PUTTING L.A. BACK TO WORK

The L.A. Area Chamber celebrated a number of successes in 2010, as City leaders responded to the Chamber’s urging and took positive steps forward to make Los Angeles more business-friendly. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and the Los Angeles City Council approved a three-year tax holiday for new businesses — a move that could help create more than 55,000 new jobs. The City Council also approved a taxpayer bill of rights, expanded two enterprise zones, established a new business tax category for internet-based businesses and created the Office of Economic Analysis, which will evaluate the impact of proposed City policies on the business community and the economy.

However, Los Angeles is still faced with significant challenges. The City’s unemployment rate, at 13.8 percent, is still higher than both state and national levels, and is one of the highest of any major U.S. city. The City budget deficit is projected to be at $860 million in 2011. And the cost of pensions and health care for City retirees is growing at a rate of $200-$300 million every year. With these challenges in mind, Los Angeles must adopt a new philosophy that focuses first on creating private sector jobs and providing long-term fiscal stability as discussed at ACCESS L.A. City Hall in October.

"Creating jobs and ensuring long-term prosperity in the City of Los Angeles requires a renewed commitment to improving the business climate," said Chamber President & CEO Gary Toebben. "We will continue to fight for jobs and address the greatest economic challenges our generation has experienced:"

At ACCESS City Hall, Chamber Board Chair Matthew Toledano noted that the key to a brighter economic future is building a stronger partnership between City Hall and local businesses. This year, the Chamber will continue to promote this partnership as we advocate for business growth, economic prosperity and improved quality of life for all that live and work in the Los Angeles area.

CHAMBER POLICY PRIORITIES FOR 2011

LOCAL – LOS ANGELES

Job Creation

The Chamber will work with elected officials and community leaders in business, labor and nonprofit organizations on strategies that will grow our economy with well-paying private sector jobs.

L.A. City Office of Economic Analysis (OEA)

In July 2010, the City Council unanimously approved establishing the Office of Economic Analysis, originally proposed by the Chamber in 2009 to provide a non-partisan analysis of all new legislation at City Hall for the potential impact on jobs and the economy. The OEA will help answer the question, “How much will that new law cost?” and strengthen the policymaking process.

Business Friendly Los Angeles

Goals include revising the City’s gross receipts tax on businesses, streamlining the permitting and planning process; initiating a feed-in tariff solar plan for local businesses; and promoting a sign ordinance that benefits businesses.

Continued on page 4
A better L.A. is our business

Advocating for better business in Los Angeles

With your support and involvement, and in spite of a challenging economy, the business community made some good progress both economically and politically during 2010. Businesses were encouraged by the growth in the economy, confidence in the stock market and the public’s response to initiatives on the November 2010 ballot.

The Chamber has big plans for 2011. For the City, the focus will be on the implementation of the Office of Economic Analysis, further reductions in the gross receipts business tax, streamlining of the development process and pension reforms to stabilize the City’s long-term budget deficit.

In Los Angeles County, a major focus will be the implementation of Home for Good, the report by the Chamber and the United Way of Los Angeles County to end chronic and veteran homelessness in five years. The Chamber has also made a robust commitment to school reform and will continue its leadership of the L.A. Compact for education excellence, small learning communities, school choice, business/education partnerships and financial aid.

At the state level, the Chamber will champion the Californians for a Fresh Start term limits reform initiative we placed on the next statewide ballot with the County Federation of Labor, as well as the State Water Bond, which was authorized for a state vote by the 2010 legislature. We will also initiate California Connections, a new leadership program to connect Southern California leaders with counterparts in other parts of the state.

In Congress, the Chamber will lead the charge on a national initiative that would expand funding for local transportation projects that are financed through voter approved revenue sources. This program would enable L.A. County and Metro to use the Measure R funding approved by County voters in 2008 to jump start the 30/10 proposal championed by Mayor Villaraigosa. We will also support President Obama in his campaign to gain final approval for the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement.

There is no shortage of important work to be done to spearhead economic recovery in the Los Angeles area and California. Thank you for your commitment of time and financial resources through your participation in the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce.

Sincerely,

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

Calendar of Events

Want to know what’s coming up at the Chamber? Visit lachamber.com/events to view and register for upcoming events. Below are some key signature events you don’t want to miss:

Event Highlights

THU | FEBRUARY 10
122nd Annual Inaugural Dinner

Join more than 1,200 business and civic leaders at the Chamber’s must-attend kickoff for 2011. The Chamber will honor new 2011 Chamber Board Chair Joseph A. Czysz, chairman and CEO of Mercury Air Group, Inc. and other distinguished honorees at the JW Marriott Hotel at L.A. LIVE. Contact Michelle Atteberry, 213.580.7585 or matteberry@lachamber.com.

