

INSIDER

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Retiring President/CEO Leaves Lasting Impact

Every year the chair of the board is asked to provide an outgoing column in the W.A.C.E. *Insider* newsletter. Traditionally, the chair of the board is asked to recap his or her year; highlighting the various mission driven programming that assisted our members and our industry. That’s something I could certainly do here.

I could talk about the invaluable webinar series we did this past fall and winter. I could highlight the various workshops W.A.C.E. has facilitated, like the volunteer leadership workshop we hosted. I could go into detail about the importance of the board basics video series which our members can share with their respective boards.

Or I could highlight the constant outreach that our association provides to local chambers and our members throughout the West through W.A.C.E. President and CEO Dave Kilby.

Dedication

I’ll save all of that for another time because I’d like to take this time to dedicate this column to the individual named



Dave Kilby

above, our president and CEO, Dave Kilby. Many of you know by now that Dave announced his retirement in the fall of 2022. By the time you are reading this, he will be conducting and performing his final duties as our chief executive at this year’s annual W.A.C.E. conference in Sacramento. I am confident that many will have taken the time to wish Dave well and reminisce about all of the good ol’ days.

Now let me be very clear, no simple column in a newsletter will be able to do proper justice in celebrating Dave and what he’s contributed to this organization. However, this is a short and poor attempt to do just that.

You see, Dave has been at the helm of our association for 34 years. In those years, he has made an impact on thousands of individuals, mentored hundreds of chamber of commerce professionals, and assisted many of us in getting out of

a few “jams” with our volunteer leaders and boards — to say the least!

To try to recap the career of one Dave Kilby would take a book to encapsulate...and then some. And that’s just with his W.A.C.E. hat on, as much more time (and space) would be needed to recap his California Chamber of Commerce career. It goes without saying, Dave’s fingerprints are everywhere when it comes to all things chambers of commerce professional development, and the impacts he has had on so many throughout his time leading our association. There is no simple way to just say “thank you,” nor should there be.

Indelible Mark

I know I speak for many of us in saying that there is no proper way to fully honor Dave due to the number of lives he has touched, careers he’s affected, and the indelible mark he will leave on our industry. I’m a prime example as I know I owe much of my success in my career, and in our industry, to Dave.

One of my mentors (and Dave could certainly be included in this group) would cite change management expert and author Price Pritchett from his book *New Work Habits For A Radically Changing World*. In it, Pritchett gives the advice: “Add enough value so that after you have left everyone will know something very important is missing.”

I know this will be said of Dave Kilby when he no longer serves at the helm of this organization. I hope you will join me when appropriate at our annual conference as we celebrate Dave and raise a pint and say thank you Mr. Dave Kilby!

Article by Jeremy Harris, ACE, IOM, president and CEO, Long Beach Area (CA) Chamber.

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COMMENTARY

All Good Things Must Come to an End



Dave Kilby

As you may know, after 45-plus years in chamber work and more than 34 years at the CalChamber, I've announced my plan to step down (retire) at the end of February, after wrapping up this year's annual W.A.C.E. conference.

When I think back, I truly had no idea that my senior project in the journalism

department at Fresno State would start me on this chamber career path, but it did...and I've never regretted it.

After 11-plus years at the Modesto Chamber, the chance to join the CalChamber team and manage this association was an offer and opportunity that I couldn't refuse.

While this work can, if you let it, be all encompassing, I've tried to do my best to do what's REALLY important — be a good husband, father and grandfather. But at the same time, I tried to make a difference and, in some small way, help chamber professionals and their organizations be successful.

As the CEO of this association for more than one-third of its existence, I've had the opportunity to work with the absolute best in the chamber business. I'm honored that many of these chamber champions — 21 of the association's past chairs — were able to join us at the 2023 conference.

Paradoxical Commandments

In 1987, when I served as the association's chair (we called it president back then), I offered up the following comments for all to think about, and hopefully, embrace. They seem just as, or maybe even more, appropriate today; it's called "Anyway: The Paradoxical Commandments" by Kent Keith:

People are illogical, unreasonable and self-centered.

Love them anyway.

If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives.

Do good anyway.

If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies.

Succeed anyway.

The good you do today might be forgotten tomorrow.

Do good anyway.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.

Be honest and frank anyway.

The biggest people with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest people with the smallest minds.

