



EXECUTIVE 2026 INSIGHT



| Welcome from your Metro EDGE Chairs

On behalf of Metro EDGE and the entire Metro EDGE Leadership Council, we would like to extend our gratitude to this year's Executive Insight speakers, attendees, and generous sponsors for making this event possible — **thank you!** Executive Insight is a pillar event for our organization, and we are proud to offer this unique opportunity for young professionals to connect with our region's top leaders across industries.

Metro EDGE is a membership-based program of the Metro Chamber Foundation designed to connect the region's young professionals to develop the next generation of changemakers. Securing the future of our Capital Region is at the heart of Metro EDGE's mission: to **Engage** in a diverse network, **Develop** critical business skills, **Give** back to the community and **Empower** through leadership (otherwise known as **EDGE**).

Our theme for this year is **Strength** — the strength of our members, our leadership, and the connections we've built together. Metro EDGE has continued to grow the past year, through our membership, new opportunities, and an increasingly engaged community of young professionals across the region.

We're incredibly proud of how far Metro EDGE has come, and the energy our community continues to bring. With a strong foundation and growing momentum, we're excited to build on that strength and continue to help support our future leaders.

Follow Metro EDGE on Instagram, LinkedIn and sign up for our newsletter for the latest event updates.

We invite you to become a member and connect to learn more about getting involved with Metro EDGE by reaching out to our Leadership Council!

Cheers!

Katie Durham

2026 Metro EDGE Chair

katie@3foldcomm.com

Nancy Eldred

2026 Metro EDGE Chair

nancy@namica.org

Welcome to Executive Insight!



This unique event represents the essence of what Metro EDGE is all about — learning from and making connections with regional leaders. Tonight is your opportunity to ask questions, listen with intent, and grow personally and professionally. It's a chance to strengthen our region with the highest caliber of well-rounded, young professionals.

- Find new motivation and inspiration from this incredible lineup of speakers.
- Each round of speed networking will last 15 minutes and you will have the opportunity to choose which speaker you would like to connect with.
- We will have 4 rounds of networking with our executives
- Make sure to have your questions ready!

Evening Schedule

5:30 PM

OPEN NETWORKING

6:00 PM

WELCOME & SPEAKER INTRODUCTIONS

6:15 - 7:30PM

SPEAKER ROTATIONS BEGIN

7:30 - 8:00PM

CLOSING REMARKS & OPEN NETWORKING

| Executive Speakers



WILFREDO CRUZ JR.

CEO, Community Resource Project

Wilfredo Cruz Jr. serves as Chief Executive Officer of Community Resource Project (CRP), providing visionary leadership and strategic direction across Sacramento, San Joaquin, Sutter, and Yuba counties. Committed to organizational governance, operational excellence, and community advocacy, he empowers his team to drive impact in education, energy, health, and workforce development.

Wilfredo brings extensive nonprofit and policy experience, serving on the California Department of Community Services and Development's Energy Council and as Vice President and Advocacy Chair of the Association of California Community and Energy Services (ACCES) Board of Directors.

Dedicated to continuous learning and inclusive leadership, Wilfredo holds a Master of Public Administration and a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration.



BRYAN FLAHERTY

Publisher & Market President, Sacramento Business Journal

Bryan Flaherty is Publisher & Market President of the Sacramento Business Journal, part of American City Business Journals. He leads the publication's revenue and business operations and drives its broader presence in the Sacramento market, overseeing advertising, events, and strategic direction of the newsroom.

Bryan stepped into the role effective July 1st, succeeding longtime publisher David Lichtman. He built his career in advertising, including as Advertising Director in Sacramento and an account executive in Portland. Based in Sacramento, he is focused on strengthening the Journal's ties to the region's business community.



MAGGIE GIORDANENGO

President, Honey

A marketer at heart and previous strategy director, Maggie Giordanengo is President of Honey, a Sacramento-based creative studio, where she brings intention and momentum to both Honey and its clients. With over a decade of leadership experience and a blend of strategic thinking and creative intuition, Maggie leads Honey's day-to-day operations, shapes the studio's strategic approach, and partners closely with Honey's team to deliver work that is both meaningful and impactful, ultimately demonstrating the influence strategy and creative can have on business outcomes. With deep roots in agriculture, Maggie's strength is translating industry nuances into compelling brand stories that drive business impact, particularly within the food, beverage, agriculture, and tourism sectors. Outside of her role at Honey, she serves as Board Secretary for Capitol Creative Alliance. In 2026, she was named a 40 Under 40 honoree by the Sacramento Business Journal.