FRI | FEBRUARY 25
Principal for a Day

The future of our workforce depends on business and civic leaders building relationships with local schools. Shadow a Los Angeles school principal and experience a typical day as an administrator and educator. Principal for a Day allows you to be a part of the solution to strengthening public education. Contact Alma Salazar, 213.580.7566 or asalazar@lachamber.com.

WED-THU | MARCH 2-3
The Americas Business Forum

This two-day program will focus on export opportunities in the Americas, primarily in Latin America. U.S. exporters will have the opportunity to meet with senior commercial officers from the Americas and will hear from various expert panelists in the trade industry. Contact Carlos J. Valderrama, 213.580.7570 or cvalderrama@lachamber.com.

TUE-WED | MARCH 22-23
ACCESS Sacramento

Join business leaders and public officials in our state’s capital for a one-night, one-day trip to meet with state lawmakers, members of the Governor’s administration and other decision makers on issues including transportation, education, infrastructure, health care, energy and the environment. Contact Samuel Garrison, 213.580.7568 or sgarrison@lachamber.com.

Contact Monika Medina, 213.580.7516 or mmedina@lachamber.com.
The Los Angeles Convention Center is the largest solar-generating building in North America.
businesses, and strengthening the collaboration between City officials and the business community.

Education
As a leading education reform advocate and a signatory of the historic L.A. Compact, the Chamber will partner with the Los Angeles Unified School District, charter schools, community colleges and other stakeholders to implement strategies to dramatically improve early and public education, and make college and technical training available to more of our students and adults who are changing careers.

LAX Modernization
The Chamber urges The Los Angeles International Airport to improve passenger safety and overall operations by reconfiguring the two northern runways. Failure to fix the north airfield threatens passenger safety and incentivizes airlines to shift flights to airports outside of Southern California. Losing one daily-scheduled international flight is a $723 million hit to the local economy and costs 3,300 jobs.

Public Employee Pension System
The City of Los Angeles faces a multi-billion dollar underfunded employee pension liability. Structural reforms to the system are absolutely necessary to prevent drastic reductions in city services or a municipal bankruptcy.

STATE – CALIFORNIA

State Term Limits
California’s term limits law is a major contributor to legislative dysfunction. Lawmakers are unable to gain the expertise necessary to tackle complex public policy issues and are heavily dependent on career Capitol staff, lobbyists and party officials. The Chamber and the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor qualified the Californians for a Fresh Start term limits initiative for Los Angeles County Federation of Labor qualified the expertise necessary to tackle complex public policy legislative dysfunction. Lawmakers are unable to gain California’s term limits law is a major contributor to the system are absolutely necessary to prevent drastic reductions in city services or a municipal bankruptcy.

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State Budget & Economic Reforms
The only way for California to end the boom-bust budgeting cycle is to update the fiscal system and promote stronger economic policies. The Chamber supports bipartisan solutions that include implementing a two-year budget cycle, reforming the State’s uncompetitive tax code and returning more fiscal control to local governments.

Business Growth Policies
To create more jobs, the Chamber urges lawmakers to make it easier for employees to opt into flexible workweeks; streamline CEQA regulations to avoid lengthy delays in the creation of good jobs; modernize meal and break period rules to prevent costly litigation; oppose policies that would increase the cost of workers’ compensation insurance.

FEDERAL – WASHINGTON, D.C.

30/10 Transportation Plan
In 2008, Los Angeles County voters approved a sales tax increase to generate $40 billion in transportation funding over the next 30 years. The Chamber supports the 30/10 initiative’s efforts to partner with the federal government to secure the $40 billion now so that projects can be built within the next 10 years rather than over three decades. This will create more than 165,000 jobs and improve the environment and overall quality of life for more than 10 million residents throughout the region.

STATE – CALIFORNIA

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STATEWIDE POLITICAL REFORM:

Californians for a Fresh Start: Statewide Term Limits Initiative

This measure improves the state term limits law by reducing legislators’ terms from 14 to 12 years while giving them the option of spending all 12 years in one house. This will significantly reduce the “musical chairs” in Sacramento that contributes to the State’s legislative dysfunction, allowing lawmakers to spend more time developing expertise and focusing on long-term policy solutions.

