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# Business Update

AWARD-WINNING MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- JANUARY 3RD:**  
**Emerge Information Session**  
Time: 6:00 pm  
Location: Visalia Chamber Office
- JANUARY 9TH:**  
**Travel Presentation – Ireland & Greece**  
Time: 12:00 pm  
Location: Buckman-Mitchell Insurance
- JANUARY 10TH:**  
**YPN Meet Up**  
Time: 5:30 pm  
Location: Barrelhouse Brewing
- JANUARY 22ND:**  
**Business After Hours Mixer**  
Time: 5:30 pm  
Location: Katie's Custom Fit
- JANUARY 23RD:**  
**Stop Harassment Workshop**  
Time: 7:30 am  
Location: Lamp Litter Inn  
Registration required
- JANUARY 24TH:**  
**Ambassador Breakfast**  
Time: 8:00 am  
Location: Visalia First Assembly
- JANUARY 30TH:**  
**Emerge Class #1**  
Time: 6:00 pm  
College of Sequoias  
Registration required
- JANUARY 31ST:**  
**2019 Legal Update Workshop**  
Time: 9:00 am  
Wyndham Hotel  
Registration required

## A Holiday Affair to Remember

By: Nicola Wissler  
Visalia Chamber of Commerce

Lavishly decorated with red ornaments, greenery, and traditional Christmas plaid, the Exhibition Hall of the Visalia Convention Center was transformed into a “Holiday Affair” celebrating the generosity of Visalia. December 7th marked the 38th Annual Christmas Tree Auction and this year the event did not disappoint. The Christmas Tree Auction helped more than 29 local non-profit organizations raise more than \$90,000, to provide support to our local community.

This year the theme of the event was “A Holiday Affair”. As attendees arrived, they were transported back in time to a simpler version of Christmas. Guests were greeted at the entrance with a vintage red pickup truck complete with a fresh cut Christmas tree in the back and a wreath hanging from the hood sponsored by Roseland Media. Following the red carpet to the door, attendees collected their wine glasses and had an opportunity to have a little fun in the photo booth provided by A Reflection in Time and Spirit 88.9. Once guests walked through the lobby they were met with a choice of which hallway they wanted to explore first.



than 20 local restaurants and samples from more than 15 wineries. Fourteen large trees were extravagantly decorated and placed around the room creating a cozy, warm atmosphere. The live auction kicked off with an appearance from the award-winning Mt. Whitney drumline. After the drumline performance, Sheriff Mike Boudreaux and Miss Central Valley Alexandra Machado took the reins and began the live auction. During the auction bidders had 90 seconds to bid on their favorite tree and support their favorite charities. At the end of the night all 14 trees were sold and three of the trees were actually sold more than once, helping those charities raise even more money. While the trees were the main reason to attend the event which raised more than \$90,000, the Christmas Tree Auction included some great entertainment as well. Frank Sinatra (Jamie Hitchcock) performed during the VIP hour, and DJ John Lewis had the crowd up on the dance floor until the late hours of the night.

While the Chamber of Commerce takes the lead in hosting the event, including recruiting volunteers, coordinating the food and drinks, securing entertainment, lighting and decorations, all of the proceeds raised during the night are given directly to the 29 participating non-profit organizations. “This event is a platform to raise money”, noted Gail Zurek, President & CEO of the Visalia Chamber of Commerce. “To host a fundraiser event takes man power, money and a lot of staff time, and during this time of the year most of the local non-profits are busy trying to fulfill their mission and don’t have time to put on an event, so the Christmas Tree Auction is the Chamber’s way of paying it forward and supporting our community.” The Chamber would like to thank all of the amazing vendors, the generous sponsors, and the more than 100 volunteers who helped to make this annual Christmas Tree Auction an Affair to Remember.



The hallway to the right boasted 30+ silent auction items ranging from wine baskets, to get away trips to the coast, fireworks, artwork, and our personal favorite a radio flyer wagon with a large moose and s’mores makings. The hallway to the left was lined with 14 beautifully decorated small trees that were part of the second silent auction of the evening. The creativity behind these trees was amazing. The Police Explorers thought way outside of the box this year, providing donut holes to everyone who walked by, but the big surprise was that the winner of their K9 themed tree also got to take home one of the two adorable puppies who came to visit. The ImagineU Children’s Museum won an award for their unique tree featuring a large stuffed Unicorn and festive pink, teal, and white decorations.

Finally, as you entered the Exhibit Hall, the grandeur of the event became apparent as more than 1,100 people enjoyed food from more



the local non-profits are busy trying to fulfill their mission and don’t have time to put on an event, so the Christmas Tree Auction is the Chamber’s way of paying it forward and supporting our community.” The Chamber would like to thank all of the amazing vendors, the generous sponsors, and the more than 100 volunteers who helped to make this annual Christmas Tree Auction an Affair to Remember.

## PRESIDENT’S CORNER

### New Year, New You

“Enough already, Gail, put up or shut up.” Encouraging advice only a great friend could offer. It was about this time of year, after apparently one too many conversations, my dear friend was encouraging me to take the big leap and start my own business. While the thought was exciting, it was also terrifying. Starting my own business felt like walking on a high wire without a net. I enjoyed my time as a small business owner but only now looking back do I know how much of a high wire I really was walking.



**Gail Zurek**  
Visalia Chamber  
President & CEO

New year, New you – seems to be a popular advertising slogan this time of year, and with good cause. As we wrap up another year and head into a fresh new one, it seems like the perfect time to re-evaluate. It also seems the conversation my friend had with me happens between lots of other people as the new year begins. Why not start that business you’ve dreamt of? Wouldn’t it be better to work for yourself? Maybe it’s time to move this hobby into a business?

Starting a business, technically, isn’t that hard. File some papers, pay some fees and voila, you’re a new business. Having a successful business from day one, is NOT nearly that easy. In my current role, I’ve seen plenty of people file papers, pay fees and jump onto the high wire

with the best of intentions. I’ve also watched others worry, plan, and fret never pulling the trigger. Successful businesses make and take calculated risks.

If you’ve dreamt about starting a business or maybe wish you would have started your business better, Emmerge is for you. The Visalia Chamber of Commerce’s Emmerge program provides introductory business classes to new and future business owners. Through this six-month program, participants build a strong network, improve business skills through writing a business plan, meet

and learn from business experts from nine different industries, and work with a business mentor throughout the program. It’s the first step in understanding how to calculate risk better and make successful decisions.

Tuition is \$350 and includes all class materials, business plan template, and resource guide. The deadline to submit applications is January 18, 2019.

While circus performers make the high wire look fun, trust us, there’s a better way to run a business.

## VISALIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MISSION ICONS



Catalyst for Change



Community Convener



Champion for Business

Visalia Chamber of Commerce  
222 N. Garden St., Suite 300  
Visalia, CA 93291  
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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## SHRM of Tulare Kings County Announces Legal Updates Luncheon

Join the SHRM T/K Legislative Director, Faith Driscoll, as she reviews the new laws, regulations and judicial opinions affecting California employers this year. This training session will include:



- Increasing minimum wages
- Lactation accommodation changes
- Expansion of sexual harassment protections
- Further restrictions on criminal background checks
- Changes to independent contractor status
- Paying for every minute worked by employees

Attendees will be provided with practical tips for applying the changes in the workplace and communicating them through employee handbook revisions. Bring your notepad and questions to get the most out of this session! Bio: Ms. Driscoll practices in the areas of labor and employment compliance and litigation at Barsamian & Moody in Fresno. She assists union and non-union employers in resolving disputes involving claims of unpaid wages, discrimination, harassment, retaliation and wrongful termination. She drafts employment agreements and contracts, handbooks and provides training for business owners, supervisors and human resource practitioners. As an advocate, she develops legal strategies for discovery, investigations, hearings and trials. She has represented employers in cases in court, as well as before the ALRB, OSHA, the EEOC, DFEH and Labor Commissioner in all stages of litigation. She also conducts workplace investigations, wage and hour audits, and employee trainings. When she isn't fighting the good fight, Ms. Driscoll volunteers her time to improve our community by serving on the board of directors for a professional human resources group and for a guild of Valley Children's Hospital.

**January 8, 2019**

Registration: 8:30 AM

Presentation: 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Please, remember to register even if you are a pre-paid member. Also, if you do not attend the luncheon and do not cancel, you will be charged.

For questions, please contact Ashley Marroquin 559-651-4040 or email [membership@shrmtularekings.org](mailto:membership@shrmtularekings.org).

## 4Creeks Inc. Welcomes Jason Huckleberry As Senior Project Manager To Expand The Capacity And Expertise Of The Growing Firm

4Creeks, Inc. announced that Jason Huckleberry will join the growing Engineering, Planning and Surveying firm. Mr. Huckleberry will serve as a Senior Project Manager for the company, focusing primarily on land development and municipal projects in the Central Valley.



Huckleberry joins 4Creeks with over 10 years of experience with the City of Visalia overseeing the Community Development Department. His wealth of knowledge, experience in the municipal sector and strong focus in Planning and Engineering make him an ideal addition to the company. "Jason is able to fill in many gaps as our company continues to respond to market pressures," Danielle Avila, CEO said, "for a company that values mentorship, Jason is a perfect addition to help our young employees continue to grow".

Huckleberry brings an established reputation with clients in public and private land development and will play a vital role in helping expand 4Creeks services into new areas. "Jason comes at a perfect time as we are looking to solidify our presence and offer high quality services to our clients in the Fresno region." Avila said.

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### About this publication ...

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## GROUNDBREAKING • GRAND OPENING • RIBBON CUTTING • CEREMONIES



Ribbon Cutting

### Coyote Entertainment Center

17255-b Jersey Ave. • Lemoore • 559-817-6170



Ribbon Cutting

### Sequoia Plaza Flowers & More

601 N. Willis St. • 559-734-1455



Ribbon Cutting

### Visalia Cyclery

1829 W. Caldwell Ave. • 559-732-2453

## COMMUNITY LOYAL MEMBERS

*A thriving community starts here!*



### New

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce would like to welcome our newest members. We encourage individuals and businesses to support Chamber Member businesses.

#### Business Builder Member:

- **COYOTE ENTERTAINMENT CENTER**  
(559) 817-6170  
Recreation, Hobbies & Sports

#### Business Connector Members:

- **A REFLECTION IN TIME PHOTO BOOTH**  
(559) 804-5551  
Photography, Video & Production Companies
- **COMBAT VETERANS OF HOPE**  
(559) 799-2548  
Civic & Service Club

#### Small Business Members:

- **GOLD STANDARD MORTGAGE**  
(559) 623-9807  
Mortgage Brokers & Lenders
- **LEMON SHARK POKE**  
(559) 713-6807  
Restaurants

### Renewing

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce thanks the following companies for renewing their commitment to the community of Visalia.

#### Keystone Member:

- TechCare 360

#### Business Builder Member:

- Valley PBS

#### Business Connector Members:

- Acclaim Credit Technologies
- AMVETS Department of California\*
- Brandon-Mitchell Gallery Event Center\*
- Rabobank-Mooney Blvd\*

#### Small Business Members:

- 1st Alliance Energy
- Citslinc International, Inc.
- Golden State Cardiac & Thoracic Surgery, Inc
- Martin & Martin Properties LLC
- Mavericks Coffee
- Montecito Apartment Homes \*
- Palm Occupational Medicine\*
- The UPS Store 6731\*
- Tropics by Design
- Visalia Lions Band Review

\*Indicates membership in the Visalia Chamber 110% Club.



**THURSDAY, JANUARY 31, 2019**

**9:00 AM - 10:30 AM (PT)**

**WYNDHAM HOTEL  
9000 W AIRPORT DR, VISALIA, CA 93277**

*Presented By:*

**SHLC ATTORNEY BRETT SUTTON**



**One (1) hour of HRCI/SHRM credit will be available.**

**Cost: \$25.00 for Chamber Members or Sutton & Hague clients and \$35.00 for non-chamber/clients.**

**TO REGISTER FOR THE EVENT, GO TO:**

**<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2019-legal-update-tickets-53163730148>**

**Or you can call the Visalia Chamber of Commerce at 559-734-5876**

**Or e-mail us at: [info@visaliachamber.org](mailto:info@visaliachamber.org)**



Congratulations to **Tulare Kings Hispanic Chamber** 2018 Business Awards recipients. It is great to see that many of these recipients are also members of the Visalia Chamber of Commerce: **Woman of the Year, Joti Kaur** - **Man of the Year, Dr Robert Aguilar** - **Large Business of the Year, Eagle Mountain Casino** - **Mid Size Business, Visalia Rawhide Baseball Club** - **Small Business, All Valley Uniform** - **Community Involvement, Todd Mackey, Tropics by Design** - **Non Profit Organization, The Source LGBT+ Center** - **Young Professional, Robert Rueda** - **CEO Award, Orlando Mendoza** - **Presidents Award, Dru Quesnoy, Kaweah Delta Hospital District.**



A HUGE thank you to Kathy Burk and team for creating a festive holiday wonderland for **Fresno Yosemite International Airport** travelers and guests to enjoy!



The Tulare County Human Trafficking Task Force and **District Attorney Tim Ward** invite you to join us for the Justice Run: Run for Freedom, January 19, 2019, at Mooney Grove Park in #Visalia. This run honors Human Trafficking Awareness Month and will benefit **Family Services of Tulare County** and the Central California Family Crisis Center, Inc. These two agencies service the needs of human trafficking victims and their children who have been victimized by crime.

