

2019 a New Year, a new opportunity to focus on growth, both in our personal lives and our professional lives. I recently received a note from someone I really appreciate having in my life, as she challenges me to think deeper. She shared she will be focused on growing in wisdom in the new year. I must admit I thought that was much better than the normal resolution of working out more, losing ten pounds, or saving toward the first million. We may look back at our past resolutions and smile, or commit to adopt them again in 2019. Whatever we choose to do, we should all resolve and commit to improve ourselves, our workplace, our community, and yes our nation. Yes I do believe as individuals, as a community, we can impact the nation. I believe in the saying "goodness happens at the local level." Individuals create community, and communities create a nation, thus the goodness that starts locally can flow throughout the nation.

Every January for the last 30 plus years I've resolved to be more efficient in my workplace, be better at time management, create a savings or an improvement that produced measurable results for the organization. I am sure the driving factor has something to do with the fact I grew up professionally in the Reagan era. I recall the drills of zero-based budgeting, as well as Lean Six Sigma. As I look to 2019 I believe my desire to be more efficient in my workplace remains a good goal. But I believe I will focus on not just being more efficient but trying to create opportunities for others to be more efficient. If I have learned anything in 2018, it's that time passes by swiftly, and before you know it the year is coming to an end and you are entering a new year. As that new year takes off, you need to be ready for the challenges and the changes you will face.

Knowing that time passes by quickly, I'm looking toward 2019 with the goal of creating organizational efficiencies through workforce development, and enhanced mentorship. I have narrowed my goals to these two, creating efficiencies and workforce development. Now if I lose ten pounds, I will certainly be smiling in 2020, but I am not going to overload myself with too many goals/resolutions. I am excited to say we are already starting by offering monthly luncheons with a focused agenda that aligns to our community needs. The first luncheon will be offered on January 10, the focus is the State of the Workforce. It's too late to get in on the luncheon in January please plan on starting in February and each month thereafter. Also, consider learning more about the Chamber and join us for our Monthly Chamber 101 luncheon. You can register for these great professional development opportunities by contacting the Chamber 580-355-3541, ask for either Sharleen or Melissa. Both have embraced these new initiatives and are eagerly looking for ways to grow professionally in the Chamber of Commerce Industry, as well as help our organization become more efficient and yes, relevant.

From your Chamber of Commerce team, we hope you desire to join us for both of these planned professional development opportunities, and we truly wish you a great New Year. I am certain if we all work together to be more efficient, and we commit to supporting the professional development of others, we will all see a great 2019. We will also be better prepared to greet 2020, for after all -it's just a year away.

Brenda Spencer-Ragland