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1702 Kicks Off Second Year: Bringing Silicon Valley's Entrepreneurial Ecosystem to Mobile

After a successful inaugural class in 2015, 1702 began its second class of networking, counseling and training among a group of Mobile area CEOs and business leaders. Designed to foster a thriving entrepreneurial community similar to that in Silicon Valley, this year's class of 19 executives will spend the next eight months in this program learning from various subject matter experts.

Class presenters will share their success stories and lessons learned on topics critical to launching, scaling and exiting a company. These include: corporate formation structures, legal and risk, raising venture capital, driving revenue, building a board, recruiting and retaining top talent, and successful exit strategies.

1702, formed in partnership with the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, is a combined vision of **Michael Chambers** with University of South Alabama and entrepreneur **Dean Parker**. Its mission is to stimulate collaboration on critical aspects of growing a business, drive innovation along the Gulf Coast, strengthen networks and take companies to the next level of greatness. A local board will serve as class mentors and work with participants on implementing business start-up best practices.

"1702 has been a smashing success and I am excited for this year's class," said Parker, 1702 board chair. "We added an additional industry sector to this year's program – healthcare, and now have five areas from which we pull nominees." Other areas are technology, manufacturing, aerospace and consumer sectors

"As we move into our second year in this program, it's exciting we have another large, diverse class of entrepreneurs. Our region's entrepreneur ecosystem continues to grow, and this large class size shows it," said **Bill Sisson**, president and CEO of the Mobile Area Chamber. "We saw by the cross-section of industry sectors these participants represent, innovation is taking place in all of the Chamber's industry recruiting sectors."

Class participants are working directly with an active board of business executives, all committed to supporting this year's class of 1702.

1702 Class Members Are:

Walt Armentrout, Heart Legacy
Taylor Atchison, Galt Gulch
Dean Brown, Alabama Orthopaedic Clinic
Laura Burton, Verge
Lance Covan, Mitternight
Adam Gnek, SGD Enterprises LLC
Elyse Goonan, One Mobile
Abe Harper, Harper Technologies
Haley Hill, Access Magazine
Zehera Husain, Doorstep Trash & Recycling

Jeremiah Newell, Mobile Area Education Foundation
David Roberts, Mitchell Cancer Institute
Mardia Scott Jr., Easy Ads
Ajay Singh, Tatva Biosciences LLC
Catina Short, Daten System Consulting
Daniel Tucker, WebSouth East
Brian Ward, Doc RX
Haley Van Antwerp, Innovation PortAL
Dirk Young, Hurricane Electronics Inc.

1702 Board Members Are:

Michael Chambers, University of South Alabama
Terry Harbin, BancorpSouth
John Jefferies, Wilkins Miller LLC
Kim Littlefield, University of South Alabama
Frank Lott, Heritage Homes
Keith Manwaring, ManwaringSolutions
Sandy Myers, ASF Logistics Inc.
Andy Newton, Southern Light
Dean Parker, Vita Capital
Bill Sisson, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
Rich Sullivan, Red Square Agency
Jay Watkins, Maynard Cooper & Gale PC
Brian Willman, Regions Bank
Mark Nix, Mobile Infirmary
Beth Stafford, Stafford & Associates

About 1702

1702 is the premier peer network of chief executive officers and business leaders from many of the most promising companies across technology, manufacturing, aerospace, healthcare and consumer sectors in the Mobile, Ala., region. It is designed to foster innovation, collaboration and mentorship among peers. Our mission is to strengthen networks, build long-term successful companies, and offer direct access to recognized advisors and thought leaders. 1702 is an exclusive, invitation-only program aimed to build a sense of community among the region's top entrepreneurs and to take these companies to the next level of greatness. The program is formed in partnership with the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, and is headquartered in Mobile. For more information, visit www.seventeenzerotwo.com.

About the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce

As a private business organization, the Mobile Area Chamber's mission is simple and direct: to serve as a progressive advocate for business needs to promote the Mobile area's economic well-being. The Chamber is a membership organization with 2,000 members, representing 90,000 area employees, and is the lead economic developer for the City of Mobile and Mobile County. For more information, visit www.mobilechamber.com.

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