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April 2017



Feature:
**Three West Coast Leadership
Participants Share their Stories**



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Pictured from left to right: Vanessa Gutierrez, Taylor deRoo, Sue Franz

Cover photo by deVries Photography

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Feature: Three West Coast Leadership Participants Share their Stories	4
Expert Sponsor: Navigate.....	8
Chamber NeoCon Road Trip 2.0	10
Tulip Time Gets HYP	12
Member Connection: City on a Hill	13
Calendar of Events.....	14
New Members	16
Happenings at the Chamber	18



ADVERTISING INDEX

Accident Fund.....	9
Andy Spears Farm Bureau Insurance	11
Baumann & DeGroot Heating & Cooling.....	20
Bosch's Landscape	15
Buis Mattress & Bedroom Furnishings.....	9
Captivation Capital.....	12
City Flats Hotel	11
deVries Photography.....	17
Edify North.....	15
Floor Gear Unlimited	12
Fris Office Outfitters	17
Gordon Water Systems	15
Guaranteed Rate	6
Holland Hospital	14
Holland Litho Printing Services.....	9
Hospice of Holland.....	11
Lakewood Construction.....	9
Lighthouse Insurance Group	6
Manpower	7
Mercantile Bank of Michigan	8
Mercy Health Partners	10
Muller Design	7
Navigate	8
Pembleton HR Consulting.....	17
Shoreline Technology Solutions.....	9
Suburban Inns.....	7
Wendy Ryder Sotheby's Intl. Realty.....	6
Yacht Basin Marina.....	13
Zeeland Lumber	15

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All content, unless otherwise noted, provided by the Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce.

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Letter from Jane Clark

President, Michigan West Coast Chamber of Commerce



Growing tomorrow's leaders means taking them out of the office, out of the routine and giving them experiences with places, people and organizations that are truly at the heart of our community. Over the 28 years of the West Coast Leadership program, this living laboratory approach to leadership development has acted as a powerful catalyst for learning. Armed with these insights, members of the class develop leadership skills, preparing them to be the future leaders of business and stewards of our community.

In our community, we see businesses taking stewardship very seriously. Many companies have, at their core, a mission of giving back, not only through financial support, but also via programs that support staff education and development, and also that encourage their employees to get out into the community and give time and resources. Stewardship of our business community is at the heart of the Chamber, as we work to connect businesses with the people and resources they need to grow and succeed, and ensure the sustainability of companies in our community. Together with our network of members, we all work to keep our community thriving for generations to come.

Best Regards,
Jane Clark



Vision:

Building successful businesses that lead to a thriving community.

Mission:

Connecting businesses to each other and the resources they need to grow and succeed.

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Feature:

Three West Coast Leadership Participants Share their Stories

By Chelsea Hall

Photo credit: deVries Photography



Sue Franz



Since 1988, Chamber programs have been preparing members to assume leadership roles in our community. West Coast Leadership is a year-long program that looks at our area with the goal of building a stronger community by creating an informed, committed and diverse network of community trustees. *Connect* sat down with current enrollees Sue Franz, Taylor deRoo and Vanessa Gutierrez to find out firsthand what it's like to go through the program.

Sue Franz

Gentex Vice President of Chemistry Research Sue Franz, Ph.D. decided to take the West Coast Leadership class after hearing positive feedback from other leaders in the company. "It just seemed to be the best way to get to know every aspect of the community through a well-organized and well run program," said Sue, whose community involvement focused mainly on activities through her children's schools. She set out with a clear goal. "I wanted to learn about our community's key issues, the history and background, why things are the way they are, what makes our community unique and what I can do for this community," she shared.

Sue elaborated on how West Coast Leadership has already exceeded her expectations by sharing a memorable class experience. "Through my personal involvement with Holland and Zeeland foundations, I have learned that we are living in a very generous area," she said. "However, until the Health and Human Service Day, I did not realize how generous this community truly is." The visit to the Holland Rescue Mission and lunch at the Community Action House were the most memorable experiences for Sue. "I was very excited to learn that Holland Rescue Mission's goals are not just to aid homeless people temporarily, but to transform them by providing shelters, meals and education," she said. "By having lunch with people at Community Action House, I had the opportunity to actually talk with people and learn how their needs were met through the kindness of the community. As generous as we are, I am also sad to see that homeless people still exist in this community. It was an eye-opening experience." Sue said West Coast Leadership opened her eyes about the community and broadened her understanding of the interconnection of business, organization and people and their needs. "More broadly, the class is enriching my professional circles and business knowledge through my classmates and community leaders," she explained.

