

# INSIDE

VERMILION COUNTY



Cover Photo by BURToo Photo

Revel Bakery  
& Play Café  
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# INSIDE

VERMILION COUNTY

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## On the Cover:

Danville's Revel Bakery & Play Café is quickly becoming a much-loved gathering place where adults and children enjoy time together, grab a delicious breakfast or lunch, and connect with the community, all under one cozy roof.

**In the photo:** Ethan Burt, Co-Owner of Revel Bakery and Tamara Aardsma, Pastry Chef

(Photo by BURTco Photo)



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Vermilion Advantage, through membership value, provides strategic leadership on critical large and small business issues - leading economic and workforce development, anticipating and responding to members' needs, addressing quality of life issues and providing a network of information and business contacts. Vermilion Advantage works regionally to bring opportunities to Danville and Vermilion County.

**Inside Vermilion County is a monthly publication created by Vermilion Advantage to showcase our members and share good news about Vermilion County. Each issue is mailed to all Vermilion Advantage members and over 1,000 copies are distributed throughout Vermilion County.**

# From the CEO/President

I love Vermilion County. I should, I've called it home for most of my life and I was born and raised here. I choose as an adult, to live here and to raise my daughter here. I want to be here.

In my time on earth, I've been blessed to get the opportunity to live in a few other places, travel, and experience a lot of cool things. During and immediately after college, I lived in Fort Scott, Kansas, Marshall, Missouri, Claire, Michigan, Murray, Kentucky, and Jerseyville, Illinois. I've traveled all over the Country going to rodeos. I have experienced things like living in a village in the middle of Ghana for two weeks, teaching local farmers how to keep record books, visiting ports in China to see large cargo ships carrying U.S. soybeans come into the country, or meeting with officials in Colombia to rebuild a market for American Farmers after the delay in the ratification of the US, Colombia, and Panama Free Trade Agreement. I sometimes think I am the luckiest guy in the world to get to experience some of the things I've done.

The purpose of talking about the opportunities I've had has a point. I understand that not everyone gets these chances, but I would like to change that. Traveling and experiencing these things has changed my life and given me a completely different perspective on things right here at home. It has given me a unique view on what we can do to remake this County. I would like to create that opportunity for others in our community.

And why not, any time you can spread the opportunity for knowledge, learning, and understanding it can only be a positive thing. We can learn so much from broadening our horizons and learning from the rest of the world.

Vermilion Advantage is currently investigating ideas like a Chamber Travel Program that would promote traveling and learning around the world from people right here in Vermilion County. The idea is to bring these traveling and learning opportunities to as many Vermilion



Advantage members as possible and in doing so, put Vermilion County on the international map while broadening our knowledge and understanding of the outside world.

That is the knowledge and understanding we can use to give Vermilion County the rebuild it needs and deserves. It is time to bring the world to our doorstep. Vermilion County is already the greatest place on earth, by broadening our horizons, we can make it even better.

## Coffee Talk

August 12:  
Monyok Leadership  
801 Fairchild, Danville

September 9:  
Express Employment  
3125 N Vermilion, Danville



# Electric Power and Community Spirit Drive Tilton Raffle to Support Emergency Services

The Village of Tilton is revving up its fundraising efforts with an exciting raffle featuring high-powered prizes and a high-impact purpose. Spearheaded by Village leaders and supported by Emergency Services volunteers, the raffle will raise funds to support a much-needed station addition for Tilton's Fire and EMS departments.

At the heart of the raffle are three grand prizes: a brand-new 2025 Chevrolet Equinox EV, a 2024 Icon electric golf cart, and \$3,000 in cash prizes, including a \$1,000 top cash prize. Raffle tickets are \$50 and available now at Tilton Village Hall, from board members, Emergency Services team members, or online at [www.tiltonil.com](http://www.tiltonil.com).

“The idea started with a couple of our board members and our city administrator,” says Village Trustee Mike Weidenburner. “We wanted something big that would truly help our Emergency Services and draw

people in. This raffle is a win for everyone.”

Nine total prizes will be given away, with winners drawn on **October 4, 2025, at 9 p.m.** following the final performance of **Music Fest '25** at **Thomas Park**, featuring the Garth Brooks tribute band “No Fences.” Ticket buyers do not need to be present to win.

The Equinox EV will be on display at several community events, including Tilton's popular Thomas Park concert series. Each display vehicle will feature a QR code for quick, easy ticket purchases from your smartphone. “We're trying to make this as user-friendly as possible,” Weidenburner adds. “You don't even have to want the car to get excited. Someone might win and turn around and sell it to the dealership!”

Upcoming events at Thomas Park include *Gone 2 Paradise* on August 2, *Logan Kirby and Fire/EMS Cruise-In* on

August 15, and *Rock Posse and Music with Sass* in September, each offering raffle ticket sales and community fun.

