



2026 CPO WINTER CONFERENCE

JAN. 27-29 - EVENT AGENDA

Location: **Pro Football Hall of Fame** - 2121 George Halas Dr NW, Canton, OH 44708
Lodging: **Double Tree by Hilton Canton Downtown** - 320 Market Ave S, Canton, OH 44702

TUESDAY, JANUARY 27TH

- 4-6PM** Exhibitors move-in/setup at the PFHOF.
*Location: THE NASH (Hallway outside the conference room)
- 6-8PM** Kick-off Mixer!
330 Bar & Grill at Double Tree by Hilton Canton Downtown
Join us for the pre-conference kick-off mixer at the 330 Bar & Grill inside the Double Tree by Hilton Canton Downtown. D'oeuvres/Cash Bar/Networking

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28TH

- 7-8PM** FINAL EXHIBITOR SET UP
*Location: THE NASH (Hallway outside the conference room)
- 8AM** REGISTRATION & BREAKFAST
*Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)
- 8:30AM** WELCOME
Matt Owen - Executive Director, Chamber Professionals of Ohio
Cherie Nelson, Executive Director, New Albany Area Chamber of Commerce (2026 CPO Board Chair)
Jeff Dafler, President & CEO, Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce
*Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)
- 9AM-9:45AM** GENERAL SESSION:
"TRUE vs. TRUTH"
A practical session on separating assumptions from facts so you can reduce stress, gain clarity, and approach conversations with greater confidence.
Chuck Huggins, Chief Operating Officer, Business Coach, Facilitator and Leadership Coach - Aileron
*Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)
- 9:45AM-10AM** – BREAK/NETWORK/VENDOR VISIT

10AM-10:45AM - BREAKOUT SESSIONS (CHOOSE ONE)

1. “Leveraging Partnerships/Relationships”

Discover how strategic collaboration can amplify your chamber’s influence. This session explores the value of partnering with regional and neighboring chambers, economic development organizations, CVBs, local, county and state government agencies. Learn how shared resources, aligned priorities, and coordinated initiatives strengthen member support, enhance advocacy efforts, and drive community and business growth across your region.

Matt Owen, Executive Director, Chamber Professionals of Ohio

***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

2. “Energizing Economies: The Strategic Role of Chambers”

For years, energy was just a line item on a budget. Today, it is the engine of Ohio's economic future. From attracting major tech investments to ensuring local manufacturers stay competitive, the reliability and cost of power will define the winners and losers of the next decade. This session cuts through the noise to focus on what matters to Ohio businesses: reliability, affordability, and growth. This panel discussion with chamber professionals, led by Logan O’Neil, IOM, OhioCED, will present a roadmap for how Chambers can proactively engage with the energy discussions rather than reacting to it. Discover how the Energizing Economies program connects you with a network of peers and resources to ensure your chamber is the driving force behind an energized economy.

Panel Facilitator: Logan O’Neill, IOM, OhioCED - Midwest Regional Director - Chamber for Innovation and Clean Energy

***Location: THE GOLD JACKET LOUNGE**

10:45AM-11AM - BREAK/NETWORK/VENDOR VISIT

11AM-11:45AM - BREAKOUT SESSIONS (CHOOSE ONE)

1. “A Modern Playbook for Membership Growth”

Take a fresh look at how chambers can strengthen every stage of the membership journey. This session will explore a modern approach to attracting and retaining members, including how aligning marketing and membership functions and a focus on onboarding can transform acquisition and retention. Attendees will gain practical ideas to weave digital marketing into membership to improve leads and create touchpoints that encourage members to join and stay engaged.

Darla Brown, Vice President of Marketing & Membership Strategy
Canton Regional Chamber of Commerce

***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

2. “Using AI for Content, Efficiency & Member Engagement”

Discover practical ways chambers can use AI to streamline operations, improve communication, and enhance member value. This session explores real examples of AI-powered content creation, workflow automation, and engagement strategies that save time, boost productivity, and strengthen relationships with members.

Jack Spliller, Client Success Manager, AI Owl

***Location: THE GOLD JACKET LOUNGE**

11:45AM – Lunch Buffet - *Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)

“All Things Chamber” program plug (3 mins)

Savanah Hufford, Executive Director, Pickaway County Chamber of Commerce

11:50AM - KEYNOTE:

Horizon 2035: “How External Forces Shape Chambers and Communities”

Amy Shields, Executive Director, ACCE Foundation and Vice President/Programs
Chamber work is never done in a vacuum, and forward-thinking chamber leaders and staff look for ways to understand the factors that shape the world in which we operate. ACCE’s Horizon 2035 is designed to keep you a step ahead by highlighting key future-facing influences. In this session, participants will have the chance to explore pressing themes that will impact how we work and the issues that we must address in the near and long term. Attendees will hear more about what is driving these trends and how savvy chamber executives are adapting to meet the moment.

***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

1-1:40PM “Vendor spotlight”

This Vendor Spotlight session provides our vendors with an opportunity to come up to the podium and highlight their products and services to the attendees. We encourage attendees to take time and visit our vendors throughout the conference. They all provide valuable services and benefits for your chamber.

