

# the **businessVIEW**



Two Local Companies  
Receive Trade Awards

**Legislation Helps**  
Mobile Compete for Jobs

What We  
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About  
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From the Publisher - Bill Sisson

## Follow the Trail to Growth

It is my firm belief that growth and prosperity of any community are driven by jobs. It's as simple as that.

So it's very good news that Mobile was recently ranked as a top 20 city in *ZipRecruiter's* list of Southern cities for jobs right now. Now that the job opportunities are here, it's our challenge and opportunity to recruit the families taking these new positions to our city and county.

When newcomers have choices, they will choose to live where they find the quality of life amenities they most desire. Certainly housing costs and schools are a big part of the equation, but so are features such as parks, walking trails and bike paths.



It's easy to think of "urban trails" as something residents can live without. But community leaders from across the country are beginning to realize that parks, pedestrian trails and bike paths serve more of a purpose than just places to exercise. They can propel growth.

In the past, those amenities were considered "nice to have," but today they have become a critical part of a transportation network that helps communities attract people. And, of course, people attract retail and other commercial development.

When you look at surveys done over the past 20 years by groups like the National Association of Homebuilders and National Association of Realtors, the results are incredibly consistent: as much as 60 percent of city residents want a livable, walkable community with recreational opportunities.

That's a staggering statistic – and the reason the Chamber supports the city and county's strategic planning efforts for the continued development of our region's recreational facilities. Having this all-important infrastructure will be an incredibly effective economic development tool for further business recruitment – and a way to ensure that newcomers will choose to call Mobile home.



### ON THE COVER

Chamber member Ron Moore with Alabama Power and his family love attending Mobile BayBears games. Learn more about what to love about Mobile on pages 18-19. *Photo by Jeff Tesney*

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# Alabama Steel Terminals Opens State-of-the-Art Coil Handling Facility

The Alabama State Port Authority and Alabama Steel Terminals LLC (AST) recently opened a \$36 million steel coil handling facility at the Port of Mobile. The new rail-, truck- and barge-served facility is a joint venture between TriState Maritime Services Inc. and the Richardson Group.

The new facility provides 178,200 square feet of covered bay area equipped with three, 50-ton capacity overhead-bridge cranes and 168,000 square feet of open storage yard, handling an estimated 700,000 tons of steel annually. According to the Port Authority, this project created 50 jobs at an annual payroll of \$2 million. At full build-out, AST will add 194,400 square feet of bay area equipped with three additional 50-ton capacity overhead bridge cranes, and hire an additional 50 workers.

“We are pleased to have delivered the most technologically advanced steel-handling facility in the nation to better complement the port’s existing portfolio of steel terminal facilities,” said **Jimmy Lyons**, executive director of the Port Authority.

According to **Tom Adger**, vice president for Alabama Steel Terminals LLC, the company’s goal was to “create a state-of-the-art steel coil handling facility emphasizing both innovation and customer service for steel manufacturers and shippers.”

The Port of Mobile is currently the second largest steel handling port in the nation, with just over 5 million tons handled in fiscal year 2014 through the Port Authority’s terminals. 



# Two Local Companies Receive Trade Awards



Governor's Office, Jamie Martin

Gov. Robert Bentley presented the Governor's Trade Excellence Awards to eight Alabama companies that are excelling in international trade. Accepting the Governor's Trade Excellence Award is Keith Jones and Todd Hassel of Prism Systems Inc.



Governor's Office, Jamie Martin

Accepting the Governor's Trade Excellence Award from Gov. Robert Bentley is John Stimpson, president and owner of Gulf Trading LLC.

Mobile-based companies Gulf Trading LLC and Prism Systems Inc. were among those honored recently by Gov. Robert Bentley with the Trade Excellence Award. The Mobile Area Chamber nominated the companies based on international trade activity and participation.

Gulf Trading LLC became its own entity in 2000, evolving out of Gulf Lumber Co., which dates back to 1940. The company has eight employees and ships softwood lumber, North American hardwood lumber, Southern yellow pine and more to export markets including the Caribbean Islands, China, India, Taiwan, Thailand, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia and Costa Rica.

Prism Systems is a 26-year-old engineering services company, specializing in software and process control services. Its

global Fortune 500 customers represent a variety of industry including manufacturing, chemicals, food and beverage, oil and gas, telecommunications and entertainment. Prism Systems has 48 employees with 10 percent of its workforce currently located in Shanghai on a long-term assignment. Additional export markets include Mexico, Thailand, Japan, France, Italy, Trinidad & Tobago, Brazil and Tajikistan.

"We hope this recognition helps other companies explore international markets as a viable


way to grow their business," said Christina Stimpson, director of the Chamber's international trade program.


"Many businesses could benefit from learning about international business opportunities and what resources are available to help," adds Stimpson. The International Trade Administration reports that less than 1 percent of America's 30 million companies export – a percentage significantly lower than all other developed countries.

