



Dear Chamber Member,

Thank you for your membership. What a wonderful community you have chosen to operate your business in...it is simply incredible! Alexandria and the surrounding area is rife with diversity in business, picturesque lakes and landscapes, and no shortage of amazing and caring people. It truly is a great place to 'Live, Work, Play and Prosper'. The Alexandria Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce has strived to help and support our thriving community for 112 years...WOW! This commitment has in no small part helped shape and develop the opportunities and advantages Alexandria sees today. This commitment will continue, and we thank you for being a part of it and trusting the Chamber to embrace and enhance the mission of your business.

The 2018 theme for the Chamber of Commerce was 'Committed to Excellence', and what a great theme it was! Our Executive Director, Tara Bitzan, demonstrated and led her incredible staff of three down this path...and the results showed. Processes, procedures and strategies to benefit Chamber members were tweaked and improved, and over 600 Chamber members benefited from this commitment. The Board of Directors, along with Tara and her staff, strove to deepen our levels of cooperation with Alexandria Area Economic Development Commission, Alexandria Downtown Merchants Association, Explore Alexandria Tourism and many other area organizations, and these collaborations are paying dividends. Alexandria was named 'Retailer of the Year' in Minnesota for 2018, an accolade that directly referenced our community's ability and willingness to collaborate. Yes, 'Committed to Excellence' was a GREAT theme...one that we will strive to continually uphold.

The selected theme for the Chamber of Commerce in 2019 is '**Neighbors Helping Neighbors**'...a concept that resonates on many levels. It is about caring individuals lending a hand when needed, or providing a shoulder to lean on, an ear to listen, or a heart to understand. It is about employers and business leaders setting good examples for their employees, for the students of our community, and for the customers that utilize their goods and services. It is about local businesses supporting one another and recognizing that a community thrives when all the diverse sectors are successful. The Chamber of Commerce understands this concept, will continue to provide information and networking opportunities for the businesses of our community, and will collaborate with other community partners to launch a Do Business Local/Community Branding campaign in 2019. 'Neighbors Helping Neighbors'...a theme we can all get behind!

Wishing you a successful 2019.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Bowen". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Greg Bowen, 2019 President
Alexandria Lakes Area Chamber Board of Directors