

## Build Small, Think Large

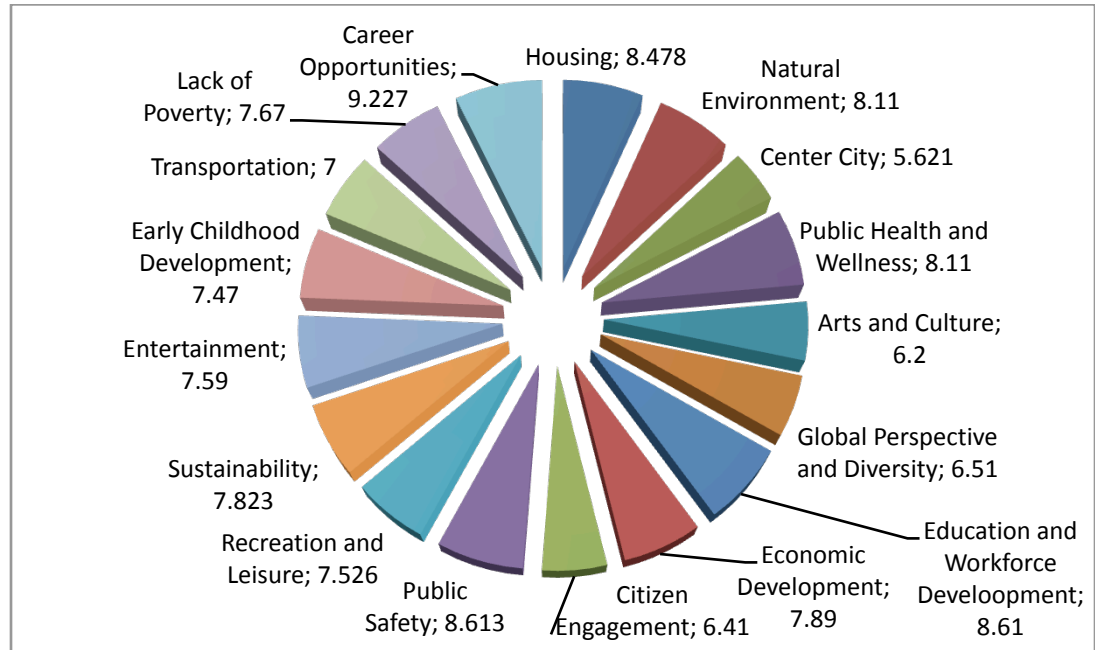
When considering the future of Springfield, Missouri many things come to mind: Ozark's beautiful natural environment, the ability to potential of its residents. The Springfield Metro area is a home, a work place, and a center for the people that live in Southwest Missouri. It is best possible future for these citizens and the best possible future for their children. To accomplish these long-term goals, small steps and action day, and every year until a larger dream is reached. These small steps will eventually lead to the city's larger goals, which will eventually lead leading the nation.

Springfield is a prime location to thrive economically, culturally, and socially. The city has all the ingredients to be the best place in the takes is solid leadership and following long-range visions. Springfield leads the nation with our Diamond Interchange; this type of leadership and development, science and technology, and high-tech manufacturing, and will establish Springfield as an economic leader. Being an economic a future that will thrive in response—trickle-up economics. The Ozark Technical Community (OTC) Visioning Challenge Team outlines seven reach the economic, social, cultural, and educational goals the people of the city want and need. It is natural for the city to continue to expand more efficiency for future endeavors.

Expansion is driven by population growth. In 2009, the Springfield metropolitan statistical area's (MSA) population was estimated at since the year 2000. In addition, Springfield's economic output doubled in the past decade; the fastest growing in Missouri and in the top fifty area's job growth accounted for more than one-third of Missouri's overall job growth, so to say that Springfield is not doing the "right things" communities throughout the country are envious of our economic growth and our standard of living, with the beauty of the Ozarks being a major the people of the Ozarks felt about their home by distributing a survey.

