

Two Alton-based First Mid small business customers receive community grants

First Mid Bank & Trust, a trusted partner in local business development, has announced that two of its valued small business customers, both located in Alton, Ill., have each been awarded a \$15,000 community grant from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago (FHLBank Chicago).

Provided through their Community First® Accelerate Grants for Small Business program, the grants will provide critical support as these businesses continue to grow and serve their community. FHLBank Chicago offers grants of up to \$30,000 to eligible small businesses to advance economic opportunity in the communities it serves.

The recipients of the grants are LaMay's Catering Inc. (LaMay's), a food service company providing full-service catering and event space along with food trucks and community cafes, and Broadway Performance Automotive LLC (Broadway), a full-service automotive repair shop. Both businesses have demonstrated strong potential for growth and a commitment to making a positive impact in their local communities.

Jason Harrison, owner of LaMay's, expressed gratitude for the support, saying, "This grant will allow us to set up a new catering contract along with updating kitchen equipment. We are thankful to First Mid and the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago for believing in our vision."

Similarly, Kelsie Rexford, owner of Broadway, said, "With this grant, we have hired another full-time employee with additional plans to purchase a new vehicle lift, diagnostic scanning system, and AC recharge system. These endeavors will not only help us grow but also enable us to give back to the community that has supported us from the beginning."

"We are thrilled to see two of our small business clients receive these significant

grants from the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago," said Lisa Fowler, regional community president at First Mid Bank & Trust. "These grants reflect not only the hard work and dedication of these business owners but also the essential role that community banks play in connecting small businesses with the resources they need to succeed."

Through FHLBank Chicago's member institutions, like First Mid Bank & Trust, Accelerate Grants assist the growth and development of small businesses in Illinois and Wisconsin. All grant recipients are small businesses that make a difference in their community, and funds are intended for the following purposes:

- The purchase or improvement of property
- The purchase of machinery, tools, or equipment
- The purchase of inventory, materials, or supplies
- Workforce development or training
- New or upgraded technology

"Small businesses play an integral role in local communities in driving economic growth, from creating jobs to fostering community development," said Katie Naftzger, senior vice president and community investment officer, FHLBank Chicago. "As a leader in the housing and community development space, FHLBank Chicago recognizes that affordable housing isn't just about the homes themselves—it's about ensuring entire communities have what they need to thrive, including economic opportunities for the residents and small businesses who call them home."

For more information on Accelerate Grants and eligibility, visit www.fhlbc.com.

<https://www.ibjonline.com/2024/10/22/two-alton-based-first-mid-bank-trust-small-business-customers-receive-community-grants/>



Owner Jason Harrison of LaMay's Catering Inc. in Alton is shown holding an oversized check for \$15,000 from First Mid Bank & Trust's Community First Accelerate Grants for Small Business program, funded through FHLBank Chicago. (Courtesy First Mid LinkedIn)



Owner Kelsie Rexford of Broadway Performance Automotive LLC in Alton is shown holding an oversized check for \$15,000 from First Mid Bank & Trust's Community First Accelerate Grants for Small Business program, funded through FHLBank Chicago. (Courtesy First Mid LinkedIn)

Third Judicial Circuit announces 2025 return of Granite City area court

After nearly five years of absence, the Third Judicial Circuit will return to Granite City starting in early 2025. Chief Judge Steve Stobbs announced recently that the Granite City area docket will soon resume proceedings in the courtroom located within the City Hall of Granite City.

Chief Judge Stobbs said, "I have fond memories of practicing before, now retired Circuit Judge Phil Kardis, in the Granite City courtroom and then serving as a judge there later in my career. I am happy to announce that the Third Judicial Circuit will soon return to Granite City for a weekly court call to include traffic, misdemeanor, and local ordinance violations."

The Granite City area docket has historically consisted of matters arising from incidents in and around Granite City, including the neighboring communities of Pontoon Beach, Venice, and Madison. The Granite City area docket ceased in March 2020 during COVID and was later moved to the main Courthouse in Edwardsville as the Third Judicial Circuit began to reopen later in 2020 with COVID restrictions in place.

Chief Criminal Judge Kyle Napp, who presides over all criminal and related matters pending in Madison County, commended the reopening of the Granite City area docket. Judge Napp said, "Granite City is the largest municipality in Madison County and the return of the docket will be welcomed by the residents of the Tri-Cities. The area dockets allow people facing criminal and traffic offenses to get to Court more easily, especially if they currently do not have a valid driver's license."

Stobbs announced that Associate Judge Andrew Carruthers, who volunteered for the assignment, will preside over the weekly docket call when it returns. Judge Carruthers said, "It will be an honor to preside in the historic Granite City courtroom and serve the residents of Granite City, Pontoon Beach, and the surrounding communities."

Chief Judge Stobbs added, "I want to thank both Mayor Mike Parkinson and the City Council for their continued efforts to bring the Circuit Court back to Granite City. It is a beautiful courtroom, and we are happy to put it back into use for the residents of the Granite City area."

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Glen Carbon firm to work at MidAmerica St. Louis Airport

By **RANDY PIERCE**
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Keller Construction Inc. of Glen Carbon has been awarded a contract to perform temporary facilities sitework at MidAmerica St. Louis Airport, the company's bid of \$653,585 being lower than one received from Holland Construction Services of Swansea.

This work is to be completed in conjunction with the Boeing Corporation MQ-25 Stingray program which involves its manufacture, at a plant on Illinois Route 4 near the airport in St. Clair County, of an innovative unmanned jet refueling aircraft for the United States Navy.

The Navy, according to Airport Director Darren James, needs space to locate five trailers on the cargo apron there for the purpose of setting up a mechanism to monitor test flights of the MQ-25. An office complex, including desks, restrooms, a break room and a conference room, with utility lines connected to it, is also to be constructed in this same area as part of this program along with a sidewalk.

The airport budget, which is overseen by the St. Clair County Public Building Commission, will be the source of payment to Keller for its work as mentioned herein but then Boeing will reimburse those costs in the future.

There was a temporary facility similar to this at the same location previously when Boeing was conducting preliminary testing of its MQ-25 prototype. but the buildings and accouterments had been removed to save the company the expense of paying for it during the waiting period for the final completion of the Navy aircraft which will be tested there before being formally delivered for military usage.

Keller Construction Inc. previously had a presence in the airport area after, in early 2022, it was awarded a contract for the creation of an entrance to the new Boeing production facility.

Along with the electronic traffic signalization at this location on Illinois Route 4 east of the airport, that project included the widening of Route 4 plus the addition of new lanes for left and right turns, shoulders and the necessary additional concrete pavement.