

FORT COLLINS AREA
Chamber of Commerce



WE'RE ALL BUSINESS

*“Business is an essential element of all successful communities.
A community’s fundamental existence rests upon the foundation of a healthy economy.”*

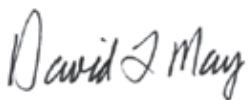
“A community’s basic well-being (quality of life) and economic well-being are inextricably entwined.”

The above statements are posted on the wall in the Chamber’s boardroom. They are excerpted from a set of values and beliefs that guide Chamber leaders and staff every day. They certainly aren’t very flowery, but they are profound in their own way. Business is important to the success and livability of the community.

In 2011, the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce, as it has been for the past 107 years, was a champion for a strong local economy and for business. We influenced issues at City Hall and in Denver that impact business. We fielded hundreds of inquiries from people interested in doing business with area companies or moving to the area. We worked with companies that were looking to expand and create jobs. We helped members acquire the knowledge and contacts they need to be successful.

One noteworthy thing about 2011 was growth of the Chamber itself. The economy may still be a challenge and resources are tight, but 100 volunteers recruited 105 new members and raised \$335,000 of new revenue for the Chamber. Through the *Moving Fort Collins Forward!* campaign, the Chamber’s top line grew by 46 percent. All of that is a reflection of the value businesses place on having a strong and effective chamber of commerce.

Here’s to a great and profitable 2012!



DAVID MAY
President & CEO



MARK DRISCOLL
2011 Chair

*“For me, the true strength
of the Chamber is the
people — smart and
engaged volunteers and
a first-rate staff.”*

—Mark Driscoll, 2011 Chair



2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MARK DRISCOLL

Chair
First National Bank

DONNA CHAPEL, CPA, CFP

Chair Elect
Chapel & Collins LLC

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Chamber of Commerce

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BYRON COLLINS

Harmony Club

CONNIE DOHN

Dohn Construction Inc.

CYNTHIA EICHLER

Foothills Mall

JASON ELLS

Cassidy Turley

DAVID EVERITT

Everitt Companies

HANK GARDNER

CSU — Research &
Information Technology

CARRIE GILLIS

New Colony Apartments

ALLEN GINSBORG

NewMark Merrill
Mountain States

SHARIE GRANT

OfficeScapes

KATHLEEN HENRY

CSURF

CATHY MATHIS

The Birdsall Group

YVONNE MYERS

Columbine Health Systems

CHRIS OTTO

EKS&H

JIM SAMPSON

Flood & Peterson

KRISS SPRADLEY

Spradley Barr Ford Inc.

STEVE STIESMEYER

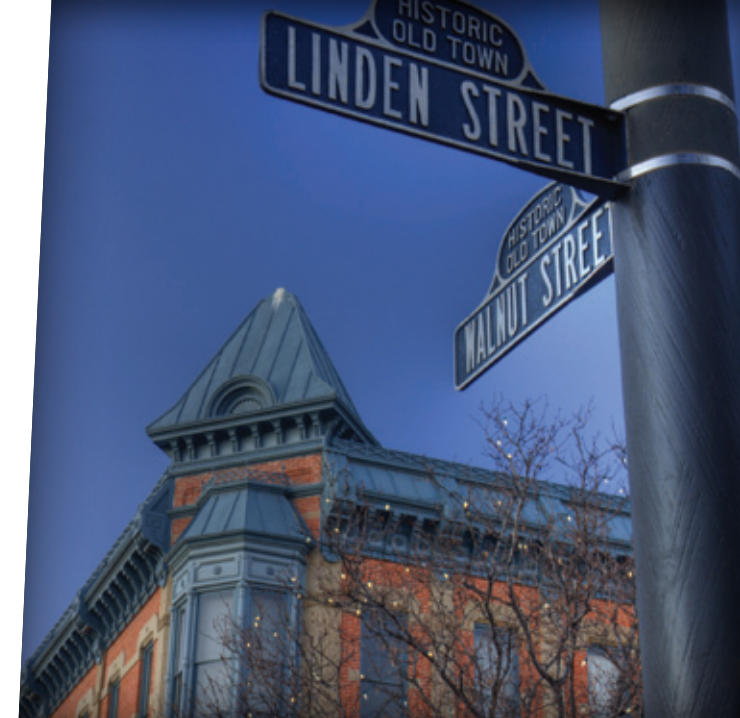
Hewlett-Packard Company

GORDAN THIBEDAU

United Way of Larimer County

KEVIN UNGER

Poudre Valley Hospital



FORT COLLINS AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

- > ESTABLISHED: 1904
- > NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 8
- > NUMBER OF MEMBERS: 1,038

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“‘We’re All Business’ is powerfully simple. There are lots of groups and causes, but the Chamber is the one speaking up for and promoting the perspective of business. That shows up on your bottom line and in the economic vibrancy of the community.”

