

# INSIDER

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## Many Reasons to Attend 2022 Conference



Sadly, we often hear that we're living in a polarized world that is full of disagreement.

That said...there's at least one topic that everyone CAN agree on: There are MANY good reasons to attend the association's 2022 conference in Glendale, AZ on February 2-4.

COMMENTARY.....	2
LEADER TO LEADER .....	3
GUEST COMMENTARY .....	4
OPINION POLL.....	5
CALL FOR PRESENTERS.....	6
AROUND THE WEST.....	7
CHAMBER EXECUTIVES IN THE NEWS .....	8
MEETING DATES.....	8

Below are just a few:

- **Connections** — This is a terrific opportunity to get acquainted and re-acquainted with your friends and peers in the industry. After not getting together since early 2020, it's time for in-person connections!

- **General Session Speakers** — Our lineup of general session speakers — Lee Rubin, William Henry, Libby Spears, U.S. Chamber President/CEO Suzanne Clark, Casey Steinbacher and Jeff Tippet will inform, motivate, entertain, challenge and make you think.

- **Celebrate** — After what we've all been through since March 2020, it's time to celebrate our successes, accomplishments and surviving some of the most trying times ever experienced — both personally and in business.

- **Best and New Practices** — The world has definitely changed, and as a result, there are many new and best practices that need to be considered and embraced for your personal and chamber success.

- **Exhibitors** — You'll be able to meet with companies that can help improve your chamber operations and, in many cases, your financial bottom line.

- **Awards** — Learn from those who will be recognized as "The Best in the West" for excellence in communications, outstanding chamber programming and individual success and achievement.

- **Sharing** — Whether it's in a conference breakout, whitewater roundtable, during a break or over an adult beverage, the sharing of experiences, successes and frustrations happens around the clock and can be worth the price of admission!

- **Inspiration** — One of the most consistent takeaways from the conference is being inspired to continue in this challenging but relevant and essential

business called a chamber of commerce.

- **Solutions** — Yes...the answers are out there, but they're probably NOT in your own backyard. By having chamber professionals attend from all over the West, you'll be able to do some real R & D and take the answers home to your chamber.

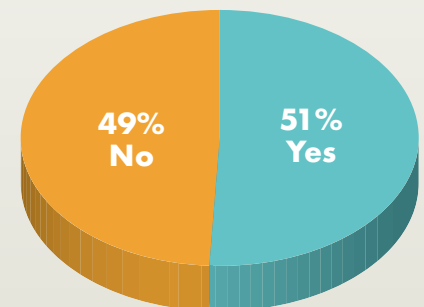
- **It's in Arizona** — This is the first time we've had our conference in Arizona and it's going to be great: the location, the weather, the hospitality and the conference content!

The theme of the conference asks: "From Relevant to Essential: Are You Ready for What's Next?" As you can see from the list above, this conference WILL help prepare you for 2022 and beyond.

Mark your calendars for February 2-4 in Glendale, AZ. Registration opens in mid-November!

### SNAPSHOT

Does your chamber provide some sort of retirement/pension program for employees?



Source: W.A.C.E. 2021 CEO Salary & Benefits Survey

## COMMENTARY

# Important Message for Chamber Professionals: Be Sure to Make Time for YOU



Dave Kilby

For many years I've been a big fan of Greg McKeown, the author of the books "Essentialism" and "Effortless."

Like you, I regularly receive blogs, read e-newsletters, see

things on Facebook and Twitter and other impactful communications.

In late October I received Greg McKeown's "1 Minute Wednesday." His message below was more personal than many of the items I receive and because of many of the confidential conversations I've had with chamber execs lately, I felt compelled to share. It was as if Greg was directing his message to chamber professionals.

