



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Amanda Ehrmantraut
Communications Coordinator
614-228-4201
aehrmantraut@ohiochamber.com

Ohio Chamber of Commerce Elects New Members to Board of Directors, Executive Committee

COLUMBUS, OHIO – At its quarterly meeting on Wednesday, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors elected 10 new members. The Executive Committee, which met on Tuesday, announced two new members.

The Board and Executive Committee each welcome a class of motivated, influential Ohio business leaders to their ranks.

Joining the Executive Committee are:

Rex Elsass, Founder and CEO of The Strategy Group for Media
Mary Taylor, Vice President for Operations and Finance at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED).

The new Board of Directors members include:

John Juech, Director of Stakeholder Engagement for the Midwest for Duke Energy
Dennis Garrison, President of the Melvin Stone Company LLC and Executive Vice President of Jurgensen Aggregates
Gary Underwood, Group Vice President of Government Affairs for the Midwest Region of Charter Communications
Jennifer Montgomery, President and CEO of McLaren St. Luke's
John White, Managing Principal for Deloitte Consulting LLP
K.L. Allen, Chancellor of WGU Ohio
Mark Walter, Director of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs for Savion
Patrick Bloom, Vice President of Government Relations for Cleveland-Cliffs Inc.
Rich Johnson, President and CEO of ViaQuest
Seth Unger, Vice President of Government and Public Affairs for GBX Group LLC.

Please see below for their full biographies.

The Ohio Chamber is the state's leading business advocate and represents thousands of companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.

**2022 NEW EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE MEMBERS**



REX ELSASS

The Strategy Group for Media



I ran for State Representative in 1986, and I came up 3 votes short of victory. For as long as I could remember, my dream was to be an officeholder – eventually a Congressman. But God had a different plan, and it wasn't about my dream of being elected but helping thousands of others realize theirs.

I earned my first real paycheck in politics as the Regional Director in Ohio for the Bush/Quayle campaign in 1988. Following the race, I served as Political Director and then Executive Director of the Ohio Republican Party where we designed the blueprint that flipped all of state government from Democrat to GOP in 4 years.

In 1994, I founded The Strategy Group Company in a one room office above my garage. With a phone, computer, and a borrowed fax machine, the company was off the ground.

One of our very first clients was Gulf War veteran, Van Hilleary – who became one of our first Congressional wins and our joyful contribution to the 1994 Republican Revolution. It was just the beginning. For over 25 years, I've worked shoulder-to-shoulder with our candidates, developing advertising strategies, guiding them through emergencies, and grinding out victories one vote at a time.

I added to our Strategy Group family talented experts in strategy, scriptwriting, production, media placement, voter contact, digital, polling, and print. I've cultivated, developed, and inspired our team, turning our company into the most successful political advertising firm in America. Together, we've helped elect 3 Governors, 11 U.S. Senators, and 85 U.S. Representatives along with over a thousand statewide, legislative, and local officials in nearly every state in the union. And we're just getting started.

Three votes. Over thirty years ago, they made the difference for me, so today, we can make a difference for our nation and for you.



MARY TAYLOR

Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED)



Mary Taylor, vice president for operations and finance, serves as the chief financial officer of the University and assistant treasurer to the NEOMED Foundation. She has full responsibility for all financial systems, including accounting and auditing, budgeting and planning, investment of all operating and endowment funds, physical facilities, auxiliary services, financing and debt management, capital construction, information technology, and purchasing.

Mary Taylor is a results driven, professional executive leader with 16 years of experience as a Certified Public Accountant working in the private sector and over 16 years of experience serving as an elected official at the local, state and executive branches of government. Extensive experience delivering results to clients in difficult tax conflict cases before the IRS and the Department of Labor. A proven leader in government, transforming and modernizing government operations, delivering results to government clients, and producing savings for taxpayers and stakeholders throughout the State of Ohio.

Prior to joining Northeast Ohio Medical University, she served as the State of Ohio's Lieutenant Governor from 2011 through 2018. In addition, she served as the Director of the Ohio Department of Insurance, Auditor for the State of Ohio as well as a State Representative.

Ms. Taylor earned her Master of Taxation and Bachelor of Science from The University of Akron. She is also a Certified Public Accountant.

2022 NEW BOARD MEMBERS



JOHN JUECH

Director of Stakeholder Engagement - Midwest, Duke Energy



John Juech is the Director of Stakeholder Engagement for the Midwest for Duke Energy, serving the company in its service areas in OH, KY, and IN. In this role he is the lead for a team that develops strategies and integrated plans that help educate and grow relationships with stakeholders and advance priority legislative and regulatory initiatives for Duke Energy in the Midwest. He is also responsible for managing the Duke Energy's Foundation in the Midwest.

Prior to coming to Duke Energy, John served as Assistant City Manager with the City of Cincinnati. He served in this capacity from 2015-2022. Mr. Juech led major projects of strategic importance to the City of Cincinnati in this role, including the TQL Stadium, a new concert venue on the Ohio Riverfront, and the new HQ for the National Institute of Safety and Occupational Health (NIOSH). John also managed key external relations of the city and served as the primary administrative liaison to the City Council. He coordinated all the City's Federal and State lobbying efforts in Columbus and Washington.

Before his roles in the City Manager's office, John managed the Office of then Cincinnati Vice Mayor David Mann as Chief of Staff. Responsibilities included policy, communications, administration, personnel, and correspondence.

Prior to that, he was the Vice President of Policy for Garten Rothkopf, an international advisory firm serving government agencies, multinational corporations, and business executives, based in Washington DC, and primarily focused on the energy sector. Prior to this experience, Mr. Juech was a Senior Legislative Assistant for United States Congressman William Delahunt (MA) and spent time working in West Africa as a United Nations Civil Affairs Officer with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO).

He holds a Masters of International Public Policy, specializations in International Economics and International Development from Johns Hopkins University, School For Advanced International Studies (SAIS). He holds a Bachelor of Arts with Distinction in Political Science and Urban Studies from the Colorado College.

John lives in Cincinnati, OH, with his wife Kate and his two children, Josephine (8) and Peter (7). He loves travel, reading, and running.



DENNIS GARRISON

*President, The Melvin Stone Company, LLC.
Executive Vice President of Jurgensen Aggregates*



Dennis Garrison is the President of The Melvin Stone Company, LLC. and Executive Vice President of Jurgensen Aggregates. Jurgensen is a leading supplier of construction aggregates, with operations spanning sixteen Ohio Counties. Dennis joined Melvin Stone in 1977 and has been part of the Jurgensen Companies since 1999. Dennis has further served or serves on numerous other state, community and national organizations including the National Stone Sand and Gravel Association, Ohio Aggregates and Industrial Minerals Association, Indiana Mineral Aggregates Association and the Washington Court House City School Board.

Dennis is a 1977 graduate of Wilmington College

Dennis and his wife, Sherry, reside in Washington Court House. They have been married 45 years and have two grown children and six grandchildren.



GARY UNDERWOOD

*Group Vice President of Government Affairs, Midwest
Region of Charter Communications*



Gary Underwood is the Group Vice President of Government Affairs for the Midwest Region of Charter Communications. Underwood is responsible for legislative and municipal advocacy in the states of Ohio, Wisconsin, Indiana, Illinois, Minnesota, Michigan, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Gary leads a team of 21 government affairs professionals across his states

Underwood is a cable industry veteran with an extensive public and legislative affairs background. He began his career with Time Warner Cable in Southeast Texas in 2001 where he built a successful Public Affairs function that would navigate the company from local to state franchising, and launch the first high speed broadband service in rural Texas. Over the course of his career, he has launched advocacy campaigns in support of company initiatives, led communications efforts during multiple natural disasters, successfully navigated high profile programming disputes and delivered legislative victories that helped to further faster broadband deployment in rural areas. Working closely with corporate leadership, Underwood worked to obtain necessary state & local approvals, including providing public testimony, which was key to securing the successful Charter, Time Warner Cable, and Bright House merger.

Prior to starting in the telecommunications industry he worked in an economic development role, and as the executive director of a community Chamber of Commerce. He serves on multiple cable association boards, the Ohio Business Roundtable, One Columbus and volunteers for other organizations in the Midwest, and Texas. When not working Underwood enjoys spending time with his daughter, traveling and boating. He is based in Columbus, Ohio.



JENNIFER MONTGOMERY

President & CEO, McLaren St. Luke's



Jennifer Montgomery has served as president and CEO of McLaren St. Luke's since 2020. She is responsible for overseeing the hospital's \$100 million revitalization plan and enhancing quality and access to care by offering more comprehensive services, including earning national verification as a Level III Trauma Center. Throughout Jennifer's career, she has served in various nursing roles, clinical leadership and executive leadership. She is especially passionate about enhancing patient care services, improving clinical outcomes, and instilling the financial discipline to achieve the goals that support a healthy and growing organization.

Jennifer earned a Master of Science Degree in Administration from Central Michigan University, a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing from Wayne State University, and her nursing diploma from Henry Ford Hospital School of Nursing.

Jennifer was recognized by Crain's Detroit Business in 2018 as a notable woman in health care. In 2020, she authored "Leading Growth in Lean Times" for the American College of Healthcare Executives' national publication.

She is a member of the American Organization of Nurse Leadership and a Fellow with the American College of Healthcare Executives.

She and her husband, Andrew, live in Perrysburg and have three children.



JOHN WHITE

Managing Principal, Deloitte Consulting LLP



John White is the office managing principal for Deloitte Consulting LLP in Columbus, leading the public sector practice and the Columbus consulting office. With more than two decades of experience defining business and IT strategy and designing, developing, delivering, and managing complex private and public sector IT systems, he is a national leader in Health and Human Services, public health, and workforce development programs. John has guided the development of new tools and predictive analytics technologies that have rapidly increased collections and efficiencies in multiple states, including Ohio, making a positive impact on the lives of children and families across the country.

John has helped drive government modernization by designing large-scale technology solutions that include data warehousing, data analytics and dashboards, performance management, employer portals, legacy modernizations, cloud migrations, and developing strategies and technology for digital government. This modernization has improved user experience and delivered dramatic results for government agencies such as human services, Medicaid, and health.

He has been at Deloitte for more than 16 years as a leader in Deloitte's Government \Professional Services practice serving state, local, county, and higher education clients. John began his career in Boston, consulting for private sector clients improving customer retention, developing digital experiences, and measuring performance through the use of advanced technology.

John is a member of a number of professional organizations, including the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA); National Child Support Enforcement Association (NCSEA), where he serves on several subcommittees; the American Management Association (AMA) and Project Management Institute (PMI); Ohio Technology Partnership (OhioX); and Ohio Information Technology Association (OITA). He is also a Certified Project Management Professional.



K. L. ALLEN, ED.D.

Chancellor, WGU Ohio



Dr. K. L. Allen has served as chancellor of WGU Ohio, the state affiliate of online, nonprofit Western Governors University since May 2020.

Dr. Allen has more than a decade of higher education experience, ranging from launching and leading collegiate departments of business development and veteran affairs to teaching as an adjunct professor of business. He is also a veteran of the Army National Guard. Throughout his career, Allen has served on several boards and advisory committees as an advocate for

education and entrepreneurship.

A native of Princeville, North Carolina, Dr. Allen is passionate about removing social and economic barriers so that everyone might pursue educational opportunities that can help them achieve their dreams. As chancellor of WGU Ohio, he has championed the university's accredited online degree programs as the path to rewarding, in-demand careers.

Dr. Allen earned his B.A. in criminal justice from Barber-Scotia College, an MBA in global management from the University of Phoenix-Charlotte campus and his doctorate in educational leadership from Southern New Hampshire University. He is an active member of the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity and the Cincinnati Rotary.



MARK WALTER

Director of Legislative & Regulatory Affairs, Savion



Mark Walter is the Director of Legislative & Regulatory Affairs for Savion, a utility-scale solar and energy storage development company based in Kansas City. Mark has spent the past decade in the solar industry, starting as a rooftop solar installer in the Pacific Northwest, and has been advocating for clean energy policy for the past seven years. Over that time, he has been the Deputy Director of Renew Missouri, Director of Business Development for Sun Solar, and the Director of Legislative & Regulatory Affairs for Tradewind Energy.

Mark has been the President of the Missouri Solar Energy Industry Association, the President of the Southern Renewable Energy Association, President and Co-Founder of the Utility Scale Solar Energy Coalition of Ohio, Vice President of the Mid-Atlantic Renewable Energy Coalition, and has been board members of many other industry associations across the country.

He currently lives in Kansas City with his two dogs, Daisy and Banjo, and spends his free time hiking, playing music, and running.



PATRICK BLOOM

Vice President of Government Relations, Cleveland-Cliffs Inc.



Patrick Bloom serves as Vice President of Government Relations for Cleveland-Cliffs Inc.

Mr. Bloom joined Cliffs in 2008 as a Government Relations Representative and served in roles of increasing responsibility before being appointed to his current position in February 2021. As Cleveland-Cliffs' Vice President of Government Relations, he maintains oversight of the Company's government relations function and has primary responsibility for matters relating to public policy, political affairs and maintaining Cliffs' relationships with policymakers at the local, state and federal levels of government. Patrick is also responsible for the Company's Community Relations function and oversees administration of the Cleveland-Cliffs Foundation, which engages in Cleveland-Cliffs' host communities by partnering with non-profit organizations in fields such as education, human services, health and the arts.

Mr. Bloom holds a bachelor's degree from Miami University, an M.A. in Public Policy and Administration from Northwestern University and a Graduate Certificate in Business Management from Indiana University's Kelley School of Business. Prior to joining Cleveland-Cliffs, Patrick gained experience through various local, state and federal campaign and public policy-oriented roles. Patrick sits on the American Iron and Steel Institute's Council of U.S. Producers and volunteers as a member of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Cleveland's Bridge Board.



RICH JOHNSON

President & CEO, ViaQuest



With a passion to serve his country, Rich signed up for the United States Air Force right after graduation and served as a finance specialist. Upon completion of basic training and technical school, he was permanently stationed at Wright Paterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio (WPAFB).

While at WPAFB, Rich enrolled at Wright State University with a major in accounting and finished his degree at Capital University in 1992 becoming the first person in his family to receive a four-year degree. Before graduation Rich accepted a position as a controller for a nursing home in London, Ohio in 1991 to gain healthcare accounting experience.

Rich founded ViaQuest in 1999 and formed a service company with a focus on a new way to deliver health care services. ViaQuest provides services to three distinct populations in the healthcare industry: Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Hospice, and Behavioral Health. With two thousand employees operating in Ohio, Indiana and Pennsylvania, ViaQuest is determined to deliver the highest quality and most innovative services in home and community-based settings to each person they serve.

Today ViaQuest is the only IDD provider in the state of Ohio who is also an Ohio Department of Mental Health certified Community Mental Health provider. ViaQuest is the “go to” provider for people with challenging behaviors. ViaQuest provides all traditional services of a Community Mental Health Center such as Psychiatry, Counseling, Therapy, Addiction Services, and Community Psychiatric Supportive Treatment. In addition to Day & Employment Services Residential Services, with unique and individualized care to children, adolescents, and adults.

ViaQuest Hospice team of caregivers include hospice physicians, nurses expertly trained in symptom control and pain relief, and build individualized treatment plans centered around the patient’s needs. This entire skill set combines to provide a comprehensive solution and true support system in home. Hospice care is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. And emergency trips to the ER are often reduced or avoided all together.

Rich is a change-maker with an in-depth understanding of today’s needs for individuals with developmental disabilities and those needing hospice, and behavioral health services. A dynamic leader who drives results, Rich has focused on improving the quality of life for these individuals for close to two decades. Some have tried to do that through working within an existing system. Rich, on the other hand, saw a need and started a company to meet it.



SETH UNGER

Vice President of Government & Public Affairs, GBX Group LLC



Seth Unger is Vice President of Government and Public Affairs for GBX Group LLC. GBX Group is a real estate and investment firm that specializes in preserving and operating historic properties in urban markets. While based in Cleveland, GBX has completed more than 200 projects in 24 states over the last 20 years, most of which entail the adaptive reuse of historic buildings in urban neighborhoods.

Seth leads GBX Group's government relations, public affairs, and coalition initiatives. This includes directing federal advocacy efforts, as well as relationship building and legislative affairs work with government officials and policymakers at the state and local level. He also works with key media outlets and stakeholder groups to advance GBX Group's efforts in the areas of tax incentives, historic preservation, urban revitalization, and community development.

Prior to joining GBX Group, Seth was the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs at the U.S. Department of the Treasury. In that role he worked to promote Treasury priorities, including the successful passage and implementation of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. During his tenure, he served as the chief spokesperson for Treasury's Office of Terrorism and Financial Intelligence.

Over the last 25 years, Seth has worked on and managed communications for presidential, statewide, congressional and state legislative races in Ohio and California. He has 15 years of direct government service at the federal and state level that also includes serving as Senior Policy Advisor for the Ohio Treasurer's Office, Press Secretary for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and Communications Director for California State Assembly and Senate leaders. He is one of the only people to serve as an administration spokesperson for both hosts of "The Apprentice," President Donald Trump and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Seth received his bachelor's degree in political science and communications from John Carroll University, where he has served as an adjunct professor of applied politics. He lives in Chesterland with his wife Bridget and six children.