Sue is grateful for Chamber services and programs, and looks forward to deepening her Chamber involvement going forward. "Through events such as Early Bird Breakfasts, SMART lunches, networking lunches and annual meetings, I have broadened my knowledge in the areas of economics, politics, business and technology," she enthused. "I am looking forward to more opportunities to serve and give back to the community." Sue is also excited to do more volunteer work. "Serving others will enrich my circle of connections and get me closer to God," she shared. "It will make me a better leader for the people I lead at work."

"The class has exceeded my expectations. I learned so much about our community that I don't think I could learn in any other way. The instructors and community leaders they brought in are a true representation of the community. Everything about the class, from the scheduling, location selection, organizers and speakers is like nothing I have seen before in any other programs." –Sue Franz

Taylor deRoo

Taylor deRoo came to West Coast Leadership with the hopes of broadening his perspective. Having attended various Early Bird Breakfasts, SmartCoast meetings and Holland Young Professional events as a Chamber member, he was energized to get involved further. "I believe it is valuable for us all to step outside our given industries or markets to gain fresh perspectives and insights to bring back to our own professions and lives," said Taylor, Director of Sales at DSA International in Zeeland. Taylor explained that his father was and is very involved with the community, a tradition Taylor hopes to carry on. "Growing up, my dad was involved with many community projects, was a city council member, served on church committees, non-profit boards and was continually giving of his time," Taylor recalled. "Now a young father myself and a maturing professional, I felt it time to start a similar journey."

The experience so far has checked the boxes Taylor hoped it would. "Indeed, the class has provided ample and unique opportunities to see inside a variety of different businesses, organizations and community programs that I otherwise would have been unacquainted with," he shared. "It has allowed me the opportunity to advance and refine my personal and professional thinking."

The program has allowed Taylor and other participants to meet the extraordinary individuals who are passionate in their work and take pride in their community. "And fortunately, that passion is contagious," said Taylor. Such passion was witnessed by Taylor during an evening ride along with an officer from the Holland Police Department. "I quickly saw the adversity, pain, addiction and distress of citizens that I didn't know existed within our community," Taylor described. "I witnessed firsthand the officer's dedication, respect, integrity and compassion for the local citizens we met. He had a genuine care for the citizens and knew several of them by name. He was aware of these residents' stories: their past, their struggles, their needs. There was a true sense of compassion to help change and make their life better."

Taylor hopes to gain further understanding of Holland and Zeeland's past and what makes the community unique and great. "I hope the underrepresented are heard," he said. "I believe 'the best idea wins' and I'm eager to help local thinkers make their ideas a reality."

"I see the West Coast Leadership class as the foundation of future community involvement. I'm eager to engage more with local leaders on government topics, municipal projects and/or community design initiatives. It has shown the importance of community involvement and the need of local community members to give their time and talents to help advance ideas for the common good." -Taylor deRoo

Vanessa Gutierrez

After taking West Coast First, Ready for School Community Engagement Specialist Vanessa Gutierrez knew she wanted to continue to invest in her professional development. "I was just beginning to expand my network in the non-profit sector and was looking for a way to connect with other individuals working for local companies and small businesses," Vanessa shared. "I was growing in my leadership skills and I felt ready to commit to the West Coast Leadership program."



Taylor deRoo



Vanessa Gutierrez

Tracking the Leadership Class – Where have they visited this year?

Baert Baron Mansion
Dekker Huis Museum
Pillar Church
Cappon House Museum
Holland Princess
Howard Miller Community Center
Gentex
Big Dutchman
Downtown Holland Merchants
Tripelroot
City on a Hill
Holland Rescue Mission
Western Theological Seminary /
Community Kitchen
Holland Hospital
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(Fillmore Complex)
Ottawa County Juvenile Detention
Center
Ottawa County Jail
Herrick District Library
Holland City Hall
Holland Energy Park
The Curragh Irish Pub & Restaurant
Careerline Tech Center
Ottawa Area Center
JR Automation
Macatawa Legends

Applications for the 2017-18 West Coast Leadership class are due by May 1, 2017. For more information, contact the Chamber at 616-392-2389 or go to www.westcoastchamber.org.

