

# BUSINESSVIEW

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

JULY 2020

**TWO LOCAL  
COMPANIES PLAN  
EXPANSIONS**

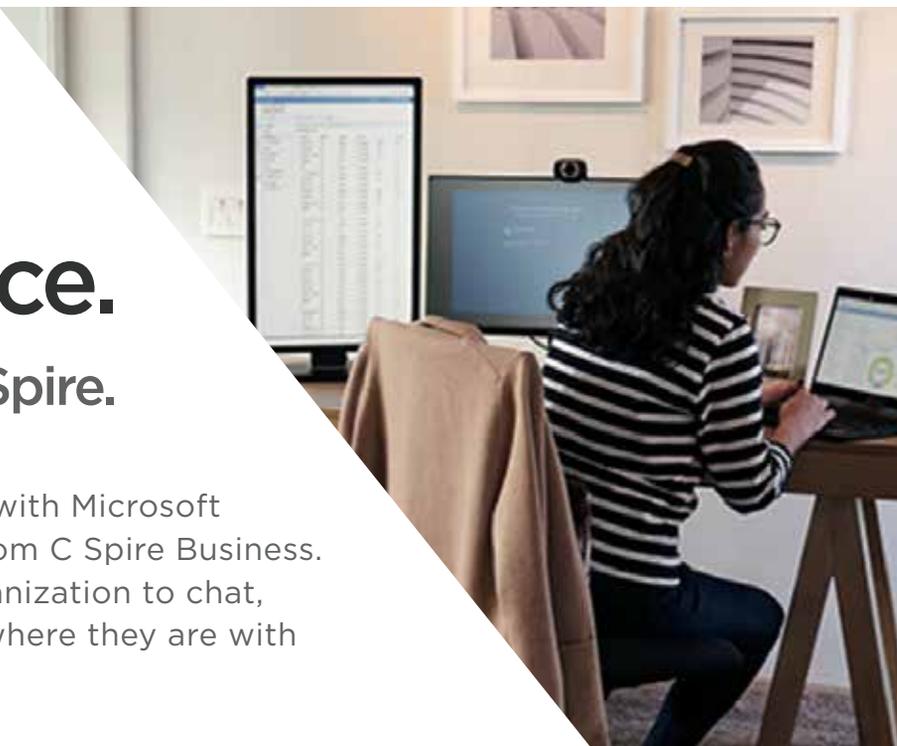
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# BUSINESSVIEW

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

JULY 2020



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## 24 ON THE COVER:

*John Driscoll has been named the new director and CEO of the Alabama State Port Authority. Learn more about him on pg. 24 and port projects beginning on pg. 30. Photo by: Chad Riley Photography*



## PUBLISHER'S NOTE:

# INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS FUELS MOBILE'S ECONOMY

Bill Sisson, President & CEO, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce

## ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

**BUSINESS VIEW** (USPS 952-700) is published 10 times a year, monthly, except for the May/June and December/January issues, by the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce.

451 Government St., Mobile, AL 36602  
251.433.6951 • mobilechamber.com

POSTMASTER send address changes to  
Attn: Finance Department BUSINESS VIEW  
Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce  
P.O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL 36652-2187  
or email info@mobilechamber.com ©2020

**Publisher** William B. Sisson  
**Executive Editor** Leigh Perry-Herndon  
**Managing Editor** Jennifer Jenkins  
**Copy Editor** Michelle Irvin

**Additional Writers and Editors**  
Mike Dumas, Mike Herndon, Ashley Horn,  
Susan Rak-Blanchard and Carolyn Wilson

**Printing Services:** Panaprint Inc.

**Graphic Design:** Wise Design Inc.

**Advertising Account Executive:**  
René Eiland • 251.431.8635  
reiland@mobilechamber.com

As a port city, Mobile's economy has always been tied to our deepwater port and the trade it provides. International business and trade have never been as important to our future growth as they are now.

Continuing to reach beyond our borders is key to growing Mobile's economy and lifting citizens' income. The math makes complete sense when you consider more than 95 percent of the world's population lives outside the United States.

In the early years, international business was primarily a strategy of big multinational corporations, which were easily able to export and/or import products and commodities. Today, the international market is open to small and medium companies as well. Information is more accessible than ever and, through the internet and social media, it's now possible for companies of all sizes to market to people throughout the world.

Our community has been quite successful at recruiting foreign direct investment – companies like Austal, Airbus, AM/NS Calvert, Evonik and many others. In fact, it has been a primary objective of the

Chamber's economic development strategy for more than 20 years. One of our bragging points is the fact that eight of our top 10 manufacturing employers are foreign-based, with headquarters all over the world.

The result of this international investment in our region has been jobs and "new" foreign money pumped into our local economy. People have been hired locally to fill thousands of new positions, and these companies also utilize local materials and services, creating new business opportunities for our local, home-grown businesses.

Finally, let's not forget that learning is an indirect advantage of international trade and foreign direct investment. They introduce our local businesses, local governments, universities and citizens to new business practices and new technologies – a win/win for all concerned.

We salute international business, trade and all our foreign-based companies that call Mobile home. Yes, they make us proud indeed.

# JONES WELDING, SPILLTECH PLAN EXPANSIONS

**Jones Welding Co. (JWC)** and **SpillTech** are making significant capital investments that total nearly \$13.5 million with estimates of adding another dozen-plus jobs over the next three years. The Mobile Area Chamber worked with the two companies as they planned their expansions, both announced in May.

**Roy Parker**, JWC president, says he wants to expand the capabilities of his family-owned business, not just by volume but by the physical size and complexity of projects. JWC specializes in repair, engineering and processing of industrial equipment and is one of the largest and longest-running businesses of its kind in the South, founded in 1911.

With an \$8.5 million investment, primarily in equipment, the company plans to hire 10 more employees to its current roster of 37.

“In today’s machine shop environment, you either make technological advancements or you become obsolete,” says Parker. “In the acquisition of more modern and sophisticated equipment, we will need more floor space and more highly-trained employees.”

JWC is also expanding its footprint, maxing out its current facility on Telegraph Road and spilling into a nearby location on 17 acres in Prichard, where it will construct a new building.

The project will be complete by year-end and will help the company take on more projects that are also tougher, larger and more precision-complex jobs, says Parker.



In its second announcement this year, SpillTech’s latest investment is \$4.98 million, with the planned expenditures primarily for new equipment. The company will add eight jobs over time.

The Mobile-based manufacturer of polypropylene mats for absorbing fluid leaks, drips and spills continues to grow, says **Tony Ruggery**, president of SpillTech. “We are investing in new equipment to increase capacity and meet both current and future projected growth in demand.”

SpillTech reaches a global customer base, with the majority found in the United States along with Canada, the Middle East, the Netherlands and United Kingdom. The company currently has 75 employees at its Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley location.

“Their investments show a continued commitment to our area, and the people who work with them,” says **Shelby Glover Zaricor**, the Chamber’s director of business development.



# USA HEALTH TO CONSTRUCT FREE-STANDING EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT



If USA Health officials are on target with their estimates, a new emergency department in west Mobile will see 15,000 patient visits annually once it opens.

The site is cleared and construction is scheduled to begin in late summer or early fall on property bounded by Hillcrest and Old Shell roads, near the University of South Alabama (USA) campus.

The facility will house significant imaging capabilities including a CT scanner, an MRI, X-ray and ultrasound. Additionally, a helipad, as required for all free-standing emergency departments, will be located there. Its likely use will be to take patients from the location to other facilities in rare situations.

“When this facility is completed, the people who live in west Mobile will have easier access to some of the most advanced

care in our region,” says **Dr. John Marymont**, University of South Alabama vice president for medical affairs and dean of the USA College of Medicine. “Patients will be able to come to a state-of-the-art facility with a full complement of imaging services and be seen by board-certified practitioners.”

USA started an emergency medicine residency program this year to increase the number of physicians specifically trained for emergency medicine. The new facility will help in training future generations of healthcare providers.

“Being located adjacent to the university campus will enhance the convenience of our healthcare learners and provide them with an additional training site,” Marymont said.

The new emergency department will be completed in 2021.



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Photo courtesy of Mobile County Public Schools

# HISTORIC BARTON ACADEMY ENTERS FINAL PHASE OF TRANSFORMATION

Students will soon be learning and making memories once again at the long-vacant Barton Academy, one of Mobile's most iconic buildings and Alabama's first public school.

The nonprofit Barton Academy Foundation, working with Mobile County Public Schools to raise money to renovate the building's interior as a new middle school, recently reached its \$14 million goal.

Federal and state historic tax credits were essential to meeting the goal, while the remainder was contributed by foundations, businesses and individuals.

Ben M. Radcliff Contractor Inc. won the bid to complete the final stage in the building's transformation, with renovations starting this summer.

When Barton was built in 1836, public education itself was an innovative concept. When school starts in 2021, Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies will use technology and innovation to challenge students to think beyond our city and state and learn on a global level.



