Downtown Stockton Alliance

2018 Strategic Plan

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With DSA Staff and Board Members

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Overview

The Downtown Stockton Alliance (DSA) is a public/private partnership uniting almost 1,000 property owners and downtown businesses in Stockton, CA. Since 1997, the DSA has served as the collective voice of the property and business owners, residents and advocates who strive to make our Downtown Stockton District a cleaner, safer, more attractive, vibrant, and desirable place to work, do business, and play.

The Downtown Stockton Property Based Improvement District (PBID) assessment was renewed for another 10 years on July 25, 2017. Eighty-two percent (82%) of the ballots returned by downtown property owners were in favor of the re-certification of the PBID.

The DSA carries out a wide array of responsibilities and services in areas of maintenance, hospitality, economic development, and marketing. Each of these services is aimed at improving the urban district by encouraging investment, marketing local business, and restoring downtown as the "heart of the city."

MISSION

To promote business, housing, arts, and entertainment to help create a vibrant, sustainable, urban community in Downtown Stockton.

The DSA is led by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and a robust board of nearly 20 property owners, local entrepreneurs, and civic leaders. Together with a team of fourteen full and part time staff members the DSA strives to keep the Downtown Stockton area clean, safe, and economically vibrant. DSA has implemented a host of strategies, events, and activities to meet these goals and objectives.

Planning Objectives

Over the past several years, the number of needs, concerns, and issues addressed through the DSA has grown. In particular, longtime members of the DSA report that following the City of Stockton's declaration of bankruptcy in July 2012, the DSA became increasingly responsible for reducing the spread of blight and economic decline in the downtown region. With the emergence of the City from Bankruptcy, and a renewed capacity by the City to promote public safety and economic development, the Board of

Directors determined to hold a series of board training and strategic planning conversations in order to clarify the role and purpose of the DSA. It also decided to convene a Strategic Planning Retreat in order to better focus and align the work of the Board, its committees, the DSA staff, and the community stakeholders and partners that collaborate with the DSA.

Planning Methodology

This strategic plan is informed by a range of information sources, including:

- Survey of DSA members, conducted November 2016
- Election results from the PBID re-assessment
- Subcommittee Work Plans, developed in Spring 2017
 - Clean and Safe
 - Economic Development
 - o Marketing
 - Public Policy
 - o Admin
 - Finance
- Stakeholder Interviews (n=15)
- Strategic Planning Retreat Discussion

Additionally this strategic plan is informed by the past work and efforts of the DSA.

Challenges

Through interviews, surveys, and retreat discussions, stakeholders identified a number of challenges to the economic development and revitalization of Downtown Stockton. The major challenges are described below:

Downtown as a Venue: The greatest challenge pertaining to Downtown redevelopment pertains to the manner in which the built environment has been designed with an emphasis on (1) city and county social services and (2) destination venues. Hence while there are a great number of reasons to enter into the greater downtown area (the courthouse, the county services, a Children's Museum, theaters, the Arena and ballpark) they are spread out from each other with little to tie them together. Instead, people come downtown for a single purpose or event – but do not necessarily add in other activities beyond their primary destination.

Perceptions of Safety: Despite many improvements over the last several years, such as declining crime rates and increases to local police patrols, there continues to be an ongoing perception that the downtown is unsafe. While safety is always a concern for any large urban metropolitan area, most stakeholders suggest that safety concerns are out of proportion to actual risk. A rising homeless population (consistent to national trends) may also be contributing to safety concerns.

There are many challenges Downtown... Closed, Unsafe, Not enough to Do, Homeless, Cleanliness, Bad Attitudes, No Signage, Disrespect, Perceptions, Transportation, Friendliness, Low Expectations, Dark

Concerns are also attributed to areas that are poorly illuminated at night and unfamiliarity with safe, well-lit pedestrian routes.

Community Ownership of the Downtown: Finally, there continues to be litter, graffiti, and (what some perceive to be) a disregard for civil harmony in downtown. One factor that may be associated with these problems is that some individuals who come downtown for city and county services are under emotional strain as they exit civic buildings such as the Probation Department or the Court House. During a roundtable discussion as part of the Strategic Planning Retreat, stakeholders identified cleanliness, friendliness, bad attitudes, and disrespect for our city as key challenges to downtown revitalization. Further, too many San Joaquin residents are still struggling to emerge out of the recession which dropped local property values by 50% resulting in thousands of families losing homes and livelihoods – for some finding civic pride may still be difficult.

