

# BUSINESSVIEW

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FEBRUARY 2021

**UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL  
OPENS NEW  
TRAUMA CENTER**

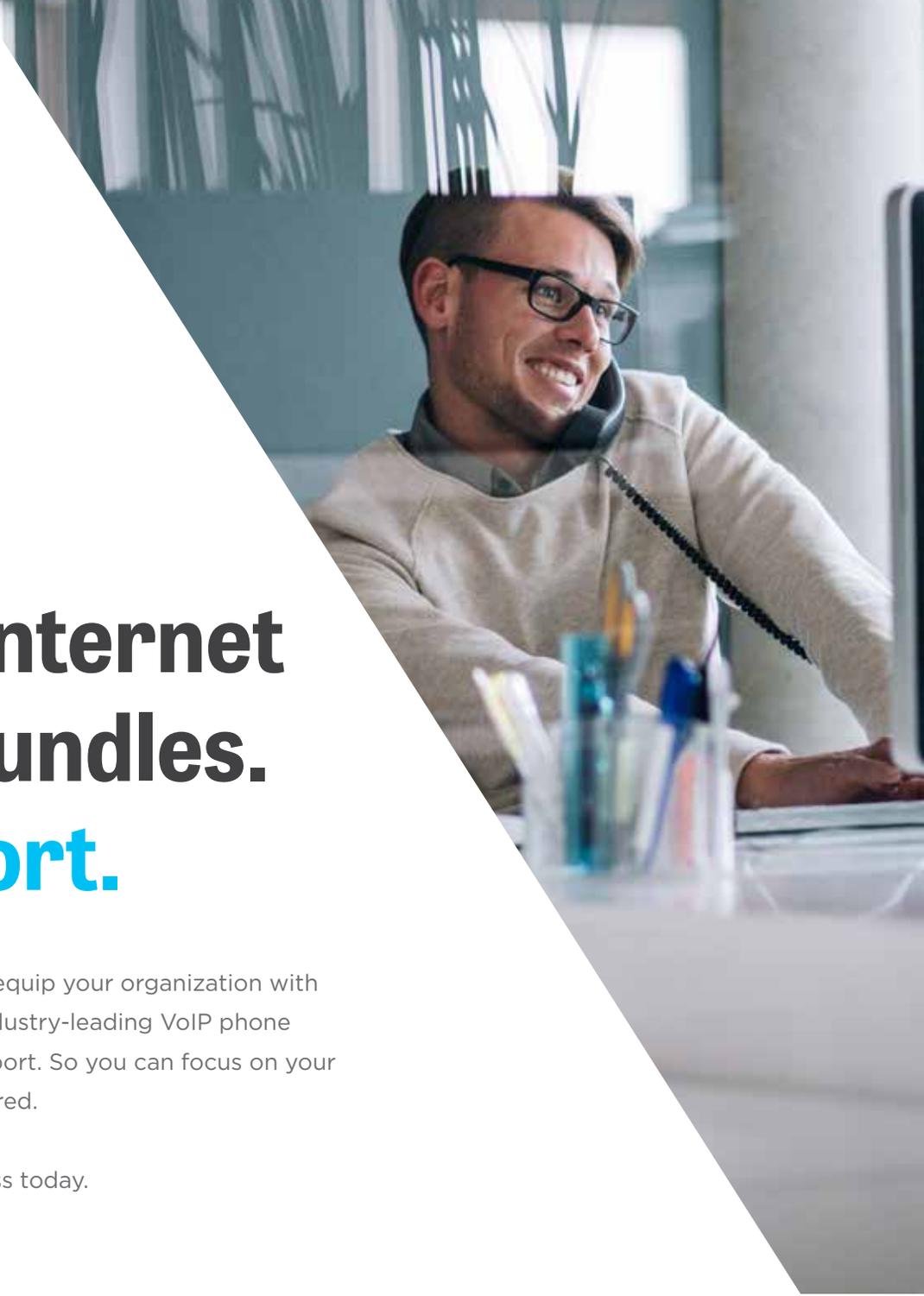
Meet the  
**BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS**

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**2020 - A YEAR  
IN REVIEW**





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# THE REAL DEAL

THE FUTURE USS MOBILE (LCS 26): READY FOR COMMISSIONING



## REMAINING MILESTONES

- Trials
- Delivery
- Commissioning (Summer 2021)
- Deployment

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<https://www.facebook.com/ussmobilecommissioning>

<https://ussmobilecommissioning.org>

# BUSINESSVIEW

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FEBRUARY 2021

## IN THE ISSUE



### 5 ON THE COVER:

*Despite a pandemic, downtown Mobile continues to grow and be restored. Take a look back on 2020 by reading the Mobile Area Chamber's Annual Report, beginning on page 5. Photo by Charles Dodd.*



5



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## ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

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4 FEBRUARY 2021



### PUBLISHER'S NOTE:

## CHAMBER ROLLS NEXT THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

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

Even with the year 2020 in our rear view mirror, it's hard to imagine another year bringing more challenges and opportunities than last year did for the Mobile Area Chamber. It was for that reason our staff and board of directors quickly worked to develop the Chamber's next three-year strategic plan a year in advance. The overarching question during the process was how will we continue to evolve and how will we adapt?

Co-chairs of the strategic planning process were Board Chair Terry Harbin and Chair-elect Matt White. They and the entire board of directors worked hard during the fall, dividing into thought teams designed to develop strategic

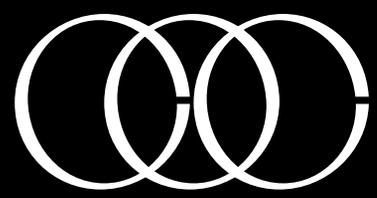
priorities and measurable goals to lead the Chamber into the future.

The end product is one we can all be proud of. The plan emphasizes how much we've already accomplished, the excellence that we continue to achieve and the opportunities we have to extend our services to the business community and to enhance our impact over the next three years. The details of the strategic plan can be found in this issue. I think you'll agree these priorities are absolutely critical and frankly necessary to the future success of our "five-star" chamber of commerce.



# 20 20

## ANNUAL REPORT



MOBILE AREA  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

# FROM OUR 2020 BOARD CHAIR



Photo by Chad Riley

What else can I say other than 2020 was not what any of us expected?

As we closed the Chamber’s annual meeting last year, I challenged everyone in the audience to get more involved in the Chamber. Closing the meeting, we played an upbeat video with some of our volunteers talking about fun networking events to attend and committees to join. Who could have imagined only a month later Mobile – like the rest of the world – would come to a screeching halt?

Even though the pandemic has devastated so many families and local businesses, there have been bright spots along the way. Some of the top takeaways from this year include:

- An immediate communications response to members and the public about COVID-19 resources ranging from federal grant and loan programs to securing sources to purchase PPEs (Personal Protective Equipment) and more.
- Announcing more than \$942 million in capital investment here in Mobile.
- Rewriting the Chamber’s long-range strategic plan to include an increased emphasis on diversity, equity and inclusion tactics to make the organization stronger; and
- Hosting Leaders Exchange in our own yard and highlighting Mobile-centric issues (housing, education, tourism and more).

I’m a different person than I was just a year ago – we all are – and that’s just one of the many reasons I’m honored to have been asked to stay on and serve the Chamber as board chair this coming year. Unprecedented, yes. But we can all agree the playbook is being rewritten, and we’re all going to come out on the other side of this stronger.

Terry H. Harbin  
2020 Chair, Board of Directors  
Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce

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Photo by Chad Riley



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2021

The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce has a strategic plan to guide its direction for years 2019-21. To develop it, the Chamber staff worked with members of the board of directors and a consultant to discuss key issues and create benchmarks to measure the organization's successes. Below is an overview of the strategy, vision and success indicators for each of our four areas of focus – jobs, advocacy, value and excellence.

## JOBS

RETAIN, EXPAND AND RECRUIT BUSINESSES, INVESTMENT AND JOBS IN THE MOBILE AREA

**VISION:** By year-end 2021, the Mobile area will have steadily increased jobs, business and capital investments in our community. The Chamber will lead business engagement in more efficient workforce development initiatives.

### Success Indicators

1. Median income growth trends for the combined statistical area
2. Primary jobs gained
3. Average salary of jobs increased
4. Total capital invested

## ADVOCACY

CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT PROMOTES BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY GROWTH

**VISION:** By year-end 2021, the Mobile will have a stronger, more diversified business climate. Chamber-led efforts will have secured a more business-friendly environment and needed infrastructure improvements, balancing sustainable growth and ongoing development. Chamber programs and events will have encouraged diversity and fostered community growth.

### Success Indicators

1. Legislative accomplishments
2. Progress in realizing the I-10 Mobile River Bridge
3. Progress in economic recovery from the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico

## VALUE

PROVIDE VALUE, SERVICES, OPPORTUNITIES AND RECOGNITION FOR OUR MEMBERS

**VISION:** By year-end 2021, the Chamber will be nationally recognized for consistently exceeding member expectations and delivering the value of membership.

### Success Indicators

1. Exceed 2,200 members and the national average in membership retention
2. Board of advisors engagement and growth
3. Member satisfaction
4. Increased usage of member rewards and benefits

## EXCELLENCE

OPERATE THE CHAMBER WITH EXCELLENCE, INNOVATION AND EFFICIENCY

**VISION:** By year-end 2021, the Chamber will be recognized as one of the nation's best through accreditation by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber will be an effective, credible and vital organization known for its high standards, ethical behavior and responsive service.

### Success Indicators

1. Five-star accreditation by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce
2. Certification by the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama
3. Healthy Chamber finances
4. Membership growth and retention

# JOBS



Airbus

## COVID-19 Response

- The Chamber's weekly conference call with area manufacturing employers along with the University of South Alabama (USA) led to an innovative practice that brought relief to local healthcare workers.
- When a critical entrepreneur program was cancelled, the Chamber worked with area organizations to create a replacement program.
- Local grant funds offered to bring relief to small businesses had input and oversight by the Chamber.
- Chamber staff counseled more than 760 small business owners and managers as they weighed options for Economic Injury Disaster Loans, Payroll Protection Program loans and other measures to keep their companies viable in 2020.
- To match dislocated workers due to COVID-19 to available jobs, the Chamber held its first virtual hiring fair.

*See pages 28-30 for an in-depth look at how the Mobile Area Chamber worked to support its members during the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020.*

## Economic Development Activity

While 2020 brought significant challenges to the business community, in dealing with the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, economic development remained lively. The Chamber's economic development department responded to hundreds of inquiries from site selectors and companies looking to locate or expand, representing industries from aerospace to chemical to distribution and transportation.

As the economic developer of record for the City of Mobile and Mobile County, more than 140 public and private companies and individuals financially support the Chamber's efforts. Partners for Growth



investments make multi-year financial commitments. The Chamber is making progress towards investment, job and salary goals, and is in year three of the current five year campaign.

## Project Announcements

A number of company announcements straddled 2019 and 2020 – meaning much of the work was completed in 2019, but final decisions and announcements came in 2020.

**10**  
**PROJECT**  
**ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
in 2020

The Chamber reported 10 economic development investment – eight expansions by local companies and two new to the area. These projects were valued at \$942 million and created 699 jobs.

**699**  
**NEW JOBS**  
**CREATED**  
by 2020 Projects

### Airbus

Kicking off the year, **Airbus** announced it would build an additional hanger to increase its A320 family of aircraft production and hire an additional 275 employees. The project is valued at \$40 million.

### AM/NS Calvert

Once the \$647 million expansion at **AM/NS Calvert** is complete, the company will produce slabs of steel currently imported from Brazil. The project is expected to create nearly 200 new jobs as the mill adds an electric arc furnace. More than 500 construction jobs will be generated during the 24-month construction period.

**\$942**  
**MILLION**  
**CAPITAL**  
**INVESTMENT**  
Announced  
in 2020



### AutoMOBILE

A new \$60 million automobile roll-on/roll-off project is under construction at the Port of Mobile. When complete, it will create a new U.S. gateway for shipping finished automobiles domestically and globally. **AutoMOBILE** International Terminal will operate the facility when completed in 2021.

### Berg Pipe

Updated industry standards for large-diameter steel pipe used to transport natural gas and oil helped spur a \$15 million expansion at **Berg Pipe**. This is the first major expansion since the company began operations at the former International Paper site in 2009.



Photo by LA Photographee



### Incoa Performance Minerals

A \$110.85 million investment and plans to hire 74 employees over the next five years will propel **Incoa Performance Minerals** into the U.S. calcium carbonate market. The filler product is added to a variety of products from antacids to paint. The new company is co-locating at Millard Maritime.

### Jones Welding Co. (JWC)

Wanting to expand the volume and complexity of projects of the family-owned business, **JWC** made an \$8.5 million investment. The company is creating 10 new jobs, and increased its footprint by 17 acres with a nearby location in Prichard.

Mobile-based JWC specializes in repair, engineering and processing of industrial equipment.

**\$57,837**  
**AVERAGE SALARY**  
**OF JOBS CREATED**  
**by 2020 PROJECTS**

### Mobile Commerce Park

The Chamber presented a new purchase agreement for **Mobile Commerce Park** to the Industrial Park Board. The board approved the sale of five-plus acres to MIDAM Properties LLC.

### Outokumpu Stainless USA

The Finland-based company made a \$43 million investment to increase its domestic market share of steel used in buildings, infrastructure, automobiles, appliances, energy and heavy industry. In addition, **Outokumpu Stainless USA** built an administrative building, housing its business division headquarters for the U.S, Mexico, Brazil and Argentina. The company's two announcements added dozens of jobs to the Mobile facility.

### SpillTech Makes Two Expansions

Customer demand led Mobile-headquartered **SpillTech Environmental** to invest \$4.8 million with plans to hire 15 additional employees.

Later in the year, SpillTech announced a second expansion, adding \$4.98 million to its expenditures and eight additional jobs.

The company manufactures and distributes standard and custom-sized high-performance absorbent products, including containment booms used in hazmat responses, and products to help customers maintain safe industrial workplace environments.



### Threaded Fasteners

The Mobile-headquartered company is expanding its fabrication, assembly and packaging operations, investing \$1.7 million with plans to hire 15 additional employees.

Driving the company's latest expansion is the number of repairs caused by numerous storms and hurricanes along the Gulf Coast.



*Threaded Fasteners announced a \$1.7 million expansion to build a facility to house fabrication, assembling and packaging of large anchor bolts such as those pictured above.*



Port of Mobile

## Impacting Investments

In addition to headlines made by new and existing companies, there were a number of investments announced in 2020 that will enhance Mobile's competitive advantage when it comes to industrial recruitment. These included:

- In May, **Airbus** completed its 270,000-square-foot hangar constructed to produce the A220 family of aircraft, and months later, the company delivered the first U.S.-made A220. Mobile is the only city in the world outside of Mirabel (Quebec) Canada, where A220 aircraft are produced.
- The **Alabama State Port Authority** completed a 400-foot container dock extension at APM Terminals Mobile. The improvements are helping shorten service times for ships and provide room for additional cranes.

Less than a year ago, the container terminal was recognized as one of the fastest-growing in the nation and one of the most improved terminals in North America by the *Journal of Commerce*.

- Further increasing its growing steel and aluminum shipbuilding portfolio, **Austal USA** made a significant waterfront purchase. The deal included a 20,000-ton Panamax-class floating dry dock, 100,000 square feet of covered repair facilities and 15 acres of waterfront property along the Mobile River and Gulf of Mexico.

Last summer, the U.S. Department of Defense released details on a \$50 million agreement with the company, granted through the CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security). Austal is expected to match that

investment and the agreement will maintain, protect and expand U.S. domestic production of steel shipbuilding capability and capacity through capital projects that will be executed over the next 24 months.



Austal



*Bishop State*

- **BendPak's** announcement of a 100,000-square-foot distribution center in Theodore was quickly followed by a report of another 70,000-square-foot warehouse.

Santa Paula, Calif.-based BendPak manufactures and sells automotive lifts used in car dealerships and parking garages. The Mobile location will serve U.S. Gulf, Midwest, East Coast and Canadian markets via Mobile's five Class I railroads.



