

Message from the CEO



Here at The Valley Economic Alliance, small business development remains one of the primary drivers fueling our passion for our mission. During the first week of May, The Alliance joined the U.S. Small Business Administration in commemoration of National Small Business Week (May 2-5, 2022). This is a special time of year when we especially take note of and patronize our region's small business owners for their unwavering tenacity, perseverance, and drive. We invite our Alliance family to join us and "Shop Local" this whole month to invest in our local job creators who add so much flavor to our Valley neighborhoods and streets with their colorful storefronts, unique innovation, and hometown charm.

This month, we also joined the LA Area Chamber of commerce in recognizing the 96th Annual World Trade Week Southern California (May 15-21, 2022). This commemoration was founded by the Chamber and first observed in 1927 to promote the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach and Los Angeles World Airports. Our local leadership is still undisputed (President Franklin Roosevelt didn't even proclaim World Trade Week as a national observance until 1935), but what has changed is the expansion of the commemoration to include all facilities and organizations in the Southern California area involved in world trade, promoting the positive aspects of international trade that are vital to a strong local and national economy.

Whether businesses are local Mom and Pop shops or leading manufacturers with global sales, we, at The Alliance, are fervent about supporting and promoting local Valley businesses. And in the interest of advancing an integrated economic development strategy, we are also working hard to close the wealth gap for our low-income residents by helping them upskill to increase their earning power, master financial literacy, and enter into the realm of homeownership. Meanwhile, we are strategizing tourism to the Valley and convening change-maker on regional development including land use policy, housing development, transportation systems, technology infrastructure, and so much more.

As advocates for our region's burgeoning businesses, The Alliance encourages you to join us in advancing the economy of our region by participating in one or more of our strategic initiative committees. You can learn more at TheValley.net/Events. We are eager to collaborate with you to promote local businesses, spark wealth generation for

low-income residents, catalyze wise regional development, and promote tourism to the Valley, among other priorities.

I hope you will contact me at sblake@economicalliance.org to share your ideas and raise your hand to volunteer in this meaningful work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sonya Kay Blake". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sonya Kay Blake
President and CEO