

ISSUE 15
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the Pillar

FINANCIAL INSIGHTS FROM BUSEY

sending
STRENGTH
and *support*

As Hurricane Ian Surged,
Busey Responded

Keeping Family in the Family Business
Generations of Patels Find Success in
the Hospitality Industry

DOORWAYS of Hope
Expansion Bolsters St. Louis Non-Profit in
Decades-Long Fight Against HIV/AIDS



welcome

As you can imagine, I've seen countless changes during my four decades in the banking industry. Yet I continue to be inspired by our **Pillars—associates, customers, communities** and **shareholders**—and their resolve to make the places we call home even better.

In this issue, we look at Team Busey's response to the devastating impact of Hurricane Ian; discuss investment approaches you may want to consider during an economic downturn; and explore the important role environmental, social and governance (ESG) plays in our daily lives at Busey.

We introduce you to the Patel family, the owners of Sunrise Hospitality—a family-owned business with over four decades of experience in the lodging industry. We also journey to the St. Louis Gateway Region to meet those opening **DOORWAYS** by providing a place to stay in a different way to those living with HIV/AIDS. Busey is pleased to bring you these stories and more in this edition of *The Pillar*.

Since opening its doors in 1868, Busey has been foundationally built upon committed, positive, thoughtful and collaborative associates and leadership. We're deeply humbled and honored to be your community partner, and we look forward to working with you and your families for generations to come.

Best regards,

Van A. Dukeman, CFA
Chairman, President & Chief Executive Officer
First Busey Corporation

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INVESTMENT CONSIDERATIONS DURING AN ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

Tips for Weathering the Storm

Polymakers and economists alike continue to debate whether the U.S. is entering—or has already entered—a recession. There is, however, no debate that the economy has experienced a downturn over the past several months, leading investors to rethink their portfolio strategies.

While it's important to avoid rash decisions and significant adjustments to how you manage your investment portfolio, small changes can help you and your assets weather a contracting economy.

WHAT IS A RECESSION?

A recession occurs when a country experiences a significant decline in economic activity. Economists use a nation's gross domestic product—the total monetary value of all final goods and services produced within the country's borders—as an indicator, but also look at unemployment, retail sales, income, manufacturing and other data points over several months to determine the state of an economy.

It's important to note that expansion and contraction are natural parts of the economic cycle. Since 1945, the U.S. has experienced 13 recessions. In most cases, they're short-lived, with only three of those 13 lasting longer than one year and none lasting longer than 18 months.

Regardless of how long they last, they do have the potential to affect your investment portfolio. The stock market is partly based on expectations of the economy over the next six months to a year, so even speculation of a recession can cause stock prices to take a hit.

INVESTMENT TIMING

Trying to time the market is generally not the best approach to investing because short-term fluctuations make it impossible to know exactly how the market will perform. Historically, however, some investment opportunities perform better than others during an economic downturn. As long as you're not letting emotion dictate your decisions, small adjustments, such as rebalancing and diversifying your portfolio, can help.

The timing—when you will need the money—is another important factor to consider. If you're in your 30s and your investments are primarily for retirement, short-term volatility caused by a recession won't have a huge impact on your portfolio in the long run. But if you're planning to retire in the next few years, the short-term impact of a recession can impact your financial plan, so it may make more sense to do what you can to preserve the wealth you've accumulated by shifting your money toward safer investments.

WEATHERING THE STORM

Depending on your unique situation, the right approach to making sure your investments come through a downturn or recession intact can vary. The most important thing is to avoid making rash decisions based on fear.

WITH THAT IN MIND, HERE ARE SOME POTENTIAL STEPS YOU CAN TAKE:

Rebalance your portfolio.

It's natural for your portfolio to get out of balance over time. That's especially true during a recession. Rebalancing can help you adjust your asset allocation to match your original goal.

Do your research.

Not all recessions are created equal, so it's important to understand what's happening. To help you stay up to date on the latest information about the economy, markets and other relevant investment topics, Busey's Investment Team offers a Monthly Market Update. [Click to opt in](#) and start receiving *Busey's Monthly Market Update* email.

Consider your individual situation and goals.

While some decisions may be good for other investors, they may not be the right fit for your current situation, your goals and your time horizon. Focus on the strategy that works best for you.

Consult with a professional.

Developing an investment strategy can be complicated. If you're feeling out of your depth or want validation for your decisions, consider working with a wealth management professional who can provide valuable advice that can help you accomplish your goals.

It's easy to put all your focus on your investments during an economic downturn, but other aspects of your overall financial plan can also be impacted. It's important to take a holistic view of all your finances.

Be sure to evaluate your emergency savings plan and insurance coverages to make sure you're covered in the event of a financially challenging life event. Additionally, it's a good idea to monitor your credit regularly and to watch for signs of identity theft, which can increase during periods of economic downturn.

While recessions are an unpleasant but inevitable part of economic cycles, smart planning, timely research and sound professional advice from an experienced, trusted wealth management team can help you prepare your portfolio and minimize risks to your financial goals. For more than 100 years, Busey Wealth Management has provided a holistic and personalized approach to our valued clients.

To learn more about our suite of services, visit busey.com/wealth-management.

HOW A RECESSION IS DETERMINED

U.S. recessions and expansions are officially measured and declared by the Business Cycle Dating Committee of the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), a private nonpartisan organization that began dating business cycles in 1929. The committee, which was formed in 1978, includes eight economists who specialize in macroeconomic and business cycle research.

While not a government entity, the NBER recession date calculations are considered official and are recognized by all U.S. federal economic agencies, including the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and others.

The NBER defines a recession as "a significant decline in economic activity that is spread across the economy and lasts more than a few months." The committee looks at the big picture and makes exceptions as appropriate. For example, the economic decline of March and April 2020 was so extreme that it was declared a recession even though it lasted only two months.

To determine peaks and troughs of economic activity, the committee studies a range of monthly economic data, with special emphasis on six indicators: personal income, consumer spending, wholesale-retail sales, industrial production and two measures of employment.

