

# Business Voice

VEGAS CHAMBER | VegasChamber.com | SEPTEMBER 2021

## LV IN DC 2021 We're Back! Sept. 20-23

Page 14

### Largest Ever

Southern NV Collaboration  
for \$3B in Federal Funds

Page 11





# ARE YOU THE BUSINESS OF THE YEAR?



**Celebrate the  
nominees & winners!**  
**Wednesday, Oct. 27**  
Details at [VegasChamber.com](http://VegasChamber.com)

## Categories

- Business of the Year
  - Small, Medium, Large
- Corporate Citizen of the Year
- Emerging Business of the Year
- Executive of the Year

Winners announced in October

*Financial institutions are excluded*



## Exclusive Sponsor



**MARY BETH SEWALD**  
PRESIDENT & CEO



**T**his month, the Vegas Chamber will take more than 150 business and community leaders to our nation's capital for our annual Washington, D.C. Fly-In. As our community recovers from the impact of the pandemic, this trip is more important than ever.

During this annual trip, the Vegas Chamber will meet with Nevada's senators and representatives, along with other key decision-makers on Capitol Hill. This trip has been instrumental in achieving many positive things for our region including the designation and funding for Interstate 11; the creation of Tule Springs national monument; additional Homeland Security Funding to protect Las Vegas; the renewal of Brand USA funding to help promote the United States to international visitors; and the reauthorization of the Terrorism Risk Insurance Act.

So, what's at stake this year?

Federal funding to help our community and economy recover from COVID is a top priority. Clark County has assembled the largest ever regional collaboration to apply for federal funding in response to the \$3 billion "Investing in America's Communities" initiative funded by the American Rescue Plan (ARP).

The federal initiative aims to accelerate economic recovery from the corona virus pandemic and help communities that were disproportionately impacted build back better.

The Vegas Chamber is proud to be part of this effort. And to ensure Southern Nevada receives its fair share of funding, it is essential that Nevada's Congressional delegation hear from the business community about the economic and workforce challenges employers and small businesses are facing and how ARP funding could be productively utilized in our state. It is important for Nevada to access the federal grants it will need for our economy - and our people - to recover and thrive.

Additionally, the Vegas Chamber will be advocating on a variety of other issues that impact the economic future of our state including, transportation infrastructure, cyber security, immigration, United States and Mexico trade relationships, water policy and the Colorado River, labor regulations, and public lands.

And we will also be sharing with policy makers the new web portal the Vegas Chamber has created to help connect workers with employment opportunities, along with the training and skills they need to obtain good paying jobs and build sustainable careers. The Vegas Chamber has built a coalition of workforce training, education, and employer partners from across the state. You will hear more about this groundbreaking work in the coming months.

We hope you will join us in Washington, D.C., either in-person or virtually, to help amplify the voice of business on Capitol Hill.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Beth Sewald". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

# LV in DC 2021 Washington, D.C. Fly-In



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## Business Voice

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For more information and to see this year's Honorees,  
go to [NevadaBusiness.com/HealthcareHeroes](https://NevadaBusiness.com/HealthcareHeroes).

The RSVP Deadline is August 18, 2021.

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# A Positive Outlook Sold Out

One night. Two venues. About 90,000 fans. Inside a packed T-Mobile Arena, a capacity crowd watched Conor McGregor take to the octagon at UFC 264 in pursuit of old glories. Meanwhile, across Interstate 15 inside Allegiant Stadium, 68,000 fans sang with country music legend Garth Brooks as he kicked off his stadium tour after nearly a year of waiting. With their star power and overwhelming box office success, the events showcased a Las Vegas that is bouncing back with a bang.

After more than a year of staying home, wearing masks, avoiding crowds and cooking at home, Americans are ready to let their hair down and party like it's 2019 again. They've made that clear through brisk sales for an ever-expanding slate of concerts and sporting events that is filling up weekends through 2021 and beyond. The success of UFC 264 and the Garth Brooks concert, along with the Illenium concert a week earlier, are just the tip of the entertainment iceberg as events throughout the upcoming calendar have been selling out almost as quickly as tickets became available no matter what the venue.

UFC 264 sold out in seconds. The Life is Beautiful and Electric Daisy Carnival music festivals, which each host hundreds of thousands of fans, sold out in a matter of hours. The CONCACAF Gold Cup soccer championship, an international competition for teams in North America Central America and the Caribbean, sold out Allegiant Stadium in 90 minutes. Also at Allegiant, WWE SummerSlam was approaching sold-out status for its first show ever in Nevada.

Strong demand for entertainment throughout the year is driving sell outs and added show dates up and down the Las Vegas Strip. Singer Bruno Mars sold out six shows at Park Theater in minutes, then added four more shows. Sales for the return of Las Vegas legend Celine Dion at Resorts World Las Vegas prompted 11 new show dates on

top of the original 10. Comedian Dave Chappelle started with one date at MGM Grand Garden Arena and ended up with four, selling all of them out. And demand for Usher's upcoming residency at Caesars Palace prompted the addition of six dates on top of the original 12.

This demand for live events is not unexpected. Concert and sporting events have become an important and growing part of the Las Vegas experience, but coming out of a pandemic where isolation has been prevalent and public interactions limited, congregating among thousands through a shared passion may be more important than ever. The pace of ticket sales across the entertainment spectrum in Las Vegas certainly supports that.



**Jeremy Aguero, Principal Analyst**

The return of prominent live events is important for the recovery of our regional tourism industry and the economy as a whole. The diverse calendar of events is already driving visitation and related spending on hotels, meals and transportation that directly supports one in four jobs in Southern Nevada. Las Vegas is ready to welcome thousands more concert-goers and sports fans in the months ahead – as long as they can get a ticket.

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# Las Vegas Welcomes



## First International Travel Trade Show

Las Vegas will welcome U.S. Travel Association's (USTA) IPW back to the Las Vegas Convention Center (LVCC) Sept. 18-22, the first major international travel tradeshow to be held in the destination post-pandemic. USTA is a national association representing and advocating for the travel industry.

Destinations strive to host IPW as the host city has the advantage of showcasing new resorts and attractions to help sell the city to tour operators and event organizers. During IPW, international and domestic tour and travel operators, hotel and attraction representatives and journalists participate in networking sessions, business appointments and tours of new offerings. In addition to showcasing the area's exciting new offerings to premiere travel partners, IPW allows Las Vegas resort and casino sales teams the opportunity to strengthen relationships with key international markets and secure future deals. During a typical IPW show, tour and travel operators book more than \$5.5 billion in future travel to the United States.

The chance to spotlight the destination during the premiere international trade show is why the LVCVA secured the bid to bring this important travel show to the destination. The LVCVA's Board of Directors recently paved the way for the show's arrival by approving a \$750,000 sponsorship to further promote Las Vegas as the premiere destination for business and leisure travel.

Malcolm Smith, senior vice president of business development and general manager for IPW, said Las Vegas is a fan favorite for the show's international exhibitors, delegates, and journalists due to its many resorts and entertainment options.

