



Downey Business

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DOWNEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

11131 BROOKSHIRE AVENUE • DOWNEY • CALIFORNIA • 90241 | PHONE (562) 923-2191

www.DOWNEYCHAMBER.org • info@downeychamber.com | MARCH 2019 • VOL 47 • NO. 3

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Anniversary Luncheon 2019

WE LOOK GOOD FOR 116!!!

What a truly fine event held on Thursday at the wonderful Embassy Suites. Nearly 100 members and supporters of the Chamber came together to celebrate 116 years of the Downey Chamber of Commerce! Over 40 companies were honored for their commitment to the chamber some joining a short 5 years ago and one special member, to our member Leach Grain and Milling who has been a member for 70 years! Congratulations to our Large Business of the Year, Downey Nissan and Small Business of the Year, The Olive. Both companies are a great example what "good business" is here in Downey A big Congratulations goes out to our Director of the Year David Gavin, our Volunteer of the Year Carrie Uva, and our Ambassadors of the Year Daniel Andrade and Ronald Long. Thank you, Lady and Gentlemen, for all you hard work on the Chamber's behalf.

This type of event can only be done with the help of many people. A big thank you to the Special Event Staff of the Embassy Suites. They put together a wonderful menu and designed a floor plan that worked perfectly for the occasion. The Chamber's Office Manager, Sarah Sellers and our Event Coordinator Blake whose efforts made, for our honorees, along with all our guests, very special! But the two favorite parts of this event is the support we receive from our elected representatives. A very big thank you to Kim Tachiki Chin of Congresswoman Lucille Roybal Allard's Office, Chad Overly of Assembly Member Christina Garcia's Staff along with Downey Mayor Rick Rodriguez, Mayor Pro Tem Blanca Pacheco, and City Council Members, Alex Saab, Sean Ashton, and Claudia Frometa. You all really add to the occasion. The second part that is so enjoyable is the tradition when all the Chamber's Past Presidents slice our Anniversary Cake! I guess having 10 or 12 hands on one small knife can make cake cutting difficult!! Thank you everyone who came and make our celebration so special. We are already planning for 117!!



Anniversary Luncheon Photos by Claudia Gomez

Message from the *President*



Hello Everyone,
There were a couple of ribbon cutting that I attending the month of February. My first was "PlayDate" a unique place that I wished existed when my boys were younger. I had the opportunity to meet with Danny and Claudia Perez. The couple met in the schools of Downey, came back to the community to open several businesses. Claudia had a vision to open a place where she could bring her child and other children between the ages of 6-month to 6-years to spend time with Mom, Dad or members of an extended family.
A place for the child to expend their energy in a clean and safe environment. They both spent hours in making sure the construction of the facility was want they wanted and that is how PlayDate started. I wish them much success in their new business and I recommend every parent and grandparent to drop by and take a look at their location at 8335 Firestone Blvd., Downey.

The other ribbon cutting I attended was LA Taco (Sol Luna). This was the old location of El Taco. I met with Brad & Crystal Freeman the owners of the business. They are currently working in the real estate business and live about two hours away from the Downey Community but they made a commitment to open a restaurant. When I ask them what made them open a new restaurant and get into a new line of business. They said it was the employees that had work at "El Taco" that made them rethink about their plan on what they wanted to do. Employees that have been there as long as 30-years to a couple of months was important to Brad and Crystal. We at the Chamber wish them the same success as the other businesses that have opened in Downey and welcome them as part of the Downey Chamber of Commerce family. I recommend you do stop by LA Taco Sol Luna located at: 7665 Firestone Blvd., Downey. Please be sure to ask for the Horchata Delight, you won't be disappointed.

-- *John F Casillas, President*
Downey Chamber of Commerce

Events & Meetings

Thursday, March 7 @ 12:00 pm
Let's Do Lunch
Hacker's Bar & Grill
10627 Old River School Rd, Downey

Thursday, March 7 @ 4:00 pm
Downey Mustangs
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
Downey Chamber of Commerce
11131 Brookshire Ave. Downey

Tuesday, March 12 @ 6:30 pm
City Council Meeting
City Hall Council Chamber

Wednesday, March 13, 2018
@ 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
Women in Leadership
Speaker: Martha De La Torre,
Co-Founder
El Clasificado/EC Hispanic Media,
Double Tree by Hilton,
Norwalk Los Angeles
13111 Sycamore Dr. Norwalk

Monday, March 18 @ 12:00 pm
Board of Directors Meeting
Downey Chamber of Commerce
11131 Brookshire Ave. Downey