**BendPak**

*BendPak manufactures and sells automotive lifts used in car dealerships and parking garages.*

- **Bishop State Community College** broke ground on a \$21 million Advanced Manufacturing Center that will train students, current employees and career-change candidates pursuing Mobile's high-wage, high-demand and high-tech jobs.

- The **City of Mobile** and **State of Alabama** announced a historic land purchase made up of multiple parcels owned by the University of South Alabama Foundation. Commonly known as Brookley by the Bay, this approximately 300-acre swath of land sits along the western shore of Mobile Bay to the east of the Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley.

Included are nearly 150 acres of waterfront property, plans to preserve 50 acres of ecologically sensitive wetlands and another 100 acres that will be dedicated to economic development.

- **Flight Works Alabama** opened to the general public. Spearheaded by Airbus and the State of Alabama, the exhibition and education center will play a key role in developing the area's future aerospace workforce.
- The **Mobile Airport Authority** put the finishing touches on its master plan and is now awaiting approval from the Federal Aviation Administration. The \$403 million plan outlines the next 20 years of development with a focus on moving commercial air passenger service to the Mobile Downtown Airport (BFM) over the next two to five years. The plan calls for a \$160 million passenger terminal with eight gates and a five-floor parking garage to be built on land that's already part of the Mobile Aeroplex.

- The **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** issued a permit and received full federal and state funding to take the Mobile ship harbor to 50-foot draft and widen the channel by 100 feet. The project will maintain Mobile’s appeal for import and export customers.

## Building International Engagement in 2020

In 2019, the Chamber made international engagement a priority to attract foreign investment. While travel and trade shows took a different turn, several high-profile activities took place in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, including engaging with the Netherlands Consulate General to discuss opportunities with Dutch companies interested in the Southeast; participating in the annual Alabama-Germany Partnership event held in Huntsville; and a conversation with the French-American Chamber of the Gulf Coast, located in New Orleans, to discuss potential partnerships and areas of collaboration.

To further advance global trade in the region, the Chamber created a quarterly newsletter, TradeTalks, sharing information on international business news, events, education topics and more.



## Talent Attraction

Development Counsellors International, a New York-based economic development marketing firm, completed its recommended strategies for the next phase of the Chamber’s talent attraction program.

In 2020, the Chamber focused efforts on “Get to Know Mobile,” a virtual event designed to bring local college students face-to-face with employers. More than 70 students from The University of Alabama and 23 Mobile area employers participated in the inaugural event.

Another initiative brought area employers interested in hiring engineering students from the University of South Alabama to campus and highlighted the value of internships.

In November, 35 veterans joined a virtual job fair with seven companies presenting opportunities. Chamber-member employers included Airbus, AM/NS Calvert, Austal USA, Mobile County Personnel Board and Rural Sourcing Inc. (RSI).

**105**  
NUMBER OF  
PARTICIPANTS  
attending  
Virtual Job Fairs  
in 2020



## Roadmap for Success

During the COVID-19 pandemic the U.S. Small Business Development Department announced Mobile qualified again to host its Emerging Leaders. As the stress of the pandemic weighed heavily on government funding, the program was canceled for 2020.

Recognizing that an executive-level, entrepreneurial training program was needed more than ever, the Mobile Area Chamber teamed up with the University of South Alabama, University of Mobile and the Alabama Small Business Development Center to develop “Roadmap for Success.”

The four-month-program helped small businesses accelerate revenues and adapt growth strategies to accommodate this new economic reality. It was offered free, and 12 businesses participated.

## Innovation Portal

In December, Innovation Portal opened its 30,000-square-foot facility with Class-A office space, collaborative workspaces, and classroom and event spaces.

In 2020, the organization launched an investment fund for Mobile-based developing companies with high-growth potential. The Portal Fund was created to attract and retain startup founders in Mobile.

**762**  
**ENTREPRENEURS**  
Receiving Business  
Counseling and  
Advice by Chamber  
Staff in 2020



*Roadmap for Success*

*When Emerging Leaders was cancelled for 2020, the Mobile Area Chamber took steps to create a similar entrepreneur program to help small business owners level up. A total of 12 participated in the inaugural Roadmap for Success. Above, Rick Miller with Pro356 Consulting is leading a group discussion.*



*Innovation Portal*

# ADVOCACY



Pictured left to right are female members of the state and local government featured in the Business View's women in business edition including: Bess Rich, Mobile City Council, District 6; Gina Gregory, Mobile City Council, District 7; Connie Hudson, Mobile County Commission, District 2; Merceria Ludgood, Mobile County Commission, District 1; Rep. Adline Clarke, Alabama State House; Rep. Margie Wilcox, Alabama State House; Sen. Vivian Davis Figures, Alabama State Senate and Rep. Barbara Drummond, Alabama State House.

Photo by LA Photographee

## COVID-19 Response

- The Chamber redirected its advocacy efforts to support businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Input from a series of member surveys gauged the pandemic's impact on the business community. The Chamber shared those results with local, state and federal elected officials.
- The Chamber's website, mobilechamber.com, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram turned into critical communication channels to share resources and COVID-19-related updates.
- To continue connecting members to elected officials, the Chamber took a number of events virtual and expanded its Forum Alabama series.

See pages 28 - 30 for an in-depth look at how the Mobile Area Chamber worked to support its members during the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020.

## SPEAKING OUT FOR BUSINESS

Decisions made in Montgomery and Washington D.C. impact Mobile area businesses, and this was never truer than in 2020.

As the voice of business, the Mobile Area Chamber based its legislative priorities on member input. The year started off with a focus on creating jobs; advocating for fair trade; calling for good stewardship of Rebuild Alabama, funded by gasoline and diesel taxes; supporting adequate funding of education budgets; promoting the Port of Mobile and removing racist language from Alabama's Constitution.

As COVID-19 scaled into a worldwide pandemic and businesses began to operate under an executive order from Gov. Kay Ivey, the Chamber's advocacy efforts were directed to relief bills aimed at keeping businesses open and their workers employed.

**856**  
STATE  
LEGISLATIVE BILLS  
MONITORED

In May, the Chamber asked the Mobile County legislative delegation to support a bill protecting companies and healthcare providers from civil liability resulting from the contraction of COVID-19. And in December, the Chamber urged Congress to stop the IRS from enforcing a “surprise tax” on Paycheck Protection Program funds, the very assistance meant to help them through the pandemic.

Other priorities included continuing the Historic Tax Credit and two economic development tax incentives, fighting tariffs on airplane parts that would hurt Airbus’ competitiveness, Hurricane Sally recovery, Alabama’s response to the U.S. Census and encouraging people to vote in the 2020 primary, runoff and general elections.

The community and governmental affairs department initiated a weekly legislative update during the 2020 session. It was sent via email to the Chamber’s Board of Directors, Partners for Growth Investors, Board of Advisors and Government Affairs Committee.

### Leadership Input

The Chamber’s governing Board of Directors took a formal position on two ballot measures in the general election. The first, Amendment 4, required the legislature to remove racist wording from the state constitution, and the second was Mobile County’s Pay-As-You-Go program to fund countywide road and bridge improvement projects. Both passed.

### Connecting to Elected Officials

The priority of face time with elected officials didn’t change in 2020, even though traditional networking events went mostly virtual, in keeping with state occupancy guidelines.



- A virtual platform allowed the Chamber to expand its usual **Forum Alabama** offerings from two a year to a series of six. Featured speakers included Lt. Gov. Will Ainsworth, Rep. Bradley Byrne, Gov. Kay Ivey, Sen. Doug Jones, and two joint sessions – one with Senate Majority Leader Greg Reed and Senate Minority Leader Bobby Singleton, and the other with State House Speaker Mac McCutcheon and House Minority Leader Anthony Daniels.
- The **State of the City and County** was also virtual. The popular event offered Mobile County Commissioner Merceria Ludgood and City of Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson a platform to share accomplishments and future plans with the business community.

**35**  
**EVENTS**  
CONNECTING  
ELECTED OFFICIALS  
& THE BUSINESS  
COMMUNITY



State of the City & County



*Pork & Politics*

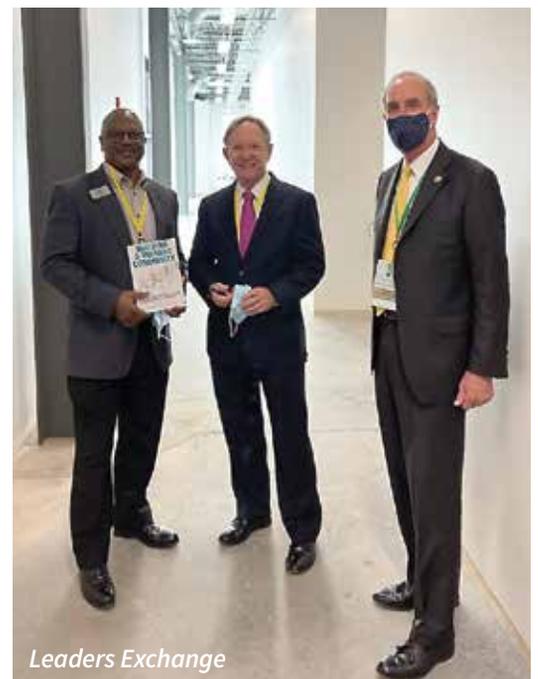
- Prior to COVID-19, **Pork & Politics** drew 240 attendees to mingle with candidates running for local, state and federal offices during the 2020 election cycle.
- To help legislators from across the state learn about Mobile and its role in the state's economy, the Chamber partnered with Coastal Alabama Partnership, Alabama State Port Authority, Business Council of Alabama and Austal to bring legislators to Mobile to tour Austal and the Port of Mobile, and experience Mardi Gras – all prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Investing at Home

With the economic hardships COVID-19 brought, the Chamber held its three-day **Leaders Exchange** in Mobile, promoting several local initiatives. Presentations included downtown redevelopment; diversity, equity and inclusion; neighborhood revitalization; education; and talent attraction.



*Leaders Exchange*



*Leaders Exchange*



Professional photographers were used to shoot various feature photos for each issue of the Business View.

## Business News and Features

Feedback on the Chamber's newly reformatted magazine, **Business View**, was strong and supportive. In 2020, the Chamber followed a formal editorial calendar covering shopping local, a year in review, women in business, real estate, trade, the Chamber's Board of Advisors, small business, healthcare, education and volunteer/professional development.

Business View  
CIRCULATION  
**16,873**

**6,589**  
Business  
View Weekly  
SUBSCRIBERS

The monthly publication is the anchor of the Chamber's business news coverage, supported by the electronic **Business View Weekly** and five social media channels.

Engagement on social media rose dramatically when businesses were operating under the "Safer At Home" order. New content, frequent updates and video posts kept followers coming back for news, information and member features. By year end, Facebook had 8,724 likes and 10,418 followers; Twitter, 9,281 followers; LinkedIn, 5,991 followers; Instagram, 2,194 followers; and YouTube, 65 subscribers.

**27,949**  
Social Media  
FOLLOWERS

## Marketing & Media

The Chamber updated its long-standing branding campaign, **Believe in Mobile. Belong to the Chamber.** To reflect the challenges brought by 2020, Stronger Together, #believeinMobile, became the modified branding message, and was distributed via the Chamber's news outlets as well as through print media partnerships.

The organization's seasonal "Shop Local" messages were deemed especially important, and were extended to show support for area restaurants and retailers.

In addition to the Chamber's typical media strategy of pitching business news, the organization and its leadership served as subject matter experts to help audiences understand the resources available to area businesses and their employees, and well as the short- and long-term economic outlook.





2020 Board of Directors

Photo by Jeff Tesney Photography

## COVID-19 Response

- The Chamber increased its technology infrastructure and adopted a virtual platform to bring members face-to-face for networking and professional development.
- A series of conference calls featured area subject matter experts offering Chamber members up-to-date information on a variety of business topics.
- The Chamber continued to offer networking sessions, award ceremonies, workshops and webinars for attendees whether they met in-person or virtual.

*See pages 28 -30 for an in-depth look at how the Mobile Area Chamber worked to support its members during the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020.*

## Starting off the Year

The Chamber's Annual Meeting continued to be the "can't miss" event of the new year, drawing more than 900 business and community leaders. The meeting, held in February, highlights recent accomplishments, introduces new leadership and presents the organization's action plan for the coming year.

## Going Virtual

Networking and professional development were even more important in 2020. The Chamber grabbed hold of technology, and before long was able to add virtual events to its offerings.

**Membership 101** was a great example of virtual success, allowing participants to dodge bad weather and attend from around the globe. The event walks new members through Chamber benefits and presents a birds-eye view of Chamber initiatives.

**Growth Alliance Task Force**, a Chamber group of minority-owned small business managers and chief executive officers, and **Executive Roundtable**, a monthly small business forum, also went virtual. Topics for these included cybersecurity, human resources tips for small businesses and nonprofit sustainability.



Virtual Military Appreciation

In addition, **Military Appreciation Day** was also held virtually. The annual Chamber event recognizes all branches of the military and distinguished JROTC and ROTC cadets.

In December, the **State of the Economy** went virtual. The event forecasts Mobile's and the national economy based on member survey-input and presentations from four industry leaders. Highlighted 2020 sectors included healthcare, shipbuilding, small business and technology.

## In-Person

**Member Appreciation Day** was the Chamber's last in-person event before Gov. Kay Ivey issued "Stay at Home" and "Safer at Home" orders. More than 200 people attended the annual soiree on the Chamber's front lawn.

It wasn't until August that a large group got together again – socially distanced, of course. During the summer's **Board of Advisors** meeting, the Chamber celebrated its **Small Business of the Year** finalists and announced Calagaz Printing Co. as the winner.

This advisory group is made up of 261 individuals, representing the Chamber's largest dues-paying members. The Board of Advisors typically meets three times a year with the organization's governing Board of Directors.

In the fall, the Chamber's **Eagle Awards** drew 218 in-person attendees. The annual event recognizes the business success and community contributions of minority-owned companies.

In between, traditional in-person networking events were more appreciated – **Coffee with the Chamber**, **Networking at Noon** and the **Chamber Classic Golf Tournament** – offering relief from virtual fatigue.

**Business Expo**, the Chamber's business-to-business trade show, was rescheduled to April 2021 due to COVID-19 crowd capacity guidelines.



**35**  
MEMBER  
NETWORKING  
EVENTS

(In Person/Virtual)



Member Appreciation Day



Chairman's Reception

### Professional Development

While much of the Chamber's programming centered around topics critical to navigating the COVID-19 pandemic, there were a number of sessions dedicated to helping members grow their business in good times and bad.

A few of those included: Google's Using Data to Drive Growth + Engage Customers Online During the COVID-19 Crisis; "A Global Trade Outlook," featuring a panel of national and local experts; "Employment Law During a Pandemic," and "How to Manage Problem Employees and Handle Difficult People."

**42**  
SMALL  
BUSINESS-FOCUSED  
Workshops and  
Seminars

### Chamber Chase

Led by **Melissa Cross** of McAleer's Office Furniture, Chamber Chase never skipped a beat. The annual resource development campaign exceeded its goal, raising \$1.51 million with the help of 37 volunteers, representing 28 companies. The group recruited 56 new members and 11 additional Board of Advisors.



Chamber Chase Chair Melissa Cross worked to make the 2020 campaign fun and entertaining for the volunteers who participated.



# AWARD WINNERS



Photo by LA Photographee

## Small Business of the Year

**Calagaz Printing Co.** (above) was named the Mobile Area Chamber's 2020 Small Business of the Year. Boutique public relations, marketing and events agency **JJPR** and telecommunications firm **Wavefly Powered by JMF Solutions** were honored as finalists.

Nominated by the Chamber, JJPR earned the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Dream Big award and took the top spot in the women-owned business achievement category.

Calagaz, also nominated by the Chamber, earned recognition by the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama and Business Council of Alabama as the gold award recipient in the 11-50 employee small business category.

## Manufacturer of the Year

**AM/NS Calvert's** \$647 million investment and 200 new jobs was the year's largest economic development announcement, and the company was named the Chamber's 2020 Manufacturer of the Year. When the expansion is complete, the company will locally produce steel slabs currently imported from Brazil.