"Las Vegas is an ever-changing destination," he said. "IPW is an opportunity for the community to showcase itself and to show the world that Las Vegas is open for business and ready to welcome international travelers again."

This year, attending national and international media will have the opportunity to experience immersive, behind-the-scenes aspects of what makes Las Vegas the most unique destination in the world including a behind-the-scenes look at how the iconic Bellagio fountains work.

"We know this year more than ever people really need that time to connect, to socialize and rebuild their networks," Smith said.

Hosted in partnership with Travel Nevada and Brand USA, the public-private partnership charged with promoting the U.S. as

a destination to global travelers, IPW places the destination and its world-class resorts and attractions at the center of the international travel industry and sets the city up for success for years into the future.



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# Largest Ever

## Regional Collaboration Preparing to Apply for Federal Funding

In the largest ever regional collaboration to apply for federal funding, Southern Nevada is preparing to submit multiple unique regional proposals to the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) in response to its \$3 billion "Investing in America's Communities" initiative funded by the American Rescue Plan (ARP).

The federal initiative aims to accelerate economic recovery from the corona virus pandemic and help communities that were disproportionately impacted build back better. "Investing in America's Communities" offers six funding opportunities that focus on issues such as employment, economic revitalization, and help for hard-hit industries.

All Southern Nevada organizations are welcome to join this regional effort that builds upon the recently approved 2021 Comprehensive Economic Strategy by the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance (LVGEA).

Current commitments to participate include:

- Boulder City Chamber of Commerce, Henderson Chamber of Commerce, Las Vegas Asian Chamber of Commerce, Las Vegas India Chamber of Commerce, Latin Chamber of Commerce, Laughlin Chamber of Commerce, Urban



Chamber of Commerce, the Vegas Chamber, and Women's Chamber of Commerce

- Cities of Boulder City, Henderson, Las Vegas, Laughlin, Mesquite, and North Las Vegas
- Clark County Department of Juvenile Justice
- Clark County School District (CCSD) College of Southern Nevada, Nevada State College, Touro University, University of Nevada Las Vegas, and University of Phoenix

- Counties of Clark, Esmeralda, Lincoln, and Nye
- Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA)
- Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance (LVGEA)
- Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR)
- Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED)
- Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada (RTC)
- Workforce Connections (Southern Nevada's Local Workforce Development Board)

Proposals are currently in progress for three funding opportunities, with additional proposals to be initiated within the next few months. Interested in learning more? Contact Vegas Chamber partner, Workforce Connections, at 702.638.8750.

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<sup>1</sup>MetLife 19th Annual Employee Benefit Trends Study, Small Business Report, 2021.

<sup>2</sup>Minimum of four core lines, applies to all guaranteed savings.

## **For a proposal and a demo of the platform contact:**



Lori Wilkinson, Vice President  
Brown & Brown Insurance of Nevada  
lwilkinson@bbnevada.com  
702-475-8243



## 2

### THURSDAY, SEPT. 2

#### MEMBER ORIENTATION

A great time for you to connect with fellow Vegas Chamber members, staff and our volunteer Prospectors and Ambassadors.

Advanced registration is required. Limit of 35.

11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Vegas Chamber (temperature reading, mask and social distancing required)

#### MAC NIGHT OUT

Join the Vegas Chamber in partnership with the Military Affairs Committee (MAC) as we recognize outstanding servicemen or servicewomen in Southern Nevada.

6 - 8:30 p.m.

Westgate Resort and Casino  
3000 Paradise Rd., Las Vegas, NV 89109  
Tickets \$50 pre-event/\$65 day of

## 7

### TUESDAY, SEPT. 7

#### CHAMBER VOICES TOASTMASTERS

Become a better speaker and a more effective presenter by joining Chamber Voices Toastmasters. Open to all members.

11:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Vegas Chamber (temperature reading, mask and social distancing required)

## 8

### WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 8

#### CHAMBER CONNECTIONS AM

This event is great for business professionals interested in expanding their network and optimizing their chamber membership. Each event will feature two speakers.

7:30 - 9 a.m.

Virtual Event

## 10

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

#### THE PUBLIC POLICY LEADERSHIP SERIES

The Public Policy Leadership (PPL) Series educates leaders on the roles and responsibilities of serving in public office.

11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Greenspun College of Urban Affairs  
4609 S. Maryland Pkwy.  
Las Vegas, NV 89154

## 14

### WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 14

#### CHAMBER CONNECTIONS PM

An open mixer for the entire business community. No cover or minimum with food and drink specials.

5:30 - 7 p.m.

Rockstar Bar at The Las Vegas Golf Center  
6730 Las Vegas Blvd. D  
Las Vegas, NV 89119

## 21

### TUESDAY, SEPT. 21

#### CHAMBER VOICES TOASTMASTERS

Become a better speaker and a more effective presenter by joining Chamber Voices Toastmasters. Open to all members.

11:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Vegas Chamber (temperature reading, mask and social distancing required)

#### CHAMBER CONNECTIONS PM

A dedicated leads group comprised of professionals from a variety of industries who grow their network and their businesses by sharing contacts, referrals and ideas.

5:30 - 7 p.m.

Vegas Chamber (temperature reading, mask and social distancing required)

## 22

### TUESDAY, SEPT. 22

#### BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

One of the most popular networking events held each month.

The crowd is welcoming and business minded. Chamber staff and ambassadors ensure all members make strategic connections. Exclusive to Vegas Chamber members.

4:30 - 6 p.m.

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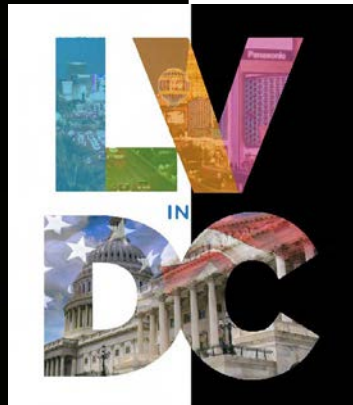


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Visit [VegasChamber.com](http://VegasChamber.com) and click on the Events Calendar to register.

Or call 702.641.5822.

Information subject to change.



# We're Back in Washington!

The Vegas Chamber is back in Washington, D.C.! The Vegas Chamber along with its partner the Las Vegas Global Economic

Alliance (LVGEA) is hosting its annual Fly-In September 20-23. This year marks a return for in-person participation for this popular program following an all-virtual format in 2020 because of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Once again, the Vegas Chamber and the LVGEA are proud to partner to represent one of the largest and most diverse group of individuals. Represented in the delegation are business and community leaders, elected and appointed officials, representatives from public agencies and special guests – a group that encompasses the diversity, depth, expertise, and dedication of Nevada's business community. The delegation is one of the largest assembled chamber fly-ins in the country. The Fly-in represents a cohesive and collaborative approach to federal policy on part of Nevada's business community.

