### GERMAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE® OF THE MIDWEST

# MIDWEST REPORT 2024

#### Welcoming the German Vice Chancellor to the Midwest

Dr. Robert Habeck experienced energy and manufacturing innovation during his visit to Illinois.

()

#### Illinois Governor Celebrates German American Partnerships

JB Pritzker emphasized the importance of transatlantic investment at the 2024 German Night Reception at IMTS.

## **Elevate Your Financial** Management with Sage Solutions

#### **ADVISORY | ASSURANCE | TAX**

Are you ready to take your financial management to the next level? Discover how Sage Intacct, the leading cloud-based ERP accounting system, can help your organization optimize operations with data-driven insights.

We offer Sage products, services and solutions that provide:

- Real-time insights to critical financial data with customized dashboards
- > Automation tools that streamline your financial processes and reduce manual tasks
- Seamless integration with existing business systems
- Scalability that easily adapts to your business needs

Adopt modern accounting platforms that enhance and streamline your organization. Contact us today.

#### Kristen Jenei, MBA

cbh.com/sage

Managing Director, Advisory Services Sage, Cherry Bekaert Advisory LLC kristen.jenei@cbh.com



# CONTENTS

)4	WELCOME
L <b>4</b>	OUR MIDWES
L9	CHAPTERS &
25	INTERNATION
86	MEMBER NET
2	EVENTS
55	CONSULTING
73	WORKFORCE
30	THE CHRISTK
34	OUR TEAM



### **TOFFICES**

NATIONWIDE NETWORK

### NAL NETWORK

WORK

SERVICES

DEVELOPMENT

**(INDLMARKET** 

## **Dear Members and Friends of the German** American Chamber of Commerce of the Midwest,

last year, I have had the privilege to count on the GACC as a close partner in all things concerning the German American economic relationship. From co-organizing a successful visit of Vice Chancellor and Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action Robert Habeck to Chicago in March, to leading successful business delegations on both sides of the Atlantic, and to advocacy on vocational training, including launching the German American Apprenticeship & Education Foundation - the GACC is always the partner of choice.

Transatlantic collaboration is crucial to tackle the challenges some through the GACC member landing spots. of now and tomorrow. I applaud GACC for bringing over delegations that focus on pressing issues for our societies. These last months companies working on Machinery and Plant Engineering for Energy Storage & Battery Production and Recycling, on Smart City Solutions, Sustainable Mobility, Public Transport, and AI and on Industrial Decarbonization all came to different states in the Midwest, from Kentucky to Illinois. As German support office of the US-Germany Climate and Energy Partnership, the GACC has specialized knowledge for a clean and sustainable economy that benefits present and future generations.

With an office in Michigan and chapters in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Colorado, I can count on Chamber expertise

Since assuming my role as German Consul General in Chicago when travelling in the Midwest. When I meet with government authorities, I always make it a point to emphasize how German companies have contributed to the growth of a state. These contributions include workforce development, job creation, and direct foreign investment.

> According to the German American Business Outlook, over 40% of respondents believe that US expansion benefits German operations, while 55% are neutral. This is important information to take into account, with more and more German companies looking to expand into or in the Midwest,

> As Consul General, I stand ready to cooperate with GACC members on topics of mutual concern. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any ideas.

#### Best regards,



**Michael Ahrens Consul General** of Germany in Chicago

## Welcoming new **DIHK** leadership

On January 1, 2025, the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (DIHK) welcomes new leadership: Helena Melnikov was elected as the new Managing Director by the DIHK General Assembly on June 13, 2024. Melnikov succeeds Dr. Martin Wholesale, Foreign Trade and Services (BGA), she previously Wansleben, who has led DIHK as CEO since 2001 and retires at worked for three years at the direct interface between the end of 2024. We thank Dr. Wansleben for a successful 23 companies and politics in Berlin. vears leading our network!

Following her election, Melnikov said, "I would like to Melnikov, who holds a doctorate in law, stood out among her thank you for the trust you have placed in me. It is a great peers. "Helena Melnikov was able to assert herself among honor for me to take on the responsibility for this highly top-class candidates in a demanding process lasting several relevant economic policy office at the head of the umbrella months," said DIHK Chairman Peter Adrian, who also chaired organization of the Chambers of Industry and Commerce. the search committee. "We are delighted to have found a very In the current economically challenging times, this task competent and committed personality in her. This will enable is of particular importance. The DIHK is one of the most us to arrange Martin Wansleben's successor in good time so important advocates of the German economy in Berlin that we are fully capable of acting in an extremely challenging and Brussels, as well as worldwide via the Chambers of phase for the German economy." Commerce Abroad. My aim is to vigorously represent the Melnikov has served as Managing Director at the German interests of companies and to further strengthen the great Association of Materials Management, Purchasing and network of IHKs and AHKs. I see using my voice with all my Logistics (BME), headquartered in Eschborn, where she has strength for the interests of the German economy as one of also been a member of the Executive Board since 2021. Prior

the most important goals in my new role." to that, she was Managing Director of the Waren-Verein der Hamburger Börse between 2014 and 2021. As Head of the Legal and Competition Department at the Federal Association of

## **66** Transatlantic collaboration is crucial to tackle the challenges of now and tomorrow.





## LOOKING BACK AT 2024 AND A GLIMPSE **INTO A PROMISING FUTURE**

#### Dear friends,

Celebrating our 60th Anniversary in 2023 set the stage for big Data from our partners at Representative of German Industry things in 2024. In Q1, we welcomed German Vice Chancellor and + Trade (RGIT) show the importance of the US market for Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, Dr. German companies. Current German investment in the US Robert Habeck, to Chicago. Along with German Ambassador stands at \$658 billion, and German companies in the US Andreas Michaelis and a delegation of 25 journalists, the create 923,600 jobs. Look out for even more up-to-date Vice Chancellor toured both the Bronzeville microgrid and TRUMPF's Smart Factory in Hoffman Estates and participated Outlook survey to be published in February 2025. in a roundtable discussion with leaders of member companies at our office. It was a pleasure to host the delegation and show off the incredible achievements that make our region special.

2024 also brought new offerings for our members, including our 401(k) Multiple Employer Plan and our new J-1 visa service offered in cooperation with GACC New York. We're constantly working to develop new opportunities to support our members.

the year. Since the inception of the ICATT and MAT<sup>2</sup> Apprenticeship Programs over ten years ago, more than 800 apprentices have benefitted from these high paying, fulfilling career opportunities without taking on debt. In 2023, the German American Apprenticeship and Education Foundation was established to allow our programs to go ever further. At our 2024 inaugural fundraiser gala benefiting the foundation, our community came together to raise more than \$50,000, helping ensure current and future apprentices receive the support they need to build successful careers.

In recognition of this important work, our Vice President Mario Kratsch was appointed to the US Department of Labor Secretary's Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship, and GACC Midwest was presented with an Apprenticeship Ambassador Certificate of Recognition by the US Department of Labor at the White House. Both are testaments to the success and high regard for our apprenticeship programs.

data with the results of our 2025 German American Business

This intense interest in the US market was reflected in high attendance at the German American Business Forum in Hanover and at our German Night Reception at IMTS, where Illinois Governor JB Pritzker's keynote emphasized the important relationship between Germany and the US.

New events such as our White Asparagus Dinner gave the German American business community a taste of German culture in Chicago. Guests experienced a three-course Workforce development was another major focus throughout dinner centered around white asparagus exclusively flown in from Germany. We further expanded our events throughout our region, organizing or supporting events in 10 states.

> With new administrations coming into power in 2025 in both the US and Germany, companies face an uncertain global economic situation. Our mission to foster transatlantic trade and investment between Germany and the Midwest remains unchanged. GACC Midwest is here to support you through any and all business conditions that may come our way.

#### Thank you for being a part of our network.

Tail Tomkins

Mark Tomkins, President & CEO GACC Midwest



Matthias Amberg, Chairman German American Chambers of Commerce





Mark Tomkins represents GACC Midwest at the White House to accept an Apprenticeship Ambassador Certificate of Recognition.



Matthias Amberg and Mark Tomkins with German Vice Chancellor Robert Habeck in Chicago

Planetarium



A panel of experts at the 2024 German American Business Outlook (GABO) Illinois event



Mark Tomkins gives opening remarks at the inaugural White Asparagus Dinner

## VICE CHANCELLOR DR. ROBERT HABECK VISITS CHICAGOLAND

From the German Bundestag all the way to the Windy City: On March 9, we had the honor of hosting German Vice Chancellor and Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, Dr. Robert Habeck, in Chicago. Accompanied by German Ambassador Andreas Michaelis and a delegation of 25 journalists, Dr. Habeck toured the Bronzeville microgrid and TRUMPF's Smart Factory in Hoffman Estates. He also took part in a roundtable discussion at our office. It was a privilege to showcase the remarkable achievements that make our region stand out.

#### **First Stop:**

Bronzeville, to learn about the historic neighborhood's innovative microgrid. Microgrids can isolate themselves from the wider power grid if needed, protecting residents during a failure. The Bronzeville microgrid can also connect to



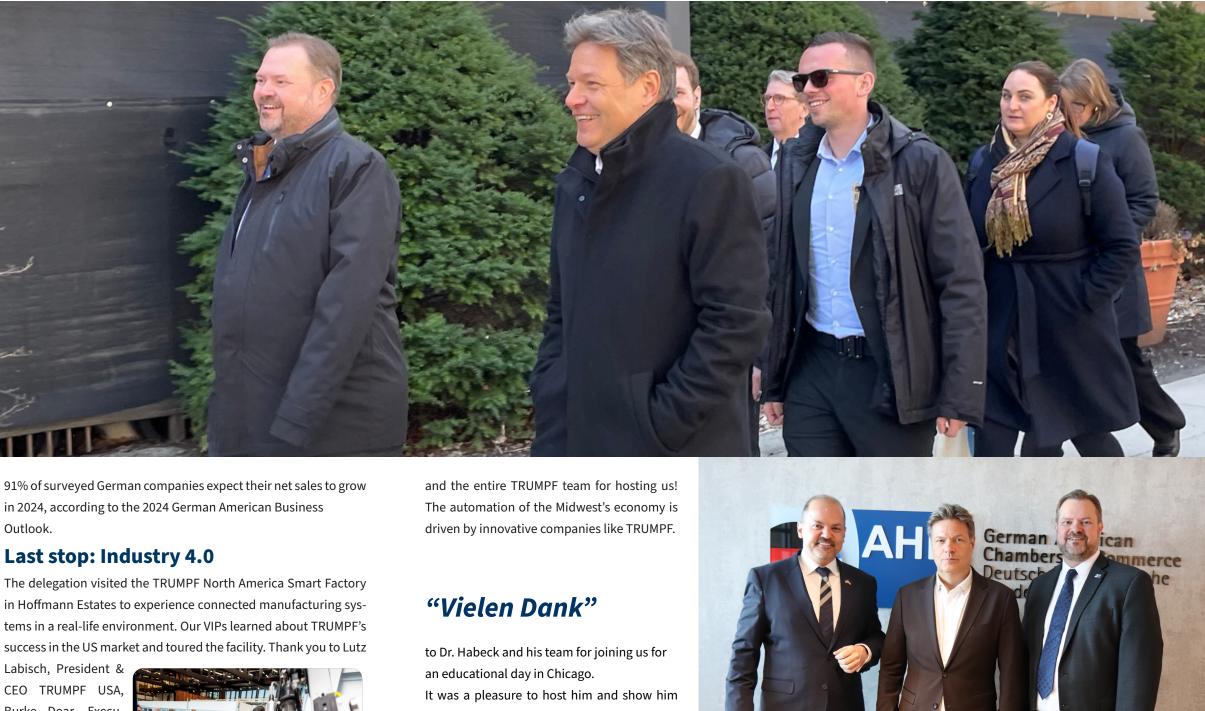
other microgrids, like one at the Illinois Institute of Technology. A historically disadvantaged neighborhood, Bronzeville has grown into a sustainability hub for the city and the region. The visit also included important discussions on community engagement. Exploring Bronzeville's microgrid furthers the mission of the US-Germany Climate and Energy Partnership, which Dr. Habeck co-signed in 2021.

#### Next stop: Executive Roundtable

Dr. Habeck joined executives at GACC Midwest's office in the heart of downtown for a roundtable discussion with German and US com-

panies, discussing challenges and opportunities for companies in the region. The US and Germany remain top investors in each countries' economies. The US is a profitable investment location:





in Hoffmann Estates to experience connected manufacturing systems in a real-life environment. Our VIPs learned about TRUMPF's

Burke Doar, Executive Vice President, TRUMPF Inc., Kartik lyer, Director TRUMPF Smart Factory,



the incredible achievements that make our region special.

## **APPRENTICESHIP RECOGNITION AT THE** WHITE HOUSE

In October 2024, our President & CEO Mark Tomkins had the honor of accepting an Apprenticeship Ambassador Certificate of Recognition at the White House on behalf of GACC Midwest from the US Department of Labor recognizing our outstanding ICATT and MAT<sup>2</sup> Apprenticeship Programs.

As the ICATT Apprenticeship Program nears its 10th anniversary, we have achieved several milestones:

- Over 800 apprentices have embarked on their workforce journey
- Over 85% graduate the program with their associate degree, DoL or equivalent US certification, & German DIHK certification
- Over 378 trainers certified

Our ICATT MAT<sup>2</sup> Network Companies and everyone involved work hard to create meaningful and educational experiences for all apprentices while producing a top-notch workforce in



Apprenticeship Ambassadors and partners on the steps of Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

many different industries. We're proud to be recognized by the highest levels of government!