Because official data is typically reported with a delay of a month or two—and patterns may be clear only in hindsight—it generally takes some time before the committee can identify a peak or trough. Some short recessions (including in 2020) were over by the time they were officially announced.



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Investment products and services through Busey Wealth Management are:

Not FDIC INSURED	May lose value	No bank guarantee
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ESG | ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE

UNDERSTANDING ESG & WHY IT MATTERS

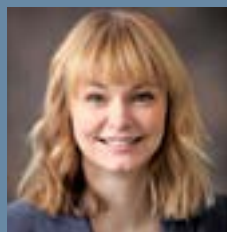
In 2005, a conference called ‘Who Cares Wins’ brought together institutional investors, asset managers, buy-side and sell-side research analysts, global consultants, government bodies and regulators to examine what factors play an important role in the context of long-term investment and value. The group found that the key value drivers are environmental, social and governance—ESG.

Now, just over 15 years later, more than 90 percent of S&P 500 companies publish ESG reports in some form. Environmental, social and governance are non-financial factors used to measure a company’s sustainability in the natural world, the communities they serve and internally.

“Corporate governance has always been critical, and the environmental and social factors now have over 15 years of research indicating that companies with a solid proposition in these areas simply outperform those that do not,” says Emily Cross Vayr, Vice President – Director of Environmental, Social and Governance Strategy and Reporting at Busey.

Emily was hired in early 2022 to lead Busey’s ESG efforts.

“With strategies around ethics and governance, diversity and inclusion, social responsibility and environmental sustainability, Busey is already doing great things in the world of ESG,” she says.



“It makes sense—if your goal is to deliver long-lasting value to shareholders, customers, associates and communities, embedding these principles is key.”

Emily Cross Vayr | Vice President, Director of Environmental, Social & Governance Strategy & Reporting



DEFINING A FRAMEWORK

In an increasingly transparent corporate landscape, companies with solid ESG positioning are more likely to grow. As younger generations enter the work force and become leaders, highlighting Busey’s values in action provides great benefit to attracting and retaining top talent.



ENVIRONMENTAL

Gauges to what degree an organization considers the protection of natural resources. These factors include environmental stewardship, climate change and energy consumption.



SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability has been a core focus since Busey earned its Illinois Green Business Certification in 2012. We continue to pursue sustainable improvements across our footprint that are not only good for the planet but also have a strong return on investment.



SOCIAL

Examines how an organization treats people, including associate engagement, customer satisfaction and community relations.

The results of Busey’s established infrastructure and award-winning programs can be seen in our strong associate engagement scores (4.28/5.0), eight-year-average associate tenure and the 43 percent of associates actively engaged in development programs. With over \$1 million donated annually, Busey also financed critical needs in our communities like scholarships, youth programs, animal welfare, health initiatives and court advocacy.



GOVERNANCE

Examines how a corporation regulates itself—focusing on internal system controls and practices to maintain compliance. This includes transparency, best practices, organization management and associated growth initiatives.

“With exceptional boards and leadership, robust internal departments and systems,

For Busey, it’s about embedding ESG to better deliver on our **Busey Promise:**

**Service Excellence
in Everything
We Do for Our Pillars.**

Busey’s strong risk management and proactive regulatory compliance programs create a strong organizational foundation and provide the basis of our ESG initiatives. “We are helping clients meet their sustainability needs; building on our existing strengths in associate talent attraction and development and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; leveraging our strong Community Banking and philanthropic community support; and continuing to build strong corporate governance,” says Emily.

We also are building on over 10 years of improving our corporate environmental footprint, because we know that as we reduce our impact on the planet, we also increase efficiency and reduce operation costs. When you take this together, it is about pulling all of these areas together into one cohesive ESG strategy to support Busey’s strategic priorities.”

Busey’s collective strengths position us to build a program that is both sustainable and scalable, committed to building upon Busey’s legacy of purposeful and sustained economic, environmental and social impact.

For more information about Busey’s corporate and social responsibilities, or to read the precursor to our upcoming ESG report—the 2020 Corporate and Social Responsibilities report—visit busey.com/csr.



sending **STRENGTH** and *support*

AS HURRICANE IAN SURGED, BUSEY RESPONDED

Leadership and Teams Acted Swiftly to Help
Support Associates, Customers and Communities

On Friday, September 23, internal Busey email communications regarding Tropical Depression Nine, a storm off the coast of southwest Florida, began circulating to alert teams to potential dangers. By Tuesday, September 27, all four Busey centers in its Florida Region were closed to help protect associates and customers. The next day, on Wednesday, September 28, at approximately 3:15 p.m. ET, Hurricane Ian—now a fierce Category 4 storm with sustained winds topping more than 150 miles per hour—made landfall in Cayo Costa, Florida, before carving a path of destruction through southwest Florida and inland.

The scale of the wreckage was staggering, even to Florida residents who had survived and rebuilt after other powerful hurricanes. The storm pulverized roads, toppled trees, gutted downtown storefronts and set cars afloat, leaving a soggy scar of ruined homes and businesses from the coastal cities of Naples and Fort Myers to inland communities around Orlando. It claimed the lives of more than 100 residents, left millions without power and caused early estimates of damage near or above \$100 billion.

“The more and more I drive around the more and more unbelievable and hard to comprehend the magnitude of the damage is,” says Charles Idelson, Executive Vice President and Regional President of Florida for Busey. “This storm didn’t hit one area, it hit 100 miles of area. It’s just devastating. So many have lost so much and are dealing with so many various issues just to make it through a day.”

Stacy Cruz, Vice President and Digital Banking Relationship Manager at Busey, who works

virtually from her home in Florida, said she was fortunate, sustaining minimal structural damage to her home. But, she added, the frightening moment the storm hit while she and her family—including her husband, children and grandchildren—were hunkered down will never leave her.