PATRICK HARBISON

Partner, Lighthouse Public Affairs

Patrick Harbison is a Partner at Lighthouse Public Affairs and owner of Patrick Harbison Public Relations (PHPR), a full-service public relations firm serving a diverse range of clients. His work includes communications strategy and implementation for corporations and organizations, statewide legislative campaigns and major citywide events.

With more than 20 years of experience as a publicist and media consultant, Patrick draws on his extensive relationships with broadcast, print and digital media throughout California to secure meaningful exposure for his clients. At Lighthouse, he oversees the firm's statewide communications efforts.

Patrick has been named Public Relations Professional of the Year by the Sacramento Public Relations Association and Influencer of the Year by the Public Relations Society of America. He has also been named one of the Sacramento Business Journal's "40 Under 40."



ROBERT HEIDT

**President & CEO, Sacramento
Metro Chamber**

Robert Heidt is President and CEO of the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, leading the Capital Region's premier business advocacy organization. With over 25 years of chamber leadership experience, he has served executive leadership roles in Las Vegas, Austin, the Greater Boston region, Arizona, and Sacramento.

A U.S. Air Force veteran and nationally recognized chamber executive, Robert was re-elected to the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) Board of Directors in 2025 and named to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Committee of 100 (CCC100). He serves on the boards of the Downtown Sacramento Partnership, Visit Sacramento, California Capital Airshow, and Paratransit, Inc.



DR. TORENCE POWELL

Chancellor, Los Rios Community District

Dr. Torence Powell was appointed as the tenth Chancellor of the Los Rios Community College District in July 2026.

Dr. Powell, a first-generation community college student and the first person in his family to graduate from college, has a long history of higher education experience in both Community College and University settings.

Prior to becoming Chancellor, Dr. Powell served as the tenth Superintendent/President for Napa Valley College from 2022-2026. Before his time in Napa, he worked at the Los Rios district office as Associate Vice Chancellor of Instruction. Dr. Powell earned his Ed.D. in educational leadership at UC Davis. In addition to his CEO role, Dr. Powell serves on the boards of multiple Sacramento-based non-profits and teaches part time in the E.D. program at Cal Poly.



CASSANDRA PYE

President, Lucas Public Affairs

Cassandra Pye is president of Lucas Public Affairs (LPA), a women-led, Sacramento-based strategic communication and public affairs consultancy. In May 2024, LPA was acquired by Public Policy Holding Company, Inc. (LSE: PPHC), and listed on the London Stock Exchange, with Ms. Pye remaining in her current role. For over 40 years, she has enjoyed a career in communications, government, politics, and advocacy for corporate interests in national, state, and local arenas. Pye provides strategic counsel to the firm's clients from sectors and industries, including education, energy, insurance, technology, utilities, telecom and public sector entities and guides a team of public affairs professionals. She has expertise in trade association governance and board management. She is a graduate of George Washington University.



DR. SCOTT B. RICHARDS

CEO, Saint John's Program for Real Change

Scott Richards is a nonprofit executive and educator with more than 25 years of experience expanding opportunity and strengthening communities. As CEO of Saint John's Program for Real Change in Sacramento, he leads one of the region's largest organizations serving women and children experiencing homelessness and economic instability. His work spans education, human services, public policy, and organizational leadership.

Before joining Saint John's, Scott spent 13 years in leadership roles with Teach For America across California and Florida, including as Executive Director in Sacramento. He holds a B.A. in Political Science from UC Berkeley, a master's degree from Northwestern University, and a Doctorate of Education from the University of Southern California.



ARIEL ROBLIN

President & General Manager, KCRA 3 / KQCA My58

Ariel Roblin has served as the President and General Manager of KCRA 3 and My58 since 2020. She is passionate about the power a diverse and inclusive working environment has on a team to inspire their achievements beyond what they thought possible. Her team's passion for community engagement and support for those in need are what drive the success of the television stations she leads. Under her leadership, the community-focused work of KCRA 3 and My58 has been recognized internationally with two Communicator Awards, nationally with three Promax gold awards, and regionally with multiple Emmy and Edward R. Murrow awards. Ariel is the proud mother of two sons.



MARASKESHIA SMITH

City Manager, City of Sacramento

Maraskeshia Smith, ICMA-CM, was appointed by the Mayor and City Council as Sacramento City Manager in January 2026. As City Manager, she oversees the City of Sacramento's day-to-day operations and leads the implementation of policy direction from the City Council.