BUSINESS CLIMATE

L.A. City Office of Economic Analysis

In July 2010, the L.A. City Council unanimously approved establishing the Office of Economic Analysis (OEA) proposed by the Chamber in 2009 to provide a non-partisan analysis of all new local legislation at City Hall for the potential impact on jobs and the economy. The OEA will help answer the question, “How much will that new law cost?” and strengthen the policymaking process.

Reforming the City of Los Angeles’ Uncompetitive Business Tax (Gross Receipts)

The City of L.A. levies a gross receipts tax on most businesses making Los Angeles the second-highest taxed city in L.A. County and near the top of all major U.S. cities. The Chamber will continue to advocate for business-friendly tax reform.

AB 32 Implementation

The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32) requires the state to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. Businesses are concerned about the cost impacts of implementing AB 32-related regulations. The Chamber will work to ensure that all proposed regulations are analyzed to make sure they are implemented fairly and do not unduly burden business.

L.A. City Planning & Permit Reform

Los Angeles has one of the most expensive and confusing planning/permitting processes of any major U.S. city. Applicants often have to deal with 12 different City departments with differing standards and timelines. The Chamber strongly supports efforts to consolidate the process to just one department and implementing long overdue reforms to make the system work again.

CEQA Reform

Originally intended for “public” projects, the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) now captures nearly all state projects. The law is often abused for non-environmental reasons in order to stop projects. It is essential to fix CEQA so that it lives up to its original intent and is no longer a litigation tool to delay good, job-creating projects for political or personal reasons.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC ENGINES

Local Ports & Goods Movement

The Port of Los Angeles is a $50 billion per year economic engine, and supporting pre-customer priorities and infrastructure improvements are essential to maintaining the Port as the nation’s busiest complex. The Chamber advocates for expansion of terminal improvement projects, ensuring an economically feasible clean air action plan and opposing new fees on port customers.

30/10 Transportation Plan

In 2008, voters approved a sales tax increase to generate $40 billion in transportation funding over the next 30 years. The 30/10 initiative works to partner with the federal government to build a dozen major transportation projects over the next 30 years rather than over three decades. This innovative plan will create more than 100,000 construction and related industry jobs.

LAX Modernization

The Los Angeles International Airport 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 better passenger experience. However, there is still an urgent need to improve passenger safety and overall operations by reconfiguring the two northern runways.

GOVERNANCE & FISCAL REFORM

Los Angeles Public Pension Reform

In 2006, the Chamber and former Mayor Richard Riordan raised concerns about the City’s unfunded pension liabilities. Today, the pension crisis is the single greatest financial threat to the City’s solvency. Unfunded pension liability and overly generous pension benefits affect local businesses through reduced City services and higher fees, and cost taxpayers and our cities billions of dollars.

2010-12 L.A. City Budget Crisis

The Chamber supports structural reforms to the City’s budget process including: (1) focusing on the delivery of essential city services; (2) reducing City overhead; (3) implementing performance-based, multi-year budgeting and improved accounting practices; (4) strengthening the reserve fund; and (5) establishing a long-term fiscal and capital plan.

REGIONAL STEWARDSHIP

Business Leaders Task Force on Homelessness (Partnership with United Way of Greater Los Angeles)

The Chamber and United Way of Greater Los Angeles formed a Business Leaders’ Task Force to develop specific policy proposals for ending chronic and veteran homelessness in Los Angeles via Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH). PSH costs taxpayers 42 percent less than over three decades. This innovative plan will create more than 100,000 construction and related industry jobs.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Statewide Education Leadership

The Chamber will act as principle advisor to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and Governor Brown’s education advisor. Additionally, Senior Vice President of Education and Workforce David Ratratty will serve on the statewide California Community College Student Success Task Force, which was formed due to SB 1045 (Liu), a Chamber sponsored bill signed by Gov. Schwarzenegger in September 2010.

Shaping Education Policy

The Chamber will launch an education bill package, including key linked learning bills which promote strong academics, demanding technical education and real world experiences in the classroom.

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?

When I moved to L.A. in 1963, I fell in love with our city. Our high schools and universities were at the cutting edge nationally. L.A. was what American business was all about: the melting pot and incubator for ideas, inventions, engineering and manufacturing. My big dream and mission is to bring as many of those great days back to L.A. — Joseph Czyzyk, Chairman & CEO Mercury Air Group, Inc.