“It lasted so, so long,” she says. “You’re all boarded up and you can’t see anything. All you can do is listen. And it sounded awful. We felt safe in the house at first, but then we started having leaks, and you’re thinking the roof is going to blow off. So, you hear all this banging and the wind is howling and the roof is leaking and you still can’t see anything ... and this is going on for hours while your whole family is there in the house with you. It’s terrifying.”

ASSOCIATE ASSISTANCE

Shortly after the storm raged through southwest Florida on September 28, Busey teams quickly got to work calling Florida associates for wellness check phone screenings to ensure they all were safe and to gauge their needs. By 5 p.m., nearly all associates were confirmed safe, and by 7:30 p.m., Amy Randolph, Chief of Staff and Executive Vice President, Pillar Relations for Busey, announced in an email to all staff “the best news of the day,” that all Florida associates were confirmed safe, and that the company’s full attention and focus was now on supporting those associates, customers and communities for as long as needed.

The company quickly reactivated the **Associate Assistance Fund**. Created during the Covid-19 pandemic, the fund assists associates and their families experiencing hardships due to qualified disasters, like Hurricane Ian, and is available

through a confidential request process.

Associates can also get help through the company’s **Employee Assistance Program, ComPsych**, which is available to all associates and household members and provides confidential emotional support, access to work-life solution specialists for qualified referrals and resources such as finding child and elder care or home repair contractors, as well as financial experts to discuss budgeting, relocation, insurance and more.

*"We are
so fortunate
to be part of an organization
like Busey which really
cares about its employees."*

To help its Florida associates as they meet with contractors, insurance adjusters or tend to other personal needs, Busey provided each associate with additional paid time off to use at their discretion. Additionally, the company provided each Florida associate with a \$250 Publix grocery store gift card.

“We are so fortunate to be part of an organization like Busey which really cares about its employees,” Charles says. “That’s what enticed me to join the Busey family, and it’s proven true time and time again through those years.”

Stacy agrees.

“Just the things that Busey has done, like the gift cards and the extra time off, it’s things you normally take for granted, but things that were absolutely critical for us early on,” she says. “And then, just the fact that they paid us, whether we could work or not ... not every company would do that. And for a lot of people, missing even one paycheck can put them in a hole that’s difficult to get out of.

“Busey has been simply amazing,” Stacy continues. “There are no words to describe it, and

it feels like thank you just isn’t enough for what they’re doing for the associates in Florida. Instead of just saying they care about us, they’ve shown us they truly mean it with what they’ve done.”

Jon Engh, Senior Vice President and Commercial Relationship Manager Team Lead in Fort Myers, FL, who has been with Busey since 2012, says the company’s actions to support its associates following the storm has confirmed what he has long felt, that they truly care.

“It’s not just a slogan or a marketing pitch,” he says. “I’ve been with Busey a long time, and I’ve never heard of or seen a company—no matter what size—step up for their employees the way Busey has. It’s been beyond impressive, and I know it’s been incredibly meaningful for so many of our associates in the region.”

It’s been eye-opening for non-associates as well.

Jon recounted a story of a conversation he had a few weeks after the storm with his friend, Alex Sanchez, who serves as President and CEO of the Florida Bankers Association (FBA). The FBA had set up its own assistance fund for member bank employees to receive assistance during the recovery, but Alex noticed that no Busey employees had applied. So, he called Jon to find out why.

“Jon told me about what Busey was doing to help their employees—the assistance fund, the gift cards and everything else—and I was completely blown away,” Alex says. “What Busey has done to help its team in Florida is simply amazing, and well above and beyond the call of duty.”

According to Alex, it’s a testament to the strong, thoughtful and compassionate leadership at Busey.

“I would encourage every bank, every corporation, to emulate what Busey is doing, because in a tremendous time of need, the leadership team at Busey is emphatically showing its Florida employees that they are committed

Continued on page 10



to them,” Alex says. “To be honest, I really feel Busey has to be a top 25 best company to work for nationally. The investment the organization made to help its team in Florida ... what a remarkable commitment, what a strong message to the employees that Busey is there for them, and what a great example in how to treat and take care of employees for other organizations to follow.”

LONG RECOVERY

While the storm passed, what Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis described as a “yearslong recovery” remains. For Busey, with its associates confirmed safe, the beginning of the recovery meant getting its service centers operational as quickly as possible for customers. Through hard work from teams across Busey, and utter determination from the Florida team, three of its four centers were re-opened within just over two weeks from the storm’s landfall.

According to Stacy, she wasn’t sure if re-opening the centers so soon was the right call.

“Then you get four people stepping up and opening a branch, and it energized us all,” she says. “Thank goodness the people who make those decisions were making them for people like us who were not emotionally ready to make them, because it was absolutely the right call. Customers did come in,

people did need us, and we needed them.”

Stacy talks about a story she heard of a customer who had lost everything in the storm coming in to get a new debit card.

“She broke down and cried. Just getting a new debit card brought her to tears,” she says. “It’s a piece of plastic we all rarely think twice about, but she had nothing left and it was a lifeline to her. This entire situation is just so emotionally overwhelming.”

To help support its Florida customers, on October 7 Busey announced that fees that had been charged since Wednesday, September 28, were retroactively refunded, and going forward those fees were waived through October 31, 2022. The company also implemented a **Payment Relief Modification Program** for existing commercial customers.

Busey also created a dedicated hurricane relief webpage on its corporate site at busey.com/hurricanesupport with easy access to service center availability, account resources, fraud prevention resources, federal disaster assistance information and FAQs.

Additionally, since filing insurance claims following a natural disaster can be overwhelming, Busey developed an **Insurance Claim Guide** to support

customers with understanding and navigating the process of accessing and managing insurance check funds.

While Busey has re-opened three of its four centers in the region, its other center in Cape Coral sustained extensive damage and couldn’t be re-opened in that timeframe. However, a mobile banking unit had been set up onsite for customer access by the last week of October.

Another of Busey’s four locations in southwest Florida, Red Cedar, normally the base of operations for the region’s wealth management team, was re-opened and serves as a Relief Center where associates can stock up on supplies and utilize office space.