Photo by Chad Riley Photography



Photo by Dawn Finch

Airbus

## Innovator of the Year

By diverting typical business operations to address a pressing community need, **Airbus** earned the Chamber's Innovator of the Year award. The company used its 3D printers to create more than 500 face masks that could be sanitized and reused and hundreds of tension-relief straps for local healthcare workers.

## Eagle Awards

During its 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Eagle Awards, the Chamber celebrated the advertising agency **Blue Fish** as its first Hispanic-owned company to be honored; and **Easy Heating and Cooling** service company. **Paula's Hair Unlimited** was given its second Eagle Award, first winning in 2007.

## Rev. Wesley A. James Minority Business Advocate

The **City of Mobile** made a significant investment in new programs, policies and procedures that led to hiring more disadvantaged businesses and service-disabled veteran-owned companies. For this work, the Chamber named the City of Mobile as its 2020 Rev. Wesley A. James Minority Business Advocate.



Photo by Willie Davis

Eagle Awards and Rev. Wesley A. James  
Minority Business Advocate

## Corporate Community Service Award

In 2019, **Wilkins Miller** employees gave 2,684 in-kind hours and 1,100 service hours to area nonprofits, and supported 25 community activities. These efforts, backed by a history of giving, earned Wilkins Miller the Chamber's Corporate Community Service Award, presented in 2020. The award is given in conjunction with the Junior League of Mobile to companies based on the community efforts of its employees.

## Gen. Gary Cooper Outstanding Service Award

The Chamber honored **U.S. Army Lt. Col. Louis J. Lartigue Sr. (Ret)** with the 2020 Gen. Gary J. Cooper Outstanding Service Award during its annual Military Appreciation Event. After his Vietnam infantry service, Lartigue served in staff positions with the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group in Thailand/Laos, the U.S. Army Communications Command and U.S. Army Europe and the Department of the Army Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics at the Pentagon.



Lartigue



Loper

## Ambassador of the Year

**Kirsten Loper**, with Frios Gourment Pops, was the Chamber's 2020 Ambassador of the Year. Loper earned the award through her service at Chamber events and reaching out to members.

## Ambassador of the Month

- Michelle Ard, Seabulk Towing
- John Garrett, Edward Jones
- Colleen Harrison, Multifamily Management Inc.
- Kirsten Loper, formerly with Calagaz Printing
- Sarah McAleer, McAleer's Office Furniture
- Megan Murdock, Hampton Inn & Suites Providence Park
- Donna Turner, Southeast Toyota Finance

## Small Business of the Month Recipients

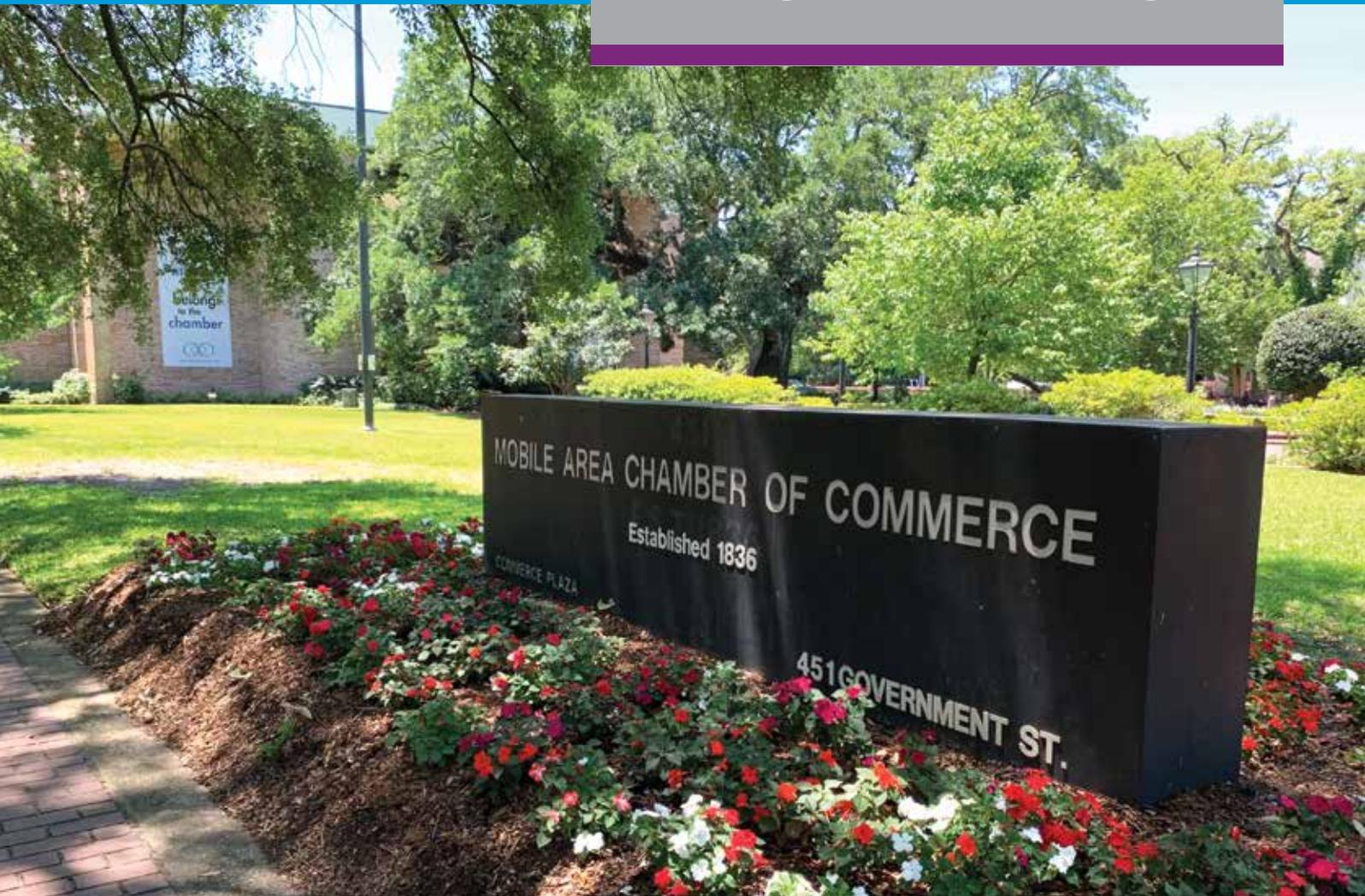
- Coldsmith, Ryder and Associates
- Dauphin Creek Realty and Associates
- Easy Heating and Cooling
- Fremin Ventures d/b/a FCS Facility Maintenance
- Generational Insights
- iCater Weddings & Events
- Mosquito Joe
- Oyster Shell Strategy
- Pro356 Consulting
- Shields Insurance Agency

**65**  
**EMPLOYEES**  
Total Number of Employees  
of the Small Businesses  
of the Month



Wilkins Miller

# EXCELLENCE



## COVID-19 Response

- The Chamber increased programming to meet the changing needs of members, adding several virtual webinars.
- Pursued grant opportunities to help the Chamber fund additional services for its members, especially small businesses.
- Staff and the Chamber's Board of Directors updated the strategic plan to fit the new environment and enhanced the organization's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

*See pages 28 -30 for an in-depth look at how the Mobile Area Chamber worked to support its members during the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020.*

## Strategic Direction

One way the Chamber works to achieve excellence in its operations is to have a plan that guides its program of work.

With the changing circumstances brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization's Board of Directors and management team updated its long-range strategic plan one year early. The board voted to approve the new plan in January 2021.

**54**  
YEARS



## Diversity and Inclusion

Recognizing a commitment to diversity and inclusion is a journey and not a destination, the Chamber added equity to its focus.

In June, while the nation struggled with social justice, the Chamber's board adopted a new statement of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI). Consisting of nine points, the document outlines the Chamber's commitment that fosters and encourages diversity, reflective of the makeup of the community.



*Chamber staff donates to Ronald McDonald House*

In addition, Chamber leadership initiated conversations with local CEOs to discuss how to intentionally improve diversity and inclusion in the Mobile area and how it impacts the community; and became a national partner in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Equality of Opportunity Initiative, joining 425 other chambers and trade organizations across the country.

Staff participation in a full day of training focused on DEI, facilitated by Gia Wiggins of Morale Resource. Topics included ethics, effective communication and the path forward.

**MACC  
ESTABLISHED  
1836**

### Resource Funding

The Chamber pursued a number of grants to stretch its resources to increase training for small businesses, update the Chamber's technology infrastructure and fund a grants development team. In total, the Mobile Area Chamber Foundation won \$100,000 in funding from several organizations, including BBVA, the J.L. Bedsole Foundation and State of Alabama.

**92,916  
PEOPLE  
EMPLOYED BY  
Chamber Member  
Companies**

### Membership

The value of the Chamber's services and the organization's response to COVID-19 didn't go unrecognized. 208 companies joined the Chamber in 2020.

To keep its pulse on how members were faring, the Chamber contacted every member at the beginning of the pandemic, developed a series of surveys to determine their greatest needs, created a "Thank You for Choosing the Chamber" video to send with renewal notices and began a series of videos highlighting member companies that ran on social media.

**1,796  
Current Chamber  
MEMBERS**

### Giving Back

Chamber staff continued its support of United Way of Southwest Alabama's Day of Caring. The staff wrote more than 50 letters for the Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Alabama graduating seniors to offer words of wisdom and to say "Congratulations!"

A Chamber team joined the City of Mobile's fall quarterly community service project to help clean-up Africatown; and at year end, the staff collected money to sponsor holiday meals at Ronald McDonald House.

**Bill Sisson**, president and CEO, continued to serve the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE) and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100.



Sisson



Hewston

**Nancy Hewston**, the Chamber's vice president of community and governmental affairs, was appointed to the technical coordinating and citizens advisory committee of the Mobile Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPO).



McIngvale

### Staff Accolades

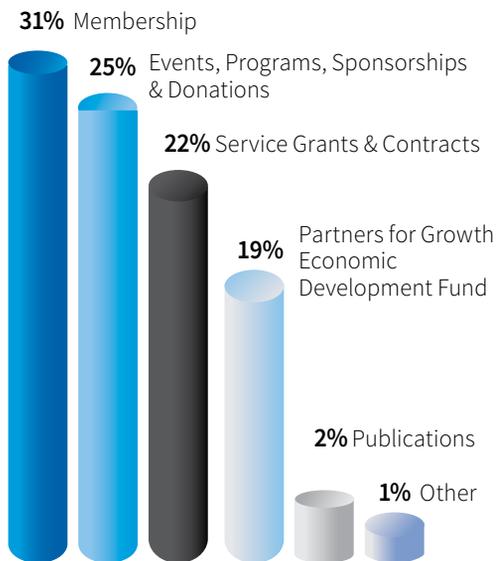
**Brooke McIngvale**, the Chamber's events manager, completed Mobile United's Connect Mobile program for the area's young professionals.

### Financial Management

The Chamber staff manages the finances of six boards. All are audited annually to ensure adherence to accounting standards. Those organizations, in addition to the Chamber, are: the Industrial Development Authority of Mobile County, Industrial Development Board of the City of Mobile; Industrial Park Board of Mobile County; the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation, a 501(c)3 organization; and Innovation Portal.

**6**  
ORGANIZATIONS  
Managed by  
the Chamber

### 2020 REVENUE



### 2020 EXPENSES



# THE CHAMBER'S COVID-19 RESPONSE

## COVID-19 Forces Chamber Work to Change

In March, Alabama businesses began operating under “Stay at Home” and “Safer at Home” orders from Gov. Kay Ivey. The protocols changed as new information about the virus became available.

Along with our members, the Chamber adapted to these challenging times while ensuring the business community had the resources needed to navigate through the massive economic disruption caused by COVID-19.

Fundamental topics included the federal government’s Payroll Protection Program (PPP) and the Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL), and where to find Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for employees.

The phone, email and online channels were the primary tools Chamber staff used to reach out to members.

## By Phone

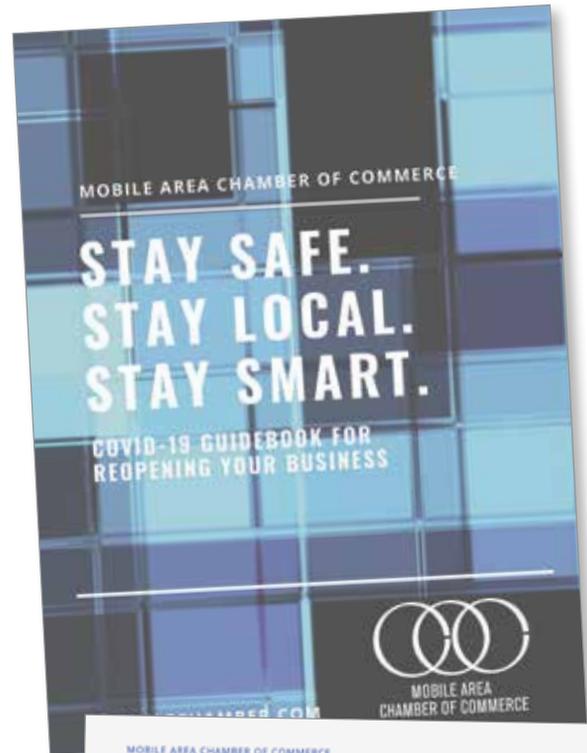


The Chamber staff divided the organization’s membership list and called every member to learn the effects of the pandemic on their companies, difficulties they were experiencing and how the Chamber’s team could best help them. Their responses helped guide the types of resources and information shared with members.

**36**  
**CONFERENCE**  
**CALLS**  
focused on  
COVID-19 Crisis  
Information

The Chamber’s staff counseled more than 700 entrepreneurs and business owners to help them comply with frequently changing rules and regulations by governmental relief programs.

The economic development team organized weekly calls with the area’s largest manufacturers and human resources staff to discuss best practices and help meet the ever-changing needs of Mobile businesses and industries related to COVID-19. These sessions led to Airbus, AM/NS Calvert and Austal diverting normal business to produce masks and tension relief straps for area healthcare workers that could be sanitized and reused.



For five weeks, various Chamber departments hosted a total of 36 free, 30-minute teleconference calls featuring community and business leaders who offered access to training, insight into completing federal loan and grant paperwork, and updates on employment services for workers.



## By Email

During the height of the first wave, Chamber President and CEO Bill Sisson sent out personal messages to members with links to federal toolkits and small business preparedness and recovery guides published by the U.S. Chamber. After Hurricane Sally hit southwest Alabama, Sisson shared similar emails with information on state and federal resources.

The Chamber used surveys to regularly check in with members, asking about day-to-day business operations, specific needs to safely reopen and future forecasts. Results of the surveys provided organizational direction and were shared with city, county and state leaders.

*“These are challenging times for all of us, but one thing is for certain – the Mobile Bay region knows something about resiliency. We have been through hurricanes, tornadoes, oil spills and economic downturns, and working together, we will navigate the Coronavirus as well. Your chamber is working hard to provide information and resources to help your business with this fast-moving situation.”*

– Bill Sisson, President & CEO  
Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce  
From an emailed message to members in March 2020

## Via Online Channels

At the onset of the COVID-19 health crisis, the Chamber’s communications and marketing team quickly developed a new web portal at mobilechamber.com dedicated to related information, links and news that could be downloaded and/or shared. Five key sections included small business resources, news and events, working remotely – transforming to reopening your business, unemployment resources and supporting local businesses.

A COVID-19 branding campaign – Stay Safe. Stay Local. Stay Connected. – identified all print and online materials dealing with the pandemic.

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram social media channels were the main communication platforms. The Chamber used them 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.



**182,000**  
WEB PAGE VIEWS  
in 2020



A new Facebook group – Stay Safe. Stay Local. – expanded the Chamber’s “Shop Local” messaging and allowed members and non-members to post operating hours, delivery or curbside services, and more. Later, to maintain the traffic driven by the pandemic, the group transformed to Chamber Connections and is open to all area businesses. It grew to more than 1,400 members in 2020.