Photos courtesy of Mobile County Public Schools



The first school of its kind in the region, Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies will enroll around 300 students in grades 6 to 9. Focusing on authentic learning experiences instead of relying solely on textbooks, the school will offer multiple foreign languages, advanced fine arts and entrepreneurial learning with a strong global emphasis. It will also host collaboration labs and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) labs and will focus on activities relating to students' real lives and future careers.

"The students will be downtown, near the heart of the city's business community and close to the port," says **Elizabeth Stevens**, Barton Academy Foundation president and CEO of Downtown Mobile Alliance. "Mobile has strong ties to the world's economy with the sheer number of internationally based companies who have operations here. I think there's a lot of magic in that."

The school will be a marketable asset for the Mobile Area Chamber when recruiting new business and industry.

"This academy will be a tremendous tool in our community's economic development tool kit," says **Bill Sisson**, president and CEO of the Chamber. "Mobile has one of the most international economies in the country. Expanding the knowledge and skills of local students in world studies and STEM will make us competitive as we continue to recruit additional foreign direct investment."

**"The students will be downtown, near the heart of the city's business community and close to the port. Mobile has strong ties to the world's economy with the sheer number of internationally based companies who have operations here. I think there's a lot of magic in that."**

**– Elizabeth Stevens**

Students must apply for the school in a process similar to the one for magnet schools, and will need to meet certain academic criteria. Application details will be announced later in 2020 or early in 2021, MCPSS officials say. More information about Barton Academy and the Barton Academy for Advanced World Studies can be found at [bartonacademy.org](http://bartonacademy.org).



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A creative solution to fulfill a contract increases the work of Fremin Ventures d/b/a FCS Facility Maintenance. Pictured here from left to right are: Willie Miller, Mollie Ballentine, Sophia Rodriguez, Keith Fremin, Rocky Fremin, Hunter Rodriguez and David Hill. Photo by Chad Riley Photography

## THE TWO SIDES OF FREMIN VENTURES

The owners of Fremin Ventures d/b/a FCS Facility Maintenance have a history of making pivotal choices when it comes to the future of their company. Founded in 2002, the husband and wife team of **Keith** and **Rocky Fremin** moved ahead of the 2008 recession by switching the company's focus from residential to commercial.

In 2016, they won a contract with the City of Mobile's blight removal program to clear landscapes, secure and repair properties so they can be sold and, in some cases, perform demolition. But a call from their insurance broker almost put a halt to it. A quick and creative solution created a new division, saved the project and broadened the company's services significantly.

"We did not want to turn the City of Mobile down," says Rocky, who serves as president, "so we divided the company into two divisions to do the work, and that made it easier to find insurance to cover both sides of the company."

Fremin Ventures is the Mobile Area Chamber's Small Business of the Month.

Both FCS Facility Maintenance and FCS Property Services fall under the Fremin Ventures umbrella as divisions that employ eight people. "Through the years, the company has diversified and added many new trades to its portfolio," Rocky says.

The maintenance division provides facility support for clients in the private and public sectors along the Gulf Coast with preventative and general maintenance and repairs, and is on call 24/7 year-round for emergencies. Services include flooring, electrical work, plumbing, boarding-up for hurricanes and restoration.

The property division focuses on exterior needs, including demolition work, excavation, debris removal, hauling services, brush cutting and land clearing for both residential, commercial and public customers.

To make way for its own growth and expansion, the family-owned company is undergoing a complete remodel to accommodate additional field and office employees.

The Fremins take advantage of the Chamber's Business Expo and cull through the *Business View* to meet other local businesses and add to their networking base.

Several community organizations have benefited from the company's and employees' generosity from monetary donations to volunteer hours to in-kind materials for gardens and remodels.

"We are service and community oriented," says Rocky.

**COMPANY NAME:** Fremin Ventures  
**OWNERS:** Keith and Rocky Fremin  
**PHONE:** 251.645.3518  
**WEBSITE:** fcs-facilitymaintenance.com



Photos by Chad Riley Photography



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# Mobile – a Hub for Foreign Direct Investment and Exports

**M**ore than two decades ago, the Mobile Area Chamber's economic development team started seeing a large number of foreign-based investments here. That, coupled with U.S.-based companies increasing their exports, were reasons the Chamber knew it needed to expand its outreach.

With infrastructure assets in Mobile that rival port communities across the nation, the Chamber created an international business division in 1997 to support an ever-growing export market of commodities ranging from agriculture to coal to forest products and more. The Chamber opened the door for what turned out to be explosive growth in foreign-based investment in Mobile that continues as many of these once-recruited companies expand operations. The results have enhanced Mobile's global competitiveness and created quality jobs and economic stability through international engagement.

While the COVID-19 pandemic is having a devastating impact on global markets and supply chains, the Chamber's work to grow Mobile's international business community remains at the forefront.

On the pages to follow, take a look at some areas of work; learn more about the Port of Mobile's long-term plans for growth; better understand the trade agreement replacing NAFTA; and meet some people who have moved here from other countries and now call Mobile home.



Photo courtesy Alabama State Port Authority

# A Look at the Chamber's International Business Program

When the recession began crippling American companies in 2007, Theodore-based Alabama Roll Products (ARP) was experiencing historic success. Global diversification helped keep the family-owned fabrication business from becoming one of the many casualties of the economic fallout that followed.

“Thanks to our projects in Singapore, we really didn’t feel any bumps in the road,” said **Gilbert Diaz Jr.**, president of ARP. “We weathered that really well, to be honest.”

The Mobile Area Chamber’s international business program was created 23 years ago to help local companies like ARP harness the power of foreign expansion and investment so they can sustain long-term health. Industry growth, even into international markets, leads to healthier economy here in Mobile, according to **Christina Stimpson**, director of the program.

“The international business program is housed within economic development because we see it as a job creator,” Stimpson said. “If a company can expand overseas, they will likely hire more people here in Mobile.”

The Chamber assists local companies through trade missions, trade shows and on-site education — most of which is free to area businesses — while connecting them with the resources necessary to maximize global opportunities. Stimpson and **Kayley Shepard** run the division.

Resources include the Export Alabama Alliance, Alabama International Trade Center, Alabama Department of Commerce International Trade Division, U.S. Commercial Service and the Export-Import Bank of the United States (EXIM).



*Christina Stimpson and Kayley Shepard oversee the Mobile Area Chamber's work in international business and foreign direct investment.*



Examples of the Chamber's international business outreach include:

## Trade Missions

ARP's Diaz serves on the Chamber's Board of Advisors and has been on several trade missions over the years. He said the preparation and contact fostered by the international business program can give businesses a leg up.

Akin to matchmaking, the program helps identify distributors, organize joint ventures or direct sales and develop customized appointment lists. Company representatives then take multiple meetings a day while abroad, with the help of in-country commercial service representatives who help facilitate the appointments.

"It makes life a lot easier, as opposed to doing a cold sales call," Diaz said. "You've got their undivided attention, and they give you the opportunity to make a presentation and try and sell yourself and your company."

## Trade Shows

From the Paris and Farnborough Air Shows to the World Petrochemical Conference and others, trade shows are key to global industries learning the relevance of Mobile-area companies. And they go hand in hand with foreign direct investment, responsible for more than 13,000 jobs in Mobile.

If it weren't for Farnborough and Paris, Mobile likely wouldn't have the Airbus U.S. Manufacturing Facility. And chemical industry trade shows have contributed to the strength of the Alabama Power-led MAST Initiative, which supports the infrastructure used by more than 25 chemical companies located in the McIntosh, Axis, Saraland and Theodore (MAST) communities.

**Patrick Murphy**, vice president of Alabama Power's Mobile division, said the strength of Mobile's natural infrastructure helps the area stand out globally.

"That puts us in a good position to continue to recruit and expand the existing manufacturing base we have now," Murphy said.

Trade shows play an important role in the recruitment and subsequent expansion of companies.

## Trade Education

In years past, the Chamber would offer trade seminars covering a variety of general topics, including the basics of exporting — from documentation to sales and marketing, and the crucial step of getting paid. In recent years, the international business program has implemented in-house counseling, where the Chamber and resource partners go to individual companies to discuss their specific needs.

"It helps move things along more quickly," Stimpson said. "We are also seeing a lot more webinars and virtual events taking place."



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# WHAT IT MEANS TO BE IMMERSSED IN MOBILE

When **Yuko Jordan** lands at either of Mobile's two airports, she takes a deep breath in appreciation of a unique feeling: the feeling of being "home."

Born and raised near Tokyo, Japan, she moved to south Alabama as a teenager along with her family, and said over time she's transformed into something much more special than just an American.

"I consider myself a Japanese-Mobilian," Jordan said.

One of the founding employees of Theodore's Mitsubishi Polysilicon chemical plant, she works as the company's Japanese business coordinator. It's a perfect role for Jordan, who translates her deep appreciation of Mobile into fresh experiences for the international clients and company executives who visit the area.