**Visalia Education Foundation** invites you to "For the Love of Art," an art show, dinner and silent auction featuring art created by our very own VUSD high school students. Proceeds from the items auctioned will be divided equally between the artist and VEF to be used for grants, scholarships and other projects that will benefit VUSD students! February 1, 2019, Ridgeview Middle School.

**Habitat for Humanity** would like to thank the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for helping to assemble furniture at the Visalia Restore on Saturday, December 1st. Such a great help! Join us as a volunteer and support Habitat for Humanity. Call 559-734-4040.



Congratulations to **Tulare County District Attorney** Supervising Criminal Investigator Kurt McPhetridge on his recent graduation from the Los Angeles Police Department Leadership Program. Developed by the United States Military Academy at West Point for law enforcement professionals, this intensive four-month program prepares leaders for the challenges of modern police work. Great work, Kurt!

On December 3rd the **Fresno Business Journal** named the Best of the Central Valley Business winners. Congratulations to **Central Valley Community Bank** on being named Best Business Bank, Congratulations to **Pride Staff** on being named Best Employment Service. Congratulations to **Educational Employees Credit Union** on being named Best Credit Union. Congratulations to **California Business Machines** on being named Best Office Equipment Company. Congratulations to **Chicago Title** on being named Best Title Company.

**Soroptimist International** of Visalia's annual shopping trip is one our favorite holiday traditions! Thank you for supporting **Family Services**, domestic violence survivors and their children all year long.



On behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff of **Happy Trails Riding Academy**, we would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our therapeutic riding class volunteers. The volunteers are the backbone of our program!



**BOARD SPOTLIGHT**

**Nathan Halls**

Nathan Halls is the Deputy Chief Credit Officer at Suncrest Bank



**Why do you serve on the Chamber Board of Directors?** Visalia is my home and my business is here. The Chamber serves as an extremely valuable platform for business. Serving on the Board helps me to stay engaged and get perspective on the larger climate that is Visalia's economy.

**What has the Chamber done in the last 12 months that has helped your business?** Tough to touch just one. Given my work in banking we are privileged to serve a wide variety of business customers. My work with the Chamber allows me to look at items effecting my customers as well as my peers and use that voice to help a range of business.

In one particular instance, the chamber was asked to evaluate the merits of the PACE (property assessed clean energy) program. We were able, with the help of the Government Affairs Committee and the Tulare County Association of Realtors better understand the issue and respond.

**What's your favorite family tradition?** My family has a tradition of having a Christmas Eve celebration and not giving serious gifts, but some of the most horrible (and hilarious) gag gifts you will ever see. Years ago, my grandmother felt it left people out, especially visitors of which there are always a few, to have a serious gift exchange. The best part is whatever you get, you have to wear, whether it is crocheted underwear or faux leopard skinn high heel boots. The sky is the limit.

**Does your family have a "motto" - spoken or unspoken?** Our motto comes from the bible and it hangs in my parent's house right as you walk in, it is Joshua 24:15 "And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

**What was your first job?** My first job was picking fruit in the field. I grew up in Sanger, not too far away from here. My Dad was very clear that my first car would be one that I paid for and so I knew the score early on. I learned several lessons in the fields; First, you don't have to enjoy your job to work hard at it. Second, mindless work gives you time to work on larger problems and figure things out. Lastly, dreams are the prize in a games of inches, constant steadfast effort toward your goal gets you there.

**VISALIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Thank You, Visalia!**



In November, the voters of Visalia approved Measure A, a general obligation bond that levies \$105 million in local funds that, through matching funds from the State, will bring us nearly \$225 million in improved and new school facilities. On behalf of Visalia Unified, I wish to thank our community for its support of our schools.



**Todd Oto, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent,  
Visalia Unified  
School District

We do not take the support of our community for granted. Measure A represents an opportunity for Visalia Unified to improve our facilities through modernization and also the construction of new buildings and a new high school. It represents also an opportunity for us to confirm our commitment to good stewardship of public funds. Measure A requires that we assemble a citizen's oversight committee that will ensure that we use funds raised through the bond appropriately and for the intended purpose: improving our school facilities. It is our goal to do good work, and through that work reinforce the trust that Visalia has in its school district.

Measure A will bring four things to our district: upgrades to eighteen schools that will make classrooms, restrooms and other student spaces more modern in function, modern science labs at our middle and high schools, improved security measures at all of our schools, and a new high school.

When will you see these changes happen? The first thing that will occur are the security upgrades. We have a committee representing staff, parents and local police and fire departments that will advise our efforts in this area. This work will be visible within the next year. Upgrades to the eighteen schools and middle and high school science labs will be next. Because this work requires formal planning and approval from the State, this will take a bit longer to initiate, but you will see this work begin within the next two years. And the high school will require much more comprehensive planning and a lengthy construction process, so you can anticipate that it will open in 2023.

Teachers working with kids is the most important thing we do. Supporting that work requires that we do our best to ensure that every classroom is modern and able to support teaching and learning at high levels. Measure A is about ensuring that our oldest neighborhoods have schools that compare favorably with schools in our newest neighborhoods. Visalia, I thank you again for your support. We will work hard to honor that support by providing good facilities and a great education for every child who attends a Visalia Unified school.

**Visalia Chamber's Emerge Program A Crash Course On Business**

By Edward Smith  
The Business Journal



The six-month program held at the College of Sequoias gives people with diverse levels of business experience an in-depth look at opening and running a company. Classes include business and employment law, accounting, marketing, finding the right insurance and sales training, among others.



Kim Batty, owner of KB Concepts, teaches marketing to students at the Emerge Program's second cohort.

the Visalia Convention Center, but an idea to do gourmet donuts had been hounding her since she first discovered them. The adventurous and creative side of Ellis wanted to bring the idea to Visalia. But her cautious side told her she had more to learn.

Being involved with the Chamber in her job at the Convention Center introduced her to the Emerge Program. "I think it's important to not jump into something without understanding what it takes," Ellis said. She has attended every one of the classes for this second cohort, but the class that stood out the most to her was employment law.

"The hope is to not just build better business, but to also show attendees if an idea is viable," said Gail Zurek, president and CEO of the Visalia Chamber.

Three people looking to grow in the business world each sought out the Emerge program with unique needs — expanding an existing business, finding an idea or entering the world of business for the first time.

**Finding the right people**

Rachel Ingram has been in the information technology business for five years. She co-owns TechCare 360 in Visalia with her husband, but a desire to rebrand their company brought Ingram to the program. She and her husband started TechCare right out of high school, and over five years, they "learned the hard way" how to run a business, Ingram said. What she wanted was a mentorship with someone who had been through many of the same problems she was facing.

