

THE CHAMBER

Charlottesville Regional
Chamber of Commerce



Collab Report

Working together for a stronger
business community



FEB
2022



Elizabeth Cromwell

Chamber President & CEO

Dear Chamber members, partners and friends,

The past two years of business disruption have provided many organizations (including our own Chamber) with nearly constant opportunities to innovate, collaborate, problem-solve, upgrade, re-think, address inequities, and deliver products and services in ways that were unimaginable just a few years ago. In this spirit of creative collaboration, we are delighted to share with you this Collab Report, highlighting a few of the key partnerships and teamwork undertaken by the Chamber in support of our business community.

I'd like to thank the many volunteers whose generosity of time and good spirit have helped Team Chamber continue to innovate as an advocate and convener through the most challenging of times. We are humbled and inspired every day as we work together to emerge from the pandemic well-positioned to succeed as individual organizations and collectively grow the economy.

We have a lot of positive developments in store in 2022, and we can't wait to collaborate with you to continue building a cohesive, supportive and successful business community!

Guy Browning

Chamber Board Chairman
SVP Fulfillment, MPS



Greetings from the board room! Our all-volunteer Board of Directors is a deeply committed group of individuals dedicated to building a vibrant economy through the Chamber's ability to advocate, convene and engage.

I'm pleased to report that while the world is still experiencing so much disruption due to the pandemic, the Chamber remains true to its strategic goals. We continue to maintain a laser focus on several strategies, which include building a "best in class" Chamber and being a solid partner for economic development.

A significant board accomplishment has been the launch of a new standing committee, the Equity Advisory Council, comprised of both board members and subject matter experts. This group is helping the board to develop and implement an equity framework and culture of discernment as the lens through which all Chamber decisions, communications and resource allocations will be made.

Many thanks to the small but mighty Chamber staff, as they have in many ways been the glue keeping the business community together. They are invigorated and look forward to convening and engaging all of us in 2022!

- working together to support entrepreneurs -

Venture Central

Venture Central, a long-envisioned collaborative project to support regional entrepreneurship, made significant strides in the past year, including the hiring of its first leader, Alex Andrew.

Andrew stated, "Venture Central is a visionary concept, and I am grateful for the opportunity to build on the efforts that others have committed over the years. We will be focusing on adding value to our business community through connections, resources and networks that will drive business growth. I'm looking forward to bringing Venture Central to fruition quickly."

The Chamber is one of the project's founding partners.

Chamber in-kind support

\$60,000

GO Virginia funding

\$300,000

Other funding

\$210,000

VentureCentralVA.com



VIRGINIA INITIATIVE FOR
**GROWTH &
OPPORTUNITY**
IN EACH REGION



**UNIVERSITY
of VIRGINIA**

Venture Central Board of Directors

Chairwoman Sarah Rumbaugh
Vice-Chairman Charlie Rogers
James Atkinson, PhD
Pete Caramanis
Chris Engel
Amrie Grammer, PhD
Denise Herndon
Roger Johnson
Hillary Murray
Payam Pourtaheri
Kyle Redinger



Charlie Rogers

Chamber Board Member
Founder & CEO, Innovative
Software Solutions

"For most entrepreneurs, between having the idea and starting the business, there is a large gap. Our goal is that an entrepreneur can walk in with an idea and when they walk out, they've been connected to resources they need to get the idea to the market."



- working together to train leaders -

Leadership Charlottesville

Throughout its thirty-plus years of success, Leadership Charlottesville has built a shared knowledge base of the community's assets, issues and opportunities. LC has fostered professional and personal relationships and assisted many local nonprofits through volunteer support.

LC relaunches this year with an expanded curriculum that adds leadership skills development. We are thrilled to produce the new program in partnership with the Center for Nonprofit Excellence, along with the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service and Institute for Engagement & Negotiation. Our vision is to maintain the most-valued program elements of the past and inject specialized leadership skills through this highly collaborative curriculum.

2022 themes will include: civic engagement, effective facilitation, equitable collaboration, communication and conflict resolution, leading in times of uncertainty, ethical decision-making, building cultural competence and more.