Opportunities

There are numerous strengths and opportunities that can support the revitalization of the downtown area if focused and harnessed towards collective goals.

Amenable Environment for Development: Civic leaders, property owners, and business leaders are all in relative agreement on the need for more investment in downtown businesses and housing. This means that entrepreneurs and developers seeking to start businesses are likely to find a welcoming environment and low barriers to entry (within the designated use guidelines). As one restaurant owner expressed, *"the market is not yet saturated – we get more benefit from having new businesses come in than challenge from the competition."*

Ideal Place for investment: Mild climate, scenic waterway, (relatively) low property values, and a location within commuting distance to employment centers within the Sacramento and the Bay Area region should make Downtown Stockton a good investment risk. Additionally, Stockton has a range of historic buildings that lend a unique charm and character to the downtown area. *"All the key ingredients are here!"*

Shared Vision: Amongst civic leaders, community-based organizations, and government organizations there is a collective will to strengthen the Downtown Area. The City of Stockton is currently undergoing a General Plan update and reviewing traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation through this planning process. New affordable and market rate housing are also planned for the Downtown region.

Vision and Purpose

The DSA seeks to create a vibrant, sustainable, urban community in Downtown Stockton. The collective vision of DSA board members and stakeholders is for an active vibrant downtown: one that is full of people walking around, eating, shopping, and living downtown; it is a place where the streets are full of color and light: reflective of our diverse community, our agricultural roots, and the opportunities for the future; it is a space for art and music, dining and entertainment, relaxing and playing for children, families, and adults of all ages to come together in the heart of San Joaquin County.

Our purpose therefore is to join with local businesses, property owners, and civic partners in making Downtown Stockton a place where people come to live, work, and play. Our goal is to get more people downtown, shopping, dining, and utilizing public parks and leisure amenities. Our overarching measures of success will be the economic health and vitality of local businesses, the confidence of entrepreneurs and property owners in making investments, and the overall perception of Downtown Stockton.

Limitations of the DSA

In working to achieve this vision it must be acknowledged that some challenges associated with the Downtown Area are outside the scope, capacity, and expertise of the DSA. Challenges associated with homelessness, generational poverty, mental illness and substance use are all outside of the purview of the DSA. Additional challenges are those which impede pedestrian and bicycle circulation (i.e. freeways, waterways, and four-lane streets designed to move vehicle traffic to and from the freeway).

Numerous partners, including the City of Stockton, Stockton Beautiful, the Stockton Convention and Visitors Bureau, Caltrans, the Port of Stockton and others are also working towards similar goals. The DSA will advocate for civic and community leaders to address these issues and will represent the voices and concerns of property owners and businesses in community planning discussions.

Program Areas

There are four major program areas that are funded through the DSA. The four program areas are:

1. Clean and Safe: Clean and safe program services provide enhanced cleaning and safety services within the Downtown Stockton service area. This includes, but is not limited to, power-washing streets, clean and safe teams for "spot" trash and graffiti removal, and security patrols.

Board Oversight: Clean and Safe Committee

2. Economic Development: Economic development program services are intended to support current property and business investments, while encouraging future investments in the Downtown area. Core projects include hosting of various events to promote downtown businesses and investment and to implement local beautification projects. The DSA also works with local businesses to encourage needed maintenance or repairs such as painting, awning replacements, or lighting improvements.

Board Oversight: Economic Development Committee

3. Marketing: Marketing services and support are intended to enhance the awareness and visibility of Downtown services and activities and to bring more people into the downtown area on a regular basis for recreation, shopping, and dining. The marketing team supports the advertising and awareness of special events and promotions through on-going social media posts, the creation of marketing tools and templates for local businesses, and by providing trainings and linkages to marketing resources for local businesses.