For the past year, the Vegas Chamber and the LVGEA have been preparing to ensure that the Fly-in is constantly evolving and responsive to your business needs and those of Nevada. There are new speakers, policy topics and events for attendees to participate in. The goal of the Fly-in is to connect members to key policy makers, high-profile think tank organizations, and national trade associations including the Brookings Institution, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, United for Infrastructure, and the American Gaming Association.

During the Fly-in, the Vegas Chamber and the LVGEA will focus on a variety of issues important to the economic recovery of Nevada's business community, investment and alignment of workforce development initiatives, and the impact of labor policies on Nevada's business climate. The Fly-in allows members to share and learn about the latest information on key federal issues, but it also keeps Nevada and the interests of our state at the forefront of policy making.

Mary Beth Sewald, president and CEO of the Vegas Chamber said, "For the past 110 years, the Vegas Chamber has remained steadfast in our commitment to the business community to be their voice in the halls of government including in our nation's Capital. This is demonstrated throughout the Chamber's history with our federal policy advocacy efforts and how we

have shaped our community through collaboration and initiative. I encourage our members to join us for the Washington, D.C. Fly-in as we continue to work together to move our community's priorities forward in our nation's capital."

The Vegas Chamber has incorporated several suggestions from our members, into the 2021 program to make it even more robust and valuable. Throughout the week-long event, members will meet and engage with federal lawmakers, think-tanks, policy groups and more. There is no better way to build relationships with Congressional members, federal policy makers, and Southern Nevada business and community leaders.



As a new feature to the program, members that are not able to attend in-person in Washington, D.C. will be able to participate

virtually. This will be the first time that the Vegas Chamber and the LVGEA will offer members the option to attend either in-person or virtually.

The Fly-in's signature programming in Washington, D.C. continues to capture the attention of national audiences and creates some of most popular events in our nation's Capital.

Every year, the Nevada Lights Up the Capitol Reception draws hundreds of congressional representatives, staff members, and special guests for an exciting evening. It is an event that pays homage to Nevada's heritage and celebrates the promising future for all Nevadans by creating an evening that can only be done with the level of excitement that Las Vegas can bring to Washington, D.C. This year's reception will be held at the rooftop of 101 Constitution Avenue, which has one of the most dramatic and stunning views of Washington, D.C. It promises to be an exciting way to kick off the week in Washington, D.C. and announce that Vegas is back like never before!

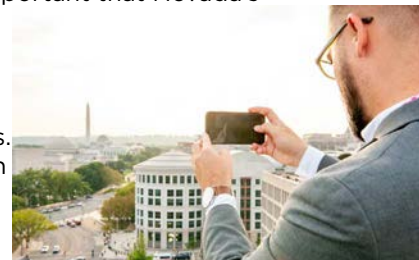
The I-11 and I-15 Congressional Caucus Luncheon is a new twist to the program and is designed to bring key powerful connections together to further advance projects investments along I-11 and I-15. This goal of this congressional event is to advocate and build support for additional investments in our interstate system, which will help grow and diversify Las Vegas's economy. Congresswoman Dina Titus, NV-1 is the Co-Chair of the I-11 Congressional Caucus and a strong supporter of these infrastructure investments.

The annual Nevada State Dinner Gala, which is a black-tie event at the historic and fabled Willard Hotel, celebrates Nevada's contributions and unique brand to federal audiences. At the Gala, the Vegas Chamber

will bestow its prestigious Nevada Business Champion Award to a federal policy maker who has worked with the Chamber to support employers and employees during the past year.

Throughout the week, members will meet with national renowned policymakers and experts who will discuss economic recovery and diversification, transportation infrastructure, international tourism, healthcare, workforce development, and education. Gina Bongiovi, chair of the Chamber's Board of Trustees and partner of Bongiovi Law, shares her perspective on why the Fly-in is an important component of the Chamber's federal advocacy efforts, "The Fly-in is an excellent opportunity to meet with Nevada's Congressional delegation and federal policy makers about the importance of passing policies that will foster Nevada's recovery following the devastating effects of COVID-19 on our economy."

The Fly-in is designed to give attendees opportunities to engage and discuss policy issues with federal policy makers that are important to them and their business. These policy meetings and roundtables are strategically designed to foster policy discussions on subjects that impact the economic recovery and future growth of both Southern Nevada and the entire state. Hugh Anderson, Chairman of the Chamber's Government Affairs Committee shared his perspective about the Fly-in, "The Vegas Chamber's Washington D.C. Fly-in is about making Nevada's voice heard on federal policy issues that are important to us as the employers and job creators of our state. Our voice matters in the halls of Congress." It is important that Nevada's business community asserts the strength of employers by representing different industries, constituencies, demographics, and audiences. Members attending this Fly-in signifies a strong and unified state ready to champion its priorities and legislative agenda on behalf of Nevada's employers.



## FLY-IN FEDERAL POLICY PRIORITIES

### EMPLOYER/EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

The Vegas Chamber is opposed to the Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act), which will take away workers' rights to choosing whether or not to join unions and pay dues, as well as the many negative impacts that the legislation will have on Nevada's job creators.

### HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

The Vegas Chamber is supportive of efforts to revise the methodology used by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in developing the risk assessments associated with the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) program.

## Cover Story continued

### NATIONAL LABOR POLICY

The Vegas Chamber will continue to push for federal policies that allow businesses to thrive. This includes advocating for the appointing members to the National Relations Labor Board who understand the complexities of business ownership and allow job creators to rebuild the economy and not be overwhelmed with burdensome regulations that will hinder economic recovery.

### PUBLIC LANDS

The Vegas Chamber supports efforts by Southern Nevada's local governments to have land transferred from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to Clark County and cities for economic development, education, and transportation projects in our community.

### SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

Along with other states, Nevada saw enormous benefits from federal assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Vegas Chamber supports further assistance to businesses as many continue to try and balance budgets and rehire Nevadans.

### TRADE AGREEMENTS

The Vegas Chamber supports the renewal of the Trade Promotion Authority, which is a vital tool for negotiation of new free trade agreements with modifications and amendments to existing agreements such as the United States Mexico Canada Agreement (USMCA). The Vegas Chamber maintains that support for expanded trade agreements will open new foreign markets to Nevada exports and allow for further investment in the state by foreign companies.

### TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

For more than a decade, the Chamber has been one of the most vocal supporters of the Interstate 11 project to connect Phoenix to Las Vegas, currently the two largest metropolises in the U.S. not connected by an interstate highway. The Vegas Chamber is advocating for

Congressional support to secure federal funds for the construction of local and regional projects, such as the completion of I-11 from Las Vegas to Phoenix along with funding enhancements for I-15 between Las Vegas and Los Angeles.

### WATER POLICY

The availability and sustainability of water resources are essential to Clark County citizens. The ongoing drought conditions within the Colorado River Basin and the impact to Lake Mead is a great concern to economic stability in the region, as well as a potential threat to future growth and economic development efforts. Due to ongoing drought conditions, the Vegas Chamber is urging federal leadership to help address the water infrastructure needs of the seven states including Nevada that rely on the Colorado River.

