By Emily Younger-Barnwell

The Partnership successfully led the largest Kansas delegation to the Paris Air Show further positioning the Air Capital of the World and the state of Kansas as a global leader in aerospace, aviation and national defense.

The June 19-25 event drew 2,500 exhibitors from 46 countries, 322 official delegations from 100 countries, and more than 300,000 professional and public visitors.

First held in 1909 and only canceled during a world war and because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2023 Paris Air Show boasted approximately $150 billion worth of contracts signed, $10 billion more than the previous event.

The Partnership's commanding presence of more than 50 attendees including federal, state and local government officials, higher-education leaders and area company CEOs was unmatched, highlighting the region and state's exemplary collaboration.

"We certainly achieved our goal of elevating the global presence of South-Central Kansas and the state of Kansas at this year's Paris Air Show," said Partnership President Jeff Fluhr. "Our state's prominently positioned booth within the U.S. Pavilion and key presence within the Kallman Worldwide, Inc. Partnership Chalet provided unrivaled spaces for networking and collaboration."

The Partnership team engaged in approximately 50 meetings with expanding aerospace companies searching for new facilities or supply-chain connections in the region.

“We want to let companies know the Wichita region is open for business. This was a perfect opportunity to meet face-to-face with industry-decision makers and share the ambitious growth initiatives and expanding presence of manufacturing and defense work in Kansas,” said Partnership Executive Vice President of Economic Development Andrew Nave.

Wichita’s No. 1 skilled workforce in the United States also took center stage during the premier event. Pinnacle Aerospace, RecruitAERO and The AirCraft Company, three local start-up companies highlighted at the event, had the unique opportunity to pitch their businesses and the region to global aerospace companies.

Prior to the Paris Air Show, The Partnership hosted the Air Capital of the World reception highlighting the region’s leading aviation and manufacturing capabilities to an audience of nearly 450 exclusive partners, dignitaries and special guests from the world.