***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

1:45-2:30PM GENERAL SESSION:

“From Relevant to Impact”

Matt Appenzeller, President & CEO Southern Ohio Chamber Alliance – SOCA

“Being Relevant” is not a compelling vision. Instead, the Chamber’s ability to make an impact should compel others to join. This session focuses on the right mindset, the most common challenges, and a few strategies Chambers can implement to create impact for members and the community.

***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

2:30-2:45PM - BREAK-NETWORKING/VISIT VENDORS

2:45PM – “Institute for Organization Management (IOM) program plug (3 mins)
Kathi Roetter, IOM, CPO-AP, Executive Director – Troy Area Chamber of Commerce
***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

2:50-3:30PM GENERAL SESSION:

“Legislative Update with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce”
Kevin Courtois, Vice President Government Affairs, Great Lakes Region, U.S. Chamber of Commerce
***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

3:30-4PM GENERAL SESSION:

CEO Forum – Powered by the Ohio Chamber of Commerce
Robert Shenton, Executive Director, CEO Forum, Ohio Chamber of Commerce
Are you looking to increase engagement with the C-Suite business leaders in your community? Do you want to provide leading executive education, along with business data and research that drives collaborative innovation, organizational success and community impact? Would you like a new revenue stream for your Chamber that provides significant value to members? The CEO Forum was founded by the Ohio Chamber of Commerce in 2024 as a premium executive group to unite C-Suite leaders for peer networking, strategic leadership development, operational excellence and executive education. Robert Shenton, Executive Director of the CEO Forum, will discuss the successful growth of the program, the executive education content and the opportunity to bring the CEO Forum to your Chamber.
***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

4-5:30PM BREAK

We will take an hour and a half break to prepare for the CPO Annual Awards Dinner.

5:30-6:30PM “Cocktail Hour & Reception”

***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

6:30-7:30PM - CPO Annual Meeting & Awards Dinner

Join us as we share the progress and future of CPO. We will be honoring the Professionals of the Year and Outstanding Chambers of the Year. We will also be honoring our Legacy Award recipients. Enjoy a cocktail hour followed by dinner and networking. (Casual Business Dress) You can dress up if you'd like!
***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

7:30PM EVENING ACTIVITIES

*You are more than welcome to join us at **330 Bar & Grill** at the Double Tree Hotel Canton Downtown for networking and cash bar.*

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29TH

8AM Full Breakfast + Networking with Peers

8:30-9:15AM GENERAL SESSION:

“Building a High-Performance Chamber Board.”

Learn practical strategies to strengthen your chamber’s board, enhance engagement, and align leaders around clear priorities. This session explores governance best practices, role clarity, and board development tactics to create a motivated, collaborative, and forward-focused board that drives long-term organizational success.

Kathi Roetter, IOM, CPO-AP, Executive Director – Troy Area Chamber of Commerce

***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

9:20-10AM BREAKOUT SESSIONS (CHOOSE ONE)

1. “INFLUENCE WITH INTENT”

Derek Malone @SnipingforDom (TikTok)

A practical, hands-on session pairing a leading Ohio-based TikTok creator with the Chamber to tell your town's story—authentically, consistently, and measurably. Learn how to identify the right partner, co-create town-focused content, set clear goals, and track impact for local businesses while staying true to the Chamber’s voice and goals.

***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

2. “Metrics, not Myths”

Matt Appenzeller, President & CEO Southern Ohio Chamber Alliance – SOCA

“If you’ve seen one Chamber, you’ve seen one!” is a harmful saying that keeps Chambers from knowing how they measure up against their peers. In this session, you’ll discover how SOCA is using Data Analysis for Benchmarking, Performance Scorecards, and forecasting tools to help Chambers of Commerce plan better and make better decisions.

***Location: THE GOLD JACKET LOUNGE**

10AM-10:15AM – BREAK/NETWORK/VENDOR VISIT

10:15AM – “Chamber Accreditation” program plug (3 mins)

Andrew McAfee, Vice President, Clermont Chamber of Commerce

***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

10:20-11:15AM GENERAL SESSION:

PANAL DISCUSSION - “Strategic Planning That Actually Gets Implemented.”

Learn a practical, action-focused approach to strategic planning designed specifically for chambers. This session demystifies goal setting, builds accountability, and offers tools to move from ideas to implementation. Attendees will walk away with proven methods to align board, staff, and community priorities

while ensuring the plan becomes a living roadmap—not a shelf document for sustained success.

Facilitator: Cindy Holtzheimer, President & CEO, Northern Area Chambers of Commerce

Panelist: TBD

***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

11:15-11:30AM – GENERAL SESSION:

“What Sticks?” Rapid Reflection (15 minutes)

Matt Owen, Executive Director, Chamber Professionals of Ohio

11:30AM CLOSING REMARKS/DRAWINGS & PRIZES

Cherie Nelson, Executive Director, New Albany Area Chamber of Commerce
(2026 CPO Board Chair)

***Location: THE NASH (MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM)**

Note: *Attendees will have full access to the Pro Football Hall of Fame during the conference. A great time to take advantage of this opportunity is after the conference concludes on Wednesday. Enjoy!*