Ingram's most immediate concern was hiring. "Seeing how someone interacts with a client is important to match the values we want with our rebranding," said Ingram. The Emerge program connected her with a mentor, Vickie Goudreau, owner of Innovation Commercial Flooring in Fresno. In her first meeting with Goudreau, Ingram asked about her hiring dilemma. "She said something really profound to me, which wasn't about skills or talents," Ingram said. "You start with their values and personality, and what they're passionate about, because it will tell you what their values are and what will fulfill them in their job."

Now, Ingram and her husband are ready to start interviewing for that position.

**Right side of the law**

Shelley Ellis said she has no intention of leaving the job she loves at

"It's important to be aware of the laws and protect your assets and be there for your employees," Ellis said. "It's a huge investment."

**Big shoes to fill**

Even though Franey's Carpet One Floor and Home has been open since 1955, its sales manager and heir-apparent, Colin Franey, needed to know business before he could step in and fill an ownership role. "Family is important to me, and legacy," he said. "I take a sense of pride my grandfather started this business."

Franey had the desire to take the reins, but what he lacked was a background in business. Before coming to Visalia in 2015, he had been a congressional aide in Washington D.C. for four years. But it was going to take work to learn the family business. He needed someone to talk to him about topics like human resources and tax codes. Guest speakers became the highlights for Franey. He would furiously scribble notes, then go back to the carpet store and test what he'd learned. "It made me realize there was so much more I needed to learn," Franey said. He knows now he has to surround himself with good people. Having only a cursory knowledge in accounting, he said, means he needs a good accountant.

**Application Deadline Extended**

Applications for the 2019 Emerge program are currently available online at [www.visaliachamber.org/emerge](http://www.visaliachamber.org/emerge). The application deadline is January 18, 2019 and classes will start January 30th. The Chamber will host an Emerge information session on January 3rd at 6:00 pm at the Chamber office located at 222 N. Garden St. Suite 300. For more information contact Nicola Wissler at 559-734-5876.

**Indoor Yard Sale at the Visalia Convention Center**

Come to the Visalia Convention Center Gigantic Indoor Yard Sale, Saturday, January 5, 2019. We brought the traditional outdoor yard sale inside. There will be a variety of sellers selling gently used items including household items, toys, collectibles, tools, furniture, clothing and much more. There will be some vendors selling new items as well! Come and enjoy an indoor sale with climate control, plenty of free parking and great bargains.

This will be our third Indoor Yard Sale. Our first Indoor Yard Sale was held on January 6 with over 75 vendors and 2,000 people attended. Our second sale was held on Saturday, July 7, 2018. We look forward to another great event! It's going to be cold outside, but we have that covered and will keep everyone warm inside. Also, we have one more thing covered. In case you get hungry, the Cinnamon Roll Shack food truck will be at the event serving up delicious hot cinnamon rolls, coffee and hot chocolate and Sequoia Brewing Company will be selling breakfast burritos and grilled wraps!

Doors to shop at the Indoor Yard Sale open at 8am on January 5, 2019 and close at 2pm. Admission is \$3.00 per person and \$5.00 for two people, with a reduced admission after 12:00pm, cash only please.

Tickets to attend the yard sale can be purchased at the Visalia Convention Center the day of the sale on Saturday, January 5th.

In partnership with the Bethlehem Center we will be providing a \$1.00 discount for anyone that brings in a donation of non-perishable food items, one discount per person. Some items in particular that the Bethlehem Center is in great need of are water bottles, cooking oil, garlic salt, pepper, chicken bouillon and canned food items.

For up to date event information please check our Facebook page at [HYPERLINK "http://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/)

## Bank Of The Sierra Awards Over \$36K In Grants To Central Valley Non-Profits During Third Quarter



Community bank's Sierra Grant Program provides funding to 11 Central Valley non-profits

Bank of the Sierra announced today that \$36,500 was given to 11 non-profits in the Central Valley during the third quarter. The bank awards \$1,000-\$5,000 grants to 15-20 local non-profit organizations each quarter as part of its Sierra Grant program. Overall in the third quarter, Bank of the Sierra awarded \$54,500 to non-profits within the bank's eight-county, 40-branch footprint.

The CenCal Mentoring Academy will use their Sierra Grant for resources and training to help at-risk students develop and practice life skills, increase school attendance and improve their chances of graduating. The Clovis-based organization serves 1,200 students and has 30 locations throughout California, with most in the Central Valley.

The mission of the Kings County Commission on Aging is to maintain and improve the physical, psychological and social well-being of the county's older residents. The organization will use grant funds to support services including adult day care, nutrition site management, legal assistance services, emergency assistance, transportation and more.

A Sierra Grant will help support the Kern County Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's Business Education Foundation's Scholarship Program to help ease the financial burden of textbooks and other school supplies on local students. The Scholarship Program began six years ago in response to the growing costs of higher education.

Family Services of Tulare County's goal is to help children, adults and families heal from violence and thrive in healthy relationships. The organization operates the Goshen Family Center (GFC), which provides resources, information, supportive programming and services to the community. A Sierra Grant will be used to help pay for a full-time victim advocate for the GFC. Family Services serves more than 5,000 people each year.

"The Sierra Grant program is fantastic because it allows us to give back to the communities that have given so much to us!" said Kevin McPhaill, Bank of the Sierra President and Chief Executive Officer. "We know these excellent organizations are devoted to our communities, and we're thrilled to help."

## United Way of Tulare County Announces 2019 Organization Funding

United Way of Tulare County announced today the 2019 funding application is now available online at [www.unitedwaytc.org](http://www.unitedwaytc.org). Applications are due January 13th, 2019.

Non-profit organizations affiliated with United Way of Tulare County apply for funding annually. Teams of volunteers visit each agency and meet with key staff and board members to evaluate the agency's processes, procedures, and internal controls. When the site visit is completed, the Review and Allocations teams make funding recommendations, often with stipulations attached. The recommendations are debated and approved by the Board of Directors and are paid four times a year.

Crystal Jordan, Chairwoman of the United Way of Tulare County Board of Directors said, "Supporting our affiliated agencies is one of the best things about United Way. This money will directly benefit thousands and thousands of residents throughout Tulare County. The affiliated agencies are doing great work and we are really excited to be helping so many people. United Way of Tulare County owes a debt of gratitude to the businesses, individuals, and organizations that supported us this year. None of this would be possible without their support."

In 2017, United Way of Tulare County distributed \$352,285 to its affiliated organizations and \$62,760 in special grants. In addition, \$19,628 was designated to non-affiliated agencies. The designated money is sent directly to the named agency by the donor and is added to United Way of Tulare County's allocations.

The United Way of Tulare County works to maximize resources for the benefit of individuals and communities of Tulare County. For more information, please contact United Way of Tulare County at (559) 685-1766 or visit their website at [www.unitedwaytc.org](http://www.unitedwaytc.org).