The survey conducted by the OTC Vision Team provided insight of OTC students desires for the future of Springfield. Students were they felt were important in becoming a long-term resident. Provided were the seventeen characteristics that students rated on a scale of one to being not important at all. They were also given an opportunity to provide written comments. OTC Students completed 679 surveys with an effective A sample size of 679 provides a 95% confidence level and a 3.65 confidence interval. This means that if 100% of the OTC student population would fall within 3.65 plus or minus of the responses received from the sample. Analysis of the survey results indicated that the students' number

the Springfield area, was career opportunities. On a scale of one to ten, career opportunities received a 9.227 rating of importance in staying in the area. Other characteristics receiving high ratings were: safety (8.613), education and workforce development (8.61), and housing (8.478). Results for all characteristics are shown in the pie chart below.



Qualitative analysis was used to interpret the written responses from the survey along with the blog’s comments. Again, the dominant theme was safety. Based on the feedback received from students, the OTC Vision Team focused its recommendations on the top three areas of importance: career opportunities, education and workforce development, and safety.

From a job’s perspective, Springfield is in a unique position. The top two employers in the city are Cox Health System and St. John’s of Missouri. Most important to this perspective is 95% of the employers in the city are small businesses with fewer than fifty employees. Springfield has added more new jobs in the last ten years than any other region in the state. Though many jobs were created, very few professions have grown with this growth.

College graduates are looking for jobs that provide opportunities for growth and advancement, something that many small companies cannot provide. As a result, college graduates often leave the area in search for better opportunities. To combat this dilemma is to recruit and create businesses that will need a highly skilled workforce.

In today's competitive environment, the city faces many challenges in recruiting new business and industry to the area. Springfield is a city of small business and the city of Springfield along with the Springfield Chamber of Commerce have done an outstanding job with small business. Economic direction is important. To provide competitive job opportunities, the city must rely on the innovation and creativity of its residents. Without research and development, the community will stagnate. The OTC Vision Team is recommending a focus on small business growth and investment, along with larger investing, will help the city continue to grow economically.

The *Equity Network* established by the Springfield Chamber of Commerce is providing an invaluable service to small business. This network provides funding for promising start-up businesses and small businesses trying to move to the next level. In addition to funding, these Angel investors are also mentors and advisors to entrepreneurs. The OTC Vision Team recommends expansion of the existing *Equity Network* by incorporating more micro-lending opportunities.

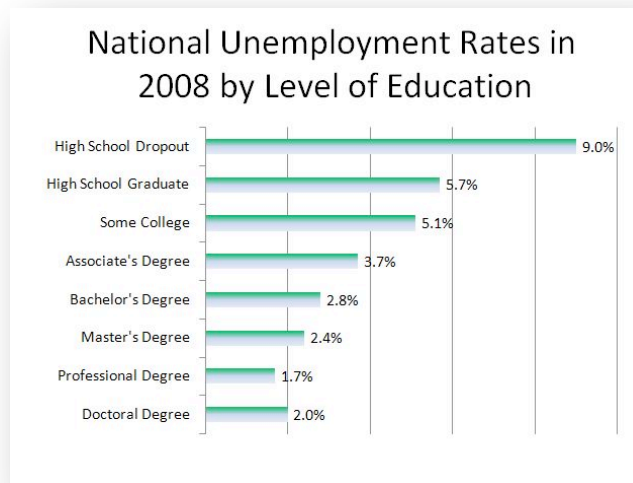
Providing capital to entrepreneurs could create an environment friendly to start-up businesses. OTC's Vision Team is recommending a program based on the concept of Paul Graham's *Y Combinator*. This organization is designed to provide seed funding, connections, and mentoring for entrepreneurs. From concept to reality is a difficult and risky stage. The organization consists of successful professionals who thrive on service through leadership. These professionals serve as mentors and consultants. They introduce entrepreneurs to potential investors and provide them with assistance on business development. Typically, the entrepreneurs come to the Organization with nothing more than a concept, a hope—a dream. Many may not even have the experience to write a business plan. The Organization may provide funding for the entrepreneur in the amount of \$10,000 to cover living expenses in exchange for a five to ten percent equity stake. Entrepreneurs are required to go through three months of education, brainstorming, and training. During this time the organization works side-by-side with the entrepreneur in developing their business, polishing up their concept, and developing an effective business plan. After going through this process, it is not uncommon for entrepreneurs to succeed dramatically.

