

CDCC ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 24

MILITARY AFFAIRS



The Chamber submitted a nomination package to the Abilene Chamber of Commerce in Texas for the **2022 AMC Community Support Award (Abilene Award)**.

Colonel Chris McDonald, Commander of the 436th Airlift Wing, presented an overview of the **State of the Base** to over 200 attendees from the business community and base at the Landings on Dover Air Force Base in November 2023. He also shared stories of several Team Dover Airmen. His speech exemplified the value in connecting the civilian community with the servicemen and women at Dover AFB. Colonel Douglas Stouffer, 512th Airlift Wing Commander, U.S. Senators Thomas Carper and Christopher Coons, and U.S. Representative Lisa Blunt-Rochester also addressed the audience.

The **Military Affaire** was held in February 2024 at King Cole Farm for the purpose of interacting with the military leaders at the base. There were over 115 attendees at this networking reception.

The **Bluesuiters Golf Tournament** was held in May 2024. Civilians and Airmen were teamed up to play in the outing at Jonathán's Landing for a little friendly competition. There were 120 golfers, including over 50 Airmen sponsored by CDCC Members. Volunteers hosted Snack and Beverage Stations on the course.



PARTNERSHIPS

- The CDCC and **Kent County Tourism (KCT)** jointly own their building at 435 N. DuPont Hwy, Dover. The Chamber works closely with KCT, whose mission is to market, develop and promote tourism in Kent County.
- The Chamber partners with **Kent Economic Partnership** and **Downtown Dover Partnership** for the purpose of countywide and citywide economic development, respectively, which includes business attraction.
- Kent County Open for Business, a series of free business development sessions, is held on the first Thursday of the month at **Kent County Levy Court**. Resource partners are available to meet with current and prospective business owners to discuss business solutions in the local area.
- The Chamber coordinates the **Association of Chambers of Commerce of Delaware** which focuses on issues affecting all Delaware businesses.
- An ongoing partnership exists with **Bally's Dover Casino Resort** to hold the 55+ Expo - a trade show for the over 55 population and caregivers. Participation and attendance continue to grow.
- An agreement with the **Retired and Senior Volunteer Program** has been invaluable to the Chamber and allows us to utilize the talents and abilities of a wonderful group of volunteers who are 55 and older.
- Media: **The Daily State News** features a column from the Chamber in its business section every Wednesday. Quarterly, the **Kent County Women's Journal** publishes a Chamber article. And **iHeartMedia** allows the Chamber to place 40-second weekly announcements on 1410 WDOV-AM, 92.9 TOM FM WRDX, and iHeartRadio.
- Partnerships with **Dover Federal Credit Union** and **Del-One Federal Credit Union** offer our members financial benefits.
- Two partnerships specifically benefit **Leadership Central Delaware Alumni**. **Leadership Delaware** will give a discount to Alumni who are accepted into their program. **Wilmington University** will give 3 college credits to all LCD Alumni.
- High Ground Solutions** partnered with the CDCC to launch a brand-new website and create an incredible communications strategy.

NETWORKING

The Chamber's most popular and well attended networking events are the **Sunset Business Mixers**. Two times a year (August and January) Member 2 Member Expos are held in conjunction with the mixer. These have provided our members with an opportunity to showcase their products/services. The January event was paired with the CDCC Showcase.



EDUCATION



The CDCC held a total of nine **Coffee Coaching** sessions via Zoom. This free informational program includes topics that apply to both large and small businesses and attendees leave with action steps to help improve their businesses.

The **Professional Power-Up** program was redesigned to be open to any CDCC member to learn more about topics pertinent to those new to their careers. The program is an educational tool for professionals to discuss workplace challenges and to build professional relationships. The group met in person every of other month and virtually on the opposite months.



LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Leadership Central Delaware, in its 23rd year, saw 28 individuals complete the program, bringing the total to 560 graduates. The LCD Alumni Association helps graduates stay connected while continuing to enhance their leadership skills.



The Class of 2024 completed three community service projects. They refurbished the Westside Family Healthcare Dover location "Book Nook," cleaned and cleared a storage shed for the Central Delaware Housing Collaborative, and spruced up a space for youth and their families at Pressley Ridge.

LEGISLATION

The Chamber tracked 36 Bills during the 2nd session of the 152nd General Assembly and took positions on 21.

Legislative Alerts and Legislative Calls to Action are sent to members to activate our grass roots network efforts and to, when needed, secure speakers for both the House and Senate.

The **Legislative Luncheon** was held in March 2024. There were about 212 business representatives in attendance at the event. It gave members the opportunity to hear directly from our area legislators on issues affecting their businesses.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Over 75 events and programs were coordinated in the past year by the CDCC Staff and CDCC Member Volunteers.