Thank you to Lael Brainard, Director of the National Economic Council for her insightful words and recognition, and to Jose Javier Rodriguez from the US Department of Labor, John Ladd at the US Department of Labor Office of Apprenticeship, and Chris Fisk from Kamala Harris' office for this special recognition.



José Javier Rodríguez, Assistant Secretary for ETA, US Department of Labor, with Mark Tomkins, President & CEO of GACC Midwest

## **GACC IN THE MEDIA**

## **GACC MIDWEST REPRESENTED IN** WIRTSCHAFTSWOCHE

GACC Midwest Vice President Mario Kratsch was quoted in a WirtschaftsWoche piece examining what German companies in the US expected from the 2024 presidential election. Stefan Heffner, Executive Vice President at GACC Midwest member company Richard Wolf Medical Instruments Corporation, was also featured, along with Hardev Grewal, President & CEO of Plasmatreat USA, Inc. The below text features some of the highlights of the article.

"The mood in the business scene is good," says Mario Kratsch, "North America is still a safe haven. Especially since there have been problems in Eastern Europe." Demand, says Kratsch, has risen sharply in recent years.

The American market is a sales guarantor for many companies - and all the more important since the German economy is no longer running smoothly. Two years of recession in Good Old Germany - while the US economy has grown by 2.3 percent (2023) and is likely to grow again this year, the International Monetary Fund estimates - to 2.8 percent."

## **66** North America is still a safe haven for organizations.

Mario Kratsch Vice President, GACC Midwes

That is why Stefan Heffner is also focusing on the "local for local" strategy – and is working on expanding production to the US. Better safe than sorry. He wants to cover 80% of US demand with US production by 2030. The current figure is 40 percent.

## **66** Anyone who comes to the country and proves themselves is welcome and accepted.

Stefan Heffner, Executive Vice President, Richard Wolf Medical Instruments Corporation

Either way, the US is likely to remain an attractive investment destination for German companies - especially those that manage to Americanize their production and supply chains as much as possible. "Doing business with the United States could become more difficult in the future," summarizes a high-ranking manager: "But doing business in the US will continue to work extremely well."

"We can't afford political ups and downs", says Grewal. This is why the company is now increasingly involved in the medical sector, as well as the semiconductor sector and aerospace technology: "These industries will grow," Grewal adds. "No matter who wins the elections."

### **66** The electric car has become a political issue. 99

Hardey Grewal. President & CEO of Plasmatreat USA. Inc.

## **GERMAN AMERICAN BUSINESS OUTLOOK RESULTS IN THE MEDIA**

The German American Business Outlook (GABO) is an annual survey of German-American business relations directed at German subsidiaries in the US assessing current economic developments and trends in transatlantic business.

#### Handelsblatt





"Wie die jüngste Umfrage der Deutsch-Amerikanischen Handelskammer unter 224 deutschen Unternehmen in den USA zeigt, rechnen 99,5 Prozent nicht mit einer Rezession in diesem Jahr."

#### Frankfurter Allgemeine

Warum sie lieber in den USA investieren nisch und generell "pro b



"Fast drei Viertel wollen ihre US-Belegschaft

noch [in 2024] vergrößern."

All text translated from German from the WirtschaftsWoche article "Die Schicksalswahl" by Julian Heißler, Volker ter Haseborg, Sonja Álvarez und Christian Ramthun, published October 24, 2024.



an Aristieg ihrer Inves Bis 2026 planen 96 Prozent u

lavon 40 Prozent mit Beträg ardnungen von über

"Äußerst gut gelaunt blicken die in den USA aktiven deutschen Unternehmen in das Jahr 2024, das zeigt der diesjährige 'German American Business Outlook'.'

### Handelsblatt



"Nobody in the U.S. is interested in the fact that your product lasts 20 years"

The Biden administration is luring German companies with subsidies. Most people think the know the country - but business works differently in America. These are the five biggest mistake

Katharina Kort 21.03.2024 - 09:00 o'cloc

New York. A fev market can be fo is not right, as is Americans of its Bayer had to lear

"As the latest survey by the German-American Chamber of Commerce shows, 96 percent of the German companies surveyed intend to continue investing locally over the next three years."

# OUR CHICAGO OFFICE

Need a place to "land" when you're in Chicago? We've got you covered! The GACC Midwest Chicago Office at 150 N. Michigan Ave. is not only located in a Chicago landmark, but is also a local hub for the German American business community and your ideal spot for working and/or hosting conferences, meetings, and events.

We are proud to share our office with Germany Trade & Invest (GTAI), VDMA, FrankfurtRheinMain, Invest in Niedersachsen, and Deutsche Messe AG as GACC Midwest is its official representative in the US. Our building is also home to NRW. Global Business, the Goethe-Institut Chicago, and Messe Düsseldorf North America, making it your spot in the city for making new German American connections.



#### Your Contact at Our Chamber



🚵 AHK

Chambers of Comm

**Franziska Hennig** Manager, Front Office & Operations

+1 (312) 585 8333 <u>hennig@gaccmidwest.org</u>

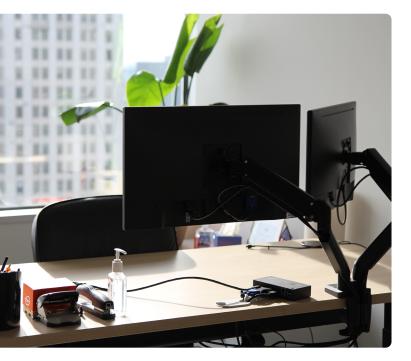
#### **Member Landing Spots**

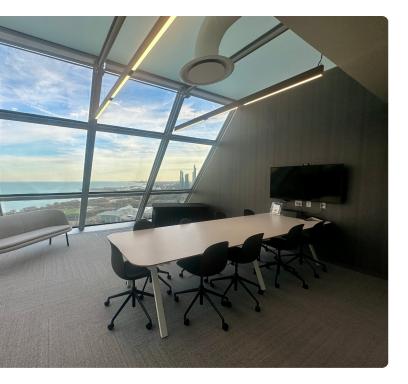
- Members have complimentary access to our three Member Landing Spots
- Close to public transportation
- Available for half- or full-day reservations

## Event Space & Meeting Rooms

- Accommodates both large and small meetings
- Hosting space for events and receptions
- Stunning view over Lake Michigan and Millennium Park
- Outstanding amenities and services
- Members receive a discount on bookings







## **OUR MICHIGAN NETWORK**



#### **Economic Growth in Michigan and German Investment in 2024**

Michigan's economy has shown resilience in recent years, rebounding strongly from the challenges of the pandemic. Despite a predicted slowdown in economic growth due to Federal Reserve interest rate hikes, Michigan remains a key destination for both domestic and international investments, particularly from Germany. According to the University of Michigan's Economic Outlook for 2024-2026, Michigan is expected to add 48,000 payroll jobs in 2024, with growth continuing into 2025. The forecast suggests that the state's payroll job count will rise by 2.5% above pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2025.

#### **Automotive Trends & German Investment**

The automotive sector continues to be a driving force in Michigan's economy, particularly in areas such as electric vehicles (EVs) and battery production. Michigan is recognized as a national leader in EV innovation, with one-third of the country's battery production and development based in the state. This position has attracted significant attention from German companies, who are leaders in automotive and EV technology.

- US Light Vehicle Sales Projections: Economists from the University of Michigan predict that US light vehicle sales will reach 15.9 million units in 2024, and 16.3 million units by 2025. Improved supply chains and robust demand are contributing to this growth, creating more opportunities for German companies to invest in Michigan's automotive ecosystem.
- **EV Investments:** Recent major investments in Michigan's EV industry include commitment by Bosch • and Volkswagen Group of America in the state, boosting EV battery production and innovation. Michigan's position as a leader in EV development continues to draw significant German investment, reflecting the state's attractiveness for companies looking to expand in this growing sector.

### **Strong Presence of German Companies in Michigan**

The steady influx of inquiries from German companies highlights Michigan's appeal as a prime investment destination. Many German firms are looking to either establish a presence in the US and twothirds are looking expand their existing operations. These inquiries typically involve market research, business partner searches, site selection, and other crucial steps in setting up operations in the U.S.

Investment Focus: German businesses are particularly interested in Michigan's strong workforce development, and research and development.

#### **Delegation from Lower Saxony**

In September, we welcomed Olaf Lies, Minister of Economic Affairs, Transport, Housing and Digitalization in Detroit with other legislators, companies, research institutes and associations from Lower Saxony. We kicked off our visit at Detroit Regional Chamber with insights from state and regional representatives and Lieutenant Governor of Michigan, Garlin Gilchrist II, welcomed Minister Lies to the state. Throughout the week, we learned more about Detroit's background as the birthplace of the automobile, walked through Ford Motor Company's EV production and visited the American Center for Mobility. We also talked about smart and sustainable cities and mobility and decarbonization solutions, discussed advanced manufacturing and innovation at Brose Group and KUKA, and had a transatlantic roundtable on hydrogen at FORVIA.



manufacturing base, innovative automotive sector, and growing technology industry. With a focus on long-term growth, many of these companies plan to invest significantly in local infrastructure,

## Rödl & Partner

ATLANTA | BIRMINGHAM | CHARLOTTE | CHICAGO | CINCINNATI | DENVER | DETROIT | GREENVILLE | HOUSTON | NEW YORK |

## Rödl & Partner, the leading international audit and tax consulting firm of German origin!

## **OUR SERVICES:**

Assurance, Attest & Accounting Advisory
 Tax Compliance & Tax Consulting
 U.S. Market Entry & Expansion
 Business Process Outsourcing
 Transaction Services
 Transfer Pricing
 Global Mobility



# CHAPTERS & NATIONWIDE NETWORK

#### **CHAPTERS & NATIONWIDE NETWORK**

## **WISCONSIN CHAPTER**

#### **GACC Wisconsin Thanks Manuel Merkt for His Service**

We extend our heartfelt thanks to **Manuel Merkt** for his dedicated service as President of GACC Midwest, Wisconsin Chapter over the past several years. Manuel's passion and leadership have steered the chapter toward success and laid a strong foundation for the future. He has officially passed his responsibilities to Vice President Philipp Lissmann. Manuel will continue to serve as a Wisconsin board member until the end of the year, while remaining an active GACC Midwest Board member in Chicago.

Rome Rauter Continues Board Service from Germany: In other board news, Rome (1Rauter of Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation has recently relocated to Hamburg, Germany. Despite the move, Rome will continue to serve as a valuable Wisconsin board member, representing and supporting the chapter from Germany.

#### Monthly Stammtisch Becomes Popular Community Gathering:

The monthly Stammtisch has quickly become a popular community gathering, offering a casual setting for locals and chapter members to connect, network, and socialize. This regular event has become a favorite for fostering new relationships and strengthening ties within the community.



3 **GACC Wisconsin Hosts Inaugural Golf Outing:** The first-ever GACC Wisconsin Golf Outing took place at the Scenic View Country Club in Slinger, WI. With over 40 golfers participating, the event was a resounding success and has already been confirmed for the 2025 calendar.

#### **Germanfest VIP Reception Draws Over 100 Guests:** (4)

This year's Germanfest VIP Reception, held in partnership with exclusive event sponsor Insperity, welcomed more than 100 guests. The event provided a unique opportunity for members to immerse themselves in German culture and build lasting relationships within the business community.

#### Hannover Messe Roadshow Comes to Wisconsin: (5)

In collaboration with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, the Hannover Messe Road Show, the world's leading trade fair for industrial technology, was brought to Wisconsin, showcasing cutting-edge innovations and fostering economic growth.





#### **Your Contact:**



#### **Phillip Lissmann** Interim President

+1 (863) 660-6509 lissmann@gaccwi.org

## **COLORADO CHAPTER**

#### **Colorado Chapter on a Growth Path**

In March 2024, the Colorado Chapter held their annual German American Business Outlook event at the Denver Country Club including a special program point: GACC Midwest President & CEO, Mark Tomkins, and GACC-CO Executive Director Samantha Seems helped honor the outgoing Colorado Chapter President Peter Einsle for his many years of service and welcomed Barbara Wittmann as the Colorado chapter's new president. Wittmann does not plan to shy away from this challenge and hints at new initiatives to come: "It is an honor to follow Peter's footsteps as GACC Colorado Chapter president, for he leaves an indelible footprint of success. I am eager to hit the ground running to continue those achievements."

Barbara Wittmann brings a lot of experience in entrepreneurship and leadership. As an award-winning author and Digital Leadership Expert, Barbara excels in aligning People & Technology for global expansion. She is doing this through her company IT Zeitgeist as well as the recently founded Digital Wisdom Collective. In 2021, Barbara was voted by Industry Era Women Leaders Magazine as one of the Top 10 emerging Women Leaders.

### **Grand Opening of the German American Treffpunkt**

In April 2024, the Colorado Chapter opened its doors for the German American Treffpunkt, a collaboration between the Colorado Chapter, the German Cultural Foundation, and the German Honorary Consul for Colorado and Wyoming. With a dedicated co-working space for Colorado Chapter members and versatile event spaces, it brings together GACC members, German and Colorado companies, and organizations to build a vibrant community.

The co-working space will provide a work environment in which new synergies and collaboration can thrive. The event spaces provide plenty of opportunity to host business and cultural events for the community. GACC Midwest members can use the co-working desks and the conference room for free for a limited amount each month based on availability. For members that would like to use the office space more regularly, there are different sponsorship levels including more perks and access to the space. More information under www.gacc-co.org.