Board Oversight: Marketing Committee

- 4. Education, Events and Policy: The DSA administrative team and executive Board Members (President, Vice President, etc.) represent the interests of Downtown merchants, property owners, and businesses to City and County commissions and taskforces regarding:
 - Street and Lighting Improvements
 - Pedestrian, Parking, and Transit Improvements
 - Zoning, Code Enforcement, and Redevelopment Opportunities
 - Increasing Community Policing
 - Reducing Homelessness and Nuisance Behaviors

Board Oversight: Education, Events, and Policy Committee

Administration: Additionally, the DSA administration oversees all program services and operations. In partnership with the Board, the CEO establishes an annual budget; enters into contracts with vendors; and tracks and monitors performance measures of contractors.

Board Oversight: Admin and Finance Committee

Major Objectives

Over the next five years the DSA seeks to make significant changes to the economic and physical vitality of the Downtown Area. Specifically, the DSA will seek to implement a multi-faceted effort to enhance the physical "look and feel" of Downtown and increase the number of people "using and enjoying" Downtown Stockton. Major objectives for each of the Program Areas are articulated below:

Improving the "look and feel" of downtown:

- Clean and Safe: Keep it Clean
- Clean and Safe: Keep it Safe
- Economic Development: Make it a Pretty Place

Improving the "use and enjoyment" of downtown:

- Economic Development: Strengthen Businesses
- Marketing: Improve Marketing and Branding
- Marketing: Enhance Pedestrian Circulation

#1 Keep it Clean – Clean & Safe

- Goal (1), Provide augmented and enhanced street cleaning, graffiti removal, and targeted trash clean up over and above standard city services.
 Lead Responsibility, <u>DSA Clean and Safe Team</u>.
- Goal (2), Increase the number of trash receptacles in the downtown area. Enhance waste disposal and recycling efforts and reduce scavenging with more effective trash receptacles.

Lead Responsibility, DSA Clean & Safe Committee.

#2 Keep it Safe – Clean & Safe

• Goal (1), Enhance security presence during evening dining and entertainment hours and during events.

Lead Responsibility, <u>DSA CEO & Board of Directors</u>

 Goal (2), Advocate for increased police presence (e.g. community policing bicycle patrols or foot patrols) in the downtown area, including during the evening. Lead Responsibility, <u>DSA CEO & Board of Directors</u>.

#3 Make it a Pretty Place - Economic Development

- Goal (1), Enhance the beauty of local streetscapes and storefronts through landscape and other improvements using the focus block improvement strategy. Lead Responsibility, DSA *Economic Development Committee*.
- Goal (2) Promote art, murals, place-making, and beautification projects. Lead Responsibility, <u>DSA Economic Development Committee</u>.

#4 Strengthen Businesses – Economic Development

- Goal (1) Convene weekly, monthly, and annual events to bring more people Downtown by showcasing local businesses, highlighting revitalization efforts, and promoting ongoing growth and development opportunities. Lead Responsibility, *DSA CEO* and *Economic Development Committee*
- Goal (2) Enhance business and financial literacy amongst local merchants. Lead Responsibility, <u>DSA Economic Development Coordinator</u>.
- Goal (3) Represent the interests of Downtown merchants, property owners and businesses to City and County Commissions. Lead Responsibility, <u>DSA CEO</u>.

#5 Improve Marketing and Branding – Marketing

- Goal (1) Use social media to increase awareness of activities, events, and opportunities within the downtown area.
 Lead Responsibility, <u>DSA Graphics and Communication Manager</u>.
- Goal (2) Increase communication between local businesses, with partnership as a priority, for the purpose of developing joint event and dining promotional packages and increasing revenue amongst participating establishments (e.g. discounts at local dining establishments before or after shows.)

Lead Responsibility, <u>DSA Marketing Committee.</u>

#6 Enhance Pedestrian Circulation – Marketing

- Goal (1), Increase signage directing pedestrians to restaurants, shopping, and entertainment. (<u>City of Stockton</u> may have this project underway. The DSA's role is to be determined and may be limited to consultation and advocacy.)
- Goal (2), Develop policies, protocols, and vendor contacts for DSA to contract for a periodic shuttle during major events and activities in order to cross promote restaurants/dining with theater and other event activities.
 Lead Responsibility, <u>DSA Marketing, Transportation Sub-committee</u>.

Work Plan # 1: Keep it Clean – Clean & Safe

This objective will be met through the efforts of the DSA's Clean and Safe Team. Program oversight is through the CEO with major project decisions supported by the Board's Clean and Safe Committee.

