

From the Desk of the CEO

Dear CALED Members,

We hope your 2024 is off to an exciting and productive start! At CALED, we kicked off the year with four incredible events in January:



1. Our Board of Directors and Advisors hosted our annual Economic Development Legislative Roundtable;
2. We held a special Board meeting to update our Legislative Policy Guidelines as well as approve an updated work program focused on supporting member connections and networking;
3. The newly-launched Project Development & Finance Division met and helped present a very successful Real Estate & Economic Development Finance Summit, and;
4. Under the leadership of Rural Exchange Chair Craig Schlatter, we held a policy-focused Economic Development Rural Exchange and were joined by special guest Dilawar Syed, Deputy Administrator, US Small Business Administration.

Check out our social media for posts on these events or contact the CALED team if you have any questions.

We plan to maintain the momentum from these high energy events by delivering on the outcomes from them. Specifically, we recently hired a new database coordinator – Ian Gill – to the CALED team who will be working on technology solutions to help members connect with each other. Whether you are looking to network with peers, ask for help, or share your experience, we are hoping to create those opportunities for you through Ian's work.

Additionally, Membership and Rural Exchange Coordinator Laura Cole-Rowe will be working with me and the CALED Board and Advisors to hold regional virtual zoom events for practitioner-to-practitioner networking. Watch for your email for information on your regional event. This is a great way to engage with other local economic developers in your area.

And, of course, what would spring time at CALED be without the exciting preparations for our annual conference. This year's conference – Elevate: Economy, Business, Community is being held in Santa Rosa, CA, April 10-12, 2024. The CALED team is working with our amazing host committee to provide you a memorable and productive experience. Please reach out if you have any questions or need more information; otherwise, watch your email or check out caled.org for registration, award submission, and session details.

Focusing on supporting our members is the primary mission for CALED. Not only do we want to create more opportunities for you all to connect, we also work diligently to make sure your voice is represented in our advocacy efforts. With a deficit in the State's budget, there is a chance we may see reductions or changes to economic development programs. CALED is watching this closely and will look to members to share which programs matter most to you. We also expect more activity with Surplus Land Act legislation and potential bills related to tax increment financing. If you have other issues that you would like CALED to be mindful of, please reach out to CALED staff and/or leadership.

As you can tell, we've kicked off 2024 strong and look forward to sharing more with you at the conference. Hope to see you there!

Sincerely,