—David May, President and CEO

The Fort Collins Area Chamber is the only
5-STAR ACCREDITED Chamber of Commerce
in the state of Colorado, placing us among the
TOP 1% of chambers nationally



WE'VE BEEN BUSY

- > Represented over 1,000 businesses
- > Worked alongside roughly 63,000 employees
- > Connected with businesses of all sizes from over 35 different sectors
- > Been responsible for roughly 12,000 referrals to member companies
- > Organized nearly 250 business, professional and advocacy events
- > AND had 60 business professionals graduate from our leadership programs

We concentrate our vision on shaping the region and area we live in today. We continue to lend our leadership and support to various local businesses. Above all, we are dedicated to continuing to improve the quality of life in our thriving community. This is our *vision*.

Our *focus* is on our community, a prosperous economy and the quality of life in the Fort Collins area. Our *mission* is to achieve this through advocating for healthy businesses and strong leadership.

WE INFLUENCE THE COMMUNITY AROUND US

Our goal is to be able to utilize our talents to better serve the community. We want to *change* what is not working and find solutions to daily problems. Here are just a few of our teams that are actively involved in business advocacy:

SPRADLEY BARR

- > CHAMBER MEMBER SINCE: 1988
- > NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:
120 (FORT COLLINS)
300 (GREELEY/CHEYENNE)
- > SELECTED AS THE 2011 LINCOLN DEALER
OF THE YEAR BY DEALERRATER.COM

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“The Chamber acts as a collective voice for the business community. We couldn’t accomplish this as successfully working individually.”

—Kriss Spradley, Co-owner



LOCAL LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (LLAC) This committee monitors local government, sets policy on behalf of the Chamber and allows chamber members to collaborate with stakeholders, both public and private, to create a more favorable environment for business.

In 2011, the LLAC organized the effort to manage proposed changes to the city’s digital sign code, advocating for the protection of digital signs while maintaining a positive overall aesthetic environment in the community.

“By helping inform stakeholders and create a collective, considered appeal, we helped change the conversation at the local policy level, protecting the investment of business owners and their ability to communicate effectively with customers.”

— Ann Hutchison, Executive Vice President, Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce

NORTHERN COLORADO LEGISLATIVE ALLIANCE (NCLA) This public policy advocacy group unifies Northern Colorado chamber members, giving them a shared voice to address and influence management of state and federal issues affecting business.

Last year, the NCLA led the lobbying effort behind the successful continuation of a 30% tax credit for angel investors who contribute \$25,000 or more to qualified businesses. The bill (HB 11-1045) builds on the original program established by the NCLA in 2009, extending it beyond a pilot program.

“Persistence, relationships and quick tactical moves— hallmarks of the NCLA — were responsible for the continuation of this tax credit during what was a very difficult budget year.”

— David May, President and CEO, Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce

UNITED WAY OF LARIMER COUNTY

- > CHAMBER MEMBER SINCE: 1987
- > NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 45
- > INTRODUCED A BOLD GOAL – CUT LARIMER COUNTY POVERTY IN HALF BY 2025

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“By being a member of the Chamber of Commerce, we give our vote to the importance of a strong, vibrant business community and add our support to the professionalism, leadership and commitment demonstrated by the Chamber.”

—Gordan Thibedeau, President and CEO





OTTERBOX

- > CHAMBER MEMBER SINCE: 2008
- > NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 500+
- > RECOGNIZED BY ENTREPRENEUR MAGAZINE AS A "GREAT PLACE TO WORK" IN 2011

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"Being a member of the Chamber is part of being a good member of the community."

—Curt Richardson, CEO

WE CONNECT YOU WITH THE COMMUNITY

Work hard—play harder! We believe that creating connections to other businesses is fundamental to the success of your business. For this reason, we have created ample networking events to help YOU stay in the loop in Northern Colorado. Here are a few of our networking events:

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Once a month (sometimes twice a month), we organize professional mixers at various businesses throughout the area. This allows you the chance to connect with numerous other business professionals.