The funding is small, but relieves the immediate stress of providing living expenses, so these entrepreneurs can be completely devoted to their business. The connections that are made and the networking provided as part of this process is an invaluable component. Connections can be made with

and larger companies. Larger companies, at times, may make buyout offers. Building an environment friendly to business feeds economic health. A competent work force to be successful. How do you train a competent workforce? Educating the workforce on all levels is the only way to prosper. Work at these small and large businesses.

Effective education deters many problems in society by prevention and is a root to economic stability. Training an effective workforce can be beneficial to the city, to businesses, and to families. A first step towards creating an educated, progressive population is to tackle the high school education campaign sponsored by the city will help curb the drop-out rate. OTC's vision team would like to introduce the Learn and Earn Education LEER campaign.

Learn and Earn is the new campaign to help the city keep their children in school. An aggressive campaign intended to reveal how decisions made in school career will change the course of their future. Designed to encourage students to choose life pathways that will lead them to a higher status career, Learn and Earn will help students make long-term decisions, better.



The campaign will include detailed profiles of real people, LEER representatives, and the decisions they made while they were young. Profiles of real individuals will be most effective and help students identify with the LEER representatives. Posters hung in high schools of the represent

young age then outlining how that decision influenced their career, education, or life, would be a financially safe step towards preventing student loan debt. A LEER campaign will also include these representatives speaking at schools and going to classrooms.

The idea behind the LEER campaign is to show students that dropping out of school to start working is not always the best decision in life. The campaign should give students real life examples where a person has dropped out of school to start working, or has turned to the types of decisions lead them down different pathways. An example of a campaign of this magnitude is the Meth addiction campaigns, with posters for addicts, similar posters could show students how dropping out of school will lower their quality of life.

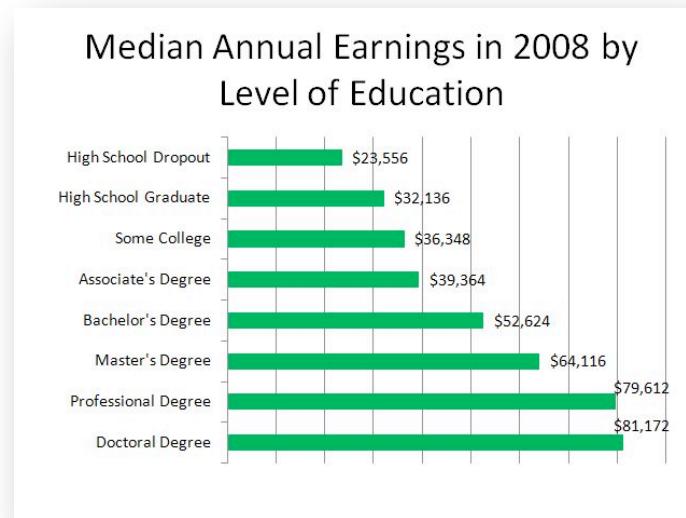
Education is an avenue to stimulate the economy. The fields of science and technology will be the careers more and more students will attain. Ozarks Technical Community College can help citizens of Springfield find their niche in the science and technology career field. OTC can help by developing new technology programs in exchange for city help in expanding OTC's footprint in the city and easing their growing pains; help the college to expand classrooms, programs, and enrollment. The new technical degrees will develop a progressive, educated workforce that will benefit all sectors for the city. An example of Association of Arts in Science degrees OTC could offer:

|                                     |                                   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Natural Resource Management         | Engineering Technician            |
| Nano Technology                     | Electrical Engineering Technician |
| 2 plus 2 degree in Entrepreneurship | Cardiovascular Technologists      |
| Paralegal                           | Forensic Science Technicians      |
| Nuclear Medicine Technologists      | Nuclear Technicians               |
| Medical Sonographer                 | Fashion Designer                  |

Collaboration between the city and OTC is essential to developing a workforce that will help sustain the economy by keeping jobs here and creating new jobs.

