Western Association of Chamber Executives

Outstanding Chamber Program Award

Purpose:
This award recognizes exemplary Chamber of Commerce programs that highlight performance in a core competency area and/or demonstrate excellence in being a **3C Chamber**—a **Catalyst** for business growth, a **Convener** of leaders and influencers, or a **Champion** for stronger communities.

The award honors programs that have achieved measurable success, align with the Chamber's mission, and can serve as a **replicable model** for other Chambers across the W.A.C.E. network.

Eligibility:

- Applications may be submitted by any Chamber of Commerce in good standing as a W.A.C.E. member. Chambers may submit more than one entry, each featuring a specific, distinct program.
- Programs must have been implemented within the past 12 months.
- Programs must demonstrate success in **one or more core competencies**:
    - Strengthening the Local Economy
    - Promoting & Improving the Community
    - Political Action
    - Representing Business Interests with Government
    - Networking & Building Business Relationships
- The program must have met or exceeded established Chamber goals and show evidence of **replicability** by other Chambers.

Award Presentation:

- Recognition at the W.A.C.E. Annual Conference.
- Spotlighted in W.A.C.E. communications, including the website, newsletters, and learning sessions as a model program.

Updated 2026

Application Elements

Applicants must submit the following materials in their award entry:

Component	Description
Chamber Information	Chamber name, location, membership size, staff size, budget size; primary contact for the program.
Program Overview	Program title, description, duration (start and end dates), and the core competency area(s) addressed.
Goals & Objectives	Specific, measurable goals set for the program; explanation of alignment with the Chamber's mission and/or 3C model.
Program Strategy & Design	Program structure; stakeholders engaged; key activities or events; innovative or unique elements.
Implementation	Timeline of program rollout; resources (staff, volunteers, partnerships, financial); operational details; communications and marketing efforts.
Results & Outcomes	Quantitative results (metrics such as participation levels, revenue generated, partnerships created, legislation influenced, etc.); qualitative outcomes (testimonials, community recognition, media coverage, long-term impact).
Replicability	How the program could be implemented by other Chambers; required resources; transferable strategies or toolkits.
Challenges & Lessons Learned	Key obstacles and solutions; takeaways for other Chambers; potential improvements for future iterations.
Supporting Materials	Photos, sample marketing materials, media coverage, links to resources, or documentation that illustrates program impact.
Budget Summary	Overview of costs, revenue generated, sponsorships, or in-kind support tied directly to the program.

Judging Criteria

Entries will be reviewed by a panel of W.A.C.E. members and industry experts using the following criteria:

Criterion	Weight	What Judges Will Look For
Alignment with 3C Model and Core Competencies	20%	How well the program reflects the Catalyst, Convener, or Champion roles and/or advances one or more of the five Chamber core competencies.
Program Goals & Strategy	20%	Clarity and relevance of objectives; innovation in program design; alignment with Chamber's mission and member/community needs.
Results & Impact	30%	Tangible outcomes; measurable success compared to stated goals; evidence of long-term benefit for members, the community, or business climate.
Replicability	15%	Ease with which other Chambers could adopt the program; clarity of transferable strategies; scalability to different Chamber sizes or markets.
Innovation & Lessons Learned	15%	Originality of the program concept or approach; adaptability; learning outcomes that strengthen Chamber capacity and can inspire others.