### YUCCA MOUNTAIN

For decades, the Chamber has opposed any transport of nuclear waste in Nevada, regardless of the radioactive level of the nuclear waste, because of security, safety, and health concerns to its millions of residents and visitors. The Vegas Chamber continue to oppose the transportation and storage of any nuclear waste in Nevada because of the potential negative effects it could have on the safety and health of residents and visitors in Southern Nevada.

The Vegas Chamber and the LVGEA are also offering special programming for spouses and partners on the trip, which includes registration for signature events, like the Nevada Lights Up the Capitol Reception and Nevada State Dinner Gala, and social programming, behind-the-scenes tours, and unique educational activities in Washington, D.C.

For information, go to [VegasChamber.com](http://VegasChamber.com).

Sept. 20-23, 2021  
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Registration includes transportation from hotel to meetings, plus meals and receptions. You are responsible for your own air travel and transportation from the airport to the hotel, and back to the airport along with your hotel room costs.

### SCHEDULE AT-A-GLANCE (Subject to change)

#### MONDAY, SEPT. 20

Welcome Reception at the LVCVA Washington, D.C. Rooftop  
Nevada Lights Up the Capitol Reception at 101 Constitution Ave. Rooftop

#### TUESDAY, SEPT. 21

Policy Group Meetings at the Willard InterContinental Hotel  
Chairwomen's Reception

#### WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 22

Meetings with Members of Congress at the National Press Club Building  
Interstate 11 & Interstate 15 Congressional Caucus Luncheon

#### THURSDAY, SEPT. 23

Meetings with Members of Congress at the National Press Club Building  
Policy Roundtables  
Nevada State Dinner Gala at the Willard InterContinental Hotel





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**Vegas Chamber Announces New Trustee, Bryant Thornton, Market Vice President, Republic Services**

Bryant Thornton is the Market Vice President, for Republic Services in Las Vegas, NV and has responsibility for supporting daily operations to ensure business continuity.

Thornton joined the industry in 1997 as a residential driver and has held positions of increasing responsibility during his tenure. These positions include Route Manager for Waste Management in Orlando, FL (1998 to 2002), Operations Manager in Orlando, FL (2003), and District Manager for the Polk County, FL area (2004). Thornton relocated to the Cocoa, FL district in 2005 and was promoted to Sr. District Manager for Brevard and Indian River Counties in 2006.

Thornton joined Republic Services in 2009 and has held many leadership roles including Operations Manager, Division Manager, General Manager, Region Manager, Area Operations Manager, and Director of Operations. In 2021, Thornton was promoted to Area Market Vice President to focus on building operational expertise and improving operations performance for Southern Nevada. Thornton works with field operations to ensure durability of standards and processes. He plays an essential role in building the capability of his teams to consistently execute on business plans and budgets, ensuring an optimal customer experience.

Thornton's professional affiliations include, Member of Professional Law Enforcement Association, Florida Highway Patrol Auxiliary State Trooper, Honorary Deputy Orange County Sheriff's Office and Reserve Police Officers Association, Florida Association of State Troopers, and Volunteer Law Enforcement Alliance. In addition to protecting and serving his community as an Auxiliary State Trooper with the Florida Highway Patrol, Thornton enjoys hiking and spending time with his family.

Thornton graduated from the University of Phoenix with a Bachelor of Science in Business Management.



**New Additions! The Vegas Chamber welcomes three team members to its family:**

- **Amanda Flues, Communications Coordinator**
- **Nick Schneider, Member Success Specialist**
- **Inbal Simhayoff, Events Manager**

**Communications Coordinator Amanda Flues** recently relocated to Las Vegas from the Midwest. She is familiar with chambers of commerce due to her experience working as the Warrensburg, MO Chamber of Commerce communications coordinator from

2018 to 2021. In that role, Flues led several committees including Marketing, Membership and Warrensburg Young Professionals, and also collaborated with other local organizations with a goal to promote business in the Warrensburg community. Flues is a graduate of Wichita State University in Wichita, KS with a BA in communications. While obtaining her degree, Flues worked at a CBS-affiliated news station which ignited her love for the communications field. In her spare time, Flues enjoys traveling, shopping, outdoor recreation, and spending time with her husband and two cats.

Recent Penn State Graduate and new **Member Success Specialist Nick Schneider** returns to the Vegas Chamber after serving as a Marketing intern earlier this year. He graduated on the Dean's List with a BS in Business Marketing and Management, and is excited to bring a strong combination of customer service skills from nearly a decade in the bar industry and strong analytical skills backed by a Six Sigma/Lean Yellow Belt, CAPM, and Google Data Analytics certification to his new role. When not at work, Schneider is hiking at Red Rock or at Allegiant Stadium supporting our Las Vegas Raiders from the stands. Check out some of Schneider's work on previous Like Nobody's Business TV episodes in the Behind the Mask segments.

Graduating from Palo Verde High School in Summerlin, UNLV and starting her hospitality career on the world famous Las Vegas strip is not the only reason **Events Manager Inbal Simhayoff** is a triple treat. Inbal also happens to be a triple major with a BA in Hospitality Management, Meetings And Events Management and Food & Beverage Management. Simhayoff's work experience includes MGM Resorts Event Productions, Hyatt Regency Scottsdale and the Cosmopolitan. With well over 1,000 successfully produced events under her belt, Simhayoff believes that it's all about delivering "an excellent customer experience". Simhayoff was also a professional dancer and was on the competition circuit. She now enjoys CrossFit, powerlifting and recently earned her NASM Certification.



**The Vegas Chamber is proud to announce that its President and CEO, Mary Beth Sewald, has joined the Hope for Prisoners National Reentry Advisory Council.**

Mary Beth is one of 10 business and community leaders from across the United States to sit on the Advisory Council.

Hope for Prisoners, a Las Vegas, Nevada-based non-profit, assists with reentry by providing the formerly incarcerated long-term support and services as they work to reclaim their lives, families and standing in the community. The comprehensive and nationally acclaimed program includes leadership, financial fitness, professional development, and technology training. Hope for Prisoners works with and is supported by law enforcement, and graduates of the program have been successfully hired by many top companies in a wide range of industries, including gaming and hospitality, transportation, and construction.

In her Advisory Council role, Sewald will help guide the organization's strategy and program development for Hope clients especially as it develops partnerships across the United States to expand the accessibility of the program into other regions. Its goal is to reduce the recidivism rate and give more individuals leaving the correctional system the opportunity for successful reentry.

“We are honored to have Mary Beth Sewald serve on our National Reentry Advisory Council. Mary Beth brings a dynamic combination of leadership and business acumen to this endeavor, as well as her relationships with chambers of commerce throughout the country. As we expand our Hope for Prisoners model to help more individuals successfully reenter, it is essential to have strong connections to employers and the business community in these communities,” said Jon Ponder, Founder and CEO of Hope for Prisoners.