The competitive application process will open in the spring of 2022, and sessions will launch in September 2022. [Join us on Zoom March 9](#) for a sneak peek!

www.CvilleChamber.com/lc



Thank You for Working with Us

Chamber Board of Directors 2022

Chairman: Guy Browning, MPS

Melvin Burruss, Attorney at Law

Kara Chandeysson, Ting

Jonathan Chasen, Wells Fargo

Chris Engel, City of Charlottesville

Yolunda Harrell, New Hill Development Co.

Wendy Horton, UVA Health

Kirby Hutto, Ting Pavilion

Rebecca Ivins, Hourigan

Roger Johnson, Albemarle County

Arlene Lee, Lee Construction Group, Inc.

Eric Mayberry, Daily Progress

Cristine Nardi, Center for Nonprofit Excellence

Christy Phillips, WillowTree

Ravi Respeto, United Way of Greater Charlottesville

Charlie Rogers, Innovative Software Solutions

Chuck Rotgin, Great Eastern Management Co.

Colette Sheehy, University of Virginia

Sasha Tripp, Story House Real Estate

Keith Woodard, Woodard Properties

Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce PARTNERS IN TRUST

Chamber events and programs are presented by these partners.

EST. 2019



The Daily Progress



albemarle



ting fiber for business



Advanced Network Systems | Great Eastern Management Company
Hourigan | Lee Construction Group, Inc. | LUMOS | State Farm
Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital | Tom Tom Foundation



Allison Partners | F&M Bank | Four Corners Real Estate Solutions | Melvin Burruss, Attorney at Law | Story House Real Estate

Become a Partner in Trust: www.CvilleChamber.com/partners





THE CHAMBER

Charlottesville Regional
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Ambassadors

After an extended hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Chamber Ambassadors have resumed welcoming members at events and assisting Chamber staff with member outreach.

Mary Kay Campbell
The Heart of Storytelling

Karen Kehoe
RE/MAX Regency

Janice O'Hara
CTI Real Estate

Devy Goradia
Accounting Solutions PLLC

Liz Knutsen
Towe Insurance Service

Ann Postak
BEMER Group

Troy Lane
First Heritage Mortgage

Kristin Sorokti
Story House Real Estate

Jennifer Mammi
Goodwill Industries of the Valleys

Ed Stockwell
Crutchfield

Volunteer: www.CvilleChamber.com/ambassadors



- working together to foster collaboration -

Affinity Groups

Volunteer-led roundtables, councils and committees provide key opportunities for Chamber members to get involved and collaborate. Even when they can't meet in person, these groups creatively find ways to make an impact. 2022 is already leading to collabs between affinity groups, including shared networking events and more.

Explore affinity groups: www.CvilleChamber.com/roundtables

Aging in Place Business Network

The Aging in Place Business Network (AiPBN) provides networking and education for local organizations that serve the 50+ community. AiPBN engages members with monthly meetings including virtual member spotlights, educational talks and tours of local facilities.

www.CvilleChamber.com/aipbn





Business Women's Round Table

The Business Women's Round Table (BWRT) continues to provide a gathering space for women in all stages of their professional life to connect with other women of the community in meaningful ways. Women should lift other women up, and BWRT aims to do that through its mission to honor, engage and inspire each other.

We are proud that we've continued to meet each month and create a space for women to support each other. After over a year of virtual meetings, we've been excited to host some in-person networking events! Attendees enjoyed themselves and were happy to be together again.

Our main goal for 2022 is to refresh and reinvigorate the group. We'll conclude our Leadership Lessons speaker series and introduce some new and different ideas. We aim to uncover new ways to be more accessible and visible to more women in our community, hopefully driving increased membership both to BWRT and the Chamber.

www.CvilleChamber.com/bwrt



Janie Kast

BWRT Chair

Managing Director, Allison Partners

Fun fact: My favorite movie is The Big Lebowski.