RED CARPET COMMITTEE

Each Tuesday and Thursday we celebrate a company's success at various businesses throughout the area. You get the chance to learn about newer businesses and more established businesses, all in one fun event.

We're responsible for organizing
14 BUSINESS AFTER HOURS EVENTS
and **85 RED CARPET RECEPTIONS.**
Revenue and attendance continue to rise
for our member activities

We partnered with the City of Fort Collins and NCEDC to retool the **BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION PROGRAM**, doubling the number of employers who responded to nearly **100**

WE'RE ON YOUR TEAM

Your Chamber of Commerce understands how challenging financial success can be. Therefore, we extend various chances for you to save money, even when it seems impossible to do so. In addition, we provide educational and professional development opportunities for you to sharpen your skills and access relevant resources.

- > We have offered savings on office supplies, bus transportation, radio/newspaper advertisements and much more.
- > We invite stimulating speakers and host inspired events to keep you looking forward.
- > With programs such as Leadership Fort Collins and Leadership Northern Colorado, we help develop more informed and influential leaders in the business community.

INTERNATIONAL APPETITE CULINARY SERVICES

- > CHAMBER MEMBER SINCE: 2010
- > NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 2
- > LUNCHING AND LAUNCHING THEIR WAY TO A SUCCESSFUL START-UP BUSINESS WITH A GROWING CUSTOMER BASE

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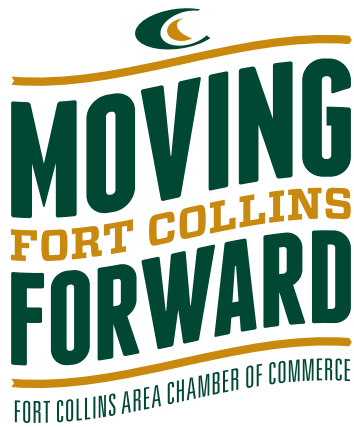
“There is absolutely no way we could have survived our first year in business without the Chamber.”

—Matt and Paula McIntosh, Owners



MOVING FORT COLLINS FORWARD CAMPAIGN

This 2011 campaign revitalized the Chamber's energy level, expanded public support and finances and sharpened our focus. Every goal was met in 2011 – Now that's moving forward.



100+

VOLUNTEERS

46%

GROWTH TO
THE TOP LINE

105

NEW
MEMBERS
(100 GOAL)

\$335,000

FINANCIAL
REVENUE
(\$300,000 GOAL)

MORE CHAMBER HIGHLIGHTS

5,623

Relocation
Inquiries

100%

Success record for
state legislative agenda

PASSED

Angel Investor Tax Credit,
thanks to the Chamber lobbyist
(See page 5 for details)

IT WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR

The community at large saw some impressive achievements in 2011.



Fort Collins wins the 2011 GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARD



Community's Business Incubator ROCKY MOUNTAIN INNOSPHERE opens new building



Colorado State University welcomed its LARGEST CLASS EVER



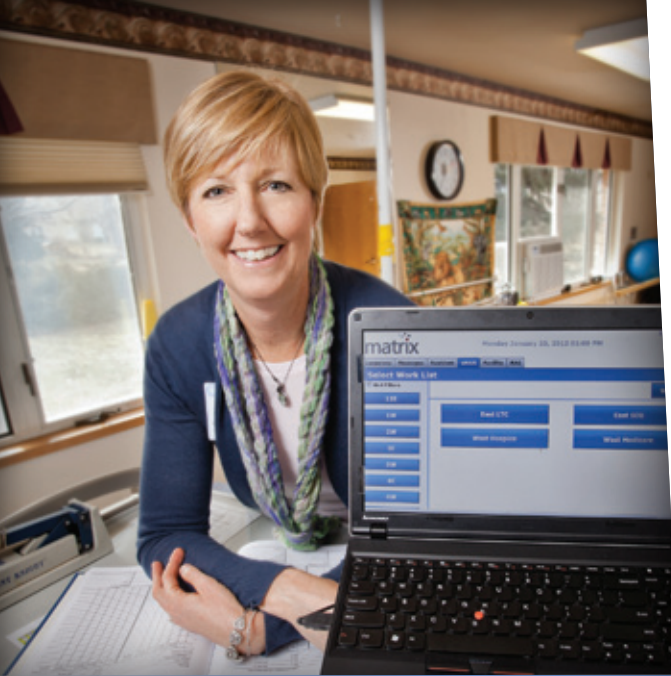
Fort Collins-Loveland 2ND LOWEST UNEMPLOYMENT IN COLORADO

