



Chair's Message

BY KATIE K. WILKINSON

ALTHOUGH THIS message will be delivered in January at our first-ever virtual Annual Dinner, I am writing to you just days after the declaration of Delaware's own Joe Biden as the President-Elect. His Vice-Presidential running mate, Kamala Harris, broke barriers as the first woman, first Black and first South Asian person elected to this office. This is a time of

celebration and change but also a time of deep challenge for our community, our state, and our country. We may have a new President – but we are currently a divided nation. The pandemic, a divisive election, and the social and civil unrest that erupted this past summer has everyone watching and listening. What is next? Take note of all these events in 2020 and watch how they will redefine our political, social, and economic landscape in the future.

As the statistics around COVID-19 continue to support a longer timeline for this virus, businesses across our state are making difficult decisions. Some are reducing staff, others are redefining their business models, and others – sadly – are forced to close their doors. While unemployment numbers in the state are improving, they are still at record highs with no true end in sight. These uncertain times continue and are not unique to Delaware. But what is

unique about Delaware? It is our consistent ability and willingness to come together – across political divides, county lines, and social inequities – to keep our state vibrant, growing, and thriving. Examples of this include: the Governor's creation of the Pandemic Resurgence Advisory Committee (PRAC) as well as the regular collaboration of the Delaware Prosperity Partnership, the Delaware Business Roundtable and chambers across the state.

The PRAC was centered around health, equity, and business, and took a head-on approach to developing and delivering programs to support all Delawareans during these challenging times. The collaboration between leaders of the Business Roundtable, the Delaware Prosperity Partnership and chambers resulted in a focused effort on our economic recovery – in the form of developing strategies to make Delaware the winning choice for businesses looking to relocate. I truly believe that this work and collaboration is possible for us because we are small, we are connected, and we are motivated.

We should also recognize the “silver linings” of 2020. They do exist. Families are spending more time together. More Americans turned out to vote than any other election in over 100 years. Employers are allowing employees to work remotely and finding – in many cases – that productivity has increased. Americans are supporting small businesses like they never have before. We are learning to live in this “new world” and new year. In 2021, I wish all of you good health and prosperity, and appreciate the opportunity to continue to lead this amazing organization.

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