She said it helps that there are key similarities between the two cultures she calls home.

There's the shared love of the sea and seafood, the focus on family and a shared tolerance of humidity, to start. But for Jordan, one parallel says it all.

"For Japanese people, once you know somebody, we offer a lot of hospitality," Jordan said. "Southern hospitality is very close to Japanese hospitality.

"And it's not about how well you speak English. Whatever interests you share with other people are all that matters."

**"For Japanese people, once you know somebody, we offer a lot of hospitality," Jordan said.**

**"Southern hospitality is very close to Japanese hospitality. And it's not about how well you speak English. Whatever interests you share with other people are all that matters."**

*Continued on page 22*

*Photo courtesy of USA Photography*

BISHI  
SILICON





Photo by Chad Riley Photography

**Jana Stupavsky** didn't follow family to Mobile, but like Jordan she established her own after moving here. A native of Kosice, Slovakia — one of Mobile's sister cities — Stupavsky was recruited to play basketball at the University of South Alabama (USA) and earned a full scholarship. Having spent her childhood limited by life behind the Iron Curtain, she said the opportunity to taste the "forbidden fruit" of freedom was a welcome one.

Stupavsky spent more than a decade working in marketing and economic development for the Mobile Airport Authority and Mobile Area Chamber, before heading back to her alma mater, where she is the assistant director in the Center for Real Estate and Economic Development, known as CREED.

She said as newcomers, it's natural for immigrants to seek out those from similar backgrounds — Stupavsky married a Yugoslavian also at USA on an athletic scholarship — but likewise it's beneficial to befriend locals. Both can happen simultaneously, she said, by meeting people at events, festivals

or one of several international markets in town. And a healthy love of football goes a long way, too.

**“I'm lucky to have two places I feel very comfortable calling home.”**

It's also a benefit that so many international companies call Mobile home, Stupavsky said, many of which have reputations for taking very good care of their employees.

“A lot of time the unknown is what creates fear in people, but having those European companies here, with their benefits, is helping change the perception of locals,” she said.

For Stupavsky and Jordan, successful integration into the local culture doesn't mean losing their native identity, but evolving it. After all, Mobile is a place where intimate groups lead to friendships, and shared passions unite all.

“I'm lucky to have two places I feel very comfortable calling home,” Jordan said.

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# JOHN DRISCOLL ALABAMA STATE PORT AUTHORITY

**TITLE:** Director and CEO

**HOMETOWN:** Bethesda, Md.

**EDUCATION:** Bachelor's degree in business administration/management, University of Maryland

**FIRST JOB:** Import documentation and land-bridge supervisor with Sea-Land Service Inc.

**PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:** Maritime director, Port of Oakland (California), one of the nation's top 10 container ports. Prior to his service at the Port of Oakland, his career spanned international maritime management positions with Sea-Land, Maersk and CMA CGM in various operations including marketing, pricing and general management responsibilities.

**WHAT IS ONE OF THE MOST USEFUL THINGS YOU OWN?**  
A battery-operated power drill

**WHAT COULD YOU TALK ABOUT ALL DAY LONG?**  
International transportation

**WHAT IS THE MOTTO OR MANTRA YOU LIVE BY?**

Treat others how you would like to be treated

**WHAT QUALITY DO YOU LIKE MOST IN PEOPLE?** Integrity

**WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE HERO OF FICTION?** Superman

**WHAT IS YOUR MOST MARKED CHARACTERISTIC?**

Desire to be successful through dedicated effort, goal-setting and teamwork

**WHAT ERA IN HISTORY WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRAVEL**

**AND WHY?** Present day. I believe this is an exciting yet challenging time to be alive. Otherwise, probably back in the '50s since it was the dawn of modern prosperity in America that set the stage for the world we live in today.

**BRIEF COMPANY DESCRIPTION:** The Alabama State Port Authority (ASPA) owns and operates the public, deepwater port facilities at the Port of Mobile, handling over 25 million tons of cargo annually. ASPA's container, general cargo, heavy lift and bulk terminals have immediate and unencumbered access to two interstate systems, five Class 1 railroads and nearly 15,000 miles of inland waterway connections. Learn more at [www.asdd.com](http://www.asdd.com).



Photo courtesy Alabama State Port Authority

# Alabama's Port Drives International Business

**I**ndustrial leaders across the globe have tremendous confidence in the Port of Mobile, and their generational investments throughout the area have been met with sweeping infrastructure expansions by the Alabama State Port Authority (ASPA). Over the last decade alone, the port authority has invested more than \$1.2 billion in new facilities and infrastructure, including two “Super Post-Panamax” cranes; a turning basin; container, rail ferry and steel terminals; warehouses; and an expansion at McDuffie coal terminal.

The expansion continues to help the city and state recruit more robust foreign direct investment, which – locally and regionally – has diversified the Port of Mobile’s cargo base and led to significant economic growth, according to the Alabama State Port Authority’s new director and CEO, **John Driscoll**.

“International business and its associated import and export activity is the lifeblood of any port,” said Driscoll. “Quality brands attract quality investors, and it stands to reason more investment is on the horizon.”

Highlights of the Port Authority’s efforts include recruitment of the MTC Logistics international distribution center for refrigerated and frozen cargoes, ongoing construction of a 57-acre, roll-on/roll-off (RO/RO) automobile terminal, expansion of the Mobile Container Terminal and advanced planning of the estimated \$400 million Mobile Harbor expansion.

**International business and its associated import and export activity is the lifeblood of any port.**

## RO/RO

In 2021, the new roll on/roll off automobile terminal, located on 57 acres at the ASPA's main port multimodal complex, will begin operation. And in recent months, the Port Authority and AutoMOBILE International Terminal (AIT) signed a concession agreement stipulating that AIT will operate the \$60 million facility once it is completed. The terminal will make it possible for passenger cars and other vehicles to be driven onto and off of ships. The facility will create a new U.S. gateway for shipping finished automobiles for both U.S. and global manufacturing and

consumer markets, which could include exports from Alabama automobile manufacturers such as Honda, Hyundai and Mercedes-Benz. The terminal is serviced by five Class I railroads, a rail ferry service with connections throughout North America, and immediate, unencumbered access to major U.S. interstate and highway systems.

AIT is a joint venture between Terminal Zarate, S.A., a Grupo Murchison company, headquartered in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and Neltume Ports, headquartered in Santiago, Chile.

"The RO/RO terminal project attracted strong players in automotive logistics, storage and port services," said Driscoll. "This project expands our cargo portfolio and opens up new markets for the port, while providing a near port option for the region's automotive OEMs."

ASPA funded the terminal, in part, through a \$12.7 million U.S. Department of Transportation TIGER grant and a \$28.8 million allocation of funds from the RESTORE Act.

**The RO/RO terminal project attracted strong players in automotive logistics, storage and port services.**

## Mobile Harbor Project

The \$400 million Mobile Harbor expansion project, designed to deepen the bar, bay and river shipping channels, as well as widen the bay channel to allow for two-way vessel traffic, is on schedule to initiate contracting and begin construction by the fourth quarter 2020.

Most recently, the project cleared two milestones: First, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers South Atlantic Division signed the Record of Decision for the Mobile Harbor General Reevaluation Report and Integrated Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. The Record of Decision determines that the project is viable and meets federal guidance for such a project. Secondly, the Design Agreement with the Alabama State Port Authority was reached, determining the project's engineering and design, and helping the authority ultimately anticipate project costs.

The harbor expansion will keep the Port of Mobile competitive in the current shipping climate, where deep-draft ships have increased in size. The project will eliminate delays for vessels entering and leaving the port and is expected to take three to four years to complete.

The width of the bay channel will be increased to accommodate two-way vessel traffic, and the project will also expand the current Post-Panamax-sized turning basin and create a minor bend easing in the lower bay channel.

"The harbor modernization project is keeping pace with ongoing terminal investments in Alabama's seaport to ensure economies of scale and competitive rates for the seaport's shippers," said Driscoll. "It's a game changer."



Photo courtesy Alabama State Port Authority



Photo courtesy Alabama State Port Authority

## Mobile Container Terminal

In late March, the Alabama State Port Authority completed its Phase 3 expansion of the APM Terminals Mobile Container Terminal. The modernization project allows the container terminal – opened in October 2008 – to meet shipper demand and accommodate larger vessels. Days after Phase 3 was completed, the terminal’s expanded berth was able to accommodate two Post-Panamax container ships simultaneously. The expanded capability was the result of a 400-foot container dock extension, which compliments the two Super Post-Panamax and two Post-Panamax ship-to-shore gantry cranes already in place to service the larger container-class vessels.

Other Phase 3 achievements include a 20-acre expansion yard, four new outbound gates and other upgrades.

