

HAPPY NEW YEAR~2010!

Take Advantage Of What NHACCE Can Do For You!

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Publication Dates

Jan. 1, Apr. 1,
 July 1 and Oct. 1

Deadlines for article submission

Dec. 15, Mar. 15,
 June 15 and Sept. 15

This newsletter is distributed to members of the New Hampshire Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives

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The New Hampshire Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (NHACCE), is a non-profit organization with our primary mission being to provide educational opportunities for chamber executives and their staff. The purpose of this education is to stay abreast of new trends, share ideas, support each other in programs and provide networking opportunities. The membership is open to any chamber of commerce in the state of New Hampshire, as well as any organization that is closely affiliated with the work of chambers of commerce.

NHACCE provides the members with a website (www.NHACCE.org), a membership directory and a spring and fall conference each year for their education and benefit. NHACCE also provides scholarship opportunities for members in good standing.

Mary DeVries has agreed to take on the task of developing our website and encouraging all of you to share information that may be helpful to one or all of us. In case you have forgotten your password, please contact her at wolfeborochamber@conknet.com.

Spring Conference Is On Its Way!

This year, plan to attend our spring conference sometime between the end of ski season and mid-May. The date and location (either Wolfeboro, Meredith or the Seacoast area) will be announced very soon. Get ready for a fantastic time of professional development and networking with peers!

Capitol Connect: Strengthening Small Business Advocacy

It has been two years since the launch of the Business and Industry Association's Capitol Connect membership program and it's been a great success! With 16 chambers on-board, along with 2,200 of their members, the voice of small business at the New Hampshire State House has never been stronger.

For those not familiar with BIA's Capitol Connect membership program, it was launched with guidance from a group of local chamber executives who sat down with BIA staff to create a program aimed at strengthening small business advocacy at the State House. Concurrently, the program was designed to add real value to being a member of a local, participating chamber of commerce.

Capitol Connect members benefit from more direct access to the deliberations of the New Hampshire Legislature, Governor and state agencies; electronic communications and calls-to-action from the BIA;

and member pricing at BIA events to which the public is invited. All members of local chambers that employ 10 or fewer employees are eligible to participate in Capitol Connect. The only qualification is that the local chamber be a member of the BIA. Most already are.

Small business owners and managers are very busy with day-to-day operations and may not always have time to stay connected to what's happening at the State House. Similarly, while local chambers of commerce are heavily engaged in many pressing community and regional issues, they may not have the time or the staff to maintain a presence in Concord. Capitol Connect helps fill this need and, at the same time, creates a stronger, more unified voice for the small business community.

"Having run a local chamber myself, and now the BIA, I understand very well the challenge of

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making a chamber membership meaningful for dues-paying members and prospects,” said BIA President Jim Roche. “Receiving a second, free membership in the BIA simply for being a dues paying member of a local chamber is a significant value-add.”

All chambers of commerce are welcome to partner with the BIA to bring Capitol Connect to their small business members. For more information about Capitol Connect, contact Katherine Tomlinson at the BIA, 603-224-5388 ext. 113 or email ktomlinson@nhbia.org.

New Hampshire State Scholars Program: A Vision for Education

The State is committed to supporting NH’s economy by preparing a better-educated workforce. The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) is proud to partner with the New Hampshire Forum on the Future (NHFOF) and the New Hampshire College and University Council (NHCUC) to administer the NH State Scholars Program. This Program encourages students to take a rigorous curriculum to prepare them for a future that will demand strong and flexible thinking skills. For those who are thinking about going to college, solid preparation is essential. The intent of the NH State Scholars Program is to promote collaboration between educators, policy makers, and business and industry leaders to deliver the message to students and parents of the critical need for increased academic rigor for successful transition to post-secondary and career options.

Since it is essential to become a State Scholar at the beginning of high school, the program pairs business leaders with classes of 8th grade students prior to the selection of their high school courses. The NH State Scholars Program involves school and community partners to emphasize the relationship of academic preparation to options after high school. Graduating competent students not only benefits our society, but also better prepares students for future careers and citizenship.