## **MINNESOTA CHAPTER**

#### **2024 Highlights**

- Welcome Lufthansa! In June, we welcomed  $(\mathbf{1})$ Lufthansa at the Minneapolis - St. Paul Airport. We celebrated with the gate ribbon cutting and an evening reception.
- Annual September Golf Tournament: Held in (2) Crystal Lake, this event brought together members of our Chapter for a day of networking and friendly competition.
- 3 Joint summer picnic with the French American **Chamber:** In June, we celebrated our long-time member and board member of both chambers, Mark McNeil.
  - Two International Delegations in Town: In June, we hosted two delegations who experienced a Minnesota Twins baseball game alongside Chapter leaders and members.
- Monthly Networking Stammtisch Events: Casual networking opportunities held at various venues, including Utepils and Surly Brewing.

Samantha Seems

**Your Contact:** 

**Executive Director & Board Secretary** 

+1 (719) 822-2058 samantha.seems@gacc-co.org



#### **Your Contact:**



**Sharon Heywood Executive Director** 

Tel: +1 (612) 865-4170 Cell: +1 (612) 670-2943 office@gaccminnesota.org





## Where passion meets purpose We shape the future

With more than 6.300 staff members worldwide, our success spans the globe while remaining committed to the regions in which we operate. As an independent family-run pharmaceutical service provider, we have achieved a lot for patients in need – and there is still much more to come.



Vetter Pharma International USA Inc 10 W. Algonquin Road Des Plaines, IL 60016 USA infoUS@vetter-pharma.com

Rely on us.

# OUR INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

**OUR INTERNATIONAL NETWORK** 

## **AHKS AROUND THE WORLD**

GACC Midwest maintains close relationships with other AHKs around the world. Get to know our international network!



## Worldwide in action for you

**OVER** 46,000 **MEMBERSHIPS** 

2,300 AHK EMPLOYEES

## **AHK PORTUGAL DIRECTOR PAULO AZEVEDO VISITS CHICAGO**

In October, Paulo Azevedo, Deputy Managing Director at AHK Portugal, spent two weeks with us in Chicago to complete his Stage program. In this interview, he shares his experiences with us, his previous and next stops, and what he has come to love about the city of Chicago.

#### Q: How long have you been with AHK Portugal and a part of the German chamber network?

A: I have been with the AHK Portugal for over 16 years now. My role as Deputy Managing Director is primarily concerned with strategic and representative activities for the entire Chamber in cooperation with our Managing Director. I also accumulate the branch management in Porto as well as the management of the market and sales consulting and member management departments.

A: Each AHK location has specific market characteristics that require services and processes in doing business to be This mix of tasks is certainly challenging, not only in terms of adapted accordingly. Over the years, a certain "local focus" time management, but also in terms of balancing the different understandably emerges. Embracing new experiences leads perspectives and goals of the individual areas. However, the to personal and professional development - be it of service resulting diversity of my tasks focusing on a wide range of portfolios, internal and external processes, and more. I can industries and working with the relevant colleagues is what only recommend a stage. I enjoy most.

### Q: For those who are not familiar with the Stage program,

A: A lot! On a professional level, we were able to exchange could you briefly summarize what it is? ideas through many discussions and internal department-A: The stage at GACC Midwest did not result from a classic specific workshops. It became clear that our experiences stage program coordinated by the DIHK, but from contact can inspire the other side and support them in their further between our two chambers. The aim is to visit another AHK development. We will now continue to work remotely on and take a look behind the scenes into their day-to-day work. developing joint initiatives between our two chambers. I The focus should be on identifying best practices, getting also had the opportunity to experience the activities of GACC to know different dynamics in doing business according Midwest at the German American Apprenticeship & Education to the regional circumstances and sectors, comparing and Foundation Fundraiser Gala, the Site Selector Event "Pure improving internal processes, jointly developing innovative Michigan Chicago," and the Smart City Conference as part approaches within the scope of our services, etc. Ultimately, of the business development trip of the same name. Great the aim is to inspire each other and make the best possible insights that also enabled me to get to know the local use of the experience and expertise available in the AHK conditions and the fantastic work of my colleagues. network

#### Q: Why did you choose Chicago for your stay?

would also like to take the **A:** For a long time, we had been toying with the idea of me opportunity to thank all completing a stage at another AHK. It was important to us my colleagues at the AHK that the AHK location to be visited had different marketin Chicago, including Mark specific characteristics than us in Portugal and common Tomkins who opened the denominators such as industry focus, service portfolio of our doors of "his" chamber to me. AHK colleagues, etc. should still be recognizable. The aim from and especially Gerrit Ahlers, the outset was to inspire each other as to how services can who put a lot of effort into be developed further together and how they can be offered preparing and coordinating and implemented in our markets, considering the respective my two weeks in Chicago! market conditions and business opportunities.

An initial exchange between myself and my colleagues from GACC Midwest at the AHK World Conference 2023 in Berlin revealed this potential for collaboration. It quickly became clear that an intensive exchange on site would be extremely valuable for both sides.

#### Q: How did you benefit from your stage stay program? What does a stage offer those who take part in it?

#### Q: What did you take away from your time in Chicago?

On a personal level, it was a wonderful experience with fantastic colleagues; from day one, I felt very welcome.



## **FROM REUTLINGEN TO THE WINDY CITY**

Hannes Oswald supported GACC Midwest from July to October 2024 in his role as DIHK Trainee. In this interview, he shares his experiences with us, his previous and next stops, and what he has come to love about the city of Chicago.

#### In short, what is the DIHK trainee program?

The German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DIHK) trainee program is a twelve-month, practical training initiative designed for recent university graduates to gain in-depth experience within the German Chamber Network (IHK-AHK-DIHK). Trainees rotate through four stations – two in regional German Chambers of Commerce (IHKs), one at the DIHK in Berlin, the umbrella organization, and one in an international German Chamber (AHK). The program focuses on practical project work, building responsibility, and professional growth.

#### What is it that you appreciate the most about this program?

What I value most about this program is the chance to gain hands-on experience, take responsibility for real projects, and connect with people across the IHK network. I also love the flexibility of working in different locations and exploring different departments, getting to know new cities, and experiencing the unique cultures within each workplace. The international station is especially exciting to me, as it's a great way to live and work abroad for a while, gaining experience without having to make a long-term commitment right away.

#### What were your previous stops before coming to Chicago, and where are you headed next?

My first stop was in Reutlingen, where I worked in the department for regional promotion and networks from January to March. After that, I moved to Frankfurt am Main to join the department for international affairs. GACC Midwest in Chicago is my third station, and although I was here for only three months, I've already become a big fan of both the city and the Chamber! My final stop will be in Berlin at the German Chamber, where I'll be working in the department for Digital Economy, Infrastructure, and Regional Policy.

#### What have you learned during your stay here?

The chamber, especially the Consulting department, has

fantastic people who are both professional and genuinely welcoming. The collaboration between permanent staff and interns is outstanding; interns are trusted with real responsibility which really allows them to grow and contribute. I had the chance to organize a delegation, gaining hands-on experience in managing a project from start to finish, and developing valuable intercultural competencies along the way. Chicago in the summer is beautiful, and the office is definitely the best workspace I've been in so far!

#### This traineeship has given you a pretty good overview of the AHKs and our global network: How do you feel our members worldwide benefit from the strong network?

The AHK network, supported by the DIHK and IHKs, serves as a powerful backbone for German companies operating worldwide. This strong connection within the German chamber organizations allows members to access a wellcoordinated network that combines local expertise with a global reach. Companies gain streamlined access to resources, representation with local and international policymakers, and ongoing support across every stage of their business journey - from startup to international expansion. The network's adaptability and focus on innovation ensure that it meets members' evolving needs, helping them enter new markets, overcome trade barriers, and maximize opportunities.

#### What is a personal interest or hobby that you'd like to share with us?

While in Chicago, I rekindled my interest in table tennis. One of the unique benefits of working at GACC Midwest is having access to an activity floor shared by all building tenants, which includes a gym and a ping pong table. Almost every day, my intern colleague and

I would play a few games after work-a great way to recharge and decompress after a full day. It's been a fun and energizing way to keep balance in my routine!





## Explore the latest on market entry and German American business expertise.

This year, GACC Midwest has introduced a new LinkedIn article series featuring the latest topics and trends relevant for the German American business community. Explore our favorite articles from this year on the following pages and be sure to check out our LinkedIn channel to never miss the latest trends.



**GERMAN AMERICAN BUSINESS INSIGHTS** 

## **GERMAN AMERICAN BUSINESS INSIGHTS**

## **THOUGHT LEADERSHIP**



## **UNLOCKING SUCCESS: THE BENEFITS OF GERMAN-STYLE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS FOR US COMPANIES**

Hiring and retaining skilled employees is a major challenge for companies, especially those in the manufacturing sector. One strategic approach that any company in the US can adopt is implementing apprenticeship programs. Drawing inspiration from the well-established German apprenticeship model, these programs offer a range of benefits for both employers and employees. Let's explore why German-style apprenticeships are a smart investment for companies:

#### **Highly-Trained Employees and Enhanced Efficiency**

The cornerstone of the German apprenticeship model is its focus on hands-on training and skill development. By offering structured apprenticeships, companies ensure that their employees receive comprehensive training tailored to specific roles. This results in a highly skilled workforce capable of meeting industry demands and driving innovation. As apprentices acquire new skills, they become more efficient in their roles. This increased productivity benefits the company by streamlining processes, reducing errors, and optimizing resource utilization. In addition, apprentices often bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas to the workplace.

#### **Customization and Flexibility**

Unlike rigid training programs, German-style apprenticeships allow companies to tailor training content to their unique needs. Whether it's specialized technical skills or soft skills, employers can design apprenticeship curricula that align with their business objectives. This flexibility ensures that apprentices gain relevant expertise while contributing directly to the company's success.

#### **Reduced Recruitment Costs**

Recruiting and retaining skilled employees can be expensive. German-style apprenticeships provide a cost-effective solution by nurturing talent from within, which reduces companies' reliance on external hiring. Apprentices who complete their programs are more likely to stay with the organization, leading to longterm savings in recruitment and onboarding expenses (Elliot + Farnbauer, 2021: Bridging German and US Apprenticeship Models). In a time in which the US faces a skills gap, especially in technical and vocational fields, companies that execute



German-style apprenticeships bridge the gap between education and employment.

#### **Stronger Company Culture**

Companies known for investing in apprenticeship programs earn a positive reputation in the market and are considered forward-thinking organizations committed to employee growth (ibid.). This reputation enhances employer branding, attracting top talent and positioning the company as an industry leader. Companies that invest in their apprentices' development make them feel valued, creating a sense of loyalty and commitment among their employees. This positive experience contributes to a robust company culture, fostering teamwork, mentorship, and a shared commitment to organizational goals.

#### Industry-Relevant Training

German apprenticeships align closely with industry standards and requirements. Companies benefit from employees who are well-versed in the latest technologies, safety protocols, and best practices. Whether it's manufacturing, engineering, or IT, apprenticeships ensure that skills remain relevant and up-todate (GACC Midwest).

#### Conclusion

German-style apprenticeship programs offer a win-win scenario for US companies. By nurturing talent, enhancing skills, and fostering a culture of continuous learning, these programs contribute to long-term success for both apprentices and employers. As companies embrace apprenticeships in the United States, they not only train employees but also build a foundation for sustainable growth and competitiveness.

GACC Midwest implements solution-driven, German-style apprenticeship programs that combine theory, practice, and hands-on-training resulting in a globally competitive

#### **GERMAN AMERICAN BUSINESS INSIGHTS**

workforce in manufacturing and other high-tech careers. The Industry Consortium for Advanced Technical Training (ICATT) program and the Michigan Advanced Technician Training Program (MAT<sup>2</sup>) offer training according to German standards focusing on complex technologies in manufacturing and logistics, technical product design, IT, and business.

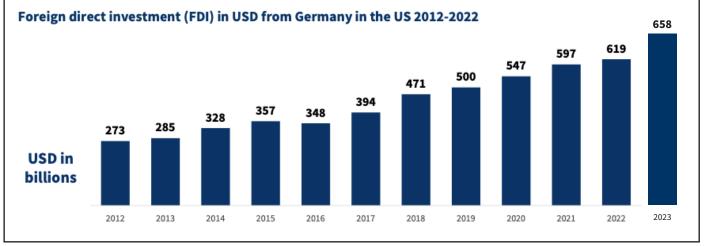
## **GERMAN FDI IN THE UNITED STATES: A GROWING PARTNERSHIP**

Foreign direct investment (FDI) plays a crucial role in shaping global economies. Germany, as one of the world's economic powerhouses, has been actively investing in the United States for decades. In fact, according to data provided by the Representative of German Industry and Trade (RGIT) in 2023, Germany accounted for approximately 13% of the total FDI in the United States. In this article, we'll explore recent trends, key sectors, prominent players, and the driving factors behind German FDI in the US.

affiliates in the US are in manufacturing (ibid.).

- Technology and Innovation: Germany's prowess in engineering and technology extends to the U.S. tech landscape. Renowned German companies invest in research and development centers, software solutions, and smart manufacturing processes (ibid.).
- Renewable Energy: With a commitment to sustainability, German companies invest in renewable energy projects.

#### **GERMAN AMERICAN BUSINESS OUTLOOK 2024 GERMAN INVESTMENT OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS HAS MORE THAN DOUBLED**



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, in USD, US of Commerce.

In 2023, German foreign investment in the United States amounted to approximately \$658 billion which indicated that German FDI has more than doubled over the past ten years (RGIT, 2023). This substantial investment reflects the strong economic ties between the two nations. Germany consistently ranks among the top countries contributing to FDI in the US, showcasing its confidence in the US market and its consumers.

#### **Key Sectors**

 Manufacturing: German companies have a significant presence in the US manufacturing sector. They invest in industries such as automotive manufacturing, machinery, and chemicals. Iconic German automakers have established production facilities across several states. Around 35% of the jobs created by German

Solar and wind energy companies collaborate with local partners to drive clean energy initiatives (German American Business Outlook Survey – GABO, 2024).

Financial Services: German banks and financial institutions have a strong foothold in the US and are active players in the American financial services sector.

#### **Factors Driving Investment Decisions**

Market Access: The US market provides access to a vast consumer base and diverse industries. This environment is perfect for German companies that seek growth opportunities and strategic partnerships. The results of



the German American Business Outlook (GABO, 2024), Conclusion annually published by the German American Chambers of Commerce, have shown that in 2024, amongst the German FDI in the US continues to thrive, contributing surveyed participants representing German subsidiaries to economic growth, job creation, and technological in the US, 89% indicated market size & customer advancements. As both nations strengthen their **demand** as their No.1 reason for investing in the US economic ties, the future promises exciting opportunities relative to other global markets, followed by **proximity** for collaboration and mutual benefit. GACC Midwest to customer base (60%) and market stability (29%) plays a crucial role in building and strengthening these (ibid.).

- Skilled Workforce: German affiliates employ 923,600 people across the United States, which makes German companies the 3rd largest foreign employer in the US (RGIT, 2023). Collaboration with local talent enhances productivity and innovation.
- Research and Development: German firms value the US ecosystem for research, innovation, and technology transfer. Proximity to universities and research centers fosters collaboration. RGIT reports that on average, German companies invest over \$11 billion annually on research and development in the United States (ibid.).

collaborations through supporting German companies in their US market entry. Our professional consulting services are catered specifically to German companies seeking to enter or to expand in the US market, and include site selection, mergers & acquisitions, recruiting, intercultural coaching, marketing & localization, and more. In addition, our vast network of member companies offers helpful resources to help guide you in the process of entering the US market.





## **AUTOMOTIVE MANUFACTURING: SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN GERMANY AND THE US**

The US and Germany have a strong relationship in the automotive industry, specifically in supplier relations. As of March 2024, the US is Germany's primary trading partner, generating \$68 billion in exports and imports in Q1 of 2024. In 2022, the main good exported between Germany and the US was automobiles, with Germany exporting \$17 billion worth of cars and the US exporting \$6.75 billion (The Observatory of Economic Complexity, 2022). In this article we'll explore supplier relations, automotive trends, and new market opportunities in Germany and the United States.

#### Supplier Relations Between Germany and the US

In 2015, the United States became Germany's fourth largest supplier of goods and Germany's top global customer for automotive. In 2019, exports to the United States accounted for 12.6% of the total value of Germany's automotive exports, with vehicles as the largest export (Life in Germany, 2023). These numbers reflect the strength and importance of trade relations between Germany and the US, especially in the automotive market. This relationship continues to grow and change as both countries innovate – and collaborate – in the automotive sector.

#### Automotive Trends in Germany and the US

The German automotive industry is known globally for its engineering excellence, innovation, safety, and design. Current trends in the German automotive industry include electric vehicles and autonomous driving. The use of such electric vehicles in Germany is on the rise: back in 2010, then-German Chancellor Angela Merkel set a goal to deploy one million electric vehicles on German roads by 2020. This was achieved in July 2021. Following this trend, in 2022 the German automobile industry produced over 506 billion € in total sales, a significant increase from the previous year of 411 billion € (Statista, 2023).

Autonomous vehicles are often seen as the next phase in automobile innovation, and Germany is determined to be in the lead, with the goal of decreasing traffic accidents while increasing safety on the road. The Autonomous Driving Act, which permits the operation of level 4 autonomous vehicles - a vehicle that operates completely by itself with no human intervention needed - took effect in Germany on July 28, 2021. On July 1, 2024, Germany launched a self-driving taxi trial which will test level-4 fully autonomous vehicles for

future use on public roads.

The automotive industry in the United States is innovating in similar ways to the German market, focusing on SUVs and trucks, electric vehicles, and autonomous driving. SUV and trucks consistently outsell sedans in the US, with US consumers preferring a larger vehicle over smaller ones (CBC, 2024). EVs are less popular in the United States - the US joined the electric vehicle trend after Europe and has 3. million electric vehicles on the roads in 2024. This accounts for only 1% of total cars on the road, whereas Germany's electric vehicles make up 25%, a significant disparity (Autovista, 2024; Edmunds, 2024). While the US does not have fully autonomous cars on the roads yet, it is projected by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that industry in the region and grow your automotive network in they could appear on roads as soon as 2025. For now, US cars the US. are equipped with partially automated features such as lane assistance and adaptive cruise control (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2024).

#### **New Market Opportunities**

With electric vehicles and autonomous driving being the newest innovations in the automotive industry, both Germany and the US are looking to expand these markets: in the United States, electric vehicle sales are expected to show an annual growth rate of 18.2%, resulting in an estimated market volume of \$162 billion by 2028. 8 In Germany, as more fully autonomous vehicles enter the roads, it is expected that the German fully autonomous vehicles market will be valued at \$28 billion by 2030. (P&S Intelligence, 2024).

#### **Strong Midwest Auto Connection**

The Midwestern United States has a strong connection to the auto industry, with Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin making up the major hubs in the region. The regional economy thrives off manufacturing plants, research facilities, and supplier operations.



	On June 25, 2024, it was announced that Rivian, a US
5	startup, and German automobile manufacturer Volkswagen
Vs	will be partnering together in a \$5 billion agreement to
VS	create new technology systems that will be implemented
	in future Volkswagen and Rivian electric vehicles. This
	partnership is projected to benefit both countries
	financially by expanding into the progressing electric
.3	vehicle market. Rivian notably has a manufacturing plant in
S	Normal, IL, where the company plans to produce its newest
	line of R2 electric vehicles.
	GACC Midwest has a broad network and strong footprint
d	Connect with us to learn more about the automotive

## **MEMBER HIGHLIGHTS:**

#### Spotlighting the achievements of our members in 2024!



#### Wieland

On January 17th, Wieland announced its plans to make a landmark \$500 million capital investment to expand and modernize its facility located in East Alton, Illinois. This comprehensive expansion project signifies Wieland's commitment to technological advancement, long-term sustainability, and its valued customer base in North America. The project involves installing a state-of-the-art hot rolling mill to enhance Wieland's production of critical copper and alloy components for electric vehicles, EV charging infrastructure, and renewable energy.

Read more at: <u>wieland.com</u>.

#### **Allied Blending**

In September, Allied Blending completed an expansion to its production plant in Keokuk, Iowa. The project increased the size of the facility by 50,000 square feet, enhancing the plant's capacity and efficiency while providing substantial benefits to the local workforce.

"Our investment in the local industrial sector underscores our confidence in the city's economic future. This expansion aligns with our mission to support the community by creating new jobs and contributing to the local economy," said Frederic Schulders, Chief Executive Officer.

Read more at bakingbusiness.com.



#### Lufthansa Group

Lufthansa Group is ushering in a new era of passenger experience with its latest product — the Allegris cabins. Introduced across all classes, this reimagined cabin design aims to enhance comfort and luxury on Lufthansa's longhaul flights. Passengers choose seats, meals and other aspects of their journeys, thereby creating an individual travel experience according to their needs.





#### WILO USA

Wilo Group and the Milwaukee Bucks announced a comprehensive partnership, with the multinational technology group becoming the first global sustainability partner of the NBA basketball team. The two partners are planning joint sustainability projects and initiatives. "We are committed to creating sustainable technologies and solutions, assuming social responsibility, and investing in strong partnerships worldwide," says Oliver Hermes, President & CEO of the Wilo Group. "Through this partnership with the Bucks, we are recognizing the business development in the US and increasing our visibility in the market," adds Jeff Plaster, CEO of Wilo Americas.

Read more at wilo.com

#### **Forvis Mazars**

Two leading accounting firms, Mazars, an international partnership operating in over 100 countries and territories, and FORVIS, a top ranked accounting firm in the United States, recently launched their new global network, Forvis Mazars. As a unique two-firm network, Forvis Mazars provides assurance, tax, and consulting services with the agility, capacity, and coverage to help clients around the world prepare for what's next. "Forvis Mazars is built on our commitment to listen to our clients, anticipate the challenges they face, and deliver an **Unmatched Client Experience**<sup>®</sup> in all that we do," says U.S. CEO Tom Watson.



#### MilliporeSigma

In October, MilliporeSigma announced a \$76 million expansion of its ADC manufacturing capabilities and capacity at its Bioconjugation Center of Excellence facility in St. Louis, Missouri. The expansion will create 170 jobs and triple the manufacturing capacity to meet increased global demand for antibody-drug conjugates (ADCs), a less invasive form of cancer treatment compared to chemotherapy and radiation. "With this investment, we are not just enhancing our capabilities; we are investing in our clients' success by accelerating innovation and development to ultimately deliver novel therapies to patients more quickly," said Benjamin Hein, Head of Life Science Services, Life Science business of Merck KGaA, Darmstadt, Germany.

#### Read more at sigmaaldrich.com.



#### **THANK YOU TO OUR NATIONAL PARTNERS** EA Baker McKenzie. **BENDER** CHG BOSCH EMOTRANS Invented for life Elektro-Automatik **FREUDENBERG** EY **FedEx** Fraunhofer Gebrüder Weiss INNOVATING TOGETHER Building a be USA ITG Haltermann Carless HORVÁTH Qreenworldwide Group **NOSTA** JAS J.P.Morgan KILPATRICK (KÖRBER KPMG TOWNSEND Ritter SPORT **prowin** RATIONA Rödl & Partner рис nomi **RWE** schattdecor SIEMENS RSM Star Technology People Walmart 🔀 TR/TON Aarketnlace

### **THANK YOU TO OUR PATRON MEMBERS**



### MEMBERSHIP ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to our members who celebrated membership anniversaries this year! Thank you for being part of the GACC Midwest network. We look forward to our continued cooperation in the years to come.



### **WELCOME NEW 2024 MEMBERS**

A.W. Faber-Castell Cosmetics, LLC Allied Blending LP Ampyx Cyber ARCO Murrav Arvato Associated Bank AURA Process Heat LP Battan Alpert Hutchings LLP Bear Creek GAPP LLC BearingPoint Inc. BERTRANDT USA Bloomington CVB BODE Chemie GmbH Borderless Business Solutions LLC Boulder School for German Language and Culture Breakthrough Innovation Advisors, LLC Bredow Homes, LLC BVB Americas Inc. Canopius Carola's Tax Assistance LLC Casebolt Law Corporation PC Coldwell Banker Realty Cyber Qubits Dcubed Denver Council on Foreign Relations (DCFR) Denver Economic Development & Opportunity Digatron Group Discover Benefit Solutions LLC Drei Bond GmbH DSML Executive Search - An Alexander Hughes company DunamisC Coaching and Consulting easviso LLC Ed Marsh Consulting Epiveris LLC

EURO-LOG USA European Fine Foods LP Exolaunch Expeditors International of Washington, Inc. F2F International Inc. Fabasoft Xpublisher Inc. FIBRO Rotary Tables US Inc Fig & Peach LLC Flener IP & Business Law Flying Food Group, LLC Formel D USA Inc Fortium Partners, LP Frontier C&M Gakuto Club German Comedy International: Paco Erhard Green Worldwide Shipping LLC GRID eSports Inc. H.E.A.T. - Academy GmbH & Co. KG HR Consult Group AG Innovative Sponsorships Kampmann HVAC US Inc. Kampmann Logistics US Inc. Kansas Department of Commerce Kleenatap KORN CONSULT GROUP Krombacher USA LLC Kruger North America, Inc Lang Technik USA Logineer USA LLC Maerklin Consulting LLC Masterpiece MATE Inc. MilliporeSigma

FiNi Consult Inc, A Division of



- **Boll Filter Corporation** •
- Brose North America, Inc. .
- MPDV USA, Inc.
- Simon Hegele Health Care . Solutions



- CONDOR FLUGDIENST GMBH
- EMO Trans Inc.
- EY Global
- Kentucky's Touchstone **Energy Cooperatives**
- Merrill Lynch Wealth . Management
- M.G. International Logistics GmbH
- PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

Industrie- und Handelskammer Mittleres Ruhrgebiet

Montrose Group, LLC MP-Protection LLC New York Life NexWafe US Holding Corp OCB Accountants **Open Doors Management** ORBCOMM OTRS, Inc Papier Sprick LP Peak Beverage Catering Pilz Automation Safety, LP Pintail Commercial Real Estate Pueblo Economic Development Corporation QClubNorthAmerica Resilient Entanglement Inc. RSM US LLP Sebastian's Garage Seifert Capital Partners Sheer Velocity, LLC Steinmeyer, Inc. STIWA US Inc. Tesch of America THALETEC USA Inc. The Metal Shop Transatlantic North America Inc. Tri-County Workforce Development Board University of Colorado Boulder Walmart International Weiss Chemie + Technik GmbH & Co. KG Wurzpott LLC YER USA

### **NEW MEMBER BENEFITS FOR OUR NETWORK**

In 2025, members of the GACCs can take advantage of a number of exciting new benefits.



Our closed-door CEO/CFO Roundtables address critical business topics and C-Suite needs. Discuss and network with peers, exchange insights on the latest developments and trends, discover new solutions, and receive advice



#### **J-1 Visa Services in the Midwest**

J-1 visa services for interns are be available through our office in addition to GACC New York's J-1 services, meaning more capacity for processing visas for your interns!



#### 401(k) Multiple Employer Plan

As of 2024, we offer a 401(k) Multiple Employer Plan plan to all GACC members US-wide, which eases the administrative burden, fiduciary risk, and expenses that come with offering a quality retirement plan. A strong retirement benefit program is especially helpful in attracting and retaining top talent.