“Shipper and carrier confidence is on the rise, attracting more services and more volume,” said Driscoll. “We would like to think part of that story is due to our container intermodal investments, achievements in productivity and an eye to customer service.”

In December, the *Journal of Commerce* lauded the Alabama State Port Authority and partner APM Terminals for productivity achievements, naming the Mobile Container Terminal the second most improved terminal in North America.

**Shipper and carrier confidence is on the rise, attracting more services and more volume.**



Photo courtesy Alabama State Port Authority



## MTC Logistics

Once completed, the \$61 million MTC Logistics refrigerated cargo facility will provide shippers with seamless supply chain solutions focused on global commerce. Located outside Mobile Container Terminal, construction of the MTC International Distribution Center is projected to be completed in early 2021. It will be one of the largest in its kind in the southeast.

It will expand the Port of Mobile's blast freeze capabilities by accommodating 30 truckloads per day and providing 40,000 racked pallet positions of storage.

"International distribution centers are a growth area not only for the port region, but for the port itself," said Driscoll. "The new MTC Logistics project provides much needed capacity, as well as seamless supply chain solutions and a comprehensive suite of services, including blast freezing, port drayage and LTL consolidation for cold cargo shippers."

**International distribution centers are a growth area not only for the port region, but for the port itself.**

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# JORGE LUIZ RIBERIO DE OLIVEIRA

## AM/NS CALVERT

**TITLE:** President and CEO

**HOMETOWN:** Sao Fidelis, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

**EDUCATION:** Bachelor's degree in metallurgical engineering from University of Federal Fluminense, Niteroi, Rio de Janeiro

**WHO/WHAT INSPIRES YOU?** Someone once told me that inspiration is when you feel a deep-rooted passion and motivation to do something. So, I would have to say my inspiration comes from my family. They make me want to be the best person I can be, and that is what pushes me each day.

**WHAT WORD WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF?** Positive. No matter what the situation may be, the outcome will always be better if you choose to be positive.

**SECRET TO SUCCESS:** Humility. When you humble yourself, you get a different perspective on life and are open to learning more from others.

**DO YOU BELIEVE IN LUCK OR DESTINY?** Actually, both. I don't think you can have one without the other. Our destiny is something we choose, but luck comes as blessings from God.

**WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR LONG-TERM PROFESSIONAL GOALS?** I learned a long time ago to focus on bringing people together. There is so much that can be accomplished when you empower people to work together.

**WHAT IS YOUR PASSION?** I would say kindness. I look at kindness as an investment that always pays back. It may not necessarily be from the outside, but it pays back for one's own peace of mind and soul.

**YOUR GREATEST INDULGENCE?** If I make a mistake, I will apologize. Also, when the truth comes first, I like to forgive.

**BEST THING ABOUT YOUR JOB:** Working with the people.

**BRIEF COMPANY DESCRIPTION:** AM/NS Calvert is a 50/50 joint venture between ArcelorMittal and Nippon Steel Corp. (NSC). The steel processing plant, located in Calvert, has served the North American market since 2010 with the capacity to produce 5.3 million tons of flat rolled carbon steel products annually.





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Photo courtesy Alabama State Port Authority

# UPDATED TRADE AGREEMENT BRINGS U.S. INTO 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the U.S. Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) passed in March 2020 brings the more than 25-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with updated provisions for digital trade, intellectual property, financial services and agriculture trade.

From it, the U.S. Chamber believes companies will benefit from:

**1. Growing Digital Trade** – Supporting the digital economy of all sectors and sizes guarantees the freedom to move data across borders and prohibits the forced localization of data, thereby ensuring continued growth.

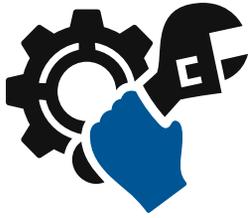
**2. Protecting Intellectual Property** – Securing stronger protections for the full range of patents, copyrights and related rights, trademarks, designs and trade secrets, the agreement also includes strong enforcement tools to guard against counterfeiting and piracy.

**3. Strengthening Agriculture Trade** – Establishing modern, science-based standards that are the strongest achieved in any trade agreement. It provides transparency and information-sharing on measures impacting trade in biotechnology products.

**Canada and Mexico are among Mobile's top export markets.** For the Mobile Area Chamber, supporting this new agreement means greater market access for both small and large companies and the potential for increased investment into Alabama. **Christina Stimpson**, director of international business for the Mobile Area Chamber, believes Alabama businesses will benefit from this effort by:

- **Reducing red tape for small businesses**, making it easier to do business with Canada and Mexico.
- **Leveling the playing field for Alabama's workforce** by improving wages and labor conditions throughout North America.
- **Providing the strongest digital trade agreement of any international agreement** by securing a firm foundation for the expansion of trade and investment for innovative products and services.

# SIX REASONS WHY USMCA WORKS FOR AMERICAN BUSINESSES, FAMILIES AND CONSUMERS



## 1 Supports Millions of Jobs

Trade with Canada and Mexico supports 12 million American jobs. Forty-nine U.S. states count Mexico or Canada as one of their top three merchandise export markets.



## 4 Essential for Farmers and Ranchers

U.S. agricultural exports to Canada and Mexico quadrupled from \$8.9 billion in 1993 to \$39 billion in 2017 (latest available data), according to the American Farm Bureau Federation. Nearly one-third of U.S. agricultural exports went to Canada and Mexico.



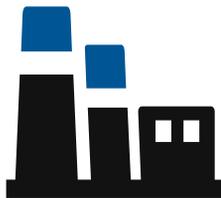
## 2 Drives Export Growth

U.S. exports to Canada and Mexico have increased more than U.S. exports to any other country since the 2007 recession. Canada and Mexico account for 40 percent of the growth in overall U.S. goods exports, and trade with the two countries reached nearly \$1.4 trillion in 2018.



## 5 Boosts American Small Businesses

Canada and Mexico are the top two export destinations for U.S. small- and medium-sized enterprises, more than 120,000 of which sell their goods and services to our North American neighbors.



## 3 Vital for U.S. Manufacturers

U.S.-manufactured goods exported to Canada and Mexico support more than 2 million American jobs. Most U.S. manufacturing sectors, and most states, count Canada or Mexico as their first or second largest foreign purchaser.



## 6 Powers the Service Economy

U.S. services exports to Canada and Mexico tripled from \$27 billion in 1993 to \$96 billion in 2018. America's highly competitive business services sector – including firms in fields like audiovisual, software, architecture, accounting, engineering and project management, banking, insurance and many more – continues to enjoy exceptional export growth.

# Alabama

**USMCA**  
The U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement



The United States, Mexico and Canada have reached an agreement to rebalance and modernize the North American Free Trade Agreement into a 21st century, high-standard trade deal. The new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) will better serve the interests of American workers, farmers, ranchers and businesses and support mutually beneficial trade leading to freer markets, fairer trade and robust economic growth in North America.



**\$6.6 Billion**

Exports to Canada and Mexico in 2018



**\$4.0 Billion**

Exports to Canada in 2018



**\$2.6 Billion**

Exports to Mexico in 2018

## USMCA Key Provisions



### Rules of Origin

Innovative rules of origin will encourage more goods and materials to be manufactured in the United States and ensure the benefits of USMCA flow to North American workers.



### Goods Market Access

New commitments for market access address non-tariff barriers related to trade in remanufactured goods, import licensing and export licensing.



### Intellectual Property

The modernized, high-standard Intellectual Property (IP) chapter provides strong and effective protection and enforcement of IP rights critical to driving innovation, creating economic growth and supporting American jobs.



### Small Business

New customs and trade rules will cut red tape and make it easier for small businesses to tap into foreign markets and participate in cross-border trade.



### Agriculture

Important improvements in USMCA will secure greater market access for America's farmers.



Canada's unfair milk pricing program will be eliminated so American dairy farmers gain more export opportunities.



U.S. poultry producers will have new access for chicken and egg exports and expanded access for turkey exports.



### Digital Trade

The new Digital Trade chapter contains the strongest disciplines on digital trade of any international agreement, providing a firm foundation for the expansion of trade and investment in the innovative products and services.



### Labor

USMCA's Labor chapter makes new enforceable labor standards a core part of the agreement. This will help level the playing field for American workers and improve wages and labor conditions in North America.

## Top Alabama Exports to Canada and Mexico, 2018

- 1 Transportation Equipment (\$3.2 Billion)
- 2 Primary Metal Products (\$1.3 Billion)
- 3 Machinery (\$454.2 Million)
- 4 Chemicals (\$360.1 Million)
- 5 Paper (\$352.2 Million)
- 6 Fabricated Metal Products (\$171 Million)
- 7 Computer & Electronic Products (\$170.6 Million)
- 8 Plastics & Rubber Products (\$155.4 Million)
- 9 Electrical Equipment, Appliances & Components (\$136.7 Million)
- 10 Processed Food (\$70.6 Million)

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— JENNIE M. CAMPBELL, CMP, CMM, PMP - CEO, President Stewart Lodges

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# COVID-19 FORCES CHAMBER WORK TO CHANGE

When the Mobile Area Chamber closed for the day on Tuesday, March 17, none of us realized it would be the whole staff's last day "in the office" until June 1. Neither did we realize how COVID-19 would change how we conduct business, communicate to members, network, raise money and so much more.

