

# The Arlingtonian

The official voice of the Arlington, Virginia Chamber of Commerce Vol. LXV, No. 2 February 2017

## Arlington Chamber of Commerce 2016 Annual Report

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## 2016 By The Numbers



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## 2016 Chair's Message



Todd Yeatts

### **Making a Difference**

It was both an honor and pleasure to serve as the 2016 Chair of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce.

We had a great year that began with the sold-out 92nd Annual Arlington Business Gala and ended with 126 new members and an 88 percent retention rate. Those numbers were the result of focus, effort, and more importantly, the desire of our members to serve and give back to the organization.

In my remarks more than a year ago, I said that my time as Chair would not be a change of course but merely an acceptance of responsibility. What I did not realize is how much I would learn about our Chamber, our Board, and our County. It was an awesome experience seeing firsthand the talent, the energy, and the can-do spirit that is given by all connected with our organization.

I was fortunate to have the support of an Executive Committee that believed in the Chamber mission. And more importantly, they understood they could make a positive difference in their roles.

Making a difference is the reason the Chamber exists. Since 1924, the Arlington Chamber has been committed to being the voice of the business community and has continually contributed to economic prosperity and civic well-being of our county.

Chamber members, our Board of Directors, our volunteers, and our staff made 2016 a success.

2017 will be my ninth year as a member of the Chamber Board and as I said at the organizational meeting, I stepped down as the Chair, but I did not step away. I am committed to our Chamber, our County, our Commonwealth, and this great country.

I am proud to be part of an organization that advocates for businesses and that makes Arlington a better place to live, work, and play.

I appreciate the kind words and the sincere thanks I was given for my service as Chair. There are so many that I would like to thank for helping, contributing, and for being part of the "my year." I will not list names, but I will say thank you when I see you and I won't forget the difference you made.

I will take a minute to thank my smoking hot bride, Cindy. She supported me, accompanied me, and encouraged me. She was my partner at events, my sounding board, and is always my good time.

I look forward to continuing to be a part of the Chamber as we move through our 93rd year and I am happy to say, that we remain, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce.

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

**Todd Yeatts**

The Boeing Company

## 2017 Chair's Message



Tina Walker

### Execution, Efficiency, Engagement

Your Chamber has been hard at work executing its strategic plan. This plan was refreshed in the fall of 2015. The Board of Directors, the committee members and the Chamber staff have been diligently working on this strategy to provide an effective and strong organization that is critical in the support of the success of its members.

One of the many important goals included in the Chamber's strategic plan is "To advocate effectively for the business community." The Chamber has amplified the voice of business and is an active participant in politics and committees across the region. The Chamber continually monitors business issues and has streamlined the response time to these important issues. The Chamber is consistently engaging with key elected and appointed officials and has invited them to speak with its members on issues that affect business and Arlington.

The Program Review Task Force was established in 2016. Per the Chamber's strategic plan, this Task Force evaluated the Chamber's signature events and has worked to enhance these programs to provide further value to the membership and to the Chamber. Similarly, in 2017, the Task Force will be evaluating the monthly networking events to ensure that these events are providing our members the right opportunities to develop relationships and partnerships. Relationships and partnerships, in my opinion, are the key to success for any individual or business and the Chamber is focused on creating effective programs for engagement opportunities. Stay tuned for more information about these exciting changes taking place this year!

The Chamber increased its presence on social media and has more followers than ever. A refresh of the Chamber's website in 2016 has provided easy access to programs via mobile devices. It is now easier than ever to gain access to the more than 100 events per year that the Chamber provides to its membership.

The Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) has brought forth some amazing students with some great ideas. This program not only provides an opportunity for our local youth to bring their ideas and entrepreneurial spirit to the table, but it also provides the opportunity for our membership to share their skills, invest in a young entrepreneur, and provide mentorships to help develop our incredibly talented youth. The recently established YEA! Booster Committee will focus on making this program better for all that participate.

As you can see, things are getting done at the Chamber. The staff, the Board, and the committees are dedicated to the Chamber's success, the membership is involved, and I am motivated to lead this organization to be a positive force for its members.

I look forward to meeting all of you and working with you over the course of 2017!

