



# Chambers working together for the benefit of Delaware's business community

BY JUDY DIOGO

THE ASSOCIATION OF CHAMBERS of Commerce of Delaware is comprised of 14 individual chambers who represent the businesses that make up our fine State. They are the: Delaware State Chamber; Bethany-Fenwick Area Chamber; Central Delaware Chamber; Delaware Small Business Chamber; Greater Delmar Chamber; Georgetown Chamber; Lewes Chamber; Middletown Area Chamber; Chamber for Greater Milford; Millsboro Chamber; Milton Chamber; New Castle County Chamber; Rehoboth Beach-Dewey Beach Chamber and Western Sussex Chamber.

The Association has been in place for the past 20 years, if not 25. As a group they meet at least four times a year to discuss issues facing their membership, while also sharing ideas for new events and programs to serve their members and ways to save their members money.

In 2019 the Association went back to adopting a legislative agenda, which would cover two to three years. This agenda contains the top issues affecting the business community. The agenda includes: health insurance/health care costs; support of tourism; workforce development; infrastructure/technology development; and regulations/permitting. These issues were selected as the most commonly heard by all our members across the State.

This past year members of the Association met with Delaware's Insurance Commissioner to discuss bringing back association style health care plans,

which could help businesses reduce their costs for health care. As a group they are also supporting the Ready in 6 initiative, whose focus is to reduce Delaware's permitting procedures and redefine regulations to allow businesses to go through the process of starting and/or expanding a business in six months. This initiative will collectively put Delaware back on the map for site selectors, hence growing our work opportunities and our work.

This year the Association is focusing on our tourism industry by supporting an accommodations tax on Airbnb's and Vacation Rental by Owner's (VRBO). The tax would operate under the same guidelines as the current accommodations tax for hotels, etc. They are also working with the Department of Labor to find a way to develop our workforce through a new skills training program concept. ■



**Judy Diogo** is the President of the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce. If you have any questions about the Association of Chambers of Commerce for Delaware, please feel free to call the Central Delaware Chamber of Commerce, 302-734-7513 or your respective Chamber.