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Business symposium focuses on 'getting back to basics'

Submitted by Kathe Nelson

Four distinguished panelists will examine various trends, challenges, solutions and opportunities in the current retail and business environment at a free business and community symposium sponsored by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 14 at the Saint Mary's College Soda Center. Sneha Patel is the operations manager with The UPS Store, Inc. supporting franchisees in Northern California and Nevada based in Sacramento. The UPS Store is a leading franchise and has over 5,000 locations with one each in Lafayette, Moraga and Orinda. Sneha is a former franchisee and focuses on growing top line revenue and bottom line profits, while increasing efficiency.

Jay Kerner, the president and CEO of U.S. Realty Partners, a regional commercial real estate operating company which is the new owner of the Rheem Shopping Center, will share his experience creating successful high-quality retail shopping centers and his vision for revitalizing the Rheem. A UCLA grad, Kerner has almost three decades of experience in acquiring, operating, developing and leasing major retail and mixed-use properties.

Tom Frainier is CEO/president of Semifreddi's Bakery. He has a BS and MBA from UC Berkeley's Hass School of Business and spent seven highly successful years at Clorox in finance and accounting before joining his sister and brother-in-law at Semifreddi's in 1988. Semifreddi's fresh bread is a staple in Lamorinda. Frainier, a Moraga resident, will share the philosophy and vision that keeps it all humming.

Lena Waters, vice president, integrated marketing with DocuSign leads cross-functional teams that orchestrate digital and in-person experiences that drive demand for sales teams, build brands, grow revenue and delight customers. Lena and her family live in Moraga.

"The Customer Experience" symposium will begin with refreshments at 6:30 p.m. followed by the formal program at 6:45 p.m. There will also be an opportunity for the audience to submit questions to the panelists. The event is a Lamorinda-wide tri-chamber event presented by the Moraga Chamber of Commerce and is made possible by generous sponsorships from Saint Mary's College, Republic Services and Wells Fargo Bank.

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