



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 | JANUARY 2019 • VOL 47 • NO. 1

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New Downey Chamber of Commerce Logo Revealed

The Downey Chamber of Commerce exists to help the community thrive by being the vehicle through which local businesses, residents, and surrounding cities collaborate.

With the explosive commercial growth in Downey in the past decade, the Chamber has had to adapt and progress along with it. This not only meant a more diverse Board of Directors, but also meant an openness to listen to new ideas about the way the Chamber works in partnership with the city.

For these reasons, we as the Board of Directors, felt that it was time to fine-tune our brand to match with our new environment. Our new Mission Statement is:

We are committed to promoting and meeting the needs of our members to create the best community in which to live, work, and do business, while providing leadership for the advancement of economic vitality by building relationships with City Representatives to benefit all businesses within Downey.

To coordinate with our updated Mission, we are proud to introduce a new logo, which better represents these changes and embodies who we are today.



The elements in our new logo were designed to symbolize the City of Downey embracing the smaller letters, which signify the Chamber of Commerce, in addition to the letters literally representing the Downey Chamber of Commerce. Like the icon, the City and its Chamber work together to create a strong, cooperative unit, joined in our dedication to provide a safe environment, reliable leadership, and opportunities for our community. One can also say that the icon stands for Diversity, Community, and Collaboration.

The variations of blue in the logo convey trustworthiness, stability, wisdom, confidence and endless possibilities. The green represents growth and renewal, which aptly represent the expansion of commerce we have had in the city in the last several years.

Overall, the more modern colors, the roundness of the logo, and clean font, express a more friendly and inviting brand, that appeals to a younger audience, while still celebrating the strength of the city's history.

Submitted by: Sheila Tetangco-Bartolone, Director, Downey Chamber of Commerce, and Senior Marketing Director at Financial Partners Credit Union



Logo was commissioned by local Visual Artist, Ronald Katagiri (@RonKatagiri), 2018

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DOWNEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Downey, CA 90241
(562) 923-2191

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RAIN NEG, EPROS

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

Message from the President



Hello Everyone,

As we finish the old year and get started on the New Year, we started creating a list of resolutions that will be the best fit for 2019 for our family and individual self. When I was younger I remember I belonged to a gym and the first 3-4 months it was unbearable to find a parking space or a machine to work out but it would fade as the resolution would change or disappear for some. The Downey Chamber of Commerce is committed in making your business resolution a priority for the upcoming year with the help of the board we have transformed a couple of areas of the chamber to best fit the businesses in 2019. Like many business and organization we had to reinvent ourselves on who we are and what we stand for.

As you see by the new issue of the **Downey Business** and website we have made some significate changes and I hope everyone will take advantage of those changes to self-promote their business and attend monthly events. You are now able to add events to your calendar and pay for those events on your computer. If you would like to promote your business we are able to put an ad in the Downey Business and provide a banner add on the website, which we received 2,603 this past week.

Our mission statement at the Downey Chamber of Commerce "We are committed to promoting and meeting the needs of our members, to create the best community in which to live, work and do business, providing leadership for the advancement of economic vitality and building the relationship with City Representatives, through coordination with local leaders to benefit all businesses within Downey". The Chamber of Commerce was created by our past members and now with the addition of newer member we are ready to assist the next generation of Owners.

-- John F Casillas, President
Downey Chamber of Commerce

Events & Meetings

Tuesday, January 8 @ 6:30 pm
City Council Meeting
City Hall Council Chamber

Wednesday, January 9
@ 11:30 am to 1:00 pm
Discover Your Next Level-Workshop Peak
Performance Strategist
Brian Mayoral
11131 Brookshire Ave. Downey, CA 90241

Thursday, January 10
@ 9:00am - 10:00am
Business Watch
Downey City Hall Council Chambers
11131 Brookshire Ave, Downey, 90241

Wednesday, January 16 @ 12:00 pm
Ambassador Committee Meeting-
7611 Firestone Blvd. Downey