A series of “show and tell” videos highlighting various businesses was posted on Facebook and Instagram. These ranged from cooking demonstrations to do-it-yourself floral arrangements to spa and art gallery tours. The video series continues weekly as a member benefit.

The Chamber offered its first virtual job fair, drawing more than 70 people, many dislocated due to COVID-19, who were interested in 500-plus jobs at four member businesses – Buffalo Rock, Ingalls Shipbuilding, Pilot Catastrophe and Walmart Distribution Center.



The Chamber looked for ways to further recognize its members. These thank you messages ran in the Chamber's Facebook and Instagram stories.

The International Business Division worked with The University of Alabama's International Trade Center to notify statewide clients about how to access the Mobile Chamber's online certificate of origin verification platform to assist with the closures of local chambers across the state. These documents signify products listed meet the necessary criteria to be considered as originating in the United States.

### And More

The Mobile County Commission turned to the Chamber to help distribute its Small Business Relief Fund Program. More than 200 companies applied for funds. The county awarded \$934,501 to 115 companies.

The Chamber extended memberships past their original renewal dates based on financial hardships related to COVID-19 until the end of 2020, unless they requested otherwise.

Regularly scheduled professional development and networking groups went virtual and new sessions were added to continue to offer members relevant tips and tactics. Topics included managing employees working from home, cybersecurity and creating and/or updating an online business profile.

The Chamber developed a statement outlining precautions the organization was taking for any in-person meetings, and strived to offer as many virtual options as possible.

Chamber staff served on a number of committees and task forces dedicated to addressing the challenges brought by the pandemic, including U.S. Rep. Bradley Byrne's First Congressional District Economic Recovery Task Force.

Community partnerships led to initiatives aimed at the general public and area companies, and continued as Ivey's latest executive order extended the wearing of masks into 2021. Three of the most prominent were:

- The “Enjoy Mobile with Confidence” print campaign highlighting best practices local businesses are using to keep customers and employees safe, led by Visit Mobile;
- A video public service announcement encouraging people to wear face coverings, led by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians; and
- An electronic billboard campaign promoting the Chamber's web resources that yielded 72,000 impressions.



# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2020



**Terry H. Harbin**  
BancorpSouth  
Board Chair



**Glyn Agnew**  
AT&T  
Economic Development



**Douglas L. Anderson**  
Burr & Forman LLP  
Legal Counsel



**Jennie M. Campbell**  
The Stewart Lodges  
Small Business  
Development



**Melissa Cross**  
McAlee's Office Furniture  
Membership



**Chris Curry**  
Mobile Airport Authority  
Military Affairs



**Daniel A. Dennis IV**  
Roberts Brothers Inc.  
Past Chair



**Monica Garsed**  
Spire  
Communications &  
Marketing



**Abe L. Harper Jr.**  
Harper Technologies LLC  
Workforce Development



**Nate Patterson**  
A Culture of Excellence (ACE) LLC  
Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



**Craig Savage**  
Austal USA  
Community and  
Governmental Affairs



**William B. Sisson**  
Mobile Area Chamber  
of Commerce  
President/CEO



**Matt White**  
White-Spinner Realty  
Incoming Chair/  
Finance & Operations

## ALSO SERVING ON THE 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kevin Ball, *Ball HealthCare Services Inc.*  
Celia Mann Baehr, *Mobile Symphony Inc.*  
Brent Barkin, *Shoe Station Inc.*  
Philip G. Burton, *Burton Property Group*  
Allen Carroll, *Wilkins Miller LLC*  
Joe Denton, *Infirmary Health*  
W. Edward Dismukes Jr., *Wilson Dismukes Inc.*  
RaShawn Figures, *Dortch, Figures & Sons Inc.*  
Thomas A. Hand, *Volkert Inc.*  
Chris Harle, *Harle Enterprises LLC*  
Jürgen G. Hellmich, *iSAM North America Corp.*

Valerie James, *VisionSpot Consulting Group LLC*  
W. Bibb Lamar Jr., *ServisFirst Bank*  
Kate C. Luce, *Mississippi Export Railroad Co.*  
Patrick Lynch, *The Hiller Cos.*  
Evan B. Maisel, *Gulf Distributing Holdings LLC*  
John V. Marymont, *University of South Alabama*  
Robert B. McGinley Jr., *McDowell Knight  
Roedder & Sledge LLC*  
Leland Moore Jr., *S & S Sprinkler Co. LLC*  
Marcus Neto, *Blue Fish*  
Paige B. Plash, *Encore Rehabilitation Inc.*

Maxey J. Roberts, *University of South  
Alabama Foundation*  
Glenda R. Snodgrass, *The Net Effect LLC*  
Richard Stimpson, *Leavell Investment  
Management Inc.*  
Vicki Studstill, *Hargrove Engineers +  
Constructors*  
Reggie Sykes, *Bishop State Community  
College*  
Mary Taylor, *Better Day Consulting LLC*  
Christian White, *Regions Bank*  
Grant Zarzour, *Fuse Project*

# 2021 PLAN OF ACTION SUMMARY

Each year, the Mobile Area Chamber staff writes its Plan of Action, a list of tactics to achieve the goals of the Chamber's strategic plan. Below are each department's goals for 2021.

## COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

Provide a constant, proactive and interactive communications program to Mobile Area Chamber members to encourage and maintain an interest in the Chamber and support of our efforts.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Value)*

Improve the Mobile Area Chamber's image in the minds of the public and make them better aware of who we are and our mission.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

Promote the Chamber and the Mobile area via the Chamber's websites, electronic publications and social media outlets.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

Improve dialogue with media outlets and promote Chamber activities and issues more heavily in the local market.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

Assist the Economic Development Department with implementing a national marketing campaign.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

## COMMUNITY & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Develop and obtain passage of the Chamber's Community Legislative Agenda.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

Recognize and promote the importance of transportation infrastructure to continuing business growth.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

Promote a local, business-friendly political and legislative climate that encourages economic growth, is responsive to business needs and supportive of business success.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

Convene key groups and organizations to identify and work on vital community issues.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

Improve communication with the membership, elected officials and Chamber staff on key community issues.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

Implement the Leaders Exchange with a focus on workable solutions to regional and local issues.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

Encourage positive military and civilian relationships.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Value)*

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Aggressively market the Mobile region for business locations and expansions based on community strengths and unique strategic advantages, governed by community quality of life objectives. Support the five-year Partners for Growth goal of creating an average of 800 new jobs per year.  
*(Supports strategic goals: Jobs and Advocacy)*

Provide staff support and expertise to the Industrial Development Board, the Industrial Development Authority and the Industrial Park Board.  
*(Supports strategic goals: Jobs and Value)*

Involve Chamber volunteer leadership, City of Mobile and Mobile County elected leadership, local agency allies and Partners for Growth investors in current Plan of Action implementation, as well as long-term economic development planning and funding. *(Supports strategic goals: Jobs and Value)*

Enhance Mobile's global competitiveness and advance the creation of quality jobs and economic growth through international engagement.  
*(Supports strategic goals: Jobs and Advocacy)*

Generate, collect, organize, provide and publish information to support economic development activities that service the needs of prospects, global consultants, existing industries and members.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Value)*

Improve Mobile's ability to respond to workforce needs.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Jobs)*



## FINANCE & OPERATIONS

Provide and maintain financial control and related services.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Excellence)*

Develop and maintain all records, forms and reports relating to human resource management.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Excellence)*

Coordinate maintenance of the Chamber building, grounds, fixtures and equipment.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Excellence)*

Enhance Chamber and Chamber Foundation operations through improvement of processes and procedures.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Excellence)*

Continue to enhance the Chamber's information technology assets.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Excellence)*

## MEMBERSHIP

Exceed budgeted goals for dues and non-dues income to support Chamber operations.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Value)*

Provide innovative programs and services that our members desire and value.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Value)*

Ensure awesome customer service to improve member retention and development.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Value)*

## SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Market and provide technical assistance to area small businesses to help stimulate their development and foster job creation.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Jobs)*

Support and educate businesses regarding the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Jobs)*

Provide business assistance to minority-owned businesses and encourage their participation in all Chamber activities.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Jobs)*

Coordinate task force activities of select programs, products and services benefiting small businesses.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Value)*

Create a system to share local funding sources with interested businesses.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Value)*

Provide continuing education, training and business development opportunities for small businesses.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Value)*

Serve as an advocate on issues of concern to the small business community.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

Facilitate assistance provided by other small business resources in the Mobile/Baldwin area.  
*(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

# HOW TO REACH YOUR CHAMBER STAFF

## ADMINISTRATION

**Bill Sisson**, President & CEO: 251.431.8610

**Bob Chappelle**, Chief Operating Officer: 251.431.8644

**Shelly Mattingly**, Executive Assistant: 251.431.8655

## COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

**Leigh Perry-Herndon**, Vice President: 251.431.8645

**René Eiland**, Account Executive, Advertising: 251.431.8635

**Ashley Horn**, Director of Digital Media & Design: 251.431.8623

**Brooke McIngvale**, Event Manager: 251.431.8640

**Susan Rak-Blanchard**, Director: 251.431.8641

**Carolyn Wilson**, Assistant: 251.431.8606

## COMMUNITY & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

**Nancy Hewston**, Vice President: 251.431.8618

**Maggie Oliver**, Director: 251.431.8601

**Mallory Tyson**, Assistant: 251.431.8621

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**David Rodgers**, Vice President: 251.431.8657

**Chris Mayfield**, Director of Existing Industry: 251.431.8654

**Kayla Morgan**, Marketing & Research Manager: 251.431.8602

**Cheryl Nicholls**, Talent Attraction Manager: 251.431.8651

**Kayley Shepard**, International Trade Manager: 251.431.8629

**Christina Stimpson**, Director of Economic Development:  
251.431.8648

**Molly Tillman**, Coordinator: 251.431.8650

**Vanessa Washington**, Assistant: 251.431.8636

## FINANCE & OPERATIONS

**Neil Christopher**, Vice President: 251.431.8625

**LeMaris Alston**, IT Manager: 251.431.8626

**Hope Bush-Collins**, Custodian: 251.431.8634

**Grant Carrera**, Security: 251.431.8658

**Jackie Davidson**, Assistant: 251.431.8605

**Donna Ikner**, Finance Assistant: 251.461.8609

**Chani Rider**, Director: 251.431.8627

## MEMBERSHIP

**Carolyn Golson**, Vice President: 251.431.8622

**Jackie Hecker**, Senior Account Executive: 251.431.8642

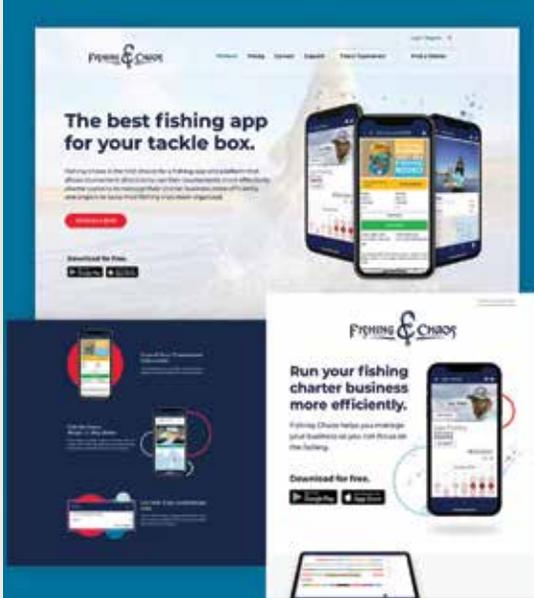
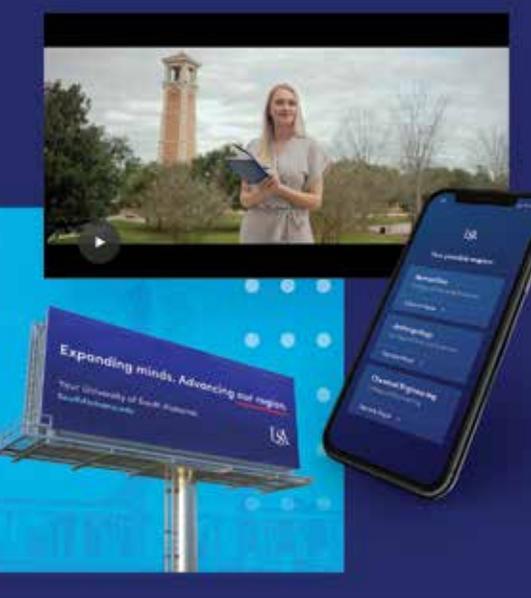
**Odetta Stutts**, Help Desk Receptionist: 251.433.6951

## SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

**Darrell Randle**, Vice President: 251.431.8615

**Brenda Rembert**, Assistant: 251.431.8607

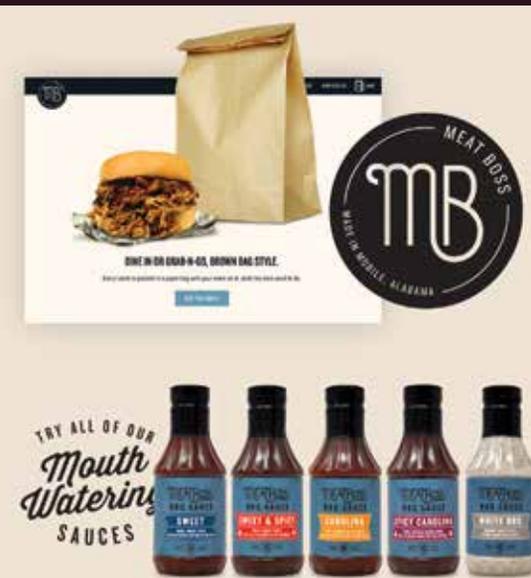
**Danette Richards**, Director: 251.431.8652



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Trey St. John, COO  
Logical Computer  
Solutions, Inc.





Above: Sam Dean, USA Health University Hospital administrator, offers a tour of the new Fanny Meisler Trauma Center to Gov. Kay Ivey. Center of the photo is Ashley Lee, nurse manager for the emergency department at University Hospital. Below, Ivey fist bumps with Bert Meisler whose wife the new trauma center is named for.

# USA UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL OPENS \$20M TRAUMA CENTER

In December, the region’s only level 1 trauma center grew as USA Health opened the Fanny Meisler Trauma Center at University Hospital.

The trauma center is approximately 27,000 square feet, nearly triple the amount of space of the current University Hospital emergency department. The center has 38 examination rooms and three trauma bays. To increase efficiency, CT and X-ray imaging are located within the center.

“We now have a facility that matches the world-class care that is delivered by our healthcare providers,” said **Owen Bailey**, chief executive officer for USA Health.

At the groundbreaking, **Gov. Kay Ivey** noted the importance of the trauma center to the economic development of the area and the state, reinforcing the state providing a \$4 million grant through an economic development bond issue.

“The impact of high-quality, highly specialized healthcare as it relates to economic growth in a community cannot be underestimated,” Ivey said. “The importance is based not only on having a healthy and educated population, but these

are items that companies look for when deciding on places to locate their businesses. They also are important for the recruitment and retention of the employees who work in those businesses.”

Mobile Area Chamber members White-Spinner Construction served as the general contractor and HOAR Construction was construction manager on the project.



# CITY PURCHASES 350 ACRES OF PROPERTY ALONG MOBILE BAY

Hundreds of acres of prime waterfront property located along Mobile Bay were purchased by the City of Mobile and the State of Alabama, and plans were announced in December. Brookley by the Bay is set to be a transformational project for economic development by reimagining an underutilized asset along Mobile's waterfront, previously owned by the University of South Alabama Foundation.

Funding and use of the 30-plus acre, \$42 million project includes:

- 150 acres of waterfront property – 100 of them paid from \$16 million of oil and gas leases through the Gulf of Mexico Security Act (GOMESA) and 50 acres covered with \$2 million of federal National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). The 100 acres will be dedicated for projects aimed at restoring the state's coastlines, and the 50 acres for land preservation.
- 150 acres for economic development on approximately 100 acres purchased with \$15 million from the Governor's Economic Development Fund. This property will become an industrial park to serve Mobile's aerospace industry.
- A 50-acre-option located north of the industrial park and adjacent to the downtown airport could be purchased by the city within the next five years for \$9 million.

