



# Membership Engagement Guide

Get informed, get engaged, and make your voice heard.



## **Successful businesses create successful communities and we are passionate about both.**

At The Chamber, we know that you want a successful business in a thriving community.

In order to achieve that, you need access to the right people, information, and resources to lead your company, as well as opportunities to meaningfully contribute to community growth, progress, and positive change.

The problem is that leading a business is demanding. It's not easy to find and keep the right people, navigate local regulations, attract customers, and adapt to an uncertain and changing economic environment. And with a full plate, addressing big community challenges can feel too time consuming or like your voice will not be heard.

We believe no business leader should have to face these challenges alone. That's why, for more than 80 years, we've helped people just like you be more successful by providing access to the networks, knowledge, and resources you need to thrive.

Our Chamber is home to one of the most diverse, collaborative, and rapidly growing community of business leaders in the region. We invite you to be part of it.

**Aaron Nelson**  
President and CEO  
The Chamber



In 2024, The Chamber launched a five-year campaign designed to fulfill our vision of workforce development, small business support, and increasing housing supply and affordability. The Campaign for a Greater Chapel Hill-Carrboro focuses on three initiatives to advance our region.



## Our Member Promise

- 1 **Connect** you to the people, information, and resources your business needs to succeed.
- 2 **Advocate** for the business interest of your community.
- 3 **Drive progress and build community** through successful community convening, education, and engagement strategies.

### Chamber Vision:

Greater Chapel Hill-Carrboro as a resilient, globally recognized community with the talent, infrastructure, and investment that drives the success of local employers and supports world-class education, public amenities, and thriving downtowns.

### Chamber Mission:

To serve and advance local business interests and build a resilient community where business thrives.

#### Invest in Workforce Development

**THE GOAL:** Create an employer-led talent pipeline that aligns education and training opportunities with high-demand jobs, increasing the social mobility of all residents while also meeting the workforce needs of employers.

##### THE OUTCOME:

- 80% of adults workforce ready
- 80% of 3rd graders on grade level
- 80% CHCCS students UNC eligible
- Community focus on Healthcare, Hospitality, Skilled Trades, and Technology workforce needs

#### Accelerate Small Business Growth and Improve Business Retention and Startup Support

**THE GOAL:** Establish a more cohesive system that improves business growth and retention and focuses efforts on starting and growing Black, Latinx, and refugee owned enterprises.

##### THE OUTCOME:

- 1,000 net new businesses
- 5,000 more jobs
- 400 new Black, Latinx, refugee-owned enterprises
- 2 billion in new investment
- Priority population income growth

#### Increase Housing Supply and Affordability

**THE GOAL:** Add 600 housing units each year to keep up with existing demand and prioritize housing affordability by adding 1,500 units of permanently affordable housing.

##### THE OUTCOME:

- 1,500 new permanently affordable units
- 3,000 new residential units
- \$10 million affordable housing bond
- \$10 million revolving loan fund



# 2026 Events + Programs

## **Business After Hours**

Semi-monthly membership gatherings offering relationship building and business connections in a relaxed, social setting.

## **Business Before Hours**

Semi-monthly casual drop-ins for members to connect downtown over coffee. Designed for intentional and flexible engagement.

**Nonprofit Executives Lunch & Learn** Monthly meet-ups facilitated by Moss + Ross focused on uniting nonprofit voices, cultivating collaboration, and inspiring community change.

## **Real Estate Roundtable**

Monthly Zoom calls for commercial and residential real estate professionals to exchange expertise of current industry climate.

## **Women's Networking Events**

Quarterly learning, relationship building, and networking opportunities for women at all stages of their career.

## **Chapel Hill Young Professionals (CHYP)**

Connecting member employees ages 40 and under with tailored networking and professional development.

## **Black Business Alliance (BBA)**

Connecting and empowering Black business owners and leaders by fostering connections, amplifying voices, and improving access to essential resources, information, and customers.

## **Carrboro Business Alliance (CBA)**

Advocating for and connecting Carrboro-based businesses.

## **Policy Event Series**

### **Economic Forecast**

The purpose of this forum is for Chamber members and friends to receive timely information on the current performance and future predictions of our national, state, regional, and local economies.

### **Growth and Development Update**

A thriving community requires investments. This forum will look closely at economic development throughout Greater Chapel Hill-Carrboro and unpack what projects are underway, why they matter, and what we can expect going forward.

### **Government Appreciation Reception**

Join local business leaders in thanking elected officials and local government leaders.

### **Policy On Tap**

This discussion series is at the intersection of business and government. Each session will highlight issues that matter to our business community with insights shared by policymakers and experts.

### **Interested in aligning your brand with these programs?**

Contact Michelle Brown at [mbrown@carolinachamber.org](mailto:mbrown@carolinachamber.org) to see how you can elevate your engagement and maximize visibility and connection with those who are actively engaged in our local business community.



## Ribbon Cuttings and Milestone Celebrations

At The Chamber, we love celebrating member business grand openings, anniversaries, or other special milestones with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Email Hayley Loftus at [hloftus@carolinachamber.org](mailto:hloftus@carolinachamber.org) to schedule your promotional celebration!



## Signature Events

### Annual Meeting | February

Reconnect with 250+ Chamber members and learn about successful Chamber-led efforts over the prior year and plans for the year to come.

### Bocce Derby | April

Participate in this annual Chamber fundraiser where fun meets purpose. Forge meaningful new connections and show off your hand-toss while you celebrate the camaraderie and spirit of togetherness.

### State of the Community Report | June

This annual briefing brings context and analysis to the latest economic, social, housing, workforce, and environmental indicators for the Greater Chapel Hill-Carrboro area.

### Business Excellence Awards | December

A celebratory luncheon ceremony honoring 24+ exceptional businesses and community leaders for their achievements in and their contributions to our community.

### Leadership Chapel Hill-Carrboro | May 2026 - Dec. 2027

A cohort-based learning experience designed to inform, develop, connect, and engage emerging leaders in the Greater Chapel Hill-Carrboro area.

### Inter-City Visit + Leadership Conference | Fall

Local business and community leaders travel to a peer community to benchmark initiatives, learn new approaches, and shape our shared vision for the future.

Contact Michelle Brown at [mbrown@carolinachamber.org](mailto:mbrown@carolinachamber.org) for information on event sponsorship opportunities.

## Board Leadership



**Elie Abou-Rjeileh,**  
Chair  
Olmaz Jewelers



**Sweta Adkin,**  
Vice Chair  
Adkin CPA PLLC



**David Henson,**  
Treasurer &  
Vice Chair for Finance  
Wells Fargo Advisors

**Creighton Blackwell,**  
Chair of the Major Investors Council  
Coastal Credit Union

**Betsy Harris,**  
Immediate Past Chair  
Armacell, LLC

**James Kilbourne,**  
Vice Chair for Government Affairs  
Allen Stahl + Kilbourne

**Scott Maitland,**  
Vice Chair for Community Impact  
Top of the Hill

**Aaron Nelson,**  
Secretary and CEO  
The Chamber

**Jennifer Player,**  
Vice Chair for Membership  
Habitat for Humanity

**Robert Saunders,**  
General Counsel  
Brooks Pierce Law Firm

**Mayor Jess Anderson,**  
Town of Chapel Hill

**La-Tasha Best-Gaddy,**  
Infinity Bridges

**Marilyn Carter,**  
Orange County Commissioners

**Elizabeth Cheek,** Carolina  
Club

**Rowell Daniels,** UNC Health

**Miles Fitch,** Fitch Lumber &  
Hardware

**Mayor Barbara Foushee,**  
Town of Carrboro

**Rory Gillis,**  
Triangle Digital Partners

**Kelly Holcombe,** Blue Cross  
and Blue Shield of North  
Carolina

**Dr. Daniella Jaimes-Colina,**  
Piedmont Health

**Emily Kreutzer,** Carrboro  
Plumbing

**Jeff Kurtz,** Ram Realty  
Advisors

**Anna Latta,** Hendrick Subaru  
Southpoint

**Dan Lehman,** UNC Health

**Joel Levy,** Joel I Levy, CPA,  
PLLC

**Greg Lewis,** Sycamore at  
Chatham Mills & 39 West  
Catering

**Jasmine Lubbad,** Homes for  
Heroes + BOLD Real Estate

**Chris McClure,** UNC Chapel  
Hill

**Jim McNeely,** Restoration 1 of  
Durham-Raleigh

**Judy Miller,** Good Works  
Funding, Inc.

**Eliazar Posada,**  
Posada Strategy Consulting

**Caroline Riggsbee,**  
Pinnacle Financial Partners

**Lauren Rivers,** Rivers Agency

**Michael Rodriguez,** Subway +  
Become Unshaken

**Sarah Stephens,** Duke Energy

**Ray Trapp,** Families and  
Communities Rising

**Dr. Rodney Trice,** Chapel Hill-  
Carrboro City Schools

**Julia Wright,** Enbridge NC

## 2026 Board of Directors

## Chamber Staff



**Aaron Nelson**  
President & CEO



**Jensen Anderson**  
Director of Community  
Engagement and  
Assistant to the  
President



**Michelle Brown**  
Director of Business  
Engagement and  
Workforce  
Development



**Alissa Cook**  
Director of  
Programs and  
Events



**Taylor Gay**  
Business Success  
Navigator



**Luke Jackson**  
Member and  
Community  
Advancement  
Coordinator



**Hayley Loftus**  
Communications  
and Events  
Manager



**Ian Scott**  
Government  
Affairs and  
Advocacy



**Aury St.  
Germain**  
Vice President for  
Member Success and  
Engagement



**Jamie Strom**  
Finance Manager

## Standing Committees

### Finance Committee

Provides oversight and guidance of The Chamber's operational financial reporting and budgeting.

### Membership Committee

Shapes strategies and supports efforts to grow The Chamber's network and enhance engagement of existing members.

### Nominating Committee

Evaluates and recommends candidates to serve on the Board of Directors and to fill officer roles on the Board of Directors.

### Awards Selection Committee

Thoughtfully reviews and selects recipients of The Chamber's Business Excellence Awards.

### Government Affairs Committee

Monitors local, regional, state, and federal public policy issues relevant to The Chamber's membership and recommends legislative priorities and new position statements to the Chamber's Board of Directors.

### CHYP Leadership Council

Plans and facilitates meaningful programming for young professionals to connect and grow in their career.

### BBA Leadership Council

Provides insights and direction to support and advance the growth of a thriving Black business community.

### CBA Leadership Council

Implements intentional efforts for connecting and advocating for Carrboro-serving enterprises.

# Community Leader \$9,875 Annually



**Jesus Avendano**  
Gonzalez Painters & Contractors  
Community Leader



Aligning our brand with The Chamber has been a positive experience for Gonzalez Painters & Contractors, **elevating our credibility, fostering invaluable community partnerships, and expanding our impact in the region.** We view investing in The Chamber as an easy way to solidify our commitment to growth and positive change.”

**Fuel The Chamber's work.  
Build a resilient community where business thrives.**

Community Leader partnerships make The Chamber's vision possible: to be a globally recognized community with the talent, infrastructure, and investment that drives the success of local employers and supports world class education, public amenities, and thriving downtowns.

**And, we'll give you some great perks along the way:**

- **Annual Platinum Sponsorship** recognition with your name and logo at all major Chamber events
- Your logo on our Major Investors web page, video, and annual membership benefits book
- **Eight tickets** to each signature event for your team and guests (estimated \$2,200+ value)
- Two Complimentary Member Exclusive promotional e-mails to full membership with social media collaboration posts
- Invitations to **C-Suite Community Investor Summits**
- **\$450 off** Leadership Chapel Hill-Carrboro registrations
- **25% off** Chamber event sponsorship and advertising

# Community Builder

## \$6,855 Annually

**Lead Your Community.  
Maximize Your Marketing.  
Leave A Legacy.**

The Community Builder Membership is perfect for you if you want your enterprise to be known as a top business leader in the community, known and respected for giving back and leading the charge to make the greater Chapel Hill region a better place to live, work, and play.

**You get all the benefits of  
membership, PLUS:**

- **Annual Gold Sponsorship** recognition at all major Chamber events
- Your logo on our Major Investors web page, video, and annual membership benefits book
- **Six tickets** to each signature event for your team and guests (estimated \$1,600+ value)
- Two Complimentary Member Exclusive promotional e-mails to full membership with social media collaboration posts
- Invitations to **C-Suite Community Investor Summits**
- **\$450 off** Leadership Chapel Hill-Carrboro registrations
- **25% off** Chamber event sponsorship and advertising



I am a big believer that strategic growth begins with the partnerships we cultivate.

Our partnership with **The Chamber** has been essential in Pinnacle's growth and leadership development. Over the past decade, The Chamber has been an invaluable resource for our marketing efforts, industry knowledge, and community engagement."



**Caroline Riggsbee**  
Pinnacle Financial Partners  
Community Builder

# Business Leader \$4,675 Annually

  
The Chamber connects businesses, fosters collaboration, drives economic growth and represents **the spirit of all things Chapel Hill-Carrboro**. Merritt Properties is proud to be a member partner, and we appreciate The Chamber's dedication to the success of businesses both big and small."



**Keith Wallace**  
**Merritt Properties**  
Business Leader

## Invest in The Chamber's Economic & Community Development Efforts.

We work for you!

The Chamber offers more than just community — we're an advocate for you and the success of your business. Let us help you make valuable connections efficiently and access the information you need to make good business decisions.

**You get all the benefits of membership, PLUS:**

- **\$1,200 sponsorship & advertising credit** to align your brand with an event or promote your message on our digital communications platforms
- **Four tickets** to each event for you and your team (estimated \$1,080+ value)
- Invitations to **C-Suite Community Investor Summits**
- **Free Member Exclusive** email marketing to full membership with social media collaboration posts
- Promote up to **four separate locations** with enhanced business directory listings that display at the top of directory search results—enhanced listings include unlimited words, photos, linkbacks, and one video link
- Custom research and community data reports

# Business Builder \$1,585 Annually

## Increase Visibility. Grow Your Brand. Get VIP Access for Your Team.

Combine all the benefits of Chamber membership with an effective targeted marketing campaign designed to increase your visibility and brand PLUS extra access for you and your team members.

## You get all the benefits of membership, **PLUS**:

- A **\$600 sponsorship & advertising credit** to sponsor an event, place an ad on our website, or let us send a Member Exclusive e-mail on your behalf
- Enjoy **two complimentary tickets** for each event for you and your team to attend and engage (estimated \$540+ value)
- Enjoy four complimentary uses of The Chamber's conference room presented by Louise Beck Properties
- Promote **two separate locations** with enhanced business directory listings that display at the top of directory search results—enhanced listings include unlimited words, photos, linkbacks, and one video link
- Complimentary membership mailing address list for one time use



**Elie Abou-Rjeileh & Jack Daoud**  
**Olmaz Jewelers**  
Business Builder



The Chamber has been **an incredible source of knowledge and support** making us feel welcomed and part of the community as we moved to Chapel Hill and opened our store here."

# Small Business \$885 Annually



## Sweta & Blake Adkin

**Adkin CPA, PLLC**  
Small Business Member



We trust this Chamber to keep us informed, look out for our interests, and help create an economy and community where our businesses can thrive.”

**Build your reputation.  
Celebrate your growing business.**

Joining the Chamber family offers more than just community; we're an advocate for you and the success of your business. Let us help promote your services, offer recommendations of who you should connect with in our local community, and navigate the complexities of growing your business.

**Get all the benefits of membership, **PLUS**:**

- A **\$350 sponsorship & advertising credit** to sponsor an event, place an ad on our website, or let us send a Member Exclusive e-mail on your behalf
- Let us celebrate your grand opening or anniversary milestone with an **enhanced ribbon cutting** that includes a social media live tour, invitations to our local community leaders, elected officials, and a press release to our local media outlets
- Enjoy two complimentary uses of The Chamber's conference room presented by Louise Beck Properties
- Shipping internationally? Discounted Certificates of Origin and Free Sale apply with this membership

## Micro Enterprise \$625 Annually

### Chamber membership has its benefits:

- Make meaningful new business connections through Chamber programs and quality strategic referrals
- Access to a members-only InfoHub with detailed membership directory including direct contacts
- Free access to professional development programs including training, networking, and policy series forums
- Promotion on The Chamber's online business directory
- Access to high-quality, low-cost healthcare and dental care for your employees and their families with Piedmont Health
- Expertise and guidance on how to apply community data to your business and navigate local regulations
- Host a ribbon cutting or milestone celebration
- Promote your events, job openings, and offer exclusive Chamber member discounts
- Membership in the Carrboro Business Alliance & Black Business Alliance if applicable

### Grow your network. Strengthen your community.

We'll help you connect, grow your brand, and save money while advocating for your success and establishing your reputation as a local business leader.



As a member of the Chamber, we value how they understand and advocate for our specific needs, share crucial development plans, and provide insight on local market prices so we can fine-tune our own growth strategies. **Membership also provides opportunities for invaluable peer-to-peer networking and access to business professionals.**



**Jamie Fiocco**  
**Flyleaf books**  
Micro Enterprise Member

## Community Champions



THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL

## Community Investors



CHAPEL HILL MEDIA GROUP



CHAPELBORO.COM

YOUR DAILY LOCAL NEWS SOURCE

## Platinum Sponsors



The Daily Tar Heel

EIGHTEEN NINETY-THREE



BRAND STUDIO



THE CAROLINA INN

EST. 1924

Community Champions and Community Investors are a premier group of corporate citizens that are dedicated to the economic prosperity and progress of our region. They represent the highest level of Chamber investment and their commitment enables The Chamber to innovate and shape a thriving and vibrant region.

## Gold Sponsors



**east west** partners



LONGFELLOW™



**Google**

**RTP**

**Graduate**  
CHAPEL HILL



 **NORTHPOND**  
PARTNERS

 **TRG TRINISIC**  
RESIDENTIAL GROUP

 **up UNIVERSITY**  
PLACE



104 South Estes Drive  
Suite 102  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

919-967-7075

[carolinachamber.org](http://carolinachamber.org)