Wednesday, January 16 @ 4:30 pm
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
Urrutia & Co
10751 Lakewood Blvd. Ste. G
Downey, CA 90241

Monday, January 21
Martin Luther King Jr. Day
OFFICE CLOSED

Tuesday, January 22 @ 6:30 pm
City Council Meeting
City Hall Council Chamber

Monday, January 28 @ 12:00 pm
Board of Directors
Downey Chamber of Commerce
11131 Brookshire Ave. Downey

Wednesday, January 30 @ 12:00 pm
City of Affairs
Speaker: Mayor Rick Rodriguez
Downey Chamber of Commerce
11131 Brookshire Ave. Downey

Message from the Executive Director



Happy New Year and all the best for 2019! Looking forward to next year you're going to see some changes in the stodgy old Chamber of Commerce. Even though we are only one year away from a new decade, the Chamber wanted to get an early start. First off, you may have noticed a new look for the paper. Part of the "new look" is the use of the new Chamber logo along with a more efficient and hopefully more entertaining look for our Business Directory.

Next the exterior of our building got a new look as well. Out with the overgrown dated plants from the sixties and it's been replaced with modern drought tolerant plantings, easy care and good-looking gravel and rocks. Also, we now have a useful pathway the Chamber can use for on site ribbon cuttings. We do appreciate the City's green light on this project and all the work done by the City's Public Works Department.

Lastly, I want to thank the members who worked so hard on 2018's Christmas Parade and the Elf Run. Our committee chairwomen, Cindy Kovach, of US Bank and Joanna Peterson, of Gallatin Dental did such a wonderful job in putting the parade together. There are so many small details that must be completed, for this event to be successful, and these two strong leaders made sure everything was done and done well. Another thank you goes out to those individuals who were instrumental in making sure the Elf Run went off without a hitch. The Chamber really appreciates Randy Luety and Carrie Uva. They were at the starting line, early and ready to organize. Marianna Pacheco brought the volunteers from Downey Adult School and they were ready to work. DAS provided the first aid station for both events making everyone feel a little safer. The theme this year was a Christmas of Giving and I can truly say that so many people gave so much to make this tradition happen.

The Chamber would like to congratulate our new Mayor, Rick Rodriquez. Mr. Rodriquez was a former President of the Downey Chamber and is a big part why the City and Chamber work so well together. Look for our new joint venture, Downey Business Watch, a collaboration between the City, Downey Police Department and your Chamber. Our first event is on January 10th and there is a flyer in today's paper as well as information on the Chamber's webpage and Facebook. This is a very important initiative with the purpose of protecting our local businesses.

Once again, Happy New Year to all our readers and let's make 2019 one of our best years ever!!

-- Michael Calvert, Executive Director
Downey Chamber of Commerce



Ambassador of the Month | DANIEL ANDRADE

This month *Downey Business* features Daniel Andrade of Beautiful Homes Real Estate. Instead of usual article promoting his business and talking about his favorite movies, Daniel

has written an informative piece regarding what it is like to volunteer for the Annual Christmas Parade. Daniel was part of the Parade organizing committee this year. He was very effective and came up with some great ideas that truly helped the process. Below is what Daniel has written about his experience.

December 2nd was such a beautiful day in Downey. It started with the whimsical 5K Elf Run in the morning and then the 67th Annual Downey Christmas Parade. There were convertibles, many kids, bands, dancers, street performers, horses and we had a large contingent of the City's non-profits participating this year. But the best part of it all was that I got to be part of the Chamber's Christmas Parade Committee! Parades are fun to watch and marching in a parade is also special, but planning a parade is just on another level.

As a member of the Downey Chamber of Commerce, you get so many opportunities to meet new people, grow your business and it feels like you know everyone in the City. It makes you want to be more involved, so I joined the Ambassador's Committee. As an Ambassador, I was able to welcome the new

companies joining the Chamber, we meet with people at City Hall, we attend Ribbon Cuttings and Grand Openings along with assisting at all sorts of events. The Chamber is responsible for the Annual Street Faire and the Golf Tournament, which is great, but working on the parade, that is very exciting.