Downtown L.A. has tremendous potential as a problem-solver for our region because it can carry a large share of density and development. The last decade has brought a renaissance in Downtown-living, entertainment and transit-friendly access—eroding 20th century stigmas. My vision is that Downtown will again become everyone’s place… and a place that has something for everyone. — Edward Muñiz, Director, Government Relations, Raytheon Company

Nothing is more important to our national security than a strong economy. A strong economy is driven by technology and innovation. Education is the bedrock of it all. My dream is to have a world class educational system in this country and have Los Angeles leading the way. — Karen Hathaway, President & Managing Partner, Los Angeles Athletic Club

Leading the Chamber 2011 OFFICERS

Chair: Joseph Czyzyk, Mercury Air Group, Inc.

Vice Chair: Small Business Brandon Shamin, Beacon Management Group

Treasurer: Karen Hathaway, Los Angeles Athletic Club

Immediate Past Chair: Matthew Toledo, Los Angeles Business Journal

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

Vice Chair, Leadership Programs: Tony Buzzelli, Deloitte

Vice Chair, Education & Workforce Development: David Crippens, Dr. Crippens & Associates

COUNCILS

Economy & Infrastructure: Chair: Jerry Neuman, Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton, LLP

Education & Workforce Development: Chair: Maaila Macin, Univision Communications, Inc.

Environmental Sustainability: Chair: Tom McHenry, Gibson, Dunn, Crutcher, LLP

Healthcare: Chair: Alexander Kramer, Venture Strategies and Innovations

Government & Civic Issues: Chair: Denita Willoughby

Healthcare: Chair: Gail Margolis, Children’s Hospital of Los Angeles

Land Use & Mobility: Chair: Daniel Grynza, TRCA Construction

Small Business: Chair: Brandon Shamin, Beacon Management Group

WORKING GROUPS

Audit Committee: Scott London, KPMG

Civic Action: Karen Hathaway, Los Angeles Athletic Club

Nomination Committee: Matthew Toledo, Los Angeles Business Journal

PROGRAMS

Referral Network: Chair: Tani E. Demain, The “People” Project Person

World Trade Week: Chair: Mario Cordero, World Trade Week

Los Angeles boasts the single-largest fuel cell power plant at any university in the world, at the California State University, Northridge (CSUN) campus. page 5
Since its inception, the L.A. Area Chamber has been the leading advocate for business in the L.A. region, and has worked to create and sustain a favorable business environment in which all businesses can grow and prosper. For many years, much of the Chamber’s public policy work came through the efforts of our seven Public Policy Committees. However, in recognition of a changing economy and the ever-evolving needs of business, and in an effort to offer our members the greatest opportunity for engagement, we have restructured the way these groups are organized.

Focus on public policy
New year, new approach in public policy

This year, the work of the Chamber’s Public Policy division will be organized into six Public Policy Councils. Each of these groups will meet approximately nine times each year, with some meetings featuring high-profile topics of interest to many in the business community. Other meetings will be held via phone or web conferencing and will feature more issue or industry-specific topics. Members are invited to sign up for their Councils of interest now, but also are encouraged to take part in other Council meetings throughout the year.

The 2011 Public Policy Councils include:

Economy & Infrastructure
- Strengthen the economic assets and engines of the regional economy, including ports, airports, signature industries and human capital.
- Meeting themes:
  - LAX Modernization
  - Port & Logistics
  - L.A. start-up community – the innovators & entrepreneurs
  - Entertainment & new media
  - Leveraging immigration & diversity

Education & Workforce Development
- Lead the business community and educator partnerships to reform our public education and develop the 21st century workforce to successfully compete in the global economy. The group will be focused on job recovery for today’s workers while preparing the future workforce.
- Meeting themes:
  - Federal & State education legislation
  - Maintaining & maximizing funding for P-20 education
  - Promoting multiple pathways/linked learning approach

Environmental Sustainability
- Spur clean and green tech innovations, ensure water and power delivery, and promote economic growth through sustainable, provides energy and environmental policies.
- Meeting themes:
  - Clean Tech L.A.
  - Federal climate change legislation
  - Water policy
  - Regulating sustainability (AB 32/ SB 375)
  - DWP governance & infrastructure

Government & Civic Issues
- Serve as the Chamber’s primary committee to evaluate legislation and policies that affect the broad business community and civic life including taxes, regulations and government reforms. They will meet monthly to monitor and act on general business regulatory issues, and will focus on L.A. City public policy issues.
- Meeting themes:
  - Implementing health care reform
  - Healthy workplaces
  - Healthy communities – ending disparities
  - L.A. County Hospital Safety Net
  - E health technology

Health Care
- Advocate for policies that ensure responsible health care reform implementation, strengthen our County’s health care safety net and promote healthier lifestyles.
- Meeting themes:
  - Implementing health care reform
  - Healthy workplaces
  - Healthy communities – ending disparities
  - L.A. County Hospital Safety Net
  - E health technology

Land Use & Mobility
- Promote smart growth development and policies that reduce traffic congestion in our region.
- Meeting themes:
  - Need to know for 2011: 30/20, development reform and Home For Good
  - Overview of major economic development projects in L.A.
  - L.A. City development reform
  - Ending chronic homelessness
  - Innovative solutions to traffic congestion
  - The future (and past) of urban design and architecture in L.A.