## HEALTHCARE NOTE

# Simplifying the Complex World of Health Care

## Visalia Medical Clinic

An affiliate of Kaweah Delta Medical Foundation *Be Well*



**Rick Strid**

CEO  
Visalia Medical Clinic

Modern medicine offers amazing technology, diagnostics and life-saving medications. We know more, and lives are being improved and extended.

And yet, in some ways, the health care industry can be more confusing and frustrating than ever. Complex insurance requirements, access to providers, referrals to specialists and scheduling of imaging can cause headaches for patients.

As a business in the business of health care, Visalia Medical Clinic determined years ago to tackle this frustration head on. Our physician owners foresaw the need and the benefits of providing many different services, all under one roof.

VMC today offers more than 60 providers, including family practice, internal medicine, pediatrics, gastroenterology, orthopedic surgery, cardiology, plastic surgery, endocrinology, neurology, allergy, dermatology, urology, otolaryngology and orthopedic surgery.

Referrals take place seamlessly, and consultations happen in real time, because our providers can simply walk across the hall to confer with colleagues – all for the benefit of patients.

I'm proud of the VMC laboratory staff and the high-quality work they do each day for our patients. The lab is held to a very high

standard, both in terms of the accuracy of the testing equipment and the expertise of the staff. Patients benefit from this level of excellence and the easy access – including Saturday hours.

Imaging is an expensive, and essential, aspect of health care today and VMC offers state-of-the-art imaging through our MRI, CT, mammography, bone density, elastography and other imaging technologies. Providing quick response is essential in all cases, but particularly when a patient is potentially facing a serious illness and the diagnosis is hanging on the outcome of the scan. Our radiologists understand the importance and offer both quick response and a caring heart.

VMC also offers a committed team of physical therapists and a team of diabetes specialists that now includes a highly skilled endocrinologist.

We have adopted new technologies, including an online resource that helps patients make appointments and check on upcoming appointments, refill prescriptions, update health information, read the summary of their doctor visit, and more.

VMC is committed to providing the best health care possible, with a focus on putting the patient first. Thanks to our relationship with Kaweah Delta, we are able to do just that, while meeting the needs of our community and helping our patients *Be Well* for nearly 78 years.

## CITY UPDATE

# Citizen Involvement and the City of Visalia

A new year is just around the corner and with it brings new opportunities to get involved in the community. For those looking to get more involved in local government, serving on a City of Visalia committee or commission is one way members of the public can be a part of making Visalia a great place to live, work and play.

Visalia City committees and commissions serve in an advisory capacity for the City Council. Each is different, but they all receive public concerns, review policies and regulations, provide valuable insight and are instrumental to the public process. By serving on a City advisory committee or commission, you can help plan Visalia's future, as these committees and commissions are making recommendations that affect life in Visalia. Currently, there are vacancies on the Citizens Advisory Committee, the Environmental Committee, the Transit Advisory Committee, the Waterways and Trails Committee, the Disability Advocacy Committee, the Historic

Preservation Committee, the North Visalia Neighborhood Advisory Committee, and the Parks & Recreation Commission.

The Visalia City Clerk's office is continually accepting applications, which are kept on file for a period up to two-years. As vacancies occur, applications are submitted to the respective Committees for interviews & recommendation then to the Citizens Advisory Committee for final review, final selections are then presented to the City Council for approval. Those appointed can serve up to three two-year terms for Committees or four two-year terms for Commissions.

City of Visalia committees and commissions are comprised of folks who have come together to help make a difference and keep Visalia thriving. For more information, visit [www.visalia.city](http://www.visalia.city), contact the City Clerk's office at 713-4512 or email [communityfeedback@visalia.city](mailto:communityfeedback@visalia.city).

## THE LAW AT WORK

# New Requirements Regarding Sexual Harassment Training



Sexual harassment should be a major concern for every employer. The law is clear – employers are liable for harassing acts that are committed by supervisors and employees. Sexual harassment lawsuits often result in record settlements and verdicts to victims. What constitutes sexual harassment – i.e. when does conduct “cross the line,” when does inter-office banter become harassment – can be difficult to define.

California has made prevention of sexual harassment the law (Government Code section 12950.1) This law applies to employers with five or more employees (it used to 50 or more). Training must be given to all employees (the previous law only required training for supervisors).

By January 1, 2020, employers with at least five employees must provide: (1) at least two hours of sexual harassment prevention training to all supervisory employees; and (2) at least one hour of sexual harassment prevention training to all non-supervisory employees. The training must occur within six months of the employee's assumption of either a supervisory or non-supervisory position. The training must be provided once every two years.

Employers must provide sexual harassment prevention training to temporary or seasonal employees within 30 calendar days after the



**Brett T. Abbott**

Gubler & Abbott LLP

hire date or within 100 hours worked if the employee will work for less than six months. In the case of a temporary employee employed by a temporary services employer (as defined by the California Labor Code) to perform services for clients, the training must be provided by the temporary services employer, not the client.

The anti-sexual harassment training may be conducted with other employees, as a group, or individually, and broken up into shorter time segments, as long as the two-hour requirement for supervisory employees and one-hour requirement for non-supervisory employees is reached.

While training does not completely eliminate the possibility of sexual harassment lawsuits, this “ounce of prevention” – now required for all companies with over five employees – is well worth the effort.

This article is for education and information purposes only; it should not be construed as legal advice. If you have an employment law question for inclusion in a future article, contact Brett T. Abbott at Gubler & Abbott ([brett@thecalifornialawyers.com](mailto:brett@thecalifornialawyers.com)). For specific employment law advice or other legal assistance, contact Gubler & Abbott (559) 625-9600, 1110 N. Chinowth St., Visalia, CA 93291 ([www.thecalifornialawyers.com](http://www.thecalifornialawyers.com)).

## LABOR LAW COMPLIANCE SERIES FOR SUPERVISORS

### Visalia Chamber of Commerce & Pacific Employers Want to Help You

# STOP HARASSMENT

California Senate Bill 1343 requires California employers with 5 or more employees (including temporary or seasonal) to provide all personnel who have “Supervisory Authority” a minimum of two hours of Sexual Harassment Prevention Training every two years. Training must include strategies for prevention and discuss remedies for victims of unlawful harassment.



Lamp Liter Inn • 3300 W. Mineral King Ave. • Visalia

2019 Schedule • 7:30am - 10am

January 23rd

April 24th

July 24th

October 23rd

Registration: 7:30 - 8am • Seminar 8-10am

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce & United Way in cooperation with Pacific Employers, will present the state mandated “Supervisors” Sexual Harassment Prevention Training Seminar & Workshop.

