

INSIDER

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Webinar Series Topics & Dates Announced



Kami Welch, ACE

The association’s popular webinar series is once again on tap this year during the months of September–December.

“The role of chambers has changed dramatically in

recent years,” said Kami Welch, ACE, president/CEO of the Arvada (CO) Chamber, and the W.A.C.E. vice chair of the board who is coordinating this year’s webinar series. “The 2022 webinar series will give attendees the opportunity to level up their strategies and resources to create greater impact in their communities.”

The plan is for the webinars to be the first Wednesday of the month and last for 1 hour beginning at 10 a.m. (Pacific). Below are the dates, topics and brief descriptions for the 2022 series:

- **September 7 – Your Message Matters:** As your chamber evolves to serve your business community as a catalyst, convener and champion, your words matter. In this session you will dig deep into the types of messages, information and data that will excite and engage your members.

- **October 5 – Setting Healthy Boundaries and Managing Stress:** As a membership organization, it can be challenging to balance member needs and your personal and organizational capacity. In this session, you will learn practical tips to help you find a better balance.

- **November 2 – Change is Hard:** Chambers have the opportunity to lead by example in deploying a results-oriented approach to change within your organization and community. In this session, you’ll build your change leadership competence and learn frameworks for navigating internal and external change.

- **December 7 – Innovative Ideas to Consider:** One of the many perks of the chamber industry is we can practice R&D (rip off and duplicate) to ensure we are providing innovative programming and resources in our communities. This webinar will expose you to a number of game-changing programs and resources that are worth copying!

A Best Practice

Over the years, many chambers have shared that they get together with their

neighboring chambers and listen to the webinars together in person and then discuss and do a de-brief as a group.

Last year more than one chamber indicated that they had over 10 people in attendance from multiple chambers. Sounds like something to consider.

As of this writing, presenters for the webinar series are still being selected.

Save the above dates. Registration information will be available in July.

SNAPSHOT

What’s Your Chamber’s Net Promoter Score (NPS)?

All-time High: +76

Average: +40

All-time Low: -28

Source: Results from 355 W.A.C.E. Chamber Performance Surveys

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Register Now
July 31- August 3, 2022
 Sacramento, California

Registration Information Available at waceonline.com

COMMENTARY

Will Survey Results Help with Change?



Dave Kilby

One of the things that I take great pride in is that W.A.C.E. has always appreciated and sought out data to back up opinions and the priorities of the association.

Generally,

I'm in sync with our survey results, but sometimes I have to smile and shake my head and ask "REALLY?"

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When analyzing two of our recent surveys, some results fell into the "Really?" category and deserved comment.

Political Action

Our 2022 Political Action Survey revealed that 33% of chambers endorsed candidates and 27% had a Political Action Committee (PAC).

To the chambers that didn't have a PAC or endorse, we asked — WHY? Here are their top responses:

1. Might hurt our relationship with the city.
2. Someone might get elected that we didn't endorse.
3. Board of Directors doesn't have the courage to do so.
4. Would jeopardize our government funding.
5. We think we'll lose members.

Responses from chambers that were politically active seemed to counter the above reasons with 40% indicating their membership had increased, 5% decreased and 55% reported no obvious impact.

Interestingly, similar percentages surfaced when we asked about the impact on relations with the city or other government officials. The vast majority of the time the "expected" negative results don't materialize.

The bottom line...it appears that most chambers don't get involved in political action because of FEAR.

Advocacy

In our recent survey on chamber advocacy efforts (summarized in this issue) sadly, only 27% of chambers reported doing a vote record of how their elected officials voted (with or against the chamber's position).

When you couple that response with answers to questions about their members recognizing the value of the chamber's advocacy efforts and the definite need for major improvement when it comes to chambers monetizing their advocacy efforts, it begs the question: would chamber members recognize the value and would monetizing advocacy be more successful, if chambers did a vote record and told their members how their elected officials voted?