Meeting themes:
- Federal & State education legislation
- Maintaining & maximizing funding for P-20 education
- Promoting multiple pathways/linked learning approach
- Clean Tech L.A.
- Federal climate change legislation
- Water policy
- Regulating sustainability (AB 32/ SB 375)
- DWP governance & infrastructure

In addition to these Public Policy Councils, the Chamber will also continue work in very specific areas through the efforts of nine working groups. These include: LAX Modernization, Goods Movement, Development Reform, CEQA Reform, Environmental Regulations, Homelessness, Financial Services & Banking, Neighborhood Engagement and Opportunity Green.

For more information or to sign up for any of the Chamber’s Public Policy Councils or working groups, contact Samuel Garrison, 213.580.7568 or sgrarrison@lachamber.com.

Chamber Snapshots
Scenes from some of the Chamber’s key events in 2010

1. During the Korean Trade Mission, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger was on hand for the signing of a MOU with Korea International Trade Association to promote trade and investment between southern California and South Korea. (Photo courtesy of Justin Shert, Official Photographer, Office of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.)
2. Chamber President & CEO Gary Toebben; Chamber Vice Chair Denita Willoughby; California Endowment Center Director Jennifer Lynch. “Giving back to your community, while encouraging others to do so as well, is part of doing business in your community.”
3. Chamber Board Chair Matthew Toledo, Los Angeles Business Journal; and Brad Kemp, director of regional research, Beacon Economics at the 2010 ACCESS L.A. City Hall event. At the Southern California Visionaries Awards Luncheon, guests were treated to a dialogue about leadership by the day’s honorees, moderated by SCLN Board Chair Kimberly Freeman (LSC ’02). Southern California Gas Company Honorees included Priscilla and David Lizarraga, TELACu President Maureen Ross. The California Endowment: Alwen Adams, City of Los Angeles; and Hepyn Im (LSC ’97). Korean Churches for Community Development: Alwen Adams, City of Los Angeles; and Hepyn Im (LSC ’97).

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In 2009, the Chamber partnered with the City, top research institutions and other organizations to launch CleanTech L.A. - an initiative to attract and grow cleantech businesses and jobs in Los Angeles. At the time, Chamber President & CEO Gary Toebben called clean technology, “one of the bright spots in our future economy.”

In the last two years, L.A.’s cleaner, greener future has only gotten brighter. Cleantech is one of the top growth sectors in the region, and many of the industry-leading technologies are being developed right here in L.A.

“Our company realizes significant benefits from being based in Los Angeles,” says Diane Schultz, president and CEO of Cyber-Rain. “The L.A. community is generally aware of the increasing need to use our water wisely and is supportive of products that make it easy for them to do so. In addition, Los Angeles has a strong innovative and technically-oriented employee talent pool, which is fueled by our top-notch universities and our entrepreneurial spirit.”

This extensive network of top-notch research institutions and universities is a big part of what fuels L.A.’s homegrown innovation. Los Angeles claims some of the best research universities in the world, including UCLA, USC and Caltech, along with five other engineering schools. These institutions are leading the way in renewable energy, sustainability and water conservation research — and from them comes a world-class workforce ready to tackle some of the world’s most relevant issues.

“They’re not only prepared to take on these challenges, they’re prepared to tackle them using the latest technologies.”

“The L.A. community is generally aware of the increasing need to use our water wisely and is supportive of products that make it easy for them to do so. In addition, Los Angeles has a strong innovative and technically-oriented employee talent pool, which is fueled by our top-notch universities and our entrepreneurial spirit.”

— Diane Schultz
President and CEO, Cyber-Rain

What is Cleantech?

Cleantech — ‘klen - tek ‘ — describes products and services that improve operational performance, productivity or efficiency while reducing costs, inputs, energy consumption, waste or pollution.

strong innovative and technically-oriented employee talent pool, which is fueled by our top-notch universities and our entrepreneurial spirit.”