Beyond the raffle, Tilton continues to shine as a vibrant and welcoming village of just over 2,500 residents and more than 115 businesses. “Tilton is a small village with plenty to offer,” says Mayor William (Billy) Wear Jr. “Tilton does not assess a real estate tax. Right now, the Culver's franchise owner is working with Aqua to remove a water main before they begin. And the plan for the restaurant just north of the Longview Bank is for something a little more upscale.”

Mayor Wear adds, “I love our small-town atmosphere and the friendly neighbors we have in Tilton. It's quiet and safe for families.”

Whether you're in the community for the music, the raffle, or the welcoming spirit, Tilton offers plenty of reasons to stay and even more reasons to get involved.

## 1st Place – 2025 Chevrolet Equinox EV



PURCHASE HERE!



## 2nd Place – 2024 ICON Golf Cart EV



3rd Place – \$1,000 Cash  
4th & 5th Place – \$500 Each  
6th–9th Place – \$250 Each

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# Glesco Electric Powering Care for America's Veterans

Glesco Electric, a full-service electrical contractor headquartered in Urbana, Illinois, has played a vital role in supporting veteran care through its long-standing partnership with the Danville VA Medical Center.

Since its founding in 1988, Glesco has served Central Illinois and Western Indiana with IBEW-trained electricians specializing in commercial, industrial, institutional, solar, and healthcare electrical systems. Integrity is a core value woven into every aspect of Glesco's operations, from job site safety to long-term client relationships.

The Danville VA Medical Center itself is a unique institution. Established in 1898, it is the eighth oldest VA hospital in the country and functions like a small city. The campus has its own police department, electrical distribution system, and multiple standby generators. Beyond providing medical care, the VA is also one of the largest employers in Vermilion County, offering opportunities in healthcare, skilled trades, and administrative support.

The company's relationship with the Danville VA Medical Center began almost 40 years ago with smaller service and

maintenance projects. Over time, Glesco earned the trust of VA staff and administrators and became a reliable contractor for more complex capital improvement projects. That trust is rooted not only in technical expertise but also in a shared commitment to the VA's mission to serve those who have served the country.

Glesco's electricians have completed a wide range of projects at the Danville VA Medical Center, including upgrades to surgical suites, labs, pharmacy depots, and the installation of modern fire alarm systems. Currently, the team is working on Greenhomes 7 and 8, residential-style facilities that are part of the VA's initiative to de-institutionalize long-term care. These state-of-the-art buildings are designed to provide a more home-like and dignified environment for veterans requiring skilled nursing support.

Glesco employees speak often of the meaning behind the work they do at the VA. For those who have been part of these projects for decades, like Glesco Electric's Vice President, Kevin Mitchell, who has worked on VA projects since 1985, the experience is both professional and personal. He described the experience of walking through the facility as "surreal," a reminder of the heroes who have walked those halls. "Even just saying hi to a veteran and thanking them for their service leaves a lasting impact," he noted.

Glesco Electric's contributions at the Danville VA Medical Center go beyond wires and circuits. They help build and maintain the infrastructure that supports healing, dignity, and care for America's veterans. Whether it's powering essential medical equipment or installing reliable emergency systems, Glesco's work ensures that the VA can fulfill its mission every single day.



l-r: Kevin Mitchell, Laura Grenda, Zach Harrell, Olivia Koziol, Justin McLeese, Jenna Barnhart, Duncan Koziol.

For more information about Glesco Electric, visit [www.glescoelectric.com](http://www.glescoelectric.com) or follow @GlescoElectric on social media.




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# Campaign to Equip Vermilion County's Next Generation

The Vermilion County Workforce Education (VCWE), an initiative created in partnership between Vermilion Advantage, DACC and VVEDS, is launching a new campaign this summer to spotlight real, local career paths and help students and families feel confident building their futures right here at home.

Despite the opportunities available across Vermilion County, especially in manufacturing, healthcare, and service industries, many students and parents still don't realize what's possible. From dual credit programs, college express, paid training to real job support, there are tangible pathways available but too often overlooked. This campaign is here to change that.

“Workforce development starts with awareness,” says Jodie Ingram, Workforce Education Director at Vermilion Advantage. “Our students are smart, capable, and full of potential. But potential needs a path. When we show them what's possible and walk beside them through the next step, we're not just preparing

them for jobs—we're empowering them to build meaningful, successful lives right here in our community.”

Running July 28th through August 15, the campaign will feature powerful stories, video interviews, and student testimonials shared across Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok. The content is designed to meet people where they are, shift mindsets, and bring heart into the conversation around education and employment. The campaign is focused on three key messages:

- Raising awareness about dual enrollment and college express programs that allow students to earn college credit while still in high school.
- Highlighting real stories of people who have built careers without a four-year degree, showing how it's possible to work your way up and lead.
- Proving that Vermilion County is a place where you can build a good life, earn a strong living, and stay close to what matters.

“We're tackling two things: awareness and perception,” says Alicia Moody, founder of The Vortex



and creative lead for the campaign. “This is about credibility, clarity, and hope. When we align the image and message with the real value this community offers, students start to see what's possible, believe it's for them, and step forward to lead right here in Vermilion County.”

