

# the **business**VIEW

USA Mitchell Cancer Institute

## Software Company Coming to Mobile – **100 Jobs**

Travel to Austria  
with the Chamber

Getting Access to Capital  
for Small Businesses





**ON THE COVER**

Michael Chambers, president and CEO of Swift Biotechnology, was named the Mobile Area Chamber's 2014 Chairman of the Board.

*Photo by Jeff Tesney*

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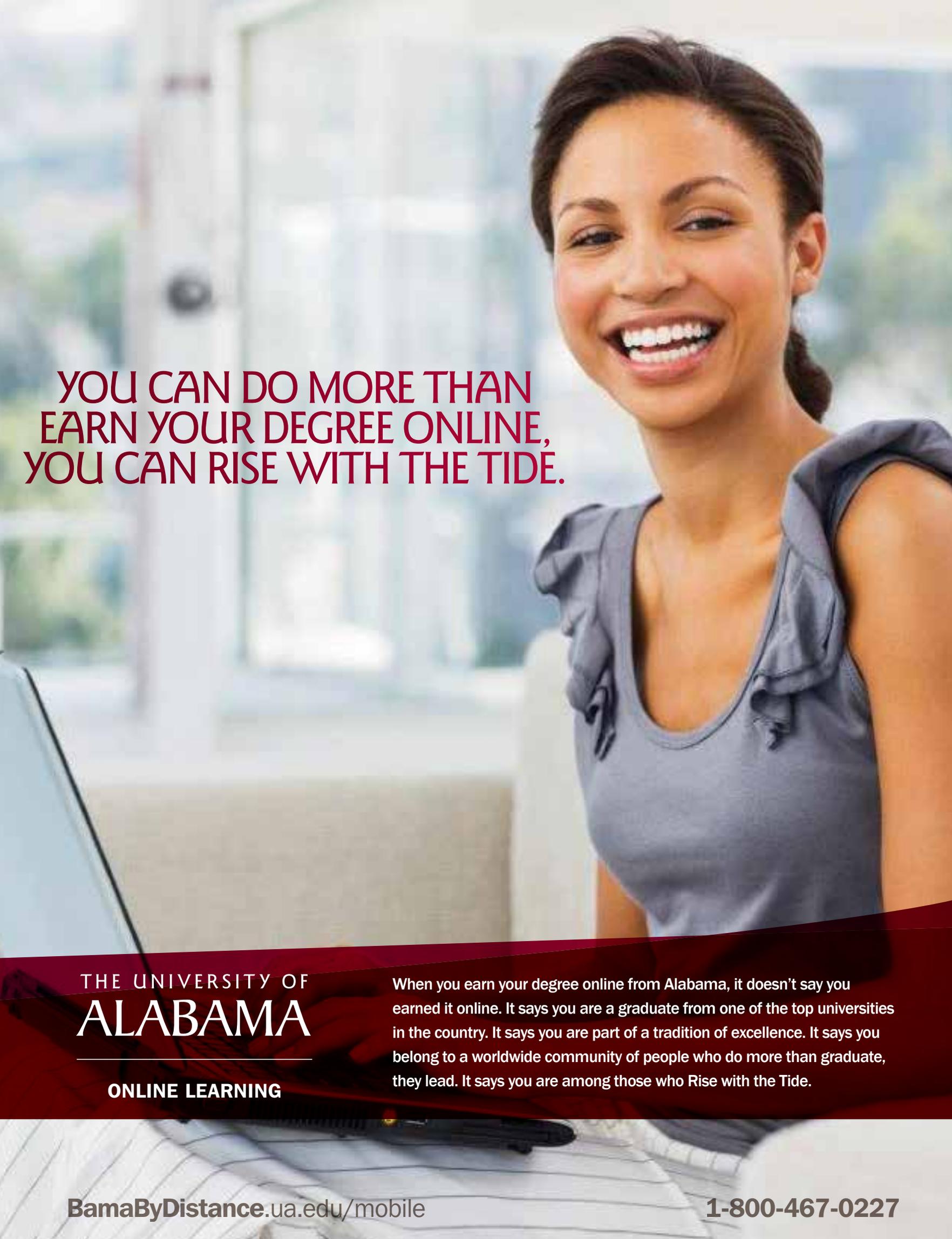
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# Software Development Company Announces 100 Tech Jobs for Mobile

**Rural Sourcing Inc., a leading domestic IT sourcing firm focused on cost-effective onshore software development and support, opened a software development center in Mobile, less than a month after an announcement was made by the company's Chief Executive Officer Monty Hamilton. Once fully operational, the center will employ more than 100 workers.**

The Atlanta-based firm ultimately chose Mobile because of its high quality of life and low cost of living. Other considerations included the highly-ranked educational institutions located here, according to Hamilton, whose company client list includes Coca-Cola, Sony and Pfizer.

"We are excited to be an early investor and catalyst for the tremendous growth in the digital

economy in Mobile," said Hamilton. "This office will give us the capacity to meet the continued growth and demand for software developers in the areas of mobile technologies, cloud-based technologies and ERP systems such as SAP."

Troy Wayman, vice president of economic development for the Mobile Area Chamber, noted this project continued efforts to diversify Mobile's economic base. He added it's a Partners for Growth goal to recruit IT companies here. This project was a partnership between the city, county, state and Chamber.

"It is that diversity that makes our economy resilient and vibrant, even during times of economic decline," said Mobile County Commission President Merceria Ludgood.

The permanent location of the center is still being determined, but the company is in a temporary office owned by the Chamber Foundation at 456 Civic Center Dr.

RSI's mission is to be the domestic alternative for software development and support that might traditionally be outsourced to countries such as India and China. By having software centers in the U.S., RSI's clients benefit from common language, culture alignment and time zone compatibility.

"We recruited (RSI) aggressively because they represent the kind of business we want to cultivate – young, smart, innovative and poised for future growth. We are particularly pleased to see them locate downtown," noted Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson. 

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Headquartered in Atlanta, Rural Sourcing Inc., announced in late January it would open an office in downtown Mobile, ultimately employing more than 100 software developers. The company's temporary office is located at 456 Civic Center Dr. Pictured above for the company announcement were (from left to right): Troy Wayman, Mobile Area Chamber; Congressman Bradley Byrne; Connie Hudson, Mobile County Commission; Nicole Locklear, RSI; Margaux Kaynard, RSI; Monty Hamilton, RSI; Mayor Sandy Stimpson, city of Mobile; Ingrid Miller, RSI; and Bill Sisson, Mobile Area Chamber.

