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Chamber Hires Lettie Bien as Defense Affairs Committee Program Coordinator

(Charlottesville, Virginia – July 6, 2020) The Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce has hired Lettie J. Bien as the first Program Coordinator for its Defense Affairs Committee (DAC). She will begin immediately.

A retired U.S. Army Reserve Colonel, Bien is an attorney and longtime community advocate. As Program Coordinator, she will carry out community engagement and business development to further strengthen relationships between the Chamber, the Central Virginia community, the regional defense/intelligence community, and our veterans.

“I commend the Chamber and its partners for their recognition of the importance of this business sector,” said Bien. “I am honored to have been chosen to undertake the implementation of this project. This will be a catalytic economic resource for the entire community.”

The defense and intelligence sector has been deemed a critical component to the economic development of the central Virginia region. The U.S Department of Defense is the fifth-largest employer in Albemarle County and the ninth largest in the Charlottesville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) that includes Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene and Nelson.

Albemarle County Economic Development Authority, the City of Charlottesville Economic Development Authority, Greene County, and a variety of private organizations have partnered with the Chamber in support of a pilot project to hire the Program Coordinator.

“We believe that increased coordination among our local defense and intelligence industry, the U.S. Department of Defense, and other regional stakeholders will benefit the entire community,” said Chamber President & CEO Elizabeth Cromwell. “In light of the COVID-19 economic crisis, these efforts are more critical than ever.”

The Chamber will establish a small satellite office at UVA Research Park, where Bien will serve as the primary point of contact within the Chamber for active duty military, reserve affairs and National Guard members, veterans and families within the community.

Established in 2009, the Defense Affairs Committee has served as a unique conduit for sharing information and facilitating connections and access between academic, industry, and government constituencies. Bien will provide support and guidance to the six DAC sub-committees and work with Chamber volunteers to develop and execute realistic goals.

“Bringing Lettie on board will enable the Defense Affairs Committee to proactively support regional economic development efforts for the retention and expansion of the defense industry,” said DAC Chairwoman Deborah van Eersel.

For more information on the Chamber Defense Affairs Committee, visit www.CvilleChamber.com/dac.

The Charlottesville Regional Chamber of Commerce advocates, convenes and engages to strengthen business in the greater Charlottesville Region.

Chamber programs are supported by our Partners in Trust: University of Virginia, UVA Health, Albemarle County, albemarle Magazine, Atlantic Union Bank, MPS, The Daily Progress, United Bank, UVA Community Credit Union, Wells Fargo, Great Eastern Management Company, Hourigan, R. E. Lee Companies, Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital, State Farm, Tom Tom Festival, Bridge Business Transformations, Four Corners Real Estate Solutions, Marjorie Adam Team, Roy Wheeler Realty Co., and Story House Real Estate.

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ATTACHMENTS: Photo of Lettie J. Bien



Col. Lettie J. Bien (Ret.)