

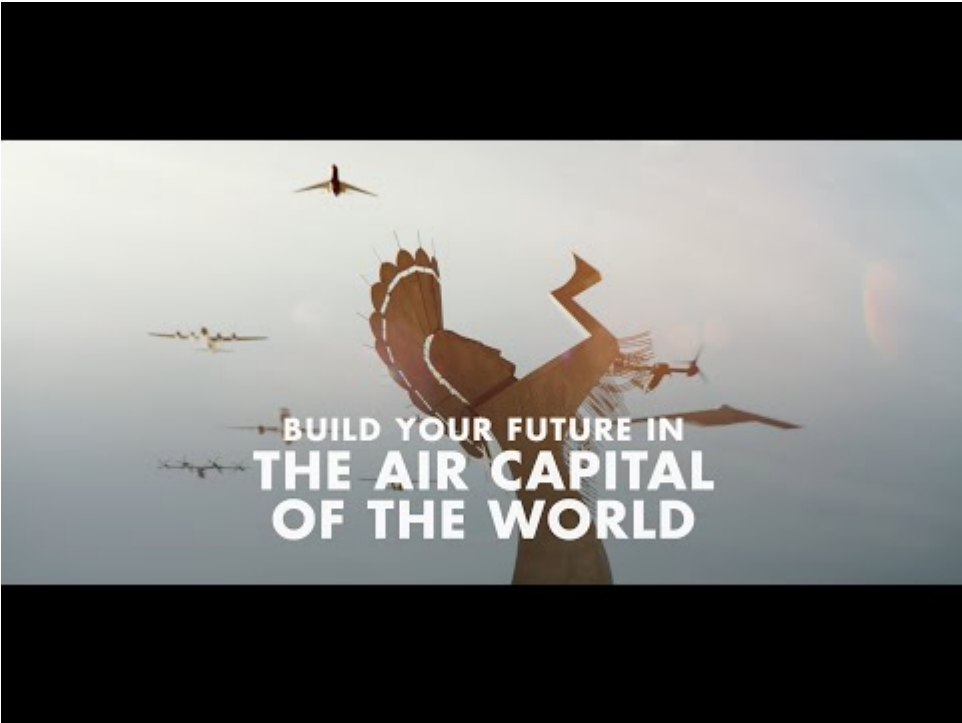


WICHITA'S GLOBAL IMPACT: 2025 ANNUAL MEETING RECAP

By Emily Barnwell

The Partnership's 2025 Annual Meeting, held Oct. 28 at Mark Arts, celebrated the region's bold vision and growing influence on the global stage. Centered on the theme Wichita's Global Impact, the program showcased how the Partnership's strategic priorities, combined with the community's collective vision, are shaping industries, expanding opportunities and strengthening the region's position as a global force.

Welcome to the Future — Built in the Air Capital of the World



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Wichita on the World Stage

The Annual Meeting opened with a [dynamic video](#) spotlighting Wichita's global aerospace presence. Originally shown at the Air Capital of the World Reception at the Paris Air Show, the video captured the region's unmatched capabilities, including advanced aircraft and engineers pushing the boundaries of innovation. The imagery emphasized a powerful message: the ideas, investments and talent cultivated in Wichita resonate far beyond Kansas.



Partnership President Jeff Fluhr reflected on this global impact, noting how opportunities created in 2025 spanned industries and amplified Wichita's reach.

The Paris Air Show itself offered proof of Wichita's influence. The Air Capital of the World Reception drew approximately 527 attendees, including 193 organizations and more than 70 high-ranking officials.

Beyond the reception, the Partnership generated 13 new projects, 11 leads and 11 advanced projects as a direct result of Wichita's presence in Paris.

Fluhr also noted key 2025 accomplishments, including strategic supplier engagements, the GAF groundbreaking, Charlotte Pipe and Foundry Company and Bloc Digital's grand openings, and the relocation of Knowmadics' North American headquarters to Wichita.



Collective Leadership and Investment

Partnership Co-Chairs Aaron Bastian and Charlie Chandler took the stage to thank investors and celebrate the power of collective leadership that continues to propel the Wichita region forward.

Chandler acknowledged the new investors and those who have increased their financial investment in the Partnership this year, emphasizing that none of the region's success would be possible without their shared belief in Wichita's future.

"The sheer number of investors who have renewed or increased their investment this year is a testament to the belief in what we are building together. Thank you for helping us drive growth for this region, for our children and for future generations," shared Chandler.

Bastian built on that message, reflecting on the strategic plan launched at last year's Annual Meeting, which centered on the following three bold aspirations for the region.

1. To become a premier global hub for business investment and innovation.
2. Accelerate today's talent pipeline to meet immediate and future industry needs.
3. Drive the region's distinctive urban core for residents and industry.

Bastian proudly announced that the Partnership has achieved its bold goal of raising \$1.2 million to help meet the aspirations.

"However, the work doesn't stop here," Bastian noted. "The Partnership is continuing to pursue its bolder goal of \$1.95 million because every investment, every connection, every project, every idea helps expand Wichita's influence on the world stage."



Together, the co-chairs introduced the evening's next speaker, Steve Feilmeier, Managing Director of Feilmeier Family Office and former Chief Financial Officer of Koch Inc.