Smith brings more than 20 years of public service experience and a track record of strengthening city services, improving organizational performance and advancing equity-focused, community-centered outcomes.

Across multiple cities, Smith has delivered measurable outcomes in areas including housing and homelessness, public safety, public infrastructure and municipal finance, and is known for her collaborative leadership style and ability to build strong regional partnerships.

Smith holds a Master of Business Administration from Eastern Kentucky University and a Bachelor of Business Administration from the University of Kentucky.



CONNOR SUTTON

Vice President of Fan Experience & Event Operations, Sacramento Republic FC

Connor Sutton is one of the youngest executives in USL — proof that experience isn't about time served, but about how much ground you can cover. He's built his career at Sacramento Republic FC from the ground up since, starting as the club's matchday emcee and in-stadium announcer before rising to Vice President of Fan Experience & Event Operations.

Sutton has spent his career shaping what a Republic FC matchday feels like — turning a venue that was only ever supposed to be temporary into a home fans genuinely love, long after its expiration date should've hit. Now he's applying that same instinct to what comes next, helping design the fan experience for Republic FC's new stadium in the Railyards from the ground up.

Over his tenure with the club, Sutton has helped plan and execute hundreds of professional matches and major events, overseeing cross-functional teams, vendors, and broadcast operations.

Questions to Get You Started

1. How did you navigate the transition into a leadership role vs. co-worker role? What was the biggest challenge? Any tips for success?
2. How do you prioritize what is important to you?
3. How has a failure, or apparent failure, set you up for later success? Do you have a “favorite failure” of yours?
4. What advice would you give to a smart, driven entry level/mid/senior professional? What advice should they ignore?
5. What is the most effective habit you’ve formed that helped you to get to where you are today?
6. Looking back on your professional history, is there anything you wish you would have done differently?
7. What is the biggest challenge you have faced in your industry?
8. How do you inspire people?
9. When you feel overwhelmed or unfocused, what do you do?
10. What do you look for in a mentor?
11. What’s one action item you suggest for people wanting to... get noticed at work/be promoted/make change/etc.
12. When you’re mentoring, what’s the best way for a mentee to come prepared to maximize your time?
13. What’s your favorite book, podcast you’d recommend to advance professional development?

| Meet the Leadership Council Team



Program Chairs

Katie Durham &
Nancy Eldred



Communications & Content Chairs

Haley Rose &
Madeline Ravera



Membership & Business Engagement Chairs

Kevin Olson &
Michael Beller



Member Engagement Chairs

Ryan Advincula
& Vanessa King



Social Programming Chairs

Emiliano Rosas &
Kayla Rodriguez



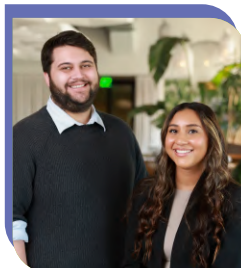
Professional Development Chairs

Sarah Costa &
Amanda Kelly,
MBA



Signature Programs Chairs

Madeline
Barbour &
Anthony Uribe



Civic Engagement Chairs

Joshua Oken &
Madison Torres

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**PROUDLY SUPPORTING
METRO EDGE EXECUTIVE INSIGHT**



Wilton Rancheria is proud to be the Capital Tribe,
Sacramento County's only federally recognized Tribe.

We proudly own Sky River Casino, hold majority ownership
of Sacramento Republic FC, and continue to expand our
influence in regional economic development.

Our investments advance health, education, and
economic opportunity for our community, today and for
future generations.



Join Metro EDGE Today!

**BY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS.
FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS.**

As a member of Metro EDGE, this is what you can look forward to annually:

- **Signature Mixers & Networking Events:** Build lasting connections with fellow professionals.
- **Dynamic Professional Development Workshops & Forums:** Elevate your career with exclusive insights and training.
- **Exclusive Metro Chamber “After Hours” Mixers:** Enjoy premium access to the region’s top business leaders.
- **Leadership Opportunities:** Apply to join the Leadership Council and help shape EDGE’s impact in the community.
- **Direct Access to Influential Leaders:** Engage with Metro Chamber and Foundation Board members.

\$125

**ANNUAL
MEMBERSHIP**



**BECOME A
MEMBER**

Join an elite network of future leaders:
Be part of Sacramento’s most ambitious and driven
young professional association!

Metro EDGE is a program of the Metro Chamber Foundation. For more information visit metro-edge.org or reach out to Joyce Cam jcam@metrochamber.org

Notes

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Notes

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THIS EVENT POSSIBLE.

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