A clipboard was passed around at the July Ambassador meeting and when I saw that, I was in!! We met monthly and started with a very long agenda of activities with multiple pieces and many sub-committees. Not to mention that we were supporting the Elf Run as well. The list started off so long, but as the weeks went by, the items got checked off one by one. If you ever get a chance to work on a Chamber event, these volunteers are the most fun people in all of Downey.

On Parade Day, the results of all our work were the smiles on the participants and the crowds. Everyone was waving, the Reviewing Stage looked beautiful and the dignitaries looked happy as well. I worked with Ron Long of Sun Run Solar and made a new friend with his awesome little girl. I personally want to thank all the Boy and Girl Scouts who helped me with the banners. I did hear a few people say that this year's parade was the best, EVER!!

If you're reading this paper, you must care about business and you must care about Downey. You should get involved! There are so many wonderful organizations in the city to chose from, but my favorite is the Downey Chamber of Commerce. Its real people working together while having fun...you'll see! Come join us at our next Let's Do Lunch or Chamber Mixer. Please check our website for our next event.



Daniel Andrade is the Broker at Beautiful Homes Real Estate in Downey and has been a Chamber Ambassador since 2017




CORRECTION

The December's edition of *Downey Business* unintentionally omitted the contact information for Maria Robideau, December's Ambassador of the Month

Please contact Maria at Risher Mortuary at (562) 861-3880 or she can be found at her office at 10927 Downey Ave. The Chamber apologizes to Ms. Robideau and to Risher Mortuary for this unfortunate error.



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Welcome Mascorro Insurance Agency



Photo by Claudia Gomez

Wishing the new Farmers Agency “Good Luck” are Mayor Pro Tem, Rick Rodriguez, the Mascorro Family (handling the scissors), City Council Woman, Blanca Pacheco, Chamber Board Member Joanna Peterson of Gallatin Dental, Chad Oberly of Assemblywoman Christina Garcia’s Office, Chamber President Elect, Carrie Uva of Century 21 Real Estate, and former Mayor and Chamber Board Member David Gafin.

On December 5th, the Downey Chamber welcomed their newest member, Mascorro/Farmers Insurance. The office is located at 8240 Florence Ave. and recently re-opened after some office renovations. The agency is a family run business which was evident when the entire family was present at the ribbon cutting. Mr. Mascorro is very proud of the training, acumen, and service that his office provides to their clients. The Chamber was there in full force and exhibited the advantages of being an active member. Learning the advantages of having your insurance with this Farmers Agency was very interesting. Mascorro believes that one agency can represent all your insurance needs and challenges his staff to make sure that they provide that. Thank you for joining the Chamber. Your membership makes us a better agency and we look forward to your active participation at events.

LOCATION:
Mascorro Insurance Agency
Farmers Insurance
Jorge Mascorro
8301 E. Florence Avenue, Suite 203
Downey, 90240
(562) 861-1200

New Members

Mascorro Insurance Agency- Farmers Insurance Jorge Mascorro jmascorro@farmersagent.com 8301 Florence Ave. Ste. 203 Downey, CA 90240 (562)861-1200	Urrutia & Company Lazaro Urrutia Urrutiataxservice@gmail.com 10751 Lakewood Blvd. Ste. G Downey, CA 90241 (562)381-2999
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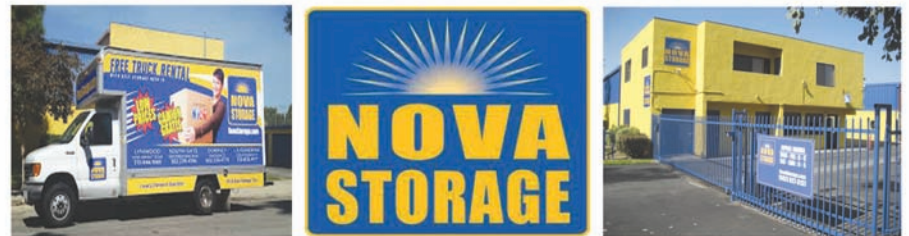
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Maria Larkin	Mary Stauffer
	David R. Gafin