#### **Member Landing Spots**

As a valued member, the Member Landing Spot provides you with exclusive benefits, such as private office space, easy access to transportation for meetings in the Loop and greater Chicagoland, as well as gorgeous views of the Mag Mile and Lake Michigan.



#### **National Partner Benefits**

Our National Partner Program is expanding to include GACC West and the Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Washington, DC. Get your foot in the door in Silicon Valley and on Capitol Hill, and utilize their Member Landing Spots when you are in town.



# **GACC MIDWEST J-1 VISA SERVICES**

#### What is the J-1 Visa?

The J-1 visa is considered a cultural visa, issued through The program sponsors are responsible for screening and the US Department of State, and is meant to build bilateral cross-cultural understanding. Internship programs are Internship exchange visitor program, as well as supporting designed to allow foreign college and university students and monitoring exchange visitors during their stay in the or recent graduates (i.e. "exchange visitors") to come to the United States. United States to gain exposure to US culture and to receive hands-on experience in US business practices in their What is the application process like? chosen occupational field.\* The J-1 visa program is open to The J-1 visa application process takes approximately 6-10 weeks, depending on wait times at the US Consulate in the companies in the United States hiring interns from almost any country outside of the United States (not just Germany!) exchange visitor's home country.

#### Why should companies in the US hire J-1 Interns?

In September 2023, GACC Midwest was designated by the US Hiring international interns offer a wealth of benefits. Interns Department of State as an authorized sponsor organization contribute to a company's success and enhance the work for J-1 visas for the Internship program, and officially started culture by bringing in fresh energy, new perspectives, foreign accepting applications in April 2024. GACC Midwest's first language skills, and the ability to bridge cultural barriers. sponsored intern began their program in June 2024. To date, Hiring international interns offer a win-win scenario for all GACC Midwest's sponsored interns have a 100% approval rate parties: interns gain real-world professional experience in for receiving their J-1 visa! a valuable international context to build their resumes and receive the opportunity to live in the US and experience \*Resource: j1visa.state.gov/programs/intern. a new culture, while organizations benefit from diverse perspectives and a global talent pool to expand their network and resources.

(5)

#### What is a J-1 Visa Sponsor?

selecting eligible foreign nationals for participation in the J-1

#### **Your Contact:**

#### **Aimee Goodman**

Manager Recruiting & **Consulting Services** 

+1 (312) 763-2989 goodman@gaccmidwest.org

# **EVENTS**

# **EUROPEAN PROFESSIONALS NETWORKING (EPN)**

This event is tailor-made for both young professionals and experienced specialists alike looking to expand their network. Get involved with local internationally focused organizations and meet like-minded professionals. European Professionals Networking events are casual, fun, and where business gets done. This event is supported by European Chambers across Chicagoland.

Our 2024 venues included: W Chicago - City Center, Twenty-Six Chicago, Goose Island Brewing, and the Chicago Christkindlmarket.

#### **Key Benefits:**

- Facilitate business conversations in a fun, casual atmosphere
- Comprehensive networking across industries ٠
- Experience unique venues in the Chicago area









" It was a pleasure meeting new people in a very nice atmosphere.

## HANNOVER MESSE 2025 SHAPING THE FUTURE WITH FUTURE WITH TECHNOLOGY

31 March – 4 April 2025 🔳 Hanover, Germany hannovermesse.com

## WHY EXHIBIT?

- Access to a global audience from 130+ countries
- **Explore the option of exhibiting** as part of the U.S. Pavilions for enhanced visibility
- Exclusive Insights: Gain access to future trends & technologies to drive your business forward
- Forge Valuable Connections with new clients



Your Deutsche Messe AG U.S. Representative Office is here to assist with registration, accommodation and participation:

✓ Katrin Geisler: geisler@hf-usa.com
 ✓ George Gabriel: gabriel@hf-usa.com

### Your Partner in Transformation

**Global Solutions from a Local Insurer.** As an experienced industrial insurer with a tradition spanning more than a century, we pride ourselves on being a trusted and reliable partner by offering tailored programs to meet the evolving needs of our clients. With an international network of local insurers in more than 175 countries, we have the global reach and local expertise to connect you to the world.

www.hdi.global

HDI

## 

Against the backdrop of challenging global markets, the US remains an attractive market for investment. Companies explored opportunities to enter and expand into the US at the German American Business Forum on June 6 in Hanover. With 260+ attendees, the event fostered connections and insights between the US and German business communities. Peakboard to Mittelständler such as Christoph Wesner with WAGNER Group. Each shared their unique experiences in the US market along with their market entry tips and best practices. The day concluded with a lively happy hour, providing ample networking opportunities for all attendees.

Workshop sessions covered topics like market entry best practices and legal requirements, success strategies for logistics, manufacturing, sales & marketing, AI and more, and unlocking international market opportunities for sports clubs. Panelists ranged from startups like Nina Berger from

### Key Takeaways

- The US has a welcoming culture for investment, and German companies have a strong interest in the US market, planning future investments
- The US has overtaken China as Germany's most important trading partner in Q1
- "There are no problems in the USA only challenges"
- If you want to be successful in the long term, you should have a local presence
- It is important to build partnerships and a network in the US, and the AHKs are a great resource for this!





Photos by Ulrich Stamm.

# GERMAN AMERICAN BUSINESS OUTLOOK (GABO)

What are German subsidiaries in the US predicting for the coming year? What do they anticipate will be successful, and what will their challenges be? Each year, the German American Chambers of Commerce work together to survey German subsidiaries across the US via the German American Business Outlook (GABO), which assesses current economic developments and trends in transatlantic business.

In 2024, the GABO results were presented in early February in New York, followed by regional events across the country. In the Midwest, GABO events were organized in Schaumburg, IL; Birmingham, MI; Denver, CO; and St. Louis, MO. Expert panelists presented region-specific analysis of the survey data, discussing what the results could mean for German companies in the area.



### **Key Takeaways**



In 2024, 99.5% of German companies in the US forecast no recession for the US economy; 91% expect their net sales to grow.



Over the next 3 years, 96% of respondents plan to invest in the US; over 40% more than \$5 million; 30% more than \$10 million.



For over 2/3 of German companies in the US, the US has a significant or dominant importance for their global business; 40% have US production facilities.



Strong US demand results in increased production, employment and R&D activities in Germany.



72% plan to expand their workforce in 2024, though 91% struggle with recruitment. By 2028, 82% expect to grow their workforce.



Concerns about US inflation, market uncertainty, supply chain and trade tension decrease ahead of 2024 US election.



Panelists in Illinois included Mario Kahlert, Siemens Smart Infrastructure; Bruce Comiskey, Wintrust Banking; James Nestel, Simon Hegele Healthcare Solutions; and Lisa Browning, Richard Wolf Medical Instruments Corporation.



Michigan GABO panelists included Justin Robinson, Detroit Regional Partnership; Jack Pennuto, KUKA Robotics Corp.; Arnd Herwig (GABC President), Brose; and Diane Forrest, JP Morgan Chase.



Peter Einsle hands over the presidency of the GACC Midwest, Colorado Chapter to Barbara Wittmann at the Denver GABO event. From left: Peter Einsle, GACC Colorado Chapter Board Member; Samantha Seems, Executive Director, GACC-CO; Barbara Wittmann, President, GACC-CO, CEO, IT Zeitgeist

# **MIDWEST** SME FORUM

Our all-day Midwest Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME) Forum is designed to provide participating businesses with the ability to connect directly with like-minded companies and industry experts. This year's theme, "Future Readiness: Expanding in the US Market," addressed the opportunities and challenges that businesses encounter as they navigate the dynamic landscape of the US market.

From learning how your business can strategically implement AI to discussing the EV future of the automotive industry, nearly 100 professionals in German American business broadened their knowledge on a variety of different topics through both panel and round table discussions.

#### **KEY TAKEAWAYS:**

#### Keynote speech from Daniel Zimmer, Sr. **Director, Head of Engagement, SAP Labs US**

- Daniel spoke about SAP's values and rich history, and emphasized the importance of the US market, particularly for European companies.
- He also shared an update on the pivotal role that Silicon • Valley and AI play in advancing innovation in both the US and German markets.



#### The Future Is Now: Grow with New Technologies and AI while Mitigating Risk

- When utilizing AI, ask: how can we be most effective?
- Identify areas ripe for AI integration and prioritize understanding processes before leveraging technology for enhancement.
- Initiate pilot projects cautiously, ensuring they don't disrupt revenue streams, while actively learning from their outcomes.
- Adapt early

#### **Fuel Your US Expansion: Gathering Localization Insights for a Profitable Road Ahead**

- Intercultural understanding holds immense importance.
- What works in Germany likely won't work in the US.
- Establish regional offices to foster decentralized management.
- Understand the local culture
- Establish regional offices

#### The Automotive Roadmap: Navigating Economic • **Challenges While Driving the Technology** Transition

- Adopting the automotive industry's shift towards • electrification requires careful strategizing
- Priorities should be sustainability and competitiveness •
- Companies must constantly evolve to stay ahead ٠
- Diversify into electric vehicles
- Be quick to adapt

#### **Workforce Development That Works For All:** "Get Them & Keep Them"

New workforce models include measuring success by responsiveness to customers rather than imposing quotas on technicians, for example.

#### Thank you to our 2024 Midwest SME Forum sponsors!







- It is important to treat remote workers as if they are in the office.
  - Everyone on the team needs to want to be there and should be driven by common values and purpose.
  - Structure work environment to maximize customer satisfaction
  - Equity in opportunity for in-person and remote employees



# **IMTS GERMAN NIGHT RECEPTION**



What a night of new connections at our 8th German Night Reception at the International Manufacturing Technology Show, the largest manufacturing technology show and marketplace in the Western Hemisphere.

Hosted in the beautiful Vista Room at McCormick Place, the evening was filled with networking with the German American business community, sampling some classic Chicago & German cuisine, and hearing from guest speakers about the strength of German business in the Midwest.

The highlight of the evening was a special keynote from Illinois Governor JB Pritzker, where he discussed the important partnership and long history of German businesses in the state of Illinois. Sam Rikkers, Deputy Secretary/ COO at Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, and Dan Knoblauch, Vice President of Manufacturing at Krones, Inc., spotlighted German successes in Wisconsin.

German know-how is everywhere at IMTS. The German Pavilion in particular featured 30 companies showcasing 53 products and services "made in Germany," a wonderful example of the strength of German innovation.

#### Thank you to our 2024 IMTS German **Night sponsors!**











# WHITE **ASPARAGUS** DINNER



We launched a new intercultural event in 2024 - our White Asparagus Dinner, hosted at the beautiful Sky on Nine in Rosemont, IL! This unique event celebrated the fusion of traditional German cuisine with modern American flavors. Guests experienced the taste of real German white asparagus, exclusively flown in from Germany. Since the venue was located across from O'Hare airport, guests could see the short trip the asparagus made from our farmer in Germany to us.

This event was about coming together, forming connections, and building relationships. The fourcourse menu included white asparagus soup, grilled white asparagus salad, long island cut strip steak with white asparagus, and a delicious white asparagus panna cotta for dessert.



Thank you to our Official Event Partner EMO Trans for flying in the asparagus and making this event possible!

Thank you to our 2024 White Asparagus Dinner sponsors!





## **66** Great networking, great food, and great venue! **99**





## **CONNECTION SERIES HIGHLIGHTS - ILLINOIS**

Thank you to our 2024 Illinois **Connection Series sponsor!** 



## **CONNECTION SERIES HIGHLIGHTS - MICHIGAN**

#### March 6 - HARIBO of America, Inc.

Rosemont, IL

Speaker: Wes Saber, CFO, HARIBO of America, Inc.

Guests learned about the history and growth of HARIBO's brand and got insights into the company's first-ever manufacturing facility in North America as well as its exciting marketing strategies for the last 100 years.



#### September 4 - Plasmatreat USA, Inc.

Elgin, IL

Speakers: Lukas Buske, Head of Plasma Application & Executive Board Member, Plasmatreat / Magnus Buske, Head of Research and Development, Plasmatreat

Plasmatreat USA, Inc. gave attendees a behind the scenes look with a live surface treatment demonstration. They also learned how Plasmatreat contibutes to the circular economy and provides benefits for its customers and partners.





#### May 8 - Miele, Inc.

Miele Experience Center, Chicago, IL

Speakers: Jared Costa, Director of National Sales and Product Training, Miele / Vicki Richter-Robb, Chef and National Program Coordinator, Miele

Attendees explored the enduring qualities that have defined Miele's 125 years of business, experienced Miele's extensive range of premium home appliances through a culinary demonstration, and discovered the significance of the US as a key growth market.



#### November 6 - Kuehne + Nagel Inc.

#### Bensenville, IL

Speaker: William Rooney, Vice President Strategic Development, Kuehne + Nagel Inc.

Participants toured the temperature-cooled warehouse for a presentation and demonstration of Kuehne + Nagel's company operations. Additionally, they learned new ways to enhance supply chain resilience, navigate environmental regulations and get a look at what the future holds for technology and sea logistics.

#### March 20 - KUKA Robotics Corp.

Shelby Township, MI

Speaker: Ed Volcic, CTO, KUKA Robotics Corp.

Guests learned about the industry and technology trends around robotics and automation. Additionally, they took a facility tour to see automation demonstrations for a range of industrial applications.



#### September 17 - Dürr Systems, Inc.

#### Southfield, MI

Speakers: Mike Fenner, Key Account Manager, Dürr Systems, Inc. / Ronaldo Martire, Senior Account Manager, Dürr Systems, Inc. / Tom Bucknell, Senior Manager - Test Center, Dürr Systems, Inc.

