

ACG[®] Cleveland

2025 Annual Report



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The Continued Power of Community

Outgoing President's Letter

To my fellow ACG Cleveland members,

Time does fly when you are having fun! The past twelve months have gone by quickly, and now I find myself grateful and humbled to have spent them serving as the chapter President for this wonderful organization. Thanks to the rest of the chapter's leadership team and several dedicated volunteers, last fall's GLCC was an incredible success. We attracted 1000+ attendees (including people from 33 states, Canada, and the UK) and secured over \$400k in sponsorship dollars. In addition, we have invested significant time and effort focused on enhancing the member experience and value proposition of the organization, while seeking to broaden our reach within the community and attract new members.

I think it's fair to say that we encountered a number of external factors that were not on anyone's 2025 bingo card, and these have kept the deal community on its toes lately. Against the backdrop of a challenging deal market and economic uncertainty, the strength of our organization and Northeastern Ohio was all the more apparent. Our sponsors have been steadfast in their support of the organization, making our excellent programming events possible. Our chapter remains in the top ten nationwide in terms of overall members. Most importantly, our members have been quick to make connections, share best practices, and find opportunities.

I'm thrilled to turn the chapter leadership over to Tom Libeg and the new members of our Executive Committee. The energy, enthusiasm, and fresh ideas that Tom is bringing to the chapter will benefit us all in the coming year.

Regardless of what lies ahead, ACG Cleveland will remain a place where the deal community can find support, friendship, and, hopefully, a great time!

Wishing you all the best!



Beth Haas

Partner at Cyprium Partners

ACG Outgoing President 2024-2025

ACG Cleveland: Investing in Our Community and Our Future

Incoming President's Letter

My Fellow ACG Members and Friends,

It has been a true blessing to serve on the ACG Board with so many inspiring and talented leaders at their respective firms and in the Cleveland deal community. As the saying goes, “a rising tide lifts all boats,” which is the perfect metaphor to describe ACG Cleveland. For years, I've watched our members give back, open doors for others, share credit for successes, and collectively create value for the organizations we represent and for the region we love.

ACG Cleveland has been an institution in our community since 1981, and over this time, it has also evolved to always serve the dynamic and emerging needs of our members. This is made possible by our members' engagement, the innovative ideas of our Board, and the many dedicated committees. Our events truly offer something for everyone – with programming focused on deal education, local interest, entrepreneurial stories, networking, and economic impact – all held at unique area venues.

Our Chapter has strong momentum, and I promise to work with our Board to build on it. Our focus for the upcoming year will be on maintaining a strong base of membership, a compelling calendar of events, and investing in the next generation of M&A leaders in Cleveland...and having a lot of fun!

As I assume the role of Chapter President for the 2025–2026 year, I'd like to express my gratitude to many people and groups:

- Outgoing President Beth Haas, who is a true pillar of our Chapter and local M&A community
- ACG Cleveland Board and committee members, who give so much of their time and talents to our organization
- Our members & guests, who build and maintain meaningful connections at our events
- Our sponsors, most of which have supported our organization for many years, for making what we deliver as a chapter possible

Cleveland is truly a great place to live and work, and our ACG chapter's spirit and sense of community play an important part. And it's in that spirit that I look forward to an awesome year ahead. I hope to see you around town or at one of our events soon – and never hesitate to reach out to me if I can be of support in any way!



Tom Libeg

Principal, Transaction Advisory at Grant Thornton Advisors, LLC

ACG Cleveland President-elect

The Value of an ACG Membership

Continued Growth, Deeper Engagement

ACG Cleveland has continued to solidify its standing as one of the most dynamic and engaged chapters within ACG Global. Year after year, we raise the bar – delivering high-impact in-person networking, compelling educational programming, and meaningful development opportunities for our members. These efforts have led to a vibrant and growing membership community.

This year, our engagement extended beyond the event space and into the digital realm. Our LinkedIn following grew by 14%, with similar positive trends across our Instagram and X (formerly Twitter) platforms – further amplifying our reach and visibility in the dealmaking community.

Our special interest groups – Young ACG (YACG) and Women in Transactions (WIT) – remain cornerstones of our programming, helping to drive inclusive, targeted engagement. These groups have powered a diverse slate of in-person events that bring together Cleveland's business leaders, including:

- All Cleveland Coffee & Celebrities – What does it take to build a community-minded celebrity brand?
- ACG Exclusive – Inside the Power of Rock!
- Past Deal Maker Winner Spotlight – Brian Hall
- How our Economic Development System Impacts Northeast Ohio

These are just a few examples of the exclusive, high-value experiences we continue to offer our members – ensuring ACG Cleveland remains the premier hub for the region's middle-market dealmaking community.