 Continued on page 6

Feature: THREE WEST COAST LEADERSHIP PARTICIPANTS SHARE THEIR STORIES

Vanessa came to the program with several concrete goals. “First, I hope to gain further confidence in pursuing my career goals,” she explained. Vanessa also saw the value of the network of people taking the class with her. “I would like to utilize the social network that is growing from this class to invest my talents and gifts into my community, while also growing in the areas that I need to develop still,” she shared. “I have learned how we all can collaborate together to achieve desired goals to make our local neighborhood inviting and our work places economically strong.”

Like Taylor, the police ride along experience was a poignant reminder of how hard officers work to keep our neighborhoods safe. As someone who grew up with fear and uncertainty surrounding the uniform, the experience opened Vanessa’s eyes. “I began to appreciate how they put their lives at risk to keep our town safe,” she imparted. A visit to the county jail proved to be enlightening as well, and helped remove some of the stigma attached to those involved in criminal activity. “I now have a better understanding of how the officers, jails and court system work, and how people can get a second chance after they have served time for a crime,” Vanessa said.

Vanessa shared that one of her future goals is to complete her college degree, and the West Coast Leadership class helped her rediscover parts of her identity and where they intersect with the work she is passionate about. She also has a strong desire to share her story and heritage with others. “I have had the privilege to be immersed in two cultures that are significant to me: my Mexican culture (place of birth) and my American culture (my home),” she explained. “I would love to one day have my own business, blog or communications department where I can highlight people’s stories to influence ‘bridge building’ in our community.”

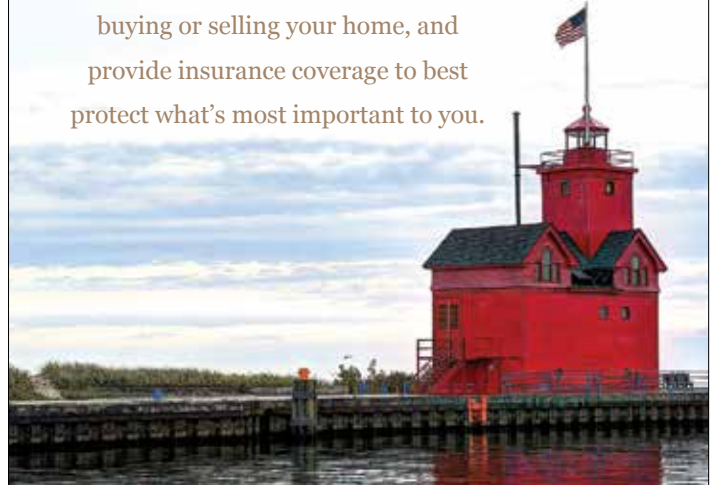
Vanessa expressed that her Chamber experience has been so positive that she frequently speaks to local business owners and professionals about the benefits of membership. Her testimonial alone is powerful: “I have attended many different Chamber events within the past year and a half. In the beginning, I felt new and a bit out of place because I didn’t know anyone,” she confessed, “but now I feel energized to be in a room with my classmates and the Chamber staff.”

“Going through the class has helped me connect the history and future of the Holland/Zeeland area. I have learned about local entrepreneurs who invested in our community through small business, agriculture, manufacturing and other technology. This led to a thriving place to live where residents can enjoy public services such as law enforcement, city and local government, schools, libraries, parks, museums, hospitals, etc. We live in a generous philanthropic community where many non-profits and faith places go above and beyond the great work that they do, while also being unique and recognized for its achievements in the state and country. It has made me feel proud to share with others the many benefits we have here.” –Vanessa Gutierrez



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User Experience

By Rob Stam, Navigate

If you work in the web development world, or have recently gone through a web development project, you're undoubtedly familiar with the term user experience, or UX. Much of our social and business interaction happens online today, and there's no way you can get ahead if you don't build and design your website or app around the user's experience.