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# Access to Capital

**This year the Mobile Area Chamber will begin a quarterly “Capital Access for Entrepreneurs”** seminar series. Working with local angel investment groups, lenders and business assistance providers, these educational meetings will target early-stage or start-up companies with financing needs.

Experts on venture funding will discuss topics critical to successfully securing financing, followed by 10-minute presentations to the lenders and investors by two pre-selected companies.

Working with the Gulf Coast Angel Network group, the Chamber will also launch and facilitate a small business mentoring program. The program will provide an opportunity for owners of small- and medium-sized businesses to meet with other business owners or professionals who have pertinent experience or expertise to share.

To learn more, contact **Danette Richards**, director of small business development, at 251-431-8652 or [drichards@mobilechamber.com](mailto:drichards@mobilechamber.com).

## C Spire Acquires Callis Communications

*No changes expected in the Callis brand and service to the regional market*

**In an effort to continue diversifying the company, C Spire announced plans**

to acquire Callis Communications, a Mobile-based provider of cloud-based services. Local businesses using Callis should expect no interruption in scope and quality of services as a result of the merger, say company officials.

Callis serves customers in key business markets across the Southeast and, for the sixth consecutive year, was recognized as one of the fastest-growing telecommunications and cloud communications companies on the *Inc.* 5000 list. In 2011, the company was named the Mobile Area Chamber's Small Business of the Year.

“For over 25 years, C Spire has built a large and highly loyal customer base with an unmatched focus on providing exceptional service and taking the business needs of its customers personally,” said **Dean Parker**, president and CEO of Callis. “That core value is what has defined Callis, and it’s why this is a great combination.”

**Hu Meena**, president and CEO of C Spire, said about the acquisition, “In addition to the cloud-based solutions available today, we plan to provide a greatly expanded and comprehensive suite of world-class cloud-based computing and enterprise application solutions from our new state-of-the-art tandem of data centers.”



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# Lagniappe Plans to Publish Weekly

## Cites need for more local news

**Rob Holbert and Ashley Toland-Trice, co-publishers of Lagniappe, never intended for their 25,000-circulation newspaper** to remain a bi-weekly. So, 11½ years after the launch of Mobile’s “alternative newspaper,” *Lagniappe* becomes a weekly on April 3.

“It’s a goal we’ve always been working toward,” said Holbert of the decision to increase *Lagniappe*’s frequency.

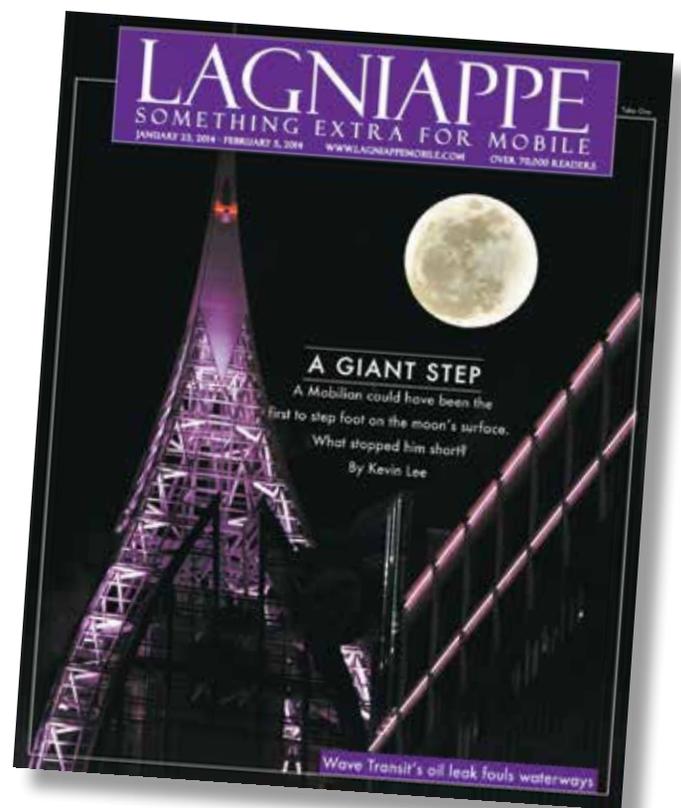
He says there are several reasons to produce more issues, but most important is that Mobile needs more news coverage. The daily newspaper kept Mobilians informed, but with the switch to publishing only three times a week, Holbert believes more print news was needed.

“Our community needs more news coverage,” said Holbert.

Holbert says based on research commissioned by *Lagniappe* and other weeklies across the country, “the death of print stops at some point.” He explains that digital media does not deliver a good product, either for readers or for advertisers. “There has to be a balance,” he said.

With two full-time reporters, in addition, freelancers and a four-person full-time advertising sales team, Holbert expects to increase staff as needed once the new print schedule begins.

While many components of the newspaper will be the same each week, Holbert explained



that some of *Lagniappe*’s current content might be split in some issues, along with new content added over time.

And through its online coverage at [www.lagniappemobile.com](http://www.lagniappemobile.com) and on Twitter (@LagniappeMobile), readers can stay up to date on breaking news coverage between publishing dates.



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<sup>1</sup> The grades used in the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Score<sup>SM</sup> program are derived from expert analysis of publicly available data using national evidence-based measures of patient safety. The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Score program grades hospitals on their overall performance in keeping patients safe from preventable harm and medical errors. For more information, visit [www.hospitalsafetyscore.org](http://www.hospitalsafetyscore.org).

<sup>2</sup> "You're probably wrong, but just guess where the safest hospital in Alabama is located," *al.com*, July 31, 2013

<sup>3</sup> "Consumer Reports rates 41 Alabama hospitals on surgery outcomes. How does yours stack up?" *al.com*, August 30, 2013

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Walker is a specialist in internal medicine and not a participating oncologist in MD Anderson Cancer Network.

James L. Walker, M.D., FACP<sup>4</sup>  
Internal Medicine  
Vice President, Quality, Providence Health System  
Practicing at Providence since 1979





Driven Engineering was founded in 2006 by Avalisha Fisher (pictured far right). The engineering firm provides a wide-range of services for clients across the U.S.

# Driven Engineering Group

Avalisha Fisher founded **Driven Engineering Inc.**, out of her home in 2006 to create a workplace unlike the ones in which she'd worked.

