

BUSINESS ACROSS CULTURES

LOCAL SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS



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In February of 2011, the Chattanooga Chamber launched Chattanooga's first International Business Council – a network of multi-national businesses and professionals committed to enhancing opportunities for locals to do business across cultures. The organization was formed to meet the specific entrepreneurial needs of Chattanooga's growing international population.

Spearheaded by Gladys Pineda-Loher, business diversity coordinator for the Chattanooga Chamber, the International Business Council offers cross-cultural business training and networking opportunities. Last year, the programming for the council's monthly meetings addressed strategies for doing business in countries such as Korea, Colombia, Brazil and India. Similar programs are on the schedule for 2012.

Since its inception, the International Business Council has already attracted scores of companies to its membership, which represents more than 20 countries, a dozen languages and three generations of people. The organization has also served as a catalyst for conversations on reciprocal trade missions with representatives from Turkey, India and the Philippines.

"Chattanooga's emerging global business sector stands to benefit immensely from the connections the International Business Council will forge between people of international origin or background and those who want to do business with them," says Pineda-Loher. "By helping this demographic develop enterprises through promotion, education, advo-

cacy and opportunities for professional and entrepreneurial growth, we hope to stimulate the kind of development that fortifies our local economy."

In addition to driving those local connections, the Chattanooga Chamber is also investigating free trade agreement opportunities in a number of countries its member businesses have expressed interest in engaging as partners in commerce.

"In order for Chattanooga to play a more active role in global exchange, we actively recruit and welcome foreign direct investment and seek ways to take advantage of opportunities that lie outside our immediate sphere of influence," says Tom Edd Wilson, president and CEO of the Chattanooga Chamber. "We want to develop a business climate in Chattanooga that not only supports this effort, but also challenges its existing businesses and entrepreneurs to expand internationally by providing them with the educational resources and connections necessary to do so."

According to Pineda-Loher, plans to further explore those opportunities are currently in the making.

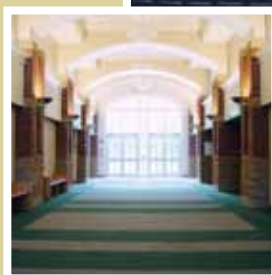
"As more people rally behind our quest to diversify the local economy and extend its reach internationally, we are better positioned to positively impact the quality of life in our community," says Pineda-Loher. "We're looking forward to fostering that growth in the months and years ahead."

DID YOU KNOW?

The Chattanooga Chamber's newly launched International Business Council includes representatives from more than 20 countries and three generations who speak more than a dozen languages.



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Organizations in and around the Chattanooga area offer resources and support for the region's diverse networks of people. Spanning a wide range of groups, these organizations cater to an expansive array of interests and strengthen the rich communities of culture thriving in Chattanooga today.

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www.bridgerefugeeschatt.org/home.html

City of Chattanooga Office of Multicultural Affairs
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Ste. D6
Chattanooga, TN 37411
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www.chattanooga.gov

Chattanooga Islamic Center
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Chattanooga, TN 37408
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Chinese Association of Chattanooga
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www.cca-ccs.org

Filipino-American Community Association
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German-American Club
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German American Chamber of Commerce
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www.gaccsouth.com/en

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www.hccet.org

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www.chattislam.org

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www.huguenot.netnation.com/states/tennessee/TN_SOC.htm

India Association of Chattanooga
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www.indiachattanooga.com

International Business Council
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(423) 763-4345
www.chattanoogachamber.com

Korean Association of Chattanooga
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www.chattanoogakorean.org

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National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
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www.chattanooganaacp.com

National Coalition of 100 Black Women - Chattanooga Chapter
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www.ncbw-chattanooga.org

Rainbow/PUSH Coalition
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www.rainbowpush.org

Sister City Association of Chattanooga
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www.chattanoogasistercities.org

St. Andrews Center
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Tennessee Human Rights Commission
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