



November 6, 2017

Dear Chamber Members,

It has been an honor to serve as your President-Elect in this year of growth and change at your Chamber of Commerce. Executive Director Detra Dettmann brought great energy to her work with the staff and Board of Directors to continue evaluating and adjusting our activities in 2017 to ensure our programs and services provide maximum value and return to you, our members.

At the beginning of the year, with the input of our own Representative Curt Hanson, we reformatted the **Legislative Forum** into an event that benefits not only our members but also the community at large. The event was free, open to any community member, and included the addition of a fourth forum in April near the culmination of the session. Attendance was very strong every month.

In February we launched the **Retail and Restaurant Managers Working Group** which meets monthly and creates a space for managers to interact, share best practices, and develop cooperative initiatives. One of the first visible projects was a full color **Shopping and Dining Guide** offering our invested members enhanced business listings. In February we also expanded our staff adding **Brittney Tiller** to the roster as our Event Coordinator. Brittney brought another set of fresh eyes and ideas to the Chamber's activities.

This spring our **Annual Banquet** again honored the great work in our community with celebration focused around our sports "All Stars" theme. We proudly presented 19 awards to recognize outstanding efforts by individuals and businesses in our community. We also graduated our third **Leadership Fairfield** class and ran an efficient festivity concluding before 9:00 p.m.

In response to feedback from our larger member businesses, we launched a new program called **"Fairfield Works"** to help our local high school students learn about the tremendous career opportunities here in Fairfield no matter their course after high school—straight to workforce, 2-year degree, 4-year degree, or advanced degrees. The program showcases "many pathways to success" and highlights the fact many people have a curvy path in their professional career.

The spring and summer brought a time of new birth, literally, as Brittney welcomed baby Emerson in May and Lindsey welcomed baby Cleo in July. We also learned that our Director, Detra, would be leaving sometime during the year to follow her husband's job change. Despite this bit of uncertainty, however, everything continued in full swing.

Early this summer we held two successful golf tournaments, **Men's and Women's Blast Off**, which are important fundraisers to augment membership dues.

Later this summer we were sad to say goodbye to **Lindsey Waugh** who chose not to return from maternity leave and instead begin working with her husband's construction company, a job that also allows her more time to spend

with their new daughter. Many thanks to Lindsey for her last four years at the Chamber. Your work has been much appreciated and you will be missed! In the meantime, we continue to see Lindsey attending Chamber events and letting us keep up with the growth of Cleo.

In addition, we must give a shout out to **Anjali Krystofiak** and **Taylor Sickels**, two great staff who have been helping us get through the busy times and flexing of schedules.

As we geared up for fall programming, each program continues to evolve and improve. The **Back to School reception** added booths this year where our new professionals could learn about our local businesses and organizations. The **Manufacturers Appreciation Luncheon** in October had record attendance with half of the audience comprised of non-manufacturers attending to celebrate and honor this important segment of our local economy.

Our fourth class of **Leadership Fairfield** is underway with the program continuing to evolve and include more discussion around leadership and leading teams. Many of the class members volunteered together last weekend working on the most recent Habitat for Humanity home. This “group volunteer day” is a new addition based on feedback from last year’s participants.

This fall we continue to work closely with **Fairfield High School** both helping support the **Future Business Leaders of America Chapter** and “**Life After High School**” class by connecting students with local business leaders.

As 2017 draws to a close we prepare to say good-bye to Detra. We flourished under Detra’s visionary, innovative and productive leadership. We will miss her. Meanwhile we look forward with excited anticipation to the leadership of **Darien Sloat** as our new CEO. We expect the transition will be seamless as Darien is well acquainted with the Chamber having served on the board for the past six years. Darien has been instrumental in leading the vision for change ensuring the Chamber flexes to meet the changes needs of our invested members, and has also spent countless hours as a stalwart volunteer on many Chamber committees as well as several other activities in Fairfield.

In 2018 we will carry forward the theme of providing services and programs which meet your needs. We are dedicated to assessing if our programs and offerings are in line with what you want from us. **Your input is absolutely vital** to assuring that the value you receive as a member exceeds the investment you make each year.

Your Chamber board and staff are here for you, so please contact us any time for any reason.

In service,

Joneane Parker
Fairfield Area Chamber of Commerce Board President-Elect 2017