The week of October 10, a leadership contingent from Busey’s Central Region in Illinois, including Amy Randolph, Executive Vice President of Retail Banking Nancy Weimer, Senior Vice President and Director of Facilities and Chief Security Officer Sheri Boberg, and Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Jeff Jones, made the trip to Florida to help set up the Relief Center and check-in with the associates to see what they needed.

“The minute I saw Amy, Sheri, Nancy and Jeff, I just

cried,” Stacy says. “Them just being here ... when you go through something like this, you just want to be with people. So, it meant so much that they traveled down here to see us and help us.”

Amy, who shed her fair share of tears as well during the trip, said spending a few days in Florida with the associates was at once devastating and inspiring.

“Being there in person you get a completely different level of understanding of the damage and just how truly difficult the situation is for them,” she says. “But it also shines a light on just how remarkable our Florida team really is. The way they have all come together for each other, for our customers and for Busey as an organization in the face of such trying circumstances is simply astonishing.”

Charles agrees.

“We have such a tremendous team here in Florida. In 50 years in banking, I don’t think I had ever met a group of people that I could really call my family, but that’s exactly what this team is to me, my family,” he says. “That’s what makes me so confident that we’ll get through this. It’s not going to be overnight, but we’ll get through it and be better for it when we do.”

keeping family

IN THE FAMILY BUSINESS

Generations of
Patels Find
Success in the
Hospitality Industry

Since immigrating to the U.S. from India, the Patel family tree has grown many branches with family members taking many different paths. For most members, however, all paths eventually led to one destination—the hospitality industry.

With their first entity established more than 40 years ago, the Patel family has successfully navigated the changing values and economic conditions of the lodging industry, effectively distinguishing itself from competitors with a hands-on approach and a clear, focused vision in a highly segmented market.

"We operate our hotels, so we are there - getting to know what our customers want and expect."

"My family has so much experience in this industry, and we don't just own the properties, we operate them as well," says Parsottam "PB" Patel, who joined the family business in 2000. "We don't treat it like investment real estate, hiring a third party to come in and manage it. We operate our hotels, so we're there getting to know what our customers want and expect. I feel that's been a big part of our success since the beginning."

The family business roots were planted in 1981 by Devchand "Dev" and Jivan "JJ" Patel when they started a small "mom-and-pop" operation with one hotel. From there, the operation began to grow as more properties were added and more family members joined the business.

"Early on, even if you didn't have a lot of capital but were willing to enlist the time and effort it takes to be successful, the hospitality industry was very attractive," says PB. "Family members were coming from India to the U.S. on student VISAs to study and

started to work in the business to make spending money. After a while, the industry just got in their blood."

In 2003, the Sunrise Hospitality corporation was established, and the family continued to expand their business portfolio to more than 40 hotels and successful streams of revenue throughout Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Pennsylvania. The portfolio includes major hospitality brands such as Marriott, Hilton, Hampton and Holiday Inn as well as others, in product categories to fit various consumer budgets and tastes.

Sunrise Hospitality's hotel products include mid-priced, full-service, all-suite extended stay and limited-service operations. Potential lodgers find their properties just off the highway, near the airports and within a variety of suburban communities. Knowing the market has enabled Sunrise and other Patel family entities to strategically build and brand each of their hotel locations—providing the right product at the right price and at the right time.



The Sunrise Hospitality Corporation

The Patels' business acumen and hands-on approach became paramount with the onset of the COVID pandemic in early 2020. As travel became severely restricted and stay-at-home orders were enacted, the hospitality industry quickly began feeling the financial impact.

To ease the burden, many Patel family members harkened back to the early days of the company, taking over duties such as housekeeping and maintenance while living on-property, which enabled them to manage expenses and keep the properties up and running.

"COVID had a major impact across the entire hospitality industry," PB says. "Over the first three months our occupancy dropped down to single-digit numbers, which made it very difficult. We could have temporarily closed down some properties, but we decided to keep them open. After sixth months or so, our occupancy numbers began to very slowly rise, and by 2021 we were back completely."

And since then, business has been booming, enough so that the Patels are once again actively looking for new and profitable opportunities for investment, development and customer service. Aiming for steady and strategic growth, the group gladly partners with those who believe success can come from continued contact with the customer base, an emphasis on excellent service and a focus on effective and efficient management.

"Our mission to always know and offer the products and services our customer base desires has added to our success over the years and fuels our growth goals for the future," PB says.

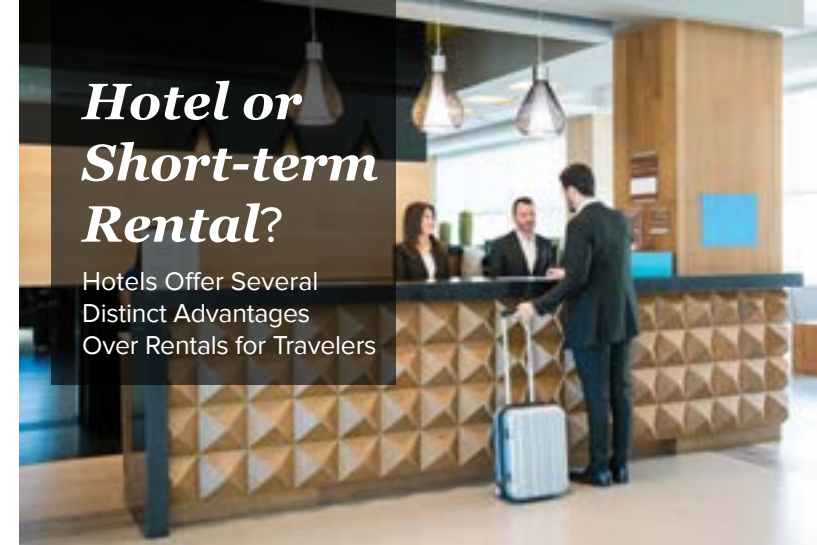
Another goal, he said, is to pass the torch of the family business to the next generation of Patel hoteliers.