This campaign is the first step in a larger vision to strengthen the workforce and local economy by building real, lasting connections between young people and local opportunity.

Here's how you can help:

- Watch the stories.
- Like the posts.
- Share the content.
- Start the conversation. Because opportunity is here, and it's time everyone sees it.



**Check out the news, flyers, and events our members have to share for August on our website! Just scan the QR code!**



If you'd like your flyer posted to our website, please email it to [sarah@vermilionadvantage.com](mailto:sarah@vermilionadvantage.com) by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month.

# FischerFest to Celebrate Gene Hackman Two-Day Film Festival Set for August 16-17

Movie lovers and proud locals are invited on August 16–17, 2025, to the historic Fischer Theatre for *FischerFest: The Cinematic Legacy of Gene Hackman*, a film festival celebrating one of Hollywood's most legendary actors and Danville's own Gene Hackman.

With the Fischer Theatre only blocks from where Hackman spent his formative years, FischerFest honors the Oscar-winning actor with a weekend of five iconic films that showcase his remarkable range, everything from gritty drama to blockbuster heroics to dark comedy. Saturday's screenings will include *Bonnie and Clyde*, *The French Connection*, and *Unforgiven*. Sunday will feature *Crimson Tide*, followed by a unique *Dessert and Discussion* session, and conclude with *The Royal Tenenbaums*.

"This festival is more than a film event. It's a tribute to a man who helped put Danville on the cinematic map," said Ashton Greer, Interim Director of the Fischer Theatre. "Throughout his life, Hackman maintained a strong connection to Danville—staying in touch with high school friends, supporting local theaters, and returning for events like book signings and fundraising for the Fischer. Gene cared about us and never forgot Danville, and so we are so pleased to honor him in this way."

Sponsored by State Representative Brandun Schweizer, Iroquois Federal Foundation, WhiteSmith Marketing Group, Luxe Lift, the Halloran Family Foundation, and Chuck & Pam,

FischerFest is poised to become a beloved annual tradition that celebrates cinematic excellence and community pride in the heart of downtown Danville.

In addition to film screenings, the weekend includes special commentary from noted film critics Chuck Koplinski and Pam Powell, hosts of *Reel Talk with Chuck & Pam*. Before each film, they'll offer behind-the-scenes stories and anecdotes to bring Hackman's roles to life for audiences.

Sunday's *Dessert and Discussion*, led by Koplinski, will provide an opportunity for community members to explore Hackman's legacy and his connection to Danville. Local artist Katie Weston will also be onsite creating a live, date-stamped portrait of Hackman during the event.

Festival goers can enjoy meals from Norah's Smokehouse, a popular food truck stationed outside the theatre on both days. Festival goers are also encouraged to visit all that downtown and the Danville community have to offer.

Ticket options are \$10 for a single film, \$25 for all three Saturday films, \$25 for two Sunday films and the *Dessert and Discussion*, or \$75 for the all-access Real Deal Pass, which includes all five films, dessert and discussion, bottomless popcorn, and preferred box seating.

Tickets are available now at [www.fischertheatre.com](http://www.fischertheatre.com).

**FISCHERFEST**  
THE CINEMATIC LEGACY OF GENE HACKMAN

**FISCHER**  
Historic Fischer Theatre  
DANVILLE, ILLINOIS

**AUGUST 16 - AUGUST 17, 2025**

# Revel Bakery & Play Café: Where Family, Flavor, and Fun Come Together

Danville's Revel Bakery & Play Café is quickly becoming a much-loved gathering place where adults and children enjoy time together, indulge in world-class pastries, grab a delicious breakfast or lunch, and connect with the community, all under one cozy roof. Owned and operated by Ethan and Bethany Burt, and operated by pastry chef Tamara Aardsma, Revel is more than a bakery; it's a vision come to life.

The idea for Revel is rooted in a dream to bring families closer. "In 2022, I got a vision from the Lord to do something in the community for kids where both kids and parents were able to be together while both felt they had something for them to enjoy," says Ethan. "I love kids, and I love togetherness." That heartfelt inspiration, combined with years of traveling to coffee shops as wedding photographers, sparked an idea to create a space that welcomes both children and adults.

At its core, Revel is a bakery, and an exceptional one at that. The menu includes handcrafted croissants, macarons, biscotti, coffee cake, scones, and cookies. Lunch options include croissant sandwiches, fresh salads, parfaits, and kid-friendly snacks. Coffee and tea enthusiasts will fall in love with the extensive espresso bar and premium tea selections. Among customer favorites? The Swedish Cardamom Bun and Berries & Cream Croissant top the list, along with the always-popular pain au chocolat and rainbow-hued macarons.

Design is one of the things that sets Revel apart, a blend of sophistication and playfulness. The play area is filled with imagination-sparking activities, including play kitchens, a child-sized coffee bar and market, coloring pages, books, and a variety of tabletop games suitable for all ages. "The wonderful thing is that children are pretty easy to please, says Ethan. "They want to feel connected, not excluded or separated, to those who brought them, and they feel just as special as the adults when there are amenities just for them."

