

INSIDER

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Annual Conference Continues with Eight Weeks of Webinars



Just like the entire year of 2020, this year’s annual W.A.C.E. conference will be unlike any other we’ve ever experienced.

Following three days of outstanding keynotes and award presentations on February 3–5, the conference committee will be offering up eight consecutive weeks of webinars on impactful topics that, based on recent polling, our association members need and want.

“Informative programming, like the conference breakouts that we are all familiar with, will now be presented in weekly sessions beginning on February 10 and will be recorded for easy access for all registered conference attendees,” said Conference Chair Jeremy Harris, ACE, president/CEO of the Long Beach Area (CA) Chamber.

Conference Webinars

- **February 10:** “Yesterday’s Approach to Membership Won’t Get It Done Today.” This session will feature **Bill and Doug Holman**, who will address the recruiting process, establishing value and how to seek investments based on how your chamber can help prospective members attain their business goals.

- **February 17:** “Diversifying and Maximizing Revenue Streams.” Chambers are under increased pressure to find new and creative revenue streams, while also maximizing profits from their current programs. **Scott Muelrath** from the Henderson (NV) Chamber, **Nona Watson** from the Palm Springs (CA) Chamber, **Emily Falappino** from the Temecula Valley (CA) Chamber and **Candace Carnahan** from the Grand Junction Area (CO) Chamber will review the many ways that chambers are successfully generating revenue with real examples from the field, while offering guidance on taking a fresh look at existing programs to find hidden money.

- **February 24:** “Strategic Communications to Deliver Value.” When it comes to communicating value, most chambers have plenty of room for improvement. Before you can convey the value of your organization, you need to identify your message that lies in your strengths, core initiatives and brand personality. **Laura Perdew** of the Greater Irvine (CA) Chamber will be joined by **Joyce Goedeke** of the Vegas (NV) Chamber and **Michael Shepard** of The Shepard Group to create a roadmap for a successful communications plan.

- **March 3:** “Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts that Matter.” Now more than ever, chambers need to develop and foster strategic relationships with economic development organizations, school districts, other nonprofits and more. Panelists **Robert Heidt** of the Glendale (AZ) Chamber, **Jim Johnson** of the Georgetown (TX) Chamber, **Mike Neal** of the Tulsa Regional (OK) Chamber and **Pam Ridler** of the Castle Rock (CO) Chamber will explore this essential topic for chamber success.

- **March 10:** “Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Equality.” You’ll hear from **John Brewer** of the Billings (MT) Chamber, **Tom Pierson** of the Tacoma-Pierce County

(WA) Chamber and **Kuma Roberts** of the Tulsa Regional (OK) Chamber about their successful efforts to lead their communities through these challenging, important topics.

- **March 17:** “Streamlining Strategies: Doing More With Less.” You’ll learn strategies from accomplished chamber professionals—**Pat Patrick** of the Lodi (CA) Chamber and **Brittany Quick-Warner** of the Eugene Area (OR) Chamber—how they have sustained their strong chambers in the face of limited resources, staff and time.

- **March 24:** “Economic Recovery.” Chambers are uniquely positioned to bring together and share resources, strategies and information critical to rebuilding business activity necessary to support members and community needs. **Paul Holden** of the Burnaby (BC) Board of Trade, **Amy Ward** of the Greater Kings County (CA) Chamber and **Erik Williams** of the Vail Valley (CO) Partnership will be presenting best-in-class recovery ideas.

- **March 31:** “Chambers Leading Through Crisis.” Pulling it all together in this final session will be **Eddie McBride** from the Lubbock (TX) Chamber, **Diane Schwenke** from the Grand Junction Area (CO) Chamber and **Mark Turner** from the Gilroy (CA) Chamber. They will be sharing examples of how chambers across the country were resilient and stepped up in new ways to lead their businesses and communities through the most challenging times ever.

Register Today

The weekly webinars will all be presented live on the designated dates at 10 a.m. (Pacific). Conference registration includes access to these sessions. For more information or to register for the conference, go to www.calchamber.com/waceannualconference2021.

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COMMENTARY

Some Thoughts to Embrace and Guide Us in 2021



Dave Kilby

Wow! What a year—2020 was whitewater times on steroids.