Think big anyway.

People favor underdogs but follow top dogs.

Fight for a few underdogs anyway.

What you spend years building can be destroyed overnight.

Build anyway.

People need help, but may attack you if you help them.

Help people anyway.

Give the world your best and you might get kicked in the teeth.

Give the world your best anyway.

Reach Out

As I pass the baton to tomorrow's leaders, I wish you all a very successful future forward.

If I can help, don't ever hesitate to reach out and, remember, as they say and sang in Disney's *Toy Story* movies: **"You've got a friend in me!"**

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

2022-2023 W.A.C.E. OFFICERS

Chair of the Board

Jeremy Harris, ACE, IOM
Long Beach Area (CA) Chamber
(562) 436-1251 • jharris@lbchamber.com

Chair-Elect

Lorraine Clarno, ACE
Kalispell (MT) Chamber & CVB
(406) 758-2800 • l.clarno@kalispellchamber.com

Vice Chair

John Brewer
Billings (MT) Chamber
(406) 245-4111 • john@billingschamber.com

Vice Chair

Colin Diaz, ACE, IOM
Tempe (AZ) Chamber
(480) 736-4280 • colin@tempechamber.org

Vice Chair

Whitney Diver-McEvoy
Yountville (CA) Chamber
(707) 944-0904 • whitney@yountville.com

Vice Chair

Kami Welch, ACE
Arvada (CO) Chamber
(303) 424-0313 • kami@arvadachamber.org

Immediate Past Chair

Chris Romer, ACE
Vail Valley (CO) Partnership
(970) 476-1000 • cromer@visitvailvalley.com

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Chairman's Circle

Gold Members

- CalChamber
- Citslinc International, Inc.
- Indus Travels
- 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.

EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Discover Kalispell CEO Guided by Integrity, Gives All Credit to Others for Successes



Lorraine Clarno, ACE

President and CEO, Discover Kalispell (MT) Chamber of Commerce
2023 Chair of the Board of W.A.C.E.

Background

Personal: Born in Sarnia, Ontario, raised in Hong Kong, Korea and Australia. Married 35 years, two grown children.

Education: B.S. in business and economics from Simon Fraser University, British Columbia.

Chamber Experience:

- **1988–1995:** Served on the Puyallup (WA) and Lacey (WA) Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Ambassador, Education committees.
- **1995:** Hillsboro (OR) Chamber of Commerce: Committee/Program Director, School to Work Director for Washington County.
- **2000–2020:** President/CEO Beaver-ton Area (OR) Chamber of Commerce.
- **2020–Current:** President/CEO, Discover Kalispell (MT) Chamber of Commerce.

Business Philosophy

Guiding Principles: Integrity and service to others in all facets of life.

Yardstick of Success: Tenure and success of my staff and leadership.

Advice to Others: Give all the credit for success to others and take all the blame for missteps.

Judgment Calls

Best Business Decision: Sunsetting the Taste of Beaverton and moving the chamber away from an event-driven organization.

Worst Business Decision: Rushing a hire decision.

One-Word Description of You: Disrupter.

True Confessions

Like Best about Current Job: Endless opportunities for change and supportive resources.

Interests/Hobbies: Cooking, snow shoeing, hiking, DOGS!

Pet Peeve: Oh, so many . . . people who do not respond within 24 hours.

Your No. 1 Strength: Determined.

Things You Need to Work on: Patience and focus.

First Choice for a New Career: Winery/dog rescue owner.

Predilections

Favorite Book: Currently — *If You Want Something Done* by Nikki Haley; learned so much about amazing women leaders.

Favorite Movie: “Top Gun Maverick.”

Favorite Quote: “Don’t know the secret to success, but the secret to failure is trying to please everyone.”

Favorite Song: Depends on the mood I’m in. To get pumped up — Alicia Keys, “This Girl Is on Fire.”

Favorite Vacation Spot: Anywhere camping in the mountains, lakes, and rivers.

Favorite Way to Spend Free Time: With family!



SURVEY SAYS

THE ECONOMY & PUBLIC POLICY

WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE ECONOMY IN 2023:

17% SAID BETTER THAN 2022

61% SAID MORE OF THE SAME

22% SAID WORSE THAN 2022

78%

SAID CHAMBERS
ARE MORE PRESSURED
TO TAKE STANDS ON SOCIAL ISSUES
TODAY THAN IN THE PAST

TOP 2 PREFERRED METHODS TO INFLUENCE POLICY

1. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL ENTITIES (79%)
2. LOCAL MEET & GREET EVENTS (54%)

76%

BELIEVE THE BUSINESS
COMMUNITY HAS A
RESPONSIBILITY
TO DRIVE SOCIAL CHANGE

DO YOU FEEL THE CHAMBER'S
ABILITY TO INFLUENCE PUBLIC POLICY IS BECOMING:

64% STRONGER

29% STAYING THE SAME

7% WEAKER

IN 2023 DO YOU EXPECT YOUR MEMBERS WILL:

32% HIRE MORE PEOPLE THAN IN 2022

44% HIRE THE SAME NUMBER AS IN 2022

12% NOT HIRE NEW PEOPLE

12% REDUCE THEIR WORKFORCE

POLL TAKEN OF 185 CHAMBER EXECUTIVES IN JANUARY 2022

LEADER TO LEADER

Challenges 2023: Burnout, Inflation, Relevancy, Recruiting New Generation

What is the biggest challenge you see facing your chamber in 2023?



Andrea Reay
President/CEO
Tacoma-Pierce
County (WA)
Chamber

I've always been someone who tries to look at challenges as opportunities. We grow as

people and as organizations when we're challenged, and maybe even a little uncomfortable.

When I think about the challenges our chamber faces this year, I think our greatest challenge is overcoming exhaustion and burnout. How do we balance serving the needs of the community while also the needs of our own organization?

Investing in professional development, wellness programs, improving our own culture; these are the investments we must make in ourselves and our team so we can continue to do the hard work our community needs us to do.



Bo Hellams
President/CEO
Bullhead Area
(AZ) Chamber

For the Bullhead Area Chamber of Commerce, we are evaluating everything we offer against other chambers

across the nation so that we can maintain relevancy in our own community of business owners.

As 2022 came to a close, we audited our membership in-depth. It was truly eye-opening to realize that an entire generation of business owners have already exited the workforce for retirement or are working their way into retirement.

Much like the issues that employers are seeing with the labor force and incentives that are now being used to attract employees, we as chamber executives must adapt to a new generation of business owners, maintain their attention and create a portfolio of business solutions that leave them wanting to be part of our organizations.

As staff and I work our way through 2023, it will continue to be my goal to stay valuable to a generation that truly knows very little about the strengths and capabilities of a chamber. We will stay on the gas to maintain relevancy on every front for business owners and our community.



Kelly Hall
President/CEO
Longview (TX)
Chamber

Problems create platforms. The rocky economy, extreme political fragmentation and global tensions provide great

opportunity for our chamber.

Our biggest challenge begins with the heart. As we onboard new volunteers and grow leaders, it is becoming more problematic to move individuals from being

politically correct to doing what is right. I believe I have responsibility to help our team improve on communicating our values and our why.

As an advocacy organization that believes in and is charged with protecting the free enterprise system, we must remain focused on our message. The programs we produce and publications we utilize (whether online or in print) must be fully aligned with our message — our platform.



Bret Schanzenbach
President/CEO
Carlsbad (CA)
Chamber

Our three biggest issues we are facing in 2023 are inflation, expansion and retention.

Inflation is driving our hard costs up and we have to keep increasing our staff members' compensation so we don't lose them and they can keep paying their bills. As you seek to pass those costs on, members and vendors complain.

There is also the never-ending need to expand our services to grow our value proposition. This mostly involves providing value first, financially capitalizing on it second, without guarantees of course.

And membership retention is a challenge. Residual COVID effects exist, plus new economic hiccups that are now showing up. Challenges exist, opportunities abound.

