In D.C. With One Voice

After a successful Southern California trip to our nation’s capital, Chamber plans advocacy trip to Sacramento in May.

More than 200 business and civic leaders—the largest-ever delegation of bipartisan Southern California leaders in the Chamber’s history—joined forces for the annual Access Washington, D.C. trip, March 26-28 to advocate for important issues affecting our region.

The delegation made it loud and clear that Southern California is a national asset. The region is the top entry point for goods, visitors and immigrants to the United States.

“THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THE IMPACT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CAN BE FELT NATIONWIDE,” SAID CHAMBER PRESIDENT & CEO GARY TOEBBEN. “DURING ACCESS WASHINGTON, D.C. WE ASKED CONGRESS TO INVEST IN THIS NATIONAL ASSET, WHICH DELIVERS TREMENDOUS RETURN ON INVESTMENT TO THE UNITED STATES.”

The group met with elected officials and policymakers on critical issues, including investment in our region’s infrastructure, homeland security funding, assistance with health care, gangs and affordable homes, and increased investment in student financial aid, career academics and workforce development.


“I'M A BIG BELIEVER IN COLLABORATION,” SAID BILL ALLEN, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY Economic Development Corp. “THE CHAMBER HAS SHOWN SUCH GREAT LEADERSHIP IN BRINGING REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TOGETHER. HAVING THESE MANY VOICES DELIVERING MESSAGES ON CORE ISSUES IS NECESSARY TO MAKE A SUFFICIENT IMPACT ON THE CONGRESSIONAL AUDIENCE.”


For the last three years Richard Macias, Macias Government Relations, has participated in Access Washington, D.C. But this year’s surpassed trips in the past.

“It’s been a great experience. The word has gotten around Capitol Hill that business is organized,” Macias said. “It shows that we care enough about our issues to come together as one.”

“The Chamber has shown such great leadership in bringing regional organizations together. Having these many voices delivering messages on core issues is necessary to make a sufficient impact on the Congressional audience.”

- Bill Allen, president and CEO, Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp.

The delegation plans to meet with numerous state officials, including Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez, State Senate President pro tem Don Perata and Majority Leader Bass.

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For more information, contact Director of Public Policy Samuel Garrison, 213.580.7568 or sgarrison@lachamber.org.

Access Washington, D.C. Partnering Organizations

Central City Association
Foreign Trade Association of Southern California
FuturesPort
Hollywood Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
Los Angeles Business Council
Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation
Manhattan Beach Chamber of Commerce
Metro
Mobility 21
Orange County Business Council
Orange County Transportation Authority
Pasadena Chamber of Commerce
Port of Los Angeles
Santa Monica Chamber of Commerce
Southern California Association of Governments
Torrance Area Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Valley Industry & Commerce Association
World Trade Week

26th Annual Small Business Awards Luncheon
Honoring Small Business Success: The L.A. Way

Wednesday, May 30, 2007

The Chamber and the U.S. Small Business Administration will co-sponsor the annual luncheon in downtown L.A. with presenting supporter Bank of America.

At the luncheon, individuals exemplifying excellence in small business will be honored. Categories include family-owned businesses, home-based businesses, exporters, women in business and more.

One of this year’s winners is Regina Grant Peterson, executive director of Advantage Certified Development Corporation in Long Beach.

Grant Peterson, one of two who will receive the Financial Services Champion of the Year award, helped start the nonprofit organization 28 years ago with the goal of helping small businesses transition from running to owning their own facility.

“We provide the financing that businesses need for day-to-day operations,” Grant Peterson said. “We help businesses grow.

For more information on the event, contact Director of Events Michelle Atteberry, 213.580.7585 or matteberry@lachamber.org.
Making our voices heard in Washington, D.C.

Lobbying trips to Washington, D.C. are not unusual. Thousands of interest groups descend on the nation’s capital every year to meet with members of Congress and administration officials. So what made last month’s Access Washington, D.C. trip different?

More than 200 business and civic leaders—the largest-ever delegation of bipartisan Southern California leaders in the L.A. Area Chamber’s history—joined to advocate on behalf of our region’s 18 million residents.

