

# BUSINESS VOICE

ISSUE 177 | OCTOBER 2023

A PUBLICATION OF THE  
RIDGECREST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



# BOARD CHAIR MESSAGE

## 2023-2024 Chamber OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

**Kristina Cross**  
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Chair Elect  
RAW Media Productions

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**Jeff Lenk**  
Cerro Coso Community College

**Bernie Mondragon**  
Bernie's Landscaping

**Nancy Pace**  
Bake My Day

**Daryl Silberberg Jr.**  
IWV Insurance

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**Rebecca McCourt**  
Chamber Executive Director

Business Voice is a publication of the  
Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce  
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Issue 177 October 2023

## October 2023

With the turn of October, we find ourselves immersed in the delights of the season—crisp air, Halloween decorations, the anticipation of cozy sweaters, and the aroma of pumpkin spice. It's a month filled with promise and excitement. Yet, for us at the Chamber, October holds a special significance.

Since its inception on October 9th, 1946, the Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce has been a bedrock of our community, tirelessly working to foster connections and fortify our local economy. This month marks the Chamber's 77th year of unwavering support for Ridgecrest and our community. Through the decades, the Chamber has woven itself into the very fabric of our community, leaving an enduring mark in countless ways.

When I reflect on the Chamber, I'm struck by its legacy, and I am privileged to be a part of it today. Despite any challenges we may face, I firmly believe that the Chamber's steadfast commitment to our local businesses is pivotal to the vitality and well-being of Ridgecrest as a whole.

For 77 years, the Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce has been a cornerstone of our community, providing invaluable networking opportunities. The Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce has been a driving force behind the success of our local small businesses and the overall economy and continues to set the standard for business communication and leadership.

This October heralds the 77th anniversary of the Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce, and it's clear that this journey is far from its conclusion. Much has transpired over these years, and as we move forward, we eagerly anticipate what the future holds.

Thank you for your integral role in shaping Ridgecrest, nurturing our business community, and fortifying the Ridgecrest Chamber of Commerce.

*Kristina Cross*



Register Today at [www.CerroCoso.edu](http://www.CerroCoso.edu)

A group of four people (three women and one man) smiling and wearing dark blue polo shirts with the Cerro Coso Community College logo. They are standing outdoors in front of a building.

**The sky is the limit at  
Cerro Coso.**

**CERRO COSO**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
**TAKE flight**



# CHAMBER LUNCHEON

RSVP today!



CHAMBER@RIDGECRESTCHAMBER.COM

**October 10, 2023— IWV Economic Development Corp., Scott O'Neil**

Join the Ridgecrest Chamber **at the Historic USO Building on Tuesday, October 10 at 12pm.** Mr. O'Neil will be discussing the proposed study that the IWVEDC is pursuing to bring air service to the Ridgecrest area and the potential impacts to you and your business. The IWV Economic Development Corporation is a 501(c)(3) that strives to enhance the economy and improve the quality of life for the greater Ridgecrest area. Mr. O'Neil has served as the Executive Director of the IWVEDC since 2015.



Your Chamber  
is dedicated to:

Building community

Strengthening the economy

Providing networking  
opportunities

Representing the interest of  
business to the government

Political action

**Please RSVP by Friday, October 6, 2023** to the Chamber office 760-375-8331 or [chamber@ridgecrestchamber.com](mailto:chamber@ridgecrestchamber.com)

**Lunch will be provided by Casey's Restaurant.**

\$25 w/RSVP, \$30 for non-members or without an RSVP

## Inside the **BUSINESS** **VOICE**

Board Chair's Message	2
Luncheon	3
New Members	4-6
Labor Law Corner	10-11
Renewing Members	12
Chairman's Circle	13



**(760) 446-2796**

**1600 N. Norma, No. 4  
Ridgecrest, CA 93555**

# NEW MEMBERS

## Ridgecrest Vineyard Church

Ridgecrest Vineyard is a “come as you are” Christian church. We say the “R” in RVC stands for “Real.” Therefore, expect to find real people, real worship, with real teachings on the Bible. We strive to love and accept everyone for who they are, where they are, and as they are. So please come as you are! With a relaxed atmosphere and welcoming people, we hope you find RVC a place to call home.

Our Values: Engage the surrounding community with relevant dialogue and action. Extend a hand of welcome to those who are searching. Encourage every believer that they have a place to serve. Embrace God’s Word and a life of prayer. Experience worship in practical and genuine ways. Enjoy the fellowship of God’s family in community settings. Equip and send out emerging leaders to multiply God’s Kingdom.