Attendees received a general overview of Dürr, one of the world's leading mechanical/plant engineering and paint finishing companies, along with a demonstration of the EcoPaintjet Robot Trail at the Dürr Test Center.



Thank you to our 2024 Michigan **Connection Series sponsor!** 

Rödl & Partner





#### June 12 - EMO Trans, Inc.

Romulus, MI

Speaker: Stacie Countryman, Corporate Export Compliance Manager, EMO Trans, Inc.

Participants took a warehouse tour and learned about what to look for in global shipping operations by identifying red flags in internal processes, staying in compliance with both US and foreign laws, recognizing and mitigating prominent risks on the Germany-US trade lane, and actively building resiliency across the entire supply chain.





#### November 20 - dSPACE, Inc.

Wixom, MI

Speaker: Peter Waeltermann, CEO, dSPACE Inc.

DSPACE introduced attendees to the company's view on "software-defined vehicles," the new trend in electronics architectures in the auto industry, along with solutionbased approaches to problem-solving within the context of E-mobility, Advanced Driver Assistant Systems (ADAS), and Autonomous Driving (AD).

## GERMAN AMERICAN APPRENTICESHIP & EDUCATION FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER GALA

Let's shoot for the stars! The inaugural gala supporting GACC Midwest's workforce initiatives took place at the "out-of-thisworld" Adler Planetarium in Chicago.

Our community came together to support the creation and expansion of high-quality apprenticeship pathways in the US. It was an evening of elegance and philanthropy: Networking with high-ranking professionals and industry leaders in the German American business community, games like Heads or Tails, and exciting live and silent auctions were the highlights for this special evening. The HARIBO Goldbear and Christkind also made appearances!

Guests heard the inspiring success stories of apprentices in the ICATT and MAT<sup>2</sup> Apprenticeship Programs. Lisa Browning, US Head of Human Resources, Building Maintenance, and IT Infrastructure at ICATT Network Company Richard Wolf Medical Instruments Corporation shone the spotlight on the dedication of their apprentices. She also shared the story of Richard Wolf's Executive Vice President Stefan Heffner, who started his career as an apprentice himself and now supports apprentices in the US through ICATT.

Throughout the evening, attendees learned about the successes of apprentices like Amethyst, a recent Mechatronics Technician graduate at Krones in Wisconsin who has seen her friends face college debt while she remains debt-free. Or Evan, at Seyer Industries in Missouri, who found it challenging to stay focused in high school - now excels thanks to hands-on learning. Or Trivia, a single mother who was struggling to make ends meet - and is now an E-Mobility technician at ZF Group in Michigan. These are just a few of the hundreds of success stories facilitated by GACC Midwest's apprenticeship programs!

In the wise words of Winston Churchill, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." Thank you to our paddle raisers, game participants, and auction bidders and donors - your contributions directly impact the lives of our apprentices as they succeed in their careers, debt-free. Altogether, the event raised over \$50,000 to support sustainable workforce development in the US.









56



Thank you to our 2024 German American Apprenticeship & Education Foundation **Fundraiser Gala sponsors!** 







# **DELEGATION TRIPS & TRADE MISSIONS**

### Urban Gardening – July 2024

This first-of-its-kind initiative, supported by the German Consulate, brought urban gardening representatives from Berlin to Chicago, where they planted the seeds of connection with their US counterparts. By exchanging ideas and inspiration, they cultivated a transatlantic partnership that will continue to flourish and grow.



### Smart City – October 2024

This business delegation centered on sustainable mobility, public transport solutions, and AI technologies, connecting German and American experts through conferences, site visits, and B2B meetings. Together, they explored the expanding Smart City ecosystem in two of the US's largest cities - Chicago and New York City.



### **Industrial Decarbonization** - November 2024

This business delegation introduced cutting-edge German solutions for industrial decarbonization to Illinois and Michigan-two of the US's leading manufacturing states. As the US transitions to a low-carbon economy, this program targeted the decarbonization of energy-intensive sectors, including the steel and automotive industries.

### **Battery Recycling** - December 2024

This business delegation brought together a diverse group of industry experts, plant engineers, and innovative minds from Germany and the US to discuss solutions in battery and energy storage manufacturing and recycling in Ohio and Kentucky.

### **CUSTOMIZABLE DELEGATIONS**

Discover new market opportunities with our customizable business delegations to the Midwest. Tailored to meet the unique needs of your industry, our expert team organizes comprehensive trips that provide companies with deep insights and valuable connections in this dynamic region.

Whether you're exploring new markets, forging partnerships, or gaining a competitive edge, our personalized approach ensures that your delegation experience is both targeted and impactful. Let us handle the details so you can focus on expanding your business in the Midwest.









Britta Schneider, Deputy **Director of Government Projects** (schneider@gaccmidwest.org) contact for more information!

# TRANSATLANTIC DIALOGUE: THE FUTURE OF INFRASTRUCTURE

The "Transatlantic Dialogue - The Future of Infrastructure" project is a three-year initiative fostering collaboration between the United States and Germany in critical infrastructure sectors. Each year, the project focuses on a specific area of infrastructure, bringing together experts, stakeholders, and industry leaders from both sides of the Atlantic to share knowledge, explore innovations, and build partnerships.





#### Year 2 (2024): Smart Grid Development

Building on the momentum from the first year, the 2024 phase of the project centered on smart grid development. This initiative facilitated a transatlantic dialogue on the future of energy distribution, emphasizing the integration of renewable energy sources, grid modernization, and digital innovation. US and German experts shared insights on improving grid efficiency and reliability, setting the stage for continued collaboration in this critical area.



#### Year 1 (2023): Electric Vehicle (EV) and Charging Infrastructure

In 2023, the project kicked off with a focus on electric vehicle (EV) and charging infrastructure. German and US experts in the EV field engaged in a series of site visits, networking events, and in-depth discussions aimed at advancing the EV market in both countries. This exchange highlighted the opportunities for economic growth, technological standardization, and climate change mitigation through collaborative efforts in EV infrastructure.





#### Year 3 (2025): Water Infrastructure

The final year of the project will focus on water infrastructure, and will address challenges related to water supply, management, and sustainability. This phase of the project aims to bring together experts from the US and Germany to explore innovative solutions, share best practices, and foster partnerships that can address the growing demands on water systems in both regions. Our delegation will be visiting Wisconsin and Illinois in the US, and North Rhine Westphalia and Bavaria in Germany.

# TRANSATLANTIC **CLIMATE AND ENERGY** PARTNERSHIP

#### **Climate and Energy Days in California**

The highlight of the year for the Climate and Energy Partnership was the Climate and Energy Days at the RE+ Conference in Anaheim, California from September 9-11, 2024. The days were kicked off with a special edition of the California-Germany Bilateral Energy Conference (CGBEC) with the topic "Transforming the Electric Grid: U.S.-Germany Solar + Storage Innovations," followed by a networking reception. Anja Hajduck, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) and J. Andrew McAllister, Commissioner at the California Energy Commission (CEC) gave the keynote speeches and started off three days of partnership events alongside the official RE+

program. Conference topics included solar and storage, tech, and strategies for grid stability with a focus on real-world success stories.

In the following days, the partnership was present at the RE+ German Pavilion with presentations, German energy success stories and innovation pitches, matchmakings, a fireside chat on storage and hydrogen and much more.

#### **Expert Delegation Trip to Germany on Offshore Wind**

The offshore wind delegation trips to Germany were continued with a third successful trip to Berlin and Hamburg from September 23-26, 2024. The US experts learned about German regulatory, technical, and economic topics, exchanged lessons learned, prospects and challenges, participated in the trade fair "WindEnergy Hamburg" and discussed cooperation opportunities.





#### **·GERMANY**





### **ABOUT THE** PARTNERSHIP

Initiated in 2021 and officially launched in 2022, the US-Germany Climate and Energy Partnership is a platform for political dialogue, expert exchange and technological cooperation.

The Partnership is co-chaired from the German side by Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Climate Action Robert Habeck and Federal Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock, and from the US side by Secretary of Energy Jennifer Granholm and the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry. The US State Department and the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection also participate in the partnership.

A Support Office, consisting of the Berlinbased think tank adelphi and the German American Chambers of Commerce (GACC), with GACC Midwest in the lead, in cooperation with RENAC, assists with the implementation of the Partnership and is responsible for all contents on its website.

#### **Your Contact at Our Chamber**



**Britta Schneider** Deputy Director, Government **Projects & Trade Missions** 

+1 (312) 585-8346 schneider@gaccmidwest.org

# US MARKET ENTRY BOOTCAMPS

Looking to Enter the US Market as a German Subsidiary? Your First Stop: GACC Midwest's US Market Entry Bootcamp!

The US Market Entry Bootcamp is a comprehensive workshop designed to equip companies for a successful entry into the US market. Led by renowned experts, the program covers a wide range of topics, including US tax complexities, transatlantic logistics, sales strategies in the digital age, cross-cultural competency, and product liability and visa laws, ensuring a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities of market entry.

The program concludes with a thorough review, summary and guidance for next steps, providing participants with a clear roadmap. Active participation is encouraged, with opportunities for questions and 30-minute one-on-one consultations with market entry experts. Participants also receive a comprehensive US Market Entry Guide, providing practical tools for creating a reliable business plan.

GACC Midwest's US Market Entry Bootcamp not only provides critical knowledge, but also fosters a mindset for success in the dynamic US market. Participants can be assured that they will leave the training with confidence, a clear strategy for their business, and a network of experts to support them every step of the way.

Both in-person and virtual bootcamps are available throughout the year and can be found on our website: gaccmidwest.org





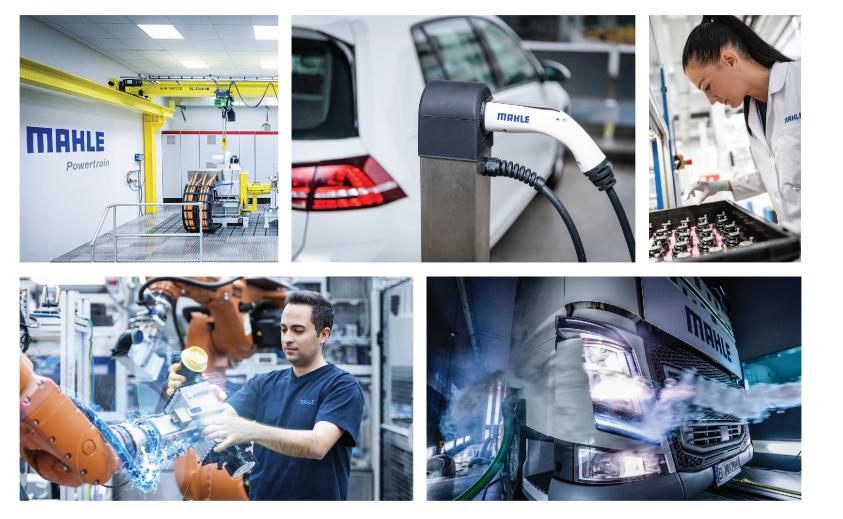
#### **Program Background:**

The US Market Entry Bootcamp was first offered in October 2021, and due to pandemic circumstances, was only able to operate virtually. The response was great, and it was a complete success with enthusiastic participants and speakers.

Since 2021, we have organized this intensive seminar seven times virtually and six times in cooperation with the IHKs in Koblenz, Dresden, Frankfurt, Reutlingen and Düsseldorf, and have thus been able to support many more companies in their expansion into the US market. In 2024 alone, we were able to offer four US Market Entry Bootcamps, one virtual and three in cooperation with the IHKs in Frankfurt, Reutlingen and Düsseldorf. With the virtual US Market Entry Bootcamp we continue to offer a convenient and comprehensive option for preparing for the US.



# **Ship** Fuels Continued Growth for Automotive Supplier



MAHLE, a German automotive supplier, has established three facilities in Ohio and hired over 1,000 employees. The company supplies OEMs with automotive parts, including pistons, HVAC components, and powertrain cooling systems. After nearly 40 years of continued growth in Ohio, MAHLE's Director of **Operations Eugene DiGirolamo** and Branch Manager Robert Baker sit down for an interview to discuss the company's growth and offer advice for companies looking to invest in the United States.

#### Why did MAHLE decide to invest in Ohio?

The OEMs we had traditionally supplied in the U.S. began requiring a local supplier. To continue to serve this customer base, MAHLE began looking for a centrally located U.S. state with moderate labor and energy costs and access to highly qualified talent. We partnered with JobsOhio. Ohio's economic development corporation, and regional partner Ohio Southeast Economic Development to find the right area to grow the business. This brought us to McConnelsville, Ohio, where we built MAHLE's first U.S. facility. The new location was the first step in helping us reach our customers in a new era where local suppliers were given precedence.

#### How has the company grown in Ohio over the years?

Our presence in Ohio grew through a series of acquisitions. In 2013, MAHLE acquired our facility in Dayton, Ohio. The historic building was previously home to one of America's first automotive companies. The Maxwell Motor Company. which later became Chrysler Corporation. Today, the Dayton facility is one of our largest locations in North America. The facility has 1.2 million square feet of manufacturing space on a 60-acre campus and currently employs approximately 1,000 employees. Dayton is connected to three major transportation throughways, which allows us to reach all the major OEMs within 4-6 hours. The facility is critical to our business operations, enabling us to ship large volumes of products to our customers quickly.

#### What role did JobsOhio's support play in the decision to continue growing in Ohio?

Since investing in Ohio. JobsOhio and its regional economic development partners have been key in helping us execute our growth strategy. They've provided incentives and helped recruit talent to scale our business. JobsOhio and its partners are in tune with our needs and proactively touch base with our team.



