New initiatives the Chamber undertook last year included establishing strategic partnerships with the UH System and various sectors in our state to develop a talent pipeline to address future workforce needs. The Chamber also partnered with Kapolei Community College on a soft skills program for employers and the Hawaii Food Manufacturing Association to strengthen that industry.

For the first time, the Chamber participated in FOODEX Japan to showcase Hawaii manufacturers and supported local designers for HONOLULU Fashion Week. We also supported local manufacturers and local designers in FOODEX Japan to showcase Hawaii that industry.

The Military Affairs Council introduced new initiatives to support the military industry in Hawaii, including a MAC Fellowship program and a Military Appreciation Reception.

On the proactive legislative front, the Chamber introduced a business package and with the support of the Legislature, the administration and our Alliance, including Neighbor Island Chambers, many of these bills passed. And, with appreciation to our legislators, we were able to stop many bills that would have negatively impacted business.

The Chamber is already in full swing, just completing our 4th Annual Chamber Week, generously supported by Island Movers and The Honolulu Star-Advertiser, and the Military Partnership Conference. Our website has been refreshed with infographics, designed by member Osaki Creative Group, that visually convey our story. Check it out at cochawaii.org.

As we move forward in 2017, the Chamber will continue to seek ways to serve as a catalyst for positive change in our state and roll-out new initiatives. With a statewide membership that represents a variety of sectors, industries and sizes, we have an opportunity to positively impact the future of our economy.

Sherry Menor-McNamara, President & CEO

CHAMBER INTRODUCES 2017 LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE

This session’s legislative package, proposed by members through the Chamber’s Policy Committees and approved by the board, focuses on three strategic areas: spurring economic development, investing in our future and improving Hawaii’s business climate. Areas of support include:

- The Manufacturing Grant Program, which has given out over $2 million to local manufacturers.
- Continuation of programs that help our innovation industry.
- Small Business Regulatory Review Board that allows for input by small business into rules and regulations.
- Expansion of early education programs.
- Infrastructure on state-owned lands near transit stations to help support redevelopment around transit stations.
- Continued efforts to address the effects of the Adams v. CDM court ruling regarding at-will employment, placing restrictions on employers on their ability to take adverse action.

Members may sign up to receive legislative action alerts or join a Policy Committee by participating action alerts or joining a Policy Committee by participating