

SSE, Inc.

www.sseinc.com

Generation of Ownership: 2nd

Founded: 1966

by Pilar Davis

SSE Technology has provided IT expertise for more than 50 years in the St. Louis area. Elizabeth Niedringhaus is the current President and CEO. Elizabeth was not even born when her mother, Susan, took her talents from IBM and forged her own path by launching the company. Being a woman in the burgeoning technology field was challenging enough, but Susan was also pregnant with Elizabeth's older sister at the time. "My mother, Susan S. Elliott, founded the business in 1966 when she was pregnant with my older sister. She had been working for several years at IBM as a systems service engineer. IBM's maternity policy at the time was to send women home at six months into the pregnancy to wait for the baby. She was not interested in sitting at home for three months. My father, who at that time was freshly out of law school, helped her incorporate Systems Service Enterprises (SSE), and the rest is history."

With two children in tow, Susan worked for years cultivating a reputation for expertise, integrity and a service-minded focus. During the 80's, Susan expanded her business to include computer training for businesses in the area, including Fortune 500 firms that sought out SSE to help train their staffs on how to use computers. Elizabeth cites that step as the foundation of their Network and Cybersecurity Services, which today supports customers in the Defense and Financial Services Sectors. Elizabeth fondly remembers her mother working late nights in the family basement building SSE Technology. "When my mother first started the business, she was working out of the basement of our family home. She would be down there well past dinner time working away. My sister and I used to shout down the clothes chute to find out when she was going to come up for dinner." Elizabeth credits those early years of watching her mother



Elizabeth Niedringhaus, left, and Susan Elliott

work tirelessly for creating the current environment of team above self, integrity, quality, and service.

Exceptional acuity helped them avoid the dot-com bubble of the 90's, and today SSE continues their tradition of being at the forefront of technology expansion. The emergence of immense cyber threats offered SSE an opportunity to exercise their penchant for innovation. "Building out and delivering cybersecurity solutions is exciting work. As hacking has evolved from information warfare into the full-blown cyberwarfare we are experiencing between nations today, we literally are on the front lines of this new battleground. We have the foundational knowledge, having built expertise in the field for nearly 20 years, not only to help our clients remediate vulnerabilities in their IT environments, but also to help them day in and day out ensure their cyber defenses are working for them to protect their data and our nation."

From the family basement to delivering their Network and Cybersecurity Services nationally, SSE maintains their original core values of great work by talented people, which Susan coded into the origins of the business. "That determined, service-minded focus and work ethic were instilled in every employee, and that is how we operate today. She drove our client-focused, service-based culture and as a services business, it all comes down to great people. We are and have been fortunate to have built a great team."

Busey Named 2022 Community Service Award Recipient

Honored by Illinois Bankers Association for Community Involvement and Stewardship

Busey is proud to announce it has been named a recipient of the 2022 Community Service Award by the Illinois Bankers Association and was honored at the IBA's Annual Conference on June 9 in Springfield, IL.

The IBA Community Service award honors financial institutions that go "above and beyond" in the area of community service. Three awards are presented annually to financial institutions that demonstrate a high level of service in their communities and honors an institution's entire portfolio of community service projects, not just a single project.

"Busey is truly honored to receive this award," said Amy Randolph, Busey's Chief of Staff & Executive Vice President, Pillar Relations. "We have a passion for helping our communities through a number of initiatives and strive to be a true community partner and steward. It's especially rewarding to be recognized by our peers at the IBA for the impact our associates are making in their communities."

Busey's nomination hinged around four initiatives that highlight its powerful demonstrations of community involvement:

- **Busey Drives Generosity:** a campaign which encourages Busey associates and customers to generously give donations to benefit local neighbors in need through donation drives hosted at each Busey service center. In July, Busey is having a School Supply Drive in the St. Louis Metro area with associates and customers invited to donate school supplies at their local Busey Service Center. Donations will benefit local students and schools;

- **Little Free Libraries:** a partnership to promote literacy by building and installing Little Free Libraries at 15 Busey service centers across the institution's footprint, including five in the St. Louis metro area;

- **Community Promise Month:** an annual celebration during the month of April dedicated to honoring associate's passions, encouraging local involvement and maximizing Busey's impact in the communities it serves. This past April, 413 Busey associates volunteered 2,103 hours to 317 community organizations during Community Promise Month; and

- **Community Connection at Busey:** a formal community engagement program which invites associates to learn from partnering non-profit organizations—like the United Way of Greater St. Louis—about opportunities to become more connected with their communities.

Busey has been proud to give back to communities for more than 150 years—doing the right thing for customers and building trusted relationships that span generations. Working with its communities to support the arts, advocate for our youth and help neighbors in need, Busey bridges needs by providing financial capital through monetary contributions and guidance, human capital through energetic and committed volunteers and social capital through leaders at the table to advocate for business and sustainability practices within our communities.

Since 2015, Busey associates have given 50,000 hours of their time to hundreds of community organizations while the organization's charitable donations total over \$1 million annually. Over half (53%) of Busey's larger contributions in 2020 were CRA qualified donations—supporting the critical needs of each community through scholarships, youth programs, court advocacy, food insecurity, shelter and more.

To find out more about Busey's dedication to the communities it serves, visit busey.com.