"I wanted a family-friendly atmosphere without strong language, inappropriate behavior, unethical practices, etc.," said Fisher, who has 21 years of general civil engineering experience. "I wanted to create a place where people would be treated fairly and as a result of being in a better work environment, we would treat our clients the way they should be treated. I also wanted to be allowed to fully address the details of a project and ensure that the designs produced are the best they can be and complete our work with an attitude of working 'as unto the Lord.'"

The business has grown to a staff of 12 that provides a variety of engineering and government

contracting services to federal agencies, counties, cities and private clients. The team has extensive design and construction management experience from roads to subdivision development, to stormwater permitting to sewer and drainage systems.

"Driven Engineering has a lot of experience in niche areas that have made it possible to expand our customer base nationally," Fisher said. "One of these areas is in railroad engineering. We are also experts in flood studies and FEMA flood map revisions."

It also doesn't hurt that 80 percent of their business is repeat business, a sign of satisfied clients.

"The business has grown to what it is today due to having set things up with the idea of staying 'scalable,'" Fisher said. "Being scalable has

required a lot of hard work along with having the right people. We have been strategically placed in just the right place at just the right time and have been taught some very important lessons early on that have made us better able to handle larger problems and situations."

Fisher said two important goals of the business are to provide a fun workplace – "if it isn't, why do it?" she asked – and to encourage involvement in the community and in professional organizations. Fisher is on the South Alabama Civil Engineering Department Advisory board, Partners for Environmental Progress board of directors and the board of governance for the Semmes Volunteer Fire Department. Senior staff and employees are also involved in activities like the AT&T Vital Link and career fairs for middle and

elementary schools.

"It goes with why I started the business," Fisher said. "I started the business on the principle and practice of unselfish concern and devotion to the welfare of our staff and our clients. Volunteering is the perfect way each of us can expand this goodwill to others, into our community and beyond. The simple act of offering your skills and enthusiasm will positively impact the lives of others, as well as your own."

Go to [mobilechamber.com/award.asp](http://mobilechamber.com/award.asp) to submit a Small Business of the Month application, or contact Danette Richards at 251-431-8652 or [d Richards@mobilechamber.com](mailto:d Richards@mobilechamber.com).

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Photo by Jeff Tesney Photography



Michael Chambers, president and CEO of Swift Biotechnology is the 2014 Mobile Area Chamber Chairman of the Board. Pictured here is a team from the University of South Alabama's Mitchell Cancer Institute who, with Swift Biotechnology, are working to develop screens and diagnostics for ovarian cancer. They are (seated, left to right): Meghan Tanner, Dr. Rod Rocconi, Dr. Laurie Owen and Chambers; and standing, Dr. Lewis Pannell and Dr. Michael F. Finan.

# Michael Chambers Named Chairman of the Board

It only takes a few minutes looking at **Michael Chambers'** resume to realize even though he is president and CEO of Swift Biotechnology, his job title gives but a mere glimpse into the scope of work he's involved with on a daily basis.

Chambers is the 2014 chairman of the Mobile Area Chamber's board of directors. It's his interest in developing small businesses and his entrepreneurial background that makes him well-qualified to oversee the Chamber, as more than 86 percent of its members are small businesses.

Chambers recently told annual meeting attendees that over the course of the coming year, several programs supporting small business would be launched to help businesses adapt to a changing global market.

These programs are: a small business week recognition program, an entrepreneurial education seminar series and a mentoring program.

"Change is innovation, and innovation creates progress," he said. "We want Mobile to embrace and

benefit from innovation. We want to facilitate innovation. We want to support entrepreneurs, inventors, big and small companies, and novel technologies that can create a new wave of success in Mobile."

And with a background like Chambers', he understands the value of change. His company, Swift Biotechnology, is developing screens and diagnostics for ovarian cancer. Housed at the University of South Alabama's Mitchell Cancer Institute, it received a grant from the National Institute of Health and an international award for Best Global Research.

Previously he helped found a company specializing in drugs and drug delivery systems for eye disease. He later negotiated that company's sale and merger. In addition to Swift Biotechnology, he is "of counsel" for the law firm of Cabaniss Johnston Gardner Dumas & O'Neal. He has also worked to help commercialize other technologies, serves on the corporate boards of two other medical device companies and is chairman of the Gulf Coast Angel Network.



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The Mobile Area Chamber bestowed its Delchamps Award to Arlene Mitchell and Abe Mitchell for their generous support of numerous organizations. The award honors the legacy of Alfred F. Delchamps.

## Arlene Mitchell and Abe Mitchell Receive the Chamber's Highest Honor for Leadership

The late Mobile businessman **Mayer Mitchell** had a favorite proverb: "When you give when you are dead, it is lead; when you give when you are living, it is gold."

For Mitchell, along with his wife, Arlene, and brother, Abe, the proverb has reflected a way of life. Long associated with business success, the Mitchell name is also stamped indelibly in the annals of philanthropy. The family has been especially generous toward the University of South Alabama (USA).

And because of that, **Arlene Mitchell** and **Abe Mitchell** were presented the Delchamps Award during the Mobile Area Chamber's annual meeting. The award is given only when someone is nominated and recipients are deemed true champions of Mobile. It honors the philanthropic legacy of Alfred F. Delchamps.

Although not alumni, the Mitchells adopted USA as their own, giving freely of their time, their counsel and their treasure, including a \$22 million gift to support USA's Mitchell Cancer Institute and Campaign USA.

Abe Mitchell's \$50 million gift in 2013, the largest gift ever given to a public university in the state of Alabama, combined with the \$43 million given previously by the Mitchell family, brings the family's total giving to USA to \$93 million.

Mayer Mitchell served more than 32 years on the USA board of trustees, with his wife Arlene succeeding him in 2007, while his brother Abe has provided steady and invaluable counsel on academic programs, especially in business and medicine.

Arlene Mitchell gave \$1.7 million for a daVinci Si robotic surgery system for USA Children's and Women's Hospital, where she also volunteers. She also made one of the largest contributions in the history of Jaguar athletics by creating the Mayer Mitchell Quarterback Endowment.

In addition to USA, the Mitchell family has given to other schools in the area including Spring Hill College, the University of Mobile and Bishop State Community College. They have given to a plethora of arts-related endeavors, including the Gulf Coast Exploreum, Mobile Ballet, Mobile Symphony, the Centre for the Living Arts, Mobile Public Library and the Mobile Opera.