The Vegas Chamber developed a partnership with Hope for Prisoners in 2019 to raise awareness about the program and connect Hope for Prisoners clients with employers and job opportunities. This collaboration has included a job fair, as well as virtual event to introduce the Hope for Prisoners program to employers in the region. The Vegas Chamber was also a sponsor of Hope for Prisoners’ Month of Second Chances luncheon in April 2021.

If you are interested in contacting Hope for Prisoners about the benefits of hiring their graduates for your workforce needs, visit [www.Hopeforprisoners.org](http://www.Hopeforprisoners.org)



**EmployNV Business Hubs Celebrate One-Year Anniversary.**

During the most unimaginable time in the midst of a pandemic, the Vegas Chamber and President’s Club Member Workforce Connections successfully partnered to open one of two EmployNV Business Hubs at the Vegas Chamber office in September 2020. This valuable member resource was strategically designed to connect members with free start-up guides, no-cost talent recruitment, hiring incentives and much more. The hubs are equipped with the latest technology to host customized hiring events, industry networking, workshops or trainings.

Shortly after the Chamber location opened, a second EmployNV Business Hub opened at Sahara West Library, providing expanded resources to the community. Happy first anniversary, EmployNV Business Hubs! For more, visit [employNVbusinesshub.org](http://employNVbusinesshub.org).

**Last Call – Enrollment Open for Access Las Vegas Program for New Executives**



Enrollment is open for Access Las Vegas, a two-day program to help executives new to Las Vegas develop a better understanding of the region. The program is slated for Tuesday, Oct. 12 and Tuesday, Oct. 19.

Access Las Vegas is designed to demystify the community, including its governance, challenges, and opportunities. Access helps executives new to Vegas develop a better understanding of our region and accelerate building their Vegas networks.

Through Access, executives will

- Learn about the economy, industry sectors, and the most critical issues facing our community
- Gain insights on a wide range of topics, including workforce, education, infrastructure, economic development, and the arts

- Understand the history of the region, its governance, and milestones
- Hear how Las Vegas is addressing its challenges and capitalizing on innovation and opportunities.
- Meet community leaders and make connections to activate your personal network
- Build relationships with fellow class members

Past speakers include Jeremy Aguero, Applied Analysis; Superintendent Jesus Jara; Myron Martin, The Smith Center for the Performing Arts; and Kevin Bagger, LVCVA.

Access Las Vegas is a program of the Vegas Chamber’s Leadership Foundation of Greater Las Vegas, a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to leadership development in Southern Nevada.

To register, go to [www.Leadership.Vegas](http://www.Leadership.Vegas) and click on the Access Las Vegas program. You may also contact Cara Clarke at [cara@leadership.vegas](mailto:cara@leadership.vegas).

**Are You the Business of the Year? Join Us Oct. 27!**



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Bigger and better than ever before, the Vegas Chamber Business of the Year Awards (formerly Business Excellence Awards) are here!

What makes your company a great place to work? How do you embrace innovation and technology? How does your company give back to the community? This high-energy, dynamic event, sponsored exclusively by Nevada State Bank, will recognize the outstanding and groundbreaking companies serving the Southern Nevada community.

Nominees are from businesses of all sizes – from a sole proprietor to several hundred employees and are members in good standing of the Vegas Chamber. Award winners will receive publicity and a special feature in a Business Voice magazine and on the Vegas Chamber’s website, as well as a special award package at the annual Business of the Year Awards event on Wednesday, Oct. 27.

Stay tuned for details on [VegasChamber.com](http://VegasChamber.com).



# HOMEOWNERSHIP ADVANTAGE PROGRAM

We are proud to announce a new, significant benefit for all employees of Vegas Chamber members: The Vegas Chamber Homeownership Advantage Program. Employers can help their employees achieve work-life balance by educating them about the program, which provides employees with resources to navigate the often complex process of home buying, home selling and financing.

### Benefits for Chamber Members:

- ✓ A Package of Exclusive Mortgage & Real Estate Benefits for Your Employees at No Cost to Your Company
- ✓ A Dedicated Mortgage Advisor & Real Estate Sales Professional
- ✓ Customized Company-Branded Materials
- ✓ Dedicated Co-Branded Web Page
- ✓ 5-Star Customer Experience from Las Vegas' Top-Rated Mortgage and Real Estate Professionals

### Benefits for Employees:

- ✓ Exclusive Mortgage Credit of Up to \$1,395 for Purchase or Refinance\*\*
- ✓ Exclusive Real Estate Credit for Buying or Selling, Giving Back 20% of Commission Received at Closing. Example: Sales Price is \$325,000, Cash Back Rebate is \$1,950\*
- ✓ Personalized Annual Mortgage & Real Estate Review
- ✓ Lower Than Market Rates
- ✓ Borrower Education Series Available
  - First-Time Homebuyer
  - Credit Education
  - Low Down Payment Options
  - Debt Management / Wealth Creation

Vegas Chamber members' employees have access to a dedicated team of experts, ready and eager to create an outstanding home buying, home selling or financing experience with up-front underwriting options, fast approvals and on-time closings. In addition, this Vegas Chamber benefit includes ongoing, periodic reviews and an education series to improve the lives of employees and their families.



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**Monica Moradkhan, Wynn Las Vegas: Named in Nevada Business Magazine's Women to Watch 2021**

Each year, Vegas Chamber President's Club Member Nevada Business Magazine recognizes community leaders in its Women to Watch issue. The Vegas Chamber congratulates all recipients and is spotlighting one of the class members, who also is a friend of the Chamber.

**Q: What does it mean to you to be featured in the Women to Watch 2021 by Nevada Business Magazine?**

It is certainly flattering and humbling to be included in a list of individuals I admire and appreciate so much. I feel very fortunate to be included with people who have done so very much for the community both in business and other pursuits. I am extremely grateful to be included with them.

**Q: What have been some of your most notable achievements?**

There have been many projects I have been privileged to be a part of that have had major impacts. What stands out to me and lifts my heart with gratitude is being part of a company where we are able to introduce innovative programming and collaborations to enhance lives in our community. Although I was only a part of the huge effort, the company's city-wide collaboration and revitalization of The Shade Tree's shelter facility was extremely rewarding. Additionally, maximizing on the extraordinary assets we have at Wynn Las Vegas (people and resources) to create pathways to philanthropy is transformative. I've always felt being appreciative of the "little wins" in life was just as important. For me, being able to serve as UNLV Student Body President, be part of the winning US delegation at an international tourism conference, and earning a graduate degree were all a dream come true.

**Q: What are your success habits?**

I like to keep habits simple because that's what makes them habits, right? I primarily focus each day on how I can be of service to others, treat people kindly, think strategically and work collaboratively. Sticking to those has afforded me any success I've had.

**Q: Whose career inspires you and why?**

There are too many people I have known and worked with that continue to inspire me. I practically meet someone every day whose accomplishments I draw inspiration from. I'm so appreciative of the people I worked with at UNLV and now at Wynn Resorts who have achieved so much. They all seemed to have a unique mix of intelligence, persistence, innovation, and humility.