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New Employment Laws for 2019

Before leaving office, California Gov. Jerry Brown signed several pieces of employment-related legislation related to employment. Here is a brief rundown:

AB 3109 (Disclosure of Sexual Harassment): This bill makes void and unenforceable any provision in a contract or settlement agreement that prevents a party to the contract from testifying about criminal conduct or sexual harassment in an administrative, legislative, or judicial proceeding.

SB 224 (Sexual Harassment): This bill amends section 51.9 of the Civil Code to expand the types of relationships that can be subject to a claim for sexual harassment to include lobbyists, elected officials, directors, producers, and investors. This statute generally applies to work relationships where one person holds himself out as being able to help someone establish a business or professional relationship directly or with a third party.

SB 820 (Settlement of Sexual Harassment Claims): This new law prohibits provisions in settlement agreements entered into after January 1, 2019 that prevent disclosure of factual information pertaining to claims of sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender discrimination or related retaliation that have been filed in court or before an administrative agency.

SB 1343 (Sexual Harassment Training): Existing law requires employers with 50 or more employees to provide supervisors with sexual harassment training. This new law expands the training requirement to employers with 5 or more employees and requires that employers provide at least 2 hours of training to supervisory employees and at least one hour of training to non-supervisory employees by January 1, 2020 and once every two years thereafter.

AB 1619 (Sexual Assault; Statute of Limitations): This new law greatly enlarges the statute of limitations for filing a civil action for damages for sexual assault to 10 years after the alleged assault or 3 years after the plaintiff discovered or reasonably discovered injury as a result of the assault, whichever is later.

SB 826 (Gender Composition of Boards of Directors): This new law provides for mandatory inclusion of women on corporate boards of directors.

SB 1976 (Lactation Accommodation): This new law makes changes to existing lactation accommodation law. The existing law requires employers to make reasonable efforts to provide a location other than a toilet stall to be used for lactation. The new law specifies that the location should be something other than a bathroom and

further specifies that it generally should be a permanent location but that it can be a temporary location if (1) the employer is unable to provide a permanent location due to operational, financial, or space limitations; (2) the temporary location is private and free from intrusion while being used for lactation purposes; and (3) the temporary location is not used for other purposes while being used for lactation.

SB 970 (Human Trafficking): This new law requires hotel and motel employers, by January 1, 2020, to provide at least 20 minutes of training on human trafficking awareness to employees who are likely to come into contact with victims of human trafficking.

SB 1123 (Paid Family Leave Uses): California has a paid family leave program that provides partial wage replacement to employees who take leaves of absence for specified purposes. This new law expands the program to provide paid family leave benefits beginning January 1, 2021 to employees who take time off for reasons associated with being called to active duty or a spouse, domestic partner, parent, or child being called to active duty.

SB 1252 (Copy of Payroll Records): Existing law already requires that employees have a right to inspect or copy their payroll records and that they must be allowed to do so within 21 days of such a request. This new law clarifies that if an employee requests a copy of the records, the employer must provide the copies (as opposed to requiring employees to copy the records themselves).

AB 1565 (Contractor Liability): This new law took effect immediately as urgency legislation. It clarifies a new law enacted last year making certain direct contractors performing work in the state liable for unpaid wages by subcontractors. The amendments to the law provide requirements that must be met in order for a direct contractor to withhold payments to a subcontractor for "disputed sums." In order to withhold payment, the contractor must specify in its contract with a subcontractor all items of information that will be requested of the subcontractor, such as payroll records and other information related to hours worked, etc.