[Explore the full range of ACG Cleveland membership benefits.](#)



Click to watch the 2024
Year in Review video

Get More Involved

Interested in planning events or shaping programming? Fill out our [Committee Interest Form](#) or reach out to Sandy Habecker at admin@acgcleveland.org.

2024 ACG Cleveland Dealsource® and Summer Social at the Shoreby Club

Sun. Scenery. Stronger Connections.



Last June, more than 320 M&A professionals gathered at the lakeside for one of ACG Cleveland's most anticipated annual events. With stunning views from The Shoreby Club and nonstop networking on the patio, the **2024 Summer Social** was once again a sell-out success.

This past year's event was proudly sponsored by **Aon** and **Calfee**, with a special thank-you to our DealSource® sponsors for powering the exclusive, invitation-only day session for investment bankers and private equity leaders.

2024 Great Lakes Capital Connection®



Dealmakers Converge in Cleveland for Two Days of Insight, Opportunity, and Connection

In September 2024, Cleveland proudly played host to the **Great Lakes Capital Connection (GLCC)**, one of the premier dealmaking conferences in the country. The two-day event brought hundreds of private equity professionals, investment bankers, lenders, and advisors together from across the Midwest and beyond.

From high-level networking to industry insights and M&A trends, the 2024 GLCC delivered outstanding opportunities for connection, education, and growth.

Attendees enjoyed:

- Dynamic panel discussions and keynote speakers
- Targeted deal sourcing sessions
- Ample networking with leading professionals in the middle market
- A vibrant setting showcasing the best of Cleveland's business and cultural scenes



We thank all who participated, attended, and helped organize this year's GLCC – especially the ACG Cleveland team, who worked hard to ensure the success of this major event.

Looking Ahead

Planning is already underway for the 2025 Great Lakes Capital Connection, hosted by ACG Western Michigan in Grand Rapids. For details and updates, visit acg-glcc.org.

2024 ACG Golf Outing at Firestone

Big Turnout. Beautiful Course. Even Better Company.



Summer was in full swing as 196 members and guests came together for a day of sunshine and strategic conversations at Firestone Country Club. With 49 foursomes hitting the course, the **2024 ACG Cleveland Golf Outing** brought professionals from across the region together for networking in a relaxed setting.

The event included a pre-round lunch, a wine tasting reception, and no shortage of memorable moments on the green.

Special thanks to our event sponsors for helping make this day such a hit!

Mark your calendar: Our 21st Annual Outing returns to Firestone on Monday, September 29, 2025.

2024 ACG Golf Outing Winners

Low Scores

North Course 1st Place (-26)

Tyler Dalton
Lucas Murray
Ryan Schreiber
Brian Stovsky

Fazio Course 1st Place (-15)

Matt Grondin
Max Pivonka
Joey Rollman
Joey Ward

South Course 1st Place (-23)

Adam Larkins
Brian Stuckey
Greg Taylor
Edward Vargo

Skills Winners

Men's Long Distance

Lucas Murray (North Course, Hole 5)
Lucas Murray (North Course, Hole 12)
Ryan Tomei (Fazio Course, Hole 6)
Lou Pederi (Fazio Course, Hole 13)
Rob Cheffins (South Course, Hole 9)
Nick Evans (South Course, Hole 10)

Women's Long Distance

Cheryl Strom (North Course, Hole 1)
Katie Lannon (Fazio Course, Hole 9)

Men's Closest-to-the-Pin

Paul McCormick (North Course, Hole 17)
Pete Duffield (North Course, Hole 8)
Joe Shepherd (Fazio Course, Hole 14)
Seth Apple (Fazio Course, Hole 7)
Ben Grosko (South Course, Hole 5)
Rob Cheffins (South Course, Hole 15)

Women's Closest-to-the-Pin

Katie Lannon (Fazio Course, Hole 12)

2025 ACG Cup®

University of Dayton



The **2025 ACG Cup®** brought together bright minds and bold ideas from across the region, with 8 universities facing off in a high-stakes finance and M&A competition. The event was held in person on January 24 at the offices of BakerHostetler Law, who graciously hosted the day-long challenge.

This annual competition gives students a real-world taste of the corporate dealmaking experience. Participants analyze complex scenarios and present recommendations on valuation, capital markets, and strategic mergers and acquisitions to a panel of experienced M&A professionals.

In their first year competing, the **University of Dayton** earned the top spot. **John Carroll University** secured second place, and **Ohio State University** rounded out the top three.

Other competing schools included: Ashland University, Baldwin Wallace University, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland State University, Notre Dame College, and The University of Akron

Huge thanks to **BakerHostetler** for hosting, and to all of the professionals who shared their time and expertise with the next generation of dealmakers.



See it for yourself.

Get an inside peek at the ACG Cup® competition and meet the winning teams from 2025.