Community is central to everything the Burts do. Revel regularly hosts special events, including birthday parties, baby showers, and story time sessions in collaboration with the Danville Public Library. "We are looking for community partners to bring wonderful things to our families," says Bethany, inviting local organizations to collaborate and use the space for family-friendly offerings.



Image by BURTCO Photo

Ethan and Bethany Burt

Danville was always going to be the home for Revel, and although the final location took some time to secure, it's proven to be the right one. "Revel has started a wonderful sense of connection to the city we live in and its people," adds Ethan. "Week after week, I am meeting people who are contributing greatly to Danville or the surrounding area, and we are discussing how Revel/the Burts can join in!"

That sense of belonging is reflected in every detail, from the calming colors and cozy zones to the layout that supports everything from children's play to quiet laptop sessions. Whether it's dropping by for a cardamom bun and a clementine cloud cold brew or celebrating a child's birthday with friends and family, Revel has a place for guests of all ages.

And perhaps the most meaningful measure of success? Ethan and Bethany's young son, Jack Truman. "Other than his home, Revel is his favorite place in the world," Ethan says with a smile.

Warm, whimsical, and deeply rooted in purpose, Revel Bakery & Play Café is a joyful new chapter for the Burts and a sweet gift to the families of Danville.

# From Danville to Pamplona: Building Global Bridges for Local Impact

By Mike Marron, President/CEO, Vermilion Advantage

The number one priority for Vermilion Advantage, our reason for existing, is business recruitment and retention. I have always believed that personal relationships are key to getting things done. Maybe that is the politician from my former life coming out in me, but I believe meeting people, talking to them and getting to know who they are is crucial in getting things accomplished and getting problems solved. Reaching out to the leadership of our member businesses to let them know we are

here to support them and that we can help has been how I've spent a large part of my time here at Vermilion Advantage. To our larger corporate partners, it is important they know that we are willing to support them at that corporate leadership level as well, which could mean traveling for visits to their respective corporate headquarters to learn about their business model and discuss how we can be of assistance to them. An ancillary benefit to making these visits is the

knowledge and perspective you gain by going out and learning about commerce in the world. That knowledge and perspective almost always pays a huge return on investment.

That was why I boarded a plane out of Chicago O'Hare International Airport last month to fly to Bilbao, Spain. From Bilbao, a two-hour car ride to the east brought me and Viscofan Danville's HR Director Sandy Blunier to Viscofan world headquarters just outside of historic Pamplona, Spain. The purpose of the trip was to learn more about Viscofan operations, build that personal connection with their corporate management, and to encourage further investment and expansion in their Danville facility. I felt it was important to carry the message right to corporate leadership, that Viscofan is a critically important part of the Danville business community, that we are here to assist in any way we can, and that we want our corporate partners to thrive in Danville.

The first stop at Viscofan was to their production facility in Cáseda, Navarra. It is a massive facility where they produce meat casing for both the European and American markets. They had on hand a chef that specialized in sausage preparation and we were able to sample some products prior to receiving a presentation on worldwide business and that specific plant. After an informative presentation and a discussion about the company and that facility, we were able to tour the plant where Viscofan manufactures meat casings made of fibrous, plastic, cellulose and collagen for customers around the world. We viewed extensive improvements in the plant to increase energy efficiency and to improve water quality. The stated goal is to make that facility net neutral with its carbon



San Fermin Festival in Pamplona

footprint soon. Discussions were held on improvements and investments in the Danville facility. Discussions around the company and Vermilion Advantage assistance led to the hot button issue of tariffs. The company talked about its commitment to Danville and increasing investment here. However, due to the proprietary nature of their process, new production equipment would need to be imported from other facilities around the world. With possible tariffs being implemented, it potentially makes the cost of importing new production equipment too great to expand in the U.S. We held a thorough discussion on possible solutions. As a result, the Vermilion Advantage Advocacy Committee is planning on discussing a policy position, asking our Federal elected officials to pass a tariff exemption in the event that equipment is being imported to increase domestic manufacturing. This seems like a sensible request that both parties could get behind if tariffs are going to be a part of our economic life moving forward with the expressly stated goal of increasing domestic manufacturing. The plan is for the Committee to discuss this next month and if they approve, to then craft this into policy that we will send to our federal officials and make the focal point of our trip to Washington DC scheduled for September.

The next day was spent in Pamplona, meeting with company officials and taking in the San Fermin Festival or the Running of the Bulls. More specific items were discussed at assisting the business to be more successful in Danville and bonds were strengthened as I learned about the local culture and history of Pamplona. It was time well spent cultivating that relationship with our corporate partners.

