



INDIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER 2026

CONNECTING · EMPOWERING · GROWING

The Indian American International Chamber of Commerce (IAICC) is dedicated to strengthening partnerships between U.S. and Indian businesses, promoting trade, innovation, workforce development, and community growth. This quarter reflects the intention in how we are shaping conversations around the workforce, growth, and the future of business

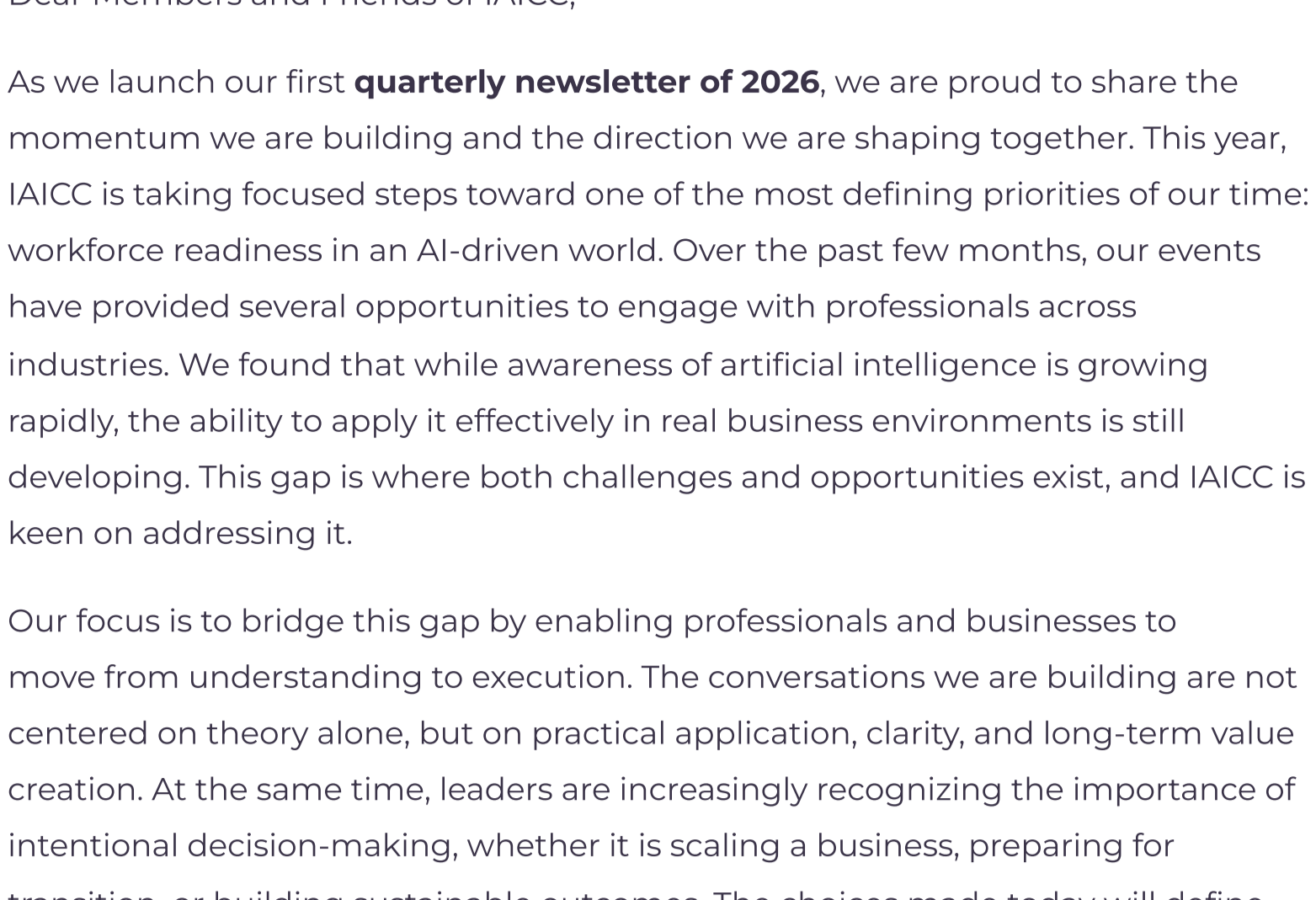
FROM THE CHAIRMEN'S DESK



Mr. Appen Menon, Esq.
EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN,
IAICC