For the first time in decades, we came together to collectively lobby on issues that matter to all of us, including increasing investment in public transportation projects and infrastructure for passengers and containers passing through Southern California; a fair distribution of homeland security funding to regions most at risk of terrorism; and increased investment in student financial aid, career academics and workforce development.

The message was clear: Southern California is a national asset. No other region is more integral to the United States’ success in the global marketplace, delivers more goods to the rest of the country or sends more tax dollars to our nation’s capital than Southern California. The federal government should and must partner with us as we invest in our future.

Washington, D.C. lawmakers, who traditionally view Southern California as an underinvested region, now understand that the strength of our voice matches the strength of our economy. Our advocacy efforts don’t stop there. In this issue, you’ll read about our other advocacy trip, this time to our state’s capital. In May, more than 150 business and civic leaders will advocate on our region’s behalf for our annual Access Sacramento trip.

International trade will be the focus of our 81st World Trade Week breakfast on May 1. International trade defines our region, with $293.9 billion flowing through the Los Angeles Customs District annually—the largest in the nation.

When so many engaged citizens and leaders from across the political spectrum join together with one common purpose, the results are always tremendous, as our Access trips have proven. Access Washington, D.C. has set the stage for Southern California to feature prominently in upcoming appropriations bills and other important federal legislation, and Access Sacramento will do the same on state legislation.

I look forward to reporting back on substantive developments as they happen and encourage each one of you to join us in Sacramento and to look ahead to next year’s Access Washington, D.C. trip.

The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce is a private business membership organization representing more than 1,000 businesses and organizations. Our 118-year history of advocacy, education and networking has propelled Southern California companies and our region’s economy to preeminence.

We invite you to join us for upcoming events. Below are some key signature events you won’t want to miss:

**EVENT HIGHLIGHTS**

**TUE | MAY 1**

81st World Trade Week Breakfast: Globalization and Beyond With 49 percent of all U.S. imports entering through the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, world trade is the economic engine in Southern California. Join more than 500 business leaders at the Sheraton Los Angeles Downtown Hotel to kickoff the annual event recognizing the benefits of world trade to our region. L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa will open the breakfast, followed by keynote speaker Howard Shatz of The RAND Corporation and the Public Policy Institute of California. For more information, contact International Trade Manager Vanessa Pereda, 213.580.7538 or vpereda@lachamber.org.

**TUE-WED | MAY 15-16**

Access Sacramento Join more than 150 business and civic leaders in Sacramento as we advocate for our fair share of state appropriations, relating to transportation projects, education, health care and other state programs. For more information, contact Senior Public Policy Manager Alexander Pugh, 213.580.7558 or apugh@lachamber.org.

**WED | MAY 30**

26th Annual Small Business Awards Join the Chamber and the U.S. Small Business Administration, with presenting sponsor Bank of America, as we celebrate 26 years of honoring small business in Los Angeles. The annual luncheon honors excellence in small business, with categories including family-owned businesses, home-based businesses, exporters, women in business and more. For more information, contact Director of Events Michelle Attebery, 213.580.7585 or mattebery@lachamber.org.

**IN THE NEWS**

Chamber media highlights

“Members of the delegation — led by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce — delivered a unified message to members of Congress: The Los Angeles area powers much of the nation’s economy and therefore deserves to reap its fair share of federal dollars.”


“‘We are the ATM for the United States and we’re coming here to get refiled,’ David Fleming told the gathering at a breakfast meeting with Sen. Diane Feinstein. ‘It’s time we put a few bucks back in.’”

—“United Leaders Plead For More Funding,” Los Angeles Times, March 27.

“The Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce...will install David Fleming as its chairman, the first time in its 118-year history that a Valley resident will take the reins.”

10 Ways the Chamber helped your business

Your membership 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 this quarter:

1. Advocated for federal funding in nation’s capital with more than 200 Southern California business and civic leaders
   The Chamber and 20 partnering organizations—the largest-ever bipartisan delegation in the Chamber’s history—stormed Capitol Hill in late March for Access Washington, D.C., to spread the message that Southern California is a national asset. The delegation met with numerous federal lawmakers, including Sen. Edward Kennedy, Sen. Diane Feinstein and Sen. Barbara Boxer to seek funding for critical issues affecting our region.