After a day in Pamplona, on the final day of my visit, I was driven back to Bilbao where I prepared for my very early morning flight the next day. I had

a little time to kill that afternoon, so I took a tour arranged by Viscofan of the City Center of the beautiful Atlantic Coast City of Bilbao. It was an amazing experience, and I learned a great deal about a city I had previously known very little about. The beautiful, historic architecture was amazing. It is always humbling walking in places that have existed for centuries, hearing the stories of medieval walls built to protect the city, and seeing beautiful churches built for pilgrims making their

dangerous treks across a continent. It gives you a fresh perspective on the small segment in time that we are here and that we get to call our own. It makes you realize we are a blimp in the history and expanse of humanity that has come before us and will follow our small adventure. The best part of Bilbao though, and the thing that resonated with me being from Vermilion County and representing Danville, was Bilbao's rebirth from the 1990's to the present day. Bilbao was once known as the "Pittsburg of Spain". Its number one industry was the steel industry. Due to macro level economic factors in the 1970's and 1980's the steel industry died and left Bilbao, leaving a troubled and distressed city. In the 1990's, the decision was made to reinvent themselves. The city invested serious money in recreating the river front district, building the historic Guggenheim Museum, an art museum that to this day is the largest titanium building in the world. Walking along the waterfront past the huge museum or through the retail district in the old City Center and past the old historic opera



Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao

house, the vibe is a mix of the best modern day living crossed with a historical European existence that you can find in any of the world's most charming cities, like Paris, Rome, or Barcelona. The transformation from an industrial steel town to a trendy Atlantic Coast hot spot is inspirational and one that we can learn from here in Vermilion County. Bilbao can be an inspiration for a future Danville.

My trip to Spain was brief but impactful. I came away with a longer to do list, but ultimately the things on that list will make a difference. Accomplishing those things will ensure that we aren't just going through the motions at Vermilion Advantage, we are here to help our members. It will give them confidence to know our community is committed to them and it will help them further commit to us. It also gives us a valuable opportunity to learn from the wide and exciting world that exists out there. Those are the things that are going to move the needle of progress as we move into the future. That is exciting.

# New Member Snapshot: Step UP Vermilion County

**Founder:** Deanna Witzel

**About:** Step Up is making Vermilion County a better place by bringing people together. Simply put, our purpose is to help people Rally, Resource and Relate. We exist to bring the community together, identify and address current challenges facing the County, empower growth and development, and create positive outcomes in economic, educational, social, and spiritual arenas.

**The Beginning:** We launched Step Up at the Global Leadership Summit in August of 2017, asking people to Step Up and sign up. We held our first meeting in September.

**What Makes it Unique:** It's the only place where people from different organizations and backgrounds in Vermilion County come together to make a difference! These meetings help avoid duplication of efforts. Our meetings start in a large group setting where we hear about what's

happening in the area, often as the first place the information is shared county-wide. We move into three work groups to discuss critical topics around mental health, substance use disorder, and parenting and family issues. And then come back together to hear updates and leave with an inspiring March Forth moment, most often from Mike Hulvey.



**Who Can Attend:** Everyone! Every meeting is open to anyone who lives, works, or is interested in the success of Vermilion County. No invitation needed! Attendees truly represent the entire County. We have representatives, CEO's and leaders from almost every non-profit organization, law enforcement, foundations, healthcare, education, businesses, and politicians. We also


have individuals who are community volunteers and those who simply care about the area.

**Get Involved:** We meet bi-monthly on Friday mornings at 8 AM at Second Church in Danville. In 2025, our next meetings are September 19<sup>th</sup> and November 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Benefits:** Together, we are transforming lives! The collaboration is nothing short of amazing! One organization has a need, and another steps up to fill it. We share information to support organizations' events, fundraisers and outreach programs.

**What You Love Most about Vermilion County:** The people. And the numerous incredible resources available in our community.

**Learn More:** Find us on Facebook by searching: Step Up Vermilion County. Or email ideas or questions to [dndwitzel@me.com](mailto:dndwitzel@me.com).



**4:30PM-6:30PM**

**August 28, 2025**  
VRBC  
103 N Vermilion St, Danville

**Professional Development Group**

**11:30AM-1:00PM**

**August 20, 2025**  
Leading From Any Position -  
Ross Darby  
TBD

**September 17, 2025**  
Resilience by Overcoming Setback -  
Daniel Chappel  
TBD

**BUSINESS & NETWORKING LUNCHEON**

**11:30AM-1:00PM**

**August 27, 2025**  
Molly's Joint  
at Palmer Arena

**September 24, 2025**  
Express Employment  
at Palmer Arena

**Check your email for invitations and to register!**

# New Member Snapshot: Great Lakes Credit Union

**President and CEO:** Steve Bugg

**Organization Information:** Founded in 1938, Great Lakes Credit Union (GLCU) is banking for a greater good. As a not-for-profit financial institution with more than \$1.6 billion in assets, GLCU is proud to serve 115,000 members and give back to them and their communities through education, volunteerism, and partnerships.

GLCU offers loan and savings products for consumers and businesses, and doesn't have to pay profits to shareholders, so we can reinvest earnings into higher rates on savings and lower rates on loans to our member-owners.