This morning training program will include information and practical guidance regarding federal and state sexual harassment laws, harassment prevention, bullying prevention and correction as well as remedies available to victims. The training is “interactive,” and includes opportunities for discussion, role-playing and a question and answer session led by a qualified trainer as required by AB1343. While all employers with 5 or more employees (including temps and independent contractors) are mandated to provide supervisor training. **All employers** need to consider this requirement as the new mandate for all supervisors. **No matter how many employees you have.**

## RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Online Reservation: <http://visaliachamber-dev.chambermaster.com/events/calendar/>

LEADERSHIP VISALIA

# The Life of an IEP

By Lisa Alvarado  
City of Visalia - Parks & Rec, MHCC



A majority of us recall our educational experience with our school districts as a pleasant one. One where we mostly focused on our fashion choices, curiosities about our teachers, and hoping to have at least one friend in each class. My experience is like most of you reading this. I recently learned that my experience is not the only experience. Leadership Visalia participants Carrie Wilson and Stacy Heaton teamed up to educate us on the life cycle of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

An IEP is offered to all VUSD students with exceptionalities requiring accommodations and/or modifications. The process of acquiring an IEP has many variables. One way is to self-identify and request one, for example your student has fallen behind on grade levels, due to recent accident requiring specialized care. Federal and State policy define this as having an intellectual disability, hearing impairment, speech, language, or visual impairment, emotional disturbance, orthopedic impairment, autism, health impairment, a

specific learning disability, or multiple disabilities or who by reason thereof needs special education and related services.

I had no idea the amount of teamwork and support each student receives while utilizing an IEP.

These plans are reviewed continuously to make sure the district is meeting the needs of every student. For parents needing assistance or more information on an IEP there is a great resource for you! Tulare County Community Advisory Committee for Special Education, facilitated by Norma Erwin 559-730-2910 EXT 5125 normae@tcoe.org .

After school age years there are ample resources for transitioning into the workplace or furthering their education. Central Valley Community Resource Center is a go-to resource. Helping individuals with developmental disabilities and children reach their goals! They can be reached at 559-738-2200. The California Department of Rehabilitation offers great resources connecting students with the workforce. They do this through job explanation, job readiness, work based learning and most importantly self advocacy. Visit their website to stay connected, they are always looking to collaborate to offer more work force knowledge <http://www.dor.ca.gov/>.

Cynthia Yoshida a Special Education Program Manager was able to help us wrap up by detailing all of her success stories and imploring, "There is life after high school, a transitional piece, limitless opportunities!" A special day full of education.



## California League Baseball Teams Unite to Assist With Fire Relief Efforts



### Eight Minor League Baseball Teams Selling Firefighting Themed Caps

As California begins its slow recovery process after some of the most deadliest & destructive fires in California history, the baseball teams of the California League have decided to step up to the plate and do their part for the relief efforts.

The California League boasts eight teams located throughout the state: San Jose, Stockton, Modesto, Visalia, Lancaster, San Bernardino, Rancho Cucamonga, and Lake Elsinore. Each team will be producing their own logoed cap with a firefighter theme, produced by Cotapaxi, a custom design and manufacturing corporation located in Commerce, CA. These custom caps will only be available for a limited time from each team & can be purchased for \$20. Net proceeds from these sales will be donated to support the disaster relief efforts as we enter this holiday season.

"Minor League Baseball is all about being involved with our local communities. These fires have affected everyone in the state, and we all want to do our part to help out as much as we can", stated California League President, Charlie Blaney.

If you would like to purchase one of these caps, you can contact each team individually via their respective websites: [www.rawhidebaseball.com](http://www.rawhidebaseball.com)

Or if you'd like to purchase all 8 caps for \$150, you can contact Matt Blaney in the California League office.

## Board of Supervisors Unanimously Supports Sequoia Gateway Commerce Center



The Tulare County Board of Supervisors unanimously supported the Sequoia Gateway Commerce Center, a project proposed for the southeast corner of Caldwell Avenue and Highway 99.

On a motion from Supervisor Amy Shuklian, and a second by Supervisor Peter Vander Poel, the board voted in favor of the project, which has been in the research and analysis stage for seven years.

"This project has been well thought out and well planned," Supervisor Vander Poel said prior to the vote. "The Planning Commission voted unanimously in support and this project will bring much-needed services and jobs and the diversification of our economy."

Supervisor Kuyler Crocker noted that the change of use from agriculture to highway commercial will result in "tremendous water savings," which is particularly important given the mandates of the Groundwater Sustainability Act. He added that these water savings will allow other farms to continue operating rather than following the land.

Air quality was a topic of the presentation by County staff and project proponents. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District is "fully satisfied" with the analysis of potential impacts, noted RMA assistant director Aaron Bock, and Bert Verrips, the project's environmental consultant. Chairman Steve Worthley added that project proponents have gone beyond the Air District's requirements with enhancements that result in "less than significant levels" of impact.

The Environmental Impact Report process involved review by a variety of organizations, including the County of Tulare, the Tulare County Farm Bureau and the Tulare County Planning Commission.

The Sequoia Gateway Commerce Center, proposed by Sequoia Gateway LLC partners Fred Ruiz and Bill Travis, is a commercial/mixed use project proposed for the southeast corner of Caldwell Avenue and Highway 99.

It would be built in phases over the next eight to 10 years, explained consultant Stephen Peck, and will include a Valley Children's Medical Group Specialty Care Center. The pediatric Specialty Care Center clinic and highway commercial uses would be built first, with hotels, restaurants, retail stores and a visitors' center in future phases.

Plans call for signals at the northbound and southbound highway ramps and other circulation improvements valued at \$10.5 million, Peck added.

For information on Sequoia Gateway Commerce Center, contact Stephen Peck, [steve@peckplanning.com](mailto:steve@peckplanning.com); 731-5778.

## Kaweah Delta's Staff Influenza Vaccination Rate is Among Highest in the State

Public urged to get vaccinated to keep flu at bay

Kaweah Delta's efforts to keep patients and visitors safe by requiring all staff to either get a flu vaccination or wear a face mask during cold and flu season have made it a leader in the state.

Kaweah Delta's staff influenza vaccination rate has been 98 percent for the past two years, which exceeds the national Healthy People goal of 90 percent, said Shawn Elkin, Kaweah Delta's Infection Prevention Manager. Kaweah Delta's staff influenza vaccination rate ranked the hospital in a tie for the fifth highest in the state beside Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, USC Kenneth Norris Jr. Cancer Hospital, UC San Diego Health Hillcrest and La Jolla Jacobs Medical Center, both in San Diego, according to a new report published by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH).

Influenza vaccination coverage among health care personnel is

an important measure of a hospital's health care quality, according to CDPH. Health care personnel who receive annual influenza vaccination make an important contribution to prevent transmission of influenza to high-risk patients, their families, and the community.

