



NEWSLETTER
JANUARY 2021



NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH!

COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

January is National Mentoring Month and local mentoring programs want the community to know about the many ways caring adults can connect with young people in Stark County. "Research confirms that quality mentoring relationships have powerful positive effects on young people in a variety of personal, academic, and professional ways," said Laurie Moline, a local youth mentor, mentoring advocate, and founder of MentorStark. "Mentoring helps facilitate personal growth and development, and provides connections to social and economic opportunity,"

Stark County features many opportunities to connect with young people through programs. Some programs include Legacy Project of Stark County, Hannah's House 119, Junior Achievement, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Foster Grandparents, and programming at local colleges and community centers. The [MENTORSTARK WEBSITE](#) has more than 35 community and career mentoring programs that are looking for adult volunteers. Prospective mentors are invited to peruse the site to see what programs align with their schedules and areas of interest and then reach out to the individual programs to get more information.

"We have so many amazing programs that are helping young people build connections and social capital, but it is not always easy to find them," said Moline. "Whether you are a parent looking for an opportunity for your child, a young adult looking for a career exploration connection, or an adult or organization looking to connect with youth, MentorStark.org can help you find or create the opportunity that meets your needs."

Twice a month, MentorStark hosts meetings with mentoring program leaders and community stakeholders to discuss best practices, share ideas and activities, and identify opportunities for collaboration. One initiative that has resulted from these meetings is the Stories of Mentoring series, hosted by the Canton Charge, powered by the Cleveland Cavaliers and in collaboration with MentorStark. The series will recognize the power of youth mentoring in the Stark County community and kicks off with two free virtual panel discussions- see our [WEBSITE](#) for more info.

"One of the recommendations out of the Northeast Ohio Youth Survey was to "promote connectedness," said Moline. "MentorStark is all about creating a more connected community."

MENTORSTARK

Learn more about becoming or finding a mentor at
WWW.MENTORSTARK.ORG

f in
[@StrengtheningStark](#)

[@StrengthenStark](#)

330-453-5628

strengtheningstark.com

info@strengtheningstark.com

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HOW LOCAL ECONOMIES GROW AND EXPAND: TOURISM & HOSPITALITY

BUSINESS GROWTH

Travel and tourism is one of the industry segments in our community that many people talk about in the abstract, yet few truly understand the real impact that the cycle of visitor spending has in Stark County. It is industry that encompasses many facets and is nestled into every corner of the county. When you ask people about what tourism exists in our community, most will acknowledge the many hotel properties or the Pro Football Hall of Fame.



However the tapestry of tourism is far more layered and robust than most people realize. Stark County has ample travel and tourism experiences that communities twice our size envy. Our national one-of-a-kind attractions like the McKinley Presidential Museum, National First Ladies Library, Pro Football Hall of Fame, and retail giants like Hartville MarketPlace which boast attendance of over 2 million guests per year, are just a few of the jewels in our crown of tourism.

The expansion of culinary tourism, driven by the elevation of our many amazing brewery, winery and distillery experiences like Gervasi Vineyard and Maize Valley, draws hundreds of thousands of people to their doors and generates millions of dollars for our communities. Additionally our amazing cultural tourism and parks and recreational destinations not only serve to enhance the quality of life for our residents, but are an active driver of visitors to our region. The fact that we have dozens of museums, a symphony, ballet and countless outdoor park assets makes Stark County a dynamic place to live, work and visit.

The final segment and one of the most important is the many special events and festivals that Stark County is proud to host, including Enshrinement Week powered by Johnson Controls, The OHSA Football Championships, Massillon Cruise-In and hundreds more. These events consistently bring visitors to the region to generate significant spending for our community.

We will close with leaving you Stark County tourism by the numbers. These numbers will show you just how vital tourism is to the economic health of our region. We hope that you will be an active ambassador in supporting travel and tourism in your own backyard. You can volunteer at many of these events, support these local tourism businesses and most importantly be a cheerleader for the many WONDERFUL experiences that make Stark County great!

In 2019:

- Tourism generated \$1.8 BILLION dollars in Stark County!
 - \$1.2 BILLION of that is direct VISITOR SPENDING
- Tourism sustained 13,501 Full Time Equivalent jobs in Stark County.
 - That represents 7% of jobs in Stark County
- Tourism generated \$322.5 million dollars payroll for employees in Stark County
- Tourism generated \$210.5 million in tax revenues.
 - This includes \$102.6 million in state and local revenues.
- Tourism tax revenues saved each Stark County household \$672 in 2019!





NAME: Allyson (Ally) Bussey

TITLE & EMPLOYER: President & CEO of Visit Canton

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR JOB TO A CHILD? We share stories, videos and photos to

show all the fun things that there is to do in Stark

County. We give people all of the information they

need to make them want to visit our museums,

parks, festivals and events. We also show the people that live here the cool

things to do in our community and why we should be proud to call Stark County

our home!

WHAT LED YOU TO YOUR CURRENT EMPLOYER? Like many people who have made

a career in travel & tourism, I stumbled upon it by accident. As a Marketing

major at Kent State University, I worked as a server at the Amish Door Restaurant

and Village. I accepted a marketing internship there and then became the

Marketing assistant at Amish Door, then the Director of Marketing, and the rest is

history. I will forever be grateful for that experience, I learned first-hand the entire

cycle of economic impact from visitor spending and how the visitor experience

enhances our communities.