Many undergraduates living in the Springfield area, and wanting to stay, are limited to the professional degrees that the colleges offer. Chamber of Commerce's Vice President of Economic Development, Gregg Williams, it was mentioned that the universities in the area are looking for more technical degrees.

professional degrees. Continuing to develop professional degrees like law degrees or more doctorate degrees for undergraduates to pursue will and give them opportunities to contribute to their community. Missouri State University offers two doctorate programs in Audiology and in E Institute for Professional Psychology offers one doctorate in Clinical Psychology, and Drury University does not offer any doctorate degrees. professional options of the city's universities, and many leave to continue their education. Developing doctorate programs will not only give s education but will attract highly intelligent and motivated people to our area, which will contribute to a diverse population.



The lack of diversity appeared many times in the comment section of our surveys. Students of OTC want more diversity, culture, and : There is no way to measure how many citizens Springfield loses because of the atmosphere of non-acceptance and lack of cultural awareness. is to provide positive role models within the city leadership. If the city embraces diversity, acceptance, and culture than citizens will understa progressive city and encourages a diverse, growing population. The OTC core team suggests joining other progressive cities and becoming a Just Communities. Some cities have embraced the National Federation of Just Communities: Cincinnati, Ohio; New Brunswick, New Jersey; Tennessee; Omaha, Nebraska; Wichita, Kansas; Little Rock, Arkansas; Santa Barbara, California, and several others. These cities have chang

Springfield needs to consider not twenty years from now but a hundred years. What will the population of the World, of the United States, of Springfield citizens need to continue to thrive in Ozark Communities?

Safety was a factor that came out of the OTC surveys as important. The majority of the people left comments expressing their confidence the subject rated high among subjects rated, some improvements should be considered for the continued safety of the city. One improvement people in residential areas, school zones, college areas, business districts, and near parks. A suggestion for incorporating sidewalks in residential housing projects to have sidewalks that connect to previous sidewalks.

The city has discussed plans to connect the Ozark Greenway Trails for bikers for several years. Aggressively pursuing the plan and the whole city would not only reduce the city's carbon footprint, but also provide citizens with alternate routes of transportation. The recession has made people use their bicycles to go to work, school, or other activities. It is not safe or easy for bicyclers to get from one part of the city to another with the congestion. Providing more bike lanes would help not just bicycle riders, but also help automobile drivers.

When thinking about safety, crime and crime stoppers are dominant in consideration. Springfield, fortunately, already has several great crime prevention in distressed neighborhoods. The Community Partnership of the Ozarks, Inc. has done a wonderful job of bringing together several organizations together in an effort to educate the public about the prevention of violence, alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs. Ozarks Fighting Back has led the conception in 1990. Organizations, like Community Partnership of the Ozarks, would do well with more city support and cooperation with citizen crime prevention groups would only benefit any neighbor in the city.

Allowing these groups more freedoms would help them flourish and protect the city and various ways. These groups sometimes would help train residents to not only protect themselves but to help the police force by recording important data and providing tip offs. The Guardian Angels by citizens to come to Springfield and help the area manage the expanding meth issue. Due to the lack of support from the city, though the city is in Springfield, the Guardian Angels disbanded without an opportunity to help the communities that requested their presences. Citizens in Springfield neighborhoods, and citizens groups that work closely with the authorities would benefit every citizen in the city.

Encouraging citizen involvement in communities is a tactic the city could use to boost safety in neighborhoods and even political away from communities and listen to the citizens' concerns then bring in people to help education and train is a great way to help prevent crime. Regional

neighborhoods can do more than one organization trying to help the whole city. Cooperation among the neighborhood citizens, city police, an encouraged and supported by every member of city leadership and Springfield residents.

The Springfield City Police Department's Police Area Representative (PAR) program is an asset that could be utilized more efficiently direction, but could potentially be more effective and useful to the city. A regionalized program that reaches to all parts of the city and provid neighborhood conflicts, drug, alcohol and domestic violence, which works with the PAR program, would bring the responsibility of a safe cit experiencing these crimes. One organization cannot completely stop these crimes, but working together on all levels could provide help for th neighborhoods safer.

