



THE INSIDE VIEW

Winter 2008

Chair's Message: Judy Genshaft, University of South Florida



It is hard to believe that 2008 is coming to a close. For the past year, I have served as the Chair of the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce and it has definitely been a roller coaster ride, but I have enjoyed every minute of it and I will miss the collaboration and camaraderie I have enjoyed with the Chamber staff and fellow board members.

Despite these challenging economic times, the Chamber has been weathering the storm. Even though many companies have been forced to "tighten their belts," the Chamber has still seen an increase in membership which is very reassuring. This tells us that our members see the value in their membership whether it be for the professional growth, the community involvement or the connection with other area professionals.

From an economic development perspective, there have been a number of companies who have relocated or expanded

in the Tampa Bay area including Draper Laboratories, Pilgrim Software and Pemco, just to name a few. Our business Expansion and Relocation efforts have been on-going and will only increase in the upcoming year when the focus will be on maintaining and helping to grow the businesses already located in our backyard.

2008 also saw the departure of a few key Chamber staff including our Vice President of Economic Development which precipitated a change in the structure of the Committee of One Hundred. After careful research and analysis, the Committee of One Hundred was reformed and will now be a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Chamber and will be governed by a cabinet and managed by Keith Norden, the new Executive Managing Director.

In addition, 2008 saw the departure of Kim Scheeler, our President and CEO. While we were sorry to lose him, in his stead, Joe House stepped up and has been serving as the Interim President and CEO. An executive search is in progress

for Kim's replacement and we are hoping to have someone on board by the end of the first quarter of 2009.

We also saw many successes in 2008, including an overwhelming response to the new Women's Series luncheons and the Women of Influence Annual Luncheon held in October. We continued to see full participation in the Diploma-see Initiative and the Leadership Tampa Program welcomed an enthusiastic new class. And, we continue to see progress in the Emerge Tampa Bay, Public Policy and Military Affairs programs.

I have truly enjoyed my term as the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce Chair and it has been thrilling to take part in many of the transitions at the Chamber. Moving forward, I look forward to still being an active part of the Chamber Board and passing the baton to the very capable Chair-elect Henry Gonzalez III from The Bank of Tampa.

WOMEN of INFLUENCE

Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce

Nearly 800 attendees enjoyed the Second Annual Women of Influence Luncheon on October 27th at A La Carte Event Pavilion. Prior to the program starting, attendees enjoyed a bazaar of "sidewalk vendors" who featured goods and services including jewelry, baked goods and insurance. Attendees were also treated to gift bags from Level 2 SalonSpa.

The luncheon program began at noon and was emceed by NewsChannel 8 anchor Gayle Sierens whose enthusiasm and candor kept the program moving. The Women of Influence Committee Chair Kim de la Parte of de la Parte and Associates took to the podium and recognized the importance of this program, the dedication of the committee members and the support of the event sponsors. The featured speaker of the program was Deborah Fine, President of Digital Strategy for Universal Television, who spoke of her personal and professional journey which included serving in executive positions at iVillage Properties, Victoria's Secret, Avon and Conde Nast Publications. Deborah closed her presentation by sharing her ten strategies for success.

Following Deborah's remarks, she was presented with a gift basket courtesy of Columbia Restaurant. In addition, some attendees received giveaways such as books, a home décor gift basket and jewelry.

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