"We will secure nearly 150 acres of waterfront property in one of the last undeveloped areas on our shoreline. It will be managed by the City of Mobile Parks and Recreation

department for all Mobilians to enjoy. Additionally, the nearly 150 acres being set aside for economic development will ensure (Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley) has a great opportunity to sustain the growth that will one day make it the world's fourth largest site for the construction of commercial aircraft," said Mobile Mayor **Sandy Stimpson**.

**Additionally, the nearly 150 acres being set aside for economic development will ensure (Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley) has a great opportunity to sustain the growth that will one day make it the world's fourth largest site for the construction of commercial aircraft.**

*Sandy Stimpson, Mayor of Mobile*

According to **David Rodgers**, vice president of economic development for the Mobile Area Chamber, having this site for companies to locate and expand is vitally important for Mobile's future economic success.

"This site will be an asset in our economic development efforts that will support thousands of jobs in our local community, he added.

Stimpson credited **Gov. Kay Ivey** for her interest in this project. He added, "Due to the complexity of this transaction, (it) would not have occurred were it not for her steadfast support."



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# CHAMBER CHARTS NEW STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR 2021-2023

Like many other businesses, the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce operates under a three-year strategic plan. COVID-19 changed the landscape so much that the Chamber is renewing its strategic plan a year in advance.

“Within the first 60 days of COVID lockdown, we knew we had to act. Operating under our current plan until December 2021 would not be wise,” said Chamber President & CEO **Bill Sisson**. “So we engaged an expert, Dan Lumpkin, to draw expertise from the members of our board to help write a plan that best addresses member needs.”

The work of the Chamber falls into four strategic areas – Jobs, Advocacy, Value and Excellence. To help assess critical strategic needs for the new plan, the Chamber enlisted board members to serve on its strategic planning team. The volunteers were divided into four “thought teams” – physical facilities; programming, services and tools; diversity, equity and inclusion; and economic development. After spending nearly three months developing their recommendations, the teams presented their reports at a summit this past December. A fifth team of past Chamber chairs will meet this year to advise on ongoing long-term planning.

“I’m very appreciative and excited about the work and counsel our board has provided,” said **Terry Harbin**, the Chamber’s board chair. “They really dug into the Chamber’s program of work and how it has changed, and will change, as we work through these COVID times.”

Following the summit, Chamber senior staff finalized a Strategic Plan for 2021-2023, which was approved by the Chamber’s board of directors in January.

Below is a look at some of the recommendations by the teams:

## Key Recommendations by Strategic Thought Teams

### Physical Facilities:

1. Form a Building Task Force to determine the best future use of the Chamber’s facilities at 451 Government St. and 456 Civic Center Dr.
2. Engage experts to perform market analysis and assess the highest and best use of Chamber properties. This would include upgrading the current facilities versus other options, including relocation.
3. Engage other community entities to discuss the possibility of co-location in a common space.

### Chamber Programming, Services and Tools:

1. Create an expanded array of educational resources for entrepreneurs and small businesses.
2. Host additional small, peer group gatherings to deepen relationships and better inform both members and staff on needed programming.
3. Stake the Chamber’s place as the “leader of leaders” with enhanced programming, marketing and business advocacy.

### Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

1. Host business-to-business “matchmaker” events to foster relationships between procurement agents and minority business enterprise (MBE) owners.
2. Create an online Minority Business Directory for the Mobile Bay region.
3. Tie tax incentive packages to the receiving company’s plans to support diversity, equity and inclusion.

### Economic Development:

1. Refine and enhance the Chamber’s lead generation and recruitment efforts, in such areas as high-tech.
2. Pursue the headquarters of companies who presently have an operational presence in Mobile.
3. Support transformational projects with long-term economic impact, i.e., port development, tourism, commercial air service to Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley and large residential development.
4. Implement a comprehensive talent attraction program to address workforce needs in the region.

## A special thank you to the following business leaders for helping design the Chamber’s strategic plan:

### Chamber Physical Facilities

**Chair:** **Matt White**, White-Spunner Realty

- **Bestor Ward**, Ward Properties
- **Doug Anderson**, Burr and Forman
- **Richard Stimpson**, Leavell Investments
- **Reggie Sykes**, Bishop State Community College
- **Evan Maisel**, Gulf Distributing Co.
- **Edward Dismukes**, Wilson Dismukes
- **Patrick Lynch**, The Hiller Cos.
- **Philip Burton**, Burton Property Group
- **Maxey Roberts**, University of South Alabama Foundation

## Chamber Programming, Services and Tool

**Chair: Michael Chambers**, University of South Alabama

- **Melissa Cross**, McAleer's Office Furniture
- **Craig Savage**, Austal USA
- **Jennie Campbell**, The Stewart Lodges
- **Glenda Snodgrass**, The Net Effect LLC
- **Brent Barkin**, Shoe Station Inc.
- **Marcus Neto**, Blue Fish
- **Grant Zarzour**, Alabama Orthopaedic Clinic/ Fuse Project
- **Paige Plash**, Encore
- **Leland Moore**, S&S Sprinkler Co.
- **Celia Baehr**, Mobile Symphony Inc.
- **Chris Harle**, Harle Enterprises LLC

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

**Chair: Chris Curry**, Mobile Airport Authority

- **Nate Patterson**, A Culture of Excellence
- **RaShawn Figures**, Dortch Figures & Sons
- **Terry Harbin**, Affordable Homes

- **Kevin Ball**, Ball HealthCare Services
- **Valerie James**, VisionSpot Consulting Group
- **Glyn Agnew**, AT&T
- **John Marymont**, University of South Alabama
- **Mary Taylor**, Better Day Consulting

## Economic Development

**Chair: Kate Luce**, Mississippi Export Railroad

- **Monica Garsed**, Spire
- **Abe Harper**, Harper Technologies LLC
- **Christian White**, Regions Bank
- **Vicki Studstill**, Hargrove Engineers + Constructors
- **Thomas Hand**, Volkert Inc.
- **Rob McGinley**, McDowell Knight Roeder
- **Patrick Murphy**, Alabama Power Co.
- **Allen Carroll**, Wilkins Miller
- **Joe Denton**, Infirmary Health
- **Bibb Lamar**, ServisFirst Bank
- **Juergen Hellmich**, iSAM North America Corp.

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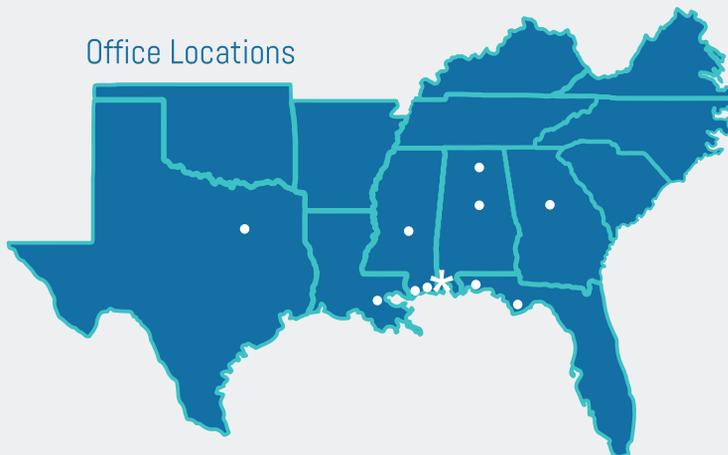
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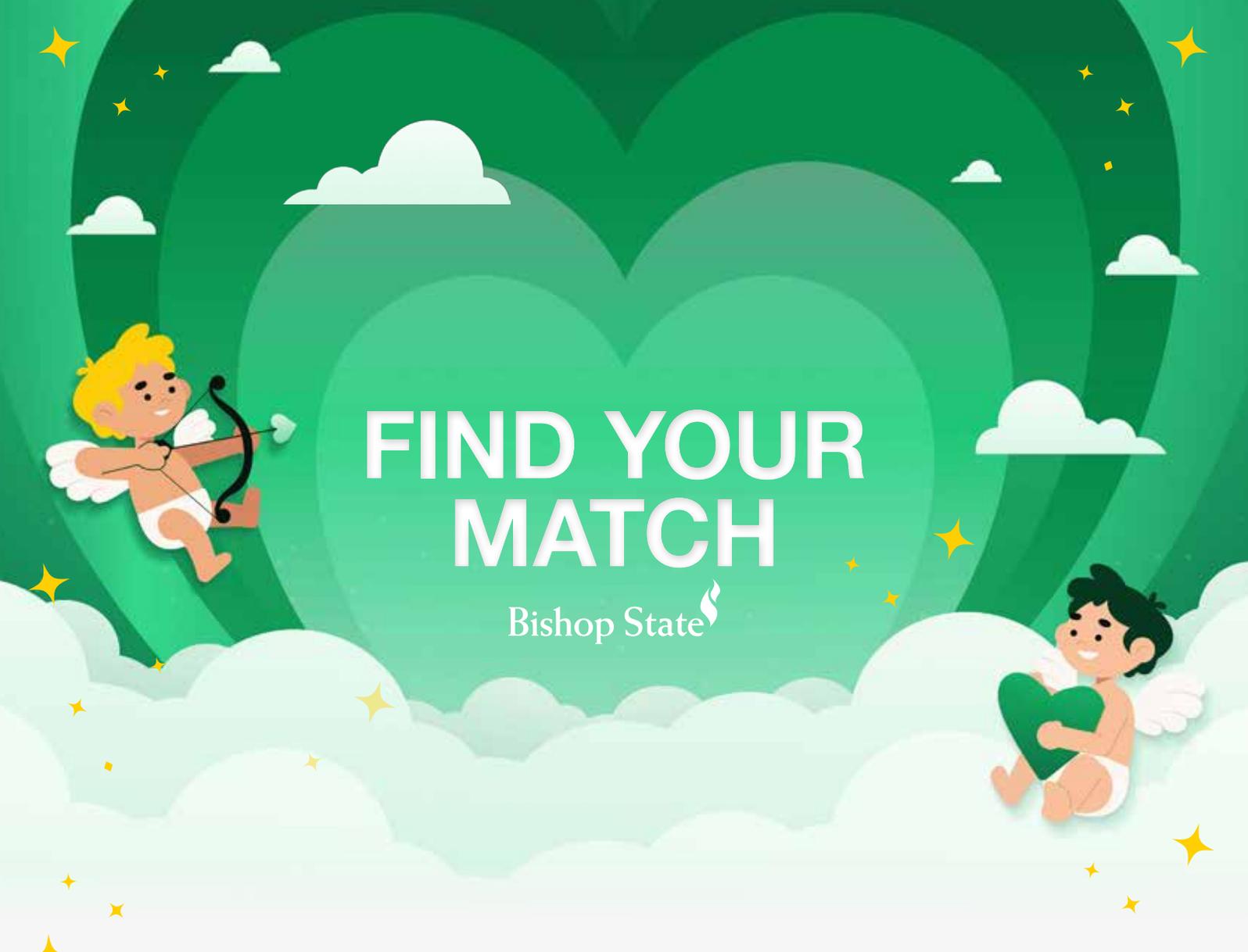
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The Pittman family opened Pittman Tractor Co in 1988. Located in Daphne, the company is growing steadily under the leadership of Lee Pittman, left, and his father, Trip, right.

Photo by Brian Jordan, FusionPoint Media

## IT'S ALL IN THE FAMILY - PITTMAN TRACTOR CO.

Being an equipment dealer runs in **Lee Pittman's** family. His great-grandfather ran a dealership in Birmingham, and his grandfather later in Mobile. So by the time Lee decided to join his parents **Trip** and **Lynn Pittman** in the family business, **Pittman Tractor Co.**, this fourth generation dealer learned from the best in the business.

Pittman Tractor Co. specializes in used construction equipment, parts and repair. It serves a large swath of the Gulf Coast, from Biloxi to Panama City, and up to Montgomery. It sells high quality equipment across the globe.

The company was named the Mobile Area Chamber's Small Business of the Month.

Lee says the company is growing, and credits Pittman Tractor's employees for its success. "We've been hitting it hard with

great customer service. And because of it, we are growing the business steadily," he said.

Last year was understandably abnormal for the company, but gave the owners an opportunity to work on building up the rental and service side of the business. Lee, the company's business development manager, sees this as an area for tremendous growth. "Rentals keep clients from putting in the capital," he adds.

**“We’ve been hitting it hard with great customer service. And because of it, we are growing the business steadily.”**

Lee Pittman, Pittman Tractor Co.



Pittman Tractor has a full service department working on their fleet of rentals.

Photo by Brian Jordan, FusionPoint Media

Examples of the types of equipment Pittman Tractor rents include asphalt/pavers/concrete equipment, compactors, dozers, excavators, dump trucks, sweepers, wheel loaders and more. Equipment delivery is also available, and Lee says if one of its rentals breaks down, the company can either quickly repair it, or replace it with another machine.

Lee said Pittman Tractor first opened in 1988, and he joined the company two years ago after working outside of the area. Since joining the family business, he's taken advantage of several local programs including the Small Business Administration's Emerging Leaders program, administered by the Chamber, and RAMP, a team-based mentoring program for businesses in South Alabama. Both programs are pushing Lee to become a better business manager.

**COMPANY NAME:** Pittman Tractor Co.

**OWNER:** Trip Pittman

**LOCATION:** 9652 Milton Jones Rd., Daphne

**WEBSITE:** pittmantractor.com

**PHONE:** 251.621.3555

**LENGTH OF CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP:** 1 year

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UNIVERSITY OF  
SOUTH ALABAMA

# Partners For Growth Update

Growing Global, Investing Local 2018 - 2022



Aggressive goals were laid out for Partners for Growth investors. A commitment by the Chamber's economic development team aims to add more than 2,000 primary jobs with average wages of \$55,000, a \$1.25 billion capital investment in the community. Here's where we are three years into the five-year campaign:

## GOALS

- Enhance our global presence by leveraging our success in key industries for continued job growth through strategic recruitment and expanded trade and foreign investment.
- Increase our capacity for desired economic growth through attention to workforce and infrastructure issues.
- Support our workforce development partners to meet the current and future needs of Mobile's continued job growth.
- Ensure shared prosperity, especially among small and minority-owned businesses.
- Create high-paying jobs through strategic recruitment, expanded trade and foreign investment, existing business growth and entrepreneurial support.

## WHERE WE ARE TO DATE:

Goal by 2022  
2,000 Jobs



2018-2020 = 1,311 jobs

Goal by 2022  
Average Wages  
\$55,000



2018-2020 = \$57,214

Goal by 2022  
Capital Investment  
\$1.25B



2018-2020 = \$1.62 B

# PARTNERS FOR GROWTH AREAS OF FOCUS

## NEW BUSINESS RECRUITMENT AND INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

### ACTION ITEMS

- Focus recruitment efforts on **“best fit”** and **“most desirable”** companies and industries by capitalizing on the region’s strengths and infrastructure.
- **Leverage the Port of Mobile**, existing companies, industries and global economic trends to increase global sales and exports for companies and attract new foreign investment.
- Pursue corporate and division headquarters of all sizes.
- Advocate for **Small Business** by supporting an annual “pro-business” legislative agenda.

## EXISTING INDUSTRY SUPPORT, INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### ACTION ITEMS

- **Identify growth opportunities** among existing industries and companies.
- Maximize **awareness** of incentives and other available assistance and increase utilization of all assistance programs.
- Through **Innovation Portal**, grow and accelerate Mobile’s entrepreneurial culture.
- **Coordinate and collaborate** innovation and entrepreneurial efforts with the University of South Alabama.

## TALENT ATTRACTION, RETENTION AND DEVELOPMENT

### ACTION ITEMS

- Develop and implement **targeted recruitment strategies** to address the area's workforce needs.
- Leverage input from existing business and work with local partners to **address areas of skills gaps and talent recruitment needs**.
- Use trade shows, career fairs and industry-specific events to **attract highly skilled talent**.
- Advocate for continued funding of **Alabama’s Education Budget**, including **Alabama’s First Class Pre-K initiative**.