2. Engaged civic leaders on health care reform proposals
   Several high-profile reform proposals are on the table, including ones from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, State Sen. George Runner, State Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez and State Sen. Pro Tem Don Perata. The Chamber met with these leaders and members of their staff to understand their respective proposals.

3. Convening stakeholders to modernize the Los Angeles International Airport
   With the last update of LAX dating nearly a quarter century ago, modernizing our airport is long overdue. Not only is LAX old and outdated, the airport faces the challenge of serving the new class of global airplanes.

4. Continued to oppose L.A. City Council’s living wage ordinance for Century Boulevard hotels near Los Angeles International Airport
   After the L.A. City Council approved a substitute ordinance establishing a living wage requirement for privately owned hotels adjacent to LAX, the Chamber and the Hotel Association of Los Angeles continued to speak out against the law and efforts to make it more inclusive for a boycott of affected hotels.

5. Educated business people on what it takes to be a Principal For a Day
   More than 150 executives and 150 principals participated in the Chamber’s annual Principal For a Day event Feb. 23 at L.A. area schools.

6. Sponsored Cash for College bill introduced in Sacramento
   Assembly Majority Leader Karen Bass introduced a bill to strengthen funding in the L.A. region for the Chamber. AB 1540 would provide additional funding to educate young people on how to navigate the college admissions process and obtain financial aid, especially Cal Grants.

7. Began dialogue on the next steps to stopping the cycle of gang violence in our community
   The danger of gang violence and the need to work together to stop gangs from proliferating was a hot topic this quarter.

8. Met with ambassadors and mayors from around the world to discuss international trade
   Doing business and establishing relationships with foreign countries was a focal point during the winter at the Chamber. New Zealand Ambassador to the United States Roy Ferguson briefed the Chamber on trade in the Asia Pacific Rim. The Chamber also met with L.A. were discussed with Mayor Miguel Lifschitz of Rosario, Argentina, Mayor Vangelis Lian of Reial, China, Dr. Ali Abassi, minister of communications and information technologies of Azerbaijan and Governing Mayor Klaus Wowereit of Berlin, Germany.

9. Furthered civic leadership in Southern California
   The Southern California Leadership Network trained emerging community leaders on the issues facing the L.A. County and Southern California through Leadership L.A. and Leadership Southern California Classes. The two programs continued to hear from top business and civic leaders about their surrounding community, including from State Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez and San Bernardino Mayor Patrick Morris.

10. Sponsored high value member events
    Hundreds of Chamber members attended the Chamber’s Business After Hour Mixers including the Taste of the Chamber in January and the March Mixer at the House of Blues.

The Chamber was bustling with activity in the last quarter as civic and community leaders visited to discuss issues facing the L.A. region. Health care and gang violence were at the top of the list, which were also part of the advocacy agenda at this year’s Access Washington, D.C. trip in March. L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa stopped in at the Chamber’s March Board meeting to emphasize the importance of the trip—Southern California’s largest business advocacy event to the nation’s capital.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger engaged business leaders at the Chamber about his comprehensive plan to reform the state’s health care system. Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Michael Leavitt talked about his value-driven health care initiative. State Sen. George Runner shared his health care proposal with the Chamber’s Health Care Committee and spoke at the Chamber’s March Board meeting to emphasize the importance of the trip—Southern California’s largest business advocacy event to the nation’s capital.

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The power of international trade

The impact of international trade and globalization in Los Angeles is profound. The value of two-way trade in the L.A. Customs District is $293.9 billion—the largest in the nation. The United States would lose an estimated $1 billion per day without our ports. Nationwide, 3.3 million jobs are linked to trade in our region. L.A.’s economy is dependent on international trade and the growth and opportunities that it presents are increasing. World trade provides more jobs and economic impact to the region than any other industry. The export of U.S. goods and services are on the rise and the global economy will continue to expand.