"The first generation of family who started the business and have been growing and operating the properties since the beginning all have kids who have now graduated college," he says.

"They all have very good backgrounds in the industry and are all smart, educated individuals. So, we've put together some portfolios managed by this second generation to help them gain the knowledge they need to take over the business and take it to the next level."

Hotel or Short-term Rental?

Hotels Offer Several
Distinct Advantages
Over Rentals for Travelers



In recent years, vacation rental apps such as Airbnb have made short-term rentals much more accessible to the average traveler. The alternative to a vacation rental is a hotel stay, which leaves many guests to weigh the pros and cons of rentals versus hotels. While the decision on which to choose comes down to personal preference, there are several advantages to staying at a hotel.

CONSISTENCY

Travelers can take comfort in knowing exactly what to expect when they walk into a hotel room. From cleanliness to room size to service to quality, there are rarely surprises.

SAFETY

Security measures vary widely among online rentals. Hotels, on the other hand, have trained staff, surveillance systems, security guards, emergency response plans and connections with local law enforcement to help keep you safe.

AMENITIES

While amenities vary from hotel to hotel, typically they include housekeeping, WiFi, pools and fitness centers, restaurants and room service, laundry service and in-room toiletries.

LOYALTY PROGRAMS

Major hoteliers offer loyalty programs, where points can be redeemed for free nights, upgrades or other gifts.

MEALS

From complimentary breakfast to room service to fine dining, having easy access to food can make life on the road a lot easier.

RELIABILITY

Airbnb hosts can cancel at the last minute, leaving renters scrambling for a new place to stay. Hotels will find a way to accommodate every reservation, even if it means a free upgrade to the Presidential Suite.

LOCATION

Hotels generally are found in the center of cities or conveniently off major interstates, while Airbnb properties are often in neighborhoods far from public transportation and major tourist attractions.



MAKING AN IMPACT IN OUR COMMUNITIES

BUSEY JOINS
VICTORY OVER VIOLENCE
CAMPAIGN

With a commitment to bettering the places where we live and work, Busey joined other Champaign, IL, area businesses and organizations in July 2022 to support Investment for Impact, an initiative in partnership with Victory over Violence.

Like many communities across the country, Champaign County has seen a rise in violent crime, especially among youth and young adults. Investment for Impact will provide an additional \$300,000 allocated to the United Way of Champaign County towards Victory over Violence grants to address immediate solutions to violent crime, as well as long-term solutions to remedy the underlying factors and patterns that lead to future violent behavior. Victory Over Violence, which launched in 2021, is a solutions-driven response to address violence. The initiative was organized by WCIA 3, a Champaign-based news station covering central Illinois, and the United Way of Champaign County.

Together with Carle Health, Christie Clinic, OSF HealthCare, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the United Way, Busey will support proven strategies that work towards solutions to violence, building a brighter future and changing the statistics. Through a variety of programs and services, Investment for Impact will give children—especially those from under-resourced

neighborhoods or living in high-poverty conditions—the help they need and deserve.

Fostering social connectedness and belonging among youth in the community is an integral part of disrupting the cycle of violence. The initiative will do this by supporting youth development programs, afterschool and summer programming that focuses on academics, and attendance and programming that builds social-emotional persistence and intelligence. It will work to stop violence and promote safety through emphasizing enforcement, street-based violence interruption, trauma and emotional supports, family engagement and wrap-around supports.



For more information on Busey’s community-focused initiatives, visit busey.com/newsroom.

AND THE WINNER IS...

ASSOCIATE AND ENTERPRISE AWARDS
RECOGNIZE SERVICE EXCELLENCE

With over 1,500 associates living the **Busey Promise** of **service excellence**, Busey’s dedicated team is behind our award-winning workplace.



This year, Busey was one of three financial institutions honored with the **Illinois Bankers Association’s 2022 Community Service Award**.

This award is presented to organizations that go “above and beyond” in the area of community service and honors an institution’s entire portfolio of community service projects, not just a single project.

The nomination hinged on four initiatives that highlight our powerful demonstrations of community involvement:

- Busey Drives Generosity
- Little Free Libraries
- Community Promise Month
- Community Connection at Busey



We are also pleased to announce Busey was recognized as a **2022 Leading Disability Employer** by the National Organization on Disability (NOD), a first-ever recognition for the organization.

This highly selective award is given to only the top performing companies demonstrating positive outcomes in recruiting, hiring, retaining and advancing people with disabilities in their workforces.

The award prioritizes practices that are associated with increased disability employment outcomes over time, and companies receive additional points based on the percentage of people with disabilities in their workforce.

40 UNDER 40

ASSOCIATE SPOTLIGHT

With a relentless drive to provide **service excellence** every day, we are proud to recognize the following associates for their tireless commitment to Busey and the communities we serve.

Angela Balcor, Andy Shaw, Randi Potter and **Tim Spears** are named among this year's **Forty Under 40 honorees**.

ANGELA BALCOR | VICE PRESIDENT, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING

A selflessly devoted leader to her team, Angela is committed not only to elevating those around her, but also to building a seamless end-to-end experience for Busey's clients. Her opinion is highly sought after due to her extensive knowledge and ability to inspire others with her creativity. Angela embraces excellence in all she does and displays it every day by serving as a model of integrity and building trust with those around her. Angela serves on the board of various non-profits like the Center for Human Enterprise Solutions and the Urbana Neighborhood Connection. Her passion for the community and its youth is evident in all that she does as a mom, business professional and community member.



Randi Potter | SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY & BUSINESS SYSTEMS

Since joining Busey in 2012, Randi has demonstrated a solid commitment to moving the organization forward with innovative ideas and transformational leadership skills. With her passion for helping others, she is a proven problem solver who drives change and is readily available to assist her team members to achieve their career objectives. Recognizing the need to develop support programs encouraging women to seek opportunities within the technology industry, Randi leads multiple efforts to raise awareness and increase involvement of women in STEM. Known for her dependability, communication skills, technical expertise and meticulous follow-through, Randi is a tenacious leader who serves as a role model for others.