Concurrently, the New Hampshire Department of Education has issued a vision document on high school redesign to support schools as they look to implement the new standards. The vision document describes the necessity of each student receiving a rigorous and relevant curriculum of study so that they will be better prepared to deal with the requirements of 21st century citizenship and careers.

The New Hampshire Department of Education is committed to the NH State Scholars Program and will work in a collaborative manner to promote the creation of a system which connects the multitude of programs focused on transitioning competent learners ready for the 21st century into an accessible network. The NH State Scholars Program will strengthen New Hampshire’s vision for the future.

Business are encouraged to participate in the NH State Scholars Program by contacting their local school district or the New Hampshire Department of Education. For more information, please visit www.nhscholars.org. By working together, we can help ensure that today’s students are prepared to participate in tomorrow’s workforce.

*Based on a letter from Virginia M. Barry,
Ph.D.- Commissioner of Education*

BIA Releases 2010 Public Policy Priorities

The Business and Industry Association will focus much of its work in 2010 on eight key issues that are important to the New Hampshire business community to arrest what many business leaders view as an eroding competitive business advantage. This year, BIA will address the following public policy priorities and pursue related action steps:

Fiscal Policy:

Priority: The BIA believes fiscally conservative state budgets with a business-friendly tax structure are an important part of the New Hampshire Advantage.

Action steps include:

- Oppose an income or sales tax.
- Oppose any increase in the BET or BPT.
- Support efforts to pass a constitutional amendment to allow the state to target education aid.
- Encourage efforts to bring state employee retirement costs to a sustainable level.

Priority: The BIA supports business tax incentives that foster economic growth. Action steps include:

- Oppose a reduction in, repeal of, or suspension of the BET credit against the BPT.
- Oppose any efforts to reduce or repeal research and development tax credits.
- Support efforts to improve net operating loss carry-forward provisions.
- Ensure that efforts to define “reasonable compensation” as a deduction against the Business Profits Tax will not adversely affect New Hampshire’s business climate.
- Support continued state investment in community development tax credits.

Human Resources, Health Care and Workforce Development:

Priority: The BIA supports efforts to reduce total health care costs for businesses and the state, including payment reform. Action steps include:

- Oppose new or expanded health insurance benefit mandates.
- Support adequate Medicaid reimbursements to health care

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BIA 2010 Priorities. . .continued from Page 2

providers in order to reduce “cost-shifting” to the business community.

- Review and evaluate cost-effective ways to provide health care to the uninsured and underinsured in order to reduce “cost-shifting” to the business community from uncompensated care.
- Support efforts to develop and implement electronic medical records and electronic prescriptions.
- Support efforts that enhance health care consumer awareness through increased transparency of health care quality and cost information.
- Support efforts to find efficiencies in the delivery of Medicaid services.
- Support efforts to promote better health in the workplace.
- Support federal health care reform that lowers costs, improves health care access and results in better healthcare outcomes. Guiding principles are:
 - Employers, government and individuals have a shared interest in public health and individual wellness.
 - The business community should not be responsible for any new costs associated with health care reform.
 - To reduce cost-shifting to the private sector, reform should address uncompensated health care and underfunding of government health programs.
 - Health care reform should not force insurance companies out of business.

Priority: The BIA will support efforts to develop New Hampshire’s future workforce. Action step includes:

- Support initiatives to improve job readiness skills for a multi-generational workforce; recruit and train younger workers; recognize the abilities and talents of legal immigrants and refugees; and to prepare the labor force for 21st Century occupations.

Economic Development:

Priority: The BIA will monitor the availability and affordability of housing for working people. Action steps include:

- Encourage BIA members and chamber partners to become more engaged in workforce housing issues at the local level.
- Continue to increase awareness of the issue through workshops, forums and publicity.
- Support the development of educational programs aimed at dispelling workforce housing myths.
- Oppose any efforts to roll back or repeal core principals of SB 342 (2008 Workforce Housing legislation).