Our In-Person worship gatherings are an opportunity for our Church to meet together to worship God in song and build one another in the word of God. We believe that corporate worship is a critical part of the life of the local Church. We would really love to have the opportunity to have you join us for one of our worship gatherings at Ridgecrest Vineyard Church.

Ridgecrest Vineyard Church currently meets for worship

Location: 1000 N Norma St, Ridgecrest, CA, US

Time: Sunday Service: 10 AM

760-977-7716 or visit <https://rvclife.org/>



Ridgecrest  
**VINEYARD**  
church

*Information provided by member*

## Electronic Payments, Inc.

Your job is to run your business, not to worry about payment processing! Electronic Payments has eliminated all the apprehensions and concerns associated with accepting and processing credit cards. Since 2000, we've been

providing merchants nationwide with state-of-the-art solutions that are user-friendly, reliable and secure. Like so many of our merchant partners, you too can maximize your business's operations with the most innovative and trusted payment processing services and solutions.

By establishing the highest standards for service, integrity and price, we enjoy one of the greatest reputations in the payment processing industry. Our in-house merchant support and 24/7 technical support teams have years of industry experience and can assist you with any need. Plus, with so many changes in payment technologies, we're always on the forefront, offering the latest in mobile, NFC and EMV-ready solutions.

To build a successful business, you need the best tools and resources in place—including how you accept payments from your valued customers. Whether you're new to accepting credit cards or are looking for more affordable, innovative payment options, Electronic Payments has the solutions in place to fit the needs of every business!

Learn more at [epinocal.com](http://epinocal.com) or call Gil Dowling at 559-536-0588

*Information provided by member*



# NEW MEMBERS

## Primerica

*Information provided by member*

### We Do What's Right

Joel Helms of Primerica states that his goal is to help clients understand and achieve financial independence in a way that is meaningful. Money impacts every area of life; marriage, kids, careers, and even how we feel about ourselves. The biggest enemy is confusion. When you don't know where you're going, it creates unnecessary worry or stress.



Creating a unique financial blueprint can mean you are less likely to struggle with fear about your financial future and prevent things like arguments about money, debt, and having little or no savings. Benefits of having a unique financial blueprint include less financial stress, less debt and more savings. This leads to an increase in productivity because when clients are excited about their future, they can live more confidently today.

How does one create a unique financial blueprint? Schedule a meeting with Joel. It is 30 minutes for him to learn about you and where you want to go. Start with a meeting so you can begin down the path to create your unique financial blueprint and the simple steps to get you there.

Implement the action steps. Primerica helps make it happen.

Contact Joel Helms to learn more at [joel.helms@primerica.com](mailto:joel.helms@primerica.com) or visit <https://livemore.net/joelhelms>

## Print Hub

*Information provided by member*

Print Hub is a custom apparel business located in Ridgecrest. Print Hub specializes in delivering quality personalized products to meet the diverse needs of its clientele on time. With a wide range of offerings including t-shirts, polo shirts, hats, hoodies, and more, Print Hub stands as a reliable partner for businesses, events, and individuals seeking top-notch custom apparel.



At Print Hub they work to provide high-quality custom apparel that reflects the unique visions of their customers. Print Hub is constantly refining its processes to achieve the highest standards in print quality. They offer a diverse range of printing methods and specialty decoration techniques to cater to a wide spectrum of design preferences.

Print Hub's commitment to excellence, from precise color matching to a diverse range of printing techniques, ensures that every custom apparel order meets the highest standards.

Learn more at <https://www.printhubtees.com/> or by contacting Chad at (442) 433-7605

# NEW MEMBERS

## Moving Mountains HR, Michelle Schwanhauser, CEO

*Information provided by member*

Michelle Schwanhauser (formerly Lemke) is an experienced leader in the realms of healthcare, human resources and risk management. She specializes in leadership development, regulatory compliance, and practical policy and procedure implementation.



Michelle has a master's in healthcare administration and 13 years' experience in HR and Risk Management, with ten of those spent at the executive level. As a consultant she offers unique contributions to strategic direction for organizations, acts as liaison with legal counsel, and provides counsel to executive leadership.

Michelle brings calm, thoughtful, decisive leadership to any organization she serves. She excels at assessing operations, identifying gaps in HR compliance, and providing practical implementation of necessary policies and procedures.



Moving Mountains HR is equipped to help companies achieve their strategic goals by providing comprehensive HR leadership, assessment and implementation services.

A lifelong resident of California, Michelle enjoys art, nature, and investing in her family and community.

## Home Office SOLUTIONS

Create a workspace that works for you.







Moe's Music Ridgecrest



Tacos and Burgers



Guild Mortgage

FULL SERVICE LAW OFFICE

LAW OFFICE OF DENNIS M. SCHUSTER

123 GRANDE WAY STE E

760-371-1126 SCHUSTERLAWGROUP.COM





**North Pole at Ridgecrest**



**Print Hub**



**Electrified Solutions Electric, LLC**



# Join us

7:30-9:00am  
October 5



CHAMBER Coffee Club

Coffee & Conversation @ the Chamber Office


# ribbon cutting!



Wednesday,  
October 4,  
at 12:00 PM

People's Pick Pantry  
at Salvation Army  
151 N. Downs St.

# ribbon cutting!



Thursday,  
October 19,  
at 12:00 PM

Jay Nolan Community Services  
722 N. Norma St, Ste A

# WINGS OFF BALSAM

AN "A NIGHT ON BALSAM" EVENT

Food, Drinks, Music,  
and Fun at City Center.

Drink tickets for purchase at the event,  
\$28 for 3 glasses, or \$10 per glass wine  
\$22 for 3 glasses, or \$8 per glass of beer  
redeemed at your choices of participating  
wineries or breweries!

Drink tickets are No-Cash: Debit/Credit, ApplePay,  
Android Pay, etc. Food and beer will be available for  
purchase from various food trucks/caterers. Free Entry.

Must be 21 or older to purchase alcohol and show proof of age with a  
valid government-issued ID. No outside alcohol permitted, event perimeter enforced.

**FOOD**

- Apple Shack
- Cake Pop Shop
- Catering Thyme
- Curros el Sagrados
- Faller PTO
- Lumpia Lady
- Molina's Tacos
- Philly's Best Cheesesteaks
- Red House BBQ
- Rob's OG BBQ
- Tacos el Gordito
- Tailored Burgers
- Tutu's Kettle Corn
- VEN

**DRINKS**

- Tobin James
- Tehachapi Winery
- Pianetta Winery
- Tehachapi Wine & Cattle Co.
- Kern River Brewing Co.
- Bravery Brewery
- Brewery X

**MUSIC**

- Joel Fulco
- DJ Paniq

**FUN**

- Scare Area/Photo Opp
- Fall Photo Area
- Zombie Costume Contest (18 & older)
- Fall Game Zone

Saturday, October 28, 2023 @ 5:00 PM  
City Center, 100 W. California Ave.



Thank you to these supportive local sponsors:  
Flight Line Tap Room, Casa Corona, RAW Media Productions, & Catering Thyme.






For any updates visit [www.Ridgecrest-CA.gov/Events](http://www.Ridgecrest-CA.gov/Events) Questions? [imedina@ridgecrest-ca.gov](mailto:imedina@ridgecrest-ca.gov) or Call 760.499.5065

## LABOR LAW CORNER

### Revised Criminal History Regulations Effective October 1

This article is reprinted from CalChamber (09/21/2023), by Michelle Galbraith, J.D.; Employment Law Expert, CalChamber

In July 2023, the California Civil Rights Department (CRD) approved revised regulations related to the use of criminal history in the hiring process — regulations that go into effect on October 1, 2023.

“The new regulations clarify employers’ obligations when using criminal histories and offer additional details and examples,” said Bianca N. Saad, CalChamber’s Vice President of Labor and Employment for Content, Training and Advice.

“Employers should take this opportunity to review and update their background check policies to ensure that they are in compliance with not only the existing laws, but the revised regulations as well.”



### ‘Ban the Box’ Basics

Most California employers with five or more employees may not ask about criminal history at any point before a conditional offer of employment is made.

“Employment applications often used to include a checkbox asking applicants to confirm that they have never been convicted of a crime,” said Saad. “But since 2018, California’s ‘ban-the-box’ laws have prohibited employers from requesting criminal history on applications and in any pre-offer interviews.”

Additionally, some municipalities — such as San Francisco and Los Angeles — have implemented their own ban-the-box laws, and employers who maintain offices in those cities must comply with both the state and the local laws. Employers with multiple worksites or teleworking employees should familiarize themselves with any local requirements and ensure that their policies are compliant.

And now, the CRD’s revised regulations have expanded on ban-the-box laws, stating that employers may not publish any statements in advertisements or job postings that suggest they won’t hire anyone with a criminal conviction, such as “applicants must have a clean record.”

### Individualized Assessment: Revised Regulations Give More Guidance

The goal of the individualized assessment is to determine whether the conviction has a direct adverse effect on the applicant’s ability to perform their job duties.

“The current regulations require managers to consider three primary factors when making an individualized assessment,” said Saad. “Those factors are the nature and gravity of the criminal offense, the time elapsed since conviction and the nature of the position.”