As Alabama businesses operate under an always-changing "Safer at Home" executive order from Gov. Kay Ivey, the Chamber is moving back into many of its familiar activities, albeit modified and still socially distant.

If you followed the Chamber's social media pages and emails, you know the staff quickly went to work to support the entire business community, with special emphasis on small businesses – providing them with information, access and support. Below is a snapshot of our efforts to help Mobile's economy restart.

Today, the majority of the Chamber's COVID-19 resources remain housed at: [mobilechamber.com/covid19-resources](http://mobilechamber.com/covid19-resources). If you need any business support navigating through the pandemic and its impact on your work, contact us at 251.433.6951 or [sbainfo@mobilechamber.com](mailto:sbainfo@mobilechamber.com).

## Counseling

We assisted business owners in determining the best financial resources that were available to them through the CARES Act. The small business development team and community and governmental affairs team counseled more than 200 entrepreneurs and business owners with real-time guidance to help them comply with frequently changing rules and regulations. In addition, the staff created a dedicated email address for businesses owners to ask specific questions regarding the PPP and EIDL funding made available in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Teleconference Calls

For five weeks, various Chamber departments hosted free 30-minute teleconference calls, using community and business leaders as experts to provide the public with access to training and insight into completing federal paperwork for loans and grants, and to update services being offered to workers. In total, we hosted 36 sessions, and all have been recorded and saved on the Chamber's COVID-19 web pages.

## Sourcing PPEs for Businesses

An immediate need, based on feedback, was access to reliable distributors of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), including masks, cleaning supplies, face shields and more. Our economic development team started working on sourcing materials locally and across the country, ultimately publishing an updated list of suppliers, vendors and makers three times a week. The list originally included non-members, but as the availability of supplies increased, the list focused on members only and was distributed on a twice-weekly basis.

*Sample of the weekly PPE availability list shared with members.*

**MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COVID-19 CHAMBER RESPONSE**

**Locating Personal Protection Equipment in the Mobile Area**

The CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain and to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol when soap and water isn't an option.

Provided by Mobile Area Chamber Members

**Masks and Face Coverings**

Supplier	Type	Contact
Cintas	Both	251-443-7301
Office Solutions & Innovations	Both	251-666-7204
Ad Venture Specialties Company	Both	251-344-0526
Zebra Marketing	Both	251-438-2422
OEC Glen Brown	Both	251-709-1237
AlSCO - Gina Herring	Both	800-553-3365
Turner Supply	Both	251-438-5581
Southern Nutrition	Disposable	530-307-8485
Gulf Supply Company	Disposable	251-457-4591
Waite's Cleaners	Reusable - Made to Order	251-473-4984
FLC Living	Reusable - Made to Order	251-591-4824

**MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COVID-19 CHAMBER RESPONSE**

**Hand Sanitizer**

Supplier	Contact
Cintas	251-443-7301
Office Solutions & Innovations	251-666-7204
OEC Glen Brown	251-709-1237
Gulf Supply Company	251-457-4591
AlSCO - Gina Herring	800-553-3365
Turner Supply	251-438-5581

**Industrial Cleaning Supplies**

Supplier	Contact
Cintas	251-443-7301
Persons Services	251-660-0132
OEC Glen Brown	251-709-1237
AlSCO - Gina Herring	800-553-3365
Gulf Supply Company	251-457-4591
Office Solutions & Innovations	251-666-7204
Turner Supply	251-438-5581

**Protective Barriers**

Supplier	Contact
McAlee's Office Furniture	251-476-8555
AL-FLA Plastics	251-471-1131
Office Solutions & Innovations	251-666-7204
OEC - Gerri Holland	251-379-0248
Turner Supply	251-438-5581
Fast Signs	251-410-7446

**Face Shields**

Supplier	Contact
Cintas	251-443-7301
Persons Services	251-660-0132
Calagaz	251-478-0488

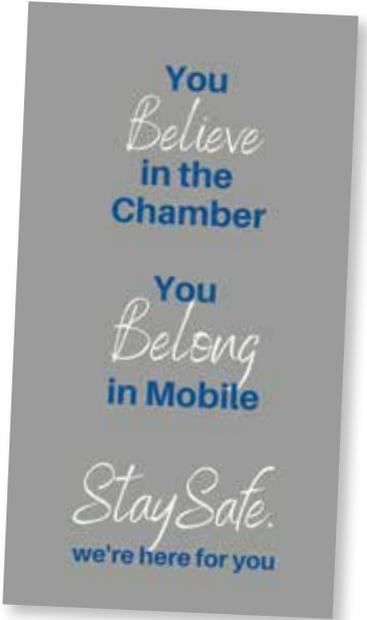
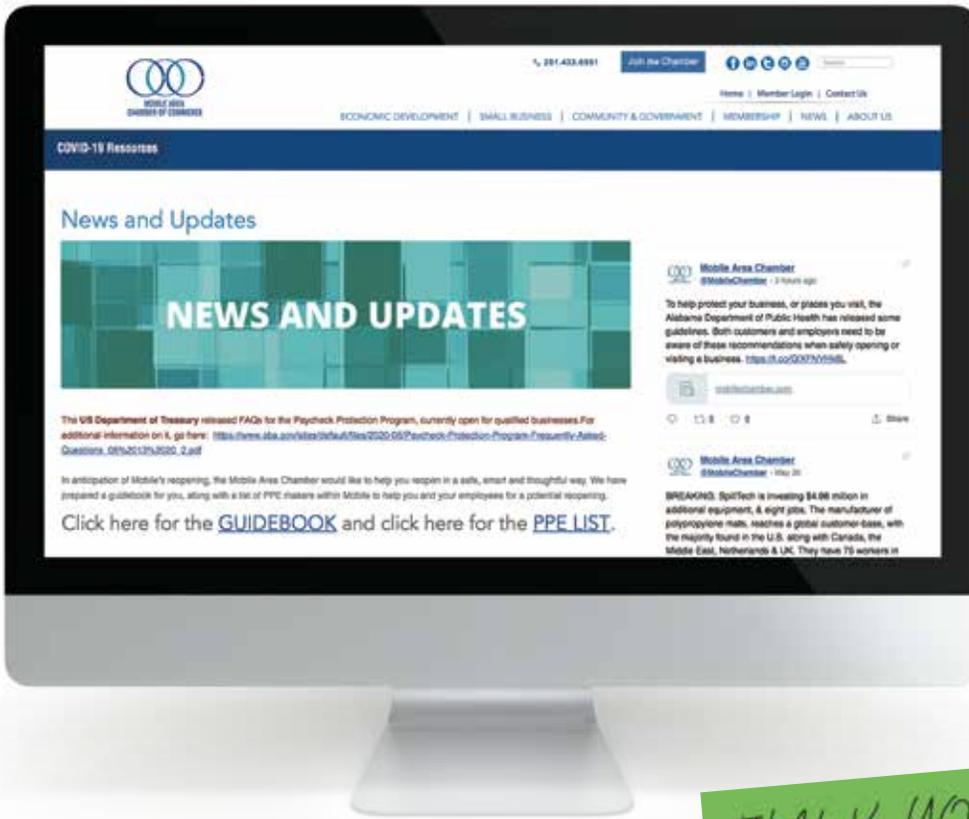
**How to Make Your Own Hand Sanitizer**

According to The Vitamin Shoppe, you need 2/3 cup rubbing alcohol (91% or higher), 1/3 cup of aloe vera gel, and essential oils if you want to add fragrance.

If you have PPE available, please contact Christopher Mayfield at 251-431-8654 or [cmayfield@mobilechamber.com](mailto:cmayfield@mobilechamber.com).

The Mobile Area Chamber collected the above information by reaching out to its members and via social media in an effort to find available PPE supplies. Chamber staff contacted each of these makers, suppliers and vendors to talk about product availability. Please understand consumer demand can impact availability of supplies.