Time and time again we were reminded that we had no idea what was around the next bend. And even when we thought we knew

the rules, government would change them or “move the goal posts” at a moment’s notice.

Unfortunately, I don’t see things slow-

ing down or getting any more predictable any time soon.

Even with that reality facing us, it’s obvious that our work as chambers of commerce has NEVER been more important.

Maybe we (W.A.C.E.) were ahead of our time when we introduced the 3Cs in February 2017—but being a CATALYST for business growth, a CONVENER of leaders and influencers to get things done, and a CHAMPION for a thriving community has NEVER been more on point.

With the good (yes—there were some good things), the bad and the ugly of 2020 now (finally) in the rearview mirror, we MUST keep our eyes focused on what lies ahead. There will, undoubtedly, be more bumps in the road, but there will also be tremendous opportunities for us to truly make a difference.

This is our time to embrace “The Chamber Is... Courage, Community and Commitment.”

Words of Wisdom

Related to that theme, here are some thoughts from others that resonated, and which I will take with me into the new year:

“Advocacy is the differentiator. If you don’t have an advocacy program, I don’t see how you can remain relevant.” —**J.P. Moery**, President of The Moery Company.

“I used to say we are collaborative. Now I say that we are an unapologetic voice of business, actively working on our members’ behalf.” —**Gail Zurek**, ACE, President/CEO of the Visalia (CA) Chamber.

“Never let the Board (regarding membership) say NO for someone else. They could be projecting something they feel—their own stresses, situation and fears onto others.” —**Kyle Sexton** of Chamber-Think Strategies.

“I’m asking you to not lose hope, because together we’re stronger. I’m asking you to step up to the plate with us and let’s be stronger together. 2021 may not bring exactly what we’re looking for, but we do know this—we have a choice. We are going to lead. We are going to lead with courage. We are going to lead with anticipation. We are going to lead with hope. Because again, together we are stronger.” —**Kelly Hall**, President/CEO of the Longview (TX) Chamber.

“We are one day closer to normalcy—or better yet—exceeding normal by reimagining improved methods to conduct business, more efficient, inspired ways to be productive, and creative approaches to growing our economy.” —**John Brewer**, President/CEO of the Billings (MT) Chamber.

“Earl Nightingale famously said, ‘we become what we think about.’ Looking back at 2020 and remembering what we were all thinking about leads me to believe we better start thinking more like Walt Disney when he said, ‘It’s kind of fun to do the impossible.’” —**Brad Hicks**, President/CEO of The Chamber of Medford & Jackson County (OR).

“How we treat each other determines the kind of community we live in, which determines the kind of country we live in, which determines the kind of world we live in. Being kind and doing good are among the most powerful tools we have. We need to use them.” —**Chris Romer**, ACE, President/CEO of the Vail Valley (CO) Partnership.

Stay safe; stay strong and let’s knock it out of the park in 2021!

Dave Kilby is president and CEO of W.A.C.E. and executive vice president of corporate affairs at the California Chamber.

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The Chairman’s Circle is a special group of members that have committed to support W.A.C.E. through sponsorships. If your business would like to become a member of the Chairman’s Circle, please contact Dave Kilby, W.A.C.E. president and CEO, at (916) 930-1202 or email dave.kilby@calchamber.com.

LEADER TO LEADER

Setting Priorities, Making Time for Families, Self, Enjoying Simple Pleasures Helps Maintain Balance

How are you managing a work/life balance and staying sane during these challenging times?



Sheri Heiney
President/CEO
Prescott (AZ)
Chamber

For me, managing this time starts with strong faith, knowing that this time will pass, and we will be OK.

When we pivoted to working from home, I did not know how to balance work and life. In the beginning, it all ran together. So I dusted off my time management skills, put together my priority list, and blended the two to regain my sanity.

I realized that everyone was in the same storm but a different boat. People were experiencing different challenges, so I have focused on patience, kindness and understanding.



Joshua Duder
Executive
Director
Chehalem Valley
(OR) Chamber

This year certainly has been a challenging one for all of us. In 2020, I've had the pleasure of

being promoted to executive director and charged with leading our chamber through a culture change. With so much to do, but a working wife and three children who are online at all times of the

day with schoolwork, I absolutely must carve out time for family.