Dr. Shankar Rachakonda
CHAIRMAN, IAICC US &
MID-ATLANTIC REGION



Dear Members and Friends of IAICC,

As we launch our first **quarterly newsletter of 2026**, we are proud to share the momentum we are building and the direction we are shaping together. This year, IAICC is taking focused steps toward one of the most defining priorities of our time: workforce readiness in an AI-driven world. Over the past few months, our events have provided several opportunities to engage with professionals across industries. We found that while awareness of artificial intelligence is growing rapidly, the ability to apply it effectively in real business environments is still developing. This gap is where both challenges and opportunities exist, and IAICC is keen on addressing it.

Our focus is to bridge this gap by enabling professionals and businesses to move from understanding to execution. The conversations we are building are not centered on theory alone, but on practical application, clarity, and long-term value creation. At the same time, leaders are increasingly recognizing the importance of intentional decision-making, whether it is scaling a business, preparing for transition, or building sustainable outcomes. The choices made today will define the opportunities available tomorrow.

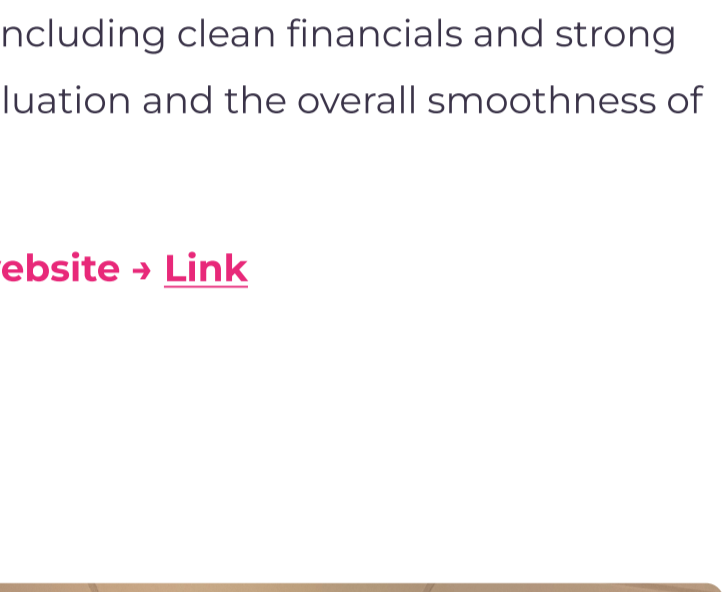
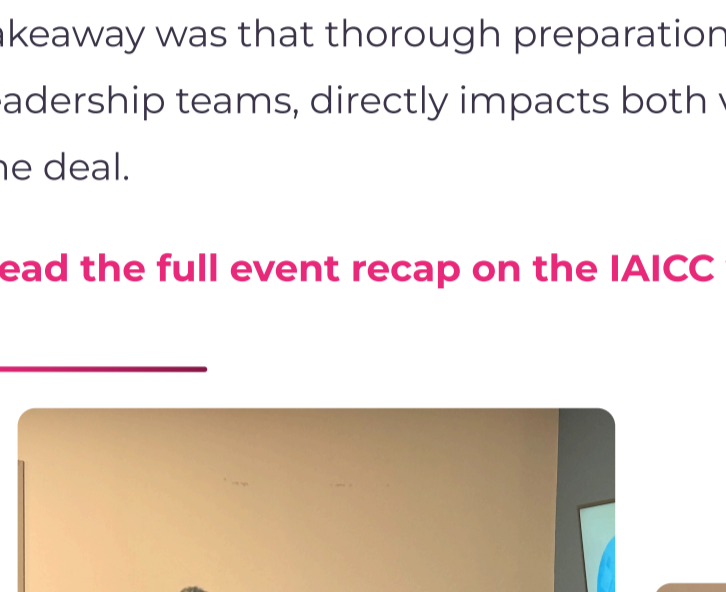
As you read through this newsletter, you will see how these themes are being translated into action through our recent engagements, community contributions, and upcoming initiatives. We are very happy about the strong participation from organizations such as **Merrill Lynch** and **New York Life Insurance** in these engagements, reflecting the growing strength of the IAICC ecosystem.

IAICC is evolving into more than a network. It is becoming a platform where professionals and businesses can learn, contribute, and grow with intention. We are grateful for your trust, participation, and your continued belief in what we are creating together at IAICC.

RECAP OF KEY EVENTS

JANUARY - MARCH 2026

The first quarter of **2026** has been both active and purposeful for IAICC, with each engagement designed around real needs emerging across our community. We began in **January** with the **AI Workshop: Reskill with AI Tools and Skills for Career Transition**, held in Vienna, Virginia. This was a hands-on, full-day experience led by **Kristan Smith, CEO of MND Suite Consulting**, and **Alek Nedelkovski, Associate Director at Radiant Digital**. The workshop focused on practical AI adoption, covering real-world use cases, workflow automation, and responsible AI frameworks.



What made this session impactful was its applicability. Participants across government, consulting, small businesses, and early-career professionals walked away with skills they could immediately implement. The workshop closed the gap between AI awareness and execution; participants left with skills they could apply immediately within their roles. No technical background was required.

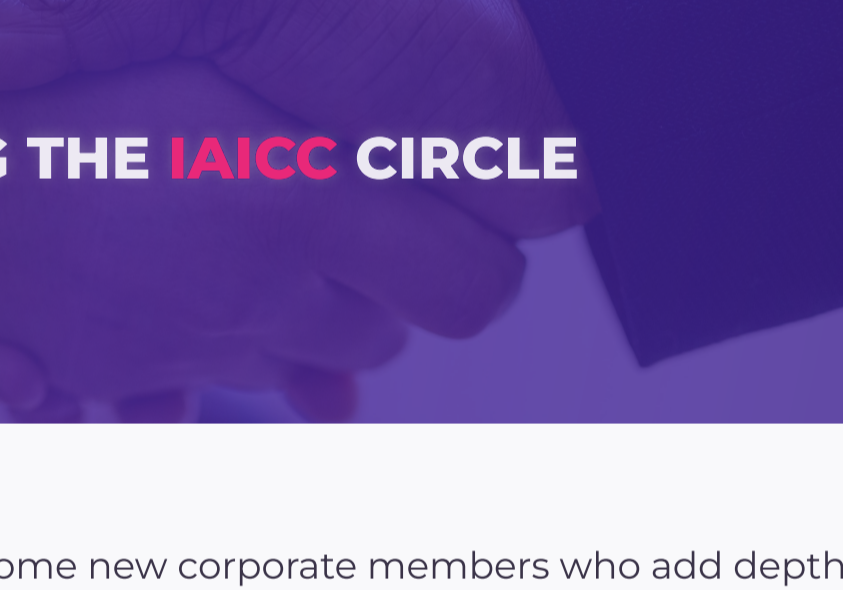
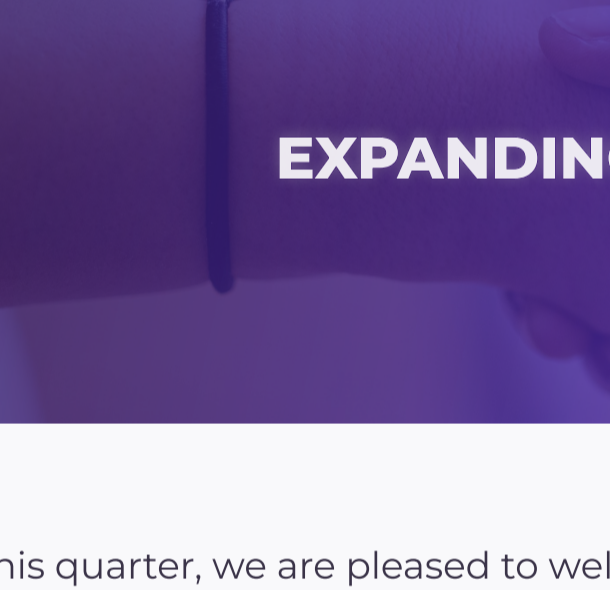
Following the strong response, IAICC is expanding this initiative through AI Fundamentals certification pathways, applied workforce training programs, and industry-focused learning cohorts.

Read the full event recap on the IAICC website → [Link](#)

In **February**, the conversation shifted toward growth and transition with the **M&ASession: Buying or Selling a GovCon or Technology Company in 2026**. Featuring **Sharon Heaton, Founder and CEO of sbLiftOFF**, the session provided deep insights into what drives successful transactions in today's market. It highlighted that the GovCon M&A market remains strong, particularly in defense, cybersecurity, and mission-critical areas, with private equity firms continuing to actively pursue high-quality GovCon businesses.

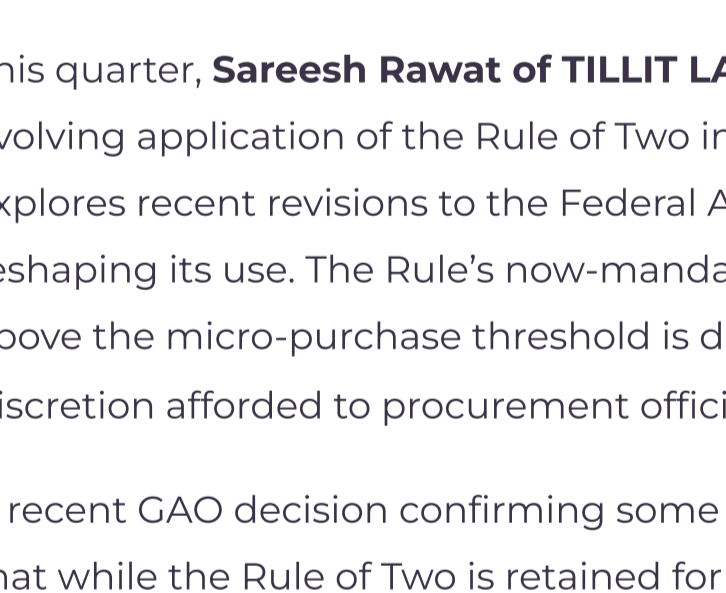
The session also emphasized what buyers are truly looking for, strong financial performance, long-term contract backlog, diversified customers, and mission-critical capabilities. Additionally, it was noted that most deals typically combine cash at closing, equity participation, and performance-based components. A key takeaway was that thorough preparation, including clean financials and strong leadership teams, directly impacts both valuation and the overall smoothness of the deal.

Read the full event recap on the IAICC website → [Link](#)



In **March**, **IAICC Connect** brought a different kind of energy. Hosted at Bombay Tandoor, the evening focused on conversations over presentations. Founders, executives, and professionals came together in a setting that encouraged genuine interaction.

What stood out was the intent behind the conversations. There was a clear willingness to collaborate, support, and build together. Several discussions from that evening are already evolving into partnerships and future initiatives, reflecting the strength of the IAICC community.



WHAT'S COMING NEXT & WHY IT MATTERS

As we move forward, IAICC continues to focus on conversations that shape long-term thinking rather than short-term decisions.

On **April 30, 2026**, we will be hosting an exclusive executive evening, **"Thinking About the Exit Before You Need One"** centered around the importance of early and intentional exit planning. While many founders tend to approach this topic later in their journey, this session is designed to challenge that thinking.

We are bringing together experienced leaders including **Atchut Kanthamani, President at Tria Federal**, **Srinivas Kankanahalli, Senior Advisor and Architect at Xcelerate Solutions**, **Prasanna Narasimhan, Sales Performance Manager, Business Banking, Mid-Atlantic Region, Bank of America**, **Jayanth Challa, President, American Telugu Association (ATA)**, and **Mahesh Menon, Founder at Two95 International**.

The conversation will explore how early planning impacts valuation, how founders can think about timing and readiness, and how to build both business and personal outcomes with clarity and intention.

Stay tuned for post-event highlights and leadership insights.

EXPANDING THE IAICC CIRCLE

This quarter, we are pleased to welcome new corporate members who add depth and expertise to the IAICC community.

Merrill Lynch

Merrill Lynch, a Bank of America company, joins us as a global leader in wealth management and financial advisory. Their experience in helping individuals and businesses navigate complex financial decisions brings immense value to our ecosystem. Their engagement with IAICC, including support for upcoming initiatives, reflects a shared commitment toward empowering founders and business leaders.

Learn more: <https://www.ml.com/>

New York Life Insurance

New York Life Insurance, we also welcome New York Life Insurance, one of the most respected financial institutions known for its long-standing focus on trust, protection, and long-term financial planning. Their presence strengthens our ability to support members in building financial security and resilience.

Learn more: <https://www.newyorklife.com/>

INSIGHTS FROM OUR COMMUNITY

This quarter, **Sareesh Rawat of TILLIT LAW PLLC** offers a timely perspective on the evolving application of the Rule of Two in federal procurement. In this article, he explores recent revisions to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) that are reshaping its use. The Rule's now-mandatory application to standalone contracts above the micro-purchase threshold is discussed, along with the complete discretion afforded to procurement officials in its application at the order level.

A recent GAO decision confirming some of these changes is examined, explaining that while the Rule of Two is retained for standalone and master contracts, it is not mandatory at the order level for multiple-award contracts or the Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) program. Sareesh also highlights other important revisions to FAR Part 19, including the shift away from requiring socioeconomic considerations to precede small-business set-asides.

For contractors, the insight signals a clear takeaway: while the Rule of Two remains a cornerstone of small business procurement policy, its application today is at the discretion of contracting officers rather than mandatory for a sizeable portion of federal procurement.

Read the full article for detailed insights at + [link](#)

WHAT IAICC IS BUILDING NEXT

AI Workforce Readiness Program

As the pace of technological change accelerates, one gap is becoming increasingly clear, the gap between awareness of AI and the ability to apply it meaningfully in real-world environments. To address this, IAICC is launching the **AI Workforce Readiness Program**, a structured initiative designed to equip professionals and small businesses with practical, execution-focused AI capabilities.

This initiative builds on the momentum created by the **AI workshop conducted in January**, which marked the beginning of IAICC's focused efforts in enabling practical AI adoption. The strong response to that session made it clear that professionals and businesses are looking for structured pathways to develop applicable skills.

The program is designed to provide a comprehensive learning experience that combines guided instruction with hands-on application. Participants will have the opportunity to engage with real-world use cases, develop practical solutions, and build confidence in applying AI within their own professional contexts.

The focus remains on execution. By creating an environment where learning is directly connected to application, IAICC aims to equip its community with the capabilities required to navigate and lead in an AI-driven world.

IAICC 2025 CONVENTION | OFFICIAL E-BOOK

The **IAICC 2025 Annual Convention**, held in Washington, D.C., brought together leaders from business, government, and technology to strengthen the U.S.-India partnership.

For those who attended, it was a powerful exchange of ideas and collaboration. For those who could not be there, the experience has been captured in the official **convention e-book**.

Inside, you will find keynote insights, panel discussions, and highlights that reflect the scale and depth of the conversations that took place.

Access the e-book: ebook.iaicc.org

A THOUGHT TO CARRY FORWARD

"Plans are only good intentions unless they immediately degenerate into hard work."

Peter Drucker

Join IAICC

Be part of what comes next

IAICC continues to grow not just through events or initiatives, but through the strength of its community.

Every conversation, every introduction, and every shared idea contributes to something larger. A network built on trust, collaboration, and a shared vision for growth.

We look forward to continuing this journey together.

Stay connected. Stay engaged.

CONNECT WITH IAICC

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