Priority: The BIA will support infrastructure development. Action steps include:

- Transportation-Advocate for investment in public transportation systems, including rail and air travel, as well as New Hampshire’s road and bridge network.
- Support efforts to increase federal transportation aid to the state.
- Water/Sewer-Educate policy leaders and the public about water and

wastewater treatment systems that are at the end of their design life and/or exceeding capacity.

- Communication/Broadband-Encourage improvements to telecommunications systems in the state.

Energy and Regulated Utilities:

Priority: The BIA will continue to work toward mitigating the rising cost of energy. Action steps include:

- Support initiatives and policies that leverage regional strengths, including the development of renewable energy resources.
- Lead and support efforts to educate businesses, elected officials, and participate in the education of consumers, about electricity supply, distribution, thermal energy savings potential, energy efficiency and conservation.
- Help members explore competitive supply options, renewable technologies, distributed energy resources and purchaser aggregation.
- Support the creation of a long term strategic economic plan for the state of New Hampshire, with an emphasis on the future of energy generation, transmission, efficiency, conservation and load management.
- Support proportional disbursements, based on energy usage, from the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Fund, Renewable Energy Fund, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Core Energy Efficiency Programs and other funds for businesses undertaking energy efficiency and conservation projects, and oppose diverting these funds for purposes unrelated to energy efficiency and the promotion of alternative energy sources.

Environmental Affairs:

Priority: The BIA will continue to support environmental policies, legislation and administrative rules that balance economic development with the long term viability of the state’s natural resources. Action steps include:

- Support Department of Environmental Services’ initiatives to streamline and expedite the permitting process.
- Advocate for increased dialogue, equitable disbursement, transparency and fairness in state agencies’ environmental fee structures.
- Foster discussions on how the Department of Environmental Services is funded, focusing on the appropriate allocation of the state’s fees and taxes.
- Advocate for greater incentives for private sector environmental stewardship.
- Support balanced state and federal policies regarding wetlands protection and wastewater discharge.
- Focus on the state’s role in balancing the availability and use of water resources.

***Gaining & Keeping
Members: The Franconia
Notch Chamber***

At the Franconia Notch Chamber of Commerce, they have taken a new approach to their membership drive. Chamber president, Frank Grima states that “Time produces change, but not in the message and purpose, simply in the method and technology to reach out further, faster and better. Good marketing is ageless; enhanced by a stronger focus, a larger venue and better tools.”

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Gaining... continued from Page 3

In three years, their membership jumped from 63 members to 140 through a strategic marketing plan through survey analysis and team structure and use of technology. Strategies used met the mission and goals of the chamber. Grima states that, "Our focus must be on our Region of New Hampshire and not any specific town or towns. The days of isolationism and protectionism are over. We all work together for the common good of our Region.

Executive Director Barbara Ashley credits much of this success to three key factors—the chamber's dues assessment, its state-of-the-art website, and the member benefits unique to the other two. The Chamber maintains an affordable dues structure that considers the classification of members who currently need to maintain memberships in multiple chambers.

Moving toward a more regional concept, regional marketing and chamber benefits have allowed businesses with three or fewer employees to be assessed at a much more affordable rate and annual dues assessment for Non-profit Organizations and Supporting Members remains at only \$60. Ashley notes that these small business classifications do not require the same type of exposure

that large businesses and hospitality members do, yet all are the backbone of what creates the quality of life enjoyed in our area.

Through a Joint Promotional Program (JPP) matching grant, the chamber developed a state-of-the-art website, posts YouTube videos, purchased a content management and training program allowing instant changes on the website. The savings in time to the chamber provides instant member benefits as well. The savings comes in time and cost on outsourced website maintenance. This savings goes back to the members in pricing. Our ad costs go to the bottom line.

The Franconia Notch Chamber of Commerce has a dues incentive program unlike others. Members can earn 25% of the dues assessment of any new member they bring to the organization. As the amount earned can total 100% of their own assessment, the end result can be a free pass for the next year, or substantial savings.

Another JPP Grant allowed for advertising in out-of-state magazines and web links as well as development of a new 2010 brochure.

