

Homebuilder association installs officers and directors for 2026, honors six for service

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NORTH STATE BUILDING
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

The North State Building Industry Association (BIA), representing the homebuilding industry in the greater Sacramento region, recently installed its officers and directors for 2026 and recognized six individuals for outstanding service promoting homeownership at an event attended by nearly 500 industry leaders at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in downtown Sacramento.

Sworn in as the BIA's Chair was Tina Cruce, the chief financial officer for Tim Lewis Communities. In her acceptance speech, Cruce said advocacy with local governments will be a top priority.

"As a CFO, I'm a numbers person, and the math is simple: the cost of building a home is shaped by far more than labor and material. Rising land costs, escalating fees, permits, extended approval timelines and infrastructure constraints all add up," she said.

"When projects don't pencil, they don't move forward, housing supply stalls and affordability worsens. At the same time, buyers are facing higher interest rates, insurance costs and taxes, pushing many to the sidelines. The average age of a first-time homebuyer is now 40, up from 33 just 10 years ago.

"These challenges affect real people, real businesses, and real communities every single day. That's why advocacy is not optional - it's essential."

Joining Cruce as officers are Vice Chair/Treasurer Luke Wissmann, division president for Beazer Homes; Secretary Michelle Velky, division president for Lennar; and Immediate Past Chair Clifton Taylor, president of Taylor Builders.

Board Members for the year are George Carpenter, Winn Communities; Deana Ellis, Cresleigh Homes; Karina Guerrieri, Tri Pointe Homes; Ryan Hatheway, Taylor Morrison; Samantha Higbee, Risewell Homes; Heather Hoffman, Sekisui; Thad Johnson, Pappas Investments; Cameron Kjome, Emerald Site Services; Laura Lewis, SMUD; Dudley Mallinson, Landscape Development; Patrick McGuirk, USA Properties Fund; Joe Pitzner, BSB Design; Craig Rickabaugh, MRS Roofing & Solar; Philip Roberts, Wood Rodgers; Aaron Ross-Swain, Fieldstone Communities; Aaron Stubblefield, Pulte Group; and Justin Walters, Somers West.

The BIA recognized four individuals for their service to the industry.

The Friend of Housing Award, presented each year to individuals and groups that have provided distinguished service in support of housing issues,



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Nearly 500 homebuilding leaders gathered following the official installation of the 2026 Chair of the North State BIA. Pictured (left/right/above) are this year's officers and directors.

was given to Sacramento County Deputy CEO Dave Defanti and the staff of the county's Department of Community Development. Defanti and county staff engaged in numerous reforms that move housing projects through the approval process more expeditiously, making the dream of homeownership a reality for thousands of families.

The Meritorious Award, recognizing a BIA member who has demonstrated exceptional commitment to the homebuilding industry over many years, was given to John Orr, who served for 40 years in BIA leadership roles. He became the BIA's president and CEO in 1985 and later served in key roles with the Association's two nonprofit affiliates, the Building Careers Founda-



Tia Gemmell, Riverview Media Photography

Tina Cruce, CFO of Tim Lewis Communities, addresses nearly 500 homebuilding leaders.

tion and HomeAid Sacramento - all with a spirit of service, integrity, and commitment.

Jim Ray, who served as president of engineering firm MacKay & Stomps until his recent retirement,

received the President's Award for his work with the Sacramento Regional Water Forum.

The forum consists of representatives from business, water providers, environmental organiza-

tions, local governments, and community groups who worked for years to find ways to manage the lower American River and shape the region's water future.

Finally, the Chair's Award was presented to Bonnie Chiu, vice president of forward planning for D.R. Horton. Chiu served for eight years on the BIA's board of directors, including 18 months as chair during a time of transition. She also has been a leader in developing the next generation of BIA leaders and supporting women in the industry.

The BIA's two affiliated nonprofits also honored volunteers.

The Building Careers Foundation, which works to develop a pipeline of trained workers for the industry, presented its Legacy Award to Jeff Pansiti. The retired executive with Lennar was recognized for creating a high school internship program that provided construction training for more than 40 young people a year.

And HomeAid Sacramento, which helps people experiencing or at risk of homelessness build new lives through construction, community engagement and education, presented its Impact Award to John Caulfield, the owner of Landmark Builders. Caulfield serves on the nonprofit's board of directors and has personally led several construction projects to provide transitional housing.

The event was sponsored by Tim Lewis Communities, Banner Bank, InterWest Insurance Services, Big Valley Mortgage, Wells Fargo Bank, CliftonLarsonAllen, Columbia Bank, Landscape Development, Leader One Financial and Metropolitan Floors.