A Global Perspective

Feilmeier offered a compelling perspective on how Wichita's industries, innovation and leadership are shaping the global economy.

Drawing from decades of experience leading global operations and investments, Feilmeier outlined the **top 10 trends** influencing the nation's growth, including artificial intelligence, technology, health care, sustainable manufacturing and energy production. He noted that Wichita companies are not only competing in these spaces but are increasingly driving advancements in them.

Feilmeier highlighted the region's rise in the Milken Institute's **Best Performing Cities** ranking, climbing more than 100 places in just two years. He emphasized that the region's progress is rooted in its people: 350 regional aerospace suppliers, 11,000 engineers, and a growing ecosystem of innovators in health care, food security and advanced manufacturing.

He also pointed to transformative local projects, including the new state mental health hospital and the Wichita Biomedical CampusSM, as examples of how investment in key infrastructure can expand opportunity and strengthen the region's economic foundation.

He emphasized the need for Wichita to remain competitive on a national level, pointing out that communities in neighboring states like Oklahoma and Nebraska are investing boldly in themselves. They are attracting residents, raising wages, and building entertainment and shopping districts that generate millions in revenue.

Beyond economic performance, Feilmeier stressed the importance of connecting Wichita's global impact with local opportunity, particularly through initiatives that expand affordable housing and economic mobility.



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“We are making great progress, but we have got to do more. Each of you in this room has the capacity to do more. Bring your capabilities to bear. When I retired, I thought I was going to retire. Now, I have this new career with affordable housing. Why? I just told my son and others, if it’s not me, if it’s not us, who is going to do it?” he shared.

Feilmeier also expressed his excitement about continued engagement with the region’s economic growth, announcing his commitment to joining the Partnership Executive Board.

“I am so excited to help them problem solve and be an example of what it means to put yourself out there and make a difference,” Feilmeier said.

He closed by reminding attendees that sustained success depends on ongoing investment, collaboration, and participation across business, government and nonprofit sectors.

“Complacency is the enemy. To stay ahead, we must keep investing, take measured risks and work together because talk is cheap, and together is better.”



Defining the Future of Aerospace

The program continued with remarks from Jon Piatt, Executive Vice President of ISR, Aviation and Security at Sierra Nevada Company (SNC). Piatt highlighted SNC’s growing presence in Wichita and the region’s unmatched ecosystem of talent, innovation and collaboration.

Founded in 1963, SNC has grown from a small startup into a global aerospace and defense leader. The company’s wholly owned subsidiary, 3S, has called Wichita home since 2006. With more than 50 employees and growing, 3S provides aerospace engineering design, compliance, and data development to support aviation modifications and upgrades for both military and FAA certification programs.

Building on that foundation, SNC most recently chose Wichita for its work on the Survivable Airborne Operations Center



(SAOC) program. The multiyear, multibillion-dollar partnership with the U.S. Air Force in collaboration with Wichita State University's (WSU) National Institute for Aviation Research (NIAR) represents one of the nation's most significant defense initiatives.

Piatt emphasized that the decision to bring this work to Wichita was deliberate and strategic.

"We knew we were investing in far more than a facility or a project. We were investing in people, in Wichita's engineers, its students, its suppliers and its community. And what we've seen since then is extraordinary, and the growing commitment continues to impress us every day," said Piatt.

Between NIAR staff, WSU students and SNC teams in Wichita, more than 400 people will be working together to support the SAOC program.

"This level of engagement delivers a significant economic benefit to the region, supporting local businesses, creating high-skill jobs and strengthening the ecosystem that sustains Wichita's role as a global aerospace hub. But it also delivers something just as valuable: a unique learning opportunity for students," Piatt shared.

Piatt also noted Wichita's growing global influence. From international collaborations to a shared presence with the Partnership at the Paris Air Show, he said Wichita's unified voice on the world stage reinforces its reputation as both the Air Capital of the World and a capital of innovation.

"When potential partners, investors, and decision-makers from around the world see NIAR, SNC, and the Greater Wichita Partnership standing together, they don't just see individual organizations; they see a collaborative ecosystem. They see a region that understands the value of partnership and operates with the same unity and precision that has made Wichita synonymous with aerospace excellence for nearly a century," he said.

He closed with a call to continue building on the region's momentum, noting SNC's commitment to growing in Wichita.





A Call to Action

The evening closed with a powerful reminder: Wichita's global impact is the result of collaboration, shared vision and bold leadership.

A video captured that story, highlighting the people, innovation and partnerships propelling Wichita forward on the world stage. [Watch the closing video](#) to experience the momentum firsthand.

Aaron Bastian reminded attendees that the work is not over. To continue shaping Wichita's momentum, we must keep investing and innovating.

Charlie Chandler echoed the urgency of staying competitive, stating that we must act boldly and decisively to keep moving forward.

The world is watching Wichita. Now is the time to lean in, invest and ensure the region not only keeps pace but sets the pace.

If you're interested in learning how to get more involved with the Partnership, email Becca Newman at becca@greaterwichitapartnership.org.

The World is Watching. Wichita is Delivering.



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