This new technologies being developed in L.A. will not only provide a future for Southern California, but for the rest of the country. For cleantech entrepreneurs, L.A. is the place to be. With the support of policy-makers and the business community, it will remain a hub of innovation for years to come.

4. Business Leaders Task Force on Homelessness Co-Chair Renee White Fraser, Ph.D., Fraser Communications, Inc., and Co-Chair Jerry Neuman, Sheppard Mullin Richter & Hampton LLP discussed the importance of ending chronic homelessness at the Home For Good Community Launch. 5. At the Annual Small Business Summit, a panel of experts shared innovative ways to access capital and learn more about incentives and tax credits. Panelists included Bryan Mueller, Director of Small Business Banking, Wells Fargo; Miguel Juarez, Vice President/Relationship Manager, Wells Fargo; Todd Wilson, Managing Director, Small Business, Mayor’s Office of Economic & Business Policy; Rodolfo Quirino, Loan Officer, Community Development Commission of Los Angeles; Patrick Rodriguez, Public Information Officer, U.S. Small Business Administration; and Brandon Shamim, President, Beacon Management Group. 6. A group of students pause to hear from an exhibitor during the annual Cash for College: College and Career Convention.
A better L.A. is our business

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, 213.580.7795 or pclark@lachamber.com.

ACCOUNTING
Jackson Hewitt Tax Services
All Chamber members and their employees receive 15 percent off all tax preparation fees. Contact Robert Oule, 562.423.5477 or Robert.Oule@jtax.com.

ADVERTISING
Billboard Connection Outdoor Advertising
40 percent off all production charges plus free graphic design with any advertising campaign. Minimum $5,000 total campaign budget. Contact Brian Alexander, 310.420.3900.

ATTORNEYS
Law Offices of Mark Schondorf
10 percent off hourly rate for business and real estate litigation services. Contact Mark Schondorf, 213.384.5234 or mark@hjy.com.
The Macelaro Law Firm
30 percent discount. Contact Teresa Macelaro, 323.399.8585 or tmacelaro@macelarolaw.com.

AUDIO VISUAL
CCS Presentation Systems, Inc.
375 discount on projector rentals. Contact Gina Rubini, 323.954.7574, ext. 12.

AUTOMOBILE SERVICES
Enterprise Rent-A-Car
20 percent off your already low prices, mention code 32w2630. Call 1.800.593.0505 or your local office.
High-N Mobile Auto Detailing
20 percent off auto wash and detail. Services provided at your location. Contact James Douglas, 213.840.3797.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
All City Employees Benefits Service Association (ACEBSA)
Save 10 percent on AMC movie tickets, 10 – 40 percent on Disneyland, Knott’s Berry Farm, Mgm: Mountain tickets, and 25 percent on Sea’s candles Gift Certificates. Contact Stephanie Rodriguez or Rhianna Castro, 213.485.2485.

Make-it-Fly
Want to Make your Business Soar? Make-it-Fly Business Advisory Board, Special Flat $10 Advisory Board for L.A. Chamber members: Special price $195 per person for all (4) sessions (standard cost: $780). Contact Wade Sonora, 626.506.6284.

CLUBS/PRIVATE
Los Angeles Athletic Club
Join the Los Angeles Athletic Club and receive $200 off your initiation fee. Application subject to approval. Call 213.630.5200.

COMMUNICATIONS
CoolineEmail, Inc.
20 percent sign-up discount on any email marketing service plan. E-mail Dan@coolineemail.com with LAChamber in subject. One discount per account.

COMPUTER & AV
SmartSource Rentals
20 percent off all rental equipment, not including delivery and tax fees. Restriction: Discount is on equipment subtotal only. Contact Kim Wade, 310.237.5324

EDUCATION PROGRAM
UCLA Anderson School of Management
Save 10 percent on any Executive Education Program. Acquire to level management strategies and leadership skills. Restriction: Cannot be combined with any other discount. Call 310.825.2001.

CHAMPIONS: Adventure, After School & Sports programs
20 percent off team building low ropes courses.

FINANCIAL
Los Angeles LDC, Inc.
$350 off any loan application fee or loan documentation charge. Loans must be $101,000 or less. Contact Rob Boo, 213.352.0131.

Plusca Advisors, LLC
20 percent off Real Estate & Financial Consulting fees. Contact Adrian Tapi, 310.644.7730 or p3730@pluscaadvisors.com.

