

Silicon Valley Chamber Honors Business Champions, Sports Legends, Young Innovators at Exclusive Celebration at The Domes

Silicon Valley Chamber honored business champions, sports legends and young innovators at a sold-out early-access celebration at The Domes.

SAN JOSE, CA, UNITED STATES, July 6, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Sold-out June 29 awards celebration, held before [The Domes](#)' July 1 public opening, connected sports legacy, business excellence, immersive innovation and a new generation already creating measurable impact

Days before The Domes officially opened to the public, the [Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce & Innovation](#)

brought together more than 300 business and community leaders, elected officials, international representatives, soccer legends and young innovators for an exclusive early-access celebration of Silicon Valley's legacy and future.

The sold-out Legends & SV Champions Annual Awards & Celebration, presented by BTA Sports, was held June 29 at The Domes in Downtown San Jose, creating a distinctive intersection of business, sports, government, global communities and emerging leadership inside one of the city's newest immersive venues.

The Domes, the Chamber's newest Catalyst Partner, welcomed the Chamber community into its 360-degree immersive environment before the venue's July 1 public opening. Guests journeyed through global imagery, jungles, cityscapes, oceans and sweeping views of Earth, while awardee names and honors appeared dramatically across the Dome.

"This was truly a Silicon Valley moment," said Harbir K. Bhatia, CEO and President of the Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce & Innovation. "We brought together local and global leaders,



Harbir K Bhatia Welcomes the Attendees

business champions, sports legends, innovators and young people already creating real impact. The intersection of innovation, experience, community and economy came to life that evening."

The Chamber's role in supporting the new San Jose venue was also publicly recognized by Chris Lawes of The Domes.

"This Chamber has been instrumental in helping The Domes open in San Jose," Lawes said.

Guests enjoyed global cuisine, a red-carpet welcome, immersive experiences and a Legends meet-and-greet. Awards were presented across four major categories — City of Santa Clara, Games, Youth and Silicon Valley — recognizing leadership, legacy, business excellence, innovation, service and community impact.



Showcasing the Immersive Experience inside the Dome

“

These young leaders are listening, researching, innovating, organizing and taking action. That is the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit of Silicon Valley in its purest form.”

Harbir K Bhatia, CEO and President of the Silicon Valley Chamber

Sports Legacy Meets a Global Moment

The evening opened with a video message from Steve Sampson, former U.S. Men's National Team head coach, reflecting on the evolution of soccer in the United States, the legacy of the 1994 World Cup and the broader impact major global sporting events can have on business, community and the economy. The event script framed Sampson's message around soccer history and major global sports events returning to the Bay Area.

Soccer legends and sports personalities joining the celebration included Shea Salinas, San Jose Earthquakes

Club Ambassador; Chris Dangerfield, San Jose Earthquakes Hall of Famer and broadcaster; Jan Eric Nordmo, U.S. Soccer coach trainer and California soccer entrepreneur; Thomas Silvas; Easy Ismail Perez; and George “King George” Lamptey.

Sports figures participated in award presentations and special program moments, while Aubrie Tolliver, sports media host for the San Francisco 49ers, served as emcee.

Chris Dangerfield and Jan Eric Nordmo received Legacy & Impact Awards, recognizing their

lasting contributions to soccer, leadership and community. Both are identified as Legacy and Impact honorees in the official event program.

“The legends represented local talent connected to the world,” Bhatia said. “Our awardees represented that same pursuit of excellence, hard work, leadership and a transformative mindset. Together, they reflected so much of what defines Silicon Valley.”

Business Champions, Innovators and Community Impact

The Chamber recognized businesses and organizations representing the breadth of Silicon Valley's economy and community.

The UPS Store, Almaden Expressway, and Selectiva Systems were named Silicon Valley Businesses of the Year, while Jashn Restaurant/Jalsa was named Santa Clara Business of the Year. METHOD 42 Productions received the Small Business of the Year Award, recognizing its creativity and craftsmanship in event design, scenic fabrication, themed environments and immersive production.

Sutter Health received the SV Leader of the Year Award, recognizing leadership across healthcare, innovation, community health and economic vitality. The Chamber honored Sutter for demonstrating strong stewardship through expanded urgent care and healthcare facilities, medical innovation and its investment in the future of healthcare education, including plans for a new medical school in Santa Clara



Silicon Valley Leader Award Presented to Sutter Health by SV Chamber Board Members and Electeds



Title of Silicon Valley Awards on Dome Screen



Awardees and Members Outside the Dome

in partnership with Santa Clara University.

In a fitting recognition at the host venue, The Domes San Jose was named SV Innovator of the Year for creating new ways for people to connect through immersive technology, entertainment and shared experiences. The Chamber's awards script described The Domes as blending technology, creativity and community in a way that feels uniquely Silicon Valley.

America SCORES received the Nonprofit of the Year: Youth Empowerment for empowering young people through teamwork, creativity and leadership. Rotary District 5170 Non Profit of the Year for Impact was recognized for inclusion, leadership, and its work benefiting and connecting communities through service and shared purpose.