To do this, I've decided that work just doesn't come home with me. While I'm at the office, I operate at full throttle, but once I get home each night, I turn off notifications and emails to focus on what's most important.



T.J. Sullivan
Executive
Director
Superior (CO)
Chamber

There is no such thing as work/life balance. There are only priorities, and your priorities should be based

on your values. If you're struggling with work/life balance, it's probably because you aren't setting your priorities in line with the things you value most (or feel you should).

Take time to clarify those things in your life that you most value, then set your priorities accordingly. Working backwards will make you feel confident in the choices you make daily regarding where you spend your time and emotional bank account.



Monica Holdaway
Executive
Director
Box Elder (UT)
Chamber

I love chamber work, which definitely helps me stay sane

during these challenging times. I think many of us would throw in the towel if we didn't believe in what we do.

My family is my rock. Without them nothing else matters and I am lucky enough to have a spouse and children who support me at work.

Balance is truly important. After 19 years in the industry, I have learned that daily tasks will be there tomorrow and that it is OK to not work 24 hours a day. We are better chamber employees when we make time for ourselves and our families.



Angie Waiss
Executive
Director
Skamania County
(WA) Chamber

There are several things that have helped me stay sane in this challenging time:

- Going for a walk and getting some fresh air calms me down and helps me put things in perspective.
- Taking time to enjoy simple pleasures like a cup of coffee in bed before a hectic day.
- Once in a while, allowing myself to take a night off from cooking dinner and enjoying some wine and cheese instead!
- Car dates with my husband. I do not recommend trying to eat Chinese take-out in the car though!
- Staying connected to family. Take care of your mental health everyone!

Visit Us on **facebook** facebook.com/WACEPAGE

Have You Visited Lately?

W.A.C.E. RESOURCE LIBRARY

Are there any documents from your chamber in the library?

If YES, is it time to update your chamber's document samples?

If NO, let's fix that!

Add your chamber's samples to the resource library that currently contains over 850 documents!

Samples Recently Added

- Candidate Endorsement Policies (4)
- Community Vision Documents (3)
- Infographics (2)
- Legislation and Political Action (4)
- 16 "Chambers with" lists including: DEI Programs, 501c3 Foundations, Women in Business Committees, Workforce Development Programs, and more!

Possible Topics to Submit

- Do you have an **evaluation form** for your staff members? Board members? CEO?
- What is your **Candidate Endorsement Policy**?
- Do you have an attention getting **Infographic**?



Please send in your sample documents TODAY to jennifer.johnson@calchamber.com

Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors



WESTERN ASSOCIATION OF CHAMBER EXECUTIVES



19

Average number of board members

Fewest reported: 2
Most reported: 150



66%

do NOT have elected officials or local government reps on their board

11

Average number of meetings per year

72% answered 11, 12 or 13

3 YEARS

Most common length of board term set by 75% of chambers

55%

of chambers limit board members to serving no more than 2 terms



82%

of chambers report electing board members by a single slate ballot

This data comes from the Board of Directors Opinion Poll which had 209 responses and was performed by W.A.C.E. in late 2020.

NOTEWORTHY

What Chambers Are Doing Around the West

Oregon Chambers Join Together in Plea for Support

The Eugene Area Chamber, Florence Area Chamber, Springfield Area Chamber, Oakridge Westfir Area Chamber and Cottage Grove Chamber recently sent a co-signed plea for support to Governor Kate Brown and elected representatives on behalf of local small-medium-sized businesses. The chambers are calling for a balanced approach to remedy and provide relief for local business in an effort to prevent a complete economic meltdown for Oregon small business. View the letter [here](#).

Southern California Chamber Coalition Holds "Save Small Business" March and Protest

West Hollywood (CA) Chamber, Hollywood (CA) Chamber and Beverly Hills (CA) Chamber hosted 50 other chamber organizations, businesses, employees, trade associations and advocacy groups in a march of protest as a show of solidarity for small businesses and the communities they serve. Organizations that participated are a part of the California Coalition for Safe Reopening.

Participants called for an immediate emergency meeting with Governor Gavin Newsom and other top state officials to discuss safer alternatives to shutdowns, the task force, and revisiting other measures contained in the California Coalition for Safe Reopening Three Point Economic and Public Health Recovery Plan.