## DIVERSE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

### ACTION ITEMS

- Continue to **implement diversity and inclusion** strategies within the framework of the Chamber.
- Cultivate diverse leadership throughout Mobile by **providing resources** and opportunities to learn, get involved and prosper.
- **Advocate** for economic inclusion and create supplier diversity education opportunities.
- Continue research and **employ best practices** from leading Chamber diversity and inclusion programs.

## BUSINESS ADVOCACY AND QUALITY OF PLACE

### ACTION ITEMS

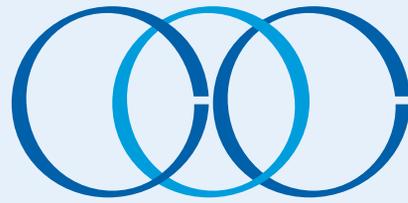
- Develop and support local, regional and statewide policies that **encourage a growing population** while maintaining a high quality of life.
- Provide consistent, strong and **effective leadership** to accomplish key infrastructure improvements necessary for economic development.
- **Encourage, support and assist** specific projects and ideas that will improve Mobile’s quality of place quotient for business growth and investment.
- **Secure the needed infrastructure investment** to retain and grow the Mobile area business base.

## The following companies are investors in Partners for Growth, the Mobile Area Chamber's aggressive and successful economic development program of work.

Adams and Reese LLP	City of Mobile	Infirmiry Health	Renasant Bank
Airbus	Community Bank	Information Transport Solutions Inc.	Robert J. Baggett Inc.
Aker Solutions Inc.	Continental Aerospace Technologies	iSAM North America Corp.	Roberts Brothers Inc.
Alabama Associated General Contractors	Cooper/T. Smith Corp.	JESCO Inc.	Russell Thompson Butler & Houston LLP
Alabama Orthopaedic Clinic PC	Cowles Murphy Glover & Associates LLP	Joe Bullard Automotive Cos.	Seabulk Towing
Alabama Power Co.	Crow Shields Bailey PC	Jones Walker LLP	ServisFirst Bank
Alabama State Port Authority	Delaney Development Inc.	Keith Air Conditioning Inc.	Shell Chemical LP
AltaPointe Health	DEX Imaging	Kimberly-Clark Corp.	Smith Dukes
AM/NS Calvert	DocRX	Leavell Investment Management Inc.	SOHO Events & Rentals
APM Terminals Mobile LLC	EcoSouth Services LLC	Lewis Communications Inc.	Southeast Toyota Finance
Arkema Inc.	Evonik Corp.	Life + Legacy Benefits	Spire
Armbrecht Jackson LLP	ExxonMobil	LLB&B Inc. Real Estate	Spring Hill College
ASF Logistics Inc.	Franklin Primary Health Center Inc.	Long's Human Resource Services	Springhill Automotive Inc.
AT&T	G.A. West & Co. Inc.	MAAS Aviation	Springhill Medical Center
Austal USA	Goodwyn, Mills & Cawood Inc.	Maynard Cooper & Gale PC	SSAB Americas
BancorpSouth	Great Southern Wood Preserving	Merchants Transfer Co.	Stirling Properties LLC
Barnes Enterprises Inc. d/b/a McDonald's Restaurants	Gulf City Body & Trailer Works Inc.	Mississippi Export Railroad Co.	Synovus
BASF Corp.	Gulf Coast Truck & Equipment Co. Inc.	Mitchell McLeod Pugh & Williams Inc.	Tensaw Land & Timber Co. Inc.
BB&T now Truist	Gulf Distributing Holdings LLC	Mitsubishi Polysilicon	Thames Batre' Insurance
BBB Industries LLC	Gulf Electric Co Inc. of Mobile	Mobile Airport Authority	The American Equity Underwriters Inc.
BBVA	Gulf States Engineering	Mobile Area Water and Sewer System	The Hiller Cos.
Beard Equipment Co.	Gwin's Commercial Printing	Mobile County Commission	The J. L. Bedsole Foundation
Ben M. Radcliff Contractor Inc.	H.O. Weaver & Sons Inc.	Moffatt & Nichol	The Orthopaedic Group PC
Bishop State Community College	Hancock Whitney Bank	NAI Mobile	Thompson Engineering Inc.
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama	Hand Arendall Harrison Sale LLC	Norton Lilly International	Thompson Tractor Co. Inc.
Budweiser-Busch Distributing Co. Inc.	Hargrove Engineers + Constructors	Olin Corp.	Trustmark Bank
Burr & Forman LLP	Helmsing Leach Herlong Newman & Rouse PC	Outokumpu Stainless USA	U-J Chevrolet Co. Inc.
Burton Property Group	Heritage Homes	Page & Jones Inc.	University of Mobile
C Spire Business	HPM	Phelps Dunbar LLP	University of South Alabama
Cabaniss Johnston Gardner	HUB International Gulf South	Poarch Band of Creek Indians	USA Foundation
Dumas & O'Neal LLP	Industrial Development Authority of Mobile County	Premier Medical Group Inc.	Volkert Inc.
Canfor Southern Pine	Industrial Development Board of the City of Mobile	Prism Systems Inc.	Ward Properties Inc.
Cardiology Associates		Providence Hospital	Warren Averett LLC
Century Bank		Quality Valve Inc.	Wells Fargo
China Doll/Dixie Lily Foods/Big Bill Beans		REEL USA Corp.	Wesco Gas & Welding Supply Inc.
Cintas Corp.		Regions Bank	White-Spinner Realty Inc.
			Wilkins Miller LLC
			Willis Towers Watson

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

From taking a stand on legislative issues to supporting Mobile's business community to recruiting new jobs and capital investment, the Mobile Area Chamber's board of directors serves as the organization's governing and policy-making body. The board is comprised of 43 members representing a cross-section of the business community – 29 men and 14 women. Approximately 74 percent of the companies represented on the board have fewer than 101 employees; 13 employ 1-10 individuals; 10 employ 11-25 individuals; eight employ 26-50 individuals; one employs 51-100 individuals; and 11 employ more than 100. Of those companies represented on the board, 10 are listed as minority owned and ten are listed as women owned. On the following pages are profiles of the Chamber's 2021 board members.



**MOBILE AREA  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

★ The star indicates those whose companies are also investors in Partners for Growth, the Chamber's long-term economic and community development program.



**Terry H. Harbin**  
*Affordable Homes* ★

## BOARD CHAIR

**Harbin** has 40 plus years' experience in all phases of sales, marketing, technology and banking management. He also started two technology related business ventures which have been sold and continue to operate successfully and has been a private real estate investor for the past 20 years. He is owner of Affordable Homes, with a focus on building energy efficient homes that meet the Gold Fortified standards, making them safer and reducing insurance costs for the buyers. He held various sales and marketing positions at QMS, and served in executive positions with Regions Bank and BankTrust and Bancorp South and has served on the boards of United Way of Southwest Alabama, University of Mobile, WHIL, Child Advocacy, Family Promise, Housing First, Coastal Alabama Partnership.



**Celia Mann Baehr**  
*Mobile Symphony Inc.*

## VICE CHAIR, COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

**Baehr** is president and CEO of the Mobile Symphony. She has more than 30 years' experience in financial services and is a Certified Financial Planner. She owns a small registered investment advisory business. Baehr holds a master's in business administration from the University of South Alabama (USA) and a bachelor's degree from The University of Alabama. She is a graduate of Leadership Mobile, a member of the Rotary Club of Mobile and the Gulf States Financial Planning Association. Baehr received the Impact Award from the Mitchell College of Business as one of the 50 most influential graduates of the college. She is a member of the USA's Mitchell College of Business' Advisory Council and the Chamber's board of advisors.



**Kevin Ball**  
*Ball HealthCare Services Inc.*

**Ball** is director of operations for Ball HealthCare Services Inc. He received a bachelor's degree in business administration from Alabama A&M University and a master's degree in long-term care administration from the University of North Texas. Ball is regional director on the executive board of the Alabama Nursing Home Association and a member of the Alabama State Board of Examiners. He previously served as advisory chair for the Birmingham regional office of the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind. Ball also serves on the advisory board for Renasant Bank and on the board of trustees for Alabama A&M University. He is also the program director for the Mobile Chapter of Omega Lamplighters, a high school mentoring program for young men.



**Brent Barkin**  
*Shoe Station Inc.*

**Barkin** is president and CEO of Shoe Station Inc. He received a bachelor's degree from Princeton and is a graduate of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public Policy. He is a third-generation footwear retailer from both sides of his family. Barkin is a member of the board of directors of the United Way of Southwest Alabama and the Mitchell College of Business Advisory Council. He is also a former board member of St. Luke's Episcopal School.



**Raymond Bell**

*Maynard Cooper & Gale PC*



**VICE CHAIR, LEGAL COUNSEL**

**Bell** is a shareholder in the law firm of Maynard Cooper & Gale. His practice focuses in the areas of governmental relations and ethics, and compliance law. He has practiced law since 1999 and is admitted to practice in state, federal, district, circuit and appellate courts. Bell is a graduate of the University of Montevallo and Theodore Goode Jones School of Law. Prior to practicing law, he served as special assistant to the president pro tem of the Alabama State Senate, special assistant to the Alabama Lieutenant Governor and appointment secretary to the Governor of Alabama. Bell serves as a special district court judge for the 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit of Alabama.



**Ty Bullard**

*Bullard Automotive Group*



**Bullard** graduated from UMS-Wright Preparatory School and attended The University of Mississippi, graduating with a bachelor's degree in business management. He immediately began his career with Bullard Automotive Group Inc., a third-generation family-owned business. Bullard became the dealer principle in 2013, which includes the franchises of Cadillac, Infiniti, Acura, Jaguar, Land Rover, Ford, Lincoln and Chevrolet. He is active in the Mobile Touchdown Club and many religious/spiritual activities throughout the Mobile area.



**Philip Burton**

*Burton Property Group*



**Burton** is president and CEO of Burton Property Group. He studied at the University of South Alabama (USA). Burton is a member of Young Presidents Organization and is one of the founders of the Beverly Burton Scholarship Trust, in honor of his late mother, providing college scholarships for Boys & Girls Clubs Youth of the Year recipients. He is a board member of the USA Foundation for Research and Commercialization, as well as the Chamber's board of advisors.



**Jennie Campbell**

*The Stewart Lodges*



**VICE CHAIR, TALENT ATTRACTION**

**Campbell** is a graduate of Tulane University, Michigan State University, George Washington University and Babson College. She is the CEO/president of Stewart Steelwood Investments LLC. She has served on many executive and advisory boards. She is a graduate of SBA Emerging Leaders and Goldman Sachs 10KSB National Cohort 9 Program. She was awarded Enterprising Women Champion 2020 and was appointed to their International Board of Advisors. She is a member of the Chamber's board of advisors.



**W. Allen Carroll**

*Wilkins Miller LLC*



**Carroll** first joined the firm now known as Wilkins Miller in 1987 and serves as its managing partner, a role in which he has served since 2007. He has a degree in business administration from the University of South Alabama. He is a certified public accountant, a member of the Association of International CPAs and the Alabama Society of CPAs. He is on the board of directors for the University of South Alabama Foundation and the Executive Advisory Council for the Mitchell College of Business. He has served St. Luke's Episcopal School as both its treasurer and chairman of the Board of Trustees. Carroll is a past member of the National Board of Directors for Distinguished Young Women. He is also on the Chamber's board of advisors.



**Cindie Carter**

*Walks and Wags Inc.*

**Carter** maintains a highly successful pet resort and training center for dogs called Walks and Wags Inc. What began as a hobby in college has morphed throughout the years into a successful enterprise. Prior to working with dogs, she worked in the automotive business and raced cars for 13 years. She founded Mobile County P.A.L.S., a non-profit for a local animal shelter, and is a member of the advisory board for the Mobile County Animal Shelter. Carter started a first-of-its-kind dog therapy program for underprivileged children ranging from 8-18 years old, teaching them the skills of dog language, and how to feel empowered with their animal friends so they can transition more successfully into their adult lives.



**Melissa Cross**

*McAlee's Office Furniture*

**VICE CHAIR, MEMBERSHIP**

**Cross** is president of McAlee's Office Furniture. She earned an undergraduate degree at The University of Alabama and a juris doctorate at Pepperdine University School of Law in Malibu, Calif. In her role as a Chamber board member, Cross chaired the 2020 Chamber Chase campaign. She also serves as a board member for the University of South Alabama Melton Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. She has participated in the following programs: Small Business Administration's Emerging Leaders, Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses, and RAMP (Real Advice Mentoring Program). Cross is a member of the Chamber's board of advisors.



**Chris Curry**

*Mobile Airport Authority*



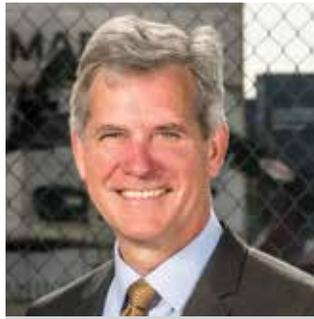
**Curry** is president of the Mobile Airport Authority. He was previously the director of aviation for the city of Tallahassee, executive director for the Collier County Airport Authority and the Gary/Chicago International Airport. Curry also served in the U.S. Air Force as an air traffic controller and retired in 2001. He earned an associate's degree in airway science from the Community College of the Air Force in Montgomery. He has a bachelor's degree from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in professional aeronautics. Curry is a member of the Chamber's board of advisors.



**Edward Dismukes Jr.**

*Wilson Dismukes Inc.*

**Dismukes** is a third-generation owner/president of Wilson Dismukes Inc. He earned a bachelor's degree from Auburn University and attended the University of Michigan Business School Executive Education Program. Dismukes began his career in the non-profit arena before spending over 15 years in the pharmaceutical industry in sales and sales management. He returned home to the family business in Mobile in 2003 to assume the president position of the company. Dismukes is past president of the Rotary Club of Mobile - Sunrise and currently serves on the management advisory board for the Mitchell College of Business at the University of South Alabama.



**John Driscoll**

*Alabama State Port Authority* ★

**Driscoll** began serving as the director and CEO of the Alabama State Port Authority in June 2020. Prior to that, he was maritime director at the Port of Oakland in Oakland, Calif., and vice president of export sales for CMA CGM (America). He started his career with Sea-Land Service and later joined Maersk Line. Driscoll earned a bachelor's degree in business management from the University of Maryland (College Park). He is a member of the Chamber's Board of Advisors.



**RaShawn Figures**

*Dortch, Figures & Sons Inc.*

**Figures** is CEO/owner and creative engine room of Dortch, Figures & Sons Inc. Having grown up in the industry, his grasp of construction fundamentals is innate, enabling him to instill a long view of best practices while injecting a historical sense of good old-fashioned hard work. Figures is a graduate of McGill-Toolen High School and holds a bachelor's degree from The University of Alabama. Dortch, Figures & Sons is the largest minority-owned general contracting firm in the state.



**Steve Franklin**

*Airbus* ★

**Franklin** is the head of site services and supply chain operations for the Airbus U.S. Manufacturing Facility. He was named to the position in January 2018, and is a member of the senior leadership team. Franklin serves as a principal interface with key strategic partners and operational management, providing strategic planning, leadership, and coordination with his counterparts in Europe. Prior to joining Airbus, he served as commodity manager at Austal USA, and supply chain manager at International Paper Co. He is a military veteran having served for 20 years in the U.S. Air Force. Franklin is an active member of the Institute of Supply Management.



**Monica Garsed**

*Spire* ★

**VICE CHAIR, COMMUNITY & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

**Garsed** has over 20 years' experience in the natural gas industry, including significant work with economic and business development for Spire, formerly Mobile Gas. As manager of economic development for Alabama and Mississippi, she is focused on Spire's economic development efforts in the Mobile area. Garsed holds a mechanical engineering degree from the University of South Alabama (USA) and has served on various boards including the USA National Alumni Association, Downtown Mobile Alliance, American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers and Partners for Environmental Progress.



