

U.S.-CHINA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HOSTED CHINESE NEW YEAR DINNER TO CELEBRATE THE ARRIVAL OF THE FIRE HORSE

The U.S.-China Chamber of Commerce (USCCC) hosted its 29th Annual Chinese New Year dinner on February 26, 2026, at the Phoenix Restaurant in Chicago's Chinatown to celebrate the arrival of the Year of the Fire Horse. This annual event brought together business executives and government officials from different nations, cultures, and businesses. It was a special occasion for fostering friendships, building business connections, and ushering in a new year of optimism and opportunity.



Siva Yam opened the dinner by welcoming guests and expressing his appreciation for their support, especially, those who traveled to join this exceptional annual celebration from out of state.

Stephen Stahr, Eric Rock, and Ramiro Martinez, who flew in from Mexico on behalf of *Juan Gonzalez*, represented the USCCC Board. *Ambassador Wang Baodong*, Consul General, *Wang Lixin*, Councilor and *Wang Xinyu*, Vice Consul of the Chinese Consulate in Chicago also participated, and they were joined by representatives from Malaysian Investment Development Authority.



Siva reported on the profound changes that have transformed the global economy over the past 25 years, and how the USCCC is poised to expand its scope to facilitate trade and investment among the U.S., China, and other regions with a focus on emerging economies, especially in Southeast Asia. Siva noted that the purpose of this expansion is to identify profitable opportunities in the following areas: (a) supply chain diversification; (b) product distribution in emerging markets; (c) technology cooperation; and (d) capital flow facilitation. Among many new initiatives, one is to launch a joint venture with a technology company in China that builds and maintains the government procurement portal for hospitals in Sichuan to assist U.S. healthcare companies in entering the Chinese market cost effectively. USCCC is also negotiating with a Chinese intellectual property right law firm in Beijing to provide low-cost legal services for U.S. companies.

Ambassador Wang Baodong gave warm welcoming remarks and reiterated that China continues to welcome business and tourism with its new policy. He also talked about the focus of China's Five-Year Plan.

Stephen Stahr, Chief Executive of Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT) shared his views on the emerging economies in ASEAN countries, based on his recent trips and plans for expansion. He gave a very detailed analysis of the demographic, economic, social, and political elements in defining future growth and strategy for businesses using the insurance industry as a blueprint. A copy of his speech may be downloaded by visiting www.usccc.org.



The award-winning baritone *Lu Kede* performed an Italian opera song, which was followed by two Chinese songs. He received a standing ovation.

The Celebration concluded with a drawing for Zippo lighters, one of the world's most recognized American brands that has sold over 600 million lighters.

