The headlines today make it easy to focus on the negative: lost jobs, rising unemployment, furloughs for state workers and multibillion-dollar cuts to education.

But California has weathered economic challenges before, and essential work is being done now to create a foundation for the future when our economy is once again thriving. As a leading facilitator of economic development, the Sacramento Metro Chamber acknowledges the positive impact of people and organizations doing that work.

One of those positives is the commitment shown to our community by a nationally known institution with the long-term vision that only comes with 118 years of experience.

In May 2008, Drexel University announced it would open a Center for Graduate Studies in Sacramento, the first of its kind away from the university's Philadelphia home.

While others cut back, why was Drexel investing in Sacramento?

Because Drexel saw Northern California as a dynamic region where the confluence of business, technology and government fit well with its mission and expertise.

Recognized by U.S. News & World Report magazine as one of the most innovative universities in the country, Drexel brings a spirit of entrepreneurship that is akin to a startup business.

Drexel began in Sacramento in January with four master’s programs and this fall will more than double its offerings.

The university has invested more than $15 million in innovative scholarship and financial aid programs at its One Capitol Mall facility and created one of the most state-of-the-art educational spaces on the West Coast, if not the nation.

Drexel also understands it cannot succeed alone.

The university is partnering with geographically and ethnically diverse community organizations to support existing programs to develop the region’s next generation of leaders and create new programs for leadership development.

Drexel’s forward-looking approach is the exact kind of thinking we need more than ever. While today’s economic struggles impact virtually every organization — businesses, government agencies and nonprofit organizations — they should not define our future.

Instead, our future should, and will, be defined by our people and the investments we make today.

A Philadelphia-based university that prior to 2008 had little presence in our community is an unexpected source to provide an example.

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