ANDY SHAW | VICE PRESIDENT, DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE INSIGHTS & INFORMATION

Andy is both highly respected and admired by those who know him best. Personally and professionally, he encourages others with his humility, team-based approach, positive attitude and commitment to the people around him. His honesty, gratitude and commitment are regarded immensely by his superiors and teammates alike. In his time at Busey, Andy has touched the hearts of many, across every level of the organization. He stands out as a hardworking mentor—also lending his time and talents to charitable organizations in the community, including Habitat for Humanity of Champaign County and the Christie Clinic Illinois Marathon.



TIM SPEARS | OFFICER & COMMERCIAL PORTFOLIO MANAGER 40 LEADERS UNDER FORTY

Tim, who joined Busey in 2021, is genuine, knowledgeable, friendly and trustworthy—connecting him to customers and associates alike. Tim personifies many of Busey's core values and, as a result, is a highly trusted, highly respected and sought-after business partner. A native of Peoria, IL, he's committed to giving back, working with organizations like the ITOO Society and the City of Peoria. Tim also serves on the Peoria Area Performing Arts Studio board of directors, lending his time and talents to support arts and entertainment opportunities for local students. His demeanor and dedication to our organization and the community around him embody the true spirit of the **Busey Promise**.

Thank you for your commitment to Team Busey and the places we call home. Congratulations to all the award recipients!

DOORWAYS OF HOPE

Expansion Bolsters St. Louis Non-Profit in Decades-Long Fight Against HIV/AIDS



The discovery of HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) in 1983 by French virologist Luc Montagnier and the proof that it was the cause of AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) a year later were important first steps in the attempt to eradicate the disease.

However, despite advancements in medicine and care which have rendered the disease treatable and allowed many affected to live normal lives, new infections continue to occur, disproportionately impacting racial and ethnic populations, the homeless and those with mental health issues. Today, there are more than 1.2 million people living with HIV in the U.S., and there are more than 35,000 new infections each year.

“We’re still seeing a large and growing population of HIV-positive clients, the majority of whom are living in poverty and many who are experiencing some form of mental illness,” says Opal Jones, President and CEO of DOORWAYS, the lone organization in the St. Louis, MO, area with a sole mission to provide affordable, secure housing and services to people living with HIV/AIDS. “These people need help, and we are going to do everything in our power to provide that.”

For DOORWAYS, that meant expansion to increase client intake as well as expanded services to meet the changing needs of the clients they serve. On October 19, after nearly six years of planning, fundraising and construction, the organization opened its new campus and headquarters in North St. Louis. The expansion was the largest and most important effort, by far, for DOORWAYS, according to Opal.

But it wasn’t the first for the organization in its fight against HIV/AIDS.

LEAP OF FAITH

Founded in 1988, DOORWAYS began as an interfaith non-profit organization providing hospice service out of St. Mary’s Hospital in Richmond Heights, MO. It was organized when faith leaders from the Catholic Church, a Jewish synagogue, the United Church of Christ, and the Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian Church communities united with area civic leaders to offer compassionate care and allow those with AIDS to die with dignity.

Initial hospice operations were conducted out of a long-vacant landmark building in the Central West End area of St. Louis. The facility would later be officially named Cooper House, in tribute to long-time agency president Lynne Cooper.

As medications evolved and treatments became available, DOORWAYS responded by shifting its focus from caring for the dying to rebuilding lives for the living. Cooper House offers 24/7 nursing assistance, support with activities of daily living, nutritional support, meals and snacks, social services and recreational therapy. Staff coordinate with client medical providers and offer transportation to doctor’s visits while nursing staff track vitals and dispense medications, which include the anti-retroviral (ART) medications that can suppress HIV, making it untransmissible.

“While some Cooper House residents require full nursing care, others benefit from one-on-one care coordination, regain their health and are able to move to a more independent living situation,” Opal says.

FACES OF CHANGE

As HIV became medically manageable, clients increasingly needed a “next step” once they regained health, and DOORWAYS was there to deliver.

The agency underwent its first expansion to build permanent housing in 1991 and continued through 2010 to construct eight apartment buildings with 103 units total, including three- and four-bedroom apartments for larger families, uncommon in subsidized affordable housing. They also offer permanent housing through leased apartments for families in crisis; 60 days of emergency housing in leased units to help clients stabilize after suffering homelessness; and rent/utility subsidies for clients in their own accommodations but in need of financial assistance to prevent homelessness.

“Housing has been the foundation of our mission over the past 30-plus years,” Opal says. “It’s such a critical component of health. When these individuals have safe and stable housing, we can effectively provide the treatment they need, which in turn leads to the prevention of the spread of the disease.”

This fact became increasingly apparent as the face of HIV began to change in the 1990s and 2000s.

With medical treatments, people with stable housing, healthcare, financial means, education and community support—also known as the Social Determinants of

Health (SDOH)—were able to manage the illness, living near-normal lives. For people battling a legacy of poverty, however, their SDOH had collapsed, which allowed HIV to rise to epidemic levels among the poor and the homeless.

DOORWAYS fought to keep up with ever-increasing demand, expanding supportive services accompanying the housing to meet the needs of this invisible population, a vulnerable and disenfranchised community ignored by many in society.

“Clients would often come to us with nothing, just the clothes on their back, and not even sure when they last ate,” says Opal. “While able to provide several days of food, our care coordinators quickly linked new clients with food pantries and helped them enroll in benefit programs providing income and food stamps. We also added an employment specialist to guide clients through a job search. For other needs, staff offered our clients referrals to outside resources to build a comprehensive network of services.”

Despite their best efforts, over the past 15 years or so, staff witnessed worsening client conditions as more and more arrived with mental health and substance abuse challenges. Out of space to further expand, DOORWAYS developed relationships with external counselors and built a strong referral list to meet broader needs. But when anchored in substance abuse and/or physical, mental and emotional illness, clients are unable to thrive. And with barriers related to transportation, lack of experience with insurance and scheduling appointments, lack of childcare, fear, feeling too ill, or any other host of obstacles, most clients were not following through with referrals.