View the media kit and photos from the protest, as well as full details on the coalition [here](#).

Prescott Chamber Foundation Partners to Form Opportunity Foundation and Center for the Future

The Prescott (AZ) Chamber Foundation has partnered with the

Prescott City Council to form the Prescott Regional Opportunity Foundation and Center for the Future. This project is focused on incubating, accelerating and attracting companies to the Prescott region, enhancing the economy with quality jobs in industries in demand this decade and beyond. The project is a response to the ongoing labor crisis and need for a quality technology workforce in the area.

View more about the many exciting facets of the project at [centerforfutureprescott.com](#).

Superior Feeds Front-Line Workers with Hungry Hungry Heroes Program

The Superior (CO) Chamber ran a successful Hungry Hungry Heroes Program over an eight-week period. The program allowed community members to purchase "tickets" that were varying amounts of donations through weekly events on their ChamberMaster website. The revenue from those ticket sales

was then used at struggling local restaurants to feed front-line workers.

The program was able to provide more than 700 meals for hospital workers, teachers, retirement community staff, police officers and postal workers, bringing much-needed help to local restaurants and essential workers.

Contact: Carol Burkett carol@superiorchamber.com.

Are We on Your Mailing List?

Information featured each month in Around the West is taken from chamber newsletters and websites that W.A.C.E. receives from its members. We try to share best practices, ideas and programs from chambers working hard to be Catalysts, Conveners and Champions and make a difference in their community. Make sure to subscribe W.A.C.E. to your mailing list, if you haven't done so already, and you may be featured in a future Insider!

Send e-newsletters to: jennifer.johnson@calchamber.com.

Send mailings to: W.A.C.E., P.O. Box 1736, Sacramento, CA 95812-1736.



Chamber Executives in the News

Donna Duperron, president/CEO of the Torrance Area (CA) Chamber, was honored as the recipient of the South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce Shaun Lumachi Advocacy Award. Duperron was chosen for her sustained leadership in advocacy for business-related issues and demonstration of leadership on local, regional and statewide ballot measures; testifying publicly to a government body on a business issue; and holding a leadership role on a regional issue of importance.

Big Sky (MT) Chamber CEO **Candace Carr Strauss** has been named president/CEO of the Sedona (AZ) Chamber & Tourism Bureau. Strauss led the Big Sky Chamber for three years. A nationwide search will take place for her successor and

she will begin her new role in February.

W.A.C.E. Life Member and past chair **Bob Linscheid** has been named the interim president/CEO of the Silicon Valley Organization (CA). Linscheid has more than 15 years of experience serving as CEO of various chambers.

T.J. Sullivan, executive of the Superior (CO) Chamber, was named CEO of the Year by the Association of Colorado Chambers of Commerce (ACCC) and recognized for his work during the pandemic, innovating new programs and "making his small chamber a model for others throughout the state."

Greater Irvine (CA) Chamber CEO **Bryan Starr** was named among Orange County's 500 Most Influential People. This is Starr's second consecutive year

on the list. The directory includes an impressive list of influential business and community leaders from a variety of Orange County companies, ranging from nonprofits to large corporations.

In Memoriam

- **Tom Guarino**, past chamber executive and longtime W.A.C.E. associate member, has passed away. Guarino is a previous recipient of the Gerald W. Hathaway Staff Person of the Year Award and the Executive of the Year Award. Guarino was working in public affairs for Pacific Gas & Electric.

- **Brian McNerney**, previous CEO for the La Verne (CA) Chamber, passed away unexpectedly on Thanksgiving. McNerney was working part-time for the chamber in membership services.

- **Patrick Swarouth**, chief policy analyst for the Greater Coachella Valley (CA) Chamber, passed away on December 7, 2020. Swarouth worked in public affairs for more than 30 years and continued to be involved and engaged in his community as a volunteer, nonprofit board member and consultant for the chamber.

All will be missed greatly.

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Zoom

Conference Webinars

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- February 17: Diversifying and Maximizing Revenue Streams
- February 24: Strategic Communications to Deliver Value
- March 3: Partnerships and Collaborative Efforts that Matter
- March 10: Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Equality
- March 17: Streamlining Strategies: Doing More With Less
- March 24: Economic Recovery
- March 31: Chambers Leading Through Crisis