While the web world has made the term user experience part of daily vernacular, the concept is as old as the invention of the wheel. Regardless of the field you're in, user experience is a critical concept. For example,

if you're in the product development field, you know that dozens of variables—from design to packaging to warranties—can play into the user experience you create.

Hearing the term over and over again during web projects has caused me to consider the concept in other areas of business as well. What is the user experience that my clients are having with me personally? With our team of people, our processes, our communication, our finished products?

There's nothing more frustrating when navigating a website

than getting lost. We've all experienced it: you're on a page looking for certain information, you go to the menu and can't find anything that seems to take you to the right place. You try something and it opens a new window for something completely unrelated, you click back and start over, and eventually you just give up. Somewhere in the website may have had exactly what you were looking for, but you just couldn't find it. The user experience was flawed.

If I'm being transparent, I know that I've had clients in the past who've felt a similar way when working with me. They had an expectation about what the result of our relationship would produce, but somewhere along the way it got confusing. They thought I'd be doing something that wasn't part of my plan, or I had expectations about them that were misguided. Some of them gave up on me, and I can't blame them. It was my responsibility to create an experience that produced the desired result.

Have you ever felt that

way? As a customer? As a company?

If you haven't thought about it in a while, take a look at your business from the user's perspective. Don't just look at whether or not you can deliver a great product or service. Ask yourself if you can deliver a great experience from their first interaction with your company, through the entire transaction, and with the result. Ask your clients how they feel working with you (even if you think they might have negative things to say).

Whether you're selling a widget on a website or constructing a building, there is an experience your customer has with you. What is it and what can you do to improve it? That experience, in turn, becomes your brand because it's exactly what they'll be talking about when someone asks about you and your business.

Rob is the President of Navigate and author of The Entrepreneur's Survival Guide. For more information and contact information visit www.robstam.com.



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Chamber NeoCon Road Trip 2.0

Plan to join us June 14, 2017 for our next Chamber field trip to The Mart in Chicago for NeoCon, one of the most recognized and attended trade shows in the industry over the last 48 years. This dynamic space showcases products and services from categories including: interior building products/materials and finishes, furniture and fabrics, flooring and technology. With more than 500 leading companies and 50,000 design professionals participating in the show, it's a great opportunity to get a look at what's up and coming in commercial furniture design and business trends.

For those who came along on the West Coast Chamber's first annual field trip to NeoCon in Chicago in 2016, it was a day filled with innovation and inspiration. Up at the crack of dawn, we assembled at the Chamber offices and rode in style on a charter bus, complete with coffee, breakfast and personalized goodie bags with snacks and informational packets about NeoCon. Members had the chance to get acquainted

and we strategized about how we would tackle this massive exhibition. Upon arrival, we moved briskly through registration, and found ourselves in the impressive main lobby of the Mart, ready to be inspired.

Visiting with our members was a top priority, and we had expertly led tours through Herman Miller, Trendway and Haworth exhibitions. We also spent time with other local companies such as (member) Symbiote, Steelcase and Euro-Locks, sharing videos and pictures of our day on social media to keep all our members at home in the loop. After a relaxing break for lunch, the group headed back into the Mart to soak in some more design, before finally retiring to our coach for the ride home to Holland, where we all shared impressions and pictures of our favorite ideas and cool innovations, and plenty of refreshments. There was a lot to process!

Ready to join us on our next trip? Head to our website (www.westcoastchamber.org)

to register for this day-long event, where inspiration is everywhere. Come along and we'll help you find it.

Details:

- Bus departs from the Hope College DeVos Fieldhouse parking lot at 7am. Arrive at 6:45am.
- Bus departs NeoCon at 3pm (CST) to return to Holland at 7pm.
- Cost: \$95 per member which includes:
 - Registration for NeoCon on Wednesday, June 14
 - Transportation to and from NeoCon
 - Light continental breakfast/snacks/refreshments on the bus
 - Lunch provided at NeoCon
 - Small groups will be arranged for interaction and tours with design companies at the exhibition space

Please welcome Gynecologic Oncologist Kevin Brader to Ottawa County.