“It became increasingly clear that it’s nearly impossible for anyone to retain housing and manage a medical regimen with so many life-limiting challenges,” Opal says. “Housing provides a foundation of stability, but our clients also need 360 degrees of services to rebuild their lives. That requires focus on strengthening their environments with the social determinants of health. But our clients today lack the pathways to resources needed to change the trajectory of their lives.”

DOORWAYS knew that if it is to keep up with ever-changing needs of those it’s trying to help, change was again needed within the organization itself.

Continued on page 20

EXPANSION

After 34 years of adapting to client needs, DOORWAYS once again was looking to expand, not only in physical structure with new land and buildings, but in services offered to those in need.

“We undertook an extensive analysis before launching a \$40 million capital campaign to develop a new campus that will allow us to expand services and model new approaches to healthcare delivery,” says Opal. “This pioneering effort will remove access and navigational barriers by using housing as the delivery system for 360 degrees of service, provided collaboratively by DOORWAYS and partner agencies.”

In-depth expansion research with consultants began nearly six years ago. Once results showed DOORWAYS had the capacity to undertake such a momentous effort, the board approved the plans for expansion two years later. They began working with architects and launched fundraising efforts with both public and private funding strategies, with a Capital Campaign Committee managing day-to-day progress and reporting to the full board.

DOORWAYS exceeded fundraising estimates thanks to broad support of the project. Of note, they received five multimillion-dollar private gifts. In public funding, they received several over \$1 million and many over \$500,000. Additionally, several of those public requests were approved in full on the first round—a rare occurrence.

They also received support from the St. Louis financial community. Busey Bank, a long-time partner with DOORWAYS, helped provide several funding instruments including Federal Tax Credit Equity and Capital Campaign bridge loans, permanent loans on the residential and administrative buildings, the original loan for the land purchase and lines of credit. Overall, Busey has provided nearly \$15 million of funding to the project.

“Obviously, a development of this magnitude wouldn’t be possible for us without help from partners in the community,” says Opal. “Busey has been a big part of that in every stage of this project, not only with financing, but with advice and support along the way.”

While Cooper House will remain in operation providing assistance for individuals unable to live independently, DOORWAYS’ new North St. Louis campus—designed to meet certification under the 2015 Enterprise Green Communities green building rating system—includes a multi-story 35,000 square foot structure with 50 housing units to accommodate up to 112 people in housing crisis. The clients will sign a lease for a one-or two-bedroom unit with private bath and kitchenette. The housing building includes a laundry, computer room, community room and recreational spaces for children.

Additionally, a new 20,000 sq. ft. structure will be used for integrated programming by DOORWAYS and

partner agencies, with private client intake rooms, life-skills classrooms, a provisions pantry, conference rooms, a volunteer center and—most importantly—private counseling offices to bring behavioral health services on site.

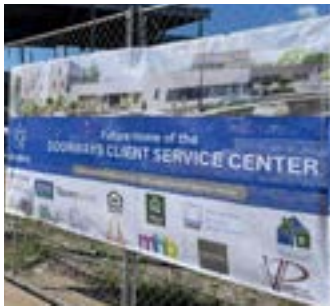
Clients will be able to participate in individual and group therapy for mental health and/or substance use needs where they live.

With additional living space now available, as well as increased capacity for integrated programming, DOORWAYS is also expanding services for those in need to include:

- **Food through its Provisions Pantry supported by Food Outreach**
- **Ryan White medical case managers to see clients on campus**
- **An internal behavioral health program with two DOORWAYS counselors, supplemented by doctoral practicum students that will reduce wait times from months to weeks**
- **Education through self-development programs and partnerships**
- **Employment services by two employment staff and partners offering job training, job fairs and more**
- **Social activities to create a sense of fellowship and community among residents**

According to Opal, the decision to expand and all the hard work to make that a reality was done with one goal in mind.

“We expect more clients to maintain their medication/medical regimen, improving their health and quality of life while achieving undetectable HIV status, which renders the virus untransmittable,” she says. “This is a fundamental step that will help us move the needle for caring for people with HIV and ending the epidemic.”



*Shown From L to R: **Edward Paine**, Senior Vice President, Specialty Finance & Community Investments Director, **Pat Buehring**, Executive Vice President, Market President, Commercial Banking, **Opal Jones**, President & CEO of DOORWAYS, **Brad Beube**, Senior Vice President, Regional Manager, **Tom Reeves**, Executive Vice President, Market Chairman*





a helping hand

FOR LOCAL STUDENTS

“This scholarship will help me with the financial struggles that come with college, it can help clear any debt I owe and buy the things I need for my classes.”

Virgie Jones | Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville
Busey Bank Bridge Scholarship Recipient

Before students headed off to the fall semester of college this year, Busey was honored to recognize the scholastic achievements and bright futures of nine deserving individuals through the Busey Bank Bridge Scholarship fund.

“This year’s Busey Bank Bridge Scholarship recipients clearly demonstrated a solid commitment to furthering their education,” says Chip Jorstad, Executive Vice President - President of Credit and Bank Administration.

“Busey has a long history of supporting communities throughout our footprint. We’re proud to be able to offer financial support to local students in many of our markets through the scholarship fund.”

Available in select counties across our footprint in Illinois, Missouri, Florida and Indiana, the Busey Bank Bridge Scholarship supports the academic endeavors of low-to-moderate income students with a desire to continue their higher education. The \$2,500 scholarship is earmarked for tuition, fees, books and/or supplies. After meeting eligibility requirements and submitting required documentation, applications were carefully considered and reviewed by a Busey-appointed committee.

BUSEY IS PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THIS YEAR’S SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Joseph Awinongya	Chavier Marshall
Nina Fedorko	Maleah Perry
Olivia Fedorko	Evan Ortiz
Cheyenne Grady	Paul Ruchal
Virgie Jones	

ASPIRATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

As you might imagine, the recipients’ experiences are varied and uniquely their own. Parents who put their dreams to the side to care for their growing families and are now ready to continue their education. A student who graduated near the top of their high school class and is the first to attend college in their family. A mid-life career change prompted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic motivating one parent to build a better life for their family. An affinity for science and physics leading another toward their dream of one day earning a PhD in astrophysics.