**Q: How do you persevere through difficulties in your industry?**

I'm a big believer in maintaining and nurturing faith. That applies not just to a person's spiritual life, but to their personal and professional life. I don't believe you have to have blind faith or just keep telling yourself "Things will get better." During the worst parts of the pandemic, for example, I found it was relatively easy to have faith because I knew I was surrounded by great people who cared about preserving jobs and were focused on making the future brighter. I have faith in people to overcome anything.

**Q: Is there anything else you would like to add?**

I can't say enough about what the [Vegas] Chamber has done for the business community and individuals throughout this community. It's an honor to be featured!

Congratulations, Monica Moradkhan/Wynn Resorts and proud Vegas Chamber member, for being recognized in the Nevada Business Magazine Women to Watch 2021! The Chamber commends all these prestigious women and thanks them for their contributions to Nevada.



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# Vegas Chamber is Member-Obsessed: Amazing Members Doing Awesome Things!



## LP Insurance Services, LLC Adds to Las Vegas Commercial Insurance Team

LP Insurance Services, a risk management and insurance brokerage firm with nine western U.S. locations, has announced the addition of AJ Micco to the Las Vegas commercial insurance team.

Micco is a native of southern Nevada and comes with over five years of insurance industry experience. He has also spent time in the mining and construction sectors and utilizes his experience by assisting commercial insurance clients in evaluating their risks.



## Make-A-Wish® Southern Nevada Grants Wish to Las Vegas Teen with Congenital Heart Disease

A 17-year-old with congenital heart disease got her wish granted thanks to Make-A-Wish Southern Nevada, an organization dedicated to creating life-changing wishes for children with critical illnesses.

The teen's dream of experiencing a full day of glamour came to life after the organization and fashion and lifestyle photographer Jerry Metellus, along with Fashion Show Las Vegas (FSLV) and Forever 21 inside FSLV joined forces for a day of glam and pampering. She also experienced an overnight stay in a **Red Rock Resort & Spa** suite and enjoyed a dinner with her family at Sugar Factory in FSLV.



## Downtown Vegas Alliance Elects New Officers and Board Members

The Downtown Vegas Alliance (DVA), a nonprofit organization that connects its members and downtown stakeholders to influence growth in the heart of Las Vegas, has announced its 2021-2022 officers and board of directors.

Elected individuals include Patrick Reilly, shareholder at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, as board chair; Bill Paredes, managing director of commercial banking at Bank of Nevada, as vice chair; and Ryan Brown, owner of Classic Jewel, as secretary. Jonathan Ullman, president and CEO of The Mob Museum, will stay on the board as immediate past chair.

The DVA also named Dulcinea Rongavilla, vice president at Cragin & Pike, as communications chair; Cody Sims, field marketing director at Cox Business, as operations chair; Tyler Williams, director of brand experience at Zappos, as membership chair; Jillian Austin, senior account executive at Lyft, as engagement chair; and Heather Harmon, deputy director of the Nevada Museum of Art, as arts and culture chair. Members at large

include Andrew Simon, president and CEO of the Fremont Street Experience; Seth Schorr, CEO, Fifth Street Gaming and chairman of Downtown Grand Hotel & Casino; and Jonathan Alvarez, CEO, co-founder and chief of security at Protective Force International.



## Summerlin® Remains at #3 as Nevada's Highest-Ranked Community

The master planned community (MPC) of Summerlin®, a development of The Howard Hughes Corporation®, marked the first half of 2021 with strong new home sales, earning the #3 spot nationally on a list of country's best-selling MPCs, according to a report released yesterday by national real estate consultant RCLCO. With 962 new home sales for 2021 as of June 30, which represents a 50 percent increase in home sales over mid-year 2020, Summerlin is the only MPC in Nevada to place on the list's top five.

"Summerlin's remarkable mid-year 2021 ranking is a testament to how homes have taken on a new meaning—not just as places to live, but where families work, learn and play," Kevin T. Orrock, President, Las Vegas Region, The Howard Hughes Corporation stated. "Thanks to our roster of the nation's top homebuilders and a robust infrastructure, Summerlin has remained well positioned to meet the needs of residents and families seeking quality of life outside of dense cities."



## \$8M Apartment Complex Sale Brokered by Belltree LLC

In one of the larger multifamily housing deals this year, the \$8M sale of "Sunset Palms Apartments" at 900 Doolittle Ave was completed at the end of June. John Brassner, broker and owner of Belltree LLC represented the buyer, Golden Bee Properties, in the transaction.

"This sale is one of several large multifamily transactions already this year proving the rental market and investor activity is robust in Southern Nevada," Brassner stated. The National Association of Realtors® identified Las Vegas as one of the top 10 commercial real estate markets for 2021.



## Vegas-Born Lexicon Bank Doubles Down on Lending Services and Community Engagement for its Second Anniversary Serving Southern Nevada

Lexicon Bank, Las Vegas's first community-chartered bank in more than a decade, celebrated its second anniversary serving Southern Nevada in August 2021. To commemorate this milestone, Lexicon Bank "doubled-down" on business lending services and community engagement to meet the most urgent needs of local businesses and nonprofits.



**WE BANK ON YOU**

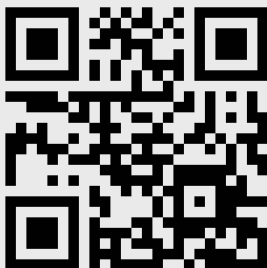
**\$280,012,646**

**TIMES WE SAID YES**

**1119 TOTAL LOANS — 103 CORE, 1016 PPP \***

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*\* Includes all granted active or paid off loans from Aug. 2019 to Mar. 2021.*





## Executive Women's Council (EWC)

# EYES ON YOU

Stacy Watkins, President and CEO, Lexicon Bank

Lexicon Bank is Nevada's community-focused banking partner that provides private, personal, and comprehensive banking services to business and personal banking customers.

### Q: Why did you join the Executive Women's Council?

I have always wanted to join the EWC, and when I took on my new role as president and CEO, I had the opportunity to be introduced to the council through the Vegas Chamber President's Club. EWC interested me given the abundance of opportunities to collaborate and mentor with other strong and community-minded women in Las Vegas. I also thought it would be a great resource for me and my team to find ways to better assist businesses and other minority, women-owned businesses in our backyard.

In all my years of banking and serving in various leadership roles, I have always found a strong connection between serving others and growth. Some of the best ways I've found the ability to find new connections was through looking for ways to get comfortable by being uncomfortable. Finding an opportunity like the EWC will not only continue to support my growth but offer me yet another group of talented and forward-thinking women leaders to connect and learn from into the future.