SB 1412 (Criminal History Inquiries): This bill amends Labor Code section 432.7, which limits employers' ability to conduct criminal history inquiries and to use criminal history information in employment decisions. Existing law makes an exception for employers who are required by federal or state law to inquire into an applicant's or employee's criminal history. The amendment is intended to tighten the exception to apply only where an employer is required by law to inquire into a "particular conviction" or where an employer cannot by law hire someone with a "particular conviction."



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Trading Post Ribbon Cutting

Recently the Chamber celebrated a very special Anniversary for a local Downey tradition. The Trading Post, located at 9956 Lakewood Blvd just north of Florence Ave., has been the “go to” supplier of quality spirits. What was once a rundown liquor store has been revived, but still gives you the old town feel of Prohibition with its traditional storefront and retro candies. George and Flower lead an incredible staff of knowledgeable men and women who know just about everything about wines and distilled liquor. When planning for your next party or just stocking up your liquor cabinet, definitely stop at the Trading Post and be amazed.

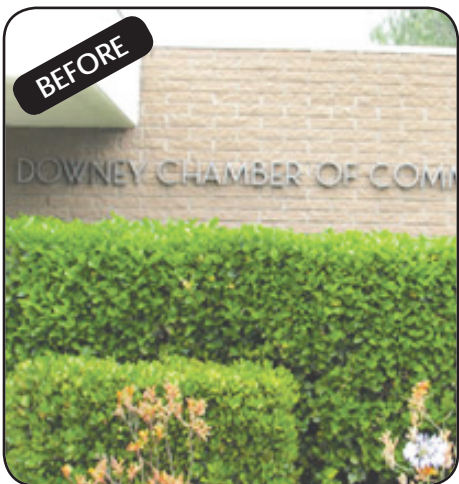


Displaying their Chamber Membership Plaque are Flower Huizor and George Cervantes who lead an incredible staff at the Trading Post.



Welcoming the Trading Post to the Chamber are Board Members Mariana Pacheco of Pacheco Realty, Cindy Kovach of US Bank, Immediate Past President of the Chamber, Joanna Peterson of Gallatin Dental, Flower of the Trading Post, City Council Member, Blanca Pacheco, George of the Trading Post, Chamber President, John Casillas of Farmers and Merchants Bank, and Mayor Pro Tem, Rick Rodriguez.

CHAMBER on the town



This month, it's not about our members being out and about, but the overhaul of our office exterior is making the news. A big “thank you” to the hard-working men and women at the City’s Public Works Department. They did an amazing job changing office from an over-grown façade that was easy to over-look, to a drought-tolerant, cutting edge exterior which now “pops” as you drive by. The staff, Board, and our members are all very please with the new look. Again, a big salute of gratitude to Public Works!!



The hard-working men who made it all possible.



-- CHAMBER Open House --

One of our favorite traditions here at the Chamber is hosting our members and friends to a Holiday Open House. Sarah, Blake and Michael set aside a weekday afternoon and invite the group for a wonderful pot luck lunch. Tamales, Spanish Rice, Cane's Chicken, Porto's desserts, lasagna, salads, well I guess just about everything was available for sampling. The best part of the event is the camaraderie along with sharing everyone's holiday traditions. Mostly revolving around food!! Thank you to everyone who came and visited. The Board, Ambassadors, and Staff enjoyed having you stop by.



It's a holiday selfie!! Chamber President, John Casillas of Farmers and Merchant Bank, corrals the buffet crowd as we fill our plates with all the goodies. Thank you, Board Members, Joanna Peterson and Cindy Kovach, Ambassadors, Jerry Weitzstein and Maria Robideau, along with staff, Sarah and Blake. The Chamber truly thank you for the support you give us all year long!

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A photograph of a plate of dumplings, likely gyoza, served with a dipping sauce. There are also other food items visible in the background.

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Thank you for your continued participation and support!