Bunmi Collins

BWRT Vice Chair

Owner & Graphic Designer, StickyNote Creative

Fun fact: In the 8th grade, I won an art contest for an illustration advertising the Ballet Folklórico de Mexico.



Charlottesville Area Development Roundtable

The Charlottesville Area Development Roundtable (CADRE) endeavors to build positive relationships with City and County leadership and elected officials. We offer the vast range of professional expertise of our participants in an effort to impact policies towards the greater community good. By collaborating with our public partners, we can work together to build a better Charlottesville. We hope this extends to all citizens through better and more variety in housing options and new developments that can accommodate our business community. Improved policies, more efficient processes and effective rules help all of us to thrive.

The City of Charlottesville Comprehensive Plan was the primary focus of CADRE for 2021. This document, the long range plan of our city, represents the strong desire to add more housing, and in particular, much more affordable housing in the community. Much of our membership has taken part in the public engagement for this plan, and CADRe Chair Ashley Davies is part of the Steering Committee. In addition, CADRE participated in the hiring committee for the new Director of Neighborhood Development Services, Mr. James Freas. Mr. Freas officially commenced his new role in September 2021. We warmly welcome him to Charlottesville, and we look forward to working with him for many years to come!

In 2022, CADRE will focus much of our attention on the update of the City of Charlottesville Zoning Ordinance. This substantial effort will immediately follow the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and the ordinance is one of the primary tools used by the City to implement the plan. The Zoning Ordinance last had a major rewrite in 2003. We also look forward to resuming meetings with our membership and getting together much more often to continue our mission to create Charlottesville's next great places.

www.CvilleChamber.com/cadre



Ashley Davies
CADRe Chair
Vice President,
Riverbend
Development

Fun facts: I'm an amateur painter and love spending time in the woods foraging for wild mushrooms.





Rhianon Botizan

Rising Professionals Chair
Private Event Sales Manager,
Pippin Hill Farm & Vineyard

Fun fact: I did 8 years of acting when I was a child with ShenanArts (Staunton based) company.

Charlottesville Chamber Rising Professionals

The young professionals we've met are looking to join for not only the networking aspect but also the sense of community that the Chamber brings. Additionally, we are trying to partner with as many new businesses and young professional business owners as possible to support our community.

2021 was the first year for the Rising Professionals, which is a huge highlight for us! We managed to exceed our expectations for events – with a goal of one in each quarter, we ended up doing a total of 1 each month.

Our 2022 goals include working with other Chamber groups for our events next year. We also plan on really fine tuning our steering committee, what being on the committee means, delegating roles and responsibilities, and firming a solid committee.

www.CvilleChamber.com/rising



Defense Affairs Committee

Program Manager: COL (Ret.) Lettie J. Bien

Chair: Deborah Van Eersel, University of Virginia Foundation

The Chamber Defense Affairs Committee (DAC) continues building relationships and resources connecting the regional defense & intelligence community and veterans with the Chamber and the business community.

Ongoing support from multiple partners will enable Program Manager Lettie Bien to continue working full time on DAC's behalf throughout 2022.

In 2021, a volunteer working group produced a comprehensive community welcome guide for incoming personnel. The guide has been adapted for general military and civilian use. DAC also released an up-to-date list of more than 50 Regional Veteran-Associated Organizations.

DAC recognized outstanding members of the local commands and UVA ROTC at the first annual DAC Service Awards Luncheon in October 2021 (pictured below, photo by Franklin Knox Photography).

www.CvilleChamber.com/dac



Hospitality Professionals Round Table

Chair: Katie Kirby, Greencroft Club

The Hospitality Professionals Round Table (HPRT) was launched in November 2021. Its mission is making a difference in hospitality and related industries through support, advocacy, education and recognition.

The group will focus on the shared priorities and needs of professionals working in hotels, restaurants, wineries and breweries, weddings and special events, tourism, and similar fields.

The group's first public event, a networking mixer with the Chamber's Rising Professionals at Merrie Mill Farm & Vineyard, will be held in the spring.

www.CvilleChamber.com/hospitality





Minority Business Alliance – Celebrating 10 Years!