### Q: Can you share a workplace story that is inspiring?

I joined Lexicon Bank in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, and, as you can imagine, there are so many incredible stories to be told over this past year. For Lexicon Bank, our team has worked countless hours on both rounds of the Payment Protection Program (PPP) which created fatigue at times and time away from our families. At the beginning of the PPP Program, as the newly appointed person in charge, I did my best to find my way and connect my team's work with the mission at hand. I began to quickly identify the need to better connect and help them see the level of impact they were making, not only for our community but for individual business owners and these businesses' employees. Although my team received countless thank you cards, emails, and appreciation from our clients, something still was missing — their personal stories.

The greatest shock in all of this was the impact that our support had for our clients, and hearing the countless, heartfelt stories that came with it. It was our duty to make sure the team heard these incredible stories of how their work not only saved businesses across Nevada but helped put food on the tables of Las Vegas families that, for some, had been without food for some time. As

we started to build our client base, we started to introduce them as they would come in and tell their stories with the back office team and all those involved so they could hear about the impact they were making on so many. It was at that point the team came to me and expressed their desire to do more and help as many people that we could. I was taken aback by their increased level of passion for the greater cause and their ability to double their efforts by booking over 600 loans for \$115 million in the first round of PPP and over 300 additional loans for over \$60 million in the second draw. When the call came to participate in the second draw, they were more than prepared to serve their existing clients and more. This team inspires me every day to be the best that I can be and consistently reminds me how truly delicate the relationship between a business owner and an employee is. I'm incredibly lucky to have worked through this pandemic with our partners and clients, and one of the best banking teams hands down in Las Vegas.

### Q: How did the pandemic change you, and do you believe the Southern NV economy and business sector will thrive once again?

Being in the financial industry for 27+ years I've seen many economic cycles, many of which I thought would be the worst of them. Never did I imagine what I have seen today, however. What I have learned by going through all of these cycles in banking is that you always have to be prepared. You need to move forward, adapt to the changes, and stay relevant to your environment and demands of the diversity of our city.

I knew there was a new lesson to be learned in this cycle, and as each month went by I kept looking for what the teaching moment and lesson was this time. Personally, it was one of the toughest years for my family and many of my team member's families, so staying mentally strong for them and myself was key. I often heard, "I can't wait for things to get back to normal," but what is normal? The world and our city will forever be changed from the pandemic, and as we've seen throughout similar situations in the history books. I would suggest that if you wait for things to get back to normal you will have lost the lesson in all of this. For families and businesses, it's important to re-evaluate what you've learned and make the necessary adjustments to endure the next economic cycle. It's important to look for the positive changes that may have occurred for you or your business and learn to re-engineer and reinvent yourself to foster growth. What we have all gone through was hard and is still difficult for many, but just like any economic cycle, we must find what's good from it, learn from it and reconnect to move our incredible city, our home, forward.

# President's Club Spotlights

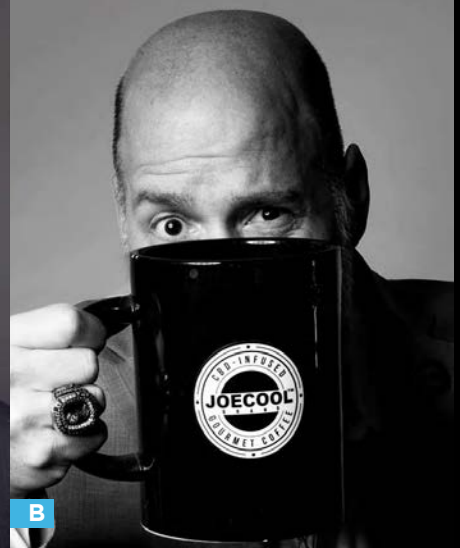
**(B) Joe Haber, President – JOECOOL Brands, Inc.**

What do entrepreneurship, technology, telecommunications, finance, marketing and branding all have in common? They are the cornerstones upon which Joe Haber draws his expertise and ability to run a wholesale national marketing and distribution company for his flagship product JOECOOL – gourmet CBD-infused coffee. Haber has spent the last two years strategizing and preparing for a national launch of JOECOOL this fall. He is also the founder of the League of Giving Foundation, a non-profit organization since 2005, dedicated to serving Las Vegas community causes.

**(A) Geoff Nathanson**

Vice President – MonarCX

Geoff Nathanson is the vice president at MonarCX and previously held leadership roles at LA Studios and Prudential. He has worked at CBS, NBC and Fox. MonarCX is a full-service Customer eXperience agency. Based in Las Vegas, the agency focuses on listening to clients, creating solutions and exceeding expectations to produce a modern Customer eXperience that supports client goals and maximizes value. MonarCX is the agency of record for Amtrak's Pacific Surfliner brand and specializes in Media placement. From ideation to creative to production to delivery, MonarCX elevates the game. [www.monarcx.com](http://www.monarcx.com)



**C) James York & Jay Blood, Co-Founders – Valley Bank of Nevada**

James York and Jay Blood are the co-founders of Valley Bank of Nevada. York is the president and CEO of the bank and Blood is the EVP and chief credit officer. Both executives are graduates of UNLV and, as such, are passionate about serving the local community. During the COVID crisis, they led Valley Bank of Nevada through providing Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loans to over 300 businesses in the community, saving an estimated 4,000 local jobs. The bank has recently opened a loan production office (LPO) in Summerlin, making it the third location valley-wide.

**D) June Zhu, CEO – Charger-a-go-go**

June Zhu has over 15 years of business development and marketing experience in both established international companies (such as P&G, Yves Rocher, and Shunya Martech) and tech startups. She's also a serial entrepreneur. Prior to ChargerGoGo, Zhu was the co-founder and CEO of Nutopia.io, an entertainment blockchain platform based in LA and Beijing.

# President's Club Spotlights

**E) Kimberly Daniels, President & CEO**  
- Mercantile Logistics & International Trade, Inc. Vice

Kim Daniels, president and CEO, has been involved in international trade since 2007, working for a construction supplier in Las Vegas. In 2013, she earned her Customs Broker License and opened Mercantile Logistics as a Customs Brokerage House. She helps businesses with clearing Customs, International Trade planning, and navigating the freight process.



**(F) Todd Koren**  
CEO & Founder - Absolute Exhibits

Todd Koren is the CEO and founder of Absolute Exhibits headquartered in Orange County California. He led the company expansion to Las Vegas (where he now resides), Munich, Germany, Orlando, and most recently to Bucharest, Romania. While in college at Chapman University, he owned and operated an import/export business called Global Provisions, sending food to the Samoas and receiving fresh products in return. Today, Koren uses his business to assist philanthropically from a toy drive for 9/11, to providing resources for Haiti, and many other projects. He advises CEOs of fast-growing companies through his leadership role with RJB Partners LLC.

**G) Ricky Navar**  
President - Peak Performance Partners

Ricky has over 20 years in sales and training of entrepreneurs. He started his career in Texas as co-owner of three businesses with his brothers. Later, Navar partnered with Excel Telecommunications to expand his portfolio and created the largest business team in El Paso. In 2012, he moved to Las Vegas where he joined Wyndham Vacation Resorts. He achieved "Presenter of the Year" five years in a row and trained other sales representatives. He was formerly president of Nevada Business Magazine and now serves as President of Peak Performance Partners.