“The rise of international trade has helped our Southern California economy recover and has provided strategically important diversification,” said Jim MacLellan, director of marketing for the Port of Los Angeles. “More than ever before, both the United States and California are international trading economies.”

With trade as the economic engine of our region, we must continue to react to the challenges and prospects that are developing. The Chamber is committed to helping prepare and educate our students to compete in the global economy.

Increasing awareness of world trade’s benefits to our youth is a cornerstone of the Chamber’s annual World Trade Week. Every year grants and scholarships are given to encourage a focus on international studies in the classroom. The World Trade Week program also hosts the International Business University Competition, in which college students from across the country apply their knowledge about international business in a real world setting.

The Chamber is preparing to advocate on several international trade issues in 2007, including:

Collaborate with trade agencies, professionals and diplomats to actively promote trade. The Chamber supports fostering collaboration with other Chambers, government entities, trade organizations, country and region specific organizations, educational institutions and diplomats to support trade promotion efforts.

Expand business opportunities abroad for American companies. The Chamber supports free trade to enhance the growth and expansion of business opportunities to American workers. Legislation that eliminates trade barriers, allows for fair competition and protects investments and property rights is critical.

Opportunities for the United States in the global economy are abundant. But the federal government is not prepared to take action and seize these opportunities, as apparent with the stalling of free trade agreements with several countries, including Colombia, Panama, Peru, the Republic of South Korea and the expiration of the Trade Promotion Authority. FTAs open markets for Americans and bring significant benefits. Those passed prior to 2005 have shown that exports are growing twice as fast to these partners. The just concluded FTA with the Republic of South Korea if passed by Congress, would eliminate farm tariffs that average 52 percent on citrus, soybeans and almonds. Tariffs would also be eliminated on computers, electronics and transportation equipment.

“Are FTAs the answer to everything?” asked Israel Hernandez, assistant secretary for trade promotion and director general of the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, receives an update on the port at the Chamber’s Inaugural Dinner Jan. 25. It does not support the extension, which set to expire in June 2007. If Congress does not support the extension, negotiating trade agreements will be more difficult. Prior to its restoration in 2002, the U.S. sat on the sidelines while other countries negotiated FTAs, placing the U.S. in a competitive disadvantage.

The World Trade Organizations Doha rounds are also stuck in muddy waters. With so much potential for American businesses, Congress must move past partisanship and allow for America to be a leader in global trade. “With international trade powering our region, we must do all we can to make sure that we stay competitive, while keeping an emphasis on goods movement and infrastructure,” said Chamber President & CEO Gary Toobben.

For more information, contact International Trade Manager Vanessa Pereda, 213.580.7538 or vpereda@achamber.org.

International trade by the numbers

The value of two-way trade in the L.A. Customs District is $293.9 billion — the largest in the nation, with the amount of trade expected to double by 2020.

The direct international trade industry is the number one employer in L.A. County and is second in the five-county region. The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach support nearly 900,000 jobs throughout California. The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach generate nearly $7 billion in state and local tax revenues.

Source: Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation and Trade Impact Study/Final Report by BST Associates.

SIGNATURE EVENTS

Scenes from some of the Chamber’s key events during winter 2007.

1. John Anderson receives the Distinguished Business Leader award at the Chamber’s 118th Annual Inaugural Dinner Jan. 25 at the Beverly Hilton. 2. Richard Riordan and Nancy Daly Riordan celebrate their Civic Medal of Honor award at the Chamber’s Inaugural Dinner Jan. 25. 3. Merrill Lynch Financial Advisor Anthony Nguyen greets a student with Playa del Rey Elementary Principal Karin Diskin at the Chamber’s annual Principal For a Day event Feb. 23. 4. Richard Riordan and Nancy Daly Riordan celebrate their Civic Medal of Honor award at the Chamber’s Inaugural Dinner Jan. 25.