The Minority Business Alliance (MBA) continues its mission by leveraging and cultivating partnerships in a relentless pursuit of creating value for our members and thereby creating value for the Chamber.

Highlights in 2021 included:

- Membership growth / Provided \$3000 in MBA Endurance Fund grants
- Partnership with United Way of Greater Charlottesville to award over \$70,000 in grants to 7 MBA members
- Partnership with C-ville Weekly highlighting MBA members and other local, minority organizations, resulting in broad print exposure for 12 MBA members
- MBA Fun Day / Team-building with Triple C
- MBA Minority Business Month
- Participated in national Comcast RISE Focus Groups

Our goals for 2022:

- Increase SWaM certifications for MBA members
- Financial coaching for members
- 10th Anniversary celebration
- 10-20% growth in membership



Quinton Harrell

MBA Chair
 Founder, Heritage
 United Builders

Fun fact: I'm an introvert who loves watching The Office, South Park, and Curb Your Enthusiasm

www.CvilleChamber.com/mba





Public Policy Committee

Chair: Rebecca Ivins, Hourigan

The Public Policy Committee began 2021 with a series of presentations from business and governmental leaders. Conversations focused on improving business opportunities as we emerge from the pandemic. Speakers included public policy experts such as Neil Williamson from the Free Enterprise Forum as well as representatives from other Chamber committees, such as Minority Business Alliance Chair Quinton Harrell. We were also pleased to welcome County Executive Jeff Richardson, whose “State of the County” address served as a precursor to the Chamber's first annual "State of the Community" event in 2022.

The second half of the year led to fewer scheduled meetings, but more engagement with individuals to focus on deepening the Chamber's public policy and advocacy efforts in 2022. Chamber CEO Elizabeth Cromwell met with business and governmental leaders to develop a new approach for 2022. This new approach is built upon an intentional effort to build (or in some cases, rebuild) relationships between the public and private sector in our region. Solid relationships, shared recognition and mutual respect can be instrumental when building the case for a stronger business community.

As the primary advocate and convener for business, the Chamber is uniquely positioned to foster stronger relationships between the public and private sectors. More information will be forthcoming as we build out the 2022 public policy calendar to focus on relationship-building, shared goals and success metrics, and being a larger advocate on behalf of business.

www.CvilleChamber.com/policy





In the Public Eye

We continue to intentionally cultivate the Chamber's public reputation by sharing our organization's work and accomplishments. Through partnerships with local media outlets, Chamber members and staff have been featured more than 40 times in print publications, radio and television in the past year, including:

- Feature articles in *albemarle* magazine
- Spotlight interviews on Newsradio WINA
- Live TV "Community Conversations" on NBC29

The Chamber earned dozens of mentions in regional media in 2021 including Virginia Business Magazine, The Daily Progress, CBS19, NBC29, Charlottesville Tomorrow, C-ville Weekly, UVA Today, Augusta Free Press and the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

www.CvilleChamber.com/blog



49,069 Chamber website visits



27,826 Member directory searches



3,957 Email subscribers



2,703



2,434



1,347



473

- working together to share our stories -



- working together for a stronger Chamber -

Chamber Business

2021 membership statistics show our Chamber growing in reach and diversity. We're also moving into 2022 with key internal improvements:

- Our downstairs lobby is now a bright, modern gathering space thanks to renovations by Heritage United Builders.
- A COVID relief grant helped launch our new virtual boardroom, enabling Board members to easily keep in touch and manage information.
- We've partnered with Advanced Network Systems to bring our office network and cybersecurity in line with current best practices.



79 virtual & in-person networking events welcomed 1,897 participants in 2021



1,015 active members and affiliate members represent over 64,000 employees



87% of members renewed in 2021, compared with national average of 80%



59 new organizations joined in 2021



24% of 2021 new members are Minority Business Enterprises

We look forward to further collaborating with our members and partners, as we continue strengthening the business community together!

Have a collab idea? Reach out to us at connect@cvillechamber.com or 434.295.3141.



Working together for a stronger business community



Elizabeth Cromwell

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