Dr. Brader, medical director of the gynecologic oncology program at Mercy Health Lacks Cancer Center, now also practices at Mercy Health Physician Partners Holland North and is a member of the medical staff at Holland Hospital. He is a skilled minimally-invasive surgeon with experience managing gynecologic cancers, including endometrial, ovarian, cervix, vulva and fallopian tube cancers.

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Tulip Time Gets HYP



Tulip Time Festival (www.tuliptime.com) has chosen to partner with Holland Young Professionals (HYP) for this year's Charity Partner Program to co-host a brand-new event, Tulips & Juleps. Holland Young Professionals leads efforts to develop, establish, and promote opportunities for young professionals along the lakeshore in West Michigan. They also work to enhance our region's ability to attract and retain young professionals. Tulip Time is committed to working closely with charity partners to provide opportunities for engagement and interaction with the festival's audience.

When Holland Young Professionals proposed Tulips & Juleps, a tulip-themed Kentucky Derby fundraising event, it was a great fit. The Kentucky Derby and Tulip Time dates align each year, and what better way to celebrate both events than with a

tulip-themed derby fundraiser? Tulips & Juleps will provide a new event experience while raising funds for the Holland Young Professionals Endowment Fund and Tulip Time.

Heather Gill Fox, President-Elect of Holland Young Professionals expressed her excitement for the Charity Partner event, stating, "The HYP Endowment Fund enables us to further our commitment to invest in young professionals and their leadership potential through grants to local nonprofits. We're so excited to have been selected as Tulip Time's 2017 Charity Partner, as any funds raised through Tulips & Juleps will have a lasting impact for years to come! Our Board of Directors is looking forward to partnering with the Tulip Time team to bring a quality event to both festival goers and area young professionals."

Tulips & Juleps, a derby soiree, will take place Saturday, May 6th, from 4-7pm at Boatwerks Waterfront Restaurant. This tulip-themed derby party includes bourbon tastings, appetizers, yard games, southern fare, silent auction and viewing of the Kentucky Derby. Ladies bring your hat, gentlemen grab your bowtie! Tickets are \$40/person. HYP members may purchase tickets at a discounted price of \$25/person until April 15. Attendees must be 21 and over. For additional details visit www.tuliptime.com/derby.

Learn more about Holland Young Professionals at www.behyp.org. The Tulip Time Festival Guide is now available offering details of the 2017 program. Brochures can be viewed online or you can request a copy at www.tuliptime.com/join. Download the free Tulip Time app to stay connected.

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City on a Hill



City on a Hill has renovated and operates in the former Zeeland Hospital building.



The Health Clinic operated by City on a Hill provides completely free service to uninsured or under-insured people who often would otherwise go without treatment.



Director Gary Ellens notes a map that shows more than 90 places around the world where City on a Hill tenant ministries are at work.

City on a Hill (COAH) opened May 31, 2006 with a clear mission. The concept was to repurpose the former Zeeland Hospital building into a ministry center that could provide space as well as heat, electric, phones and other amenities at a relatively low cost. This would allow tenant ministries to focus more of their energy on their individual missions, and not worry so much about keeping the lights on. What began as a few people with a shared vision to provide humanitarian aid during a hurting economy, grew into a board of directors with a directive to give nonprofits in the area some much needed support.

In 2006, Gary Ellens was serving as a consultant, assisting in preparing the building for ministry. His passion for the project led him to apply for the position of Executive Director, and he was hired. Since that time, COAH has grown from having 12 tenants to 46 ministries, serving a variety of community needs. One ministry is Kids Hope Network, which creates church-school partnerships that pair church members with at-risk kids in supportive, mentoring relationships. Another child-focused ministry located at COAH is CDS Lakeshore Headstart. CDS

provides children and families of Ottawa and Allegan counties with services that teach children the learning and social skills they need to achieve kindergarten readiness.

In addition to helping non-profits with their missions, COAH felt called to develop four ministries of its own to meet community needs. They now house a Health Clinic, which provides medical care to uninsured and underinsured people, a Café, which offers low-cost or free meals to those in need, ATLAS, an adult mentoring ministry for persons in crisis, and leader renewal, a retreat and reflection space for pastors and leaders.