The family's involvement in social service programs such as the Child Advocacy Center, Penelope House, Dumas Wesley Community Center and Boys and Girls Clubs of South Alabama are just a few of the dozens of organizations whose work has been impacted by the Mitchells' generosity.

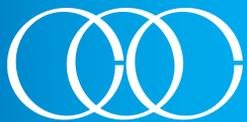


2013



*Safe Archives President Bestor Ward (fourth from left) is pictured with company employees. The company was named the Chamber's Small Business of the Year.*

# Safe Archives LLC



**Small Business  
of the Year  
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When you're in the business of storing someone's most significant documents, they trust your location is secure and easily accessible, and your staff is friendly. It helps if you can also provide an economical option.

That's just what president **Bestor Ward** had in mind when he launched Safe Archives 11 years ago. The company is the Mobile Area Chamber's Small Business of the Year.

In addition to traditional storage of paper files, the company offers a concrete vault, the only firelock vault in a 250-mile radius for more valuable items like backup tapes and hard drives, scanning and imaging services, and online inventory.

The Safe Archives staff of eight is dedicated to customer service and encouraged to share their own ideas on ways to reach company goals. It must be working because in the last two years the company's revenue has increased by double digits.

# 2013



*The city of Mobile's advancements and support to minority business endeavors, including the MBDA Business Center, coordinated by the Mobile Area Chamber, earned the government entity the Chamber's Minority Business Advocate Award. Receiving the award were Johnny Robinson, far left, and Alexander Ikefuna, far right. Pictured in the center is Michael Baisden, the Eagle Awards keynote speaker.*

# City of Mobile

The city of Mobile has an established goal to expand and improve contract opportunities for minority- and women-owned businesses. This goal, backed by results, earned the government entity the Mobile Area Chamber's Minority Business Advocate award in October.

As an example, the city's homeowner rehabilitation program and community and planning department granted more than \$413,500 in home improvement contracts in 2012, with 47 percent being awarded to minority contractors.

The city's purchasing department also joined forces with the Chamber's MBDA Business Center - Mobile, implementing a process where requests for quotes are submitted to the center to be distributed to local minority business enterprises.

Currently, the city is working with a private consultant to complete a disparity study of procurement practices. Results will offer city leaders recommendations on how to further enhance its supplier diversity.

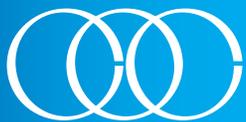


# 2013



*BAE Systems was named the Mobile Area Chamber's Manufacturer of the Year based on the company's recent growth and contracts securing work for the next several years. Pictured with a group of BAE employees are company executives: (front row, left to right) Victor Rhoades, Richard McCreary and Gene Caldwell.*

# BAE Systems Southeast Shipyards Alabama



**Manufacturer  
of the Year  
Award**

BAE Systems Southeast Shipyards Alabama has doubled its workforce since taking over the Mobile River shipyard three years ago; and announced plans to hire another 150 employees by mid-2014. There are approximately 1,000 employees locally, 37,000 nationally and 88,000 globally with BAE Systems.

The London-based entity has operations in Australia, India, Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom and the United States, and its Mobile operation is the Mobile Area Chamber's Manufacturer of the Year.

Despite recent economic challenges – including the Deepwater Horizon oil spill – a mix of repair work and new construction by the energy sector is driving the majority of the work in Mobile. The company also serves clients in the construction, cargo, cruise, chemical and transportation carrier industries.

As proof of its stability and future vitality, BAE holds contracts for six vessels, creating a backlog of work for the next three to four years – as long as the market will allow. In addition, last year the local facility completed the largest vessel ever built and launched in Alabama, measuring 616-feet-long and weighing 12,000 tons – the chemical tanker American Phoenix.

# 2013



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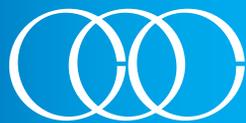
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*Based on the efforts of company employees, Airbus Americas Engineering won the Corporate Community Service Award. The award is presented by The Junior League of Mobile and the Mobile Area Chamber.*

# Airbus Americas Engineering



**Corporate  
Community  
Service Award**

Airbus Americas Engineering employees dedicated their time and effort to 116 community agencies and service projects.

From education to emergency assistance to health-related causes to veterans, nearly two-thirds of the company's 230 employees are actively involved in volunteer efforts.

Airbus Americas Engineering is the winner of the 2013 Corporate Community Service Award, given to companies based on the community efforts of their employees.

Throughout the past year, Airbus employees gave up their holidays to help assess damage from the Christmas Day 2012 tornado that tore through midtown Mobile with the American Red Cross; filled backpacks with food for hungry children and donated 2,000-pounds of food to the Bay Area Food Bank; helped teenagers compete in the BEST Robotics competition; stocked a library with books and adopted reading buddies at Gilliard Elementary; and much more.

This award is presented by The Junior League of Mobile and the Mobile Area Chamber.

# 2013

# Millie Sue Hawk

Millie Sue Hawk has made a career of welcoming newcomers. As the former owner of Welcome Friends, a business she recently sold, she has introduced people moving to the area to various businesses and services.

Hawk was named the Mobile Area Chamber's Ambassador of the Year, which she also earned for her involvement in 2009.

And although she is no longer an entrepreneur, she continues to be involved with the Chamber. In her ambassador role, she has welcomed new Chamber members, introducing them to the organization's many benefits and networking opportunities. Hawk is also an active participant in Chamber Chase, the Chamber's annual resource development campaign.



*The Mobile Area Chamber recognizes volunteers for their involvement in various events and visiting new members. The 2013 Ambassador of the Year was Millie Sue Hawk, former owner of Welcome Friends.*

2013

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# Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce 177<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting Sponsors

The Chamber's annual meeting was attended by more than 1,000 business professionals who were urged to "see Mobile differently."

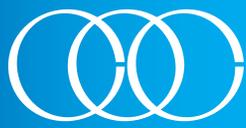
Following an update on the community by Chamber President and CEO **Bill Sisson** and wrap-up of 2013 by former Chairman **Mike Saxon** with Alabama Power, along with a video highlighting the year's accomplishments, 2014 Chamber Chairman **Michael Chambers** with Swift

Biotechnology LLC was introduced.

Afterwards, guests enjoyed the area's largest networking reception featuring 15 local restaurants and caterers and corporate sponsor booths.