Virgie Jones has her sights set on a degree in civil engineering. After attending an introductory workshop in engineering at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE), she made the decision to pursue her dream there, as well.

In her heartfelt application essay, Virgie shared her wish of starting an engineering program at her former high school to give other interested students the same opportunity to learn—and maybe even create her own scholarship fund one day as another way to give back to her community.

Now in her junior year at Illinois State University, Olivia Fedorko is diligently working to earn her Bachelor of Science in Nursing with the hope of specializing in pediatrics. While she has always loved being around children, she was inspired by watching the compassionate nurses at St. Louis Children’s Hospital care for a close friend fighting cancer.

“After my experiences at the hospital, I found myself reflecting on the love I had witnessed from the caregivers,” she wrote in her essay. “It was here that the thought of pediatric nursing took root. I suddenly understood that caring for children in their moments of distress was the path I wanted to take.”

Financially supporting herself through college, Olivia says the Busey Bank Bridge Scholarship is providing the extra assistance that she needs.

“Not only do I have tuition and room and board, but I have to have a car to get to my clinicals that are about 30 minutes away,” says Olivia. “Finances are becoming a bigger and bigger barrier to my degree—this scholarship is helping me finish it without as much of a struggle.”

As a mom of four, Chavier Marshall paused college plans after high school and made family her priority. Today, she is back in school and working toward her licensed practical nursing (LPN) diploma—calling her children her “motivation to do better.”

“They’re a major reason why I am so driven to go back to school and make more of my life,” Chavier wrote in her application.

After earning her LPN, she has plans to work toward a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

“The Busey Bank Bridge Scholarship will assist me with the cost of my tuition so that I can obtain the education that is required for the LPN program,” says Chavier, who is attending Capital Area School of Practical Nursing in Springfield, IL. “It’s a major accomplishment, as well as a steppingstone, to further my education and a path to go further in my career and life.”

While applications are no longer being accepted in 2022, the opportunity will be available again next year for eligible students.

To learn more about the Busey Bank Bridge Scholarship, visit busey.com/scholarship.

GROWING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSEY ASSOCIATES

Educational Assistance Program Available

Fostering an environment of learning has been integral to Busey’s commitment to service excellence for more than 150 years. By ensuring our associates have opportunities for growth and development, we can continue to better serve the needs of our customers and communities.

Along with internal career development programs, associates are encouraged to consider formal education opportunities outside of the organization. The Busey Educational Assistance Program is a benefit designed to provide cost assistance for those eligible associates pursuing associate, undergraduate or graduate degrees and non-degree relevant courses, along with professional certifications, designations and licensure programs.

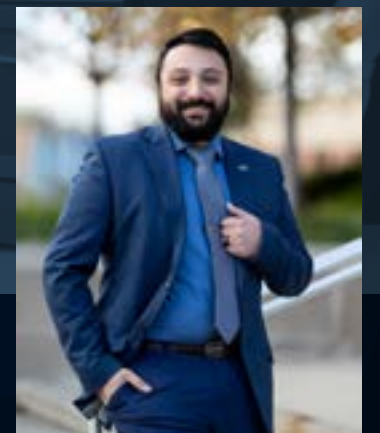
Anish Mehta, Vice President – Area Manager II with Busey, took part in the program and subsequently earned his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.

“I really appreciated the idea that Busey would help me pursue my degree focus, especially since it was already business related,” says Anish. “This really helped me save a lot of money on educational costs so that I could focus on saving and paying down other expenses.”

Currently, full-time associates who meet eligibility requirements can receive up to \$6,300 per calendar year for college courses to cover tuition, fees, books and other class equipment for approved courses. Courses must be business and/or job related, and taken at nationally recognized accredited colleges, universities and technical schools.

“I definitely would have gone back to school regardless,” says Anish, who joined Busey in 2013, “but the educational assistance helped out a great deal and took a lot of the stress out of it.”

To learn more about Busey’s Total Rewards and career opportunities, visit busey.com/careers.



GROWING FORWARD

In the Northern Illinois Region

Busey Expands Schaumburg Location

In September, Busey was pleased to grow its presence in the Northwest suburbs of Chicago with the expansion of our Schaumburg, IL, location. For five years, this 3,000 square foot office space was home to Busey's Government Guaranteed Lending team within our Small Business Administration (SBA) division. With steady growth and additional team members, however, they were quickly running out of room.

Seeing this pattern of continued success, Sean Gallagher, Executive Vice President - Regional President, identified further wealth and business opportunities beyond traditional urban centers in the greater Chicago market, one of which was to bring on JP Hills, Senior Vice President – Market President, to lead a new Commercial and Wealth team in this area. However, with no additional workspace for the team, an expansion was in order.

"Our opportunity in this market is immense and requires a focus on positioning the Busey brand throughout the distinct cities, towns and neighborhoods that define the area," Sean shared. "Schaumburg is of unique strategic importance to our efforts here."

Today, with an array of offices, cubicles and expansive board conference rooms equipped with video conferencing capabilities, the new 10,000 square foot space has more than enough room to house the Commercial, Wealth Management, Private Client and SBA teams. The building also features hotel workspace for visiting Busey partners, an onsite restaurant, lounge and ample parking opportunities. The new space is conveniently located off I-90 and Roselle Road in Schaumburg.

Since arriving in the Chicagoland area in 2017, Busey made a commitment to provide premier services to our clients—and it continues today. Our long-term generational approach to banking means Busey customers can rely on us to provide the services they need, when they need them, for generations.

Building Business. Growing Wealth. Since 1868.



A glimpse inside the newly expanded Schaumburg office space housing Commercial, Wealth Management, Private Client & SBA teams

Busey's Financial Suite of Services:

