Cleantech takes off in L.A.

Cleantech is on the rise in L.A., with more than 700 cleantech companies already located in the area. This October, the City will launch the Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator (LACI) to accelerate the development of cleantech start-ups and to help build a stronger green economy in L.A. LACI will offer office space, mentoring, commercialization help, networking opportunities and financing to eligible cleantech startups.

LACI is a nonprofit organization hatched from the CleanTech L.A. alliance between the Mayor’s office, the LACI will develop of cleantech start-ups and to help build a Cleantech Incubator (LACI) to accelerate the startups.

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The L.A. Area Chamber believes that this region has the power to lead the country in an economic revival, and has been working with business and civic leaders to promote innovative solutions to some of the nation’s most pressing problems. Following is an overview of some of the sectors where the L.A. area is leading the nation in innovation.

People all over the country are looking for ways to do more with less. From small business owners to policymakers, Americans are finding that in this new economy, the conventional ideas and old methods no longer work.

Enter “innovation,” which quickly became a buzzword in December 2007, in sync with the start of the recession. Though broadly used, it generally refers to the invention of products and processes that introduce positive change to society. Harvard Economist Michael Porter calls it “the central issue in economic prosperity.”

In Southern California, the region that brought the nation the space shuttle, the Internet and the Mars Rover, innovation is more than a buzzword; it’s our bread and butter. The L.A. area is home to two of the top five patent-producing universities in the nation (The University of California and California Institute of Technology), dozens of Nobel Prize-winners, a vibrant startup scene; a booming tech sector; and one of the most cutting edge, busiest and most profitable port complexes in the world.

Suffice it to say, Southern Californians know a little something about innovation, and with the world hungry for cleaner, more efficient and cheaper ways of doing things, our ideas have never been more in demand. The ability to find creative solutions to big problems is part of what has grown L.A. from a sleepy pueblo to a massive metropolis in less than 125 years. Thinking big and partnering across industry lines have enabled City leaders to overcome L.A.’s unique challenges, and has made the City a world leader in multiple industries.

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Want to hear more? Join us at the LACI launch!

Thursday, October 6, 2011
5 – 8 p.m.
411 S. Hewitt St.
Los Angeles, CA 90013

The event will feature a showcase of new technologies from local cleantech companies, tours of LACI, food and drinks from local restaurants and live music. The program will include remarks from local political leaders and a presentation about LACI and the La Kretz Innovation Campus by LACI Executive Director Fred Walti.

RSVP now at laci.eventbrite.com.

For more information, visit laincubator.org.
A better L.A. is our business

The power of innovation

Innovation is the ability to see change as an opportunity, not a threat. Throughout history, the leaders of business and industry in California have embraced that philosophy; and in today’s climate of continuous change, there’s no other way to ensure our area’s future prosperity than to seize the opportunity to innovate once again.

In this issue, we’ve explored innovations throughout Los Angeles, Southern California and the State. As you’ll read, innovation is not only a part of the culture in our region; it is also the answer to our many of our current challenges.

From America Fast Forward, in which L.A. is a model for the nation in discovering innovative ways to finance transportation projects, to the growing cleantech industry, the Chamber is working to utilize our area’s entrepreneurial spirit to put Californians back to work.

For the past year, the Chamber has been planning a new state-wide leadership development program, California Connections, to build a cadre of leaders across the State that know each other, respect each other and share a common desire to break down the barriers that exist between different geographic areas. This November, the Southern California Leadership Network will launch the program, giving executives throughout the State an opportunity to study important issues and create pathways to successful statewide leadership.

A key to leadership development and continued innovation is education. As home to some of our nation’s top higher education and research institutions, the L.A. area owes much of its world-class status to its universities. These research institutions employ more than 100,000 people and fuel our economy through their excellence in innovation, teaching and public service. Through the L.A. Compact, the Chamber has engaged our universities in a focused effort to support innovations that will ensure a strong 21st century workforce for our region.

The past three years have been very challenging and full of change for businesses in L.A. and throughout the State, but our members have used collaboration to sustain their business as and set the stage for growth in the future. I thank you for your continued support of the innovative efforts of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. In times of change, your time, talent and resources are needed more than ever to continue your mission of creating a better L.A.

The Chamber VOICE is a quarterly publication of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce 350 S. Bixel St., Los Angeles, CA 90017.

For membership information, contact the Chamber at 213.580.7592 or visit lachamber.com.

The Chamber VOICE is produced by the L.A. Area Chamber Marketing & Communications department in conjunction with Chamber Staff.

Gary L. Toebben, President & CEO
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce

Calendar of Events

WED | SEPT 28
The Connection Point Series, Session Three: Twitter and Blogs for Business
Learn how Twitter can be an information accelerator with the power to produce real bottom line results. Also, find out how blogs can increase customer engagement and help establish you as a thought-leader. For more information on the Connection Point Series, “Social Media: The New Way to Connect with Customers,” visit lachamber.com/connectionpoint.

WED | OCT 5
ACCESS L.A. City Hall
Join business leaders from throughout the region for a networking breakfast and a special City Council meeting on issues vital to L.A.’s businesses. Topics include job creation, prioritizing essential city services, pension reform, fixing the budget deficit and lowering L.A.’s business tax. This event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Beverly Kenworthy, 213.580.7531 or bkenworthy@lachamber.com.

TUES | DEC 6
Southern California Visionaries Awards Luncheon
The Southern California Leadership Network annually recognizes leaders who are inspiring positive change in the region at this pinnacle leadership event in Southern California. For more information, contact Taleen Ananian, 213.580.7526 or tananian@lachamber.com.

DEC 7 - 8
10th Annual Cash for College: College & Career Convention
The two-day College & Career Convention features college life seminars, interactive career demonstrations, financial aid presentations and an exhibit hall with college and university representatives from throughout the United States. For more information, contact Simon Flores, 213.580.7598 or sflores@lachamber.com.
10 ways the Chamber helped your business

Your investment in the Chamber helps us build a stronger economy and quality of life in the region. Here are a few ways we helped improve L.A. business:

1. **Pushed Westside Subway Extension to final approval stage**

   The Chamber has been a long-time proponent of the Westside Subway Extension, which was recently announced as one of eight projects nationwide that has been invited to take the final approval stage to receive loan funding from the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act program. The $640 million federal loan commitment would help fund a high-capacity, nine-mile extension of the Metro Purple Line subway to a proposed Westwood/Veterans Affairs Hospital station once negotiations are complete. **Bottom line:** The Chamber supported the U.S. Department of Transportation for advancing the project, and thanks Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer for their continued support.

2. **Hosted nation’s largest job fair for veterans**

   The Chamber joined the U.S. Chamber, ServiceNation: MissionServe and a number of other organizations to host the Hiring our Heroes job fair for veterans at Sony Pictures Studios. More than 160 area companies and 1,500 veterans and military spouses took part. In addition, attendees were greeted by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, who made the event their second stop on their tour. **Bottom line:** The Chamber gives military spouses and veterans a unique opportunity to connect with businesses ready to hire.

3. **Supported downtown stadium MOU**

   The L.A. City Council voted to approve a Memorandum of Understanding that outlines the framework of a $1.5 billion proposal to develop a downtown stadium and new wing of the Convention Center as proposed by Anschutz Entertainment Group (AEG). The Chamber supports the public-private development model for the proposed project. **Bottom line:** The Chamber’s strong professional football back to L.A. would be a stimulus to our regional economy.

4. **Created job opportunities for young workers**

   The Chamber and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa helped create hundreds of job opportunities within the private sector for L.A. area youth. AT&T, Cedars-Sinai Health System, Cordoba Corporation, H&R Block, Kaiser Permanente, Microsoft Corporation, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc., Vons, Walmart Foundation, Wells Fargo and other companies all pledged summer jobs for the HIRE L.A.’s Youth campaign. **Bottom line:** Connecting youth with jobs is vital in strengthening the workforce.

5. **Played vital role in Blueprint for Great Schools**

   State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson submitted a Blueprint for Great Schools, a 33-page report prepared by his Transition Advisory Team. Made up of community leaders, school employees and administrators as well as community, labor and business leaders, the team is co-chaired by Stanford Education Professor Linda Darling-Hammond and L.A. Area Chamber Senior VP of Education and Workforce Development David Rottray. The blueprint is designed to make sure success in a California classroom today means success in college and a career tomorrow. **Bottom line:** The recommendations promise to support our 21st century workforce with the necessary skills to help them thrive in economy.

6. **Continued to push for pension reform**

   Chamber Board Chair Joseph Czyzak, Mercury Air Group, Inc. testified in support of AB 340, which would help reform California’s public pension system. The bill gives retirement board permission to call out and identify suspicious pension enhancement practices, an authority they currently don’t have. The Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce strongly supports Assemblymember Furtani’s AB 340 and believes there are ways we can encourage the Legislature to continue with further pension reforms,” said Czyzak. **Bottom line:** AB 340 is an important first step in reforming our state public pension systems.

7. **Spearheaded America Fast Forward Coalition Letter**

   The Chamber sent a letter to Congress co-signed by more than 30 chambers of commerce from across the country, calling for the Senate to pass a robust transportation reauthorization bill that includes innovative financing such as America Fast Forward. The coalition is in agreement that infrastructure investment should be a priority for Congress and that maintaining a strong transportation infrastructure, creating jobs and balancing the budget are not mutually exclusive goals. The Chamber has been a strong proponent of America Fast Forward, known locally as 30/20. **Bottom line:** More than 920,000 Americans per year will be put to work building our national infrastructure if federal legislation is passed to enable the America Fast Forward program.

8. **Testified for L.A. Zoo restructuring**

   Chamber President & CEO Gary Toebben testified in support of the L.A. City Administrator’s Office proposal to issue a request for proposals (RFPs) to find an alternative management structure for the Los Angeles Zoo, with the goal of providing the zoo with the flexibility to utilize new earned revenue sources and more private sector fundraising to keep revenue to operate and market the zoo. In August, L.A. City Council passed the measure to solicit RFPs from prospective zoo operators. **Bottom line:** This business model would permit the zoo to fully reach its potential as a civic institution that adds greatly to the quality of life in L.A.

9. **Celebrated Home For Good milestones**

   The Business Leaders Task Force on Homelessness Co-chairs Jerry Neuman, Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton, LLP, and Renee Fraser, Fraser Communications, testified at the State’s Select Committee on Homelessness special hearing in L.A. Assemblymember Toni Atkins, chair of the committee, and Assembly Speaker John Pérez heard about Home For Good as well as the State can do to support the effort. Home For Good is at 46 percent toward the goal of housing chronically homeless this year and 43 percent of housing homeless veterans. **Bottom line:** By redirecting and coordinating our existing resources, we can eliminate homelessness in L.A. and spend less money than we do now.

10. **Helped set up Office of Economic Analysis**

    Chamber President & CEO Gary Toebben testified in support of the L.A. City Administrator’s recommendations for the Office of Economic Analysis (OEA) Pilot Program. The L.A. City Council unanimously passed the ordinance. Council President Garcetti’s office is funding the pilot project with $250,000. The OEA will ensure that new city legislation is evaluated for its direct impact on jobs, the ability to keep business in the City, the amount of private sector investment attracted and tax revenue for the City. **Bottom line:** This is a big win for the business community and the Chamber thanks the L.A. City Council for its support and Council President Garcetti for his leadership.

11. **Seminars + Seen at the Chamber**

    L.A. City Controller Wendy Greuel addressed participants at the Accenture Panacast & Politics Breakfast Speaker Series. **Bottom line:** Senator President pro tem Darrell Steinberg discussed the importance of connecting education and the economy for students, and announced that the State has the workforce it needs to stay competitive at the Accenture Panacast & Politics Breakfast Speaker Series. Cindy Glenn, U.S. Customs & Border Protection; and Henry Smith, U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, Alcohol, Tobacco and Trade Bureau, met with the Trade Commissioners Networking Group for a private import briefing. Woua Hsieh, president and founder of Solamar, spoke about the Environmental Sustainability Council. “We aren’t calling for a mandate, we are calling for shared responsibility,” said Greg Good, director, Don’t Waste LA Project, LAANE, discussing a proposed franchise waste haul system in L.A. at the Land Use & Mobility Council. **Bottom line:** We need to focus on retaining jobs in Southern California; said L.A. County Supervisor Don Knabe at the Accenture Panacast & Politics Breakfast Speaker Series. David Chou, technical architect at Microsoft Corporation, discussed the importance of using technology at the Small Business Council meeting. Young Lawyers, Los Angeles Unified School District Board Member, spoke about the important reading milestones that take place in third grade at an Education at a Glance meeting. The Chamber honored former Rep. Jane Harman (CA 36) for her eight terms representing Los Angeles County in the House of Representatives. “I need to be looking at the long-term goal of having zero to near-zero emissions technology go forward,” said Strauss for the L.A. Zoo. **Bottom line:** The Chamber hosted representatives from the South Coast Air Quality Management District, including Barbara Baird, district counsel, for a public hearing on the proposed draft AGMD Energy Policy. Los Angeles Department of Water & Power General Manager Ron Nichols discussed basic business costs and the rate increases necessary to meet those costs. Michael J. Panetta, Associate Chase Bank, N.A., called Brazil “the technology hub of the world,” and questioned the U.S. at the Navigating Global Economic Challenges: Corporate Best Practices in Foreign Expansion and Trade seminar. 144 Attendees at the first High Speed Rail Task Force meeting heard updates from California High Speed Rail Authority Board member Kurt Pringle, Alan Bell, deputy director, Los Angeles Department of City Planning, about the Department’s efforts to re-write and modernize coding for the first time in 65 years at the Land Use & Mobility Policy Council. At the Government & Public Affairs Issues Outlook Seminar, SNR Denton US LLP met, said the business community should view redistricting as an opportunity to affect change. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa met with business leaders at the HIRE L.A.’s Youth Employer Engagement Luncheon. **Bottom line:** Don’t miss out on any action this fall – go to www.seenheard LAC.com for a calendar of upcoming speakers and events.
treatments for cancer, Alzheimer's, Leukemia, HIV/gene sequencer. Since then, the region has remained synthetic human insulin, as well as the automatic industry, including technology that was used to create key contributions at the dawn of the biotechnology worldwide. Southern California scientists had several claiming some of the world's top innovators and been pushing the boundaries of science for decades, area is putting the City on the map. In fact, L.A. has the vast array of innovation coming out of the L.A. L.A. is not well-known as a biotechnology hub, but Forward, " says L.A. Area Chamber President & CEO Gary Tooben.

The last several years have seen a number of innovations emerging as a result of L.A. area research. In 2005, Abraxis Health, Inc., a global biopharmaceutical company recently acquired by Celgene Corporation, introduced Abaxane, a novel form of a widely used cancer drug used to treat metastatic breast cancer. The world's largest independent biotech firm, Amgen, has long called the region home, and is turning out treatments for everything from cancer and osteoporosis to heart failure and arthritis. Baxter International Inc. also has three of its five U.S. Baxter BioScience operations in Southern California, and is working on research related to hemophilia, biotherapeutics, regenerative medicine and vaccines.

In L.A. and Orange counties, employment in the technology and scientific sectors is up from 2009, with more than 70,000 people working in biomedical industry jobs. In fact, 27 percent of California's biomedical workers are live in the region, and L.A. County is third in the State for the number of residents working at private research institutions. California has consistently ranked No. 1 among all states in funding received from The National Institute of Health (NIH), the primary agency of the federal government responsible for biomedical and health-related research. In 2010, the State received $3.3 billion in NIH grants, which helped to employ more than 71,000 people. More than $1 billion of these funds went to L.A. area research institutions, including the California Institute of Technology; Cedars-Sinai Health System; Children's Hospital of Los Angeles; City of Hope; University of California, Los Angeles and University of Southern California.

Where the State is leading the nation in environmental innovation, L.A. is leading the State. In 2007, Mayor Villaraigosa released the GREEN L.A. Action Plan. GREEN L.A. gives L.A. a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 35 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, the most aggressive goal of any big U.S. city. The plan aims to increase L.A.'s dependence on renewable energy to 40 percent by 2020. The City is well on its way to reaching this goal, since 2005, reliance on renewable energy sources has gone from 3 to 28 percent, the most dramatic improvement in the State among major utilities. Part of L.A.'s renewable energy is provided by the Fine Tree Wind Power Plant, the nation's largest municipal wind farm, as well as the Terminal Island Renewable Energy Project (TIRE), a state-of-the-art clean energy facility which is setting the standard for clean energy nationwide.

TIRE is the nation's first to turn biosolids, the nutrient-rich organic materials resulting from the treatment of sewage sludge, into clean energy. The five-year demonstration project saves the City $1.6 million per year in the cost of removing biosolids, and the energy produced is worth $2.4 million. The project has been recognized as one of the top 50 innovations in American government by the Harvard Kennedy School's Ash Institute, and has received a National League of Cities 2010 Award for Municipal Excellence.

For more information, contact P. Anthony Thomas, 213.580.7668 or athomas@lachamber.com.

The merits of America Fast Forward have won over a bipartisan group of national leaders—a difficult feat in today’s divisive political climate. In July, the Chamber sent a letter to Congress, co-signed by more than 30 chambers of commerce from across the country, calling on the House and Senate to pass a robust transportation reauthorization bill that includes America Fast Forward financing. If federal legislation was passed to enable the America Fast Forward program, more than $20,000 Americans per year would be put to work building our national infrastructure, generating $5.8 billion in state and local tax revenues and $10.6 billion for Washington.

"With so many in the construction industry out of work and the cost of projects at a historic low, now is the time to take our foot off the brake, step on the gas and take a historic opportunity to maximize the growth in the greater Los Angeles region." says L.A. Area Chamber President & CEO Gary Tooben.

The L.A. Area Chamber believes that this region has the power to lead the country in an economic revival, and has been working with business and civic leaders to promote innovative solutions to some of the nation's most pressing problems.

L.A. is not well-known as a biotechnology hub, but the vast array of innovation coming out of the L.A. area is putting the City on the map. In fact, L.A. has been pushing the boundaries of science for decades, claiming some of the world’s top innovators and producing technology that has saved millions of lives worldwide. Southern Californians have been key contributors at the dawn of the biotechnology industry, developing the treatments for cancer, Alzheimer’s, Leukemia, HIV/AIDS and cardiovascular diseases.

California continues to claim the highest number of annual patents in the country, generating about one quarter of all U.S. patents issued in 2010.
Business Advocacy Priorities

Statewide Political Reform: Statewide Term Limits Reform - Californians for a Fresh Start
The Chamber is supporting the L.A. County Federation of Labor’s term limits reform initiative that has qualified for the next statewide election. The initiative will reduce state lawmakers’ tenure in office to 12 years, allowing them to serve the entire time in a single house of the legislature. The Chamber is working towards developing expertise and long-term policy solutions rather than on their next election.

Business Climate
Reforming the City of L.A.’s Uncompetitive Business Tax (Gross Receipts)
The City of Los Angeles levies a gross receipts tax on most businesses, and this is the highest-based tax in L.A. County and near the top of all major U.S. cities. The Chamber advocated for the creation of the Business Tax Advisory Committee, which recently released an economic analysis that shows that eliminating the Gross Receipts tax not only creates more than $350,000 jobs, but also generates more indirect income to the city compared to the current tax revenue.

L.A. City Office of Economic Analysis
In 2020, the Chamber convened a wide consortium of multiple city departments with differing standards and timelines. The Chamber strongly supports the Mayor’s efforts to make the system more transparent and efficient, as well as provide certainty to all stakeholders.

The California Environment Quality Act (CEQA)
CEQA was originally intended to ensure that development projects meet environmental standards. However, the law is often abused with multiple city departments with differing standards and timelines. The Chamber supports the Mayor’s efforts to make the system more transparent and efficient, as well as provide certainty to all stakeholders.

Regional Economic Engines
Local Ports & Goods Movement
The Port of Los Angeles is a $50 billion/year economic engine, and supporting pro-business priorities and infrastructure improvements is crucial to sustaining the Port as the nation’s busiest complex. The Chamber advocates for expanding terminal improvement projects, ensuring an economically feasible clean air action plan and opposing mandates or new fees on port customers.

America Fast Forward
In 2008, voters approved a sales tax increase to generate $40 billion in transportation funding over the next 30 years. Formerly known as the 35/35 Initiative, America Fast Forward seeks to partner with the federal government to build a strong urban transportation system that results in the next 10 years rather than over three decades. This innovative bipartisan plan will create more than $200,000,000 jobs. Cities across the country are replicating this plan for their own transportation needs.

Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) Modernization
LAX is a $60 billion annual economic engine for our region and supports thousands of local jobs. The Chamber is proud of recent progress to modernize outdated terminals for a better passenger experience. However, there is still a pressing need to reconfigure the two northern runways for greater passenger safety and to accommodate the next generation of larger, cleaner and quieter aircraft.

Governance & Fiscal Reform
Focus on the Delivery of Essential City Services
The Chamber supports structural reforms to the City’s budget process that focus on the delivery of essential city services by creating public/private partnerships that make it easier to do business and ensure that the city is providing services in an efficient and effective way.

L.A. Zoo Restructuring
Based on the recommendation by the City Administrative Officer, the City Council is currently reviewing a process in which a Request for Proposal (RFP) will be issued for a private entity to take stewardship of the L.A. Zoo. The Chamber will be advocating for a robust RFP that will allow the City to maximize the Zoo’s value and ensure that the Zoo is operated to the benefit of the community.

Regional Stewardship
Business Leaders’ Housing Task Force
The Chamber and United Way of Greater Los Angeles formed the Business Leaders’ Task Force and launched the Home For Good report—a five-year strategic plan to end chronic and veteran homelessness in L.A. via permanent supportive housing (PSH). Placing a chronically homeless individual in PSH costs taxpayers $42 percent less than when they are living on the street.

Education & Workforce Development
Improving Public Education through Public Policy
The Chamber is sponsoring the following legislation that promises to strengthen our public education system:
AB 250 (Gronnios) – Will implement 21st century standards and assessments.
AB 790 (Furundjian) – Establishes a Linked Learning high school pilot program that would allow participating districts to implement a district-wide approach that supports strong academics, technical education and real-world experience in the classroom.
AB 3304 (Block) – Establishes a Linked Learning high school pilot program that would allow participating districts to implement a district-wide approach that supports strong academics, technical education and real-world experience in the classroom.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) – On the federal level, the Chamber is supporting the reauthorization WIA. WIA will provide our nation’s unemployed with an opportunity to receive the support needed to begin rebuilding our economy.

Local Education Leadership
As a signatory of the L.A. Compact, the Chamber applauds LAUSD Superintendent John Deasy’s efforts to improve LAUSD. Because improvement of local schools must be a collective effort, the Chamber works with Deasy and other Compact partners and supports Deasy’s “Performance Measure” which outlines goals that will guide and measure overall performance of our schools.

America Fast Forward will:
create jobs right now by empowering local communities
create quality private sector jobs – not through the traditional route of the federal government providing taxpayer funded grants that flow through a variety of entities – but by empowering local communities with forward-looking financing tools that will allow them to focus their own resources directly on the priorities that will best lead to real job creation right now
support tens of thousands of Main Street American businesses in a new way
leverage private capital to create one million private sector infrastructure jobs nationwide
empower local communities not only to make decisions about what is best for them when it comes to jobs – but in a way that does not add to the nation’s budget problems

To learn more about America Fast Forward or to get involved with L.A. Area Chamber policy councils, visit bechamber.com/advocacy.

Critical for the Port of L.A. is the redevelopment of Terminal Island in a way that will enable the Port to utilize the real estate assets necessary to grow cargo capacity well into the future. This includes developing state-of-the-art terminals, preserving commercial fishing operations and facilitating efficient rail movement of imports and exports. Regional participation and support of this planning process is important for the Port’s future.

My hope is to unleash an innovation renaissance in L.A. Capitalizing on our world-class universities, our intrepid entrepreneurs and forward thinking policymakers can usher unprecedented growth and development. It is time we replace individual reaction with collective action. Making long-term investments in transportation and infrastructure, promoting the green economy and supporting local small businesses can pave the path of significantly improving our quality of life.

Big dreams for a better L.A.
For more than 120 years, the L.A. Area Chamber has championed L.A.’s port, an international airport, water system, entertainment industry and freeway system. We asked members of the Chamber’s Board of Directors, what’s your dream project or policy idea for the L.A. region that the Chamber can help make a reality?

Like my parents, I received a high quality education in LAUSD, but I question whether the opportunities afforded me will be available to my own kids. As we face tough economic realities, my big dream for L.A. is that publicly funded education is returned to excellence for all kids across our City, and that we find creative ways to make housing opportunities more plentiful and affordable, which will generate economic opportunities for the entire community.

Daniel Gryczman
Executive Vice President
Regent Properties

Geraldine Knatz
Executive Director
Port of Los Angeles
Focus on leadership
California Connections

It was [pioneers] that gave to California a name for getting up astounding enterprises, and rushing them through with a magnificent dash and daring, and [with] a recklessness of cost or consequences, which she bears unto this day. And when she projects a new surprise, the grave world smiles as usual and says, "Well, that is California all over." — Mark Twain, 1872

California—a microcosm of creativity, innovation and that pioneering spirit—needs strong leadership to continue to maintain its world-class companies, institutions and organizations. Fellows of California Connections 2011 are taking on that challenge in this first-of-its-kind statewide leadership development program launching in November.

The Southern California Leadership Network’s newest fellowship is giving business, government and nonprofit executives the opportunity to study the mega-regions shaping California, make connections with executives around the nation’s most populous state and create a personal roadmap to enhanced statewide leadership roles.

“California’s greatness is the sum of its dynamic regions,” said Kimberly Freeman, SCLN Board Chair and Community Relations Director for Southern California Gas Company, a Sempra Energy utility. “Our leaders must gain a deeper understanding of these regions to propel California in a positive direction.”

California Connections provides that guidance and pathways to successful leadership through interactive seminars, small group excursions and SCLN’s signature skill development component Building Your Leadership Portfolio.

Join us as we build a pipeline of leaders ready to ensure that California’s future is bright. For more information or to get involved, contact Talleen Ananian, 213.580.7526, tananian@scchamber.com or visit www.leadershipnetwork.org.

Public Policy

This quarter we sat down with P. Anthony Thomas, the Chamber’s new vice president of public policy, to get his take on the current fiscal climate in Los Angeles.

Thomas: It is my sincere intention to maintain the L.A. Area Chamber’s position as an economic and political force as I work with the membership throughout my tenure. I look forward to working in concert with State legislative and congressional deliberations, labor, City Council and the Board of Supervisors to create what I like to call the “triangle of partnership.” If we are to be a business-friendly city, then we must have a partnership between government, labor and the business community. Once we stand as a united front, there will not be a city in the nation that will be able to stand in competition.

Thomas: We need to first define what message we are using to attract and retain companies in L.A. One move in the right direction would be to abolish the business gross receipts tax. L.A. has the highest sales tax of all 88 cities in the County. Businesses know that taxes and fees are necessary, but in many cases, they are being overtaxed with fees that become burdensome to industry. The Business Tax Advisory Committee (BTAC) has recognized the tax as an unnecessary burden, and should be applauded for their overwhelming support of this issue. If City Council can also get on board, it will help our long-term job growth.

How do you see the prospects for reform in L.A.?

Thomas: Change is hard to come by, especially when you have done it one way for many years. However, reform can happen if policy makers, labor and the business community work together to define a common problem and collaborate to solve it. Getting on the same page in the beginning will help to avoid finger-pointing and blame-shifting later on. Building partnerships between business, labor and government will be beneficial to all involved.

How can our agenda work in concert with the State’s economic agenda?

Thomas: It goes back to having a viable plan and working with our state legislative delegation. We need to engage them early and often to achieve business-friendly reform. We also need to oppose any proposals that do not increase jobs or attract industry to the State. Will it have its challenges? Yes. Is it doable? By all means.

For more information, contact P. Anthony Thomas, 213.580.7568 or ato@scchamber.com.
Universities fuel L.A.’s innovation economy

Few cities outside Los Angeles when it comes to higher education. The area’s universities are regularly ranked among the top research institutions in the world, and their role in generating cutting-edge technology, developing highly-skilled workers and supporting local businesses puts them in a prime position to fuel the City’s growing innovation economy.

L.A.’s research universities have an enormous economic impact, sustaining more than a 100,000 jobs and infusing tens of billions of dollars into the local economy annually. The University of California, Los Angeles; Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center; University of Southern California; and California Institute of Technology are among the largest overall employers in the City.

The high density of universities in L.A. supports a rich network of collaboration and public-private sector partnerships. For instance, Children’s Hospital Los Angeles and USC are working together to develop medical devices for children. By combining programs, institutes, faculty and students, they hope to create a pipeline of new pediatric devices in L.A.

Another fruitful partnership (and recent National Institute of Health grant recipient) is the UCLA Clinical and Translational Science Institute (UCLA CTSI). A partnership between Cedars-Sinai Medical Center; Charles Drew University of Medicine and Science; Los Angeles Biomedical Research Institute at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center; and UCLA, the UCLA CTSI aims to facilitate translational research, or the transition of basic research into practical treatments and clinical trials.

“California, and L.A. in particular, has always been a trendsetter,” said Dr. A. Eugene Washington, UCLA vice chancellor for health sciences and dean of the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA, in a news release. “As the rest of the U.S. population undergoes dramatic change, the experiences and successes of our CTSI programs will offer a model for health improvement nationwide.”

Inter-institutional collaboration produces a wealth of valuable research, resulting in technology that can then be patented and transferred to the commercial sector through a process called technology transfer. The University of California, with three campuses in the region, has led all U.S. universities in patents issued for 18 consecutive years, receiving 449 patents in 2010 – twice as many as second-place MIT. These patented technologies produce hundreds of new inventions and spawn dozens of local startups, spurring the growth of the tech sector in L.A.

L.A. universities also help transform research into practical, applied innovations in the local economy through continuing education programs like UCLA Extension or partnerships between research universities and community colleges.

One such partnership is the Bridges to the Future program, a collaboration between Cal State L.A., L.A. City College, Pasadena City College and East L.A. City College to develop the pool of talented minority students who will eventually become leaders in biomedical research. These types of education programs enable workers to find better jobs and higher pay, while also providing employers with access to new ideas and processes that can increase their firms’ competitiveness.

In addition to workforce development, higher education institutions outreach to the L.A. community in a variety of ways. The Caltech Classroom Connection pairs Caltech volunteers with local pre-college educators to increase student understanding, appreciation and interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. California State University offers more than 2,500 service-learning courses per year in the region.

By the numbers

UCLA ranks

#2 best public university in the world

USC has an economic impact of

$4.9 billion per year in the region

Caltech ranks

#2 best university in the world (behind Harvard)

On L.A. area CSU campuses, for every $1 spent, $1.70 is generated in the regional economy.

L.A. Area CSU campuses sustain more than 39,000 jobs in the region

2. “Saviors of Our Cities: A Survey of Best College and University Civic Partnerships 2009”
3. Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2010

For more information, contact Mandy Denaux at 213.580.7532 or mdenaux@lachamber.com.
Member Advantage

The Chamber’s member-to-member discount program offers a variety of savings, from hotel rooms to printing and shipping. If you’d like to offer other members a discount on your products or services, contact Pat Clark, 213.580.7595 or pclark@lachamber.com.

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20 percent off all tax preparation fees. Contact Robert Ouel, 562.423.5477 or Robert.Ouel@jtax.com.

ADVERTISING
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ADVOCACY
Move LA
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20 percent discount on hourly rate for business, real estate and general civil litigation. Contact William Dickerman. 310.258.6666 or sm Dickerman@gmail.com.

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10 percent off AMC movie tickets. 10-45 percent off Disneyland, Kodak’s Bunny Barn, Magic Mountain tickets, and 20 percent off Sea & Sand Gift Certificates. Contact Stephanie Rodriguez or Rhizame Carson. 310.842.4005.

Co-Pilots Advisory Boards & Business Services
Special Pilot 201 Advisory Board: $395 per person for all (4) sessions in downtown Los Angeles. Contact Nancy Walsh. 800.595.3102.

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10 percent off cleaning or janitorial services. May not be used with any other offer. Contact Rose McCoppin, 323.982.9500.

TIME MANAGEMENT
A Clear Path: Professional Organizing for Home, Work, and Life
10 percent off hourly minimum “six-clutter” session anywhere within the greater L.A. area. Contact Regina Lark. 818.400.9590.

Training Program
Newleaf Training and Development
20 percent off training and development public seminars. Contact Paul Butler. 863.286.3034 or paul@newleaf-ca.com.

TRANSPORTATION
Cheap Airport Parking
20 percent off with promo code lachamber at cheapairportparking.org. Contact Jose Alcocer, Sedan Services: $10 discount on airport transfer. Book online at www.execucar.com; use discount code HKCKA.

WireMedia Communications, Inc.
10 percent discount off branding, marketing and design services per hour. Contact Mary Jo Leavitt, 818.550.9536 or info@wiremedia.com; or go to www.wiremediacommunications.com.

Sprint
10 percent discount on award winning dog daycare, boarding, grooming, training, pet parties, pickup and delivery. Restrictions: Speed Scrub, Club, Contact Jay Blumberg. 213.793.7456 or jay@speedscrub.com.

PET CARE
Bark Avenue
10 percent on dog walking, play doggie daycare, board, grooming. Contact Christopher Henry, Majestic Hospitality equipment subtotal only. Contact Kim Webb 310.237.5324.

Members of the Chamber enjoy these discounts.

TBNA/ISPH, 10 percent off packaging fee on water on applicable loans booked through 1/31/12. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY LENDER. Contact Miguel Jimenez. 310.782.2038 or Miguel.Jimenez@PromericaBank.com.

Fee credits up to $100/mo for six months on applicable new accounts through 1/31/12. Contact Roberto Manzano at Roberto.Manzano@PromericaBank.com.

Los Angeles LDC, Inc.
$250 off any loan application fee or loan documentation charge. Loans must be $500,000 or less. Contact Michael Bannor. 310.382.9111.

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Architectural Photography & Design
North Bronson Software
10 percent off hourly consulting or flat-rate contracts to build iPhone and iPad applications. Contact Rick Van Voorden, 213.787.2833 or rick@northbronson.com.

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A Clear Path: Professional Organizing for Home, Work, and Life
10 percent discount on translation services. (30 percent for nonprofit). Contact Mary Jo Lausten, 818.550.9536 or paul@newleaf-ca.com.

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20 percent off cover stock, posters, both digital printing and copying, CAD plotting and blue printing. Contact Matthew Wilson. 213.580.7759.

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This quarter we spoke with U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer about America Fast Forward and L.A.’s role as a national leader in innovation.

You are a major supporter of America Fast Forward, the national extension of the local 30/10 Initiative for transportation in the L.A. area. Why is this initiative so important to you?

Senator Boxer: America needs to put people back to work, and one of the best ways to do that is to invest in the nation's aging infrastructure. My bipartisan transportation proposal, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), would create or save more than 1 million jobs nationwide and 170,000 jobs in California in each of the next two years. MAP-21 will establish a new initiative, “America Fast Forward,” which is based on 30/10 and builds on the success of the federal Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) program. We would increase TIFIA funding from $122 million per year to $1 billion per year.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, every federal dollar spent through TIFIA has historically supported a total of $30 in transportation investment. That means that the $1 billion of TIFIA funding in MAP-21 would leverage $30 billion in transportation projects and would create up to an additional one million jobs nationwide, which would go a long way toward jump-starting our economy.

America Fast Forward proposes a new way of approaching an old problem. What are some other ways that policymakers are thinking outside the box to do more with fewer resources?

Senator Boxer: I have introduced a bill that would help responsible homeowners who are current on their payments but underwater on their homes to refinance at a lower interest rate. The bill, S.170, seeks to remove some of the barriers to refinancing, such as risk-based fees. By lowering their interest rate by one percent, an average homeowner with a $150,000 mortgage would save $1,100 a year – and that’s money that would go right back into the economy. The bill is bipartisan – it’s cosponsored by Sen. Johnny Isakson of Georgia – and it’s backed by the National Association of Realtors and the National Association of Mortgage Brokers. We believe we could help up to two million homeowners.

In business, the greatest challenges often present the greatest opportunities. What opportunities do you see emerging from the economic downturn?

Senator Boxer: We need to remember the lessons of how we got out of economic downturns in the past. During the 1990s, under President Clinton, we created 23 million new jobs by investing in new tech, biotech and other emerging industries. We also turned deficits into surpluses. We can do that again. If we make smart investments in clean energy, transportation and other infrastructure, and health care, we will lay the foundation for our country’s long-term economic growth and create millions of new jobs. I just toured the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab where scientists are working to use artificial photosynthesis to create new liquid fuels that could power our cars, trucks and airplanes with no carbon pollution. These kinds of technologies will be game-changers and will keep America an economic leader.

You’ve long been a supporter of innovation in education and research. What are you working on currently to keep America’s workforce competitive in the global economy?

Senator Boxer: I have been a longtime supporter of the R & D tax credit and I’d like to see it made permanent.

The most important thing L.A. area businesses can do is do what they have always done – innovate, pioneer new ideas and products, and create jobs.

— Senator Barbara Boxer

I think we need to continue to invest in cutting-edge medical research, which has helped create so many jobs in California. I’ve also been a strong supporter of Pell Grants and other investments in education to make sure our children have the opportunities they deserve and businesses have the skilled workers they need.

And to compete in the 21st Century, we have to invest in rebuilding our infrastructure. That’s why I’m working so hard to pass MAP-21. The House would slash transportation spending by over 30 percent and under their proposal, California would lose $1.72 billion next year for highway and transit projects and over 61,000 jobs. California and the nation can’t afford that.

Creative problem-solving and invention are classic characteristics of California businesses. What can the Chamber and other business organizations do to keep it that way?

Senator Boxer: Los Angeles has been a leader in leveraging funds for transportation investments, and the 30/10 initiative is a model for the nation. And the L.A. Area Chamber has already taken on a major role by being such a strong advocate for 30/10 in California and for “America Fast Forward.” During this time of intense debate over deficits, I think it’s critical that businesses join us in making the case for federal investments that help spur private sector funding, create jobs and grow the economy.

What do you see as the biggest barriers to innovation today?

Senator Boxer: One of the biggest barriers for a lot of small businesses and entrepreneurs has been the lack of access to capital. I worked on a bill with Sen. Jeff Merkley of Oregon last year to get billions more in capital to small businesses by lending through community banks.

We know that small businesses created nearly two thirds of all jobs in America over the last 15 years, so we need to support them and help them expand and create jobs. We should also reform regulations that are overly burdensome while keeping those that are wise.

How can the L.A. area business community help tackle these barriers?

Senator Boxer: The most important thing L.A. area businesses can do is do what they have always done – innovate, pioneer new ideas and products, and create jobs. And continue to partner with us, especially on ideas like 30/10 and America Fast Forward. With your help, we can leverage federal investments and create millions of private-sector jobs. And we can get our economy back on track.
Focus on small business:

10,000 SMALL BUSINESSES

A Big Break for Small Business

Ali Mohammedi is the owner of a luxury chauffeur business based in Los Angeles. Since starting the company in 1986, he envisioned expanding his business worldwide, and by 2010 he’d begun to take tentative steps towards achieving that goal. Mohammedi was unsure of the next step, but got a big push forward when he was accepted to Goldman Sachs’ newly-announced 10,000 Small Businesses Program.

A five year, $500 million initiative, 10,000 Small Businesses aims to help small businesses in urban and rural communities across the United States. The program is designed to help small businesses grow and create jobs by offering business owners free access to education, mentors, networking and financial capital.

“When you’re serious about your business, you can take all the help you can get,” says Mohammedi. “This program offered a great education that cost nothing but my time, and came at just the right moment since I’d been wanting to grow my business.”

In L.A., the program’s business and management education program is led through a partnership with Los Angeles City College and The Long Beach Community College District. The program is free to accepted business owners, and includes nine modules that cover traditional business disciplines, including sales and marketing, financial statement analysis, human resources, operations and entrepreneurial leadership. Courses are taught through a practical, peer learning-based approach, and each business owner develops a growth plan as a capstone to the course.

“When they go through the curriculum, the scholars—business owners—get an understanding of how to work on their business instead of in their business,” says Alex Davis, dean of economic and workforce education and executive director of the 10,000 Small Business program at Los Angeles City College. “Often scholars obtain contracts and funding as a result of going through the program and learning how to become bankable.”

With 325,132 small businesses (compared to the national average for metro areas of 78,289) the L.A. area is an ideal location for 10,000 Small Businesses, and the program has gained the support and partnership of local mavens, including Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster and L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

“Scholars come into the program with one idea about the program, but they really don’t understand all the components,” says Davis. “Once they go through all the modules there’s a transformation. That’s the sentiment that they share; that they’re able to see their business with fresh eyes.”

Mohammedi couldn’t agree more. “I’m more motivated, focused and growth has been more consistent,” he says. “10,000 Small Businesses gave me the push I needed to move forward, and in the next five years I hope to expand my fleet in L.A. and open offices in San Francisco and New York—maybe even London or Paris. The sky’s the limit.”

For more information, contact Bridget Neter, 213.580.7506 or btneter@lachamber.com.

Bottom-Line Benefits

Connect 4 Lunch

Connect 4 Lunch can now “Connect 4 Lunch” to make personal connections with three other members in an intimate lunch setting. lachamber.com/bottomline

Certificates of Origin

The Chamber has adopted the next generation eCert technology as our standard to process your Certificates of Origin. lachamber.com/ecertify

Human Resources Expertise

Employers Group Chamber members will receive a free six-month membership with the Employers Group, California’s preeminent human resources expert. employersgroup@lachamber.com

Los Angeles Area Rx Card

As a resident of L.A. County, you and your family have access to a FREE Discount Prescription Drug Card program. Download and print a Los Angeles Area Rx Card. lachamber.com/rxcard

Office Depot

Save up to 65 percent on office supplies from Office Depot, with next-day delivery and convenient ordering by fax, phone or web. www.lachamber.com/bottomline

The Parking Spot

Save 20 percent at both locations of The Parking Spot at Sepulveda and Century. www.lachamber.com/bottomline

For more information contact Pat Clark, 213.580.7595 or pclark@lachamber.com.
Welcome to the Chamber

Congratulations to our new members who joined the Chamber during May, June and July. To learn more about Circle Level membership benefits, call 213.580.7592.

The L.A. Area Chamber of Commerce is a dynamic, influential business organization that represents the business interest of the Los Angeles region. As a member, you gain access to professional networking opportunities, local and foreign expertise, and opportunities to contribute to the Los Angeles region.

Member Anniversaries

Thanks to our new members who joined the Chamber during May, June and July. To learn more about Circle Level membership benefits, call 213.580.7592.
Our Mission
By being the voice of business, helping its members grow and promoting collaboration, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce seeks full prosperity for the Los Angeles region.

Diamond Club
The Chamber gratefully acknowledges the support of our largest member investors, the Diamond Club, for their help in fulfilling the Chamber’s mission.

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Chevron Corporation
Clear Channel Outdoor, Inc.
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Kaiser Permanente
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Microsoft Corporation
Occidental Petroleum Corp.
Port of Los Angeles
Ralphs Grocery Company
Siemens Corporation
Southern California Edison
The Southern California Gas Company, a Sempra Energy utility
Southwest Airlines Co.
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