To take your advocacy efforts to the next level, I have long believed that chambers need to up their game, "close the loop" and tell their members how their elected officials voted on issues on which the chamber has taken a position. If it was important enough to take a position, isn't it important enough to tell your members the result?

Yep...I appreciate the importance of data and, sometimes, having it is an essential step to making the important changes that need to happen.

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



Ashlee Rich Stephenson, senior political strategist for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, provides a briefing on "Today's Political Landscape" at the W.A.C.E. Political Action Bootcamp held May 19th in Las Vegas, NV.

LEADER TO LEADER

Online Networking, Video Sharing, Advocacy Help Chambers Prove Value w/o Involvement

What is your chamber doing to improve value without involvement and/or how are you communicating this value to your members?



John Tayer
President/CEO
Boulder (CO)
Chamber

We often tell our members, we are a “no guilt chamber,” meaning they don’t have to attend our

networking gatherings or business meetings to get value from their investment in our work.

While we still believe in the benefit of facilitating business-to-business connections, making a positive impact on the business environment and our community — by identifying critical issues, developing solutions, and advocating for action — is core to the Boulder Chamber’s mission.

The result of this work earns the respect of our investors, through tangible benefit to their business operations, from media attention it garners, and in direct member communications.



Terri Cole
President/CEO
Greater
Albuquerque
(NM) Chamber

Our focus on advocacy benefits our member businesses of every size. Small and medium-sized

companies need an organization to fight for them at all levels of government — they simply don’t have the resources to take it on themselves.

Meanwhile, larger companies need community support to protect them against the most threatening policies. Plus,

while they often have their own lobbyists to advocate on industry issues, they appreciate supporting an organization that can engage in other conversations too.

In New Mexico, business must be at the table on foundational economic issues like crime, education and the workforce, and they trust problem solvers and advocates like us to create that space for them.



Derek B. Miller
President/CEO
Salt Lake (UT)
Chamber

We create and improve value with members by setting expectations at the outset, tailoring membership

packages when they join and reevaluating them during the renewal process. These packages include specific initiatives where the members have a personal or professional interest, whether that be receiving timely economic data and analysis, air quality efforts, entrepreneur mentoring, our social impact foundation, or supporting minority- and women-owned businesses.

We also recognize that business owners and leaders have limited time to attend personally, so we work with these leaders to identify others in their organization who can get involved with the chamber.



Katie Stice, IOM
President/CEO
Rancho Mirage
(CA) Chamber

We have been very successful in this area given the inability to get involved due to the pandemic. The following are now

a consistent part of our value proposition. E-introductions are simple and a warm

way to introduce new members through the chamber and it is so appreciated!

We also do a “Live with Your Chamber” interview video series via Streamyard that can be seen on multiple platforms and later launched “Adventures with Anne” where we share lots of photos and the history of the business/owners on a social media post.

The pandemic taught us that people wanted to hear stories of those in their community — so we created the opportunities to do so weekly.

That general concept is still valuable and engaging. In the last 28 days, we’ve reached more than 15,000 people and this is a consistent number.



Andrew Hoan
President/CEO
Portland (OR)
Business
Alliance

One way the Portland Business Alliance is creating additional value is through enhanced promotion of new

members across our marketing activities. Each new business that joins the Alliance is officially (and publicly) welcomed across our social media channels, with vibrant artwork and a link to their own websites. Given the aggregate size of our social media audience, this is a significant amplifier for many businesses.

Additional new member highlights are added to our revamped monthly Member Newsletter, which provides new members the opportunity to be featured across our 6,800+ member base.

We’ve also leveraged our trade agreements with local media to promote new and renewing members in print ads. For small businesses, this might be the only opportunity to show up in the newspaper or business journal — it’s a unique value add that is deeply appreciated.

