



**For Immediate Release  
November 18, 2015**

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## **2015 Mobile Area Chamber Award Winners**

Three local companies and one individual were honored by the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday, Nov. 18 at a joint meeting of the organization's governing board of directors, board of advisors and its economic development investors.

Those honored were:

### **Manufacturer of the Year – Evonik Corp.**

This year's Manufacturer of the Year earned the award for a decade of unprecedented growth.

Since 2005, Evonik has expanded 11 times, creating 114 well-paying jobs and investing approximately \$378 million in its Mobile facility. The latest is a co-location investment with Bayer Crop Science, announced in July.

The German-based specialty-chemical company produces a number of products found in well-known brands in sectors such as health, nutrition, paint and coatings, livestock feed, detergents and herbicides.

More than 40 years ago, known then as Degussa was the area's first direct foreign investment and the first German chemical manufacturer to locate in Alabama. The company has been instrumental in helping recruit additional foreign-based companies. In addition, Evonik has a long-standing commitment to the community, local schools and various charities.

Currently there are more than 800 employees, and another 300 contractor employees that support the site.

### **Corporate Community Service Award Winner – Roberts Brothers**

With 172 agents and 23 support staff, the Roberts Brothers team dedicates time to help dozens of organizations by donating time and resources.

An estimated 90 percent of the real estate brokers and employees in Mobile and Baldwin counties participate in charitable work adopted by the company or outside through personal interests, or both.

Among the many beneficiary organizations are:

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Alabama
- Child Advocacy Center
- Habitat For Humanity of Southwest Alabama
- McKemie Place
- Mobile County Public School System
- Ronald McDonald House Charities of Mobile
- USA Children's and Women's Hospital

This award recognizes companies for their commitment to the community and is presented by the Junior League of Mobile and the Mobile Area Chamber.

### **Innovator of the Year – Horizon Shipbuilding**

Before Horizon Shipbuilding developed its own specialized project management software, the Bayou La Batre-based company relied on conversations remembered, estimates and drawings. The company designs, constructs, repairs and maintains vessels for commercial, private and government customers.

The idea for the software came when President Travis Short thought about how the project details he studied could be just as useful to managers and production team members.

Short named the software after a muffled conversation he overheard on the walkie talkies, where one employee asked another, “Did you just call me a Gordhead?”

Now, Gordhead symbolizes a clear line of communication logging accurate, concise and timely information, including material costs, labor hours and schedules.

With the software loaded on wireless tablets, managers can see the daily impact to the company’s bottom line, resulting in shortened project timelines and a more efficient work schedule that saves labor costs.

### **Ambassador of the Year – Saty Putch**

Small business owner Saty Putch found he was drawn to the business side of operations when he worked as an engineer. After retiring, he opened an accounting and tax preparation firm. Last year, he launched another endeavor, becoming the local franchise owner of Murphy Business and Financial, a business brokerage firm.

He says, he enjoys helping the Chamber, and is thankful that being an ambassador gives him the opportunity to meet other business owners.

During his six years of service, Putchu earned Ambassador of the Month three times, and was previously awarded Ambassador of the Year in 2011.

He attends grand openings and ribbon cuttings, assists at Chamber networking events, visits members, and participates in Chamber Chase. His work, as well as those of his fellow ambassadors, helps the Chamber expand and maintain its membership base.

In addition, the Chamber recognized McAleer's Office Furniture as its Small Business of the Year, and honored Baheth Research and Development Laboratories and New Life Housing as Eagle Award winners. These awards were given in conjunction with Small Business Week in May and during the Minority Business Conference in October, respectively.

*Attached photos include group shots of the Manufacturer of the Year, Corporate Community Service Award Winner, Innovator of the Year, and an individual shot of the Ambassador of the Year.*

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