"I am excited to be part of Ohio's industrial future." Robert Baker

Eugene DiGirolamo **Director of Operations** MAHLE's Facilities, North America



**Robert Baker** Branch Manager MAHLE's Facilities, Dayton, Ohio

**READY TO GROW? LET'S GROW, TOGETHER.** Learn more about the opportunities in Ohio and how JobsOhio can support your business needs at jobsohio.com/Germany



Alina Harastasanu JobsOhio Director. European Business Development Harastasanu@jobsohio.com 614.362.4502

JobsOhio was also instrumental in helping us recover from labor shortages following the COVID-19 pandemic. After the pandemic, business grew guickly as we won contracts and needed to deliver complex products out of the Dayton facility simultaneously. JobsOhio and the Dayton Development Coalition quickly supported our HR team by putting us in touch with pre-vetted recruitment agencies. They also assisted with the planning and execution of hiring events. Together, we were able to fill the positions needed to get our production back on track.

#### What advice would you give automotive manufacturers looking to open a facility in the U.S.?

It is not always easy to get the full picture of what is available in terms of real estate, incentives, or tax breaks. So, I recommend reaching out to economic development organizations such as JobsOhio. They're a trusted and well-connected resource that can put you in touch with local development agencies and key stakeholders. This is the best way to decide on where to invest.



## TALENT PLACEMENT WITH DECADES OF EXPERIENCE SERVING GERMAN AMERICAN BUSINESSES

At GACC Midwest, we understand the unique challenges and opportunities that German-American businesses face in the US market. With over 60 years of experience and a vast network of industry connections, we provide tailored recruitment services that connect companies with top-tier talent across the Midwest. Our expertise encompasses a wide range of roles, from senior executives to specialized professionals, ensuring that we meet the diverse needs of our clients as they pursue their North American business objectives. Whether you are establishing a US subsidiary, scaling your operations, or enhancing your existing teams, we are here to support you every step of the way.

Our bicultural team, fluent in both German and American business cultures, plays a pivotal role in bridging cultural differences. We offer valuable consultations designed to optimize your recruiting processes, ensuring that you find the right candidates who align with your organizational values and goals.

#### **Services Offered:**

Our recruitment process begins with a personalized consultation, where we work closely with you to align your hiring strategies with US job market standards. We take the time to fully understand the specific requirements of the role you are looking to fill, which allows us to make precise matches with candidates.

Employing a proactive recruitment approach, we leverage our extensive network and various external platforms to identify and attract top talent. Our thorough interview and evaluation processes ensure that we present only the most qualified candidates, saving you time and effort.

GACC Midwest provides a comprehensive suite of services that manage all aspects of the recruitment process. This allows you to focus on your core business activities while we handle the intricacies of talent acquisition. Additionally, we offer expert intercultural consultation to guide you throughout the hiring journey, helping you navigate any challenges that may arise.



Our commitment to quality and client satisfaction is reflected in our impressive track record, with over 50% of ou projects originating from returning clients. Partner with GAC Midwest for expert guidance as you navigate the complexitie of US recruitment, and experience firsthand the dedication and expertise that set us apart in the industry.

#### **Success Rate in Recruitment:**

Fill Rate: 95% of our recent recruitment projects have been completed successfully. We've filled key positions across six different industries, demonstrating our ability to meet diverse client needs.

#### **Trusted by Returning Clients:**

Our commitment to providing exceptional recruitment services is clearly demonstrated by the loyalty of our clients. In 2024, nearly 50% of our search projects were from returning clients, highlighting their trust in our ability to consistently fulfill their recruitment needs.

#### Key Roles We've Mastered – Delivering Top Talent Across Leadership, Sales and Engineering:

Sales & Market Development Managers:

 Extensive experience in identifying and securing top talent for roles focused on driving revenue and growth.

Top-Level Executive & Organizational Leadership Positions

 Proven track record in recruiting leadership roles essential for steering business development strategy an operations.

Field Engineering & Technical Support Specialists:

• Specialized recruitment for technical roles requiring field expertise and problem-solving skills.

ur CC es	<ul> <li>Successful placement of candidates in administrative roles crucial for maintaining smooth office operations.</li> </ul>
	Industries We Served in 2024:
	At GACC Midwest, we've successfully partnered with a diverse range of industries. While we have strong expertise in sectors like Machinery Manufacturing, our reach extends far beyond these areas, including:
	Automation & Machinery Manufacturing
n	Transportation & Logistics
	<ul> <li>Renewable Energy &amp; Semiconductor Manufacturing</li> </ul>
•	Electronics & Appliances
	Food & Beverage Manufacturing
	Furniture Solutions
:	Public Safety
nd	Membership Association

**Operational Support & Administrative Management Roles:** 

#### **Your Contact**



Nathalie Rusznyak Senior Manager, Recruiting & Consulting Services

+1 (312) 585-8007 rusznyak@gaccmidwest.org

## **MARKETING IN THE US**

#### **Leverage Our Network**

Are you interested in sharing your success story within the and more. Print options include event materials and flyers, as region and bringing more exposure to your brand? We can help with that. Do you want to share your products and services with companies that might need them? We can help with that, too.

With our expansive and diverse network, GACC Midwest's Marketing & Communications team is here to get your company's message out there in the German American business community.

GACC Midwest provides a range of advertising opportunities exclusively for members. Digital advertising options include LinkedIn spotlights, newsletter features, website banners,

#### LinkedIn Spotlights: 11,000+ followers

- Share product releases, services, events, white papers and exclusive promotions for our audience
- Collaborate on targeted LinkedIn Ad Campaigns to reach • an audience interested in transatlantic business

#### **Executive Update:** 5,000+ subscribers

• Place an ad in our monthly newsletter that has an open rate of over 50%

#### **GACC Midwest Website:** 174,000+ yearly page views

 Increase brand awareness and website traffic with a prominent banner ad on the GACC Midwest website

#### GACC Midwest Report: Mailed to 600+ members

• Get brand visibility through our annual printed and digital signature publication

well as our signature publication, the GACC Midwest Report which you are reading right now! This report is sent to all our member companies every year as a hard copy.

Not sure which options are best for you, or interested in multiple advertising venues? GACC Midwest offers customized campaigns tailored to your brand's needs. In addition to these options, it is always recommended to build your own channels in the US. If your company is interested in creating a US LinkedIn presence, our Consulting team's Marketing & Localization services are a great way to get started.



#### **Your Contact:**



#### **Anne-Katrin Huber** Director Marketing,

+1 (312) 585-8004 huber@gaccmidwest.org

Membership & Events

## MARKETING SERVICES

#### **Localize Your Content With Us**

GACC Midwest's marketing experts will get your company's message across in the US, offering localization support to drive success through perfectly coordinated communication. If you have additional marketing needs, get in touch with us and we will tailor our services to fit your goals.

#### **Our Process**

- 1. Define a comprehensive, tailored channel strategy.
- 2. Set up the company's Linkedin account and profile.
- 3. Create a monthly content plan with content and visuals.
- 4. Native speakers ensure content is accurate.

#### Why LinkedIn?

- 1. LinkedIn is the world's largest professional network, with 950+ million users.
- 2. The US has the largest number of users per country, with 206+ million users (22% of global users).
- 3. 61 million people use LinkedIn to search for jobs every week, and 117 job applications are submitted every second.

#### **Other Marketing Services**

#### **Customized LinkedIn Training**

This training covers US marketing best practices and social media nuances, emphasizing LinkedIn's potential as a powerful tool. It optimizes company profiles, discusses content selection for B2B and B2C, and explores do's and don'ts of effective posts. Participants gain insights into paid advertising campaigns and LinkedIn Sales Navigator.

#### Website Support

Website copy localization is crucial, complementing social media content for a consistent online brand presence. Participating companies' website text is checked and revised by native US-English speakers, optimizing it for search engines. GACC Midwest offers guidance on user-friendly website structure.

#### **Testimonial**

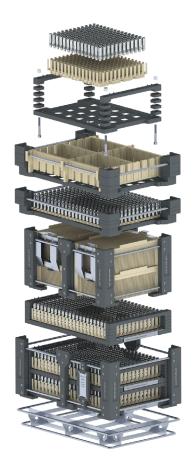
In our efforts to reach potential customers in the US market, we joined forces with GACC Midwest. They helped us localize our LinkedIn page, develop engaging content, and expand our follower base. Over the span of two years, the GACC Marketing Services team demonstrated their responsiveness, creativity, and understanding of our industry. Through regular calls, we ensured our marketing efforts were aligned. With their seamless support, our brand gained visibility in the US bioprocessing sector. We highly recommend GACC Midwest's marketing services to other German companies entering the US market, especially because of their expertise and understanding of the US market.

#### - BlueSens Corporation

**Your Contact:** 

**Katarina Theo** Consultant, **Consulting Services** 

+1 (312) 585-8314 theo@gaccmidwest.org



### **WORLD INNOVATION**

- FLEXIBLE
- COST-EFFECTIVE
- SUSTAINABLE
- AGILE
- MODULAR AND STACKABLE
- AUTOMATION-CAPABLE

We have been developing innovative part carrier systems for the following industries for over 20 years: Tooling, Electrical, Automation, Aerospace, Defense, Material Handling and Battery Technology.

Drying

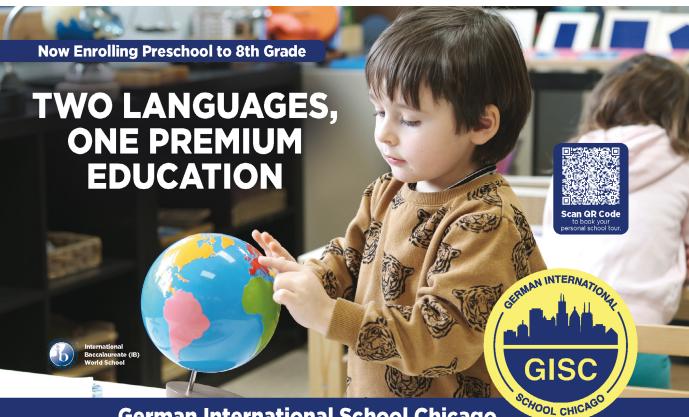


Intralogistik



Robotic

Website, downloads and more videos



**German International School Chicago** 1726 W Berteau Ave · Chicago, IL 60613 · germanschoolchicago.com





# DEVELOPMENT

## **TRAIN THE TRAINER**

Doing and teaching are distinct skills, and an expert is not always a great teacher. Even if the conditions for learning are great in a company, a huge amount of money and resources can be wasted if trainers don't have practical tools and techniques on hand to transfer their knowledge. That is where the Train the Trainer course comes into play. This 5-day course is designed to help trainers communicate and train more effectively, so your company can spend more time on the things that matter.

Each Train the Trainer course equips participants with tools to effectively train and mentor their trainees and provides theory-based tools to help understand which techniques to apply when teaching. The German American Chamber of Commerce developed this course in cooperation with teaching and training specialists from Germany, resulting in an international certification recognized in 40 countries. With a hands-on approach, this course concept was specifically designed for apprenticeships and other practical training environments to prepare trainees for the real world.

Within five days, participants receive a customized training plan and training modules that select appropriate teaching methods for different situations and learning styles. Topics include how to give effective feedback, different communication techniques, how to troubleshoot problems, and much more. The standard Train the Trainer course focuses on trainers and mentors for apprentices and technicians. However, customized options for your company can also focus on general and non-technical training.

Roleplaying is also an exercise that helps participants understand how to implement these techniques in realworld situations. According to Matt Hughes, Training and Development Manager at ALPLA Group and recent Train the Trainer participant, "I think the roleplaying exercises have been really beneficial. I think that's been an aspect that maybe we don't utilize enough to really have people role play and put themselves into situations to see how they



actually would react in those situations," says Hughes.

The first four days of instruction are dedicated to coursework and practice, with the fifth day focusing on a written and practical examination. Upon successful completion, participants receive a certification as an internationally approved trainer for workforce development. 100% of trainers who attended a Train the Trainer seminar would recommend it to their coworkers to improve their training and communication skills.

With in-person and virtual course options available, getting your trainers top-tier instruction has never been easier. To learn about our upcoming course options, or if you would like to host a Train the Trainer course at your company, please contact Geneva Scurek.

66 The awesome thing about Train the Trainer, is that it is useful for anybody who does any type of training, it doesn't have to be with apprenticeships. But if you're looking to be more effective in your training or if you're working, especially with adults or young adults, this is a great opportunity to add more tools to your toolbox.



#### **Your Contact:**

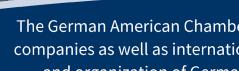


**Geneva Scurek** Senior Manager, Training, **Exams and Certification** 

+1 (312) 585-8339 scurek@gaccmidwest.org



**BUILDING BETTER APPRENTICESHIPS** Driving Retention and Fostering Workforce Excellence







The German American Chambers of Commerce (GACCs) support US companies as well as international businesses with the introduction and organization of German-style apprenticeship programs.





## Creating safety.

Product solutions made of perforated sheets and sheet metal gratings.

Graepel is a worldwide leading system supplier, well known for its vertical integration, certified quality and strong customer focus. Our products are essential for all kinds of vehicles, plant construction and facade elements in architecture.

Since 1889 our family company proves its expertise in perforated and formed sheet metal.



## **CONGRATULATIONS TO THE ICATT AND MAT<sup>2</sup> APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM CLASSES OF 2024!**

Our cohorts of apprentices have successfully completed the 3-year program with hard work and determination, earning their associate degrees and DIHK certifications. They have acquired important skills and mastered cuttingedge technology, positioning themselves as highly skilled individuals fully equipped to make a significant impact at their companies

The 210 active apprentices currently enrolled in the ICATT and MAT<sup>2</sup> programs paired with the **impressive 3-year** retention rate of 85.2%, demonstrate the organic growth of our programs as well as the increasing holistic, added value that both companies and apprentices recognize. More and more companies are dedicated to establishing a mid- to long-term workforce development strategy — a strategy well worth the investment, leading to a future-proof workforce for their businesses.