FRUIT & GIFT BASKETS
Melville’s World Variety Produce, Inc.
10 percent off exotic baskets. Contact Laci Hoxie, 888.588.0251, ext. 340.

HOUSING
Oakwood Worldwide
10 percent off daily rate for a fully-furnished one bedroom apartment in downtown Los Angeles. Contact Nancy Walsh, 602.395.5022.

INTERIOR DESIGN
Design Theory
15 percent off design/hourly rate or 10 percent off design flat fee. Go to www.design-theory.com

JANITORIAL SERVICES
Elite Services
New clients receive two hours cleaning or janitorial services. May not be used with any other discount or offer. Contact Rose McConnon, 323.982.9500

MARKETING & DESIGN
WireMedia Communications
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The Los Angeles Department of Water & Power (DWP) gives a $300 rebate to customers who install water-efficient washing machines.
Ricardo Lara: My parents were a huge inspiration to me. Both my mother and father are Mexican immigrants, and my mother was always fighting on our behalf—whether it was for better education or ensuring that we were involved in good after-school programs. Consequently when I got into grade school and junior high, I saw some of her qualities reflected in my desire to get involved with programs that help others. I took on various leadership activities in high school, and then student government in college where I eventually became student body president. Ultimately, these leadership qualities transformed into a love for politics.

You graduated from the Southern California Leadership Network’s Leadership L.A. Program in 2007. What originally attracted you to the program?

Ricardo Lara: I grew up in Los Angeles, but moved to Sacramento for college and then lived there for several years. After realizing I’d never really lived or worked in L.A. as an adult, I became interested in getting to know my hometown. I wanted to understand what made L.A. such a unique place. A friend of mine told me about Leadership L.A. and I was intrigued. I became a fellow in the hopes of furthering my leadership skills and meeting other young professionals. LLA is also what led me to pursue my Executive Master of Leadership Degree at USC.

How has Leadership L.A. and your subsequent involvement with the Southern California Leadership Network equipped you for the roles you’ve taken on in the last few years?

Ricardo Lara: My involvement provided a well-rounded perspective of what our region needs if we’re going to continue to be competitive on the national and international stage. Leadership L.A. has equipped me with tools to understand the complexities of L.A.’s transportation, business and civic needs, and how to take action to grow all these different sectors so that we can continue to be the most diverse, most innovative place in the country.

You have earned endorsements from both business (L.A. Area Chamber PAC) and labor organizations. How can the business and labor communities work together more effectively?

Ricardo Lara: We’re at a transformational point in California. This dire economic situation is forcing groups that don’t traditionally work together to really buckle down, meet and strategize on how to create jobs.

We’re at a transformational point in California. This dire economic situation is forcing groups that don’t traditionally work together to really buckle down, meet and strategize on how to create jobs.

— Ricardo Lara
Assemblymember Ricardo Lara

One of my political mentors told me once, “I want to change the world, and sometimes that would frustrate me. But then I finally got it: Every day I can change the world for a small business owner and provide them with the tools they need to become more competitive—that is a great thing.”

Civic leaders: follow your path and don’t second guess your gut. Follow that gut and it will lead you in the right direction. Don’t be afraid to change the world.

Another opportunity where the business and labor communities can work together is in the field of renewable energy. Renewable energy not only enables us to be responsible with our region’s natural resources, but it also promises high paying green jobs to the L.A. workforce as well as investment opportunities for local businesses. I look forward to being a part of that discussion and hope to act as a liaison between the business and labor communities.

What inspired you to become a leader?

Ricardo Lara: To aspiring civic leaders is to take the time to invest some volunteer hours and get to understand the system. Following your deepest passions will fulfill you as an individual and makes you want to get up in the morning.

You graduated from the Southern California Leadership Network’s Leadership L.A. Program in 2007. What originally attracted you to the program?

Ricardo Lara: I’m willing to listen and to commit to hearing solutions to get people back to work. We want business to come to us and talk about job creation bills. We recognize that they are the experts and should have a seat at the table when we’re discussing job creation. We can’t do it in a vacuum.

It’s a really tough economy for students as they’re leaving college and universities. Many highly skilled students and workers are finding themselves unemployed. We need to take opportunities to encourage students to become the next generation of entrepreneurs. We must work together to provide students with the tools they need to graduate from college feeling empowered to start a new business. In my district, small businesses are the backbone of the local economy. I see a lot of mom and pop shops that are struggling right now, yet somehow continue to be vibrant in their communities. They’ve taken a proactive approach to staying in the 50th district and riding out difficult economic times. I have to do all I can to support small business and go hand in hand with their mission.