Wednesday, March 20 @ 12:00 pm
Ambassador Committee Meeting
Brickstones Grill
8425 Firestone Blvd., Downey

Tuesday, March 26 @ 6:30 pm
City Council Meeting
City Hall Council Chamber

Wednesday, March 27 @ 12:00 pm
City of Affairs
Speaker: TBT
Downey Chamber of Commerce
11131 Brookshire Ave. Downey

Message from the *Executive Director*



It's almost Spring with just a week or two to go. As nature reminds us about renewal it's also a good time to look at our business and see what we can change to improve our procedures. We have all heard the expression, "Spring Cleaning," and at the Chamber we to are always changing and improving.

One of the ways that the Chamber is always moving forward is with our Board of Directors. These are 15 leaders in the community and with special business skills that meet monthly to keep the Chamber relevant and on task in helping Downey Businesses. Each Board Member has the opportunity to serve for a three-year term. That term can be renewed for another three years which truly helps with providing continuity of leadership. However, the Chamber would never want the Board to become compliace, so each year, by design, we have three or four members terming out. This process provides an opportunity for "new blood" to join. In the coming months we will have an opportunity to honor those hard-working Board Members who will be leaving us in June. However, now is the time for those candidates to come forward and ask to serve!

If you are a Chamber member, currently in good standing, you can submit a resume to the Chamber office and be considered for our Board. It's a wonderful opportunity to have input on important matters like the Christmas Parade, the Annual Street Faire, and Golf Tournaments. These events are so important to us at the Chamber, but also to the people of Downey. Working on the Board also allows you to promote your business by attending luncheons and ribbon cuttings. Each event is reported here in the Business Directory with pictures and articles. Mention of your Board work is also detailed on our Website, Twitter, You Tube, and Facebook Page. It's a great way to get some needed exposure and to do some good work with some truly fun people! Please think about it!!

Another "new" event is our upcoming Morning Networking Event scheduled for the April 18th at 7:30. We will be meeting at the Chamber Office at 11131 Brookshire Ave. and the charge is \$5. A light breakfast will be served and we look forward to your attendance and to get a chance to say "Good Morning!"

-- *Michael Calvert, Executive Director*
Downey Chamber of Commerce

Downey Business

--STAFF--

Michael Calvert, Executive Director
Sarah Sellers, Administrative Assistant
Blake Calvert, Intern Events Coordinator

DOWNEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
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The board of directors meets at the chamber office on the third Monday of each month at 12:00 noon.

Ambassadors of the Month | CARRIE UVA



Carrie Uva is a proud life time Downey resident as well as a long-term Downey business woman. Carrie attended Our Lady of Perpetual Help School and graduated from St. Joseph High School in 1983. Carrie’s dream since the 8th grade was to be an attorney when she and her classmates took a field trip to Downey Municipal Court. Carrie loved it!! She received her BA from Loyola Marymount University and her Juris Doctor from Western State University of Law. During law school, Carrie studied for her real estate license as a way buy and sell property for her father and brother who were in the construction business. She currently enjoys both the practice of Estate Planning Law as well as property transactions in and around the Downey area. This year, Carries celebrates her 25th year working with 24 Hour Real Estate and truly enjoys working with the firm’s principals Mel and Rita Berdelis. The Berdelis’ even allow Carrie to run her Law Practice in the real estate office.

Carrie’s parents Tony and Esther Uva were active in many Downey organizations and she learned from a young age to give back to the community and volunteer your time. Carrie has served as President of the Downey Association of Realtors she is a member of the Downey Los Amigos Kiwanis Club, the southeast District Bar Association, a neighborhood watch captain and Commissioner on the Downey Public Works Committee and Measure S Citizen oversight Committee. But Carrie’s favorite post is being the current President Elect of the Downey Chamber of Commerce! “Being part of the Chamber is such a rewarding experience. I have met some wonderful people and I have found a great networking source within the Downey Business Community. I am always referring my clients, friends and family to many of the business owners that I have met at ribbon cuttings or being part of the Christmas Parade, Golf Tournament, Street Faire, and Elf Run Committees. I encourage all business owners to get involved. I am also super excited to be the President of the Chamber in July. I can’t wait for my year to start!!”

