



NATIONAL U.S.-ARAB CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

غرفة التجارة الأمريكية العربية الوطنية

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U.S. - ARAB CHAMBER SUPPORTS "WORLD TRADE WEEK" IN LOS ANGELES

SBA Administrator Maria Contreras-Sweet Says Trade Agreements Are Key to Maintaining U.S. Global Economic Leadership

Los Angeles, CA – This past week, the National U.S. - Arab Chamber of Commerce (NUSACC) and other local institutions supported the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce in celebration of the 89th Annual World Trade Week. NUSACC's Los Angeles Office – represented by Ms. Huda Salman – participated in the “kickoff” breakfast held at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Los Angeles.

More than 600 business executives – including NUSACC member companies – attended the program, which highlighted trade opportunities and the economic benefits of global trade, investment, transportation and logistics. The launch event included trade representatives from almost 30 countries, including the Arab Republic of Egypt, which was represented by Mr. Yasser M. Moustafa, Commercial Consul with the Consulate General of Egypt in Los Angeles; and the United Arab Emirates, which was represented by H.E. Abdulla Ali Al-Saboosi, the UAE's Consul General in Los Angeles.

“NUSACC was very pleased to support the excellent work of our ‘sister’ Chamber in Los Angeles, as well as the L.A. World Trade Week, which may be the largest of its kind in the United States,” said David Hamod, President & CEO of the U.S. – Arab Chamber. “NUSACC sees great value in maintaining a



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full-time presence on the West Coast, which is developing increasingly important business ties with the Arab world.”

NUSACC has maintained offices in California for decades. In 2014, the Los Angeles office: hosted a “GCC Trade Connect Workshop”; co-hosted a seminar with the UAE Consulate focused on legalization services; participated in the launch event of the new UAE Consulate in L.A.; supported the launch of Etihad Airways’ non-stop flight from Abu Dhabi to Los Angeles; hosted NUSACC’s first *Iftar* dinner on the West Coast in observance of the holy month of *Ramadan*; and co-hosted a visit to California by the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA).



Bret Johnsen, Chief Financial Office for SpaceX, offered keynote remarks.

Keynote speakers at the Kickoff Breakfast, which initiated a solid month of trade-focused events in Southern California, included Bret Johnsen, Chief Financial Officer of SpaceX, and Maria Contreras-Sweet, Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).



The Hon. Mickey Kantor (right), former Secretary of Commerce and U.S. Trade, was awarded the Stanley T. Olafson Bronze Plaque by Gary Toebben (left), L.A. Area Chamber President & CEO.

Noted Ms. Contreras-Sweet, “Right now, 95 percent of the world’s consumers live outside our borders, but only one percent of our businesses sell to them. If we’re going to maintain our global economic leadership, strong trade agreements are essential to our small business exporters to reach global markets and elevate their entrepreneurship potential.”

Caroline Brown, 2015 World Trade Week Chair and Director of Global Trade & Supply Chain Solutions, said, “The Los Angeles area is considered the ‘gateway for trade’. For 89 years, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce has worked with the Southern



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California trade community to spread the word about the financial benefits of trade, transportation and logistics, and the impact that trade makes on jobs and opportunities within communities.”

Brown went on to say that one of the most significant geographic advantages for Los Angeles is having the Southern California trade community positioned at the gateway of the Pacific Rim, as well as a conduit to the Americas – Canada and South America. In addition, trade continues to grow in significance with Asia, the Americas, Europe and Africa, she suggested.

Brown pointed out that the composition of the L.A. global community – through its people, languages, and cultures – and is a source of strength for Southern California trade. “We trade with more than 200 countries and have 209 languages spoken in our communities,” she noted. As such, she suggested, “We are not dependent on one trading partner . . . and we have the innovation to offer superior products that meet worldwide demands and have the capacity to purchase products around the world.”

“Industries such as agriculture, automotive, metals, electronics, and aerospace make California unique,” she concluded. “These innate qualities make Southern California extremely competitive.”

The Kickoff Breakfast included an awards ceremony that recognized members of the L.A. business community for their contributions to international trade. This year, the Hon. Mickey Kantor, former U.S. Secretary of Commerce and U.S. Trade Representative, was awarded the Stanley T. Olafson Bronze Plaque in recognition of his outstanding contributions to Southern California’s trade position.



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Additional awards included:

- Export Achievement Award: Aleph Group, Inc. and Haas Automation, Inc.
- Foreign Direct Investment Award: InBody USA
- Bob Kleist Leadership Award: Organization of Women In International Trade, Los Angeles chapter
- Service Achievement Award: Los Angeles Custom Brokers and Freight Forwarders Association, Inc.

The kickoff event also honored 17 college and high school students with scholarships totaling more than \$10,000, part of the World Trade Week Education Initiative.

Carlos Valderrama, Senior Vice President of Global Initiatives at the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, concluded, “The Chamber’s Global Initiatives Council appreciates the Los Angeles office of the National U.S. - Arab Chamber of Commerce for their support in our international programs, including our signature event, the World Trade Week Kickoff Breakfast.”



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The National U.S.-Arab Chamber of Commerce, widely regarded as the voice of American business in the Arab world, is in touch with business communities across the United States and serves as the U.S. point of contact for the national chambers of commerce in the 22 Arab nations. On a daily basis, NUSACC works closely with leaders throughout the Arab world, as well as high-level decision makers in the U.S. business community, public policy research centers, multilateral institutions, nongovernmental organizations, media, and the U.S. Government.