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New information, contact International Trade Manager Vanessa Pereda, 213.580.7538 or v@achamber.org.
Small Learning Communities Put Education First

At Jordan New Tech High School and other high schools throughout Los Angeles, students don’t learn from textbooks. They have the opportunity to connect with Grammy-award winning artists and use state-of-the-art digital media equipment courtesy of Apple. “One of our goals is to help students find their voices and to encourage them to have successful futures through technology,” said Michael Hoy, senior executive for Urban Initiatives at Apple.

The academic and career themed pathways at these schools said Hoy, are breaking through to students in innovative and effective ways at Jordan New Tech High School.

Hoy participated in the Chamber’s Principal For a Day program and connected with Jordan New Tech Administrator Felipe Velez. Hoy has arranged for Velez to shadow him for Executive For a Day on April 20 at a conference on film’s impact on student achievement. SLCs, like those at Jordan, Westchester, Saticoy and Monroe provide specialized learning environments for students to focus on career pathways. Los Angeles Unified School District Superintendent David Brewer III recently announced his approval of more than 150 small learning communities, with an anticipated total of 300 SLCs.

“We couldn’t have a program without our business and community partners,” said SLC Coordinator Nikki Siercks, Monroe High School. “They help with curriculum advising, planning and evaluation of students’ work.”

Business partners provide SLC students with real-life learning experiences and companies gain by investing in the development of L.A.’s future workforce.

Research shows that personalized small learning environments produce significant results. Students in SLCs show improved test scores, increased attendance and graduation rates, reduced discipline problems and are more likely to go to college and succeed in the working world.

The Chamber’s affiliate UNITE-LA assists LAUSD educators and stakeholders in developing high-performing urban high schools. UNITE-LA is facilitating SLC study tours around the nation, visiting SLC models in Seattle in March and Minneapolis and St. Paul School Districts in April.

The Chamber serves as a champion for small learning communities,” said Chamber President & CEO Gary Toebben. “We encourage the business community to take an active role in motivating and engaging students.”

For more information or to learn how to get involved with emerging small learning communities, contact V.P. of Education & Workforce Development David Rutnay, 213 482-3897 or drautnay@la-chamber.org.

Big dreams for a better L.A.

For nearly 120 years, the L.A. Area Chamber has advocated and helped establish L.A.’s port, international airport, water system, entertainment industry hub and freeway system. We asked members of the Chamber Board of Directors what’s your dream project or policy idea for the L.A. region that the Chamber can help make a reality?

“Finish the historic LAUSD program to build 140 new schools. Not since Mulholland brought water to the city 100 years ago has there been a construction program of greater importance to the social and economic future of the region. Challenges remain. The Chamber must be steadfast in its advocacy and support to complete this effort sooner rather than later.”

–Jim McConnell, president, RGI Construction Management and former chief facilities executive for Los Angeles Unified School District

“Complete our work on building a replicable model for community transformation. The Los Angeles Urban League, in collaboration with numerous partners, is launching a model focused on changing outcomes in education, employment, safety, health and housing in a 70-block geographical area surrounding Crenshaw High School. The role and support of business is critical for this work.”

–Bar H. Taylor, president and CEO, Los Angeles Urban League

“My dream is that LAX—the gateway to the region, national and global businesses and tourism travel to other west coast cities. The Chamber supports reinvigorating a master plan process that would put Southern California on a path to reaching the number one worldwide.”

–Michael C. Franklin, director, government and Public Affairs, Western region, United Airlines

Law enforcement, education, transportation and planning leaders have an opportunity to work together on a variety of issues. Police agencies, including the Los Angeles Police Department, are working to improve the quality of life for residents of South Los Angeles through investments in community-oriented policing, community revitalization and the expansion of youth programs.

In addition, the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department’s Unified Command Division became operational in January and continues to address the needs of Los Angeles residents through partnerships with essential community organizations and businesses.

Law enforcement and businesses are working together in other areas including partnerships with the LAX Security Council, the Partnership for Crime Free Neighborhoods (PCFN) and the Neighborhood Emergency Response Team (NERT) to ensure that residents have a safe environment.

The Chamber is working with local lawmakers to ensure that Southern California receives much needed cleaner technology. Supported goals include encouraging market-based mechanisms and incentives to accelerate the move to cleaner technology.