If Springfield started a regionalized program asking for volunteers and businesses to get involved, with the PAR officers starting a gra cooperation between the city and citizens would grow. Begin by making the public more aware of the PAR officers and encouraging citizens the grade schools. PAR officers should present programs explaining to students and parents what they could do to help keep crime down. Pub the media, send program announcements home with children from the schools and invite the public to attend. The desire for community in Community Focus 2009 shows that the citizens of Springfield and Greene County have continually volunteered for worthwhile causes. Accor 31.6% of people in Springfield volunteer. Springfield Citizens only need more opportunities to get involved with the city and their communiti any organization that benefits the people of Springfield.

Participating in the Community Visioning Challenge gave the students of OTC a real opportunity to help shape the future of their hom responsive to the challenge's purpose, and the whole school embraced and supported the team's efforts to gather the student's thoughts on Sp Ozarks has always been an attraction to keep and recruit people to the area. Springfield's natural environment, area lakes, outdoor activities, a no longer be sufficient in keeping the youth of the Ozarks in the place that supported them. Employment, the opportunity for employment, ha choosing a place to settle down and raise a family. If Springfield were to provide even more opportunities, though we are the fastest in Missou will view the Ozarks as an area to continue to grow. The notion of growth for growth sake is one that immediately rears its head, but controlle characteristic that sets a part Springfield from the rest of the Nation.



A team of only five hardworking students tackled a challenge larger than themselves and dedicated their time to helping their city. They contributed their own opinions, ideas, creative talents, free time, and tuition to shape the future of a home they did not want to leave. Ozarks Technical Community College is the hub for Springfield citizens to improve their own situations and become productive. The distinguished position of OTC in the community allows for better access to the citizens of the Springfield metro area. The team was able to gather information in a four phase methodology from students that live and work within city limits and rural communities.

In the first phase of OTC's methodology for the Community Visioning Challenge, a method to create a core team was established. Through cooperation between students and faculty, Business 100 A: Service Learning, became a one hour credit class that OTC students could attend and receive a grade. Students were encouraged to participate in the vision challenge as core team members, but were not required to register for the class.

The team tackled the challenge by brainstorming on ways to reach the most students on OTC's Springfield campus and retrieve in-depth answers from the students. The second phase consisted of taking the two previous objectives, establishing creativity, and getting approval from administration. The second phase of the methodology included a video to stimulate thought and a survey created to determine how people felt about Springfield, Missouri. The video and survey were intended to be watched together in classrooms across OTC's Springfield campus. OTC faculty voluntarily showed the video to their classes and collected their students' opinions concerning how they felt about living in the Springfield. OTC's vision team collected 679 surveys distributed by teachers, students, and staff.

An attempt to reach a larger portion of OTC's student body involved using the internet as effectively as possible. Connecting to students through the internet was the third phase of OTC's methodology. Dubbed Springfield 20/30, the internet portion of the methodology involved creating a blog, a Facebook fan page, and uploading the video to Youtube. The blog was intended to be a place for students to continue the discussion about the characteristics of Springfield that they would like see implemented, changed, or improved. The Facebook fan page was also intended to continue the discussion; it attracted more people than the blog and was a better resource for communicating with OTC students. The video that was shown to students in classrooms by faculty was uploaded to YouTube and made available to anyone. The internet was not as successful as the surveys in providing answers, but still allowed the team to spread the word about what they were trying to accomplish.

The last phase of OTC's vision team's methodology consisted of sorting the data and choosing the top three issues that were prevalent in the surveys. To help the team provide the best vision for Springfield, several interviews were conducted including one with Springfield's City Manager, Greg Burriss and another with Chamber of Commerce's Vice President for Economic Development, Greg Willams. The insight garnered from talking to these two city leaders helped the team reshape their perspective on Springfield and the future of Springfield.

Tackling the challenge that the city of Springfield presented to the colleges provided the members of the core team an opportunity to feel truly involved with the community and the school. The team carried out their four phase methodology in a short eight weeks. The OTC vision team ended the eight week class in March, but continued to meet outside of school to finish the challenge. OTC's student, faculty, and administration participation was a key to the success of the vision team's data gathering methodology, and the team thanks them.