Kaweah Delta, which has seen a 21 percent increase in the number of staff getting a flu vaccination since 2015-16, is also a key player in helping increase the aggregate healthcare personnel vaccination rate in California hospitals from 72 percent to 84 percent in the 2017-18 flu season, according to the report. Back in 2015-16, Kaweah Delta began requiring all staff to either get a flu vaccination or wear a face mask during cold and flu season. Since that time, Kaweah Delta's rate has gone from 77 percent to 98 percent, Elkin said.



## 5 Tricks to Becoming a Great Networker!

By Kelsey Low, The Growth Coach



For many, the idea of showing up to a place with the goal of meeting new people can be intimidating. I have heard so many people say, "I had to force myself to come here",

in regard to a networking event.

I am an extrovert at heart and love meeting other people, but for many networking can be intimidating and stressful. If you're an introvert, this guide is going to help you become a great networker instead of an "Awkward-Annie".

### 1. Come with an open mind.

Think about how you can be curious and discover things about other people. Networking is about connecting with other people. Come with the intention to learn about other people while simultaneously sharing about yourself. This is not an opportunity to show off and dominate every conversation. This is a time for connection, not comparison or judgments.

### 2. Ask questions!

The easiest thing for a person to talk about is themselves. Ask people about what they do. Ask people what they love about the community. Ask them what they want in 2019. If you're feeling awkward, you can alleviate the awkwardness by asking them open-ended questions.

Be engaged with what they are saying. Really pay attention and ask follow up questions. Be present. Don't think about what you're going to say next. Most people think about themselves and miss key things. Maybe the person you're talking to isn't an ideal client but could know someone who is. Or maybe they could be your new best friend.

### 3. Be aware of non verbal communication.

Some say communication is 20% words and 80% non-verbal communication. In all social situations, be aware of the non-verbal messages you are sending.

- When someone is talking to you and really engaged in what you're saying- their feet will be pointing towards you. If one or both feet are pointed away from you or they are leaning away- they are trying to get away. Take the cue and let them walk away.
- Use eye contact. Networking is about connecting and the best way to do that is to look at someone in the eyes. It also shows your confidence in being able to listen and be attentive.
- Try to avoid crossing your arms. This could non-verbally block people from approaching you because it gives a message that you are closed off.
- The universal cue for noticing if someone is engaged in what you're saying is the raising of the eye brows. This little tip is more about you being aware of your own expressions. Raise your eye brows and nod your head when you want someone to know you're engaged in what they are saying.

### 4. Don't give everyone and their mom a business card.

Only give away business cards to people you make a deep connection with. If someone really wants to continue a conversation with you or if you get to the point of exchanging any information, then give a business card. But for every interaction, you don't need to give them a card. Save them for the true connections.

### 5. Be prepared to answer this question: What do you do?

People want to know, people are interested, and they know the point of a networking event is to meet like-minded people. Say what you do and how you help people. Example: "I am a business coach and I help people use like experiences to grow in their career". This gives the person more than a title and a more humanitarian view. Don't fire hydrant people about your services. Talk about what you care about and how you help and serve people or the community.



# ANNUAL AWARDS

## Submit Your Nominations Today!

The Visalia Chamber of Commerce is seeking nominations for the 66th Annual Awards Celebration

**Categories:**

- Large, Medium, Small Business of the Year
- Woman of the Year
- Non-Profit of the Year
- Man of the Year
- Young Professional of the Year

To nominate an individual or business go to [www.visaliachamber.org/awards](http://www.visaliachamber.org/awards)

The deadline for nominations is March 1, 2019



Continued from Page 1

- Gems of Eastern Europe River Cruise**  
June 28 - July 8, 2019
- Shades of Ireland**  
July 22 - August 3, 2019
- Journey Around Lake Michigan**  
August 10 - 18, 2019
- Greece:**  
In the Footsteps of Paul the Apostle  
October 2 - 12, 2019
- Oberammergau, Germany & Austria**  
June 9 - 18, 2020

Collette Vacations, Mayflower Tours, Cistline  
For more information, go to [www.visaliachamber.org/travel](http://www.visaliachamber.org/travel)

CLIP & SAVE

CALENDAR - JANUARY 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 Emerge Information Session 6:00 pm Chamber Office	4	5
6	7 Visalia City Council Meeting 7:00 pm City Hall	8	9 Travel Presentation 12:00 pm, Buckman Mitchell Insurance	10 YPN Meet Up 5:30 pm, Barrelhouse Brewing	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 Visalia City Council Meeting 7:00 pm City Hall	22 Business After Hours Mixer, 5:30 pm, Katie's Custom Fit	23 Harassment Workshop 7:30 am, Lamp Liter Inn	24 Chamber Ambassador Breakfast 8:00 am, Visalia First Assembly	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 2019 Legal Update, 9:00 am, Wyndham Hotel		

## Visalia Chamber of Commerce and Groppetti Automotive Family Announce Fresno State Football Alumni David Carr and Executive Leadership Coach Justin Patton as Keynote Speakers for the 2019 Impact Leadership Conference.

As Title Sponsor for the Impact Leadership Conference, Groppetti Automotive Family is proud to welcome two nationally recognized keynote speakers to the first Annual Impact Leadership Conference. The Visalia Chamber is excited to have their first sponsorship come from a business person who embodies the spirit of the conference and believes in Impact Leadership Conference's mission. Wanting to help reduce concussions, Groppetti saw a community need and stepped forward to help. In the Fall of 2018, they fully equipped all varsity football teams in Visalia Unified School District with VICIS Zero 1 Helmets.

Justin Patton, International Speaker and Executive Coach will be the first keynote speaker at the first Annual Impact Leadership Conference, hosted by the Visalia Chamber of Commerce on March 21, 2019 at the Visalia Convention Center. Justin has traveled the globe working with top Fortune 500 organizations, coached NCAA athletes and contestants in the Miss America/Miss USA organization and is releasing his first leadership book "Bold New You" in January 2019. "I've had the pleasure of hearing Justin present before. His engaging presentation is one of the very few where it was so compelling, I took diligent notes. The lessons he presents provides a powerful framework for leaders at all levels. I'm excited to welcome a speaker of his reputation and caliber to our first Impact Leadership Conference," said Gail Z.

David Carr, former Fresno State Football and NFL Superbowl Champion will be the afternoon keynote speaker at the Impact Leadership Conference. Carr will share leadership lessons he's learned at Fresno State University, in the National Football



League and now as a commentator on the NFL Network. As a Fresno State Football player, Carr won the Johnny Unitas Golden Arm Award and the Sammy Baugh Trophy, additionally his Fresno State #8 jersey was retired in September 2007. Carr was chosen as the 1st overall pick in the 2002 NFL Draft, and he went on to win the Super Bowl Championship in 2011 with the New York Giants. After retiring from the NFL Carr and his brother Derek opened Carr Elite in Bakersfield, CA. Carr is a regular contributing Football Analyst for NFL Network.