**Thomas Hand**

*Volkert Inc.* ★

**Hand** is president of Volkert Inc. having joined the company in 1995, and returning to the management team in 2003. He was appointed as the firm's Chief Marketing Officer in 2017, after serving in similar roles for Volkert's gulf and central regions. He has also facilitated the firm's teaming in major alternative delivery projects, such as the inner harbor navigation channel MR-GO surge barrier and the Biloxi Bay Bridge. Hand received a bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Auburn University. He is a member of St. Andrew by the Sea church and is active in various industry and community associations. Hand is a member of the Chamber's board of advisors.



**Valerie James**

*VisionSpot Consulting Group*

**VICE CHAIR, DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION**

**James** is a president at VisionSpot Consulting (VSC) Group. She spearheads the company's leadership effectiveness, operational efficiency, and talent management programs. Her primary industry expertise is in small business development, healthcare, corporate, and community workforce development. She and her team help leaders build more sustainable businesses by aligning and improving the functionality and precision of processes, employee productivity, and strategic execution to deliver quality outcomes. She is a Harvard trained leader and author of four books. She holds a doctor of education degree in organizational leadership from Pepperdine University.



**Cliff Kennedy**

*Frios Gourmet Pops*

**Kennedy** is CEO of Frios Gourmet Pops. He is a graduate of UMS-Wright Preparatory School and attended Millsaps College. Kennedy worked in the family business, Gulf Supply Company, for 13 years before joining Frios Gourmet Pops in December 2018. He is a board member for the Child Advocacy Center.



**Sidney King**  
*Commonwealth National Bank*

**King** is president and CEO of Commonwealth National Bank. Before returning to Commonwealth, he served 12 years as Kansas City regional president for Liberty Bank and Trust. He worked previously nine years as president and CEO at Commonwealth and five years as president and CEO at First American Bank in Jackson, Miss. He is a graduate of DePaul University in Chicago where he received a bachelor's degree in accounting.



**Carita Koen**  
*Green Magic Landscape*

**Koen** is the chief operations and marketing officer for Green Magic Landscape. She is also the creator of "Sista's Link," a private community via social media created to offer inspiration, empowerment and best business practices for women in business. She holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Mobile. Koen is involved with the Chamber's Growth Alliance Task Force, the National Association of Landscape Professionals Women in Landscape Network and the National Association of Women Business Owners.



**Kate Luce**  
*Mississippi Export Railroad Co.* ★

**Luce** is president and CEO of Alabama Export Railroad and Mississippi Export Railroad. Her career includes additional experience with General Electric Transportation and Bain & Company. Luce holds a bachelor's degree in supply chain management from Auburn University, and a master's in business administration from Duke University's Fuqua School of Business. She is a recipient of the Keohane Leadership Award for exceptional leadership and currently serves on the Board of Visitors at Duke's Fuqua School, the Board of Directors of the North American Shippers Association, the Board of Governors at the Mississippi Economic Council and is a member of the Chamber's board of advisors.



**Patrick Lynch**  
*The Hiller Cos.* ★

**Lynch** is president and CEO of The Hiller Cos. He joined Hiller in March 2014 as the chief operating officer, and prior to that time served in various senior management roles within the companies focused on the maritime sector, based in New York. He holds a master's in business administration from the University of San Francisco, as well as a bachelor's of science in marine engineering and marine transportation from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, NY. Lynch is a member of the Chamber's board of advisors.



**John Marymont**  
*University of South Alabama* ★

**Marymont** is vice president for medical affairs and dean of the College of Medicine at the University of South Alabama. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Northwestern University and obtained a medical degree from Vanderbilt University. Marymont earned a certificate in medical and healthcare management as well as a master's in business administration from the Jones School of Business at Rice University. He serves on the Jones Health Care Advisory Board at Rice University's Jones Graduate School of Business and as the Council of Deans liaison to the Association of American Medical Colleges' Group on Business Affairs.



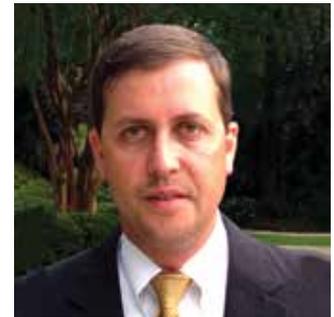
**Robert McGinley Jr.**  
*McDowell Knight Roedder & Sledge LLC*

**McGinley** is an attorney with McDowell Knight Roedder & Sledge LLC. He received a bachelor's degree from Washington & Lee University and a juris doctorate at The University of Alabama School of Law. McGinley is a member of the Alabama State Bar, the Mobile Bar Association, the State Bar of Georgia and the State Bar of Mississippi. He is the chair of the board and founding director of the Mobile Area Education Foundation Public Charter Schools, Inc., as well as the founding member of the Friends of the Saenger. He is also a member of the Chamber's board of advisors.



**Gina McKellar**  
*Crow Shields Bailey PC* ★

**McKellar** is the Managing Shareholder at Crow Shields Bailey PC, an accounting and consulting firm with offices in Mobile, Daphne and Gulf Shores. She is a graduate of the University of South Alabama and specializes in tax planning and consulting for businesses, estate tax work, and business valuation services. She received a designation as a certified valuation analyst in 2001. McKellar has been involved on boards of numerous organizations including the McGill-Toolen Foundation, University of South Alabama Planned Giving Council, and the Smart Home Alabama Board. She is also a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the National Association of Certified Valuators and Analysts.



**Leland Moore Jr.**  
*S&S Sprinkler Co. LLC*

**Moore** is chief operating officer of S & S Sprinkler Co LLC. He attended UMS-Wright Preparatory School and Hampden-Sydney College. Moore is a founding member and board member of Fired Up Inc., a non-profit founded to give back to the community through BBQ. Moore is a member of the Chamber's board of advisors.



**Eliska Morgan**

Thompson Engineering



**Morgan** is government relations/business development manager for Thompson Engineering. Previously she was executive director of the Alabama Gulf Coast Recovery Council, leading efforts to develop plans committing more than \$315 million in RESTORE funds to projects throughout Mobile and Baldwin counties. She serves as chair of the Chamber's State Government Affairs Committee and on the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program's executive committee and business resources committee; the Dauphin Island Sea Lab Foundation board of trustees; Alabama School of Mathematics and Science Foundation board; and the Alabama Water Resources Commission.



**Patrick Murphy**

Alabama Power Co.



**VICE CHAIR, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Murphy** is vice president of the Mobile division for Alabama Power Co. Before assuming his current position, he was vice president for marketing and economic development and vice president of economic and community development. He began his career with Alabama Power in 2011 as a senior project manager in the economic and community development department. Prior to joining Alabama Power, he was the senior vice president of economic development for the Birmingham Business Alliance. Murphy is past president of the Economic Development Association of Alabama. He is also a member of the Chamber's board of advisors.



**Marcus Neto**

Blue Fish

**Neto** is the owner of Blue Fish, a digitally-focused advertising agency that helps small- and medium-sized organizations overcome obscurity. He is a member of the board for Fuse Project, and he and his team are also behind the website MobileAL.com. Blue Fish was named the Chamber's Small Business of the Year in 2018. He is a graduate of James Madison University and the Small Business Administration's Emerging Leaders program.



**McCrary Otts**

Lyon Fry Cadden Insurance Agency

**Otts** is vice president for Lyon Fry Cadden Insurance Agency, and has been with the company since 2002. He is a graduate of UMS-Wright Preparatory School and The University of Alabama with a bachelor's degree in business. Otts is a member and past officer of Spring Hill Presbyterian Church and he has been involved with the Waterfront Rescue Mission and the United Way of Southwest Alabama.



**Nathaniel Patterson**

A Culture of Excellence (ACE) LLC

**Patterson** is chief engagement officer of A Culture of Excellence (ACE) LLC, a small business and nonprofit training firm. He attended California State University, Fullerton in Southern California, where he founded and grew several businesses including a concert promotion firm and a marketing firm. He is a noted speaker and author of *This Is Not Your Parents Economy*, an e-book and career workshop and *What If I Fail?*, a book and motivational workshop.



**William B. Sisson**

Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce

**Sisson** is president and CEO of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce. He earned a master's degree from The University of Alabama, and a bachelor's degree from James Madison University. He is a graduate of the Institute for Organization Management, Leadership Mobile and Leadership Alabama. Sisson is a member of the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama, U.S. Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100 and Rotary International. He serves on the boards of UMS-Wright Preparatory School, Alabama School of Math and Science Foundation, and Mobile Area Education Foundation.



**Enoch Smith**

Easy Heating & Cooling Inc.

**Smith** is CEO of Easy Heating & Cooling Inc., founded in 2005. He is a two-term president of the platinum business builders BNI Chapter, graduate of the SBA Emerging Leaders program, graduate of the MAWSS Mentor Protege Program, and graduate of the Minority Business Accelerator. He is also a participant of the RAMP program, and a member of the Chamber's board of advisors. Easy Heating received the Chamber's Eagle Award in 2020. He is a graduate of John S. Shaw High School, Universal Technical Institute with a concentration in HVAC & refrigeration technology, Bryant & Stratton College with an associate's degree in information technology and is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering at the University of South Alabama.



**Glenda Snodgrass**

The Net Effect LLC

**VICE CHAIR, SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

**Snodgrass** has been president, lead consultant and project manager at The Net Effect since the company's inception in 1996. She is primarily engaged in cyber security training, threat analysis and mitigation for commercial, nonprofit and governmental organizations. Snodgrass holds a bachelor's degree from the University of South Alabama and a master's degree from Université de Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne. She is president of the Gulf Coast Industrial Security Awareness Council and a member of the Chamber's Gulf Coast Technology Council steering committee.



**Elizabeth Stevens**  
Downtown Mobile Alliance

**Stevens** has served as president and CEO of the Downtown Mobile Alliance since its formation in 2005. She has worked in downtown development since 1985 in her native South Carolina as well as Alabama. She started the Main Street Program in Conway, S.C., and then moved to Mobile to run the Main Street Program for the City of Mobile. In 2017, Stevens was appointed to serve as a trustee to the Alabama Department of Archives and History. She is president of the Barton Academy Foundation and serves on the board of directors of Springboard to Success, Visit Mobile, and Mobile Rotary. Stevens is a graduate of Leadership Alabama.



**Richard Stimpson**  
Leavell Investment Management ★

**VICE CHAIR, MILITARY AFFAIRS**  
**Stimpson** is chairman/investment counselor for Leavell Investment Management. He received a bachelor's degree in pre-law from The University of Alabama and subsequently served in the U.S. Marine Corps as an infantry officer. Stimpson is a member of Leadership Alabama, the Downtown Mobile Alliance and the Alabama Policy Institute, where he serves as the chair of the board.



**Mac Taul**  
Merchants Transfer Co. ★

**Taul** is president of Merchants Transfer Co., and has been with the company for 25 years. He is a graduate of UMS-Wright Preparatory School and Birmingham Southern College. Taul is a partner at Point Logistics, Southern Intermodal Xpress and Hardwoods Unlimited. He is also involved in the JH Outback Ministry, Southeastern Warehouse Association and the Young Presidents Organization.



**Mary Taylor**  
Better Day Consulting

**Taylor** is owner/president of Better Day Consulting, JT Property Management and Elegant Knights Transportation Group. She retired from the U.S. Army after 27 years at the rank of Master Sergeant. Taylor is a member of the Chamber's Growth Alliance Task Force. Taylor is a board certified credit consultant and Fair Credit Reporting Act-certified through the Credit Consultants Association. She helps her clients obtain home ownership and establish business lines of credit through her credit restoration program.



**Christian White**  
Regions Bank ★

**White** is Regions Bank's market executive and commercial banking leader for South Alabama. He began his banking career with Regions in 2003. He is involved with several local non-profits, including Wilmer Hall and the United Way of Southwest Alabama. White has a bachelor's degree in economics from Hampden-Sydney College and is a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Honor Society.



**Matt White**  
White-Spinner Realty Inc. ★

**INCOMING CHAIR/FINANCE AND OPERATIONS**  
**White** is president of White-Spinner Realty Inc. Prior to becoming the president, he was controller and vice president of operations. He received a bachelor's degree in commerce and business administration from The University of Alabama. He is a member or former member of the boards of Prichard Prep and Leadership Alabama. White is also a member of the Chamber's board of advisors.



**Gia Wiggins**  
Morale Resources

**Wiggins** is president of Morale Resources, a boutique human resources consulting firm. She received a bachelor's degree in psychology and sociology from Grambling State University, a master's in business administration from California State University and a doctorate degree in business administration from the University of South Alabama (USA) with a concentration in management. Wiggins is an adjunct instructor at USA and the University of Mobile. She has held executive HR positions at AT&T, Cintas, Target and BAE Systems Southeast Shipyards. Wiggins serves on a number of committees and organizations, including the Daphne Kappa League advisory board and Gulf Coast Dementia Services.

# INVESTOR FOCUS MAAS AVIATION



One of the company's aircraft painting hangars located at Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley.

**Company officials:** Tim Macdougald, group CEO; Mark Gidman, group chief operating officer; Rory Condon, group chief financial officer; and Geoff Myrick, U.S. chief operating officer

**Address:** 321 Airbus Way, Mobile

**Number of employees:** 65 in Mobile

**Website:** maasaviation.com

**Years in business:** 38

**Brief company description:** MAAS Aviation is an international commercial aircraft painting company operating nine paint shops for original equipment manufacturers, airlines, leasing companies and part 145 repair stations in The Netherlands, Germany, Lithuania and the United States. The company delivers approximately 300 aircraft per year from its state-of-the-art facilities.

**Why do you support the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's Partners for Growth Initiative?** "MAAS Aviation is committed to the communities in which it operates. We see the Partners for Growth initiative as a key contributor to the city's strategic economic development," said Myrick. "A thriving industrialized economy in Mobile leads to business development opportunities for the company and quality of life benefits for our team members."

**How long have you been a continuous Mobile Area Chamber Member?** Since 2015

**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](mailto:drodgers@mobilechamber.com).

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## EXECUTIVE PROFILE

# COREY HANSON

## WALA FOX10 TV

**TITLE:** Vice President/General Manager

**HOMETOWN:** Portland, Ore.

**EDUCATION:** Bachelor's degree in rhetoric and media studies, Willamette University, Salem, Ore.; graduate certificate in business essentials, UNC-Flagler Business School, Chapel Hill, N.C.

**FIRST JOB:** Associate producer, KGW TV, Portland.

**PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS:** Emmy Award winner for television news documentary.

**WHAT WORD WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF?** Driven.

**SECRET TO SUCCESS:** I lead by example and do the little things.

**DO YOU BELIEVE IN LUCK OR DESTINY?** Neither. I believe in working hard and making smart choices.

**WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR LONG-TERM PROFESSIONAL GOALS?** To encourage young women to never limit themselves and believe anything is possible.

**WHAT SLANG OR TREND MAKES YOU FEEL OLD?** Having kids in (and out) of college.

**WHAT IS YOUR PASSION?** People and giving back.

**WHAT COULD YOU TALK ABOUT ALL DAY LONG, OTHER THAN YOUR KIDS OR FAMILY?** Design and remodel.

**THE LAST BOOK YOU READ?** *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng

**OUTSIDE OF WORK, WHAT DO YOU DO TO RELAX?** Boating, bike riding, spending time with the family and dogs.

**WHAT IS YOUR MOST MARKED CHARACTERISTIC?** My laugh.

**BEST THING ABOUT YOUR JOB?** Having a front-row seat to history.

**TOP BUCKET LIST TRIP?** Anywhere in the Mediterranean.

**ERA IN HISTORY YOU'D LIKE TO TRAVEL?** I wouldn't want to go backwards in time. I believe in living in the now, but wouldn't mind a glimpse into the future.

**BRIEF COMPANY DESCRIPTION:** WALA is a FOX affiliate located in Mobile. It is owned by Meredith Corp. Meredith's Local Media Group includes 17 stations reaching 11 percent of U.S. households. Meredith's stations produce approximately 700 hours of local news and entertainment content each week and operate leading local digital destinations.





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**CHAMBER NAMES STIMPSON DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Christina Stimpson** was promoted to the Mobile Area Chamber's director of economic development.