Goal	Activity	Short Term Performance Measures
1. Streets, Sidewalks and Building Facades are Clean	Power Wash Streets	 Hours of power washing that occur each month Proportion of DSA service areas that receive power washing services monthly
	Remove Dumps and Debris	Timeliness of response to debris removal
	Graffiti Abatement	Timeliness of response to graffiti abatement
2. Procure new trash Receptacles	Install new trash & recycle receptacles	Receptacles are purchased and installed

Activity	Tasks and Responsibilities	
Power Wash Streets	DSA shall hire maintenance staff or contract with a vendor to conduct power washing activities per the desired frequency and nightly schedule.	
Remove Dumps and Debris	Within 72 hours of notification, DSA maintenance staff shall respond to calls for trash removal or sidewalk cleaning M-F 9am-5pm within designated Downtown Services Area(s).	
Graffiti Abatement	Within 72 hours of notification, DSA maintenance staff shall respond to calls for graffiti abatement M-F 9am-5pm within designated Downtown Services Area(s).	
Install New Trash & Recycle Receptacles	DSA shall purchase and place, through a 50/50 branding partnership with local businesses, new trash receptacles within locations identified by the Clean & Safe Committee.	

Long Term Measures of Success

Property owners and businesses are satisfied with DSA activities to improve cleanliness

Work Plan # 2: Keep it Safe – Clean & Safe

This objective will be met through the efforts of the DSA's Clean and Safe Team. Program oversight is through the CEO with major project decisions supported by the Board's Clean and Safe Committee.

Goal	Activity	Short Term Performance Measures
1. Business and Dining Areas are Safe	Policing Activities by Law Enforcement	None. This is the responsibility of the Stockton Police Department.
	Provide Additional Security Personnel	 Number of staff, hours, and location of enhanced security personnel hired by DSA
	Deploy Ambassadors	Number of staff, hours, and activities conducted
2. Increase police presence in the Downtown area	Advocate for increase in community policing strategies	 Dedicated community policing team assigned to Downtown area conducting bicycle or foot patrols.

Activity	Tasks and Responsibilities
Policing Activities by Law Enforcement	N/A
Provide Additional Security Personnel	DSA shall hire security staff or contract with a vendor to provide enhanced security presence in designated areas.
Advocate for Increase in Community Policing Strategies	DSA shall work with the City of Stockton to identify target areas and advocate for additional community policing.

Long Term Measures of Success
Property owners and business are satisfied with DSA activities to improve safety
Reduce the incidence of property and violent crimes within the Downtown Area as measured by SPD statistics

Work Plan # 3: Make it a Pretty Place – Economic Development

This objective will be met through the recommendations of the DSA's Economic Development Committee. DSA staff will assist with project coordination and shall make purchases or execute contracts as necessary. DSA staff will also provide technical assistance and support to businesses seeking a City of Stockton façade improvement or micro loan.

Goal	Activity	Short Term Performance Measures
1. Beautify Streetscape & Storefronts	Research Costs and Assign Resources	 Develop a project budget
	Determine scope of project(s)	 Develop a project plan articulating the locations and the planned improvements
	Install Focus Block Improvements	 Annual goals are met for procuring and making improvements
2. Increase Artistic	Promote public art	Provide mini-grants for murals and public art
Expression in the Downtown Area	Encourage beautiful buildings	 Assist property owners in securing city resources for awning, window, or façade improvements

Activity	Tasks and Responsibilities	
Research Costs and Assign	Committee members shall work with the CEO to create a resource	
Resources	allocation plan for Focus Block Improvement Project Activities	
Determine Scope of Project(s)	Committee members shall solicit input and document the intended improvements and placement of improvements annually. The plan shall also include long-term maintenance / sustainability.	
Install Focus Block Improvements	Committee members shall solicit volunteers and partners to install Focus Block Improvements with assistance from DSA maintenance staff.	
Promote Public Art	Committee members shall work with project partners to create a small capital campaign for public art and beautification projects. Once the desired capital is raised the Committee will create and manage a minigrant process to procure public art installations.	
Encourage Beautiful Buildings	The DSA shall continue to promote and encourage façade improvement loans offered by the City of Stockton. DSA staff shall provide technical	

Activity	Tasks and Responsibilities	
	assistance and uniform design guidance to DSA service area members seeking assistance in obtaining a City of Stockton <i>Façade Improvement</i>	
	Forgivable Loan and/or a Micro Loan through the City's Downtown Financial Incentive Program.	
	Financial incentive Program.	

