

People in Business

Madison County ROE hires instructional coach for schools

Madison County Regional Superintendent of Schools Dr. Robert W. Werden recently announced the newest member of the Regional Office of Education's staff. Dr. Stacie Hoover will serve in the role of instructional coach



Dr. Stacie Hoover

for schools in the Madison County region. Dr. Hoover is a veteran educator with a rich background in teaching, curriculum design, educational administration, and program development. With a doctorate degree in Curriculum Design and Instruction from McKendree University, she has dedicated her career to enhancing educational experiences and outcomes for students. She has taught everything from elementary school to college level courses in which she demonstrated effective teaching strategies for traditional and non-traditional students. Cumulatively, these experiences have given her insight on relationship building and working collaboratively on common goals for students.

She is also a skilled grant writer that has successfully secured funding for multiple initiatives, underscoring their commitment to fostering educational opportunities. Her experience extends from public education to private education. Additionally, she has mentored and coached educators throughout the educational field. Passionate about creating inclusive and effective learning environments, Dr. Hoover continues to inspire educators and students alike through innovative approaches and unwavering dedication to educational excellence.

In Dr. Hoover's role as an instructional coach, she will be available to work with any of the 13 school districts in Madison County to help improve the level of instruction provided by educators in those districts. Dr. Hoover said that she is extremely excited about getting into the schools and helping educators reach their fullest potential.

First Bankers Trust Company welcomes Kern, Harris

First Bankers Trust Company N.A. (First Bankers Trust), a wholly owned subsidiary of First Bankers Trustshares Inc., recently announced the appointment of Kelly Kern as senior vice president of Finance and Accounting. In her new role, Kern will spearhead the Finance and Accounting and Technology Services departments, focusing on the development and execution of the company's financial, operational, and IT strategies, as well as ensuring robust control systems to preserve company assets and maintain accurate financial reporting.

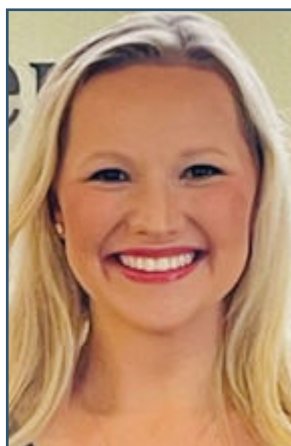
Before joining First Bankers Trust Company, Kern was with Phibro Animal Health in Quincy, Ill., where she specialized in internal controls, accounting, and project management. She also held senior financial roles at Raymond James Bank in Florida, including senior vice president and controller. Kern holds a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting and is a CPA.

First Bankers Trust also recently announced the addition of Olivia Harris as Treasury Management Banker for the O'Fallon and St. Charles Commercial Banking Offices and the greater St. Louis metro area.

In her new role, Harris will focus on developing and managing key customer relationships, specifically addressing commercial treasury and cash management needs. She will report directly to Market President Dominic Seipp.

Prior to joining First Bankers Trust, Harris gained significant expertise in treasury management, retail banking, and lending during her time at Great Southern Bank. Her broad background in these areas will support her in working closely with the retail and lending teams, as well as Deposit Operations, Digital Banking, and Financial Services.

Olivia Harris



Olivia Harris

Five area Jackson Lewis attorneys recognized

Nationwide employment law firm Jackson Lewis P.C. recently announced that five attorneys from the firm's St. Louis office have been listed in The Best Lawyers in America® 2025 edition. Jackson Lewis St. Louis-based attorneys named to the list included Office Managing Principal Jessica L. Liss, Principal and Office Litigation Manager Adam D. Hirtz, Principal Thomas E. Berry Jr., Principal R. Michael Lowenbaum and Principal Stephanie O. Zorn. Lawyers on The Best Lawyers in America list are divided by geographic region and practice areas. They are reviewed by their peers based on professional knowledge and undergo an authentication process to make sure they are in current practice and in good standing.

The Gori Law Firm expands, welcomes new attorneys

The Gori Law Firm recently welcomed several new attorneys to its team. Joining the firm's Edwardsville office are attorneys Elizabeth Skym, Jack Woelfel, Andres Montero, Alex Enyart, Michael Cook and Teona Drake-Robinson.

Skym received her juris doctorate in 2016 from Washburn University School of Law in Topeka, Kan. Before joining The Gori Law Firm, she represented Social Security claimants seeking disability benefits. Skym now represents clients and families in cases relating to mesothelioma and asbestos exposure.

Woelfel has been a practicing attorney for over 20 years, 15 of which were dedicated to representing clients in asbestos litigation. He has also worked in consumer law, personal injury and workers' compensation.