The event was held Tuesday, Feb. 4, at the Mobile Civic Center and featured commitments and participation by the following sponsors, restaurants, caterers and volunteers.

**Thank you to the following companies for supporting this year's annual meeting:**



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# Chamber Offers Trip to Innsbruck in September

In September, a group will travel with the Mobile Area Chamber to stunning Innsbruck – the capital of the Tyrol, in the Alpine region of Austria – for a week of sightseeing in Austria, Italy and Germany.

The cost of the trip, set for Sept. 19-27, is \$2,999 based on double occupancy, with a \$500 deposit due at the time of registration. Final payment will be due June 19. The trip is expected to sell out quickly, as space is extremely limited.

Innsbruck, founded in 1562, is a superb destination best known for its rich cultural heritage, only a stone's throw away from Italy and Germany. The host destination of the Olympic Winter Games twice, in 1964 and 1976, Innsbruck has more than 160 restaurants, cafes and bars, most of them in walking distance of the old town.

A highlight of the trip will be traveling to Munich, Germany, during its world-famous Oktoberfest.

For questions, or to receive a full brochure and registration form, contact Leigh Perry Herndon at 251-431-8645 or lherndon@mobilechamber.com.

The trip itinerary is as follows:

**Day 1** Depart Mobile on an overnight flight to Munich, Germany

**Day 2** Arrive Munich/Innsbruck

Travel by motorcoach on a scenic drive to Innsbruck, with its historical buildings, breathtaking scenery and snow-capped mountains.

**Day 3** Innsbruck/City Tour

The group will tour Innsbruck, with visits to the old town to see the world-famous Golden Roof, then to the Innsbruck Imperial Palace “Hofburg,” with entrance into the Imperial Chapel “Hofkirche.” Visit the Olympic stadium and ski jump and the beautiful gardens of the Ambras Castle.

**Day 4** Innsbruck/Optional Salzburg Tour

Spend the day at leisure or take an optional tour to Salzburg. The city of Salzburg was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site, framed by the majestic backdrop of the snowcapped Alps and famed for its old-world glamour. Explore Salzburg's Baroque old town with its beautiful churches and cathedrals. Experience the city's charming streets with unique wrought iron signs and large squares

with fountains and buildings inspired by royalty. Other famous sites include the majestic Cathedral of Salzburg, Mozart's birthplace, as well as the many sites where “The Sound of Music” was filmed.

**Day 5** Innsbruck/Bavaria, Munich and Oktoberfest

Leave Austria for Munich, the capitol of Bavaria. Munich, at the foot of the Bavarian mountains, is the beer capital of the world and home to the legendary Oktoberfest, an important part of Bavarian culture held since 1810. Spend the day at Oktoberfest Munich, where the group can “drink in” the incredible atmosphere.

**Day 6** Innsbruck/Optional Merano Tour

Join the group for an optional tour to Merano, Italy. The scenic drive will include impressive panoramic views of the Austrian, Italian and Swiss Alps before heading to Resia Lake for a photo opportunity. Take a walking tour ending at a local wine cellar for a tasting in Merano. On the way back to Innsbruck, will visit the Alpine town of Bolzano and the Archaeological Museum containing the famous iceman, Ötzi, a well-preserved natural mummy of a man who lived about 3,300 B.C.

**Day 7** Innsbruck/Neuschwanstein Castle

The group will enter the fairytale kingdom of 19th Century Bavaria on a tour of Neuschwanstein castle, once inhabited by King Ludwig II. The castle appears through the mist like something out of a dream, and travelers will learn about the tragic reign of the legendary “mad” Ludwig, including the obsession that drove him to build his secluded dream castle in the Alps.

**Day 8** Innsbruck/Optional Mittenwald and Garmisch Partenkirchen Tour

Join the optional tour into the Mittenwald and Garmisch Partenkirchen, two unforgettable favorites of the area. Mittenwald is not only one of the most important violin-making centers in the world, it's also famous for its many colorful wall paintings (“Lüftmalereien”). In 1786, the German writer Goethe called the town a living picture book, which is how it remains. Next it's off to the resort town of Garmisch Partenkirchen, two towns that were forcibly joined together in 1935, under Hitler's instructions, to host the 1936 Winter Olympics.

**Day 9** Leave Innsbruck for Mobile



**Price: \$2,999 per person based on double occupancy \*Additional \$499 for single room**

- Includes:**
- ❖ Round trip air transportation from Mobile
  - ❖ First-class hotel accommodations for seven nights
  - ❖ Eleven meals consisting of seven buffet breakfasts and four dinners
  - ❖ Sightseeing, including local guide and all entrance fees as follows:
    - Full-day tours to Munich for Oktoberfest, Neuschwanstein Castle and Innsbruck.
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# Listen – Don't Be "That Guy"

by Johnny Gwin, Hummingbird Ideas



Gwin

*Editor's Note: Gwin will be one of the featured speakers when the Public Relations Council of Alabama hosts its state conference in Mobile March 30 - April 1. Find more on Gwin's presentation and other regional and national speakers, as well as register to attend the conference at [www.prcaonline.com/conference](http://www.prcaonline.com/conference).*

I am a bad date. BAD. Sure I can spin a yarn over some dinner or drinks. I have been called a lil' charmer. One time, an exceptional "conversationalist." But to be honest – I dictate a conversation. When I'm not jabbering on and on,

I fool you by keeping eye contact, tilting my head and maintaining the right body language so it looks like I am truly listening. But I'm so faking it. Now, I'm not a bad guy. More like a lazy guy who is thinking more about what he is saying next than focusing on the important insights (I should be using) that my companion is happily sharing with me. Shame on me.

Ok T.M.I.– what does this dating deficiency confession have to do with anything? Well, if you're doing the same thing, not listening, with your social media you're a "bad date" too. You, like me, are talking non-stop. Never paying attention to anyone else and lacking self awareness, so much, you don't even know you're "that guy."

Social media, like a dinner date, is a great way to develop kinship with someone, and listening – also known as social media monitoring – is as important as what you are saying. Listening is how you learn about someone, increase mutual understanding, uncover what they like to talk about and find important. It shows them real respect and helps create a real connection. It increases the chance of a possible second date.