**Tina Walker**  
BAE Systems

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**Linda Chandler**, Linden Resources, Inc.  
**Crystal Christmas-Watson**, Crystal City Marriott  
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**John Finlay**, Crystal City Sports Pub  
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**Bill Fogarty**, Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley & Walsh PC  
**Angela Fox**, Crystal City Business Improvement District  
**Betsy Frantz**, Leadership Center for Excellence  
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**John Gallagher**, Energesco Mechanical  
**Michael Garcia**, State Farm Insurance  
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**Brian Gordon**, Apartment and Office Building Association  
**Donna Hamaker**, Buck & Associates  
**Greg Hamilton**, Arlington Magazine  
**Daniel Hoff**, Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

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**Greg Mullan**, George Mason Mortgage, LLC  
**Dr. Patrick Murphy**, Arlington Public Schools  
**Joe Prentice**, State Department Federal Credit Union  
**Lindsey Rheame**, EagleBank  
**Scott Ritter**, United Bank  
**David Rowley**, Minuteman Press  
**James Ryerson**, Marymount University  
**Marie Schuler**, Comcast Cable Communications  
**Kevin Shooshan**, The Shooshan Company  
**John Snedden**, ROCKLANDS Barbeque and Grilling Company  
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*Past Chair*  
**Kevin Shooshan**  
The Shooshan  
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*President & CEO*  
**Kate Bates**  
Arlington Chamber  
of Commerce



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**Shannon Bailey**  
Global Thinking



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## 2016 Highlights

### Advocacy:

- The Chamber authored 18 public policy position letters in 2016 on matters affecting the Arlington business community. We saw the impact of these positions in policy outcomes throughout the year, and Chamber position letters were cited by County Board members when discussing their positions on numerous topics.
- President & CEO Kate Bates testified at a number of County Board Meetings in 2016 and attended several Work Sessions.
- Governor Terry McAuliffe signed into law the reinstatement of the additional 0.25% Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) for Arlington County, which was the Chamber's top priority for the 2016 legislative session. The funds generated by the additional TOT provide needed support to ensure that Arlington remains competitive in attracting leisure and business travel. The Chamber was a key driver of this issue, sending letters to the Virginia Senate and House Finance Committees in support of SB 160 and HB 1147 to reinstate the additional 0.25% TOT for Arlington County. Kate Bates testified on behalf of SB 160 before the Senate Finance Committee. She and Chris Raines, Hotel General Managers Committee Co-Chair, each testified before the House Finance subcommittee regarding HB 1147. Both bills passed through committee and were passed by the Senate and House respectively.
- The Government Affairs & Economic Development Committee hosted relevant speakers at their meetings throughout 2016, including County Board Chair Libby Garvey, County Manager Mark Schwartz, the Arlington delegation to the Virginia General Assembly, and Greg Potts – Virginia Government Relations Officer for Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. These meetings give members direct access to key leaders to stay informed on timely important issues.



2016 Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) students and Investor Panelists

**Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!):** The Chamber completed its second successful year of the YEA! program, which teaches middle and high school students (ages 11-18) how to launch and operate their own business. This program gives our members the chance to make an impact through volunteer opportunities, from business plan reviewer to mentor to investor panelist. The 2016 YEA! graduating class had 20 students, all of whom went on to launch their own business or nonprofit before the completion of the program. The Chamber also created the YEA! Booster Committee, which gives members another opportunity to get involved in helping future business leaders.

*(2016 highlights continued on next page)*

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## 2016 Highlights

**Governance:** The Chamber's newly-formed Governance Committee led the process of reviewing and updating the Chamber's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws. Through the committee's efforts, we accomplished the following:

- Simplified and streamlined the documents, removing references to specific procedural steps and ensuring compliance with the Code of Virginia and current best practices for corporate foundation documents.
- Addressed any gaps between what was spelled out in the documents and actual processes.
- Reviewed the nominating process and considered a shift from a vote-driven process to a board-nominated, skill-based process.

**New Programs:**

- The Chamber partnered with three local chambers and the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging and Travel Association to produce Northern Virginia Restaurant Week. Through this program, local restaurants gained exposure through a marketing campaign leading to extensive media coverage by sources including local TV stations.
- The Chamber hosted a Candidate Forum, featuring the three candidates running for County Board. The business-themed forum was moderated by Scott Brodbeck, editor of ARLNow.com, and allowed each candidate to engage with local business leaders and address key issues for the business community.
- The Chamber co-hosted an economic roundtable, the Northern Virginia Elected Leaders Forum, with five local chambers and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission. At this sold-out event, Northern Virginia business leaders heard from a number of elected officials across the area, including then-County Board Vice Chair Jay Fisette, about the economic climate in each jurisdiction and ongoing initiatives aimed at bolstering economic growth.
- The Chamber also grew its travel program in 2016, sending 20 travelers on a trip to Cuba. Cuba Getaway travelers visited sights including Ernest Hemingway's farm, the Museum of the Revolution, and a Havana cigar factory.