City on a Hill hosts various Chamber events, including Ambassador meetings, hosting one of the days of programming for the West Coast Leadership class, and a past Chamber event called Network & Nibbles. In the fall of 2016, COAH celebrated its 10-year anniversary, with an open house and a Chamber ribbon cutting event. Of the 10-year anniversary, Ellens said, "We are thankful for the 10 years God has used City on a Hill to bless this ministry. We are eager to see what he will do here in the future."



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April Calendar of Events

Tuesday, April 11

Early Bird Breakfast

@Haworth Inn & Conference Center,
225 College Avenue, Holland

Please join us as we welcome Whit Mitchell, an Executive Coach, author and speaker as he shares with us how to Unite the Extraordinary. In addition to Whit's executive coaching work, he has partnered with universities such as Dartmouth, Harvard and Columbia University for their Executive Development Programs. Come and learn many practical and fresh ideas for team dynamics, organizational culture and personal performance.

Time: 7:30-8:30am

Cost: \$20 per Chamber member (\$25 if registered after April 9) / \$35 per non-member

Monday, April 17

Governmental Affairs Breakfast

@Alpenrose Restaurant, 4 E 8th St, Holland

Access to elected officials is a special member benefit for you! Join us for breakfast with our elected state and federal legislators. Arrive at 7:15am for a brief networking session before the breakfast begins.

Time: 7:30-8:30am

Cost: \$20 per Chamber member (\$25 if registered after April 14) / \$35 per non-member

Wednesday, April 19

12th Annual Minority Business Awards Luncheon

@Midtown Center, 96 W 15th Street, Holland

Enjoy a delicious lunch and network while we celebrate the rich diversity in our business community and recognize minority business leaders and advocates. We will honor a minority owned business and a minority business champion.

Time: 11:30am-1pm

Cost: \$40 per member / \$75 per non-member

Thursday, April 20

West Michigan Business Day at the Capitol

@Michigan State Capitol Building,
110 S Capitol Avenue, Lansing

Get direct access and build influence with the West Michigan Chamber Coalition at the annual West Michigan Business Day at the Capitol. Meet with West Michigan legislators to discuss issues that are important to the business community. Attend committees, House and Senate sessions, and hear from department heads. Enjoy lots of great member-to-member networking that occurs throughout the day and participate in the West Michigan Business Expo!

Time: 8am-4pm

Cost: Free for members, must pre-register.

Friday, April 21

Membership Orientation

@Howard Miller Community Center,
14 S Church Street, Zeeland

Chamber Membership Orientation is an interactive, fun and informative event that provides a comprehensive overview of Chamber events, programs, and committees. Network with new and seasoned members, and enjoy a FREE lunch! Registrations not required but appreciated.

Time: 11:30am-1pm

Cost: Free

Wednesday, April 26

Network @ Lunch

@Boatwerks, 216 Van Raalte Avenue, Holland

Register early for this popular event! Get to know other business representatives by spending an hour with them over a relaxing business lunch. You will randomly be assigned with dining partners at the event, giving you the opportunity to make new contacts and share about yourself and your business.

Time: 12-1pm

Cost: \$15 per member inclusive of tax and gratuity / \$25 per non-member inclusive of tax and gratuity

Thursday, April 27

Employment Law Update with Miller Johnson

@Hope College Maas Center Auditorium, 264 Columbia Avenue, Holland

Join us as we partner with the Lakeshore Human Resource Management Association at this upcoming seminar featuring guest speakers from our partner, Miller Johnson, on what employers might/should see in 2017 and beyond from the Trump administration.

Time: 8-11am

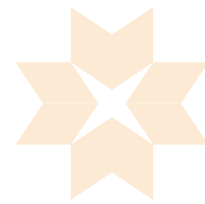
Cost: No Charge for LHRMA members - **promo code needed!**

\$45 per Chamber member (\$50 after pre-reg ends April 24)

\$25 for each additional attendee from the same company

\$75 per non-Chamber member

For a full listing of events, visit
www.westcoastchamber.org/events.



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Jared Kimber

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When it's Valentine's Day on Early Bird Tuesday



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Ribbon Cutting at City on a Hill



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Ribbon Cutting at Generational Wealth



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Cheryl Kilinski gets excited about networking!



Audrey Green from Midwest Title Agency connects with presenter Erin Bemiss

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