



As we celebrate the 250th birthday of our nation, the Little Rock Regional Chamber is proud to have served the metro Little Rock region for more than 160 years.

When the founders of our nation convened 250 years ago, the land we stand, work, and live on today was still a frontier. The Arkansas River served as a pathway for exploration and commerce, and the small rock noted by French explorers, La Petite Roche, would eventually give our city its name. Long before Arkansas became the 25th state in 1836, this region was already helping shape the story of America.

Arkansas has also played a defining role in our nation's ongoing pursuit of equality and opportunity. The events surrounding the integration of Little Rock Central High School became a pivotal chapter in the Civil Rights Movement, drawing the attention of the nation and helping shape the course of American history. While that chapter challenged our community, it also demonstrated the power of courage, leadership, and perseverance, values that continue to guide our region as we work to build opportunity for all.

Over the years, Arkansas has played an important role in our nation's growth. The Arkansas River has long served as an economic engine for our region, connecting communities and creating opportunities for commerce. From the development of railroads and transportation networks to the growth of manufacturing, logistics, healthcare, technology, and financial services, our region has continually adapted and evolved to meet the needs of a changing economy. That spirit of innovation, hard work, and determination continues to position Metro Little Rock as a place where businesses and people can thrive.

As many of us gather with family and friends this Independence Day, it is important to pause and reflect on the significance of this moment. Celebrating our country means recognizing the people who make it what it is today.

Communities do not prosper without people willing to invest their time, talent, and resources into building something greater than themselves. America would not be the nation it is today without entrepreneurs, business owners, workers, and leaders who show up every day and keep moving us forward.

As we look out at the Arkansas River from the Little Rock Regional Chamber building, we are reminded of how far our region has come, from a small landmark on the riverbank to a thriving center of commerce, innovation, and opportunity.

The next chapter of Arkansas' story is still being written, and together, we have the opportunity to make it one of the most prosperous and impactful in our history. Here's to the opportunities ahead and the generations who will continue shaping our region for years to come.

Wishing you and your family a safe and happy Independence Day.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay Chesshir". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jay Chesshir, CCE  
President & CEO  
Little Rock Regional Chamber