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# Chamber honors 21 companies with Targeted Business Awards

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The Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce has recognized 21 businesses that serve as the engine driving southcentral Kentucky's economic success.

The chamber held its annual Targeted Business Awards at the Southern Kentucky Performing Arts Center on Thursday night, honoring sectors from health care to manufacturing to technology.

"A targeted business generally would be a business that does 50% of its business outside of the state of Kentucky," said Ron Bunch, president and CEO of the Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce. "The idea is that as they grow, they sell goods and services outside the market and they bring new money to the local economy to make the local economy bigger."

According to the chamber, the region has added 984 jobs and announced \$118.6 million in capital investment so far in 2023.

Bunch said the chamber's "whole economic development plan" is built around those targeted companies and helping them grow year after year.

Bowling Green Metalforming took home the John B. Holland Business of the Year Award, sponsored by the Murphy Construction Group, and Southern Coil Solutions earned the Newcomer Award, sponsored by German American Bank.

The newcomer honor goes to a company that has announced a location in southcentral Kentucky within the past year.

Bunch said a lot of the newcomers that have been honored by the chamber are key players in the supply chains of companies that already had deep roots in Bowling Green.

As an example, Bunch said a company like Nova Steel came to the region to work with Bowling Green Metalforming. Constellium picked Bowling Green for a manufacturing plant so it could get materials from Logan Aluminum.

"The beauty of that is that proximity helps both companies become more competitive and grow," Bunch said.

Graves Gilbert Clinic, Med Center Health and TriStar Greenview Regional Hospital earned the Healthcare Enterprise Award, sponsored by Southcentral Kentucky Community and Technical College and given to health care organizations that have expanded in 2023.

Aerospace Composites, Carter Lumber, Country Oven Bakery, Delta Faucet, Kobelco, Multi-Color Corporation, Nova Steel, Performance Foodservice and Precision Strip all earned the Business Expansion Award, sponsored by TVA.

Oria Health was tabbed for the Business Innovation Award, sponsored by Stewart-Richey Construction, and the sustainability-based Green to Gold Award, sponsored by Bowling Green Municipal Utilities, went to CROWN Cork & Seal.

New this year was the Emerging Technology Business Award, created in partnership with the Western Kentucky University Innovation Campus and sponsored by Keller Schroeder.

The winners included BeingAI, Eezy, Eyeconic, Lunae and MyXR, all ventures with a presence inside the tech hub on Nashville Road.

“Bowling Green is one of Kentucky’s fastest-growing tech hubs, and the Emerging Technology Business Award is the seal of approval on our joint efforts with the Bowling Green Area Chamber of Commerce to supercharge this sector,” Buddy Steen, WKU Innovation Campus CEO, said in a release.