## Learn Not to be "That Guy:"

1. **Tune in.** Listen, not just talk, to customers and find the most popular thought leaders.
2. **Listen like an "open-minded" researcher,** not a brand guardian.
3. **Listen, judge what they are saying and then respond.**
4. **Remove distractions.** Never be in listening mode while creating and scheduling daily content.
5. **Join conversations your audience is already talking about** – Oscars, Super Bowl, popular TV shows, etc.
6. **Ask open ended questions,** especially if something lacks clarity.
7. **Practice the "turn taking" signals** in the flow of a conversation.
8. **Listen to silence.** If no one is talking, this also says something.
9. **Respect your audience** by never "fake" listening ever again.

Today's consumers on social media are telling each other what they want and what brands really are. We had better start listening. While I have been constantly jabbering on Facebook, what real insights am I missing out on to improve my company? Am I ignoring advocates? Are people "breaking up" with me?

I have a long way to go to be that perfect dinner date (and content marketer) who is smart, interesting, cool, irresistible – as well as a "great listener" that makes all of your friends green with envy. You know, "Mr. Right." I'm not there yet, but unlike my last 10 or so first dates, "That Guy" started listening a little more and was lucky enough to hear, "Yes, I'll marry you" last Christmas.

Tell me about your listening tips and stories on Twitter (@thejohnnygwin) and as one of my favorite TV characters Fraiser Crane used to say: "I'm Listening."

# Julie Bordes

## Named Director of Local Affairs for Chamber

For the last decade, Julie Bordes has worked with community and regional leaders on public relations, marketing and air service development projects, first as marketing manager for the Mobile Airport Authority and later as an independent consultant based in Houston.



Bordes

Affairs Ginny Russell. “Her work in public policy makes her a perfect fit for our organization, and we’re proud to have her on the team.”

“Mobile is home. Its exciting evolution is not only good for me and my children but the community as a whole,”

said Bordes. “I look forward to working with Chamber members and elected officials.”

A native of Elberta, Bordes earned a bachelor’s degree in international business and a master’s degree in business administration from Spring Hill College, where she ran cross-country. She’s active in a number of local public relations, aviation and community-focused organizations.

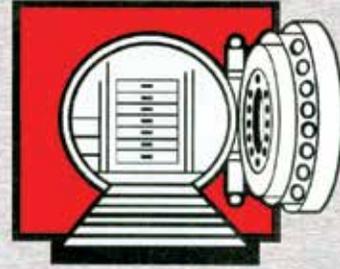
To reach Bordes, call 251-431-8628 or email [julieb@mobilechamber.com](mailto:julieb@mobilechamber.com).

In January, Bordes was named the Mobile Area Chamber’s director of local affairs. In her new role, she will focus her efforts on the local business community acting as a liaison with local elected officials to facilitate further partnership and communication.

“Julie’s optimism and knowledge of Mobile and its many opportunities make her a true asset to us,” said Chamber Vice President of Community and Governmental

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*With convenient locations in Mobile and Daphne and throughout the coast, Coastal Bank and Trust executives are (from left to right) Lincoln Lee Hammons, market president; James H. Mathis, CEO; and Michael Holland, COO.*



# Coastal Bank and Trust

**Company officials:** L. Lee Hammons, market president; James H. Mathis, chief executive officer; and Michael Holland, chief operating officer

**Years in business:** Since 2007

**Brief company description:**

Coastal Bank and Trust is a local division of Synovus Bank offering a full range of financial products and services. As one of the Southeast's largest community banks, Synovus operates under 29 trade names to reflect its ties to the communities it serves. Synovus Banks are located in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and Tennessee. Locally, Coastal Bank and Trust has three locations – two in Mobile and one in Daphne.

**Why are you located in Mobile?**

"Though Alabama was part of the Synovus Bank footprint, Mobile was one of the largest cities in the five states where it (Synovus) operates that we did not have a presence," said Hammons. "Synovus chose to expand to Mobile in 2007 so the company could be a part of the positive growth potential here."

**Why do you support the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's Partners for Growth initiative?**

"For the future economic growth of the Mobile area, we all look to the Chamber to lead the charge and play an instrumental role in moving our area forward towards success for all businesses," said Hammons.

"We believe that giving back to the communities we serve is vital to the community's success and to our own success."

**What do you see as Mobile's greatest potential?**

"With our rich abundance of resources, Mobile is well positioned to be a leader in the current economic environment, as well as in the future," said Hammons. "With

our port, access to interstate systems, rail systems and shipping, Mobile is uniquely positioned to partner with both national and global companies who are looking to invest/grow in the Southeastern United States. Taking advantage of these resources is the key for our city to reach its greatest potential."

**Length of continuous Chamber membership:** Since 2006



Partners for Growth (PFG) is the Mobile Area Chamber's long-term economic and community development program. For more information, contact **Katrina Dewrell**, the Chamber's investor relations coordinator, at **251-431-8611** or [kdewrell@mobilechamber.com](mailto:kdewrell@mobilechamber.com).

# Cell Phone Etiquette

Cell phones seem to make everyone ruder – but it doesn't have to be that way.

We've all been there: You're sitting in a waiting room, restaurant or other public place and someone's on their cell phone. You hear a loud conversation you really don't want to hear, or the clicking of someone typing a text that seems to be the first chapter of a novel.

Whatever your pet peeve about cell phone usage, you've been on one side or the other.

"You mean like... annoying Twitter feed lunch guy or obnoxious text and alert notification person? Guilty as charged," said one brave Mobile Area Chamber Facebook page fan.

So what bugs you? "When there is an interaction between a sales/service person and the client is talking on the phone," said **Laura Searcy** with iBERIABANK. "If the employee were

talking on their phone while helping the client, customer service would be called with a complaint. Take a few minutes to hold your call and have a face-to-face encounter with someone. You may have an opportunity to meet a really interesting person you otherwise would have ignored while on the phone."

With the Federal Communications Commission contemplating lifting its

ban on in-flight cell phone use and with common courtesy in mind, Cellphones.org came up with a few simple suggestions to follow when in a public or business situation and someone has their cell phone out ready to turn their attention away from you.

Here are some common sense reminders on cell phone/texting/etiquette that all of us need to remember.

## 1. Lower your voice when taking calls in public.



## 2. Avoid personal topics when others can hear you.



## 3. Avoid taking calls when you're already engaged in a face-to-face conversation. If you do take a call, ask permission of the people with you.



