspective through effective and focused marketing.
  - The brand strategy and execution takes the form of marketing and advertising campaigns and includes developing communications strategies and tactics targeting specific visitors - tourists, event and meeting planners and travel journalists. Through additional focus groups and targeted surveys, the benchmark of this objective will occur in fiscal year 2009, Adequate time for market saturation will improve visitor perception by a minimum of 15 percentage points.

## SECTION 4, Q6 ■ Methodology.

“...changing the citizen’s perception of their city involved what is referred to as Brand Culturalization...”

### 6. Methodology:

The methodology used in changing the citizen’s perception of their city involved what is referred to as Brand Culturalization, a process to help citizens and organizations embrace the brand and learn to reflect its most valuable attributes. The Chamber’s Convention and Visitors Bureau formed a brand council with representatives from each of Tulsa’s key touch points. The council oversees efforts including:

- Developing a train-the-trainer program.
- Ten thousand manuals and 200 CD’s developed for the program.
- Producing a Brand Promise guidebook available throughout the community.

The methods used to reach the objective of changing the visitors’ perspective of Tulsa involved components of advertising and marketing campaigns as well as communications efforts include the following:

- Promote new VisitTulsa.com website
- Thirty-two page editorial spread in Southwest Airlines Spirit magazine
- Distribute all new print promotional material
- Focus on high-potential markets with weekend visit push strategy
- Print and outdoor creative advertising
- Create new trade show booth to match brand
- Reinstate planner events in two major markets
- Distribute a Monthly E-View newsletter

\*\*\*See budget enclosed.

## SECTION 4, Q7 ■ Communication.

“...*identify* the new brand; *train* the citizens to understand and live the brand day to day; and invite visitors to *experience* Tulsa's offerings.”

### 7. Communication:

To generate awareness for the new branding of Tulsa, the Chamber created a communications strategy that would *identify* the new brand; *train* the citizens to understand and live the brand day to day; and *invite* visitors to experience Tulsa's offerings. Various communications vehicles were implemented and executed pre and post brand launch.

- Brand Culturalization training - Hoteliers, key attraction managers, transportation company managers, restaurants and other touch point representatives attended training sessions.
- External brand planning study launch site - Website was created to report findings from the brand planning study.
- Spirit magazine 33 page editorial spread - This editorial reached travelers on Southwest Airlines.
- Familiarization tours - Hosting prospective event planners for major conventions and sporting events was an excellent opportunity during August's PGA Championship.
- Advertising and marketing campaigns and lead to VisitTulsa.com - Strategic ad placement in airports, outdoor and regional leisure and trade publications reached a wide range of locals and visitors who were redirected to the VisitTulsa.com website.
- Holiday and Spring push for weekend visits - Targeted advertising campaigns with print, radio and promotional give-away components reached surrounding markets in Arkansas and Missouri.

## SECTION 4, Q8 ■ Evaluation.

“Consultants have lauded both the brand process and the implementation for its authentic and genuine representation of Tulsa.”

### 8. Evaluation:

The need to market a “new Tulsa” became a major objective for the Tulsa Metro Chamber and the Convention and Visitors Bureau in 2006. The branding effort started with the initial phase of research in 2007 resulting in a need to develop a new brand – a brand promise to ignite Tulsa community pride and put Tulsa on the map as a destination city.

As the branding efforts continue, Tulsa has seen accomplishments in meeting the objectives of new branding. The Tulsa brand blueprint materials have resulted in greater awareness of the assets Tulsa boasts as well as the challenges. The brand training proved to be a great tool for the hospitality industry and those representing Tulsa as they become aware of the “brand” they wear.

### Key Outcomes

More than 1,200 touch point representatives participated in the training sessions, and evaluated the program. They were given the opportunity to rank the program which averaged 4.89 out of a high ranking 5 showing excellent satisfaction results. Evaluation feedback also reflected a change in the perceptions of their roles as ambassadors to a remarkable community.

All brand materials, publications, signage, and advertising creative drove traffic to the new TCVB brand website, VisitTulsa.com, which experienced a 38% increase in unique visits over the previous year. The campaign and corresponding creative was developed to see long-term results. However, inquiry numbers showed an increase during and after the holiday campaign and we can project another increase as the spring campaign winds down.

Consultants have lauded both the brand process and the implementation for its authentic and genuine representation of Tulsa.

Partner organizations like the Tulsa City Council and Downtown Tulsa Unlimited will utilize branded materials and graphics for their own publications. Downtown business owners have requested branded signage for their storefront windows. The community is excited and ultimately Tulsa will get the respect – and the visitor income – it so richly deserves.