

In February 2022, our first in-person event after the pandemic lockdown was the First Annual State of the Community, a forum to learn about efforts by the business community, the University of Virginia, Albemarle County, and the City of Charlottesville to build a more robust local economy. It was a nearly instant sellout. With some formatting tweaks, we are delighted to announce the Second Annual State of the Community on Friday, February 17, at Abbott Auditorium at the Darden School of Business.

Our Chamber has big plans for the State of the Community event, bringing together several panel discussions to share ideas about economic drivers, such as a well-trained workforce, comprehensive planning and development, and supporting homegrown entrepreneurs. The scheduled speakers include the City and County executive leaders Michael Rogers and Jeff Richardson, UVA President Jim Ryan, PVCC President Jean Runyon, and business leaders including Antwon Brinson (Culinary Concepts), Ed Rogers (Bonumose), Ashley Davies (Riverbend Development), Frank Stoner (Milestone Partners) and more.

Tickets are \$60 for Chamber members and \$75 for the general public, including a box lunch. Please register today!

### New Board Members

We are proud to announce our newest Chamber board members. Our 2023 Board Chair Rebecca Ivins will be supported by our largest board in several years. New board members from our community include Rita Bunch, Libby Edwards-Allbaugh, Rudy Fernandez, Allison Linney, David Mitchell, and Todd Rowley, who will be joining a dedicated group of business leaders currently serving on the board.

The Chamber is well-positioned as a primary convener and champion for innovation, collaboration, and resourcefulness. Our organization, and its staff and volunteers, have weathered the past few years in a productive and resilient fashion. It is now poised to embark on developing a new strategic plan.



FROM THE DESK OF  
*Elizabeth Cromwell*  
President and CEO of the Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce

### A Year of Transition and Plans for the Future

As we pause for a moment before diving into the next strategic plan, the timing is perfect for me to step aside as Chamber President and welcome a new leader to take the organization to new heights. As my last days at the Chamber close, I'd like to extend my sincerest thanks to the amazing board, staff, volunteers, and partners for their professional and personal fellowship.

Chamber board member Arlene Lee has assumed the role of Search Committee Chair, and the committee hopes to meet candidates from near and far. I may be biased, but being Chamber President in this community is a plum position and an excellent opportunity that many will seek. I am confident that a visionary, collaborative leader will continue the Chamber's upward trajectory.

The Albemarle County region is a jewel, and I am grateful for my time here over the past five years. I wish you all continued success and prosperity.

Following some travel, I will be settling into a new role with a nonprofit organization Island Autism Center, in West Tisbury, MA. I will be helping with the planning and developing a residential setting where children and adults with autism can enjoy social and therapeutic activities year-round. If you're ever on Martha's Vineyard, feel free to look up the Island Autism Center and see what we have been able to accomplish.

**2023 Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce  
Second Annual State of the Community  
Friday, February 17  
Abbott Auditorium at the  
Darden School of Business**

Please register today! [bit.ly/sotc2023](https://bit.ly/sotc2023)

Join us for a fast-paced, engaging discussion on fostering local economic success. A series of panels will feature Q&A with key stakeholders and decision makers in the public and private sectors. Our panelists will highlight collaborative strategies in municipal leadership, entrepreneurship, workforce development and comprehensive planning. We'll hear success stories, examine challenges, and identify opportunities. Sponsored by Ting.

### Panel #1—Municipal Leadership Update (11:05–11:25am)

Chamber President Elizabeth Cromwell will moderate a conversation highlighting efforts to foster regional entrepreneurial growth.

Panelists: Roger Johnson, Director, Albemarle County Office of Economic Development, Chris Engel, Director, City of Charlottesville Office of Economic Development, Yolunda Harrell, Founder & CEO, New Hill Development Corporation, Antwon Brinson, CEO, Culinary Concepts AB, and Ed Rogers, CEO & Co-Founder, Bonumose.

### Panel #2—Investing in Homegrown Entrepreneurship (11:25am–12pm)

Chamber President Elizabeth Cromwell will moderate a conversation highlighting efforts to foster regional entrepreneurial growth.

Panelists: Roger Johnson, Director, Albemarle County Office of Economic Development; Chamber board member. Chris Engel, Director, City of Charlottesville Office of Economic Development; Chamber board member. Yolunda Harrell, Founder & CEO, New Hill Development Corporation; Chamber board member. Antwon Brinson, CEO, Culinary Concepts AB. Ed Rogers, CEO & Co-Founder, Bonumose.

### Panel #3—Investing in Education for a Competitive Workforce (12–12:45pm)

Chamber Board Member Wendy Horton, CEO of UVA Health, will moderate a discussion on developing career pathways through public-private cooperation.

Panelists: Jim Ryan, President, University of Virginia, Jean Runyon, President, Piedmont Virginia Community College, Matthew Haas, Superintendent, Albemarle County Public Schools, and Charlie Rogers, President & CEO, Innovative Software Solutions.

### Panel #4—Economic Impact of Comprehensive Planning & Land Use Decisions (12:45–1:20pm)

Chamber Chamber Public Policy Committee member Neil Williamson, President & CEO of the Free Enterprise Forum, will moderate a conversation about comprehensive planning in Charlottesville and Albemarle.

Panelists: Pace Lochte, Assistant Vice President for Economic Development, University of Virginia; Ashley Davies, Vice President, Riverbend Development, and Frank Stoner, Principal, Milestone Partners.

## Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce

434-295-3141 [cvillechamber.com](http://cvillechamber.com)

The Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce advocates, convenes, and engages to strengthen business in the greater Charlottesville Region.