Miles Barber, founder of the [Santa Clara Weekly and Silicon Valley Voice](#) and a longtime independent community media voice, received a Lifetime Legacy Award recognizing more than 60 years of community service. A former Santa Clara Chamber Board member and longtime Rotarian, Barber has remained an active civic voice well into his 90s, known for challenging prevailing narratives, bringing broader perspectives to public discourse and helping keep the community informed and engaged through the Santa Clara Weekly and Silicon Valley Voice.

The late Joe Siecinski, founder of BrainSHARE, business mentor and former Chamber chair, was posthumously honored with a Lifetime Legacy Award for his enduring impact on entrepreneurs, leaders and the Chamber community.

Young Leaders Already Creating Measurable Change

Among the evening's most compelling stories were young leaders already turning ideas and advocacy into tangible results.

Anagha Shirahatti, a recent San José State University graduate active in Chamber and campus leadership, received the Youth Leadership Award.

Amrit Kaur Rana was recognized for her Girl Scout Gold Award project, Safe Streets, Strong Voices. After identifying traffic and pedestrian safety concerns near Carolyn Clark Elementary School, she surveyed more than 100 residents and worked with local government and education leaders. Her advocacy contributed to the installation of 19 new traffic safety signs, and she created a toolkit to help other young people advocate for safer communities.

Nirav Adavikolanu, a 16-year-old student at The Harker School, was honored for developing AI-powered tools that support multilingual learners. His projects, Shruthi and Lectio, are designed to help learners understand English concepts and classroom content, with his work already being used in learning environments including citizenship preparation classes at the San José Public Library's Seven Trees Branch.

The Chamber also recognized Shelene Huey-Booker for youth empowerment and leadership development and Skanda Naveen for youth volunteer leadership.

“These young leaders are not waiting for someone else to solve a problem,” Bhatia said. “They are listening, researching, innovating, organizing and taking action. That is the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit of Silicon Valley in its purest form.”

Local, Global and Civic Leaders Participate

The celebration drew international, federal, state, county and local participation, reinforcing Silicon Valley's regional reach and global connections.

International guests included community and consular representatives connected with Türkiye, Colombia and Mexico, along with Steven Saum representing Czech Republic community connections.

Civic leaders included Santa Clara County Supervisor Sylvia Arenas; Milpitas Mayor Carmen Montano; Cupertino Mayor Moore; Santa Clara Vice Mayor Albert Gonzalez; and Santa Clara Councilmember Kevin Park.

The program also included participation and representation from the offices of State Senator Dave Cortese, State Senator Aisha Wahab, Assemblymember Patrick Ahrens and Congressman Jimmy Panetta. Mariam Ghallab participated on behalf of Senator Cortese's office, Elizabeth Vacca represented Senator Wahab's office, and Carter Hu, District Director, participated on behalf of Assemblymember Ahrens.

Award recipients received additional recognitions through the offices of Congressman Jimmy Panetta, State Senator Aisha Wahab, Santa Clara County Supervisor Sylvia Arenas and Assemblymember Patrick Ahrens.

Chamber Leadership Honors Legacy and Looks Ahead

The celebration also marked a leadership transition for the Chamber.

Ravinder Lal, incoming Chair of the Board, shared his vision for 2026–27 and introduced the incoming Board leadership. The incoming Executive Board includes Ravinder Lal, Chair; Rafael Eljou, Vice Chair; Savinder Singh, Treasurer; and Alice Village, Secretary.

Outgoing Chair Franchesca Lacanlale, the first young professional in the Chamber's history to serve as Board Chair and a recent Silicon Valley Business Journal 40 Under 40 honoree, expressed gratitude for the Board's participation, commitment and partnership.

Lacanlale also paid tribute to Joe Siecinski, who passed away unexpectedly in April. She reflected on the profound influence his mentorship, encouragement and belief had on her personal and professional growth, crediting him with helping her lead with purpose and believe she could make a difference.

A Platform for Partnership and Regional Impact

The celebration was presented by the Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce & Innovation with Title Sponsor BTA Sports.

Sponsors and community partners included BTA Sports, The Domes, METHOD 42 Productions,

Jalsa Catering & Events, The UPS Store – Almaden Expressway, Selectiva Systems, Fogo de Chão, NorthStar Strategic Partners, Idyll Time Wines, Rotary District 5170, Rotary Club of Santa Clara, Rotary Silicon Valley Leadership, Sister Cities International and NorCal SCI, among others. The official event program recognizes the sponsors and community partners supporting the celebration.

“This is what partnership can look like in Silicon Valley,” Bhatia said. “Businesses, government, international communities, sports, nonprofits and young innovators come together. We create visibility, build relationships, celebrate impact and connect people to opportunity. That is the ecosystem we are building.”

The Chamber's vision is Creating a Thriving Silicon Valley Economy for All. Through business growth, innovation, workforce and entrepreneurial pathways, advocacy, regional collaboration and global connections, the Chamber works to strengthen the economic infrastructure that helps businesses and communities succeed.

About the Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce & Innovation

The Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce & Innovation is a regional business organization focused on empowering the economy by powering business growth and connecting business, government, community and innovation.

Rooted in more than a century of business leadership and civic engagement, the Chamber serves as a regional convener, connector and catalyst, helping businesses access the relationships, resources, visibility, advocacy and partnerships needed to grow in one of the world's most important innovation economies.

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