Chamber member Barbara Nicastro poses by a classic car in Havana on the 2016 Cuba Getaway

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### Community Action Committee

**Linda Kelleher**, Culpepper Gardens

**Meg Rapelye**, Phoenix Bikes

### Education & Workforce Development Committee

**Alessandra Colia**, Urban Alliance

**David Remick**, Arlington Employment Center

### 2017 Gala Committee

**David Isaacson**, Beach Geeks

### Government Affairs/Economic Development Committee

**Brian Gordon**, Apartment and Office Building Association

**Tad Lunger**, McGuireWoods LLP

### Green Business Committee

**John Gallagher**, Energesco Mechanical LLC

### Hotel General Managers Committee

**Dori Familiant**, DoubleTree by Hilton

Washington DC-Crystal City

**Chris Raines**, Holiday Inn Rosslyn

### Membership Development Committee

**Greg Hamilton**, Arlington Magazine

### Membership Engagement Committee

**Jasmine Gould**, Strategic Consulting Partners

### Opportunity Works Campaign

**Barbara Nicastro**, The Law Offices of Barbara E. Nicastro

**Joe Prentice**, State Department Federal Credit Union

### Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) Booster Committee

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## The 92nd Annual Meeting



2016 Keynote Speaker Victor Hoskins of Arlington Economic Development

On Friday, December 9, more than 200 members and guests gathered at the **Sheraton Pentagon City Hotel** to celebrate the success of 2016 and look forward to what is to come in 2017. The afternoon included presentation of awards, announcement of 2016 Board of Directors by 2016 Chair **Todd Yeatts**. **Arlington Economic Development** Director **Victor Hoskins** provided the keynote speech, which focused on working to unleash the potential of Arlington and surrounding areas, in order to boost the economy and set the region on the path towards a bright future.

2016 Chair **Todd Yeatts** of **The Boeing Company**, highlighted some of the Chamber's accomplishments over the year, including its powerful role in leading business advocacy efforts, increase in membership, and launch of a new website. 2015 was an exciting year for the Chamber, and we look forward to continuing that growth 2016.

**Todd Yeatts** and President & CEO **Kate Bates** honored those who significantly contributed to the Chamber's successes in 2016 with a presentation of the annual awards.



2016 Chair Todd Yeatts, 2017 Chair Tina Walker, and 2018 Chair Lindsey Rheame

## 2016 Award Winners

### 2016 Chair's Award Crystal City Sports Pub

**Crystal City Sports Pub** was honored with the Chair's Award, which was accepted by co-owner and General Manager, **John Finlay**. The sports pub has been a high level sponsor for the Chamber, serving as co-grand sponsor of the Gala, as well as a sponsor of the Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!) and Valor Awards. **Crystal City Sports Pub** provides in kind support, including hosting a Business After Business and a Board of Directors meeting. **John** is an active member of the Board of Directors, where he generously contributes his time, and often refers prospective members to the Chamber. A past Best Business Award winner, the pub supports a number of Chamber nonprofit members and works to make a positive impact on Arlington.



John Finlay accepts the 2016 Chair's Award on behalf of Crystal City Sports Pub

### 2016 President's Award Todd Ihrig of H.D. Vest Investment Services

The prestigious President's Award, sponsored by **395 Express Lanes**, was presented to **Todd Ihrig** of **H.D. Vest Investments**. **Todd** is the first member in the history of the Arlington Chamber to receive this honor twice, having first received this honor in 1999. He has been a member of the Chamber for 17 years, and is active in other community-service organizations, including service as Board Chair of the **A-SPAN**.



Todd Ihrig accepts the 2016 President's Award

### 2016 Committee of the Year Award Community Action Committee

The Committee of the Year Award, sponsored by **Argosy University**, was presented to the Community Action Committee, co-chaired by **Linda Kelleher** of **Culpepper Garden** and **Meg Rapelye** of **Phoenix Bikes**. The Community Action Committee raises the business community's awareness of nonprofit organizations by connecting Chamber business members with more than 90 nonprofit members. This year, members organized and implemented three nonprofit education forums that provided opportunities to create meaningful partnerships between Arlington's nonprofit and businesses. This group annually produces Volunteer Arlington Day, which this year attracted over 180 volunteers serving 17 nonprofit sites.



Community Action Committee co-chairs Meg Rapelye and Linda Kelleher accept the 2016 Committee of the Year Award



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## Honoring Arlington's Heroes

On April 19, the Chamber hosted the 34th Annual Valor Awards to recognize the men and women who so valiantly keep Arlington safe year round. The Valor Awards honored members of Arlington County's Office of Emergency Management, Police Department, Fire Department, and Office of the Sheriff for their extraordinary heroic efforts in the line of duty.

This year, 15 honorees were recognized for their courageous, often lifesaving actions in the line of duty. More than one hundred and fifty attendees of the Valor Awards heard stories of acts of heroism.



2016 Valor Awards recipients with Emcee Doug Hill

## Making a Difference in the Community

More than 180 local volunteers from various Chamber member businesses and organizations lent a helping hand to area nonprofits as part of the 17th Annual Volunteer Arlington Day on Tuesday, April 26. Sponsored by the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, this annual tradition matches members of the business community with rewarding half-day service projects throughout Arlington County.