*We all need a Break.*

*Many of us are facing burnout because we're always available. Cell phones ring at every hour. Emails arrive around the clock. 24/7 availability has become the standard.*

*The pandemic only accelerated this evaporation of boundaries. These are perks of working from home, but one of the drawbacks is that we have lost one of our safe havens.*

*Taking time to escape isn't a luxury — it's essential.*

*Only by taking time to think, dream and plan are we able to discern the essential few from the trivial many in our lives.*

*But one thing is certain; we won't get this time by default — only by design.*

*How can you design consistent time to escape?*

*Here are a few ideas:*

- *Schedule blocks of blank space on your calendar. Use the time to think, plan and dream.*

- *Start your day tech-free. Spend the first 20 minutes of your day reading, thinking and meditating.*

- *If you work from home, schedule mid-day breaks to get outside and walk.*

- *If your employer provides vacation time — use it.*

- *Whether you invest two hours a day, two weeks a year, or 20 minutes each morning, you will never regret making time to escape.*

*To the above, I say "Well said Greg!"*

I also highly recommend reading BOTH of Greg's books and you might also want to consider his "What's Essential" podcast.

## 2020-2021 W.A.C.E. OFFICERS

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Vail Valley (CO) Partnership  
(970) 476-1000 • [cromer@visitvailvalley.com](mailto:cromer@visitvailvalley.com)

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(562) 436-1251 • [jharris@lbchamber.com](mailto:jharris@lbchamber.com)

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(406) 245-4111 • [john@billingschamber.com](mailto:john@billingschamber.com)

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Vegas (NV) Chamber  
(702) 641-5822 • [mbsewald@lvchamber.com](mailto:mbsewald@lvchamber.com)

### Vice Chair

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Visalia (CA) Chamber  
(559) 734-5876 • [gail@visaliachamber.org](mailto:gail@visaliachamber.org)

### Immediate Past Chair

**Glenn Morris, ACE**

Santa Maria Valley (CA) Chamber  
(805) 925-2403 • [glenn@santamaria.com](mailto:glenn@santamaria.com)

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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](mailto:dave.kilby@calchamber.com).

## LEADER TO LEADER

# Leading Includes Knowing When to Step Back or Jump In, Growing/Learning from 'Non-Wins'

*What is the best piece of advice that you've received that has helped you become a better leader?*



**Robert Heidt**  
President/CEO  
Glendale (AZ)  
Chamber

Rather than a single piece of advice, I feel that years of observation and interaction have led to a collection of best practices

that I work to embrace.

I try to be present and attentive while championing those around me, I believe an empowered team that strives for their own greatness is the best example of me doing my job well.

Never be afraid to jump into the trenches or lead by example, and realize that perceived deficiency or limitation is nothing more than opportunity for greatness.

While we each pursue a personal journey, the moments of convergence are what afford us the greatest chance for growth.



**Diane Schwenke**  
President/CEO  
Grand Junction  
Area (CO)  
Chamber

I remember someone saying to me once that sometimes the best place to lead from is behind, and I

believe that is true. An effective leader is someone who asks the important questions, listens, maps out possible strategies, gets buy-in, and then sometimes becomes the champion for the effort.

Sometimes, however, it is the leader who brings it all together and then lets others be out front and the face of an effort. That can be because others are better suited to carry the message or have the connections necessary to get the desired outcomes.

It really doesn't matter the reason, but recognizing that sometimes your role is a bit more invisible and utilizing the talents of others appropriately is the mark of an effective leader.



**Michael Gallops**  
President/CEO  
Rowlett Area (TX)  
Chamber &  
Visitors Center

The best piece of advice I've gotten that has helped me to be a better leader was a simple phrase

spoken by a friend of mine, former Texas State Representative Cindy Burkett.

She said the best leaders keep a positive attitude in every situation "because sometimes you win and sometimes you learn."

No matter the outcome, you have to choose how to respond. You can look at things as a win or lose, or you can choose to be better and learn from the "non-wins." Step out of your comfort zone, learn from the losses and you will be better.



**Samantha St. John**  
CEO  
Greater Kirkland  
(WA) Chamber

Don't be afraid to take risks. You learn just as much from your failures as you do from your successes, sometimes even more. Failures are not often catastrophic or beyond recovery, so taking risks helps you grow as a leader.

## Resiliency Workshop Attracts Chamber Staffers



More than 25 chamber staff members from around the West joined us for the Resiliency Workshop in Irvine, CA. The October 21 event was coordinated by W.A.C.E. Vice Chair Kami Welch (left) and featured speaker Casey Steinbacher (middle). W.A.C.E. Board Chair Chris Romer, ACE, IOM, was also in attendance.

