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Op-Ed: Economic Development

One of the greatest ongoing responsibilities facing Chandler is creating new employment opportunities and maintaining our existing jobs in a highly competitive and changing world. This includes supporting businesses of all sizes.

We've had some incredible announcements and a lot of be proud of to the credit of both the City and the Chandler Chamber. However, we can't rest on our past successes- because we aren't just competing with other Valley cities- we're competing for jobs across the country and the globe.

One of the biggest issues affecting businesses right now is workforce development and training. We are fortunate to have companies right here in Chandler take on some of that responsibility. And although the City doesn't oversee the education system, our economic development efforts should be focused on facilitating connections between schools, colleges and businesses. I have first-hand insight into the importance of educating our young people and how an educated workforce translates to a strong business community through my experience includes working with both the city's Economic Development division and the Chamber of Commerce on business recruitment and retention and serving as the Board President of the Chandler Education Foundation and Marketing Chair of the Chandler Unified School District's Bond and Override committee.

Encouraging public-private and non-profit partnerships is also key to supporting our business community. The City can bring all of these stakeholders together to strategize the best methods to provide assistance and support to our businesses, especially new startups.

A few examples of how Chandler is already making headway in these areas is the partnerships it has established to launch Chandler Innovations, an entrepreneur incubation program sponsored by the City. By helping companies turn their ideas into a business, and leveraging the expertise of local business leaders, the City is well positioned to land innovative, high-tech companies in its backyard and create job opportunities for residents. Another example is the City's partnership with the University of Arizona, which offers both undergraduate and masters level courses in Chandler.

As a former local government employee (I've worked in both Phoenix and Chandler), small business owner and longtime community volunteer, I believe I bring the right skills and experience to serve our residents and businesses.

Specifically, my past community service experience includes serving as Board Chair of the 2021 Chandler Chamber of Commerce, Chair of Women in Leadership, 2021 Citizen Bond Committee (Airport), and East Valley JCC Board. I also have provided pro bono work for Chandler Firefighter Charities, AZCEND, ACEE and Fans Across America to name a few. I'm proud of the many opportunities Chandler offers the business community members to become involved with our City and I look forward to expanding these community service opportunities.

Through strong collaborations between our City, its residents, educational institutions, and our businesses, we can continue to build a thriving community that we can all take great pride in...let's all work together to make Chandler the first choice for people looking to open a business and to get a job!