

May 14, 2024

Dear Chamber Members and Partners:

Next month, the 36th class of our Leadership program will graduate 60 participants. This will bring our total graduates to over 1,500!

Each year, we welcome a diverse cohort of seasoned and emerging leaders from all sectors of our community to engage in a year-long journey to not only learn more about our county but also about themselves. This introspective element lends itself to challenging participants to design a pathway that will lead them to a destination of service – by volunteering for a non-profit organization or school, serving on a public board, committee or commission, or even running for elective office. No matter the arrival sequence, the Leadership program instills in all participants the need for thoughtful, compassionate and impactful leadership in service to a broader community of needs.

When Chamber San Mateo County began the Leadership program in 1988, we saw our community struggling with developing a pipeline of civic-minded, community-focused leaders who could fill critical roles at all levels of public service. At that time, the president of the Chamber partnered with a council member and city manager of Redwood City to reverse this trend and foster a training program that would be a call to action for service. Since that time, we are proud to claim the countless participants who have been appointed to city, county and regional boards and commissions, who hold seats on charitable boards, who have run for office and been elected, and those who have served and continue to serve in municipal leadership roles as city managers, directors, and department chiefs.

The broad portfolio of topics explored each year in the Leadership program grounds graduates in the history, challenges and realities of topics. From government, education, housing, transportation, safety, healthcare and economic development, the Leadership program sparks ongoing conversations that lead to collaborations and network-building. Now, more than ever, we need this service-centric approach to lifting our region and creating an inclusive community that ensures that diverse voices are heard and all populations are represented in processing the realities of today and shaping the opportunities of tomorrow.

Chamber San Mateo County is now opening up the application process for the next cohort of the Leadership program, which will officially kick-off later this fall. The applications and process can be accessed via this [link](#). We encourage you to think about applying if you have not already participated in the program. And for those who count themselves as a Leadership graduate, we encourage you to inspire someone in your network to apply. The application deadline is July 15, 2024.

For those who are Leadership graduates, we would love to hear from you. Please tell us about how participating in the Leadership program has impacted your professional and/or personal life. We would welcome your story by emailing amy@chambersmc.org.

I know that you all will join me in sending good wishes to the 2024 class of the Leadership program!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Amy".