

September 17, 2024

From Chair Jennifer Hiramoto –

In September, the CALED Board hosted its annual retreat and board meeting at the [Toyota Arena](#) in Ontario. This marked my first retreat as Chair of CALED, an organization that I have been involved with in nearly all my public sector career.

During the meeting, I announced my theme for the year, which is "**Build-Up and Breakthrough.**" This was inspired by author Jim Collins of "Good to Great," an oldie but goodie. I recently dusted this book off as I was searching for inspiration on leadership. Like the title suggests, this book developed criterion for "great" companies, and then took a deep dive into understanding the culture and leadership that distinguished these great companies from the not-so-great ones.

One chapter in particular spoke to me. It talks about the "Flywheel and the Doomloop." To quote Jim Collins, "Sustainable transformations follow a predictable pattern of build-up and breakthrough. Like pushing on a giant, heavy flywheel, it takes a lot of effort to get the thing moving at all, **but with persistent pushing in a consistent direction over a long period of time, the flywheel builds momentum, eventually hitting a point of breakthrough.**"

As I continue to listen to and read all of the inspiring economic development stories across California about what's to come, both big and small—from groundbreaking to make way for professional sports stadiums to host cities gearing up for the 2028 Olympics to communities working on revitalizing their downtowns—I can see that we are steadily working toward our own breakthroughs.

And so—I choose to ignore the noise about the doom and gloom in California—and instead keep pushing for a better, stronger, more resilient Golden State.

After all, California is the world's fifth largest economy. We have been working on our breakthrough for years. We are a state that values and promotes diversity, we are home to many of the best universities from around the globe, we embody a culture of continuous advancement in new industries and technologies, and we are surrounded by an abundance of unique places that offer unmatched tourism experiences and unrivaled investment opportunities.

If you can't tell, I am a staunch supporter of California and passionate about our craft in economic development. To that end, it is with great enthusiasm that I start my three-year term as Chair of CALED—California's leading economic development organization that represents nearly 900 members.

That is not to say California has no room for improvement, but it is the Build-Up and commitment to continuous progress—and to ultimately improving the quality of life for future generations—that drives me. And I'd like to think that commitment to progress drives you, too.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve and represent CALED,

Jennifer McLain Hiramoto

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