## 4. Avoid texting during face-to-face conversations.



## 5. Put your phone's ringer on silent mode in theaters and restaurants.



## 6. Don't light up your phone's screen in a dark theater.



## 7. Hang up and drive. At any given time about 3% of people driving are simultaneously talking on their phones.



## 8. Acknowledge the delay. All phone calls involve latency, which means there's a delay between when you speak and when the other person hears it.



## 9. Don't use Google Voice call screening with family and close friends.



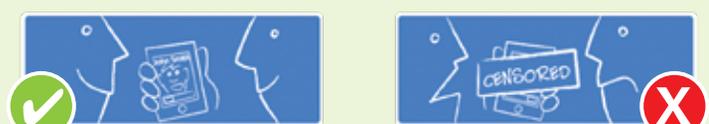
## 10. Don't blame the other person for a dropped call. If you make 100 calls per week, you can expect between 2-4 dropped calls each and every week. Saying "I think your phone must have dropped the call" sounds petty and actually makes people feel bad.



## 11. Avoid looking things up during a conversation.



## 12. Avoid inappropriate profile pictures. Facebook lets users synchronize Facebook contact information, including profile pictures, with their cell phone address book. Many higher-quality phones show your picture on the screen when you call.



Source: cellphones.org

## MARCH

For information on Chamber events, visit [events.mobilechamber.com](http://events.mobilechamber.com).

## 3-4 CHAMBER CLOSED FOR MARDI GRAS

## 7 CHAMBER CLASSIC GOLF TOURNAMENT

Make plans to bring your customers out for a day of fun and networking on the golf course.

**When & Where:** 7:30 a.m. registration/8:30 a.m. shotgun start – TimberCreek Golf Course, 9650 TimberCreek Blvd.

**Cost:** \$150 for singles or \$850 for teams of four

**Contact:** Kelly Navarro at 251-431-8638  
or [knavarro@mobilechamber.com](mailto:knavarro@mobilechamber.com)

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## 7 INTERNATIONAL TRADE SERIES: LOGISTICS AND DOCUMENTATION

This series is designed for new and established companies looking to advance their international business skills.

**When & Where:** 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. – Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.

**Speaker:** Local & statewide industry experts

**Topic:** Getting started with international shipping/making logistics work

**Cost:** \$35

**Contact:** Christina Simpson at 251-431-8648  
or [cstimpson@mobilechamber.com](mailto:cstimpson@mobilechamber.com)

## 12 NETWORKING@NOON \*Members Only

Make 40-plus business contacts in 90 minutes over lunch.

**When & Where:** Noon to 1:30 p.m. – Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center

**Cost:** \$10 and must be paid with reservation

**Contact:** Kelly Navarro at 251-431-8638  
or [knavarro@mobilechamber.com](mailto:knavarro@mobilechamber.com)

**Sponsor:** 

## 13 MEMBERSHIP 101 \*Members Only

Come meet other members and Chamber staff to learn about the many ways to benefit from your membership.

**When & Where:** 8 to 9 a.m. – Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.

**Contact:** Kelly Navarro at 251-431-8638  
or [knavarro@mobilechamber.com](mailto:knavarro@mobilechamber.com)

No charge, but seating is limited. RSVP requested.  
Free parking.

## 18 EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE \*Members Only

A monthly forum exclusively for Chamber member small business owners and managers.

**When & Where:** 8 to 9 a.m. – Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.

**Speaker:** Mayor Sandy Stimpson

**Topic:** An update on the city of Mobile

**Contact:** Brenda Rembert at 251-431-8607  
or [brembert@mobilechamber.com](mailto:brembert@mobilechamber.com)

No charge, but seating is limited. RSVP requested.  
Free parking.

**Sponsor:** 

## 20 BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

**When & Where:** 5:30 to 7 p.m. – Tacky Jack's on the Causeway

**Cost:** \$5 for members and \$10 for potential members

**Contact:** Kelly Navarro at 251-431-8638  
or [knavarro@mobilechamber.com](mailto:knavarro@mobilechamber.com)

Reservations are not needed.

**Sponsor:** 

## 26 NONPROFIT ROUNDTABLE \*Members Only

A bi-monthly forum for Chamber member nonprofit executives and managers.

**When & Where:** 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. – Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.

**Speaker:** Dr. Katherine Whiteley, president/CEO, Growing Potential

**Topic:** Keys to successful online philanthropy efforts

**Contact:** Kelly Navarro at 251-431-8638  
or [knavarro@mobilechamber.com](mailto:knavarro@mobilechamber.com)

No charge, but seating is limited. RSVP requested.  
Free parking.

## 26 GULF COAST COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE SUMMIT VII AND MARKET REVIEW

The USA Center for Real Estate & Economic Development will present this one-day seminar on Mobile and Baldwin counties' financial viability.

**When & Where:** 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. – Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center

**Cost:** \$150 per person

**Contact:** Cesny Soffronoff at 251-431-8636  
or [csoffronoff@mobilechamber.com](mailto:csoffronoff@mobilechamber.com)



Who's New



Neth

Bryan Neth joined ServisFirst Bank as senior vice president in commercial banking. Neth has 22 years of banking experience. He received a bachelor's degree in business from Spring Hill College and is a graduate of the Alabama Banking School.



O'Brien

Austal USA appointed Terry O'Brien vice president of business development and external affairs. A retired U.S. Navy captain

with 26 years of service, O'Brien held various positions in business development and customer affairs at Huntington Ingalls Industries. He will be based in Washington D.C. to provide direct support to Navy and government officials.



Beason



Benson



Ethredge



Hieronymus



Hollingsworth



Williams

Wilkins Miller Hieronymus LLC, an accounting and advisory firm, promoted Kyle Beason, Michael Benson, Blake Ethredge, Brooks Hieronymus, Christy Hollingsworth and Lisa Williams

to senior accountants. Beason graduated from the University of Montevallo with a bachelor's degree in business administration and a major in accounting. Benson graduated from The University of Alabama with a master's degree in tax accounting and a bachelor's degree in commerce and business administration with a major in accounting. Ethredge received a bachelor's degree in commerce and business administration with a major in corporate finance from The University of Alabama and recently earned CPA certification. Hieronymus graduated from The University of Alabama with a master's degree in tax accounting and a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Mississippi. Hollingsworth graduated from The University of Alabama with a master's degree in tax accounting and a bachelor's degree in commerce and business administration with a major in accounting. Williams earned a master's in business administration and a bachelor's degree in business and a major in accounting at Spring Hill College.

