

CEO Monthly Memo

Amy Buckmaster, President & CEO

April 9, 2024

Dear Chamber Members and Partners:

In the front lobby of the Chamber office is a photograph of our board of directors from 1920. As you might expect for the time, all of the directors assembled around the table were white males. Compare that photo to the Chamber's leadership roster today and you will see the full growth and story of our Chamber unfold before your eyes.

Today, our Chamber is led by a woman (yours truly). Last year, our board of directors elected its first Latina chair, which came on the heels of having elected two AAPI, a Latino, a gay man and four women as chair over the last 25 years. Further, the board also seated its first labor representative in 2022. This diversity is not only a demonstration of the progress we have made as both an organization and as a community, but also a reflection of the importance we place on making sure all voices are represented at our table.

To put a finer point on it, Chamber San Mateo County is not your ordinary chamber of commerce.

- We are a convener of all facets of the community to tackle big problems and make a lasting impact on issues that matter – transportation, housing, balanced government regulations and taxes, and economic vitality for all segments of our community.
- We are the voice and support for business, institutions, employees and labor for growth, problem solving and the bettering of the region's quality of life.
- We pride ourselves on successfully advocating for our members and our communities to achieve positive outcomes and make meaningful progress, rather than on talking problems to death.

This may all sound trite and simple, but it's true. As an example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, while so many of our member businesses were struggling to chart their path forward, Chamber San Mateo County provided services, support and solutions to help them and the communities they serve to survive and thrive. This is just a snapshot of the approach we take and the work we do each day. To highlight many more ways the Chamber meets the times and

brings the interests of our members and the community to the forefront, I invite you to read through our newly published [Annual Report for 2023](#).

As an organization, we continue to evolve but remain firmly connected to our roots and anchored in our values to ensure that we maintain our position as the forum where business voices are heard, engaged, supported and elevated. Since that black and white photo in our office was taken 104 years ago, Chamber San Mateo County has grown in membership, service area, influence and effectiveness. To create the greatest synergies for our community's businesses, the Belmont Chamber of Commerce and Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce successfully transitioned their memberships to Chamber San Mateo County in 2023. These two chambers join the San Carlos Chamber of Commerce, which transitioned its membership to the Redwood City-San Mateo County Chamber in October 2020, creating the organization we are today – Chamber San Mateo County. This new geographical service area is the largest of any chamber in the county, includes the county seat, serves 1,500 members and encompasses 175,000 residents and 100,000 employees.

With this new reach, Chamber San Mateo County represents parts of two congressional districts, one state senate district, two Assembly districts, three county supervisor districts, four cities, and seven educational districts, with nearly 65 elected officials, in addition to the professional staffs of each governing body. Access to this vast network of community leaders increases Chamber San Mateo County's ability to advocate for our members on a broader, regional scale and shape a portfolio of critical outcomes in housing, transportation, and taxes and fees that impact the business and economic vitality of our community.

The Chamber team stands ready to be helpful and useful in any way we can. Please let me know if there is anything we can do to help or support you and your business.

Happy Spring!