## GUEST COMMENTARY

# Membership Campaign in Pandemic Brings Huge Results in Income, Community Awareness



**Wendy Gerig**

Earlier this year, I announced my intention to retire after 28 years as the CEO with the Roseville Area Chamber of Commerce. It was important to me, as I carefully crafted my “exit plan,” to leave

the chamber in a strong position for the new hire.

Last year, as chamber executives, we heard time and time again that the best thing to come out of the pandemic was that chambers were forced to move away from events and switch focus to what our businesses need the most: advocacy — at the local, state and federal levels.

The challenge is that in most cases, additional revenues, unfortunately, are not raised from our advocacy efforts.

Another “benefit” of the pandemic was that it forced us to stay in touch with other chamber executives to collaborate and come up with solutions for staffing, virtual programming, etc.

## Intriguing Solution

Our chamber’s biggest win during this season came from a “Zoom” that I

had with my friend Marni Sanders from the Yuba-Sutter Chamber. During this meeting, she shared that her chamber was going to host a membership campaign in early May.

Did I think she was crazy? Perhaps ... but also intrigued, as COVID had continually made us look at things differently and work outside the box.

Yuba-Sutter’s campaign, put on by Your Chamber Connection, was a wild success and Marni’s timing was perfect — her volunteers responded to the call to get involved and businesses were ready to join. During her two-day campaign, they recruited 226 new members with a total income of \$126,000. WOW, WOW, WOW!

## Successful Campaign

So what did I do? We hired Your Chamber Connection to host a campaign for us the first week in October. We recruited 228 new members that brought in an income of \$176,350. What a way to welcome our new CEO, Rana Ghadban, and set her up for success!

Not only did Your Chamber Connection help bring in new members, but they also assisted in their retention by providing us with a “welcome strategy” post-campaign. Our staff and ambassadors are now hard at work implementing a strong retention plan,

which includes monthly new member orientations and individual outreach to our new members to ensure their engagement.

## Volunteer Education

But just as important as the income was the chamber education that occurred with the 113 volunteers who participated. Your Chamber Connection spent time outlining the benefits of membership with all of our volunteers so that each of them was able to easily articulate reasons to be a part of the chamber.

I believe this education will prove invaluable in the years to come as they help even more people understand our value.

For two days, the room was full of professionals believing in the chamber and in their community. Was it wacky? You bet! Did people have fun? Absolutely! And the competition was over the top!

Is it for everyone? Well, that’s your call — but if you want to move away from events and focus on what our businesses need most from us, which is advocacy, I would encourage you to meet with Your Chamber Connection and take your chamber to the next level.

*Wendy Gerig is the former CEO of the Roseville Area (CA) Chamber of Commerce.*

## Board and Emerging Leaders Meet Face-to-Face in Irvine



Members of the W.A.C.E. Board of Directors and Emerging Leaders Council met at the Irvine Marriott in Irvine, CA for their Board meeting and planning session on October 21.



WESTERN ASSOCIATION  
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## SURVEY SAYS Is Your Chamber Ready for the Future?

Percentages reflect respondents who ranked their chamber 7, 8 or 9 when considering the following statements (Based on the ACCE Horizon Initiative)

**43%**

Providing and communicating value without involvement

As compared to 28% in 2015

**73%**

Seeking success for business today and prosperity for tomorrow

As compared to 62% in 2016

**75%**

Being a consensus builder and a convener of diverse stakeholders

As compared to 59% in 2016

**61%**

Customizing offerings to address individual businesses needs

As compared to 50% in 2016

**58%**

Adjusting programs, services & network options for future generations

As compared to 48% in 2016

**84%**

Building personal relationships and offering personalized connections

As compared to 76% in 2016

**71%**

Being a "kick-ass" problem solver (KAPS)

As compared to 58% in 2016

**57%**

Examining and updating communications model

As compared to 52% in 2016

**71%**

Embracing diversity throughout the organization

As compared to 70% in 2016

**86%**

Occupying the "sane center" on most issues

As compared to 65% in 2016

Data collected in October 2021 opinion poll from 190 chamber executives



WESTERN ASSOCIATION  
OF CHAMBER EXECUTIVES  
**2022 CONFERENCE**

# Call for Presenters

Deadline: Monday, December 6

## FROM RELEVANT TO ESSENTIAL Are You Ready for What's Next?

Friday, February 4 - Glendale, AZ

General Session - 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.