Our apprenticeship programs are further expanding on the west coast with the first partner company in Nevada. In Ohio, the ICATT program is working on a new training profile to qualify apprentices to become Stamping and Roll Forming Technicians.

German-style apprenticeship programs offer a real and evergrowing alternative to the classic four-year college degree, leaving its graduates not only debt-free, but with wellrounded training, profound work experience in the relevant industry, and a job guarantee upon graduation.





#### MAT<sup>2</sup> class of 2024

## **GACC MIDWEST VP APPOINTED TO THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON APPRENTICESHIP**

was named to the U.S. Department of Labor's Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship. The committee provides recommendations to the Secretary of Labor on how to best use the apprenticeship training model to provide career pathways for everyone. The committee appoints 30 employer, labor, and public representatives from a broad range of industries to serve a two-year term. Official committee meetings occur twice a year.

#### **Goals of The Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship:**

- 1. Modernize the current apprenticeship model and promote innovation in the National Apprenticeship system.
- 2. Expand apprenticeship programs into new industries such as cybersecurity, clean energy, advanced manufacturing, information technology, and healthcare.



- In March 2024, GACC Midwest's Vice President, Mario Kratsch, 3. Establish apprenticeship pathways starting at a young age that lead to good jobs with family sustaining wages.
  - 4. Equal access for anyone to participate in and excel in the National Apprenticeship system.



## 2024 NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP AWARD RECOGNIZES ENDRESS+HAUSER

The 2024 GACC Apprenticeship Award honors Indiana based ICATT® Apprenticeship Program Network Company Endress+Hauser for its dedication to ensuring apprentices have the support they need to thrive along with its commitment to fostering long-term organizational growth and building community. Endress+Hauser joined the ICATT Apprenticeship Program in 2018 with its first cohort of two apprentices and currently has 12 apprentices.

Jurors highlighted Endress+Hauser's goal to make apprentices 5+% of their US workforce in the next 2-4 years and their outstanding retention rate. Additionally, jurors noted the company's robust support structure to help apprentices achieve high GPAs, along with its outreach efforts at local high schools.

Endress+Hauser recognizes Advanced Manufacturing Technician Apprentice graduate Kyawnaing Htun for his dedication that impresses both in and outside of Endress+Hauser. One of his most notable achievements was launching a paperless system within the flow entity called MES, which has revolutionized operations in that area and serves as a model for future paperless transitions. What truly sets Kyaw apart is his exceptional ability to balance his academic pursuits, work responsibilities, and family commitments. During the program, Kyaw became a US citizen—he moved to the US at the age of 15—and assisted his mother in achieving citizenship also. His resilience, work ethic, and ability to thrive in new environments make him an outstanding member of the Endress+Hauser apprenticeship program and an inspiration to those around him. Kyaw is currently pursuing his bachelor's degree in engineering technology management at Indiana State University while maintaining a 4.0 GPA and excelling in his career.

"We are proud to have Endress+Hauser as an ICATT Network Company. It is wonderful to see the success their enthusiastic commitment to apprenticeship is bringing to the company's workforce pipeline. The satisfaction of their current and former apprentices is a testament to the quality of their training and supportive company culture. Endress+Hauser exemplifies the mission of ICATT, and I am excited to see how the program grows at the company in the coming years," says Sascha Alexander Kuhn, Deputy Director, Apprenticeship Networks at the German American Chamber of Commerce® of the Midwest, which developed and runs the ICATT Apprenticeship Program.



Endress+Hauser is a global leader in measurement instrumentation, services and solutions for industrial process engineering. They provide process solutions for flow, level, pressure, analytics, temperature, recording and digital communications, optimizing processes in terms of economic efficiency, safety & environmental impact. Their customers come from various industries, including chemical, food and beverage, life sciences, power and energy, mining, minerals and metals, oil and gas and water & wastewater. "Endress+Hauser is proud to be an ICATT Network Company, reinforcing our commitment to developing a robust talent pipeline and investing in the future of manufacturing. With over 70 years of experience, we have consistently prioritized supporting the workforce in the communities where we live, work and play. Through our apprenticeship program and initiatives, we cultivate skilled talent aligned with our high standards, ensuring our team is equipped to meet the evolving needs of our customers. By supporting ICATT, we actively foster innovation and excellence that benefit our employees, customers and the broader manufacturing community," says Robert Head, Apprenticeship Manager, Endress+Hauser.





## SPREADING CHRISTMAS CHEER IN CHICAGOLAND

The most beloved holiday tradition in the Chicagoland area returned for another year of cheer! **More than 1.5 million guests** from **over 70 countries** visited the markets in 2024. For many, the Christkindlmarket has become an annual tradition with some visitors returning since its **inception in 1996**. This year, the non-alcoholic nutcracker mug made its debut alongside the returning traditional boot mug and beer stein. Guests enjoyed shopping for handmade gifts from vendors and trying authentic German foods.

### CHRISTKINDLMARKET CHICAGO

- Christkindlmarket Chicago at Daley Plaza celebrated its 28th year!
- Guests tasted authentic and specialty dishes from German vendors and local and international ones too including schnitzel, pierogis, and strudel.
- The highly anticipated boot mug returned for the 2024 season.



### CHRISTKINDLMARKET AURORA

- The Aurora market featured more than 60 vendors and special cultural events, including Glassblowing Workshops, Wine Tasting, and Lantern Parades with St. Nicolaus and the Christkind.
- Guests enjoyed a scavenger hunt for the whole family searching for nutcrackers and receiving a goodie bag.





#### CHRISTKINDLMARKET



#### **Your Contact:**



**Maren Biester Priebe** CEO & General Manager, German American Events, LLC

+1 (312) 494-2164 priebe@ germanamericanevents.com

# GACC MIDWEST BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Matthias Amberg | Chairman, German **American Chambers of Commerce** Partner Rödl & Partner

**Uwe Schoberth | Vice Chairman** Head of Distribution US/Bermuda **Canopius Group** 

**Mark Tomkins** President & CEO GACC Midwest

Mario Kratsch Vice President | Secretary GACC Midwest

Ursula Klicker | Treasurer CFO GACC Midwest

**Mehdi Bentanfous** CEO, North America **KINEXON Inc.** 

**Christiane Bock** First Vice President **Alliant Employee Benefits** 

Mark Denzler President & CEO Illinois Manufacturers' Association

Katja Garvey Partnei Porter, Wright, Morris & Author LLP

**Stefan Heffner** Executive Vice President Richard Wolf Medical Instruments Corporation

Peter Kamps Head of Finance, Regional Solutions & Services Americas Siemens Industry, Inc., Smart Infrastructure

Dr. Susanne Lemaine President Vetter Development Services USA, Inc.

**Philipp Lissmann** Interim President GACC Midwest, Wisconsin Chapter Head of OEM and Installation Services, Krones Procurement

Manuel Merkt COO and VP of Marketing HAIMER USA

**David Nissen** Partner **Cherry Bekaert** 

Sarah O'Hare Global Head of Human Resources, Freudenberg President and Regional Representative, Freudenberg NA

Henrikki Pantsar Managing Director TRUMPF Laser Technology North America

**Timo Rehbock** Partner Barnes & Thornburg

**Michael E. Richter** Managing Director & Shareholder J.S. Richter Ltd.

**Peter Riehle** President & CEO WITTENSTEIN North America

Matt Ristow President CLAAS Omaha Inc.

Wes Saber Executive Vice President & CFO HARIBO of America

**Dieter A. Schmitz** Partner **Baker McKenzie** 

**James Schollett** President GACC Midwest, Minnesota Chapter

**Christine Schulders Executive Vice President** HARTING, Inc. of North America

Markus Schyboll CEO EA Elektro-Automatik GmbH & Co. KG

**Geoffrey Somary** CEO Ipsen Group

**Matthias Stegmüller** President ACSYS Lasertechnik US Inc.

**Barbara Wittmann** President, GACC Midwest, Colorado Chapter CEO, IT Zeitgeist

Mark Zumdohme President & CEO Graepel North America Inc.

**Ambassador James D. Bindenagel Honorary Director** 

W. David Braun **Honorary Director** 

## It's a great time to

There is no better time to look at lowa as a place to do business! We are committed to keeping business costs low, growing our skilled and productive workforce, and encouraging innovation across all business sectors. Iowa's diverse and stable economy is supported by focused strategies that spur growth and job creation, especially in our leading industries of advanced manufacturing, biosciences and finance and insurance. With a competitive corporate tax rate, state-led job training programs, world-class research institutions and access to abundant renewable energy, our pro-business environment helps global leaders and entrepreneurs invest for long-term success! And we make it easy to expand here with development-ready sites available to meet your priorities on a deadline.





## in Iowa

Perfectly positioned in the center of the United States, Iowa provides efficient access to quickly distribute goods and resources around the world. Opportunity abounds in Iowa and we're eager to invest in your company's success. Visit iowaeda.com to learn more.



## **OUR TEAM**



**Mark Tomkins** 

President & CEO



**Mario Kratsch** Vice President



**Gerrit Ahlers** Vice President & Director, **Consulting Services** 



**Ursula Klicker** CFO



**Christian Rodriguez** ICATT Business Apprentice







Senior Manager Recruiting & Consulting Services





Manager

Membership Engagement

Antonia Hasselberg

StaAccountant

**Hugh Hoebbel** 

Payroll & Employee Benefits

Specialist



**Jayson Bard** Coordinator Events & Membership

**Stephanie Dal Porto** Coordinator Events & Membership







**Denise Remelé** Manager Human Resources

Virginia Rounds

Special Projects



Kate Bleeker Vice President German American Events LLC



Sascha Kuhn

Deputy Director

Apprenticeship Networks

**Markus Wirth** Head of Michigan Office & Deputy Director Consulting Services



**Geneva Scurek** 

Senior Manager

Training, Exams &

Certification

**Britta Schneider** Deputy Director, Government Projects & Trade Missions



**Katrin Geisler** Manager Government Projects & Trade Missions



**George Gabriel** Consultant **Government Projects** & Trade Missions



**Anna Hack** Senior Manager Consulting Services



Nathalie Rusznyak



Svetlana Belova Manager

Marketing



**Maren Priebe** 

CEO & General Manager

German American Events LLC

**Corina Mundry** Manager Event Operations



Jana Fogarty Assistant Manager Cultural Projects and Marketing



**Aimee Goodman** Manager Recruiting & Consulting Services



**Charlotte Nowak** Consultant Government Projects and Trade Missions



**Myriam Klein** 

Manager

Applicant Outreach & Special

Projects

**Jan-Felix Kederer** Consultant Government Projects & Trade Missions



**Katarina Theo** Consultant **Consulting Services** 



Lara Rudolph Consultant **Consulting Services** 



**Anne-Katrin Huber** Director Marketing, Membership & Events



Emily Adams, Carina Benezra, Isabel Bonebrake, Jaymee Dhein, Fabian Fleck, Hanna Goeckeler, Edon Hotaj, Naomi Kiel, Stefan Landau, Laurent Le Borgne, Eva Liles, Chloe Lim, Michael Miltenberger, Felix Mohn, Charlotte Nowak, Hannes Oswald, Toni Poetzl, Melanie Reiner, Christian Rodriguez, Johnathan Schindera, Johanna Schlegel, Ricarda Schumacher, Nathan Steltzer, Hanna Tallman, Paula Tepe, Hagen Warne, Ambar Vega, Sinah Voss



84

















#### **OUR TEAM**





**Elizabeth Czapski** Manager Marketing & Communications



**Katharina Malena** Krause Coordinator Marketing & Communications



**Anna Sterk** Accountant Manager



**Paul Rathburn** Office Manager Accounts Payable



Franziska Hennig Manager Front Office Operations



**Daniel Sartagh** Information Technology Administrator





Prachi Deo Senior Manager Event Operations



Leila Schmidt Senior Manager Marketing and Intercultural Communication



Jessica VandenBergh Senior Manager Event Operations





**Kjersten Kleveland** Assistant Manager Special Projects



# ABOUT **GACC MIDWEST**



The main offices of the German American Chambers of Commerce are in Atlanta, Chicago, New York, San Francisco, and Washington, DC, alongside their branches in Detroit and Houston. The GACCs cater to a vast network of members and National Partners with a wide variety of services for US market entry, apprenticeships in the US, and industry events for their German American business network.

The German American Chamber of Commerce® of the Midwest (GACC Midwest), headquartered in Chicago with a branch office in Detroit, was founded in 1963. GACC Midwest is an integral part of the German Chamber Network (AHKs) with 150 offices in 93 locations around the globe. Our continuing mission is to promote German-American business relations and to support trade and investment between Germany and the United States, especially the Midwest. Our organization combines elements of a trade commission, a membership association, and professional consulting services for market entry, apprenticeships in the US, and more.

In addition to our offices in Chicago and Detroit, GACC Midwest has three Chapters across the US. Our Chapters in Colorado (CO), Minnesota (MN) and Wisconsin (WI) organize additional events for companies and members and offer them access to both a local and regional network.





### **German American Chamber of Commerce** of the Midwest, Inc.

150 North Michigan Avenue, 35th Floor, Chicago, IL 60601

+1 (312) 644-2662 info@gaccmidwest.org www.gaccmidwest.org

Supported by:



Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action

on the basis of a decision by the German Bundestag

Project management & graphic design of the 2024 Midwest Report: Katharina Malena Krause, Elizabeth Czapski, Isabel Bonebrake

## **PLATINUM SPONSORS**





**Cherry** Bekaert Rödl & Partner