Cash for College program statewide and place it under the direction of the Student Aid Commission. New Approaches to Combating Gang Violence: The Chamber encourages the city of L.A. to adopt a new approach for combating gang violence. The city currently operates dozens of different gang prevention programs spread among multiple departments with little coordination or ability to measure results. A new approach should eliminate ineffective programs, implement performance thresholds, promote innovation and improve coordination with law enforcement and educators.

The Chamber remains committed to working with the L.A. City Council and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa’s office to ensure the protection of vital industrial lands and related jobs, while recognizing that housing and mixed-use outcomes in education, employment, safety, health and housing in a 70-block geographical area surrounding Crenshaw High School. The role and support of business is critical for this work.”

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Page 5

PUBLIC POLICY PRIORITY ISSUES - SPRING 07

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>What’s going on now</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statewide Health Care Reform</td>
<td>The Chamber is working with Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s office, the state legislature and other stakeholders to substantively reform our state’s health care system. Primary objectives include expanding coverage to all uninsured children, reining in pricing costs, sharing the financial burden and improving access for all Californians.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
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<tr>
<td>LAX - Aviation Modernization</td>
<td>Los Angeles International Airport continues to lag behind other major airports in congestion, facilities and ability to accommodate the next generation in aircraft. Our region is lagging key international business and tourism travel to other west coast cities. The Chamber supports reinvigorating a master plan process that would put Southern California on a path to reaching the number one worldwide.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash for College Expansion Legislation</td>
<td>The Chamber is a sponsor of AB 1540, which would establish about $3 million to expand the highly-successful Cash for College program statewide and place it under the direction of the Student Aid Commission. Assembly Majority Leader Karen Bass, Senator Toni Tamborini and Senator Mark Leno are the principle co-authors of this important legislation to expand college education opportunities for low-income first generation collegebound students.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ports Clean Air Action Plan / AQMD Clean Air Plan</td>
<td>The ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach have developed a joint plan an action plan to improve environmental quality at our ports. The Chamber continues to work with the ports and businesses to ensure the final action plan succeeds in both growing and growing these economic engines.</td>
<td>SUPPORT WITH ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximise Proposition 1B Funding for Transportation</td>
<td>The Chamber is working with local lawmakers to ensure that Southern California receives much needed funding from last fall’s infrastructure bond. The Chamber was successful in getting funding for top priorities including new carpool lanes along the 405 Freeway’s Sepulveda Pass, Interstate 225 and Puente St, along with important upgrades to the Interstate 5 corridor between Orange County and L.A.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Approach to Combating Gang Violence</td>
<td>The Chamber encourages the city of L.A. to adopt a new approach for combating gang violence. The city currently operates dozens of different gang prevention programs spread among multiple departments with little coordination or ability to measure results. A new approach should eliminate ineffective programs, implement performance thresholds, promote innovation and improve coordination with law enforcement and educators.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Film Production &amp; Retention Tax Credits</td>
<td>Rancho film production continues to negoiate impact on our local economy. The Chamber supports targeted tax credits and incentives to keep film production here in Southern California, including greater efforts to foster growth in the post-production and technology-related fields.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.A. City Industrial Land Policy</td>
<td>The Chamber remains committed to working with the L.A. City Council and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa’s office to create the city more business friendly, especially in light of the mandated wage referendum. The Chamber is an active member of the L.A. City Council’s newly-created Business Retention &amp; Attraction Task Force as well as the Mayor’s Los Angeles Economy and Jobs Committee.</td>
<td>WATCH</td>
</tr>
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<td>Improving L.A.’s Business Climate</td>
<td>The Chamber continues to work with the L.A. City Council and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa’s office to create the city more business friendly, especially in light of the mandated wage referendum. The Chamber is an active member of the L.A. City Council’s newly-created Business Retention &amp; Attraction Task Force as well as the Mayor’s Los Angeles Economy and Jobs Committee.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Free Trade Agreements and Extension of the Trade Promotion Authority</td>
<td>The Chamber supports the concluded free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, Peru and South Korea. If the free trade agreements are approved by Congress, all tariffs and other trade barriers with the countries will be removed. The Trade Promotion Authority expires in June 2007 and has been an essential part in negotiating free trade agreements. The renewal would allow for new free trade agreements.</td>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
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The rose garden at Exposition Park has more than 20,000 rose bushes.
The largest lotus pond in the United States is in Echo Park.