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PRESIDENT DAVE KILBY
@DaveKilbyWACE

<http://twitter.com/DaveKilbyWACE>

W.A.C.E. by the NUMBERS



25,854

responses collected through the W.A.C.E. Chamber Performance Survey since 2014



118

executives and staff that attended Academy in 2022



40,367

unique page views on WACEonline.com in 2022



23

states or provinces represented by W.A.C.E. members



51

documents added/updated in the Resource Library in 2022

821

total number of W.A.C.E. members



CHAMBER LEADERSHIP PODCAST

107 episodes released of the Chamber Leadership Podcast



60

hours of continuing education offered by W.A.C.E. in 2022



366

views on the new Board Basics page since its release in October 2022



1,100

likes on W.A.C.E. Facebook page



2,284

survey responses collected from chamber executives from W.A.C.E. opinion polls in 2022



25

Accredited Chamber Executives still active in chamber management

NOTEWORTHY

What Chambers Are Doing Around the West

Carlsbad Chamber Launches Podcast Studio

The Carlsbad (CA) Chamber ended the year with a new state-of-the-art podcast studio in their offices. The studio was created in collaboration with Imagine Podcasting, a local podcast consulting business. For those looking to launch their own podcast, the studio has raw equipment, production and publication capabilities all in one.

Interested in doing something similar? Reach out to Bret Schanzenbach at bret@carlsbad.org to get all the details.

Kitsap Chamber Offers Small Business Assistance Through Grant Program

The Greater Kitsap (WA) Chamber, in partnership with the Washington State Department of Commerce, has launched the Growing Greater Business Program serving historically underserved small business owners in Silverdale and Central Kitsap County. The grant includes not only financial assistance but also support in the form of entrepreneurship opportunities and educational workshops.

Twenty businesses will be eligible for a grant of up to \$10,000 each, which will be used to help grow their businesses as they continue to recover from the loss of business income and activity during the pandemic. Eligible business growth opportunities include attending or exhibiting at industry conferences, leadership training, brand awareness, lead generation, customer acquisition, customer retention, increased customer lifetime value, and employee training.

The grant also includes a six-month membership to the chamber and access to its many benefits.

Learn more at <https://greaterkitsap-chamber.com/greaterbusinessgrant/>.

Eugene Chamber Focuses on Child Care

The Eugene Area (OR) Chamber has launched several efforts to help expand access to child care in their community.

Pre-pandemic data shows that in Lane County there was one child care slot for every four children ages 0–5 years and just one slot for every seven infants and toddlers.

Onward Eugene, in partnership with Quality Care Connections and the Early



Childhood Hub of Lane County, is supporting local child care providers and community stakeholders in applying for upcoming child care capacity building grants.

In addition to helping connect providers with grants, they also published a toolkit, "Leasing with Care: Supporting Child Care as an Employer," designed for employers interested in supporting their employees' child care needs, ranging from simple, low- or no-cost strategies, to more robust approaches, and everything in between.

High-quality, affordable and accessible child care has a significant impact on the economic growth and competitiveness of not only companies but also our country. Download the toolkit at <https://onward Eugene.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Leading-with-Care-LANE-FINAL.pdf>.

More questions about the program? Contact Childcare Sector Strategist Holly Mar-Conte at hollym@onward Eugene.org.

Atascadero Chamber Debuts Jr. CEO Program

In 2023 the Atascadero (CA) Chamber is launching a six-week digital business education course that teaches kids the basics of starting their own business. The program is sponsored by a local credit union. The program has been developed with the theme of how to open a lemonade stand business.

At the end of the program, students will open their lemonade stand (or another concept that they created) at The Plaza at La Plaza during "Jr. CEO Business Day," Saturday, April 1. The program will communicate basic information at a junior high learning level and covers five main categories: business fundamentals (forming a business plan, setting up a bank account, etc.), cost models, safety and food prep, marketing and customer service, and money management.

Each virtual session will be facilitated by Chamber CEO Josh Cross as well as feature local business leaders as guest speakers.

Learn more at <https://www.atascaderochamber.org/jr-ceo/>.

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.

MAY 17-18, 2023

CAPITOL SUMMIT & SACRAMENTO HOST BREAKFAST



HAVE YOU VISITED LATELY?

We have added/updated 143 documents in the resource library in the last two years. With over 800 documents in the library there is something for everyone!

Find Samples & Inspiration

TOPICS

- Board Documents
- CEO Evaluations
- Strategic Plans
- Annual Reports
- Member Attraction & Retention
- Member Letters
- And so much more...



Have samples you think would be helpful to others? Submit them by emailing jennifer.johnson@calchamber.com



MEETING DATES

W.A.C.E. Events • (916) 442-2223
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Executive Workshop & Board meeting
May 11 - 12
Hilton Denver City Center
Denver, CO

W.A.C.E. Academy
August 6 - 9
Hyatt Regency
Sacramento, CA
Registration to open in March