**Where are you located? How long have you been in Vermilion County?**

GLCU originally was founded to provide savings and loans to members and employees of the Great Lakes Naval Academy in Waukegan, Illinois. Through the decades, we've grown to more than 20 branches throughout northern Illinois.

We're now thrilled to serve members in Vermilion County, with our latest branch located at 323 N. Gilbert Street, Danville, IL 61832. Our Danville branch manager, Penny Goodrum, has been serving members in the community at the credit union for over 40 years, initially as First Illinois Credit Union, which later became Vibrant Credit Union, and is now Great Lakes Credit Union.

**What makes GLCU unique:** Like most credit unions, GLCU embraces the "people helping people" philosophy, giving back to local communities through volunteerism and outreach efforts. However, unlike many credit unions, GLCU has a company-wide initiative to contribute at least 4,000

hours to improve the financial lives of those in our communities. In 2024, through the GLCU Foundation for Financial Empowerment, 222 GLCU employees far surpassed the goal, investing 4,384 hours in community outreach and helping 156 organizations. We hosted 44 educational workshops, as well as 96 youth education events. We also saved \$7.9 million in community assets through foreclosure intervention and counseling, thanks to our housing and financial counseling program. Providing financial literacy and access to financial services in low- and moderate-income communities, GLCU remains steadfast in our efforts to bring about positive change in the communities we serve.

GLCU is one of only five credit unions in the nation to have HUD-certified housing and financial counselors on staff. We offer free financial and housing counseling services to anyone who wants to improve their financial situation, and we welcome the opportunity.

**What is the best part of doing business in Vermilion County?** We're located in the Danville community and really enjoy that there's a very diverse group of businesses, services, and organizations that people can turn to in times of need. Our members feel like family and many have been with us for decades! We're happy to be a part of this community and proud to bring our "banking for a greater good" philosophy to the Danville community.

**Join Us for our Ribbon-Cutting Event**

Come celebrate GLCU's ribbon-cutting community event at our Danville branch on Thursday, August 21 from 12-2 pm. Bring your appetite – we're having T&G BBQ food truck onsite and will be providing lunch for all attendees. Plus, enjoy music with a live radio broadcast by Tommy B of D102! In addition, we're collecting donations for The Dwelling Place of Vermilion County, and will have giveaways, raffle prizes, and a shred truck onsite to safely destroy confidential financial information. We hope to see you there!



Top L to R: Penny Goodrum, Tanner Harding, Deana Westfahl, Morgan Rangel  
Bottom L to R: Lauren Powell, Emily Perez, Julianne Wasson. Not Pictured: Caitlin Kruger

# Career Quest: Local Internships Spark Futures for Area Teens

For a group of high school juniors and seniors in Vermilion County, summer break isn't just about soaking up the sun; it's about building a future.

Through Career Quest, a summer internship program offered by the Vermilion Vocational Delivery System (VVEDS), students are getting a firsthand look at the working world and loving it.

Career Quest matches students with paid, professional internships tailored to their career interests. From mental health and engineering to construction and auto mechanics, the program opens doors and minds to the possibilities right here at home.

"Career Quest is intentional," says Jodie Ingram, Workforce Education Director. "Every part of it is designed with purpose—to give the students

the confidence and exposure to make informed decisions about their future."

Selection for the program involved an application and interview process led by Ami Siefert of Danville Area Community College Career Services and Jodie. Students identified their interests and even named preferred businesses, allowing Ami and Jodie to connect them with opportunities that fit.

Some of the generous and enthusiastic participating businesses include Schomburg & Schomburg, thyssenkrupp Crankshaft, Wilson's Complete Auto, Atlas Total Home, MPower Counseling, the YMCA, Carle, and Watchfire. "The willingness of local businesses to jump in and support the program has been

incredible," says Jodie. "It shows how much this community values its youth and wants to be part of their journey."

The experiences are wide-ranging: students are learning to change tires, operate excavation equipment, assist in HVAC and construction projects, and explore early childhood education or mental health careers. One student, Lucas Sollars from Georgetown-Ridge Farm High School, discovered a real passion for the automotive field through his internship. "He really enjoyed getting under the cars, working on engines, and doing all the maintenance stuff," says Jodie. "It made him feel like this was something he could see himself doing!"

The real magic is in watching local young people light up as they find their paths. "There's something really special about watching that spark happen," add Ami and Jodie. "It gives us so much hope—and pride—for the future of our workforce."

## Member of the Month – July 2025

### Congratulations to Birth to Five - Illinois, our Member of the Month!

Their dedication to early childhood services truly makes a difference in our community, and we're proud to celebrate you!

**Birth to Five Illinois** helps communities across the state improve early childhood programs for children from birth to age five. Their goal is to give every child in Illinois a strong start in life by listening to families and making sure resources go where they're needed most.

For more information contact them at [info@birthtofiveil.com](mailto:info@birthtofiveil.com), (773)739-2107 or find them on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/BirthToFivell>.