For more information, please visit <https://mobilechamber.com/covid19-resources>

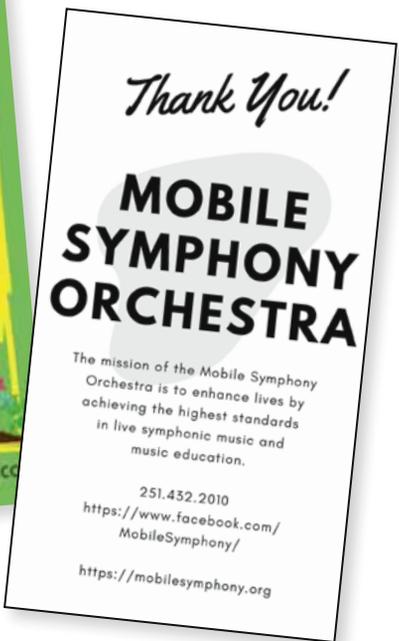


## Website Resources

Stealing a page from Hurricane Katrina coverage back in 2005, the Chamber's communications and marketing team quickly put up a COVID-19 resource page, housed on the Chamber's website – mobilechamber.com. It grew quickly, and included five key sections – Small Business Resources, News and Events, Reopening Your Business, (original section was Working Remotely), Unemployment Resources and Support Local Business. These pages have a tremendous amount of information, documents, guides, etc., and all content can be downloaded and is sharable.

## Turning to Social Media

Being nimble was critical to pushing important content and information out to a large population. So, early on, the Chamber turned to its social media pages for help. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram were the main platforms. In turn, Chamber employees helped spread the messages using their personal channels. We used these channels seven-days a week, 12 hours a day at the height of the pandemic when the state was shut down, and maintained that pace for seven weeks. Beginning June 1, the Chamber eased back on its COVID-19 coverage, and returned to more traditional social sharing.





## Contacting Members

All of the Chamber's efforts would have been in vain had we not had regular check-ins with members, and their willingness to give us feedback. Over an eight-week period, the Chamber reached out to its membership with short surveys asking critical questions about their business, forecasting for the future and specific needs to successfully reopen. Response was tremendous, and helped us navigate a clear path. Also, within the first two weeks of working remotely, the staff made contact – or attempted to make contact – with every Chamber member to check in, seek feedback and offer support.



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## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is protective clothing, helmets, goggles, or other garments or equipment designed to protect the wearer's body from injury or infection. The hazards addressed by protective equipment include physical, electrical, heat, chemicals, biohazards, and airborne particulate matter. Businesses should keep a minimum quantity of 15-day supply of PPE. PPE can include masks, face shields and gloves.

**NOTE:** Gloves put employees at higher risk of exposure and are not recommended for general protective use for the following reasons:

- The COVID-19 virus does not harm your hands, so gloves provide no protection, and touching your face with contaminated hands, whether gloved or not, poses a significant risk of infection.
- Gloves often create a false sense of security for the individuals wearing them; people are more likely to touch contaminated surfaces because they feel they are protected from the virus because of the gloves when in reality, they are not.
- When wearing gloves, people are less inclined to wash their hands; this is counterproductive and puts others at higher risk; we want people to wash their hands because it is the number one way to prevent the spread of any virus.
- Use of gloves takes training; if gloves are not removed properly, they are exposed to greater risk.

### WHO SHOULD WEAR MASKS?

- Medical and isolation team members
- Health screeners (i.e. a supervisor who takes employees' temperature)
- Disinfection team members
- Those with broad exposure to customers or employees

### WHO SHOULD WEAR FACE SHIELDS?

Face shields are commonly used in healthcare and manufacturing. They can provide extra protection for those who must work within three feet of another person due to their job requirements. They are not necessary unless you work in healthcare/manufacturing, but they can help.

### WHO SHOULD WEAR GLOVES?

- Employees in isolation
- Those performing disinfection of common surfaces
- Employees handling trash
- Employees handling food

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## KEEPING THE WORKPLACE SAFE

- PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE
- STOP HANDSHAKING & AVOID TOUCHING FACE
- INCREASE VENTILATION
- USE VIDEOCONFERENCING
- ADJUST/POSTPONE LARGE GATHERINGS
- LIMIT BUSINESS TRAVEL
- LIMIT FOOD SHARING
- STAY HOME IF YOU OR A FAMILY MEMBER IS SICK
- LIMIT CASH HANDLING
- USE ONLINE TRANSACTIONS
- PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING
- HOLD MEETINGS IN OPEN SPACES
- REMIND STAFF OF HAND WASHING
- SANITIZE HIGH TRAFFIC AREAS

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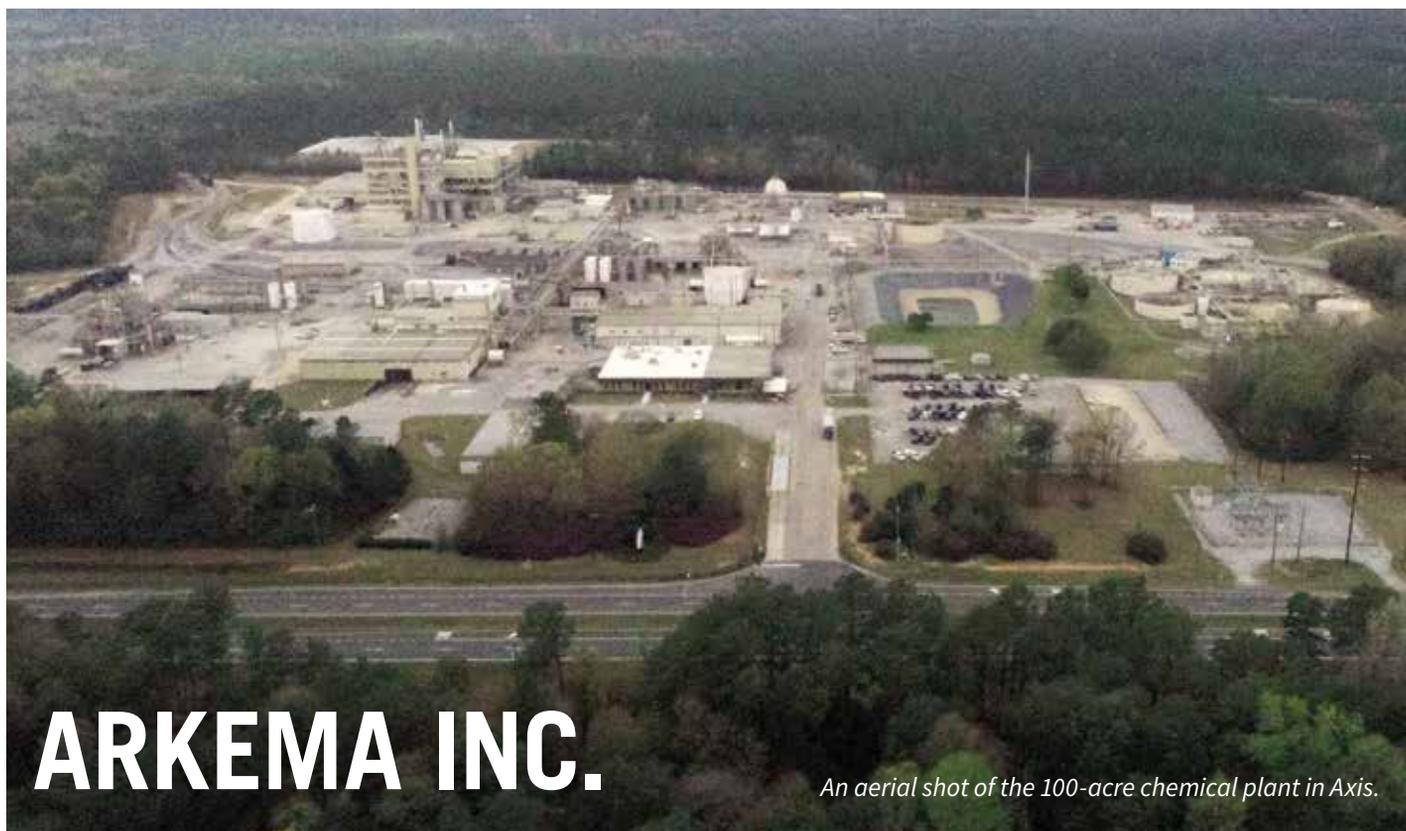
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# ARKEMA INC.

*An aerial shot of the 100-acre chemical plant in Axis.*

**Company officials:** Plant Manager **Rene Neron**

**Address:** 13755 U.S. Hwy. 43 N, Axis

**Number of Employees:** 109 (in Mobile)

**Website:** arkema.com

**Years in business:** Since 1980

**Brief company description:** Building on its unique set of expertise in materials science, Arkema offers a portfolio of first-class technologies to address the ever-growing demand for new and sustainable materials. The Axis plant manufactures products based on two primary chemistries: acrylic polymers and sulfur (thio) chemicals. Acrylic polymers are additives used to improve the properties (Impact Modifiers) and processing (Process Aids) of a wide variety of plastic items. Impact Modifiers improve the impact resistance of PVC compounds used in pipe, siding, fencing, decking, windows, and trim. Process Aids improve the productivity, quality and cost of producing these same products in addition to film, sheet, bottles and packaging. The site also manufactures PEKK, a lightweight, high performance thermoplastic used for aerospace applications. In addition to these chemistries, the plant operates and maintains two tin-based chemistry production units for PMC Organometallics.