Leavell Investment Management named Andrew Grinstead president and chief executive officer. Grinstead succeeds the firm's founder, Tom Leavell. He graduated from Harvard University with a bachelor's degree in economics and earned a master's degree in business administration from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management in Evanston, Ill.



Lovvorn

Joni Lovvorn joined Mobile Lumber & Millwork in its Coast Design Kitchen & Bath division as the appliance showroom

manager. She brings 25 years of industry experience in the remodeling and new construction sectors and was professionally trained on GE and Bosch appliance product lines, as well as others.

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Winkler

**Page & Jones Inc.** hired Hamburg, Germany, native **Heino Winkler** as director of global project services. He most recently operated

his own company, Global Project Services, now a part of Page & Jones' menu of services.



**J.P. Gareri** joined the **Principal Financial Group** as a financial representative.



Gareri

### Business Endeavors

**Providence Hospital** rolled out a new program to help patients pay hospital bills through an interest-free loan program. The **ClearBalance®** program offers low monthly payments with terms of up to 48 months, no interest charges and no late fees. Call 858-200-9208 or visit [www.ClearBalance.org](http://www.ClearBalance.org) for more information.

**Computer Technology Solutions Inc. (CTS)** technology consulting company has acquired new office space at 6420 Wall St. in Mobile to accommodate the growing workforce of 30 employees and additional room for continued expansion.



**TAG/The Architects Group** was selected to design and build the new \$19.7 million Citronelle High School for the Mobile County Public School System. The project will include both renovation and new construction. HOAR Program Management is serving as program manager for the project.

### Well Done

**Maynard Cooper & Gale PC** law firm was named a 2014 BTI Client Service A-Team, which surveys corporate counsel at Fortune 1000 companies on client service. The survey honors "standout law firms" chosen by clients for representing "the epitome of superior client service." This is the sixth year Maynard Cooper has been included on the list.



T. Cooper



S. Cooper



Tate

Real estate agents **Tony Cooper, Sue Cooper and Becky Tate** of Prudential Cooper & Co. Inc., REALTORS, earned the Realtor Emeritus award from the National Association of Realtors for serving in their roles for 40 consecutive years.



The **University of Mobile (UM)** was named as one of America's Best Christian Colleges for the 17<sup>th</sup> consecutive year and one of America's 100 Best College Buys for the fifth consecutive year. UM is one of 95 accredited four-year colleges or universities offering bachelor's degrees and residential facilities nationwide to receive the 2013-14 designation, based on the

highest quality education in a Christian environment. Each year, Institutional Research & Evaluation Inc. rates American colleges and universities providing the highest quality education at the lowest cost.

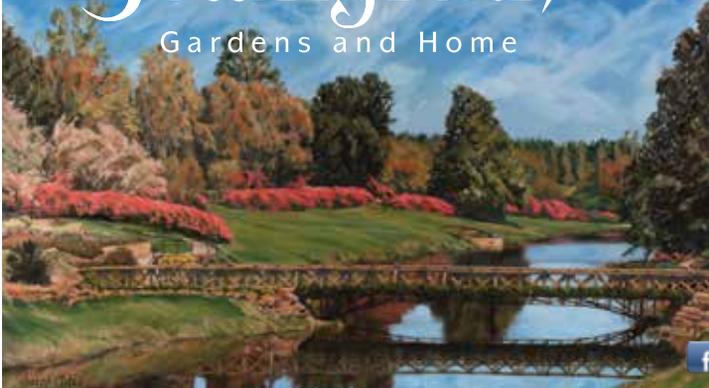


The **Grand Hotel Marriott Resort, Golf Club & Spa** in Point Clear was recognized as the Best Historic Hotel in the "more than 400 guest rooms" category at the Historic Hotels of America 2013 annual awards held in Milwaukee, Wis. The hotel also received nominations in the Best Historic Resort, Hotel Historian of the Year, Historic Hotels of America Ambassador of the Year and Historic Hotels of America Sustainability Champion categories.



**Mia Burmeister** of **Bellator Real Estate & Development LLC** earned the certified international property specialist (CIPS) designation. She is one of only three Realtors statewide to hold this designation, which indicates a deep understanding of the international buying environment and the needs of the global buyer.

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Eddlemon



Jones



Nobles

Jessica Eddlemon, Amanda Jones and Steven Nobles of Wilkins Miller Hieronymus LLC earned the certified public

accountant (CPA) certification. Eddlemon received a bachelor's degree in business administration, with a major in accounting and finance; Jones earned a bachelor's degree in business administration with a major in accounting and

Nobles earned a bachelor's degree in business administration with a major in accounting, all from the University of South Alabama.



**Bishop State Community College** recently captured a record eight medallion awards in the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations District 2 competition. The competition recognizes excellence in communications exclusively among two-year colleges in 11 states, the Bahamas and Bermuda.

In addition, four members of Bishop State Community College faculty and staff were recognized as excellent employees of the Alabama Community College System during a Chancellor's Award recognition ceremony. **Dr. Reginald Crenshaw, Dr. Michael Williams, Erica Hunter and Celeste Patrick** were recognized for outstanding contributions in their respective fields.

**Romie Asher**, Infirmary Health's vice president of community activities, was awarded the Ree Offord Good Samaritan Award at the Operation Bounce-back Cardiac Rehabilitation 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary banquet. Asher was recognized for providing exemplary leadership and support with a spirit of generosity and caring for others. This award is given in memory of Ree Offord, former Bounce-Backer, who exemplified extraordinary concern for others, especially those most in need.



**Fresenius Medical Care East Mobile** was recognized for outstanding patient education and home hemodialysis (HHD) program. The center was chosen as a "center of distinction" for proactively

screening patients in its HHD program, effectively training and allocating staff to support the needs of current HHD patients, promoting adoption of HHD among its patients, and providing superior patient care to its HHD patient population.

Submission deadline for Member News is two months prior to publication. News releases should be one or two brief paragraphs. Photos must be professional headshots, labeled with the person's last name, and must be 300 dpi at full size and saved in an eps, tiff or jpg format. Send your information to [news@mobilechamber.com](mailto:news@mobilechamber.com).

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Mobile Area Chamber

The Mobile Area Chamber was awarded a five-star rating by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the highest designation given. Of the 6,936 chambers in the U.S., only 301 are accredited, and of those only 43 have achieved five-star distinction.



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