In this position, Stimpson will manage all business development and expansion project activity – international and domestic, and will oversee the Chamber's international trade program and data and research function.

She joined the Chamber in 2009, and in 2013 was promoted to director of international trade. During the last seven years, Stimpson has worked to increase Mobile's international competitiveness, advance job creation and economic growth through international engagement and help dozens of area companies develop a global customer base.

**David Rodgers**, vice president of economic development, said, "Stimpson's leadership and international business strength made her the ideal candidate to spearhead the Chamber's business development activities."

"Our success is dependent on our ability to creatively reach out to targeted industries and populations in a way that results in a new job for a worker and a skilled hire for an employer," said Stimpson. "I am excited to build upon the traditional goals of economic development looking beyond job creation and capital investment to ensure priorities like talent pipelines, increased productivity and trade growth, and the needs of existing industries are being met."

Stimpson holds a bachelor's degree in apparel merchandising, design and production management from Auburn University, and received additional training at the Basic Economic Development Course at Georgia Tech.

She has participated in the Alabama Leadership Initiative, is a graduate of Leadership Mobile and was recognized nationally as a 40 Under 40 by Development Counsellors International and locally by *Mobile Bay Monthly*. Stimpson serves on the boards of University of South Alabama's Global USA, the Japan American Society of Alabama, the Alabama World Trade Association and the Alabama District Export Council.

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# FEBRUARY 2021

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

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

## 2 COFFEE WITH THE CHAMBER

Start your day with the Chamber and network with other business attendees.

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

**Where:** Hank Aaron Stadium Club, 755 Bolling Brothers Dr.

**Contact:** Carolyn Golson at 251.431.8622 or [cgolson@mobilechamber.com](mailto:cgolson@mobilechamber.com)

No charge.

**Sponsor:** S&S Sprinkler Co.

**Hosted by:** Mobile Sports & Entertainment Group

## 3 ANNUAL MEETING

Upbeat, Uplift, Unstoppable – the Chamber's Annual Meeting will address the challenges and accomplishments of 2020 and highlight what's ahead for 2021. The program will be followed by networking with food and drink.

**When:** 5:30 to 8 p.m.

**Where:** Mobile Convention Center

**Cost:** \$60 per person/discounted group rate of 10 tickets for \$360 or \$70 for nonmembers

**Contact:** Carolyn Wilson at 251.431.8606 or [cwilson@mobilechamber.com](mailto:cwilson@mobilechamber.com)

Reservations required.

**Presenting Sponsor:** Trustmark Bank

**Supporting Sponsors:** AM/NS Calvert, Austal USA, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama, Burr & Forman LLP, C Spire Business, Crow Shields Bailey PC, Ingalls Shipbuilding, Lenzing Fibers Inc., Mobile Airport Authority, Nudraulix Inc., Outokumpu Stainless USA, University of South Alabama

**Catering by:** AMS Global/Savor Mobile, The Battle House Hotel & Spa, iCater Wedding & Events, Naman's Catering, Pollman's Bake Shops, Georgia Roussos Catering

**Event Support by:** All A Bloom Florist & Gifts, Dorsett Productions Unlimited, FusionPoint Media, Gwin's Commercial Printing, Identity Signs, Imperial Dade Paper, Leaf & Petal Florist & Gift, SoHo Events and Rentals

## 9 EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE

\*Members Only

**VIA ZOOM:** This monthly meeting of Chamber-member small business owners and managers includes presentations by speakers on timely topics affecting small business.

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

**Speaker:** Michelle Parvinrouh

**Topic:** An Update on Innovation Portal

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

Registration required for ZOOM meeting code..

**Sponsor:** BancorpSouth

## 15-16 CHAMBER CLOSED

## 18 MEMBERSHIP 101

\*Members Only

**VIA ZOOM:** Meet other members and Chamber staff virtually to learn more ways to benefit from your membership.

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

**Contact:** Carolyn Golson at 251.431.8622 or [cgolson@mobilechamber.com](mailto:cgolson@mobilechamber.com)

Registration required for ZOOM meeting code.

## 24 GOOGLE: MAKE YOUR WEBSITE WORK FOR YOU

**VIA ZOOM:** From promoting products and services, creating brand visibility, driving customers to your store, to connecting with your target audience, your website should be goal-oriented, organized, useful, functional, intuitive and search-friendly.

**When:** 11 a.m. to Noon

**Contact:** Danette Richards at 251.431.8652 or [dritchards@mobilechamber.com](mailto:dritchards@mobilechamber.com)

Registration required for ZOOM meeting code.

## THANK YOU TO THE SPONSORS OF OUR FEBRUARY EVENTS





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## WHO'S NEW

### Southern Cancer Center Adds Staff



Mirakian

#### Southern Cancer Center

hired board-certified radiation oncologist **Dr. Alex S. Mirakian**. Mirakian earned a medical degree from Monash University Faculty of Medicine Nursing

and Health Sciences, in Melbourne, Australia, and has more than 20 years of clinical oncology experience. His training includes stereotactic and intraoperative radiation therapy and brachytherapy fellowships at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Texas and Mount Sinai Beth Israel in New York, as well as residency at Peter MacCallum Cancer Center in his native home of Australia.

### Premier Medical Introduces New HR Team



Davis



Butts



Pollman

**Premier Medical** named **Jennifer Davis** director of human resources. She earned a bachelor's degree in psychology, political science and law from Spring Hill College, and is currently pursuing a master's degree in business administration from Louisiana State University Shreveport. She also earned a professional in human resources certification.

**Kathryn Butts** was named the assistant director of human resources. Butts earned a bachelor's degree from Huntingdon College in business management and a professional certification in human resources.

**Daly Pollman** was hired as benefits coordinator. She earned a bachelor's degree in biomedical science with a minor in psychology from Auburn University.

### BBB Industries Restructures Administration

**BBB Industries LLC (BBB)**, a remanufacturer of aftermarket vehicle parts, announced three leadership changes.

**Jeffrey (Jeff) Bigler**, who co-founded BBB along with his brother and father, is now on the board of directors, where he will sponsor several longer-term operational projects while also providing guidance and counseling.

**James T. (Tim) Garner** was appointed executive vice president and chief financial officer. Garner joined BBB following the successful sale of IXS Holdings, where he held the same role.

**Thomas J. (Tom) Sheppard** was selected executive vice president and chief information officer.

### New Associates Join Maynard Cooper & Gale



Bingham



Byrd



Combs



Gala



Gainer



Morina



O'Malley



Pilcher



Rogers



Waller

#### Maynard Cooper & Gale

announced the hiring of 10 lawyers.

**Marky Bingham** joined Maynard's healthcare practice. She earned a law degree from

The University of Alabama, where she served as the executive editor of the *Alabama Law Review*. She holds a bachelor's degree in finance from The University of Alabama.

**Caron Byrd** is a member of Maynard's public finance practice. Byrd earned a law degree from Florida State University. She is a graduate of Birmingham Southern College, where she received a bachelor's degree in philosophy.

**Jaclyn "Jacki" Combs** joined the firm's litigation practice. She is a graduate of the University of Southern California. Combs earned a bachelor's degree in communications from The University of Alabama.

**Nikisha "Niki" Gala** joined Maynard's intellectual property practice. Gala holds a law degree from Seattle University. She received a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the University of Mumbai in Maharashtra, India.

**Hugh Gainer** is a member of Maynard's insurance and financial services litigation practice. He received a law degree from Samford University. Gainer also earned a master's degree in accountancy at The University of Alabama and a bachelor's degree in commerce from Washington & Lee University.

**Lauren Morina** was selected to the firm's cybersecurity and data privacy practice. Morina earned a law degree from Washington & Lee University. She earned a bachelor's degree in criminology from the University of South Florida.

**Trenton O'Malley** is new in Maynard's real estate and financial services practice. He earned a law degree at Texas A&M University. O'Malley holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Mississippi.

**Elizabeth Pilcher** also joined Maynard's insurance and financial services litigation practice. She earned a law degree at Samford University and a bachelor's degree in finance from The University of Alabama.

**Jeff Rogers** joined Maynard's corporate section as a member of the mergers and acquisitions and public company advisory practice groups. He holds a law degree from The University of Alabama, where he also earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering.

**Robert Waller** also joined the firm's corporate section as a member of the tax practice. He earned a law degree from The University of Alabama, where he was an articles editor/acquisitions committee for the *Alabama Law Review*. He received a bachelor's degree in accounting.

### Litigator Joins Adams and Reese

**Adams and Reese** welcomed **Blake T. Richardson** as an associate. Richardson's practice focuses on insurance litigation, including cases involving motor vehicles and trucking.

Richardson received a law degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law and a bachelor's degree in commerce and business administration from The University of Alabama.

### iXL Real Estate Increase Staff



Franks



Tardie



Durgin

Five agents join iXL

**Real Estate:**

**Shulanda**

**Franks, Angie**

**Tardie, Jeanice**

**Durgin, Nikita Pleasure and Raven Grant.**



Pleasure



Grant

### Cooper Marine & Timberlands Adds to Business Development Team



Adams



Dodd

**Cooper Marine & Timberlands** promoted **Strickler**

**Adams** to

director of

marine logistics and hired **Alan Dodd** as director of business development. Adams is a graduate of The University of Alabama, where he earned a bachelor's degree in finance. Dodd has a bachelor's degree in marketing and computer science from The University of Alabama. He brings 17 years of industry experience.

## Outokumpu Stainless Names President



Weinert

**Tamara Weinert** was appointed acting president and CEO of business area Americas for Outokumpu. She has a master's degree in finance from Manchester Business School and a degree in protected landscape management from University of Greenwich.

## Bellator Real Estate & Development Welcomes Four Agents



Koptis



O'Dare



Vreeland

**Bellator Real Estate & Development** gained four new Realtors: **Braxton Harrison**, **Sarah Koptis**, **Michelle O'Dare** and **Julie Vreeland**.

## Wilkins Miller Announces New Hires

**Wilkins Miller LLC** accounting and advisory firm added **Jeffrey Kintz** and **Lindsey Ballard** to the staff. Kintz earned a bachelor's degree in commerce and business administration and a master's degree in taxation from The University

of Alabama. Ballard has a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of South Alabama.

## BUSINESS ENDEAVORS

### Spring Hill College Participates in Innovative Textbook Program

**Spring Hill College** is one of 12 schools across the country chosen to participate in the 2020-21 OpenStax Institutional Partnership Network, part of Rice University. As a participant in the network's program, Spring Hill will work to build and execute a strategy to encourage greater use of free, flexible textbooks among its faculty and students.

### Mobile, Top Banana

The **City of Mobile** and **Mobile Sports & Entertainment Group** announced Mobile will be home to the Savannah Bananas' One City World Tour on March 26, 2021. The baseball team bills itself as the "world's fastest and most outrageous game of baseball."

## WELL DONE

### McCarty Passes CPA Exam



McCarty

**Wilkins Miller LLC** accounting and advisory firm announced **Jordynne McCarty** completed and passed the uniform certified public accountant (CPA) examination. McCarty earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Southern Mississippi.

### Southern Cancer Center Expands Service in Baldwin County

**Southern Cancer Center** announced the launch of its radiation oncology service line in Baldwin County. Southern Cancer Center is now the only community-based multidisciplinary oncology practice in lower Alabama, comprised of 17 providers at six locations across the area.

### Grant Helps USA Health Research Aggressive Cancers

**Gary Piazza PhD**, professor of pharmacology at the **USA Health Mitchell Cancer Institute** and the department of pharmacology at the **University of South Alabama College of Medicine**, is part of a collaboration to explore a potential treatment for aggressive cancers. Piazza, also a co-lead investigator, discovered and developed a novel RAS inhibitor class. RAS inhibitors may help treat aggressive cancers that are RAS-driven such as pancreatic, colon and lung cancers.

The grant, part of the Richard A. Elkus MD Eminent Scholars Fund in gastrointestinal oncology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, promotes innovative research and scientific understanding of gastrointestinal cancers, especially pancreatic cancer.

### Chair of Orthopaedic Surgery Named at USA College of Medicine

**Dr. James R. Slauterbeck** was appointed professor and chair of orthopaedic surgery at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine. Slauterbeck specializes in sports medicine and currently is a professor at the University of Vermont Larner College of Medicine, Department of Orthopaedics and Rehabilitation and a joint appointment in the department of pediatrics in Burlington, Vt. Slauterbeck earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Arizona State University in Tempe, and a medical degree from the University of Arizona in Tucson. After completing his residency at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, he completed a sports medicine fellowship at the University of California, Los Angeles.

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# Don't Sleep on Social Media

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## University of South Alabama Completes \$150 Million Campaign

The **University of South Alabama** completed its \$150 million Upward & Onward Campaign in September, exceeding its goal by \$10.9 million by raising \$160.9 million. With donations from more than 23,000 individuals, businesses and foundations, it is the second and largest fundraising campaign in the university's history. The Upward & Onward Campaign elevates academics, research, athletics and healthcare.

## Ambrecht Jackson Recognized on Lists

**Ambrecht Jackson LLP** was ranked in the *U.S. News & World Report* and *Best Lawyers* list in the Mobile, Alabama market in 30 practice areas, with 21 receiving a "Tier 1" ranking. The rankings are based on a rigorous evaluation process that include the collection of client and lawyer evaluations, peer review from leading attorneys in their field, and review of additional information provided by law firms as part of the formal submission process.

## MCI Research Featured in National Journal

**USA Health Mitchell Cancer Institute (MCI)** scientists have extensively researched nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide, or NAD+, and the role it plays in cancer research and treatment effectiveness for patients. The MCI scientists' work was highlighted in the October special issue of the scientific journal, *DNA Repair*. MCI researchers are using their findings to better understand why some cancer treatment responses may be affected differently depending on the patient's vitamin B3 dietary intake and how a cancerous tumor can grow and spread because of a patient's metabolism.

## OsteoStrong Hillcrest Adds High-Tech Air Purifier

**OsteoStrong Hillcrest** has a new air and surface purifier with ActivePure technology scientifically proven to destroy microscopic pathogens and contaminants on surfaces and in the air.

## Adams and Reese Receives National Recognition

**Adams and Reese** was recognized in the 2021 edition of *U.S. News – Best Lawyers* "Best Law Firms" list, published by *U.S. News & World Report* and *Best Lawyers*. With 18 national-level practice area rankings in this year's list, the firm received National Tier 1 rankings in several areas. At the regional level, the firm received 157 metropolitan-level practice area rankings in 14 metro areas across its regional southern U.S. footprint.

## Dr. Laura Cepeda Selected as a Fellow

**Laura T. Cepeda**, chief medical officer of the **Mobile County Health Department**, was chosen as a member of the Region IV Public Health Training Center at Emory University's inaugural Public Health Leadership Institute (PHLI) cohort. Cepeda competed with 144 other applicants to become one of three PHLI fellows from Alabama. The cohort is a premier collective of top-notch public health leaders representing the eight Southeastern states that comprise HHS Region IV.

## 73 Burr Attorneys Named Super Lawyers And Rising Stars

At **Burr & Forman**, 73 attorneys in Alabama, Mississippi and Tennessee were selected for inclusion among *Mid-South Super Lawyers for 2020* in its November magazine. This includes 31 attorneys recognized as "Rising Stars," up-and-comers under 40.

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****BRIAN D. JORDAN**

Brian D. Jordan, a photography and videography professional with FusionPoint Media, has been capturing moments his entire life. Shortly after college graduation, Jordan started his own company to provide video and photo services to Mobile-area businesses. This began an almost 40-year career behind the lens.

In 1999, Jordan started FusionPoint Media, a creative services firm known for providing comprehensive marketing support solutions backed with a personal touch. In this role, he has truly gotten to showcase a wide range of expertise as he supports clients both locally and across the country.

With this longevity in the business, Jordan has had the opportunity to get to know Mobile, its businesses and people in depth. His skills include proficiency in staged, candid and action photography; in-studio and on-location production; and photography and videography for a broad range of mediums.

In this issue, Jordan's work can be seen on the Small Business of the Month. To see more of his portfolio, visit [fusionpointmedia.com/services](http://fusionpointmedia.com/services).

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