The Deal Maker Awards

Our Signature Networking Event Returned in Style with Big Names, Big Wins, and Bigger Energy.

January 29, 2025

Atrium Ballroom Huntington Convention Center

ACG Cleveland kicked off 2025 with the 28th Annual Deal Maker Awards – our signature networking event uniting Northeast Ohio's M&A professionals. This standout evening honored top dealmakers driving acquisitions, financings, and growth.



Congratulations to Our 2025 Deal Makers



Woman in Transactions

Megan Mehalko, Benesch, Friedlander, Coplan & Aronoff LLP



Deal of the Year Winner

CBIZ, Inc.



Buyout Deal Maker Winner

Bridge Industries



Corporate Deal Maker Winner

NexaMotion Group

Event Sponsors

Thank you to our 2025 sponsors! Your generous support helped make the Deal Maker Awards a success. We're grateful for your continued partnership in celebrating Northeast Ohio's M&A community.

Platinum Sponsors

Benesch
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Strategic Acquirer Network (SAN) Sponsor

BakerHostetler

ACG Akron Sponsor

Buckingham Doolittle & Burroughs

YACG Cleveland Sponsor

CIBC

Women in Transactions Sponsor

CIBC

The Deal Maker Awards



By The Numbers

- ★
535
registrations
- ★
4 Deal Maker
honorees
- ★
28 years
strong

Event Spotlights: Rock, Revenue, & Real Talk

ACG Cleveland Brings New Energy to Programming in 2024–2025



An Iconic Night at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame

In true Cleveland fashion, ACG members enjoyed a world-class evening at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame. Attendees were treated to VIP access to the museum, a private screening of the Power of Rock video, and an inside look at future expansion plans.

The views from the bridge level were unbeatable, the energy was electric, and the networking? Pure rockstar status. Big thanks to **Benesch** for helping make this memorable night possible.

Want a glimpse of the action? [Watch the highlight reel here.](#)



Brian Hall: Leadership With Purpose

In a special spotlight session, Brian E. Hall shared his powerful story of business leadership rooted in equity, entrepreneurship, and community impact. His message: Real growth means more than numbers; it means uplifting others along the way. Attendees walked away with inspiration, actionable insights, and a renewed perspective on building companies that thrive and give back.



WiT Presents: Capital Stack 101

The 2025 Women in Transactions Capital Stack event looked at funding strategy from the ground up. Panelists covered everything from senior debt to mezzanine financing, empowering attendees with the know-how to structure capital effectively in today's dealmaking environment. Whether you were new to the game or a seasoned pro, this session delivered sharp insights – and sparked some great conversations.



Economic Development & the Deal Pipeline

What does Northeast Ohio's economic development ecosystem have to do with M&A? Everything. This unique event gave attendees a behind-the-scenes look at how regional organizations and incentive programs are actively shaping – and accelerating – deal flow in our area. From tax credits to targeted support, the panel walked through the resources that directly impact ACG Cleveland members and their opportunities for success.

Women in Transactions Network

The Women in Transactions (WiT) networking group includes female professionals from the entire dealmaking ecosystem, including private equity investors, strategic acquirers, lenders, investment bankers, consultants, attorneys, and accountants.

The WiT network has an active committee involved in planning events, member outreach, and social media. To learn more about WiT, join their network, or aid the committee, please contact Laura Redinger at lauraredinger@yahoo.com.

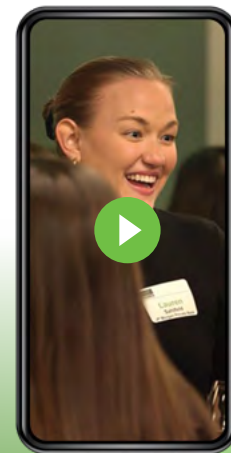
Believed to be the first group of its kind within the ACG network, the WiT committee strives to host annual programming that encompasses philanthropy, networking, education, and celebrating female entrepreneurship.

Some event highlights from the past year include:

- A night of philanthropy in support of Chair-Ity, a non-profit providing furniture for youth transitioning out of foster care.
- Annual White Elephant Gift Exchange – WinTer Wonderland Edition
- WiT Capital Stack Educational Luncheon
- An intimate gathering with the female founders of the renowned local restaurant, Poppy.

In addition to these events, we support a variety of golf-related activities to bring women into the sport, where business often gets done.

Our vibrant committee hosts sell-out events and is often the bridge for new members to get further involved in all that ACG Cleveland has to offer.



Click to watch the video reel from the WiT White Elephant Gift Exchange

Young ACG Cleveland

Young ACG Cleveland (YACG) continues to be the largest young professional cohort among ACG's 59 global chapters. Focused on professionals age 35 and younger, YACG provides a vibrant platform for emerging leaders in the M&A community to grow their networks, develop their careers, and engage with peers across the dealmaking landscape.