Building on the success of the more than 30-year Leadership Visalia program, the Chamber was asked to host a regional leadership conference for those seeking deeper leadership development. Additionally, the Central Valley's young professional community is seeking high level leadership training as they develop in their career. This conference expects attendees to include both seasoned and developing leaders.

The Impact Leadership Conference will encourage participants to explore how they can grow and develop as leaders. While it is easy to focus on the needs of an organization, supervisor or staff, Impact will focus on personal accountability as a tool for growth.

Tickets for the Impact Leadership Conference can be purchased online at: [www.visaliachamber.org/impact](http://www.visaliachamber.org/impact). Early Bird ticket pricing is available until January 2nd, or until early bird tickets sell out. Regular priced tickets will be available through March 15th. Sponsorship opportunities are available by calling Jon Bueno at the Visalia Chamber of Commerce at 559-734-5876.

## Travel Savings Available

### Sign Up for Greece: In the Footsteps of Paul the Apostle or Shades of Ireland

Join the Chamber for a Slide Show Presentation - Wednesday, January 9, 2019 at 12:00 pm at the Buckman Mitchell Building 500 N. Santa Fe. The Chamber invites you to learn about the tour Greece: In the Footsteps of Paul the Apostle and Shades of Ireland featuring Northern Ireland. Both tours have early booking savings of \$200 per person if booked soon. The Greece tour which includes a 3 night Greek Island and Turkey cruise will depart on October 2, 2019 and return on October 12, 2019. The Greece tour is 11 days and includes 20 meals and costs \$4,599 per person (with early booking discount). The Ireland tour will depart on July 22, 2019 and return on August 3, 2019. The Shades of Ireland tour is 13 days and includes 17 meals and costs \$4,799 per person (with early booking discount, both tours include roundtrip airfare from Fresno, roundtrip transportation to the Fresno Airport, and hotel accommodations.



#### Greece: In the Footsteps of Paul the Apostle

Paul the Apostle, the prolific writer of the New Testament letters was one of the first Christian missionaries. Trace his journey through the ancient cities and pastoral countryside of Greece and Turkey. The tour will begin in Athens with a welcome dinner at the Plaka nestled at the foot of the Acropolis. From Athens the tour will leave on a 3 night cruise of the Greek islands beginning with Mykonos full of whitewashed buildings and narrow streets. Next on the cruise is Kusadasi, Turkey and Patmos Greece where Paul spent three years, this part of the journey includes a visit to the "House of Mary" where it is believed she spent her last days. Patmos, considered the "Jerusalem of the Aegean" includes a visit to the Monastery of John and the Cave of the Apocalypse where John was inspired and wrote the Book of Revelations. The last stop on the cruise is picturesque Santorini with an excursion to the open-air museum of the Minoan Palace of Knossos. Back on the mainland the day will end in Thessaloniki, Greece's second largest city founded in 315 B.C. where Paul wrote two epistles to the Thessalonians. Travelers will also get to visit the Museum of Byzantine Culture. Traveling down the coast to Philippi the tour will join a local guide to where Paul was held prisoner in the dungeon and where he baptized Lydia the first Christian in Europe. Next on the tour is

Delphi where travelers will explore the Sacred Way as they walk to see the Doric Temple and Sanctuary of Apollo. Finally, the tour will stop in Corinth on the way back to Athens where travelers will see the hill of Areopagus (Mars Hills) where Paul delivered his famous "Men of Athens" speech, and then end the trip with a tour of the Acropolis.

#### Shades of Ireland:

Set out on an amazing Irish adventure that tells the complete story of the Emerald Isle. The tour will begin in Dublin, Ireland with tours of St. Patrick's Cathedral, O'Connell Street, Phoenix Park or Grafton Street and the River Liffey. From Dublin the tour will travel to Kilkenny the 12th Century city on the River Nore, then onto Waterford for a walking tour and chance to visit the Waterford Crystal factory or the Medieval Museum. Next on the agenda is a visit to Blarney Castle where the story goes that those who kiss the Blarney Stone gain the gift of eloquence. From the castle the tour will travel to Killarney's stunning national park to participate in a traditional boat ride and sale the breathtaking lakes. Travelers will experience the Ring of Kerry, along the rugged coasting and take time to shop for local artisan-made crafts before visiting the Cliffs of Moher one of the Ireland's most iconic sites.

For those interested in tradition, the tour will stop for a visit at a traditional Irish farm and then stroll the streets of Donegal Town enjoying quaint craft and woolen shops. More historic information will follow in the town of Derry know for political turmoil. The tour will travel to the Inishowen Peninsula and Malin Head the northern most point of Ireland. As the tour begins to wind down travelers will see the most famous national site in Northern Ireland the Giant's Causeway, formed by volcanic activity millions of years ago. Travelers will end the tour in Belfast with a tour of the capital city where they will see "Samson and Goliath" the cranes that build the Titanic, before touring the "Titanic Experience". The day will end with an overnight stay at the regal grounds of Cabra Castle.

For more information about the Chamber travel program go to [www.visaliachamber.org/travel](http://www.visaliachamber.org/travel).



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### VISIONARY:



### REGIONAL LEADERS:



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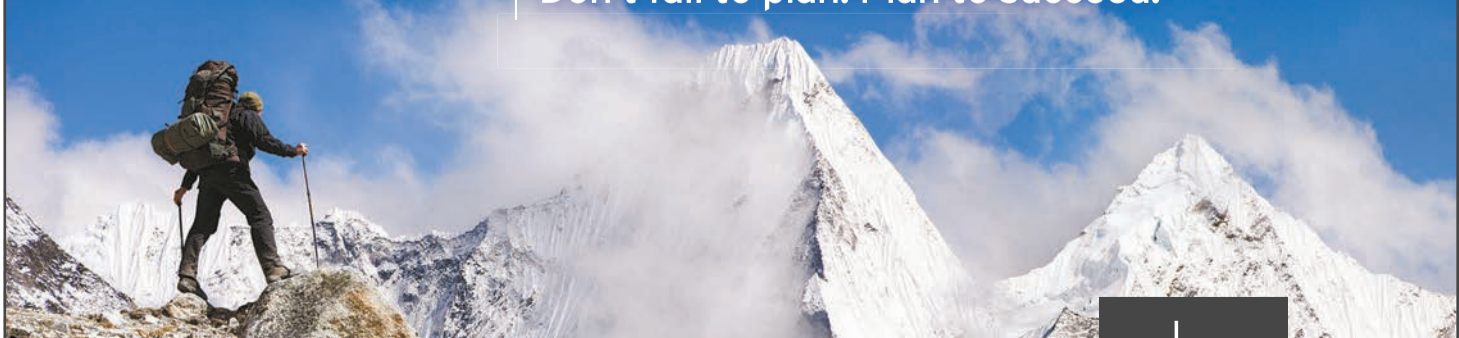
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