*Frank Grima, President
Franconia Notch Chamber of Commerce*

Would You Consider a Free Membership for Business NH Magazine?

Business NH Magazine provides an annual scholarship contribution for NHACCE. This is an important means of financing an education. Would you consider giving a free membership to *Business NH Magazine* as a result of their scholarly contribution? *Business NH Magazine* subscriptions are free to chamber members. Consider it a way in which to work together in this tough economy. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Martha Pepek, Subscription Department of Millyard Communications, Inc. publisher of *Business NH Magazine*. You can reach her at 603-626-6354, ext. 206. You may fax the form below to Millyard Communications, Inc. at 603-626-6359.

If you have ideas, press releases, or articles to share, please e-mail them to bmaltzie@gmail.com by the 15th of the month prior to publication.

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Gross Annual Sales More than \$10 million \$1-10 million Under \$1 million

Please contact me about advertising opportunities.

NHACCE Gazette

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www.nhacce.org

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mon., Jan. 11
7:30am-9:00am

Washington Update

Where: Salem Boys & Girls Club, 3 Geremonty Drive, Salem, NH. Health Care, War, Immigration Issues, Taxes, Unemployment, Federal Spending...the issues are numerous. New Hampshire's US Senators and US House Members are invited to address the business community at this annual event. Audience questions (via moderator) are part of the program. RSVP to Salem Chamber at 893-3177.

Wed., Jan. 13
4-6pm

BIA Hosts Reception for Legislators

Where: Holiday Inn, Concord. An opportunity for business leaders to meet and mingle with the state's elected officials. Gov. John Lynch and all legislators and staff have been invited. Cost: BIA and Capitol Connect members: \$25. Non-members: \$45. To register, call 224-5388 x116 or register at:nhbia.org.

Tues., Jan. 26
11:45am-1:00pm

2010 Economic Forecast Luncheon

Where: Grappone Conference Center, Concord. Join the Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce for an economic forecast by four experts on New Hampshire's economic sectors for their predictions on the local, regional and national economy including the stock market, banking, labor market, and real estate market. Cost: Concord Chamber Members: \$25. Non-Members: \$35. Register at 224-2508.

Wed., Jan. 27
7:30am-11:30am

Small Business Day at the State House

An opportunity for small business owners and managers to meet New Hampshire's top policy-makers, learn more about legislative issues that could affect your bottom line, and receive valuable information about tools to help your company grow. Cost: \$15. Contact: Christine Ducharme at 224-5388 x116.

Thurs., Jan. 28
12:00pm-2:00pm

2010 Economic Outlook Luncheon

Where: Courtyard Marriott, 2200 Southwood Drive (Exit 8), Nashua. Annual Economic Outlook Luncheon as we welcome keynote speakers Barry Bluestone, Ph.D. and Charlie Arlinghaus for an enlightening discussion on the economy in 2010, and how we will all be affected on both a local and national level. Cost: Greater Nashua Chamber of Commerce Members: \$30; Non-members: \$40. Register on-line: <http://events.nashuachamber.com> or call: 881-8333.

Fri., Mar. 5
8:00am-11:00am

Web Marketing: How do I get noticed & what do they see?

Where: TBD. Getting noticed in the web search engines is a science which you can learn but it is important to also understand that more "hits" means that more people will see your website. What will they find? Cost: Greater Keene Chamber of Commerce Members: \$20. Non-Members: \$25. Contact: Susan Newcomer 352-1303 ext. 14 or email: snewcomer@keenechamber.com.

Wed.-Fri., May 5-7

SAVE THE DATE! 2010 Governor's conference on Tourism

Where: Sheraton Portsmouth Harborside Hotel. Sign up now to take advantage of early conference registration rates. Exhibit space available. Visit www.nhtravelcouncil.com or call 603-665-9559.



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We welcome contributions from chamber executives!

Editorials, articles or writing requests may be submitted by contacting Beth Maltzie via e-mail: bmaltzie@gmail.com

Please see the copy deadline on the front of this newsletter.