A better L.A. is our business

Manager Bridget Netter, 213.580.7576
For more information, contact Program
Thursday, June 14:
You Really Do
Less: How to Increase Interest in What
Speak Your Business in 30 Seconds or
Thursday, May 17:
Secret to Creating Successful Results
Intentional Networking: The Insider’s
Eyes on the Prize: How to Prepare, Plan
will include:
This first three sessions in the six-part
Connection Point series in 2007
will include:
Eyes on the Prize: How to Prepare, Plan
and Succeed at Networking

Many professionals network as a part of their business development efforts, but do so without a solid strategy for success. At the Chamber’s Connection Point series, members learn how to network with a purpose and plan.

“The program offered great tools, excellent discussions and role-playing examples to use while networking, whether it was in a social setting, in an elevator or over dinner.”

~Aimee Lopez, business development
engineer, Turner Construction Co.

“The Connection Point forced me to analyze what I was doing and assess whether my self-

learned habits were helping or hurting my objectives.”

~Mark Washington, career resource advisor,
Los Angeles Unified School District

Small business spotlight:

Chamber members fit for fashion

Chamber members Vani Kumar and Gaurav Bajaj have deep-rooted passions for apparel and have proven they have the business
acumen it takes to succeed in a city known for setting fashion standards.

Both 25-year-olds are fairly new to the apparel sector by industry standards, but have made significant headway into building their respective businesses.

“Niches are driving the business and there is not one way of doing things,” said Ilse Metcheck, executive director of the
California Fashion Association. “We are a city of entrepreneurs.”

For Kumar, finding an alternative to
the Men’s Warehouse chain was one reason
she opened The Suit Closet last year in
downtown L.A. The first-of-its-kind retail
outlet for women sells more than 1,000 high-end business suits.

As a Chamber member, Kumar takes advantage of the Chamber’s networking events, including the
Referral Network, where she interacts with business women—her primary customers. Kumar also attends the
Small Business Owners Roundtable to discuss common issues, from marketing challenges to opportunities for business development.

“Retail is one of the most
difficult areas in the L.A. fashion market, especially with fashion in L.A. constantly changing.” Kumar said.

“When you’re new, you learn quickly
that you need other people and can learn from their experiences.”

Kumar is a part of the largest retail sales market in the country. L.A. has more than 7,000 fashion-related businesses and had $75 billion in sales in 2010. And has surpassed New York City as the top apparel manufacturing center in the nation.

On another side of the business
is Gaurav Bajaj, who has worked in his
family’s apparel distribution company Price
Hammer, Inc. since 2005. Bajaj came armed
with an understanding of all facets of the industry through a 25-year family history spanning three continents: manufacturing in India, retailing in Germany and finally wholesale distribution in L.A.

Last year the L.A. apparel industry
generated $24.1 billion in wholesale volume.

Volume and efficiency are the most important elements to procurement in bulk quantities, Bajaj said, and one of his main business priorities includes addressing port inefficiencies, which would allow for easier processing.

As a Chamber member, Bajaj participates in the annual Access trips to
Washington, D.C. and Sacramento to make his voice heard with other business leaders to advocate for issues critical to the region, including international trade and goods movement.

To learn more about Chamber programs and benefits that will allow you to get the most out of your membership, contact Membership Manager Pat Clark, 213.580.7595 or pclark@lachamber.org.

Price Hammer clients include
wholesalers who sell to small and mid-size discount stores and other retailers.

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Which brings us back to us, the citizen/owners. Not just alumni. Not just the university family. We need every business, large and small, every member of the leadership community, anyone who benefits from this university. That would very likely be every one of us.

One last thought: The future has been around for a very long time. It will be there tomorrow. But now is now. The momentum, the excellence, the need is now.”

Sherry Lansing. UCLA, Unabashed.

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