Ambassador Lunch

On February 20th the Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors met at Pita GR to talk about upcoming events, network, and enjoy some delicious Mediterranean food. Before lunch incoming Ambassadors Blanca Gonzalez and Joseph Snider of Chase Bank and Cristina Martell-Perez of One West Bank introduced themselves and talked about how their businesses help the community. The committee is hard at work contacting our membership along with other business about marketing their companies at our upcoming Street Faire (May 4th) and the Annual Golf Tournament (June 19th)

Pita GR is a new restaurant, and new chamber member, located of Paramount Blvd and Florence Ave specializing in Greek street food. Thanks to Joanna Peterson of Gallatin Dental and Monica Dien of Financial Partners Credit Union, co-chairs of the Ambassador Committee for organizing this luncheon.

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CHAMBER on the town



Photo by Claudia Gomez

The Chamber’s Christmas Parade Committee was recently honored by The Downey City Council for all their hard work organizing the 2018 Christmas Parade. Saying “thank you” are Mayor Rick Rodriquez, Mayor Pro Tem Blanca Pacheco, Council Members Sean Ashton, Alex Saab, and Claudia Frometa. Accepting their Certificates of Appreciation are Committee members Rain Ng, Carrie Uva, Carmen Gonzalez, Blake Calvert, David Gafin, Jeannie Wood, Joanna Peterson, and Michael Calvert.



Photo by Claudia Gomez

Enjoying the recent City Affairs hosted by Financial Partners Credit Union are former Mayor Meredith Perkins, Chamber President Elect Carrie Uva of 24-Hour Real Estate and Larry Kooiman of Century 21 Home and Investments. It was a great event due to the expert information given out by guest speaker Mayor Rick Rodriquez!

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MAYOR'S Corner



Hello Downey!

The day of closure of the Downey City Library will be on March 16. This will be a day full celebration for the library and its bright future. There will be music, art and activities for the family. Also on site will be local libraries sing up resident for library card registrations. Confirmed cities are Norwalk, Commerce and Santa Fe Springs. The Downey City Library will go through a massive transformation and will reopen in 2020. The entire interior of the library will remodeled. A modern look with paint and new signage is planned for exterior. The library is long overdue for improvements and once this project is complete it will become a true gem of the city for residents and future generations to enjoy.

Join me on April 3 for the annual State of the City address at the beautiful Rio Hondo Event Center. Each year the State of the City address brings together the community to celebrate accomplishments and preview the year ahead. We are blessed to have had another great year here in Downey. Please join me and hear about the city’s accomplishments and future goals. For more information please contact Blake at the Downey Chamber of Commerce at 562-923-2191.

Please join your City Council Members on the first day of Spring, Wednesday, March 20, for the first “Walk with your Council Member” series of the year. The walk will be held at the Downey High School track at 7 pm. These walks will help to improve fitness, health, and wellbeing as well as give you a chance to speak with your elected officials about any city issues or questions you may have.

In last month’s article I talked about the Downey One Day of Service Fair which will take place on Saturday, April 27 at the Civic Center. This will be a community service day in which volunteers will give back by participating in various projects throughout the city. We will be having a meeting on March 14 at 6 pm inside the Barbara J. Riley Community & Service Center where you can hear more information about the event as well as share your input and ideas.

Lastly I would like to remind everyone the importance of being vigilant in our community. A good neighbor is one of the most effective crime prevention tools ever invented. If you see something say something. If you encounter a suspicious person in your neighborhood please call and report it to the Downey Police Department by calling 911.

Rick Rodriguez
Mayor
562-904-7274
rrodriguez@downeyca.org
facebook.com/MayorRickRodriguez
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CHIEF'S Corner



Crime prevention information from the Downey Police Department

Tax season is the prime time for email scams

As April 15, 2019 quickly approaches, we wanted to remind you to be vigilant in avoiding Internal Revenue Service (IRS) related online scams. These IRS scams, as well as other similar scams, most often utilize scare

tactics and threat of financial impact as a way to get victims to comply. During tax season, online scammers will often attempt to phish your personal information. Phishing is a way that scammers attempt to steal your personal information and/or money by sending bogus emails. The emails look official and may state you have funds available, or that you may owe money. It’s important to know that the Internal Revenue Service does not initiate contact with taxpayers via email, text messages or social media. Any requests for PIN numbers, passwords or access to bank information should be considered a scam. According to the IRS, if you receive an email claiming to be from the IRS that contains a request for personal information, taxes associated with a large investment, inheritance or lottery, do not reply and certainly to do open any attachments. Those attachments contain malicious software that will infect your computer or phone. Also, do not click on any embedded links. Forward the email to phishing@irs.gov, and then delete the email. If you discover a web site that claims to be the IRS, forward the web address to the same email address.

For more information, please refer to the official IRS website regarding Phishing and Online Scams at <https://www.irs.gov/privacy-disclosure/report-phishing>

If you have any questions, please contact the Downey Police Department at (562) 861-0771



New Members

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Brad Freeman, CEO
www.latacosoluna.com
7665 Firestone Blvd.
Downey, CA 90241
(562)777-TACO

Downey Mustangs
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Angela Grande, President
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Downey, CA 90241
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Linda Read, President
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<https://blackbeardiner.com/>
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Downey, CA 90240

Downey Hair Loss Solutions
Larry Hart, Owner
www.downeyhairlossolutions.com
8335 Firestone Blvd
Downey, CA 90241
(951)454-0716

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Georgette Solano,
Broker Realtor
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- Susan Nordin

Meredith Perkins

Jim Reynolds

Mary Stauffer

David R. Gafin

Celebrating Ribbon Cuttings

The Play Date



It was a great afternoon when you can attend a ribbon cutting in your socks!! The Play Date is a new business dedicated to children and the parents who love them!! It's a wonderful place where children can play, use their imaginations, and have a great time because the parents are part of the fun. Your able to bring in a lunch, use the slides and games and make an incredible day that your children will always remember.

Owners, Daniel and Claudia Perez grew up in Downey and attended schools locally. Knowing how special Downey can be as a youth, is the reason that they brought this unique concept back to their home town. The Play Date is located at 8335 Firestone Blvd. and has Mommy/Daddy and me classes, a store of wonderful merchandise. It was a very fun ribbon cutting and we had put our shoes back on and go back to work!!

US Beauty Supply



Mayor Rick Rodriguez stand between Mr. and Mrs. Choi inside their new store. Mr. Choi is holding his City Certificate presented by the Mayor earlier that morning.



Helping Mr. Choi with the Chamber Scissors are Mayor Rick Rodriguez along with many members of the Choi Family and Friends cut the ribbon and announce the beginning of their new business.

It is always great to see a family, who have been long time residents, and at the time when most couples are slowing down and looking to retire that's when Mr. and Mrs. Choi have decided to open a new business in Downey.

US Beauty Supply had their ribbon cutting on February 11 and we had Mayor Rick Rodriguez, Chad Oberly from Assembly Member Christina Garcia, along with many of our Directors and Ambassadors supporting our newest member.

US Beauty Supply is located at 10355 Lakewood Blvd and has a large variety of hair products, make up and wigs for just about any occasion. Their staff is very knowledgeable and can help with any beauty question. Thank you, Choi Family, for selecting Downey as your business location, the Chamber wishes you the best of luck!

LA Taco



Photo by Claudia Gomez



Restaurant owners Brad and Crystal Freeman take pride in receiving their Chamber of Commerce Membership Plaque. The Freemans are looking forward to keeping the traditional and appeal from the old location at the new LA Taco.

On February 21st The Chamber hosted a ribbon cutting for LA Taco Sol Luna. Located where El Taco's Firestone Blvd location once was, the owners Brad and Crystal Freeman made a point of keeping as much of the staff and recipes from the original Downey landmark as possible. The owners gladly shared samples from their menu with the Chamber and City representatives in attendance, I personally recommend the Horchata Delight ice cream.

The Chamber of Commerce greatly appreciates Chad Oberly, the representative from Assembly Member Cristina Garcia, members of the Downey City Council, Alex Saab, Mayor Pro Tem Blanca Pacheco and Mayor Rick Rodriguez for attending and welcoming this new business to our amazing city.



Photo by Claudia Gomez

Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace



Introduction

Drug and alcohol use present challenges for all of society, including employers. Ensuring that employees are drug and alcohol free while at work is critical to a company’s success and everyone’s safety. However, employers can face legal jeopardy by infringing upon employee privacy when employers overzealously attempt to rid their workplace of drugs and alcohol. Therefore, crafting and following a strong, but legal, drug and alcohol policy is critical for all employers.

The Policy

Like most important policies, the employer’s drug and alcohol policy should appear in the employee handbook. Employee handbooks are an excellent location for drug and alcohol policies because employees are given, and must read and sign, employee handbooks from the onset of their employment. Employees cannot claim ignorance when an employer has a signed document indicating that the employee read and understood the policy. Furthermore, including the drug and alcohol policy in the employee handbook will put employees on notice that the company takes drugs and alcohol in the workplace seriously. A robust policy could have a deterrent effect discouraging employees from brining or using drugs or alcohol in the workplace.