### Here's your chance to present at a W.A.C.E. Conference general session in front of all 2022 Conference attendees.

We're looking for a handful of several short talks (**no more than 10 minutes each – time limit WILL be enforced**). These thought-provoking talks will focus on “Be Ready for What's Next!”, offering up ideas and actions that could help shape the future of Chambers of Commerce. This is NOT “Show & Tell”... Be BOLD...Think BIG...and make us think!

Our plan is to announce the presenters on Friday, December 20th.

### Here's a short title and summary (300 word limit) of the topic I plan to cover in talk

The selection of the presenters will be based on summary information provided above.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Chamber \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**DEADLINE to submit your summary is 12pm Noon PST on Monday, December 6.**

Email to: [dave.kilby@calchamber.com](mailto:dave.kilby@calchamber.com)

## NOTEWORTHY

# What Chambers Are Doing Around the West

## Vail Valley Partnership Holds Board Service Basics Workshops

The challenges of the past two years have made evident how important the choice is of whom you nominate to be a part of your board.

In an effort to prepare community members for board service on not only chamber boards but on any community boards, the Vail Valley (CO) Partnership held two Board Service Basics workshops. These workshops were intended for anyone who currently serves on a board or committee, as well as anyone who is interested in possibly serving.

The workshop covered organizational structure, governance, Roberts Rules of Order, roles and expectations, questions to ask when considering sitting on a board, finding your passion and strengths within board service, understanding communication styles, managing healthy conflict and working in a team.

Attendees also had the opportunity to hear from local board veterans about their experiences and challenges they have encountered during their service. Great idea for feeling out who in your community may be interested in serving while helping your members and community be better leaders and board members.

View event details at <https://www.vailvalleypartnership.com/signature-programs/vail-valley-works/boardbasics/>.

## Tempe Chamber Partners with Airport to Provide Parking Program for Members

The Tempe (AZ) Chamber partnered with Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport to provide special parking discounts and a loyalty program for members and their employees when traveling. Members are provided with a discount code which then gets them 15% off already-discounted online rates, loyalty points, close, convenient, safe parking with nine parking options at five locations, reserved parking with easy QR code scanning and, coming soon, car care services.

To learn more about the program, email Erika Acorn at [erika@tempechamber.org](mailto:erika@tempechamber.org).

## Modesto Chamber Launches Inspire Youth-Inspire Dreams Platform

The Modesto (CA) Chamber, their Business and Education Committee, and the project's steering committee rolled out their Career Exploration Platform to spark interest in 6th grade students early on in their educational path and lead them to

Learn more about the program at <https://www.modchamber.org/inspire-youth-inspire-dreams/>.

## Fort Collins Area Chamber Holds Moving Fort Collins Forward Campaign

The Fort Collins Area (CO) Chamber is holding their annual campaign to raise funds and increase membership. This year, 40 volunteers on 11 teams are tasked with raising \$400,000 and bringing in 100 new members. To reach their goal, volunteers will be raising funds through memberships, event sponsorships, advertising, initiatives and budget reduction trades.

This year's campaign highlights the chamber's response to the pandemic with the theme of Respond. Recover. Reignite.

Building Back Better for a Strong Northern Colorado. This once-a-year total resource campaign has run successfully each year since 2011 and provides the Fort Collins area with a properly funded chamber capable of accomplishing key initiatives in the community each year.

Interested in learning more?

Visit <https://fortcollinschamber.com/program/moving-fort-collins-forward/>.

## Are We on Your Mailing List?

Information featured each month in Around the West is taken from websites and chamber newsletters that W.A.C.E. receives from its members. We try to share best practices, innovative 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](mailto:jennifer.johnson@calchamber.com).

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



opportunities right in their hometown.

The chamber rolled out the platform to 6th graders at the end of the school year last year, received incredibly positive feedback from teachers and students, and since then has added more content.