Long Term Measures of Success

Property owners and business are satisfied with DSA activities to beautify Downtown

Increase in public and private investments in public art, murals, and façade improvements to beautify Downtown

Work Plan # 4: Strengthen Businesses – Economic Development

This objective will be met through the continued efforts of the Economic Development Coordinator and DSA staff.

Goal	Activity	Short Term Performance Measures
1. Strengthen Local Businesses	Expand and Enhance DSA sponsored events to bring more people and investments to Downtown Stockton	 Host Annual Summit: "State of Downtown Stockton" to highlight businesses & opportunities Sponsor more monthly and weekly events to increase patronage at downtown stores and restaurants.
	Increase Marketing Capacity of Downtown Businesses	 Work with area businesses to ensure that they leverage DSA sponsored events and activities within their marketing efforts.
2. Enhance business and financial literacy of area businesses	Brick and Mortar Entrepreneur Center	 Number of trainings, training topics, demographics of participants Positive feedback from training evaluation forms
3. Advance city and county efforts to address major concerns in the Downtown Service Area	Advocate for greater investments by City and County towards the Downtown Service Area	 Participate in the Homelessness taskforce meetings Solicit concerns from membership annually to develop advocacy goals and talking points.

Activity	Tasks and Responsibilities		
DSA Event – Annual Summit	The Economic Development Committee will plan and convene an Annual Summit to promote Downtown Stockton businesses, revitalization, and ongoing development potential.		
DSA Events – Weekly/Monthly Events and Activities	The Economic Development Coordinator and Marketing Coordinator will jointly plan and advertise a range of weekly and/or monthly events in partnership with local businesses.		
Brick and Mortar Entrepreneur Center	The Economic Development Coordinator shall facilitate <i>Entrepreneur Workshops</i> in partnership with Centro Community Partners.		
Advocacy	The CEO shall survey members regarding high level needs and concerns and work with the Board to develop talking points and advocacy strategies.		

Long Term Measures of Success

Successful retention of new, desirable enterprises (2+ years)

More people coming to downtown and/or Stockton residents reporting satisfaction with their Downtown area, as measured through brief surveys distributed during events and/or at restaurants or local businesses.

Work Plan # 5: Improve Marketing and Branding - Marketing

This objective will be met through the initiative of the DSA Graphic and Communication Manager with collaboration and insight from the Marketing Committee and local businesses to create cross promotional events and marketing strategies.

Goal	Activity	Short Term Performance Measures
1. Enhance public awareness of Downtown businesses and opportunities	Post updates and grow social media presence	 Increase in likes, shares, and followers Increase in re-tweets Increase in Instagram posts tagging Downtown service area places or establishments
2. Create cross- promotional events and marketing strategies	Host meetings of marketing professionals/business owners to develop cross- promotional ideas	 Number, frequency, and attendance at meetings Number of cross-promotional events planned Self-reports of cross-promotional event impact

Activity	Tasks and Responsibilities
Grow Social Media Presence	Graphic and Communication Manager shall continue to grow social media and internet presence.
Foster Cross-Promotional Events	Convene monthly meetings of marketing reps and owners of event and dining establishments to discuss upcoming events and cross-promotion marketing opportunities.

Long Term Measures of Success

Increase awareness of events, activities, and establishments in Downtown as determined by social media metrics. Increase participation in cross-promotional marketing opportunities associated with DSA sponsored, and other, events

Work Plan # 6: Enhance Pedestrian Circulation - Marketing

The first goal of this objective is to promote new signage within the downtown area directing pedestrians and cyclists to local establishments. This project may already be underway through the City of Stockton. Further research is needed to determine the extent of DSA involvement.

The second goal of this objective is to determine the feasibility of the DSA contracting with a shuttle provider during major events and activities in order to cross promote restaurants/dining with theater and other event activities. The feasibility analysis will be conducted by a *trolley sub-committee* of the Marketing Committee. Upon determination of feasibility, recommendations will be made to the Marketing Committee and the DSA Executive Director for determination of whether and how to shuttle pedestrians from events and/or circulate pedestrians around the Downtown area. This goal is described below.