The drug and alcohol policy should be worded broadly so that the most behavior possible can be covered. The policy should cover manufacturing, distributing, possessing, and using illegal drugs and alcohol. Employees must be banned from having any illegal substances in their system at work as well. Drugs and alcohol should also be defined broadly to include any illegal or unauthorized mind altering or intoxicating substance. While an employer cannot, and should not, attempt to prohibit an employee from using prescribed drugs in accordance with a valid prescription, an employer can punish an employee who abuses prescription drugs or sells/ gives prescription drugs to others.

Importantly, marijuana, regardless of prescription or legalization by state law, can still be banned by employers. The ban on marijuana should be made explicitly in the drug and alcohol policy to avoid any confusion.

Alcohol, although also a legal substance, can be regulated as well. Employees can be forbidden from drinking on the job. Excessive consumption by an off duty employee can be grounds for discipline when a “hung over” employee cannot perform job duties satisfactorily.

Companies that serve alcohol to employees at company sponsored events should include language in the drug and alcohol policy stating that employees are responsible for responsibly consuming alcohol in moderation. Ensuring that employees avoid excessive consumption will help protect a company against a lawsuit caused by an intoxicated employee injuring a member of the public.

Drug and Alcohol Tests

Unfortunately, even the best policy cannot stop some employees from abusing drugs and alcohol at work. However, employers must be careful when testing employees. An employer must have a reasonable suspicion that the employee is under the influence before a drug or alcohol test can be conducted. A reasonable suspicion can be created from any number of events, such as an employee witnessing a co-worker doing drugs, behavioral changes, smelling alcohol or marijuana on an employee, or discovering drug or alcohol paraphernalia that belongs to an employee.

Reasonable suspicion can also be created by a workplace accident. However, the accident must be one that drug and alcohol use could have reasonably caused. For example, an employee crashing a company car could have reasonably been caused by the employee being under the influence. However, an employee being bitten by a snake has no relationship to drugs or alcohol. These kinds of accidents cannot justify testing.

Employees in safety sensitive positions, such as an air traffic controller for example, can also be tested randomly tested due to the grave danger the public would face if one of these employees was impaired on the job.

Searches

Once an employer has a reasonable suspicion that an employee has violated the drug and alcohol policy, the employer can search the employee’s work area for contraband. The drug and alcohol policy should clearly state that employees do not have a reasonable expectation of privacy in the workplace. Therefore, an employee’s desk, locker, computer, briefcase, and other similar areas can be searched by the employer. It is critical that employees are informed early on in their employment about the possibility that their workspaces can be searched to avoid any confusion or claims of ignorance later.

Enforcement

Employers can be faced with difficult decisions when an employee violates the drug and alcohol policy. The decision to fire an employee who is not great at the job or who otherwise is problematic can be easy. However, if a star employee violates the drug and alcohol policy, the employer is faced with an entirely different scenario. Employers must resist the temptation to apply the drug and alcohol policy differently depending on which employee violates its terms. Selective enforcement can lead to the policy being challenged, and perhaps invalidated, in court. The best practice is to clearly explain the policy to all employees and then faithfully enforce its terms regardless of who violates the policy. Consistency is critical.

Conclusion

Having a clear and enforced drug and alcohol policy in the employee handbook is an employer’s best weapon against drug and alcohol use in the workplace. The policy must be strictly adhered to in order for it to be effective. While no policy can guarantee a drug and alcohol free environment, a good policy can go a long way towards making the workplace a safe place for everyone.

Colin P. Calvert is a partner in the Irvine, California office of the labor and employment law firm Fisher & Phillips LLP. Please do not hesitate to contact him if you have any questions or seek additional information. Mr. Calvert may be reached at (949) 798-2160.

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DOWNEY
ONE DAY OF
SERVICE

COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING

Thursday March 14 | 6pm

Barbara J. Riley Community & Senior Center
7810 Quill Drive, Downey CA

Downey One Day of Service is a community volunteer day taking place on Saturday, April 27th in which volunteers give back to their community by participating in various projects throughout the City. Examples of community projects may include mowing someone's lawn, washing cars for the elderly, cleaning a park, putting together hygiene kits, painting someone's house, reading to seniors, litter clean-up, tree planting, among others. Join us for this meeting to learn how you can be part of this event and give back to our community.

All local residents, community organizations, businesses and churches are invited to attend.

Please RSVP by March 12th to jmontenegro@downeyca.org or by calling **562-904-7284**.



City of Downey

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