



Where were you in 1967? Were you not even in the minds of your parents yet, were you becoming more and more independent going through elementary school, finding yourself making plans for what happens after high school or were you soaring in your career? Whatever stage of life, your Chamber of Commerce likely went through similar growing pains to bring the organization to its 50 years of experience working, supporting, and collaborating with businesses and our community.

Anniversary years enable us to discover who we are, what we have accomplished, where we need to improve and what we are capable of being. We can measure our growth with any number of metrics, but my favorite victories are realized through the friendships and productive business relationships that have been formed and the new lenses through which people are able to see our community. We have members who have new business partners, new customers, new business referrals and have added business advisors all because of the connections made through their Chamber involvement. The short, direct saying of 'people do business with people they know, like and trust', is a reality through Chamber introductions, connections and committee work.

There is power in community. Having a great business community does not show up by accident. It is intentional. It takes action, effort, follow through and open communication. Your Chamber has taken the strong values of this community to heart, building our coalition of businesses and keeping the interests of business top of mind.

The Chamber of Commerce is made up of entrepreneurs, business owners and leaders of corporations. No matter the size, they all share common ground. Daily, I listen to stories from members that demonstrate their inherent optimism and feelings that they are the last line of defense and they consider themselves especially accountable for the people who look to them for leadership and paychecks. Their efforts to be resilient and practical are daily reminders for me.

Sure, over the last 50 years the Chamber and our members have experienced ups and downs. Our Chamber recognizes the importance of the businesses who have built the foundation of this organization. The Chamber must evolve every year refocusing why we were formed while reinventing year after year to meet the ever-changing speed of business. We continue to work with you to promote business affecting just over 16,200 employees.

When I reflect on the accomplishments and progress our Chamber has made it is never attributed to one person or event. Every Chairman of the Chamber Board, with whom I have had the pleasure to work, has been intentional with their actions to lead, guide and protect the foundation and mission of the Chamber. Every opportunity we have to help a member is an opportunity to build a relationship. Every relationship we cultivate creates a trust factor. The more trust that is built among our members, the increase in doing business together or making referrals multiplies. The more prosperous business, the more enhanced the community becomes.

Thank you for supporting your Chamber of Commerce and each other. Through your membership investments, business sponsorships and time, we will continue to build and sustain a first-rate Chamber of Commerce.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet Tressler-Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janet Tressler-Davis, CCE IOM, CTA  
President & CEO