Comprising approximately 35% of ACG Cleveland's total membership, YACG is led by Committee Chair Brandon Patton of AON. Through a robust calendar of programming and volunteer opportunities, YACG empowers young professionals to:

- Build meaningful connections within their cohort and across the broader ACG network
- Gain valuable experience by serving in leadership roles on various committees

Highlights from the 2024–2025 fiscal year include:

- YACG Meet the Founder featuring Brent Zimmerman of Saucy Brew Works
- YACG Annual Tailgate Kickoff Social
- YACG Annual Holiday Gathering
- YACG Five Iron Golf Simulator Event
- YACG Meet the Founder featuring Mike Malley of Malley's Chocolates

These events continue to foster a strong sense of community and provide valuable touchpoints for professional growth and engagement among Cleveland's next generation of dealmakers.



ACG Akron Network

The **ACG Akron Network** is one of several dynamic special-interest groups operating under the ACG Cleveland umbrella. Focused on serving M&A professionals, business owners, commercial bankers, and other members of the regional deal community, ACG Akron offers a unique platform for networking and professional development tailored to the Akron market.

Under the leadership of Ryan McGovern, the group continues to grow its presence and impact, hosting multiple events throughout the year that combine thought leadership with valuable peer connections.

In 2025, ACG Akron held a series of standout events, including the Winter Social at Topgolf in Akron, which featured an engaging presentation by Don Pagett, Executive Director of the Kaulig Companies Championship at Firestone.

One of the marquee events of the year was “Preparing for and Executing a Successful Exit of Your Business” – a sold-out panel discussion sponsored by Buckingham Law. This session offered critical insights into navigating one of the most significant moments in a business owner’s journey and drew strong interest from the local business and investment community.

To stay up to date on the upcoming ACG Akron programs, visit the **ACG Cleveland Event Calendar**. For more information, contact ACG Cleveland at (216) 696-8484 or email admin@ACGcleveland.org.



Strategic Acquirer Network (SAN)

ACG Cleveland's **Strategic Acquirer Network (SAN)** is tailored for professionals whose primary responsibility is driving corporate growth through acquisitions. This exclusive network fosters a peer-to-peer exchange among Strategic Acquirer Officers, enabling meaningful dialogue, knowledge sharing, and relationship building across the Northeast Ohio business community.

In 2024–2025, the SAN Committee hosted three highly engaging events:

- **Summer Social at Top Golf – Independence (August 2024):** Our annual kickoff event brought together 20 strategic acquisition professionals from across Northeast Ohio for an evening of networking, food, drinks, and informal peer connection.
- **Roundtable at The Union Club – Cleveland (Fall 2024):** This intimate discussion provided members a chance to share experiences and strategies in a confidential, executive setting.
- **Tremco/RPM Plant Tour and Speaker Panel (Spring 2025):** A behind-the-scenes tour of Tremco's facility was followed by a compelling panel featuring Steve Tyler, Vice President of Business Development at Tremco, and John Kramer, Vice President of Corporate Development at RPM. The session was expertly moderated by Becky White, EVP of Strategy and Corporate Development at The Kenan Advantage Group.

These events continue to strengthen the SAN community, offering unique opportunities to exchange insights and foster lasting professional connections.



Sponsorships

Sponsorships through ACG Cleveland offer firms an unmatched opportunity to stay front and center with Northeast Ohio’s dealmaking community year-round.

Our Platinum, Gold, and Silver sponsors enjoy industry-exclusive exposure across:

- Premier networking and educational events
- ACG Cleveland’s weekly newsletter (5,000+ subscribers)
- Social media and digital platforms

We are incredibly grateful to our annual sponsors for their ongoing support and partnership. Your contributions help make every event, program, and connection possible.

Interested in sponsoring ACG Cleveland? [Reach out to learn more](#) about available opportunities.

Platinum Sponsors



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



ACG Cleveland 2025-26 Board

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BakerHostetler

Dave Fechter
Acchroma

Sarita Gavhane-Ritz
Edgewater Capital
Partners

Mark Heinrich
Plante Moran

Matt Kolman
Deloitte

Mindy Marsden
Bober, Markey, and
Fedorovich

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Walter Haverfield

Molly Brown
Hahn Loeser & Parks

Alanna Guy
BakerHostetler

Katie Kelly
Deloitte

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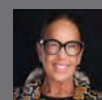
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Grant Thornton



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Kirtland Capital Partners



Director at Large:
Tricia Balsler,
CIBC



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Beth Haas,
Cyprium Partners



**Annual Events
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Vorys



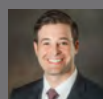
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