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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **151<sup>st</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION HIGHLIGHTS CHAMBER EFFORTS FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS**

*Gary & Mary West and Martha Gilmer to receive awards for outstanding work benefitting the region.*

SAN DIEGO (Feb 24, 2022) – For 151 years, the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce has been committed to creating the best environment for San Diego businesses, employees, and neighborhoods to thrive. Tonight, local businesses, community leaders, and elected officials will gather for the organization's [Anniversary Celebration](#).

The event will celebrate the Chamber's partners and members and the accomplishments achieved over the past year. The Board of Directors, including Board Chair Neil Mohr, General Manager of Republic Services, will be officially appointed at the event by Mayor Todd Gloria. The Chamber will also share its priorities for 2022, which include resources and tools for businesses – especially small and minority-owned businesses – impacted by the ongoing pandemic, and growing our cross-border relationships and binational economy.

"During my time as Board Chair, I learned a lot about the Chamber's role in helping businesses succeed in challenging times and am looking forward to continuing this important work," said Chair Mohr, who is continuing in his Board leadership role through June of this year. "The Chamber team is building on what we learned over the past year and focusing efforts on providing businesses and governmental officials with the information and resources they need to respond and plan for the future."

The Chamber's goals for the year center on spearheading the business outreach strategy around efforts to address COVID-19 business impacts among populations at high-risk and underserved, including racial and ethnic minority populations and rural communities.

Together, with the support of members and community partners, the Chamber will continue serving as the region's leading voice on issues of critical importance from housing and homelessness to international trade. Key priorities also include supporting business-friendly policy that fosters innovation and business growth and delivering economic research that identifies where the San Diego region is excelling and where opportunities exist to do more. Through Chamber partner LEAD San Diego, the organization will work to enhance opportunities for alumni to connect and engage while exploring additional ways to expand the opportunity and accessibility of its programming to a wider audience.

"As we continue navigating the challenges and impacts of the pandemic, the Chamber's role as a hub for connection and our work to provide our members with the tools and resources to make critical business decisions is more important than ever," said Jerry Sanders, Chamber President and CEO. "We're fortunate to

have a membership of engaged and passionate business leaders, as well as partners in the community, in government, and elected officials, who we work with each day to achieve our vision of making the San Diego region the best place to live and work. We know that the work and collaborations of today will create opportunities for tomorrow."

The Chamber will also present two awards to local leaders who have made a difference in the community and represent what truly makes San Diego unique.

- **Gary & Mary West** will be receiving the Herb Klein Spirit of San Diego Award which honors individuals who have made a significant and lasting impact on our region. After retiring, the Wests turned their passion and energy to philanthropic initiatives dedicated to making a significant, lasting impact on lowering the cost of healthcare and improving care for older adults – specifically low-income seniors.
- **Martha Gilmer and the San Diego Symphony** will be receiving the Moving San Diego Forward Award. Symphony CEO, Martha Gilmer, has led the organization for eight years and is responsible for much of the organization's exciting trajectory over the last few years including the selection of Rafael Payare as Music Director and realizing the long-sought dream of a permanent outdoor performance venue.

For highlights from the 2022 Anniversary Celebration, search the hashtag #Chamber151 on social media.

**About the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce:** The San Diego Regional Chamber is the hub for connections and collaboration among the regional business community, and uses that clout to advocate for public policies and candidates that support economic growth and the creation of jobs for all businesses. As the largest local Chamber on the West Coast, representing more than 2,000 businesses and an estimated 300,000 jobs, the San Diego Regional Chamber is working to make the San Diego region the best place to live and work. For more information, please visit [SDChamber.org](https://SDChamber.org) or call 619-544-1300.

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