**(H) Gena Lofton, Founder - Lofton Sports**

Gena Lofton, founder of Lofton Sports, a luxury sports and entertainment experience company, which owns 60 VIP and Club Stadium Seat Licenses (SSLs) for the LA Rams and LA Chargers and two luxury suites. Lofton also owns NFL-designed accommodations adjacent to SOFI Stadium. One may purchase tickets at Lofton Sports and/or reserve Your 5-Star Luxury Accommodations at Lofton Sports Units, both combined providing a unique luxury sports and entertainment experience.

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# Adjusting to the New Normal



**Jill Ross and Ana Salazar, U.S. Bank Goals Coaches**

The challenges of COVID-19 reinforced to small business owners that they need to be prepared for the unexpected. But by its very definition, “the unexpected” is impossible to predict and as we re-emerge back into normal life, it’s hitting different business owners in different ways. Meeting with a goals coach can provide an opportunity for a business owner to think through what unique selling points they might have to attract and retain employees, as well as the longer-term strategy of their vision and the role employees may play in that.

“The business owner knows their business best and is the one who will ultimately be making the decisions,” said U.S. Bank Goals Coach Jill Ross. “Our role as a goals coach is to ask them the questions to get them there.”

## Not Just a Money Problem

Most people tend to equate the idea of preparing for the unexpected with the need to create a rainy day savings fund to help provide a cushion for lean times. While having savings is never a bad idea, many of the small business clients Ross works with find that their unexpected obstacles often have nothing to do with money.

“We are hearing from clients who have been able to save up plenty of money in the past year and have good insurance, but they still are struggling with the stress of it all,” Ross said. Small business owners often don’t have the same depth of human resources tools and staff as larger companies, so they need to be creative in how they can offer resources to themselves and their employees. It could be as simple as reaching out to a neighboring small business that offers yoga

or other wellness services to see if they might be able to offer your employees a discount, or initiating a frank conversation about how you can help support an employee’s work-life balance, Ross said.

## Figuring Out the New Normal for Workplaces

Another unexpected challenge facing employers these days is asking employees to return to the office after they’ve had more than a year to settle into the routine of working from home. It’s worth considering whether employees have in fact been able to remain as productive while at home and if their business model truly depends on walk-in customers who expect a face-to-face conversation, said Ana Salazar, a U.S. Bank Goals Coach.

“Some businesses are finding that customer preferences have changed during the pandemic and they prefer to meet online because it’s more efficient,” she said, recommending owners keep a pulse on what channels customers prefer to use to connect before making drastic workplace decisions. If you’re interested in talking to a U.S. Bank Goals Coach about your business or personal goals, scan or visit [vegaschamber.com/coaching](https://vegaschamber.com/coaching) to schedule time with a coach. U.S. Bank is an Equal Housing Lender, member FDIC.

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# How public relations tactics and a plan will benefit any small business



Photo Credit: The Firm PR & Marketing

For any small business moving a million miles per minute, it's oh-so-easy to push public relations (PR) efforts to the back burner. We get it – particularly after the past year-plus we've collectively endured and as Las Vegas kicks its great comeback into high-gear.

In reality, PR efforts – spanning media relationships, digital endeavors, community engagement and everything in between that can enhance a company's public image – should be at the forefront of any business' priorities.

We've seen a lack of PR proficiency impact folks time and time again during our nearly three decades serving businesses throughout the valley and beyond, spanning missed opportunities to connect with an audience/clientele to failing to be prepared for an emerging crisis.

Everything is made better and easier with the right tactics. In PR, these efforts can be super-simplified into two primary buckets: Proactive and reactive.

On the proactive front, relationships with local, regional and national media can go a long way. These relationships are often built on providing media members with meaningful updates about your company, its culture, its happenings and its people. These relationships and connections can equate to influential stories about your organization and – in the eyes of readers and viewers – a powerful, trusted third-party validation of your company and its unique efforts.

Here in 2021, PR extends well beyond traditional media (e.g., print, radio and broadcast). Social media is an increasingly powerful tool that, if utilized to its max, can make a major impact on a company's bottom line.

Just as advertising buys and targeted newsletters are used to market to a specific audience, social media provides an opportunity to drive home certain messages and connect with audiences on an even deeper level. Think about what's already in your arsenal as a company – spanning milestones, anniversaries, photos, statistics and more – and you likely have a very solid base to start building out a social media content calendar.

On the reactive front, PR crises will happen, and you must be prepared. These crises can span scenarios that can affect any business – e.g., an employee-related concern, building issue or COVID-19 – or circumstances unique to an individual company or industry.

To avoid a last-minute, chaotic scramble, think through the prospective scenarios that have the highest likelihood of affecting your business down the line. What would you want to say (that may be tweaked or molded down the line)? Where will that message go? And who will deliver it?

While we've touched on a handful of proactive and reactive tactics here, it is always optimal to have a detailed PR plan in place, formally outlining key communicators within an organization, audiences, comprehensive strategies and tactics, timelines and crisis scenarios, among other key facets.

As Benjamin Franklin once said, "For every minute spent organizing, an hour is earned." When it comes to PR, you will certainly reap the rewards for the energy put in to preparing and executing the right strategy.

The Firm Public Relations & Marketing is headquartered in Las Vegas with a satellite office in Fort Lauderdale, Fla. For more information on The Firm and its services, visit [www.thefirmpr.com](http://www.thefirmpr.com) or call 702-739-9933. Just as advertising buys and targeted newsletters are used to market to a specific audience, social media provides an opportunity to drive home certain messages and connect with audiences on an even deeper level. Think about what's already in your arsenal as a company – spanning milestones, anniversaries, photos, statistics and more – and you likely have a very solid base to start building out a social media content calendar.

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## SLEEP BETTER WITH MERCURY

By Damien Fortune  
COO at Secured Communications

As a business owner or executive, do you lose sleep at night, concerned that your business might be the next victim of a malicious cyberattack? It's no surprise that you do, given the constant barrage of news stories about the ever-increasing frequency and cost of cyberattacks despite organizations' best efforts.

Over the past 12 months, 31 billion data records were compromised. The average cost of a data breach continues to skyrocket, surpassing \$8 million in 2020, and corporations are reporting that unauthorized intrusions are more common than ever before.

Two recent high-profile attacks have led to significant economic damage for companies in the US. In late May, the Colonial Pipeline was taken offline and forced to pay \$2.3m in ransom. In early June, the meat supplier, JBS was forced to pay \$11m to get back online. Both events resulted in tremendous disruption, devastating impact to supply and cost to consumers. Businesses, universities, hospitals, airlines, and countless others have been compromised, having to take their networks offline, creating huge financial losses, a breakdown in supply chains, and an increase in costs to consumers. In addition, phishing and ransom ware cost companies millions of dollars, as well as damage to their hard-earned reputation. Thankfully, there is hope for the weary business owner.

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