Goal	Activity	Short Term Performance Measures
Pilot a trolley shuttle for	Research models	Develop Model
pedestrians between	Determine cost / financing	Secure Pilot Project Financing
event and dining venues	Create usage plan	Establish protocols

Activity	Tasks and Responsibilities
Research Models	 DSA trolley subcommittee will discuss project with RTD. DSA trolley subcommittee will research merchant trolley's in other communities (e.g. Walnut Creek and Emeryville).
Determine Cost / Financing	 DSA trolley subcommittee will investigate potential contractors and partners.
Create Usage Plan	 DSA trolley subcommittee will convene a taskforce to develop policies and protocols regarding procurement, usage, and operations.

Long Term Measures of Success

A 1-year pilot project is established that markets and provides the trolley during several cross-promotional events Data informs a decision whether to continue the project and creates evidence for further partner support

DSA Board and Committees

The DSA Board of Directors is a committed and engaged group of volunteers that provide guidance and oversight to the operations of the DSA. DSA Board and community members are also invited to participate on program and operations committees to help implement the goals and objectives of the DSA.

There are currently five committees of the DSA; each is responsible for overseeing the project work associated with the following goals:

- 1. Clean and Safe Committee
 - Keep it Clean
 - Keep it Safe
- 2. Economic Development Committee
 - Make it a Pretty Place (Focus Block Improvement Strategy)
 - Strengthen Businesses
- 3. Marketing Committee
 - Improve Marketing and Branding
 - Enhance Pedestrian Circulation (*Trolley sub-committee*)
- 4. Education, Events, and Policy Committee
 - Advocacy for the Downtown Stockton Service Area
- 5. Admin and Finance Committee
 - Setting Annual Goals and Direction
 - Contract and Performance Monitoring
 - Developing the Annual Budget and Procurement Plan

DSA Staff Roles and Responsibilities

DSA employees are dedicated to the economic development and revitalization of the Downtown Stockton Service Area. DSA staff represent a diverse array of experiences and talents and, as of September 2017 include:

- *Chief Executive Officer:* Manages the overall operations of the DSA, solicits input from business and property owners, and leverages additional resources towards area efforts.
- *Graphics and Communications Manager*: Responsible for the design, layout, and management of promotional materials and publications, including social media content.
- *Economic Development Coordinator*: Develops and manages special events and activities; facilitates DSA's entrepreneur workshops; and collaborates on implementing economic development initiatives.
- Office Manager: Responsible for office management and administrative support across all project areas.
- Clean and Safe Team: Full and/or part-time maintenance staff and ambassadors.

Priority Goals for the DSA

The following goals have been identified by the Board of Directors as being "of high priority" with regard to staff time and effort:

Goal Streets, Sidewalks and Building Facades are Clean	 Staff Assigned CEO and Clean and Safe Team 	Committee Clean and Safe
Business and Dining Areas are Safe	 Police and Contracted Private Security 	Clean and Safe
Convene an Annual Summit on "The State of Downtown Stockton"	 CEO and the Board of Directors 	Economic Development
Align Focus Block Improvements with the Summit, in order to showcase revitalization impacts	CEO and the Economic Development Coordinator	Economic Development
Enhance Public Awareness of Downtown Businesses	 Graphics and Communications Manager 	Marketing
Bring individuals and families into Downtown for recreation, dining, and entertainment.	 Economic Development Coordinator and Graphics and Communications Manager 	Marketing

Appendix

The following staff, board members, and community stakeholders were interviewed and/or participated in the August 21, 2017 retreat. Their time, wisdom, and candor are greatly appreciated.

DSA Staff / Advisors

- Cynthia Fargo
- Jeff Groom
- Manuel Laguna
- Sylwia Lipiec-Qualls
- Charisse Lowry
- Courtney Wood

DSA Board Members

- Anthony Barkett
- Jacob Benguerel
- Mahala Burns
- Kendra Clark
- Marcia Cunningham
- Doug Egbert
- David Garcia
- Kari McNickle
- Wes Rhea
- Micah Runner
- Jared Rusten
- Gio Trinchera

DSA Community Stakeholders

- Hillard Corren
- Mel Corren
- Zac Cort
- Mike Klocke
- Bill Maxwell
- Janice Miller
- Martina Morio