The Member of the Month Program is a fantastic opportunity to spotlight and celebrate the outstanding businesses and individuals that contribute to Vermilion County.

**How to Qualify:** Businesses and individuals are automatically entered in the drawing when they participate in any of the following:

- Attend networking events
- Attend board meetings (for current board members)
- Partner through initiatives such as catering an event, joining the Career Expo, posting on the Jobs Board, and more

For more information about the Member of the Month Program, contact Dana at Vermilion Advantage at (217) 442-6201 or [drowland@VermilionAdvantage.com](mailto:drowland@VermilionAdvantage.com).

### Perks of Being Member of the Month:

- A featured spotlight on our social media and website
- Recognition in our newsletter
- A creative consultation with Tyler Burress, of BRBH Media to highlight your
- A guest spot on WITY Radio to share more about your services.
- One event pass for a networking event!

# Someone to Know: John Hart

For nearly 25 years, John Hart has dedicated his career to the students and families of Danville School District 118. Officially appointed Superintendent in June 2025 after serving as Interim Superintendent, Hart leads the district with a clear purpose: to ensure every student reaches their fullest potential.

His journey into education wasn't a straight line. A Vermilion County native, Hart entered the workforce right out of high school, choosing factory work over college so he wouldn't add to his family's financial burden. "The pay was good, but I knew I wanted to make a different kind of impact," he says. That realization led him to start taking night classes at Danville Area Community College. Ten years later, after working full-time and studying part-time, he earned a bachelor's degree in special education from Eastern Illinois University.

In 2001, Hart began teaching at Douglas Elementary School. His passion for helping students succeed quickly led to leadership roles: Special Education Coordinator, Principal of Southwest Elementary School, Director of Special Education, and Assistant Superintendent. Today, as Superintendent, his goals include supporting staff, leading district-wide academic efforts, and maintaining strong community partnerships. "I try to stay true to who I am—a caring, community-focused individual," he says. Hart is proud to have spent his entire educational career in District 118. "I've

witnessed firsthand the dedication our staff has for the students and families we serve," he says. "There's a lot of misunderstanding out there, but the truth is, our schools are filled with incredible people doing amazing work every day."

That dedication is personal. He recalls a time when a student needed out-of-state hospitalization but couldn't go without a guardian. "A staff member volunteered to go—on their own dime—just to ensure the student received the care they needed," Hart says. "That moment reminded me I'm in the right place, surrounded by the right people."

Hart believes the key to making a lasting impact in a community is simple: "Be visible. Be present. Invest your time." He models that commitment in his work and in how he views leadership. "Strong leaders are built on truth, refined by challenge, and proven through service," he says, quoting the best advice he's ever received.

Outside of his role in education, Mr. Hart is an avid outdoorsman who enjoys spending time in nature – whether it's fishing, mushroom hunting, or tending to his garden. He finds joy in the simple things like mowing the grass and enjoying the peace it brings. A proud husband, father, and grandfather, Mr. Hart enjoys watching his grandkids events ranging from archery, softball, cheerleading and soccer games at DASC and taking his grandkids to local events such as Danville Dans baseball games. Both Mr.



Hart and his wife enjoy spending time locally around Vermilion County, with much appreciation for the welcoming atmosphere of downtown Danville and the strong sense of community it offers.

Mr. Hart finds much joy in his family and in the community that shaped him. Thoughtful and reflective, he's always seeking ways to grow and listen more deeply. "While I love humor and believe every leader should be able to laugh at themselves," he says, "I spend a lot of time thinking about how I can be better—for the people I serve."

Whether leading through a crisis or advocating for the district's future, John Hart is someone whose presence and purpose make a difference—one student, one school, and one conversation at a time.

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## Members of Vermilion Advantage, NFP In Good Standing by Level of Membership

### ADVANTAGE DIAMOND DIRECTOR:

(Level \$10,000+)

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- Carle.Carle Medical Supply
- City of Danville
- Danville Sanitary District
- First Financial Bank
- Golden Nugget
- Iroquois Federal
- Old National Bank
- OSF HealthCare Sacred Heart Medical Center
- Owens Corning Danville
- Vermilion County Government

### ADVANTAGE GOLD CROWN DIRECTOR:

(Level \$6,000 - \$9,999)

- Bunge Milling, Inc.
- Cannon Cochran Management Services, Inc.
- Christie Clinic
- Danville Area Community College
- Danville Country Club
- Danville Metal Stamping
- Danville School Dist. #118
- Hyster-Yale Group
- McLane Midwest
- Mervis Industries
- REG Danville, LLC
- Republic (formerly Allied Waste)
- thyssenKrupp Dynamic Components Danville, LLC
- Vermilion Development, Inc.
- Viscofan USA, Inc.