Advocacy Efforts

SURVEY SAYS

27%

publish a
vote record
of elected
officials

85%

of chambers have
an active advocacy/
government affairs
program

6.7

average rating that
chambers gave
themselves on their
advocacy efforts
(1-9 scale)

67%

have a policy
platform outlining
positions on
key issues

3.9

rating chambers
gave themselves on
monetizing their
advocacy efforts
(1-9 scale)

Data collected from 202 executives in an opinion poll conducted in May 2022

WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE SAYING



W.A.C.E. Academy *"If you value your chamber's success and resiliency, W.A.C.E. Academy is for you. If you value cultivating lifelong colleagues and friendships, W.A.C.E. Academy is for you. Since I, like most, didn't start my career as a chamber professional, it was paramount that I found a development pathway quickly. Thankfully, a neighboring colleague pointed me toward Academy. Right away I learned that Academy is not only laying the groundwork for my chamber's fortitude; it is also building my 'Square Squad' of trusted, honest and genuine friendships. I will never change my tune. W.A.C.E. Academy is for everyone in this industry — period."* **Jenny MacMurdo, President/CEO, Pacific Grove (CA) Chamber**

Chamber Leadership Podcast *"The Chamber Leadership Podcast is like a 'shot of espresso,' stimulating discussion among our chamber team and causing us to seek continuous quality improvement. We enjoy hearing from industry leaders and have benefitted from the practical application of the tips of the trade. It's digestible, relevant and much appreciated!"* **Jake Mangas, President/CEO, Redding (CA) Chamber**



Chamber CEO Salary Survey *"I have relied upon the W.A.C.E. CEO Salary Survey for several years now. It gives me an opportunity to gauge my salary with that of my peers in similar-sized chambers. It also helps me with providing a baseline salary number for my Board and Finance Committee when it comes time to discuss salaries and benefits. It is a great tool."* **Gioia Goodrum, IOM, President/CEO, McMinneville Area (OR) Chamber**

"The Chamber Is" Ad Wizard *"The Chamber Is...Ad Wizard is a turnkey marketing tool that helps us not only position our chamber in the community, but to communicate our value proposition in a meaningful and impactful manner. We use most of the tools, including posters, in our conference room, banners at our programs and events, and both traditional and digital ads. Feedback from our community has been overwhelmingly positive."* **Chris Romer, ACE, President/CEO, Vail Valley (CO) Partnership**



Chamber Performance Survey *"We have found W.A.C.E.'s Chamber Performance Survey to be an extremely helpful tool. Because the survey is administered by a third party and responses are anonymous, our members can give us very honest feedback as to what they need from us and how we are performing at meeting their needs. This input guides us in our strategic plan updates each year, as well as in reviewing and revising our membership services. Our members like that we are asking for their input and that their voices are being heard. We no longer waste our time on programs that members do not find beneficial. Instead, we focus our efforts on their top priorities, which has led to better membership retention and new members as well."* **Angie Waiss, Executive Director, Skamania County (WA) Chamber**

NOTEWORTHY

What Chambers Are Doing Around the West

Redding Chamber Launches Podcast

The Redding (CA) Chamber kicked off the new year with the launch of their “Chamber Connection” podcast. Podcast episodes are released biweekly and in each episode Jake Mangas, president/CEO, conducts meaningful conversations with a variety of guests, from community leaders, to elected officials and business owners with amazing origin stories that take place right in Shasta County.

The chamber is excited to utilize this fresh new way to communicate with their community and invites listeners to “meet us in the sane middle.”

Check out the podcast episodes at <https://reddingchamber.com/category/the-commerce-connection-podcast/>.

Bellevue Chamber Offers Mini-MBA Program

The Eastside Mini-MBA is a pioneering executive certificate program that enables leaders, managers and professionals to grow their fundamental business acumen, manage people and projects, and deliver sustainable business value.

Offered in collaboration between the Bellevue (WA) Chamber and the University of Washington, this program is focused on developing the next generation of inspirational business leaders in the Eastside community. The program is offered completely online with 17 weeks of 3-hour online live sessions covering 10 different core areas.

At the close of the program, participants receive an Eastside Mini-MBA executive certificate from the University of Washington Bothell School of Business. Graduates also may use learning and a capstone project to help fulfill requirements of self-study credits to attain their MBA at the school.

Learn more at <https://bellevuechamber.org/eastside-mini-mba/>.