Colorado:7.7%, National:8.5%



Fort Collins-Loveland BEST PERFORMING CITIES INDEX

Milken Institute's Best Performing Cities Index



LET'S PLAN FOR THE FUTURE TOGETHER

Northern Colorado is one of America's best places to live and do business. That's not just 'chamber of commerce speak' — it's borne out in the numerous rankings and recognitions that are bestowed upon us with regularity.

But, nice as recognition is, all of that is yesterday's news. It is the result of things done in the past. Tomorrow's great headlines will be the product of actions we're taking now to keep this a great place to work and live.

WHAT'S COMING IN 2012

The Larimer County area weathered the 'Great Recession' better than most places. We lost fewer jobs, the unemployment rate is far below the national average and home prices remained relatively strong.

Even so, we did lose over 6,000 jobs. In 2012 and beyond, the focus will be on replacing those jobs and adding new and better paying ones. For the coming year, the Chamber has nine objectives:

- > **ATTRACT AND RETAIN PRIMARY JOBS** Primary jobs are those good-paying ones at companies that sell most of their products and services outside the region and import profits. The Chamber will work with its partners at the City and the Northern Colorado Economic Development Corporation to assist existing primary employers with their expansion plans.
- > **FOSTER A STRONG BUSINESS CLIMATE THAT CREATES JOBS** The Chamber has a strong and active legislative agenda for 2012 to advocate the business perspective with government. Among the issues are streamlining local and state regulations, floodplain policies, water supply, redevelopment policies and adoption of a city economic jobs plan.

COLUMBINE HEALTH SYSTEMS

- > CHAMBER MEMBER SINCE: 1993
- > NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 1,350
- > RECEIVED TWO SIGNIFICANT GRANTS FROM SKILLBUILD COLORADO TO HELP EMPLOYEES LEARN NEW SKILLS AND ADVANCE WITHIN THE COMPANY

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"Our Chamber operates at a very high standard; they received their 5-star accreditation for good reason. They continually demonstrate best practices and are, every day, advocating for business — something I don't have the resources to do."

— Yvonne Myers, Health Systems Director

- > **HELP MEMBERS STAY INFORMED ON KEY ISSUES** We don't need more information, we need more knowledge we can act on! In that spirit, the Chamber is hosting a major Health Care in Your Future summit, Knowledge Bites monthly 'lunch and learns,' Green in Action environmental programs and several legislative briefings and events.
- > **GROW COMMUNITY LEADERS. LEADERS ARE MADE NOT BORN** Future community leaders are 'made' through Envision Young Professionals, Leadership Northern Colorado and Leadership Fort Collins.
- > **FIND GREAT CANDIDATES TO RUN FOR CITY COUNCIL** City government policy has a big impact on business. That means we need to pay close attention to who is running for City Council. In 2012 Chamber leaders will be on the lookout for people who care about business to run for Council in April 2013.
- > **CELEBRATE SMALL BUSINESS** Small business is big business in Fort Collins. To celebrate this important part of our economy, the Chamber will be hosting its first-ever small business of the year luncheon.
- > **HELP MEMBERS CONNECT WITH PROSPECTS AND CUSTOMERS** Membership does have its privileges, including access to events and leads that put information and prospects at their disposal.
- > **SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORKFORCE** Sure the economy is still tough and unemployment is higher than historic norms, but many companies are telling us that they're having trouble finding the right talent. Workforce development is a growing priority for the Chamber.
- > **MAINTAIN A WELL-RUN CHAMBER** Clean financial audits, a competent and credentialed professional staff, a 5-Star national accreditation, and strong reserves are all indications of a well-led organization. Such things are not the purpose of the Chamber but they are foundational to delivering the services and programs the community and members need.

We just celebrated the graduation of the second **LEADERSHIP Northern Colorado** class and have recruited the third group of leaders committed to **SHAPING THE FUTURE** of the region

"The heart of the Chamber's success is relationships. In 2012 we'll strive to make them even stronger as we focus on programs that bring value to members and the community."

— Donna Chapel, 2012 Chair





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