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

"Arkema's social responsibility target is to create value for both stakeholders and the company," said Neron. "Arkema cultivates interactions and close relations with its stakeholders, including local commerce partners, through open and constructive dialogue."

**How long have you been a continuous Mobile Area Chamber Member?** Since 1980

**About Partners For Growth:** Growing Global, Investing Local 2018-2022, Partners For Growth is a five-year, public-private



initiative of the Mobile Area Chamber, to grow and diversify Mobile's economy. Its five pillars include: 1) new business recruitment and investment attraction; 2) existing industry support, innovation and entrepreneurship; 3) workforce attraction, retention and development; 4) diverse business development; and 5) business advocacy and quality of place.

Join the Chamber's economic development investors by contacting David Rodgers, vice president, economic development, at **251.431.8657** or **drodgers@mobilechamber.com**.



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# CHAMBER AT WORK

## CHAMBER SERVES ON FIRST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT ECONOMIC RECOVERY TASK FORCE

Chamber President & CEO Bill Sisson and Nancy Hewston, the Chamber's vice president of community and governmental affairs, served on U.S. Rep. Bradley Byrne's First Congressional District Economic Recovery Task Force. This group of leaders from southwest Alabama presented ideas to Gov. Kay Ivey as she worked on reopening Alabama's economy and getting people back to work.

## INDUSTRY RECRUITING REMAINS CHAMBER PRIORITY

The Chamber's business development division recently worked nearly 20 projects across multiple industry sectors for site selectors and the Alabama Department of Commerce. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic development team remained busy with new and existing project work.

## SMALL BUSINESS HOSTS NATIONAL SPEAKER

Glenn Shepard presented "How to Manage Problem Employees and Handle Difficult People" during a webinar in June attended by more than 75 people. He provided attendees with methods to best communicate with and empower problem employees.

## CHAMBER HOSTS SEVERAL GOOGLE WEBINARS

More than 120 people participated in the Chamber's Small Business Development department's "Grow with Google" program this spring. Sessions included "Using Data to Drive Growth + Engage Customers Online During the COVID-19 Crisis" and "Manage Your Business Remotely in Times of Uncertainty."

## VIRTUAL FAIRS POPULAR FOR JOB-SEEKERS

The Chamber hosted a virtual job fair with local employers in May, with four member businesses – Buffalo Rock, Ingalls Shipbuilding, Pilot Catastrophe and Walmart Distribution Center – to talk about their more than 500 open positions, benefits and how to apply. More than 70 people attended the job fair.

## HR TASK FORCE CREATED

Initially set up to listen to the needs of human resource executives as the Chamber laid out its talent attraction plan, the HR Task Force quickly shifted focus. The group began meeting with the Chamber's workforce development director to discuss how the Chamber can help to meet the ever-changing needs of Mobile's businesses and industries related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

# CHAMBER CHASE 2020 KICKS OFF LATE, BUT NOT DETERRED

This year, Chamber Chase volunteers are working a little longer - and harder - to exceed their announced 2020 goal, no thanks to COVID-19 forcing the economy to pause. Not deterred, however, Chamber Chase Chair **Melissa Cross** with McAleer's Office Furniture has turned up the fun and is getting everyone involved in the campaign.

In addition to bi-monthly reward sessions held in person, and on social media and Zoom, the Mobile Area Chamber has developed a series of event sponsorship videos to help sell more local businesses to invest in Chamber events such as annual meeting, the annual golf tournament, board of advisor sessions and more.

"We're having a great time, and are so grateful to local businesses who are stepping up in a BIG way to sponsor events, purchase ads, and upgrade their dues investment," said Cross. "I could not be more proud."

To learn more about Chamber Chase, or events your company can sponsor, take a look at [chamberchase.com](http://chamberchase.com) or reach out to **Carolyn Golson**, vice president of membership at 251.431.8622 or [cgolson@mobilechamber.com](mailto:cgolson@mobilechamber.com).



Chamber Chase 2020 volunteers had a blast at their kickoff event held at McAleer's Office Furniture. A shark and flamingo even attended the event passing out the ever popular "Bill Bucks" featuring Chamber President & CEO Bill Sisson.





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## DIANA ALLEN

### THE SSI GROUP

**Diana Allen** is president and CEO of The SSI Group. Prior to joining SSI, Allen honed her revenue cycle skills with companies such as GE Healthcare, McKesson Corp., Meridian and Harvard Medical Faculty Physicians. She holds a doctorate degree from Colorado Technical University in healthcare administration and a master's degree in healthcare administration from Cambridge College. Allen is also a contributing author to industry publications, as well as a national conference speaker on healthcare process improvement strategy.

## WILLIAM BRYANT JR.

### MOBILE AREA COUNCIL, BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

**William Bryant Jr.** is the scout executive/CEO of the Mobile Area Council, Boy Scouts of America. He is the immediate past revenue and membership growth coach for the national office of the Boy Scouts of America. Bryant holds a master's degree in business administration in nonprofit administration from Oglethorpe University in Atlanta and is a graduate of LEAD Atlanta, a leadership program of executives from across the state of Georgia. His accomplishments include the Atlanta Urban League's Rising Star Award, Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity Inc. Man of the Year Award, Distinguished Alumnus Award of Grambling State University and the National President's Award through the Boy Scouts.



## CRAIG PONCEY

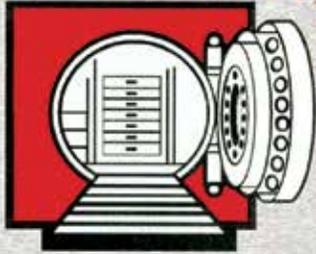
### COASTAL ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Craig Pouncey** is president of Coastal Alabama Community College. Prior to his appointment, he served as superintendent of the Jefferson County School District and was named the Alabama Superintendent of the Year by the Association of School Superintendents of Alabama. While serving as superintendent, he managed 57 schools and more than 36,000 students in the state's second largest school system. Pouncey previously served as chief of staff for the Alabama State Department of Education and superintendent of education for Crenshaw County Schools. He received a doctor of education degree from Samford University.



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*Note: Watch the Mobile Area Chamber's website, [mobilechamber.com/events](http://mobilechamber.com/events) and our social media channels for updates as we balance in-person and virtual events.*

## 8 VIRTUAL NETWORKING@NOON

*\*Members only; one representative per company*

**VIA ZOOM:** Chamber President & CEO Bill Sisson will give a brief welcome and update on what we're working on at the Mobile Area Chamber. Following his remarks, networking will be facilitated by Dawn Rencher, director of member relations for the Chamber. Grab a brown bag lunch and join us.

**When:** Noon to 1 p.m.

**Cost:** \$10 registration, and you will automatically receive a Zoom meeting code.

**Contact:** Dawn Rencher at 251.431.8649 or [drencher@mobilechamber.com](mailto:drencher@mobilechamber.com)

*Registration requested for ZOOM meeting code.*

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## 21 VIRTUAL EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE

*\*Members Only*

**VIA ZOOM:** A monthly forum exclusively for Chamber-member small business owners and managers.

**When:** 8 to 9 a.m.

**Speaker:** Panel TBA

**Topic:** "Sustainability of Nonprofit Organizations After COVID-19"

**Contact:** Brenda Rembert at 251.431.8607 or [brembert@mobilechamber.com](mailto:brembert@mobilechamber.com)

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## WHO'S NEW

## Phung Joins USA Health Department of Pathology



Phung

**Thuy Phung MD, PhD** recently joined USA Health as medical director of molecular pathology and dermatopathology. She also serves as an associate professor of pathology at the **University of South Alabama College of Medicine**. Phung earned a medical degree and doctorate in cell biology from the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry in Rochester, N.Y. She is a board-certified diplomate of the American Board of Pathology, the American Board of Medical Genetics and Genomics and the American Board of Dermatology.

## Travers Named CIO at USA Health



Travers

USA Health appointed **Steven Travers PhD** as chief information officer. He brings 25 years of experience in healthcare information technology. Travers earned a bachelor's degree in microbiology from the Mississippi University for Women, a master's degree in biology from the University of South Alabama, a master's degree in business administration from Millsaps College and a doctorate in management from USA.

## Roberts Brothers Adds Agents



Winstead



Mitchell



Emley



McAleer



Hudson

**Suzanne Winstead, Carlette Mitchell, John Emley, Cheril McAleer** and

**Denna Hudson** are new agents with **Roberts Brothers**.

## Long's Human Resource Services Promotes Conklan



Conklan

**Shawn Conklan** was recently promoted to vice president of operations at **Long's Human Resource Services**. Conklan brings nearly 20 years of sales and operations experience to the role and will be responsible for the strategic growth of all of Long's business lines. Additionally, Conklan is a U.S. Coast Guard veteran and a graduate of Leadership Mobile.