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH THE STRENGTHENING STARK MOVEMENT?

When the Strengthening Stark report was commissioned, it rose to the surface

that one of the growth areas to make our county thrive was the travel and

hospitality industry. With the construction of the Hall of Fame Village coming

into the landscape, the addition of new hotel properties, the rise of culinary and

cultural tourism, the leadership from Strengthening Stark realized that Visit Canton was the partner that had the

relationship to engage, collaborate and strategize on how to elevate this important growth industry.

WHAT DO YOU WISH OTHER PEOPLE KNEW ABOUT STARK COUNTY? I could write an entire novel on this question! Stark

County is truly blessed with amazing assets that few, if any other communities have. One-of-a-kind destinations;

in a community our size to have three national attractions in the Pro Football Hall of Fame, McKinley Presidential

Museum and Monument and the National First Ladies Library is truly remarkable. If you then layer the other amazing

museums, parks and cultural experiences that exist, our region boasts quality of life assets that communities would

aspire to create. The fact that we have a winery destination that rivals Napa Valley at Gervasi Vineyard in Canton, or

a destination like the Hartville Marketplace which hosts over 2 million guests a year all in Stark County is something

that we need to celebrate. The fact that we have amazing events like Enshrinement Week powered by Johnson

Controls, Massillon Cruise-In, Canton Blues Fest, countless sporting events like the OHSA Football Championships,

Hall of Fame Marathon, etc. are what put the travel & tourism industry over the top. This is something that is the

fabric of our community, yet many of our residents don't realize how proud they should be to have access to these

experiences and how being an ambassador for our communities build pride and elevate the way our region is

viewed by residents and visitors alike. I encourage our local community to support these destinations and look at

your own backyard like a visitor would, I promise you will find many reasons to be proud to call Stark County your

home.

IF YOU WON THE LOTTERY AND COULD PURCHASE ONE THING FOR OUR COMMUNITY, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY? I

am actually going to completely switch topics from the rest of my answers. If I won the lottery, I would invest much of

my funds into working with those organizations who

are striving to end food insecurity in our county.

I would also invest in many of the projects that

Strengthening Stark is working on, specifically those

who are trying to connect those who need upward

mobility to earn a living wage and the training they

need to do so. If we could address these needs

and reduce those living in poverty, that would be the

tipping point in our community which would truly

make Stark County an amazing place for ALL who

live, work and visit here.

WHAT STARK COUNTY RESTAURANT SHOULD WE

CHECK OUT THIS WEEKEND? This is a really hard

one, since my whole job is to promote ALL of

the wonderful options. Whatever you choose, I

encourage you to support local restaurants, as they

need our help more than ever!



QUOTE FOR THOUGHT

"Synergy is everywhere in nature. If you plant two plants close together, the roots co-mingle and improve the quality of the soil so that both plants will grow better than if they were separated."

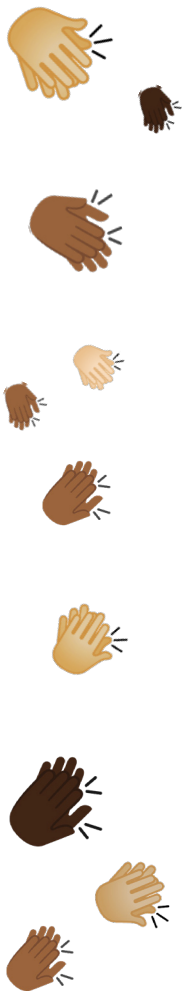
-Stephen Covey
7 Habits of Highly Effective People

OUR MISSION

Strengthening Stark is a community-wide movement of residents, business, government, nonprofits and philanthropists who share a vision for a vibrant, growing county. Our goal is to make Stark a great place to start and grow a business, develop one's talent and pursue a career, and live and raise a family.

SEDB SURPASSES 2020 GOALS!

BUSINESS GROWTH



Despite the challenges that came with 2020, Stark Economic Development Board surpassed their annual goals. Their work in attracting new businesses to Stark generated 987 new jobs with projected payroll of \$45 million! SEDB also secured nearly \$15 million in state supported funds to support these new businesses. They also continue to focus on our current businesses as well, making 205 Business Retention & Expansion (BRE) calls during 2020 to ensure these businesses know about the great resources available to help them grow and expand! Each year for the past 3 years, SEDB has expanded its outreach and the number of new jobs and funding to help strengthen Stark! Congratulations on these amazing results!

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SCIENCE IN SPIRALS

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03/18/21 VIRTUAL JOB FAIR

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Save
THE DATE!

March 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Area residents can discover new career opportunities from the comfort of their home, office, smartphone or computer at the **OH-Zone Stark County Virtual Career Fair** Thursday, March 18, 10am-2pm. Hosted by OhioMeansJobs Stark County and Strengthening Stark, the goal is to connect with prospective employees and meet the workforce needs of local companies and industries.

Job seekers who are looking for a job or a better job can meet virtually with employers who are actively hiring and learn about job openings with competitive wages and benefits. Check out Facebook for more updates!