Montero earned his juris doctorate from St. Thomas University School of Law in Miami Gardens, Fla., and began his legal career in civil litigation at a top national collections firm. There, his practice focused on high-volume plaintiff lawsuits, where he conducted numerous litigations for clients throughout Florida. In 2024, he shifted his focus to advocating for individuals and families affected by asbestos-containing products.

Enyart is a native of Belleville, Ill., and has served as an assistant public defender in St. Clair and Jackson counties. He had a private practice and worked as a legal analyst for the Illinois State Senate. His experience includes bilingual asbestos depositions, which he will use in his practice as he continues to advocate for those affected by asbestos exposure.

Cook attended Southern Illinois University School of Law in Carbondale, Ill., to receive his juris doctorate in 2023. He is focused on helping those injured by asbestos receive the compensation they deserve and navigate the complexities of the legal system.

Drake-Robinson is a St. Louis native who attended St. Louis University School of Law's part-time night program. There, she obtained her juris doctorate while working full-time. After she received her degree, she began representing personal injury plaintiffs. She also has experience in civil litigation, municipal law, criminal defense, traffic and municipal prosecutorial work. Today, she represents plaintiffs in asbestos litigation cases.

In addition to providing psychotherapy and serving in leadership positions, her special interests encompass working with children and adults who have experienced trauma, family violence, food insecurity, poverty, impact of addiction on systems, foster care, criminal justice reform and cultural competence.

Local attorney, court security officer recognized

Local attorney Deanna L. Litzenburg was recently honored with the Third Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Service Award by the Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI) for providing outstanding pro bono services to low-income individuals and charitable organizations in the last year.



Stephanie McSparin & Deanna Litzenburg

Stephanie McSparin, of the Madison County Sheriff's Department, was also honored at the event with the Judge Barbara Crowder Pro Bono Champion Award for her exceptional service and duties as a Madison County Security Officer.

The awards were presented at the Third Judicial Circuit Pro Bono Luncheon on Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2024. At the event, the keynote speaker, Illinois Supreme Court Justice David K. Overstreet, spoke on the importance of advocating for justice.

Litzenburg is a vice president and shareholder at Mathis, Marifian & Richter Ltd. McSparin has served as a Madison County Court Security Officer for 18 years.

The Public Interest Law Initiative (PILI) was established in 1999 to encourage and assist law firms and corporations in developing their pro bono programs. The initiative has transformed into a hub for pro bono within the Illinois legal community, working with law firms, corporations, public interest law agencies, law schools and members of the bar and bench to increase the offering of pro bono legal services throughout Illinois.

West Star Aviation promotes Kuntz, Sies

West Star Aviation recently announced the promotion of Craig Kuntz to Project Manager for Embraer at their East Alton, Ill. (ALN), facility. Kuntz will play a key role

in overseeing business aviation maintenance, avionics, and modifications for the Embraer projects.

His responsibilities will include customer support, work order processing, squawk approval coordination, and managing multiple large projects. Kuntz will also serve as the central point of contact for customers and personnel, ensuring that every project is completed to the highest standards.



Craig Kuntz

Kuntz joined West Star Aviation in 2020 as an aircraft maintenance technician III, and he has demonstrated an exceptional work ethic, technical expertise, and a commitment to delivering outstanding service to WSA's valued customers. His promotion to project manager reflects his proven ability to manage complex tasks and his dedication to customer service excellence, an official announcement further noted.

Dan Sies was also recently promoted to Falcon Program Manager at the East Alton facility. He will be responsible for leading the Falcon team, focusing on customer satisfaction, overseeing profit and loss and implementing positive changes while continuing to grow the Falcon program.

Sies began his aviation career in 2000, joining West Star Aviation as an Airframe and Powerplant (A&P) in the Citation department. He later transitioned to the Falcon team, where he has progressed from A&P to lead and then team lead.

HSHS Dr. Morton receives lifetime achievement award

Dr. Steven D. Morton, D.O., an orthopedic surgeon with HSHS Medical Groups in Breese and Highland, has received the Donald Siehl Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Osteopathic Academy of Orthopedics (AOAO), the highest award granted by the organization.



Dr. Steven D. Morton

The honor is given to a member who, in the opinion of the academy's board of directors, has made a major contribution and commitment to the AOAO during his/her professional career.

Dr. Morton accepted the award during the organization's annual fall meeting held October 24-26 in Boston. Morton performs surgeries at HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital in Breese, HSHS St. Joseph's Hospital in Highland and HSHS St. Elizabeth's Hospital in O'Fallon.

He received his medical education from the University of New England, College of Osteopathic Medicine; completed his residency in orthopedic surgery at Deaconess Medical Center; and received a fellowship in orthopedic trauma from University Medical Center of Southern Nevada. He is board certified by the AOAO.