Businesses, institutions and organizations county wide are recruited to create "day in the life" videos to provide students with first-hand real-life experience within a field. Current content represents the 15 sectors of business and industry.

This is only the start of paving the way for college or career training. There will be extension opportunities for each student in supporting them through high school with the focus on the student's identified interests. The final destination will be for each student to be prepared to move into a career training program and/or college to pursue their passion.

## Chamber Executives in the News

**David Archer** has been chosen as the new president/CEO of the Manhattan Beach (CA) Chamber. Archer previously led chambers in Pismo Beach, Sausalito and La Quinta. Archer succeeds **Kelly Stroman**, who is now managing director of the Friendship Foundation's \$40 million Friendship Campus project in Redondo Beach.

The Wichita (KS) Regional Chamber has announced that **John Rolfe** is their next president/CEO. Rolfe comes from Kansas Leadership Center, where he served as chief business officer since 2019.

The Sherman Oaks (CA) Chamber has hired **Vickie Bourdas Martinez** as their

new CEO. Bourdas Martinez brings to the chamber more than 30 years of experience in nonprofit management, entertainment, and finance industries.

**Jocelyn Brennan**, president/CEO of South County (CA) Chambers, announced she is moving on from her current position to pursue launching her own company. A search for her replacement is underway.

The Maple Valley Black Diamond (WA) Chamber has announced that **Heidi Hanscom** is their new CEO.

**Tom Pierson**, ACE, has announced that he will be leaving the Tacoma-Pierce County (WA) Chamber at the end of

December after 10 years leading the chamber. A national search is underway for his successor.

The **Tulsa (OK) Regional Chamber** was named the 2021 Economic Development Organization of the Year by the International Economic Development Organization at its Excellence in Economic Development Awards in Nashville.

### In Memoriam

W.A.C.E. Life Member **Jerry Vorpahl** has passed away. For many years, Vorpahl served as the Western Region director for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. He was the Pettit Award recipient in 1988.

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**Day 3 – Hanoi**  
Full day city tour includes the Tran Quoc Pagoda, Temple of Literature, Vietnam's first university dating back to 11th Century then St Joseph Cathedral.

**Day 4 – Hanoi/Halong Bay**  
Tour bus excursion to the harbor, board the Cruise Boat for an overnight cruise.

**Day 5 – Halong Bay/Hanoi/Hoi An**  
Tour bus excursion to the harbor, board the Cruise Boat. Short excursion to Sol Sim Island and take a refreshing swim at Halong Bay. Boat pass Thieh Cung and Dau Go Caves, Fighting Cock Islet. Transfer to Hanoi Airport and fly to Da Nang Airport. Bus transfer to Hoi An.

**Day 6 – Hoi An**  
Morning tour bus excursion to the world Heritage My Son Sanctuary, the remains of remarkable towers constructed by the Cham builders, many centuries ago. Enjoy a 2-hour boat trip on The Thu Bon River, passing Duy Hai fishing village, Tra Nieu, Kim Bong carpentry village and Cam Thanh coconut village and end at Old Town of Hoi An.

**Day 7 – Hoi An/HCM City (Saigon)**  
Fly from Da Nang Airport to HCM City (Saigon).

**Day 8 – HCM City (Saigon)**  
Bus ride to Tien Giang, board a vessel to explore the 4 mythical islets of the Dragon, Unicorn and Paradise located in the Mekong Delta. Enjoy local flavor food, tea, wine and traditional Vietnamese folk songs.

**Day 9 – HCM City (Saigon)**  
Visit the Cu Chi Tunnels, a byzantine maze of underground passages, chambers, rooms and body traps during the War. Afternoon visit the Reunification Palace, War Museum and Ben Thanh Market.

**Day 10 – HCM City (Saigon)/LAX Airport**  
Connection flight to LAX Airport, where you will arrive at Los Angeles Airport on the same day.

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### MEETING DATES

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#### W.A.C.E. Fall Webinar Series

- **December 1: Lessons Learned and What's on the Horizon for Chambers in 2022**

#### W.A.C.E. Annual Conference

February 2-4, 2022  
Renaissance Phoenix Glendale Hotel & Spa  
Glendale, AZ

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