-The Downey Chamber of Commerce-

Background Checks Beware: The Do’s and Don’ts of Employee Background Checks



Introduction

Background checks, also known as investigative consumer reports, can be a powerful arrow in an employer’s quiver. Background checks help an employer spot a potentially problematic employee and allow an employer to avoid hiring a person with a questionable history. However, employers must know the law surrounding background checks in order to avoid unnecessary liability. Finally, employers must be wary because once something is learned about an employee, it cannot be unlearned. Discovering a star employee’s problematic past can force an employer to have to fire an otherwise excellent employee.

Federal and State Rules

California employers who wish to run a background check on applicants or current employees must follow the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act and California’s Consumer Credit Reporting Act. These laws define a background check as any written or oral report created by a third party that details an employee or applicant’s credit history, character, general reputation, personal characteristics, or mode of living which is used for employment purposes. The laws only apply when an employer hires an outside agency to investigate an employee or applicant. The laws do not apply when the employer conducts an investigation themselves.

Under both Federal and California law, employers must receive an employee or applicant’s written permission before conducting a background check. Employers must fully disclose the background check’s nature and scope to the employee or applicant. A large exception to this rule occurs when the employer has reasons to believe that the employee has engaged in wrongdoing. In such a case, employers can secretly conduct background checks without first securing the employee’s written permission.

Background checks cannot be unlimited. For example, civil judgements against an employee that have been fully paid and are at least seven years old cannot be included in the final report. Arrests that are at least seven years old cannot be included in the report, so long as the arrest did not lead to a conviction.

Employees who “check the box” and elect to receive a copy of the background report must be sent a copy within three days of the employer receiving the report. The copy must include the background check company’s contact information, and the name of the person or people who created the report.

An employee has few options when disputing a background check’s findings. The employee must complain to the company that ran the background check. That company is required by law to undertake a free and reasonable reinvestigation within 30 days of receiving the challenge, and to update the final report if any information needs to be corrected.

Potential Liability

Employers can face liability for violating the background check rules. Under Federal law, companies can face between \$100 and \$1,000 in fines for any violations, punitive damages, court costs, and reasonable attorney’s fees incurred in bringing a lawsuit against the employer.

California provides for harsher penalties. Employers can be forced to pay \$10,000 or the actual damages the employee suffered, whichever is greater. Additionally, as in a violation of the Federal law, a California state court can award punitive damages, court costs, and reasonable attorney’s fees.

Attorney’s fees could easily reach into the tens of thousands of dollars, so employers would be wise to avoid litigation by simply following the rules.

Is Ignorance Bliss?

An underappreciated risk of conducting background checks, especially on existing employees, is that employers cannot unlearn what they have discovered. While it is critical for employers to have an accurate understanding of their employees’ character, this knowledge can come at a price. For example, a background check could uncover something serious about an employer’s star employee. This employee might be invaluable to the company and create a great deal of revenue and customer satisfaction. However, employers must enforce their company policies uniformly or risk charges of favoritism or disparate treatment. Moreover, employers can be held liable for their employees’ actions. Employers will not get far wielding their ignorance as a shield if an employee harms a coworker or the public for some reason that could have been predicted had the employer only run a background check. Therefore, employers must go into background checks with the knowledge that they might have to fire the employee if negative information is discovered.

Conclusion

Background checks are a common and useful way that employers ensure that their employees are trustworthy. However, there are dangers employers must be aware of when considering conducting background checks. The employer can face significant liability, especially when attorney’s fees are included, for violating either Federal or State law. Moreover, employers risk upsetting their employees and potentially losing employees when background checks are ordered. While these dangers do exist, background checks continue to offer employers invaluable information. Background checks will continue to be routinely run nationwide. As long as employers play by the rules, background checks should be a relatively painless and extremely useful tool in the employer’s tool belt.

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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If you are wondering "how can I get my business noticed?" Do what many of our members do, get involved, meet new business owners (and potential clients), and advertise. I know that **The Downey Patriot** and the monthly **Downey Business** are being read. I get comments almost every day regarding our content and from those companies developing new business! So, join the fun and get noticed! You have nothing to lose and only new customers to gain!!



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