The revised regulations build on each of these three guidelines, and add additional context and considerations that employers should factor in as they evaluate criminal history:

- The nature and gravity of the criminal offense:
  - The applicant’s specific personal conduct that led to the conviction.
  - Whether the harm was to property or people.
  - The degree and permanence of the harm.



- The context in which the crime occurred.
- Whether a disability contributed to the offense, and if so, whether a reasonable accommodation or subsequent treatment of that disability would mitigate risk of harm.
- Whether trauma, violence, duress or other similar factors affected the applicant.
- The age of the applicant at the time of the crime.
- The time elapsed since conviction:
  - The time that's elapsed since the offense, since that's likely much earlier than the conviction.
  - If the applicant was incarcerated, the time elapsed since release.
- The nature of the position:
  - Specific job duties.
  - Whether the context in which the offense occurred is likely to happen in the workplace.
  - Whether similar harm is likely to arise in the workplace.

Finally, the revised regulations clarify that the term “applicant” includes existing employees who are seeking a different position with their current employer, as well as those who are subject to a criminal history screening during employment due to a change in management or policy.

“If you’ve never conducted criminal background checks before but decide to implement them now, you should follow the individualized assessment process if you learn that any of your existing workers have criminal records,” said Saad. “And employers who currently conduct criminal background checks should review their policies and practices to ensure they align with the revised regulations.”

## Responding to Criminal History

Following the individualized assessment, if an employer decides not to hire an applicant, it must provide a written notice to the applicant of their potential rejection due to prior criminal conduct and give the applicant at least five days to respond.

The revised regulations provide a number of examples of the types of evidence an applicant may offer to respond to a report of criminal convictions, such as letters of reference, certification of a disability or documentation of a completed counseling program.

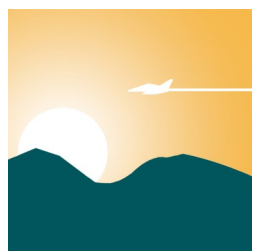
“The revised regulations require that employers consider all of the applicant’s responsive evidence, and encourage employers to apply particular consideration to evidence of rehabilitation,” said Saad. “That evidence could include an applicant’s conduct during incarceration, participation in educational activities or job training, and community or civic service.”

Following reassessment, if the employer still determines that the criminal conviction will prevent the applicant from being able to carry out the requirements of the job, the employer must provide the applicant with a written notice of the final decision. This notice must inform the applicant of the right to challenge the decision with the CRD.

## Employer Takeaways

With the revised regulations taking effect on October 1, 2023, employers should do the following.

- Review job postings and advertisements to ensure they don’t contain any language prohibited by the revised regulations, such as “no felons” or “clean background check required.”
  - Ensure that all criminal background check policies, including the individual assessment, apply to both existing employees seeking a different position with their current employer and applicants.
  - Review current background practices to make sure they comply with the revised regulations.
- Consult with legal counsel before making a final decision not to hire if there’s no clear conflict between a criminal conviction and the specific duties that the sought-after job requires.



do business with

MEMBERS

## RENEWING MEMBERS in August 2023

711 Materials, Inc

AltaOne Federal Credit Union

Beansters Espresso

Bishop Veterinary Hospital

Bruen for Mayor

Clarion Inn

El Rio Properties LLC ®

Francina van der Hoek

Growing Personnel

High Desert Haven

John's Pizza

Mary Kay I.B.C., Deborah Corlett

Maturango Museum

Pizza Factory

Race Communications

REALMS Charter School

Ridgecrest Regional Hospital

RRH Foundation

S.A.S.S.

SpringHill Suites by Marriott

State Farm Insurance & Financial –  
Gary Charlon

The Swap Sheet

TNT Western Homes

Toyota of Ridgecrest







# CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE MEMBERS



## PLATINUM & GOLD MEMBERS

RIDGECREST REGIONAL HOSPITAL FOUNDATION

SIENNA PODIATRY - DR. HOLLY SPOHN GROSS, DPM.

SYNECTIC SOLUTIONS, INC.

TEYA DEVELOPMENT, LLC

Bowman Asphalt, Inc.

Burkey, Cox, Evans & Bradford

Cerro Coso Community College

Desert Empire Fairgrounds

Electrified Solutions Electric, LLC

Electronic Payments, Inc.

Guaranteed Rate

Holiday Inn Express

Immanuel Christian School

IWV Water District

JT4, LLC

Liberty Ambulance

MWR (Morale Welfare & Rec.)

Oliver Law

Opportunities For Learning

PG&E

Primerica

RBD California Restaurants / KFC

Saalex Solutions

Sierra Sands Unified School District

Southern California Edison

Southern Inyo Healthcare District

T-Mobile

Toyota of Ridgecrest