



Dear Members,

Milestones have a way of putting both the past and the future into perspective.

Two hundred and fifty years is a remarkable milestone. It invites us to reflect on where we've been, celebrate what we've accomplished, and consider what we hope to become.

At the Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce, we have the privilege of working every day with the people who power our economy and strengthen our communities. Entrepreneurs who take risks. Manufacturers who build products used around the world. Small business owners who see an opportunity and put in the work to turn it into a thriving enterprise. Educators, innovators, healthcare providers, nonprofits, and employers of every size who invest in people and create opportunities.

Their stories remind me that one of America's greatest achievements is not a single invention, industry, or institution—it is a system that empowers ordinary people to do extraordinary things. For 250 years, the freedom to pursue an idea, start a business, create a product, solve a problem, and build a better future has remained one of our country's defining strengths.

Here in the Toledo Region, we see that story every day.

We see it in businesses that have been part of our community for generations and in entrepreneurs launching their first venture. We see it in manufacturers embracing new technologies, in employers investing in workforce development, and in organizations working together to solve challenges that no one sector can solve alone.

The success of our region has always depended on people willing to look beyond today's challenges and invest in tomorrow's opportunities.

The next chapter of the American story will be written by the people building businesses, developing talent, advancing technology, strengthening communities, and creating opportunities for others to succeed.

That responsibility belongs to all of us. Because the future will be shaped not by any one individual, business, or organization, but by communities that work together - communities that connect people to opportunity, embrace innovation while investing in people, and recognize that economic prosperity and quality of life go hand in hand.

Together, may we continue to build, create, innovate, and lead with the confidence that our best chapters are still ahead.

Happy 250<sup>th</sup> Birthday, America.

Sincerely,

**Wendy Gramza**

President & CEO

Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce