

Boasting Buffalo: Greg Bauer talks about growing businesses and leading the UB Foundation

🔑 **SUBSCRIBER CONTENT:**

Apr 27, 2018, 9:00am EDT **Updated: Apr 27, 2018, 12:34pm EDT**

Greg Bauer and his wife, Joanne, started Employer Services Corp. in 1995 with no customers, no employees and a theory: that area businesses could use a local one-stop shop to outsource human resources functions. The Williamsville firm now has more than 55 full-time employees, with many more working as contractors for specific companies. They handle everything from payroll to benefits to compliance for a range of local customers. The Bauer family is active in the community, too. Greg and Joanne met as students at the University at Buffalo, where he was recently named chairman of the UB Foundation, and they run a family foundation that has supported Artpark, Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, Habitat for Humanity and other causes. He spoke recently about business, Buffalo and his beloved university.



PHOTOGRAPHER: JIM COURTNEY

Greg Bauer met his wife, Joanne Bauer, while they were University at Buffalo undergraduates. He's now a major part of UB's alumni network, including his position as chair of the University at Buffalo Foundation board.

Why has Employer Services been so

successful? Our core values are delivering exceptional customer service and value every day. We have experienced tremendous growth in the past five years and we've done it one conversation at a time. When we sit at a table with a prospect, we ask, "What are your concerns and issues?" and then we explain how we would handle it. Most of our business is in the eight counties of Western New York but we're in 35 states because our clients take us there. We also started a new business called Meliora Consulting with a group of individuals who are all master black belts in the Lean Six Sigma world and who are out there every day providing customized process improvement solutions.

What's your opinion of doing business in Buffalo?

Buffalo has been really good to me, personally and professionally. It's a community that in general is a trusting group, and we have positioned ourselves to earn and keep that trust. There's this energy right now in the community, a combination of optimism and belief. We are seeing our clients employing more people. We are seeing startups like we've never seen before and we are seeing the tried-and-true business staples of the Buffalo economy generally growing, as well.

What do you think about the direction of UB?

UB has had and continues to have tremendous influence on Buffalo's journey in its road to prosperity. We have wonderfully accomplished professors and our students are the best and the brightest. The leadership of the university is engaged in the community. The foundation has been able to do wonderful things to help the university in its vision, whether it's helping with the growth of medical school programs or a new athletic fieldhouse.

The foundation is subject to intermittent controversy about publicizing its

finances. What's your position on opening the books? The university gets less and less of its budget from the state, which means it has to raise money. And it's our job to be good stewards of that money. We want to be as open and transparent as we can while still protecting the confidentiality of our donors. We are a private organization. The foundation board is enthusiastically exploring all avenues of making the foundation the best it can be, whether it's transparency issues or making more responsible investments. The board is a good group of people who do a lot and are committed to being better.