

As the President & CEO of the Lawton Fort Sill Chamber of Commerce, the stakeholders, and the members of this great organization, I was welcomed as a new employee to their team on October 8th, 2018.

In all honesty, I had not thought of being here. As many of you know, I enjoyed a wonderful career working for the Army, a career that I loved, working with and serving those that I adored. However, the time was now if I were going to continue to work on behalf of the community that I believe in... Lawton Fort Sill. I knew that in the moment when a friend and mentor asked me if I was ready to make a change, and contribute to something positive for the community that I call home.

When I entered the office on October 8th, 2018, my job was to commence working for the members and the residents of this beautiful community. It goes without saying, I will work with the Chairman, Albert Johnson, Jr, and the Board to enable us to fulfill our fiscal and governance responsibilities, as well as, our goals and objectives as outlined in our bylaws within the 2018/2019 Business Plan, which includes a dedicated approach toward enhanced Economic Development, Tourism, Membership Services, Military and Government Affairs, and Community Enhancement.

I hold my duties and responsibilities firmly and you can count on me to provide direction and leadership to the Lawton Fort Sill Chamber of Commerce, its mission, strategies and the board approved goals and objectives. We will achieve and report measurable outcomes. I will be diligent in my efforts to consistently present our Chamber of Commerce, our community, in a positive image so our members and our community residents can witness a strong and consistent return on investment.

The Lawton Fort Sill Chamber of Commerce is linked directly to the economic stability of this community. The Chamber of Commerce enhances and promotes existing businesses within our community, local businesses that are working hard each day to provide quality products and services to this great community and its residents. We must support them as they support us. When we do this, others will see the efforts and they too will be motivated and encouraged to visit Lawton Fort Sill. They will be encouraged to shop here, buy homes here, and yes, and open up new businesses here. It takes all of *us*, and I am glad to be one of *us*. You will find me ready, willing and supportive of our many partners, such as the Lawton Economic Development Authority, our city, county, state and national leaders as we all forge forward together going after constructive, quality of life, and economic pursuits that will contribute positively to our community.

One last thought, have you considered being a part of the positive change you want to see? If not, I implore you to ask yourself, why? This is our community and we must remember, goodness and success happens first at the local level. I hope to see you soon. Please remember, when you shop local, the benefits are found local. I am honored to serve and I look forward to *Finding a Way to Yes...Together*.

Brenda Spencer-Ragland