Superior Chamber Offers Business Center for Businesses Affected by Wildfire

In late December, Boulder County, CO was faced with a wildfire. In response to help the community members who lost

businesses, the chamber convened local companies to provide resources so that the chamber could operate a business center for those facing challenges as a result of the fire.

Walk-in free workspace, meeting space, computers, printer/scanner/copier and business assistance is made available. This resource has just been extended to continue to help businesses.



The chamber most recently held an expo as well, offering residents and businesses an opportunity to meet valuable vendors that can help in the recovery process or who have a background to offer advice. There were 30 vendors, including builders, lenders, designers, mitigation specialists, town staff, and mental health resources.

To view more about the chamber’s recovery efforts, visit <https://www.superiorchamber.com/marshall-fire-resources/>.

Eugene Chamber Releases Digital Magazine Website

The Eugene Area (OR) Chamber has created a fully functioning “Open for Business” publication website with all the great content of their previously printed publication and much more. The new site allows for more published content, more frequently, with less overhead cost. Until circumstances improve and physical copies make sense again, the chamber can let community members know what’s happening with local businesses, the

chamber, and beyond in a much timelier fashion.

Check it out at <https://www.openforbizeugene.com/>.

Chamber Opens New Cowork Space in Grover Beach

South County (CA) Chambers have opened a new cowork space in Grover Beach, CA in partnership with the Cal Poly Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship (CIE) Small Business Development Center (SBDC), the City of Grover Beach, and the County of San Luis Obispo. “The Launch Pad” cowork space is managed by the chamber.

At its opening, the space was set to contain an aerospace and aeronautics incubator program and is a short walk from the “West End” of Grand Avenue with its shopping and restaurants, the beach boardwalk, and the monarch butterfly grove.

The cowork space features private offices, open desk seating, high-speed fiber optic internet service, and a conference room with audio/visual capabilities. Free business workshops and programs will be offered as well. To help meet the diverse needs of local businesses and entrepreneurs, there will be flexible month-to-month membership rates ranging from \$175-\$900 per month.

Learn more at <https://thelaunchpadsouthcountychambers.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, 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.

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

Chamber Executives in the News

The Pleasanton (CA) Chamber has announced that **James Cooper** will take over as their new president/CEO. Cooper has led chambers in Novato, American Canyon, and most recently Vallejo. Cooper will replace **Steve Van Dorn**, IOM, who is retiring after 30 years in hospitality, sales and chamber management. **Jackie Arnold**, chair of the Vallejo Chamber Board of Directors, will step in as interim executive director.

Sherry Menor-McNamara will be taking a sabbatical from the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii to run for Lieutenant Governor for the State of Hawaii. While she is out, **Keala Peters**, executive vice president, will be taking the lead.

After 20 years with the Truckee (CA) Chamber, President/CEO **Lynn Saunders** has notified the Board of Directors of

her intent to retire at the end of 2022. A search for her replacement is currently underway.

Tillamook (OR) Chamber's **Justin Aufdermauer** was named Oregon's Chamber Executive of the Year by the Oregon State Chamber of Commerce.

The **Torrance Area (CA) Chamber** was chosen by the Los Angeles County Business Federation (BizFed) as Business Nonprofit of the Year for Supervisor District 4 at their inaugural Business Makes LA County Work Awards (Bizzis).

The Gardner (KS) Chamber has hired **Jason Leib** as their new president/CEO. Leib most recently served as an operations executive in information technology and has held a number of community leadership positions.

MEETING DATES

W.A.C.E. Events • (916) 442-2223
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Academy 2022

July 31–August 3
Hyatt Regency Sacramento
Sacramento, CA

Academy Plus

August 1–2
Hyatt Regency Sacramento
Sacramento, CA

The Ad Wizard

To access The Ad Wizard, visit wizard.waceonline.com. Chambers that have created ads are encouraged to send them to W.A.C.E. or use #TheChamberIs when posting them on social media.

Chairman's Circle

Gold Members

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- Personify

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.

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