What would you recommend to aspiring leaders from the Los Angeles basin who are looking to be more involved in civic issues?

Ricardo Lara: My advice to aspiring civic leaders is to find a cause or an issue that you’re really passionate about and take the time to meet the people providing service on the frontline. If you’re passionate—be it about education, healthcare or homelessness—take the time to invest some volunteer hours and get to...
Focus on small business:
Leveraging New Media Technologies

In the last few years, new media technologies have changed the face of business and provided powerful tools for networking, marketing and improving efficiency. Blogs, websites and social networking allow businesses to form stronger relationships with customers and outreach more effectively to prospects. However, with new technologies being released all the time it can seem difficult if not impossible to keep up with it all.

The Chamber asked Scott Spiro, CEO, Computer Solutions Group, to break down the trends and share some tips with the small business community.

What are some of the new media trends you see catching on in the small business community? More businesses are finally seeing the real value offered by New Media. In particular, they are setting up Facebook and Twitter accounts in record numbers and putting these links on their marketing materials.

How has the new media landscape evolved over the last decade? New media has really taken off in the last two to three years. It’s a bit like when companies first started learning about websites back in the 1990s. They thought to themselves, “Why do I need a website?” and “What’s wrong with a phone book ad?” Similarly, companies are now trying to understand why they need a new media presence.

How can new media technologies save time and money for small businesses? New media tools are less expensive to use than traditional marketing services. However, it’s best to take the time to learn how to use them. Not every tool works for every company. First, decide what your primary goals are, and then choose the tools most applicable for your goals.

What can you recommend to small business owners who are overwhelmed trying to keep up with the latest tech trends? Stay simple and start with the basics: set up a personal Facebook account and a business Facebook page. A blog or microblog (like Twitter) is also good to have. Next, set up a YouTube video channel. Put something together that will separate you from the crowd and that will be interesting to read or watch. Set yourself up as a guru in your industry. Finally, use a tool like HootSuite that allows you to update all of your pages with a single click.

To read more of Spiro’s views on technology, follow him on twitter at twitter.com/scottspiro or visit his blog: blog.scottspiro.com. His company can be found on the web at www.csgllc.net, on twitter at twitter.com/csgsupport and in the blogosphere at www.csgblog.net.

SMALL BUSINESS CORNER
Computer Solutions Group

Computer Solutions Group is an outsourced IT provider specializing in network support services, education and products that enhance corporate and personal productivity. President and CEO Scott Spiro founded the company in 1996 in an attempt to earn a bit of money while auditioning for commercials. Today, more than 200 companies trust Computer Solutions Group to manage their network. In 2010, Spiro cofounded a new division, New Media Sciences Corporation, which provides new media consulting services. “Technology changes every couple of months,” Spiro says. “We hope to guide businesses in developing a strategy that is unique to their needs and makes the most of new media tools.” Computer Solutions Group has been a Chamber member since 2009.

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“I've always been interested in how things work, particularly living things. My field is molecular biology, investigating the unusual properties of biological systems. I've been at it for sixty years. It's quite addictive.

“I believe the very best work happens when research and training are intermixed. Many of my most valued colleagues have been the graduate students and postdoctoral fellows with educated imaginations, fresh perspectives and questions no one had asked. "The Nobel work solved a classic problem—how energy is captured and used in living cells. I'd been studying this unsuccessfully for years. Then, in 1970, looking back through the old data, I saw what all of us had missed: energy wasn't used to create a key substance. It was used to release that substance in the cell. From that moment, we were on the path to understanding how cells obtain the energy to serve the needs of living things.

“UCLA research is an enormous, diverse enterprise, just look at the breadth and depth of new knowledge that flows from here year after year. But, there's another factor that's less apparent but equally remarkable—a unique, deliberate research culture here that capitalizes upon that breadth and depth and thrives on interchange among researchers and disciplines. This may not sound unusual, but—in too many academic settings—competition trumps cooperation.

“Imagine a great river. Lots of institutions dispense existing knowledge. The mission of a research university is something more: to produce new knowledge. UCLA has a worldwide reputation for creating knowledge across an astounding range of inquiry. How does it do that? Dr. Boyer’s 1997 Nobel Prize for Chemistry honors his pioneering investigation of the formation of adenosine triphosphate (ATP)—the molecule that provides the energy for biological reactions and processes in all living things. He was the founding director of UCLA’s Molecular Biology Institute.

Paul Boyer. UCLA, Unabashed.