The **Holiday Gift Auction** was held in October at Maple Dale Country Club. Both the Live and Silent Auctions were held in person. The Auction enabled attendees to view and bid on over 125 quality gifts which showcased the goods & services provided by CDCC members. The goal is to promote shopping locally during the holiday season and all year long.



The **Home & Garden Expo** was held in February in the Exhibit Hall on the Delaware State Fairgrounds. Hundreds of attendees visited with 40 vendors from contractor and home repair to mortgage services and home decor. Educational seminars were hosted both days by event sponsors.



The **Awards for Excellence Celebration**, held in June at Bally's Dover Casino Resort, gave the CDCC the opportunity to acknowledge its many volunteers & partners, recognize our Excellence in Business Award nominees & announce the winners, hold a graduation ceremony for the Leadership Central Delaware (LCD) Class of 2024, announce the LCD Best in Class competition winner and give the State of the Chamber address.



Other events hosted during the year included: The Amazing Chase in September, the State of the Base Briefing in November, Capital Holiday Celebration & CDCC Holiday Party in December, Economic Forecast Breakfast & Capital Briefing Reception in January, **Military Affairs** in February, **Legislative Luncheon** in March, the **Leadership Central Delaware Invitational** & the **Chamber Mini Masters** in April, and **Bluesuiters Golf Tournament** in May.

MEMBERSHIP



The CDCC offers several opportunities for our members to increase their exposure. Among these are event sponsorships, volunteering, Member Orientations, Coffee Coaching, Sunset Business Mixers, Ribbon Cuttings, New Member Spotlight Articles, and the 5-Star Journey Map Program.

Benefits

CDCC Showcase

Held every year in January by the Marketing Committee in conjunction with the **Sunset Business Mixer** to acquire prospective and current members with the benefits of the organization.

Daily State News and Delaware Public Media advertising discounts, Staples purchases discount, Benefits Connection comprehensive insurance plan, LASIK Corporate Discount Program through Eye Specialists of Delaware, ability to join Dover Federal Credit Union and Del-One Federal Credit Union, Special Marketing Packages, discounts through the Club Card Savings Program, membership in the U.S. Chamber Federation Program, and copies of Delaware Today Magazine and The Business Report.

CDCC Journey Map to 5 Star Membership

Journey Maps serve as the catalyst to being an engaged CDCC member by combining each member's unique business needs and goals with benefits offered by the CDCC.

Members meet with a CDCC representative to identify their business needs & map out their 5 Star Journey. Next they complete their Action Steps and start seeing the impact on their business. Once completed, they are recognized as a 5 Star Member.

- What does a 5 Star Member get?
- *Official Pinning at a Sunset Business Mixer
- *Photo in the Chamber Connections
- *A gold listing in the Business Directory
- *A remarkable return on the investment of CDCC membership & it's benefits.

30
Total # of ribbon cuttings and groundbreaking to celebrate new businesses and expansion of existing businesses in 2023 - 2024

102
new members

87%
retention rate

AWARDS

After the membership voted for the individuals who best exemplified Excellence in Business, awards were presented to the following at the Awards for Excellence Celebration:

Small Business of the Year

Bright Side Roofing



Large Employer of the Year

Del-One Federal Credit Union



Young Professional of the Year

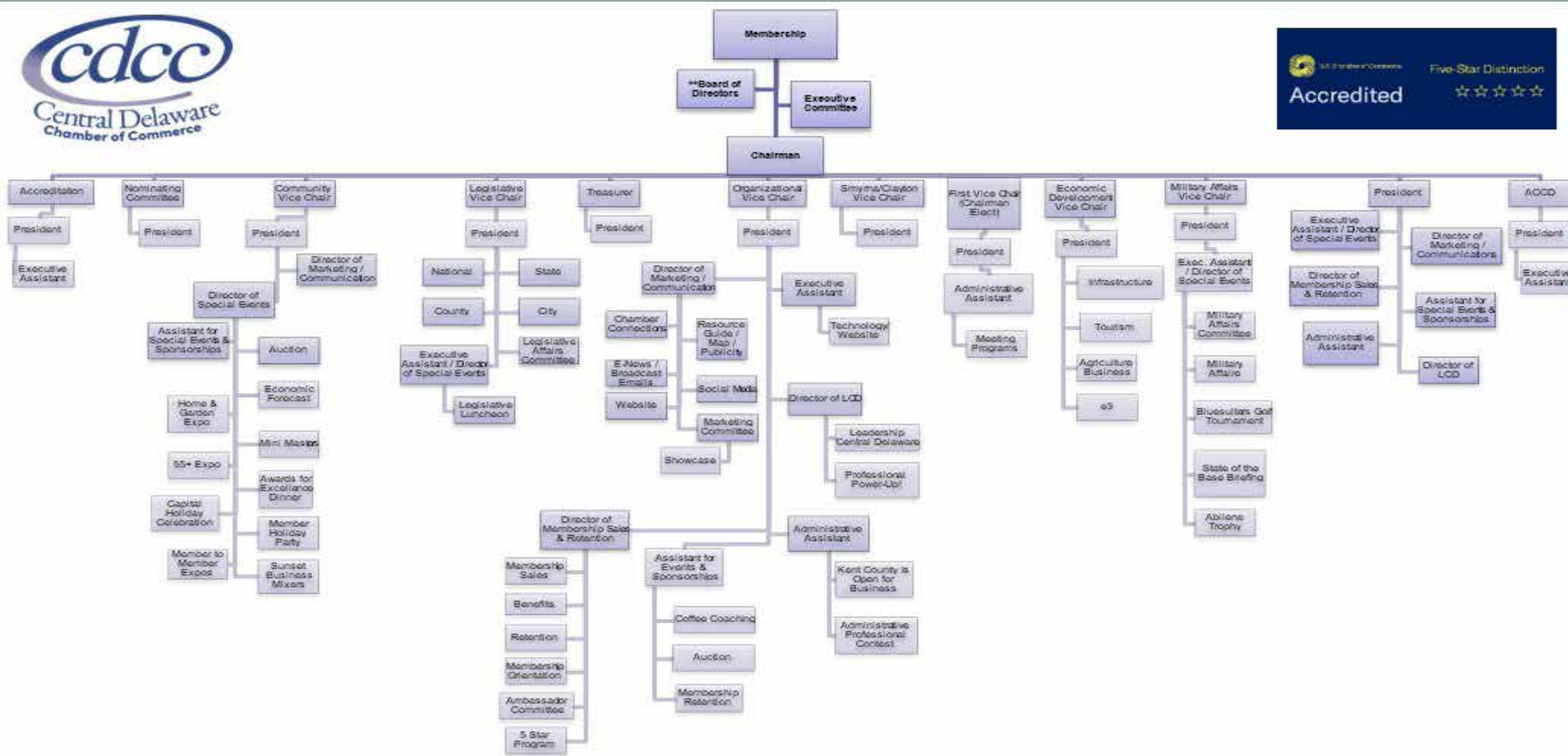
Allan Timlin
Roma Italian Restaurant



Awards presented at the Annual Dinner included:

- Outstanding Partnership Award: Secure Data Computer Solutions;
- Board Member of the Year: Nick Polcino of Bally's Dover Casino Resort;
- Volunteer of the Year: Heather Cregar of the Daily State News;
- Ambassador of the Year: Erlene George of Primerica.

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CDCC Staff

Honorary Board Members:
 Dover Air Force Base
 Kent County Levy Court



Dina Vendetti, President
 Cristal Brennenman, Executive Assistant & Director of Special Events
 Jennifer Sutter, Director of Membership Sales & Retention
 Martha Lehman, Administrative Assistant
 Cindy Friese, Assistant for Special Events & Sponsorships

Working Partners:
 Kent County Tourism
 Kent Economic Partnership
 Downtown Dover Partnership

Revised: 7-16-24 cb

PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Sponsorship opportunities make it possible for more of our members to participate in events and to gain exposure.

Showcase Opportunities include tabletop displays at the Legislative Luncheon, Awards for Excellence Celebration, and two Member 2 Member Expos.

Sponsored programs include Leadership Central Delaware, Sunset Business Mixers, and Coffee Coaching.

The **CDCC Club Card Savings Program** is used to bring more customers directly to CDCC members' doors. Key cards are distributed to all members, who are then encouraged to shop the discounts offered by over 100 Chamber members. The program has been rewarding for both businesses and CDCC members. All discounts are easily accessible by clicking on the "Club Card Savings Program" on the CDCC website homepage.

The **Central Delaware Resource Guide** and **Dover/Kent County Map** are distributed to people interested in relocating to the area and to local residents looking for a quick reference guide or CDCC Membership Directory. These resources assist the individuals at Dover AFB, new college students, and new hires to our member businesses in becoming acclimated to Central Delaware. The Resource Guide is also available on the CDCC website. Both options are supported by advertising.

- Sponsored Events:**
- The Amazing Chase
 - CDCC Holiday Gift Auction
 - State of the Base Briefing
 - CDCC Holiday Party
 - Economic Forecast Breakfast
 - Capital Briefing Reception
 - Home & Garden Expo
 - Military Affairs
 - Legislative Luncheon
 - 55+ Expo
 - The Chamber Mini Masters
 - Bluesuiters Golf Tournament
 - Awards for Excellence Celebration