- Watchfire Signs
- Westwood Equity

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- City of Hoopston
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- Curry Construction
- Double S Liquid Feed Service, Inc.
- Fisher National Bank
- Genpact
- Great Lakes Credit Union
- Greenwood, Inc.
- Illini Media Group
- Invenergy
- Village of Oakwood
- Village of Tilton

### ADVANTAGE EXECUTIVE MEMBER:

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- Acton & Snyder, LLP
- Advanced Medical Transport East
- Anderson Electric, Inc.
- AT&T Illinois
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois
- Bowman Estates
- Brainerd Chemical Midwest, LLC
- Central Illinois Media Group
- Chittick Family Eye Care

- County Markets / Niemann Foods
- Depke Gases & Welding Supplies
- Environ
- Envirox, LLC
- Everside Health
- Express Employment Professionals
- Faulstich Printing Company
- First Farmer Bank & Trust
- Flex-N-Gate Plastics
- GHG Logistics - Hana Group
- Heritage Development
- Heritage Health Therapy & Senior Care
- Hometown Savings Bank
- Hubner Industries, LLC
- IL Chapter Nat'l Electrical Contractor's Assoc.
- Julius W. Hegeler II Foundation
- McDonald's - Linders Limited V, LLC
- Meijer
- Prospect Bank
- Ross Webb Ins. & Financial Services, Inc
- Runnings of Danville & Tilton
- Russell Leigh & Associates, CPA
- SIHF Healthcare
- Sigma Network
- thyssenKrupp Crankshaft Company
- Towne Machine Tool Co., Inc.
- Tractor Supply Co.
- Village of Catlin
- Voltus
- WITY Illiana Communications, LLC

## Members of Vermilion Advantage, NFP (continued)

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(Level \$500 - \$999)

112 Wine & Coffee  
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 All Source  
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 Anytime Fitness - Tilton  
 Arrow Ambulance  
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 Autumn Fields Adult Community of Tilton  
 AWEBCO  
 Berns, Clancy, & Associates, P.C.  
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 Brett Crandell Ins. & Financial Serv. - State Farm  
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 City of Georgetown  
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 Comcast Business  
 Country Financial - Amanda Galloway  
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 Dines Machine & Mfg.  
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 Earthrise Energy  
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 FLP Wealth Advisors of Raymond James

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 Gibson Teldata, Inc.  
 Greene Galvanized Stairs  
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 Hampton Inn & Suites  
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 Leatherneck Hardware, Inc.  
 Lebanon Seaboard Corporation  
 LMR Promotions  
 Local, The  
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### ADVANTAGE HONOR MEMBER

(Level \$300 - \$499)

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 Georgetown Wood & Pallet Co., Inc.  
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 Glesco Electric, Inc.  
 Hayley Siefert, Broker - Keller Williams Real Estate, TREC  
 Jameson Steel Fabrication  
 Jenna Wirth State Farm  
 Lakeview College of Nursing  
 Liberty Village  
 McDowell Builders, Inc.  
 McLaughlin Asset Management  
 Myers Carpet Weavers  
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 Rosecrance  
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 Sleep Inn & Suites  
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 Sunset Funeral Home, Memorial Park & Cremation Center  
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 Birth To Five, Illinois  
 Boys & Girls Club of Danville  
 Brooks Sustainability Foundation NFP  
 Brown, Amy  
 CASA of Vermilion County  
 Casey Toler Creative  
 Center Street Productions  
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 Central Illinois Human Resources Group  
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 Community Foundation of East Central IL  
 Corporate Supply, Inc  
 CRIS Healthy-Aging Center  
 CRIS Rural Mass Transit  
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DACC Foundation  
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 Danville Area Living - Shannon Schroeder  
 Danville Area Visitors Bureau  
 Danville Art League  
 Danville Boat Club  
 Danville Family YMCA  
 Danville Farmer's Market  
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 Danville Rescue  
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 Danville Symphony Orchestra  
 Danville Technology Services  
 Danville Tennis Center  
 Davis Bookkeeping  
 Deer Creek Manor  
 Diamonds Amongst the Rough  
 Dicken, Josef "Joe Voiceover"  
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 Downtown Danville, Inc.  
 East Park Church of Christ  
 Eastern Illinois Foodbank  
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 Erich Hannah  
 Erickson, Gary C.  
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 Fellowship of Christian Athletes  
 Festival of Trees  
 First Church of the Nazarene  
 Fischer Theatre  
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 GAO Grotto / Denmark Park Corporation  
 Gateway Family Services of Illinois  
 Georgetown Fair  
 Georgetown Ladies Community Club  
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 Mustard Seed Christian Daycare  
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 Oakwood Public Library District  
 Olympic Hardware  
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 Prairielands Council – Boy Scouts of America  
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 River Bottom Farms Topsoil  
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 Rossi Photo Studios  
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 Save the Lorraine Foundation  
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 Spotlight Performing Arts  
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 TASC  
 The Dwelling Place  
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 University of IL Extension., Vermilion Co. Unit  
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 Vermilion Co. Farm Bureau  
 Vermilion Co. Museum Society  
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 Lee, Todd  
 Mulvaney, Jeanne  
 Nicholls, Bill  
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