The participating nonprofits had a variety of tasks for volunteers. Some helped with restocking and sorting food drive donations, others organized books in the library for after school programs for elementary school students, while others helped with landscaping projects at various sites, and more.



2016 Volunteer Arlington Day Volunteers



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## 2016 Arlington's Best Business Awards

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce celebrated the 30th Annual Arlington's Best Business Awards on May 24, 2016 at the Sheraton Pentagon City Hotel. Recipients of these awards represent businesses that have consistently provided outstanding quality of service and products, achieved significant growth or stability over the lifetime of their business, and displayed industry leadership.

### 2016 Arlington Best Business Award Recipients:

**Joe's Place Pizza and Pasta** - 2016 Retail Small Business of the Year

**Strategic Consulting Partners** - 2016 Home-Based Business of the Year

**Phoenix Bikes** - 2016 Nonprofit of the Year

**Design TLC, LLC** - 2016 Technology Small Business of the Year

**Virginia Center for Orthodontics** - 2016 Service Small Business of the Year

**Crystal City Marriott** - 2016 Business of the Year

**Snagajob** - 2016 Business of the Year



2016 Arlington Best Business Award winners



(L-R) 2016 Arlington Business Hall of Fame inductees John Shooshan, Lola Reinsch (on behalf of her late father, Emerson G. Reinsch), and Bill Buck with Chamber President & CEO Kate Bates

The event also recognized new inductees to the Arlington Business Hall of Fame, honoring the accomplished Arlington business people dedicated to improving the local economy and quality of life. This year's inductees included **Bill Buck of Buck & Associates**, **John Shooshan of The Shooshan Company**, and the late **Emerson G. Reinsch** (honored posthumously).

The Arlington Business Hall of Fame honors men and women with a connection to Arlington County who have demonstrated a long record of successful management, expertise and business skills, along with notable achievements and exceptional civic and community involvement. Each of the individual honored, clearly meet these criteria, and many of Arlington's successes stand as a clear monument to their commitment and success. Now in its 93rd year of service to the Arlington business community, the Arlington Chamber is pleased to recognize these businesses and individuals.

## 2017 Chamber Staff

**Kate Bates**, President & CEO

**Tina Bennett**, Events & Development Director

**Mike Rosenow**, Membership Director

**Caroline Taylor**, Communications Manager

**Alex Held**, Membership Engagement Manager

**Hannah Dannenfels**, Operations & Special Projects Manager

**Debbie Powers**, Part-time Events Associate



(L-R) Caroline Taylor, Tina Bennett, Kate Bates, Alex Held, Hannah Dannenfels, Mike Rosenow

## Garvey Shares Arlington's Economic & Development Status

On June 21, the Honorable **Libby Garvey**, 2016 Arlington County Board Chair, delivered her address at the annual State of the County, providing attendees with an overview of the economic and development status of the County as her tenure on the Board comes to a close. Before a crowd of 150 business, nonprofit, and civic leaders, **Garvey** provided the community with an update on many of the core functions and services that the County is responsible for including the school system, attracting and retaining businesses, and County economic performance. **Garvey** emphasized that Arlington has once again received a AAA bond rating, even despite a high commercial vacancy rate, allowing the County to issue bonds at low interest rates. **Garvey** also said prioritizing economic development while keeping focus on issues like affordable housing and siting of public facilities is a key challenge for current and future Arlington leaders.



2016 Arlington County Board Chair Libby Garvey

In response to questions about Columbia Pike, **Garvey** said that though the area is wonderful, “we could do a little better job on the Pike” and mentioned her hope for a “single-seat trip” from West Columbia Pike to Crystal City, and the potential for a “Crystal-Pike Transitway.” To questions about the challenges of the Metro system, Garvey praised the work of Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) General Manager Paul Wiedefeld, saying, “If anybody can fix this, I think Paul Wiedefeld can do it.”

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## Recognizing Arlington's Hospitality Superstars

More than 80 front-line workers within Arlington's hospitality industry were honored at the 12th Annual Hospitality Awards on March 22. Hospitality Award winners are nominated for outstanding customer service, excellence in profession, and continuously exceeding their job description. The 2016 ceremony also honored 17 individuals who have served in the Arlington hospitality industry for 25 or more years through the Bob Klein Legendary Service Award.

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2016 Hospitality Superstars

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# The Chamber

Arlington Chamber of Commerce  
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The mission of the **Arlington Chamber of Commerce** is to strengthen businesses and the economic environment for those who work, live and do business in Arlington.

The vision of the **Arlington Chamber of Commerce** is to be the essential partner for business success.