## Thames Batré Insurance Welcomes Boone



Boone

**Coley Boone** was recently added to the **Thames Batré Insurance** team of producers. Boone is a graduate of Auburn University with a bachelor's degree in horticulture. She also earned a Certified Professional Insurance Agent (CPIA) designation and Certified Insurance Counselor (CIC) designation

## Threaded Fasteners Promotes Bryan



Bryan

**Threaded Fasteners Inc.** promoted **Ashley Bryan** to chief financial officer. Bryan is a certified public accountant with a bachelor's degree in business administration and a master's degree in accounting from the University of Southern Mississippi.

## Altaworx Hires Hines As Infrastructure and Automation Manager



Hines

**Altaworx** welcomed **Tony Hines** as infrastructure and automation manager. He brings 25 years of network engineering and infrastructure experience. Hines studied management information systems at the University of Mobile and previously worked with multiple international companies.

## JubileeScape Adds Crow as Operations Manager



Crow



Paton

**JubileeScape** announced the addition of **Scott Crow** as Mobile area operations manager. Crow earned a bachelor's degree in horticulture from Auburn University. In addition, **Dave Paton** returned to the team as a landscape designer and business development manager.

## BSCC Hires Softball Coach



Meadows

**Bishop State Community College** added **Monica Meadows** as its new head softball coach. Meadows earned a bachelor's degree in psychology and a master's degree in human resources from Rollins College in Orlando. She is currently completing a master's degree in physical education at the University of West Florida.

## Adams and Reese Adds Williams-Maynard



Williams-Maynard

Former U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission attorney and Assistant U.S. Attorney **Suntrease Williams-Maynard** joined **Adams and Reese's** government investigations and white collar defense practice as special counsel. Williams-Maynard holds a bachelor's degree in sociology/criminal justice from Shaw University, a master's degree in public administration and a graduate certificate in public sector human resource management from Pennsylvania State University, and a law degree from North Carolina Central University.

## Bellator Welcomes New Agents



Moore



Craft



Carwie



Cockrell



Foster

**Bellator Real Estate & Development** added five new agents: **Chris Moore, Carrie**

**Moore, Carrie Moore, Carrie Moore, Carrie Moore** and **Candace Foster**.

## BUSINESS ENDEAVORS

## MAA to Take Over St. Elmo Airport

The **Mobile Airport Authority (MAA)**, through an agreement with the state of Alabama, will manage operations at the St. Elmo Airport in Mobile County. This agreement is the first in a two-step process, and eventually the state will transfer ownership to MAA. The public-use airport near Grand Bay is a 738-acre property with 20 hangars and a 4,000-foot landing strip used primarily for corporate and private jets.

## Bryant Bank Opens Mobile Location



Holland

**Bryant Bank** announced its newest location at 6151 Airport Blvd. in Mobile. Veteran banker **Michael Holland** will lead the Mobile team at the site formerly occupied by the Singing River Federal Credit Union. The office will offer the bank's full line of products such as personal, private, business and mortgage banking, treasury management services, online banking and a drive-thru ATM. The new location will employ nine bankers.

## Airbus Reaches Milestones

Airbus reached two important milestones at its commercial aircraft production facility in Mobile. First, the company inaugurated production activities in a newly built Final Assembly Line hangar. Second, Airbus welcomed the first component assemblies destined to become an A220 for JetBlue into the new hangar. JetBlue will be the second customer served by the Mobile team, with its first U.S.-made A220 scheduled for delivery in the fourth quarter of 2020.

## WELL DONE

### Palmer Whiting Among 2020 Top Advisors



Whiting

**Palmer G. Whiting**, wealth management advisor at Merrill Lynch Mobile, was recently named to Barron's "Top 1,200 Advisors" list, March 13, 2020. Barron's is a trademark of Dow Jones & Co. Inc.

### UAB Public Health Names Recipient of Alumni Award



Daniel

**Casey L. Daniel PhD, MPH**, a public health researcher and assistant professor of family medicine at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine, received the 2020 UAB School of Public Health Early Career Achievement Alumni Award for demonstrating excellence in public health as an alumnus of the UAB School of Public Health.

Daniel also works in the cancer prevention and control program at USA Health Mitchell Cancer Institute.

## UM Announces Top Faculty and Staff Awards and Promotions



Henderson



Schuler



Godwin



Hughes

The **University of Mobile** recently awarded its highest faculty and staff honors, the Megginson Awards and Faculty Engagement Award. The Megginson Awards recognize outstanding contributions to the university in the areas of teaching, research and service. The Faculty Engagement Award honors a faculty member who demonstrates excellence in student engagement inside and outside the standard classroom setting and intentionally fosters community among students.

The 2020 William A. Megginson Teaching Award was presented to **Dr. Troy Henderson**. The Mitford Ray Megginson Research Award was presented to **Dr. Stephen Schuler**. The Emma Frances Megginson Service Award was presented to **Cindy Godwin**, The Faculty Engagement Award was presented to **Julie Hughes**.

### UM Faculty Receive Promotions

In other news, **Dr. Stephen Schuler** was promoted to full professor. **Dr. Leslie Baggett**, **Dr. Karen Dennis** and **Rusty Roberts** were promoted to associate professors. **Lourdes Baumer** and **Tammy Brown** were promoted to assistant professors. **Dr. Matthew Downs**, **Dr. Patrick Jacobs** and **Dr. Stephen Schuler** received tenure.

## UM Business Students Ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in Online Global Business Strategy Competition

Four **University of Mobile** business students generated the highest total scores worldwide in an online global business strategy competition. The team, led by **Dr. Kathy Dunning**, dean of the school of business and associate professor of accounting, includes the following students: **Heidi Giles**, an accounting major from Canada; **Gunner Hendrix**, a marketing major from Spanish Fort; **Morgan Bryant**, a management major from Mobile; and **Lukas Burt**, an accounting major from England.

### Altaworx Wins Innovation Award

**Altaworx** announced TMC, a global, integrated media company, named its Catapult Billing Platform as a 2020 TMC Labs Internet Telephony Innovation Award winner. The award honors products that display innovation, unique features and significant contributions toward improving communications technology. The Catapult Billing Platform is an ecosystem that includes white label UCaaS with automated billing and compliance. The UCaaS platform also provides robocall blocking, toll fraud prevention and revenue assurance integration features.

In addition, Altaworx was named one of America's Top 500 Fastest Growing Companies according to *The Financial Times*. Altaworx ranked 253 out of 500. The company attributes its success to its focus on business impact first and technology second.

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## Williams-Maynard Top 40 Under 40



Williams-Maynard

**Adams and Reese** announce Attorney **Suntrease Williams-Maynard** was named one of The National Black Lawyers' (NBL) "Top 40 Under 40" in Alabama. The award is extended to only forty lawyers in each state who, "exemplify superior qualifications, leadership skills, and performance in their areas of legal practice."

## Spring Hill College Makes Top Ten List

According to *Forbes'* "Third Way's Price-To-Earnings Premium: A New Way To Measure The Economic Value Of College" article, **Spring Hill College** is ranked among the top ten colleges and universities in the country on a new return on investment (ROI) calculator. The Price-To-Earnings Premium, or PEP, is a new method developed to calculate the ROI of various higher education programs.

## COMMUNITY

### St. Paul's Student Semifinalist in Presidential Scholars Program



Rosenthal

**Alexandra Rosenthal**, a graduating senior at St. Paul's Episcopal School, was named a semifinalist in the 2020 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program. She is the only semifinalist in

Mobile and one of 10 students in the state of Alabama. Scholars are selected on the basis of superior academic and artistic achievements, leadership qualities, strong character and involvement in community and school activities.

### UWSWA Named New Sponsor of the Year by AmeriCorps NCCC

AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (AmeriCorps NCCC) Southern Region named **United Way of Southwest Alabama (UWSWA)** its 2020 New Sponsor of the Year. UWSWA was recognized for providing enriching service opportunities and learning experiences and the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, an IRS initiative designed to support free tax preparation service for the underserved through various partner organizations. The service helps low- to moderate-income individuals, persons with disabilities, the elderly and limited English speakers file their taxes each year.

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 first and 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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**FEATURED PHOTOGRAPHER  
CHAD RILEY**

A native of Mississippi, Chad Riley is a commercial photographer and photojournalist located in Mobile. He graduated from the University of Mississippi and moved to Mobile in 2008 for his wife, Cameron's, graduate school studies. Riley launched his photography career in 2010 capturing weddings and has since photographed more than 300 weddings and 1,000 assignments. Today, his focus is primarily in commercial photography and photojournalism. His work has been featured in magazines and newspapers locally and nationally including *Mobile Bay*, *Alabama Magazine*, *Lagniappe*, *Business Alabama*, *Business View*, *Forbes Magazine*, *Best Magazine*, *TheKnot*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Philadelphia Daily News*. In this issue, Riley's photography is featured on the cover, in "Mobile – A Hub for Foreign Direct Investment and Exports," as well as the Small Business of the Month. To see more of his portfolio, visit [chadrileyphoto.com](http://chadrileyphoto.com).

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