



➤ LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Looking back upon the past two years, I am struck by how the relationships we have to each other helped grow and strengthen our influence in the region. Throughout our business community, our city and

our region, the evidence of the Chamber's work is seen in increased communication, our area's business people working together and the stronger connections that have been built.

These connections - these strong relationships - between members, and to our city and regional leaders, have been a catalyst for powerful and positive change.

It was only five years ago that the GMCC was tirelessly fighting legislative proposals detrimental to small businesses. Mandating sick leave policies, mandating municipal wage policies, restricting employers ability to communicate with their elected officials - these were just a few of the proposals that we stood against to protect our members.

I continue to be approached by GMCC members and those in the community inquiring what changed across the political landscape that these types of proposals are no longer being considered. My answer is the dedicated involvement of all of you, our members, to become more engaged in the election process and support candidates who understand what it takes to run a business, and the necessity to create a climate conducive to economic growth.

In 2010 we will continue to advocate on your behalf and serve as a resource and positive contributor to future discussions on ways to grow our regional economy and quality of life.

Jennifer Alexander

President, Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce



➤ LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

In the two years that I have had the pleasure of serving the members of the GMCC as your Board Chair, I have seen first-hand how the influence of the Chamber and our business community continues to grow. That success can be

attributed to your support for the GMCC and involvement in the political process.

Looking back, the numbers truly speak for themselves. In 2007, nine of our 11 GMCC-endorsed candidates were elected to serve on the City of Madison Common Council. In 2009, all 12 of the Chamber-endorsed candidates were elected.

The business community of the greater Madison area spoke together as a unified voice and now has strong representation in Madison government. This has helped avoid repeat battles against harmful initiatives that continued to negatively label our region as "unfriendly to business".

In addition to the changing landscape, we've also helped change the political discourse to one of proactive economic development initiatives. The City adopted a three-to-five year strategic economic development plan, adapted economic incentives to foster job creation, and created a new cabinet level position to focus on economic development.

Within the Chamber itself, membership also continues to grow despite the challenges of the national economy. The future of the GMCC and our business community is bright and full of opportunity due to our work together to make the greater Madison area a remarkable place to live, work, play and do business.

Thank you for the privilege of leading the Chamber and being one of your fellow GMCC members.

Mark Bugher

*Director, University Research Park, Inc.
Chair, 2008-2009 Board of Directors of the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce*



**GREATER MADISON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

LEADERSHIP AT WORK

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Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce

➤ Accomplishments 2008-2009

Lead by Board Chair Mark Bugher and President Jennifer Alexander, the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce strengthened the connections that bind our business community together and worked to change the political landscape of our city and region to one that is more conducive to economic growth.

This report highlights some of the GMCC's key accomplishments throughout 2008 and 2009.

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Building a Strong and Inclusive Chamber

New Members > Greater Madison area businesses continue to find value in GMCC membership. More than 410 new members (projected to year end) have joined since January 1, 2008 with an increase in the number of Gold and Silver Level members as well as regional members.

Programs > In addition to increased attendance at the regularly scheduled Chamber Café, CEO Forum and Business Card Exchange programs, the GMCC Business Expo had a record number of attendees and exhibitors at the 2009 event. The GMCC sponsored several special programs including a Dane County Executive candidate debate, Madison Metropolitan School District listening session and an Economic Development Breakfast Series featuring the topics "Changing Banking and Retail Conditions in Wisconsin", "Economic Recovery", and "What Makes Madison Competitive".

GMCC ChamberCARE > The GMCC health care insurance program continues to be popular with GMCC's small business members (1-99 employees). In 2009 Dean Health joined WPS Insurance and Group Health Cooperative in providing this program to GMCC members

Redesigned GMCC Website > The GMCC launched a new and fresh website redesign in spring of 2009 providing members with online event registration, marketing opportunities and increased membership and benefit content.

Minority Business Advisory Council > The Minority Business Advisory Council (MBAC), an advisory body to the leadership of the GMCC staff and its Board of Directors was launched in January 2009. The MBAC will serve as a voice for the needs and concerns of businesses of color throughout the greater Madison community.

Small Business Advisory Council > Under the leadership of the Small Business Advisory Council (SBAC) and in cooperation with the City of Madison, a Road Construction Survival Guide was created to assist small businesses before, during and after road construction projects.

Business Survey > The GMCC issued an important economic and membership survey to all small and medium-sized member businesses in summer of 2009. This survey provided crucial feedback to the Chamber and provided an important method to listen directly to the concerns of member businesses.

Thank-a-Thon > GMCC Board Members and Ambassadors worked with the GMCC staff on March 19, 2009 to contact all GMCC member businesses to say "Thanks" for supporting the GMCC mission and for making Madison a better business community. Over 1,500 phone calls were made in just six hours by 45 volunteers.

PUBLIC POLICY

Advocating for a Better Business Climate and Prosperous Region

Recognizing that our advocacy efforts are more productive when proactively used to address problems rather than reacting to legislative proposals, GMCC leadership came together in late 2007 to develop a **Legislative Blueprint**. The Blueprint was our message to the community that working together we can improve the economic vitality and quality of life in our region. In 2008-2009 we demonstrated our commitment to these principles through several proactive initiatives, including:

Encouraged proactive economic development initiatives in City of Madison

- Supported creation and appointment of a new Economic Development Director position for the City of Madison.
- Contributed to creation and supported adoption of a new 3-5 Year Strategic Economic Development Implementation Plan.
- Supported changes to TIF priorities to focus on quality job creation.
- Endorsed the Edgewater Hotel redevelopment, a proposal with significant impact on the downtown and regional economy.

Protected Small Businesses

- Successfully blocked a state proposal that would have permanently indexed the state's minimum wage to inflation and allowed for local municipalities to enact individual minimum wage ordinances on local businesses.
- Under the leadership of the SBAC and in cooperation with the City of Madison, created a Road Construction Survival Guide to assist small businesses before, during and after road construction projects.
- Advocated for uniform statewide smoking requirements to ensure a level playing field for small businesses.

Promoted Regional Transportation

- Served on a Wisconsin Joint Legislative Council Study Committee to craft legislation allowing municipalities to create regional transit authorities (RTA) to manage regional transportation systems.
- Supported language in the State Budget giving the Madison region the option to create a RTA.
- Supported the state's application for federal funds to connect Madison to major Midwestern cities via high-speed rail.

Created a Political Environment Conducive to Economic Growth

- All 12 GMCC-endorsed candidates for Madison Common Council elected into office.
- Grew GMCC Direct Givers Conduit Program both in participants and funds disbursed to candidates.
- Facilitated candidate training program (GMCC Campaign Boot Camp) to prepare potential candidates, campaign managers and treasurers to run for office.

In addition to these accomplishments, we continued to extend our influence in the community by establishing new partnerships and sustaining positive relationships with elected officials. These efforts allow the GMCC to successfully advocate on your behalf to ensure Madison continues to be a globally competitive place to live, work, play and do business.