**"We hope this recognition helps other companies explore international markets as a viable way to grow their business."**

Christina Stimpson  
director, Mobile Area  
Chamber of Commerce  
international trade program

To address this, the Chamber, along with the Export Alabama Alliance and the Alabama District Export Council, will present the International Trade Leadership Series, an in-depth certification program to advance international business skills for Alabama companies beginning June 19 (See pg. 31 for details).

Other recipients of the 2015 Governor's Trade Excellence Awards are: Applied Chemical Technology Inc., Florence; Drummond Co. Inc, Vestavia; Knox Kershaw Inc, Montgomery; Masada Resource Group LLC, Birmingham; Schwarze Industries Inc., Huntsville; and SEPCO, Alabaster. 

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# Chamber Receives School System Award

In April, the Mobile Area Chamber received the Workforce Development Starts With Us award from the Mobile County Public School System. It was given to the Chamber for bringing business and industry leaders to the table with K-12 and higher education teachers to talk about the ever-changing needs of Mobile's workforce.

Accepting the award for the Chamber was **Emily McGrath**, the Chamber's education and workforce development director; **Troy Wayman**, vice president of economic development for the Chamber; and **Loka Mistratta** with Cintas Corp., who served as workforce development vice chairman until he moved to Dallas in May. 

## 2015 Award Winners:

- **Empowering Students Starts With Us Award:** Chief James H. Barber, Mobile Police Department
- **Community Involvement Starts With Us:** The Fuse Project
- **Workforce Development Starts With Us:** Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
- **Mentoring Starts With Us:** Kappa League
- **Student Safety Starts With Us:** Ronnie Adair, Mobile County Emergency Management Agency
- **Supporting Academics Starts With Us:** United Way of Southwest Alabama
- **Giving Back Starts With Us:** Mobile Rotary Club
- **The Future Starts With Us:** Bay Chevrolet
- **Career Preparation Starts With Us:** Airbus Engineering Division
- **Innovation Starts With Us:** VT MAE
- **Partner of the Year:** Mobile Infirmary
- **It Starts With Me:** Amelia Lindsay, Allentown Elementary School
- **It Starts With Me:** Cheyenne Bliss, Burns Middle School
- **It Starts With Me:** Semaj Bell, BC Rain High School
- **Elementary Teacher of the Year:** Laniese Howard, Kate Shepard Elementary School
- **Secondary Teacher of the Year:** Don Jones, BC Rain High School
- **Student Support Starts With Us:** MCPSS Transportation Department
- **School Spirit Starts With Us:** Nancy Pierce, Public Relations Supervisor

## Eagle Award Applications Now Accepted



The Mobile Area Chamber is accepting applications for its annual Eagle Awards and the Rev. Wesley A. James Minority Business Advocate Award (MBA) through Friday, July 24. Eligibility information and the application can be found at [www.mobilechamber.com/small-business/small-business-awards](http://www.mobilechamber.com/small-business/small-business-awards).

The awards will be presented at the

Minority Business Awards Luncheon to be held in October 2015.

Eagle Awards honor deserving minority-owned businesses that demonstrate business growth and community commitment. Nominees must be at least 51-percent owned, operated and controlled by an African-American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian or Asian-American. Additionally, the business must be headquartered in Mobile, Baldwin or Washington counties; have been operational at least three years; exhibit revenue and/or employee growth; have apparent solid financial base; be a for-profit company; and show evidence of community service contribution.

The MBA Award recognizes the efforts of a company or business to support minority-owned businesses by increasing their supplier diversity programs and expanding opportunities. Nominees must be a Mobile Area Chamber member in good standing; show a commitment to supplier diversity; have three complete years of operation (as of Dec. 31, 2014); and have an office in Mobile, Baldwin or Washington County.

For more information on nominating a business or applying for either award, contact **Danette Richards** at 251-431-8652 or [drichards@mobilechamber.com](mailto:drichards@mobilechamber.com).



# Southern Light Going the Distance

Southern Light reached two significant milestones recently, with two more on the horizon.

The Mobile-based fiber optic network provider announced its network expanded to 5,000-plus miles. That's like driving from Mobile to Anchorage, Alaska, and then to Fargo, N.D. Southern Light also completed service to its 1,000<sup>th</sup> business location.

These achievements firmly established Southern Light as a leading industry provider in the Southeast, says **Andy Newton**, president and CEO of Southern Light.

The 17-year-old company has 214 employees spread out among seven locations. Southern Light will consolidate the majority of them into seven floors of the RSA Trustmark building in 2016. The firm of Goodwyn, Mills and Cawood is designing the 47,000-square-foot space to meet Southern Light's needs.

Soon the company will finish construction of a new data center at the University of South Alabama. The facility will be one of the largest on the Gulf Coast, says Newton, and it will be monitored around the clock.

"Southern Light continues to see tremendous demand from wireless carriers, enterprise customers and government entities," says Newton. "Fiber network providers are positioned to perform well as our world relies more heavily on faster connections."

In response, the company is increasing its footprint to key markets including Huntsville, Birmingham and Jackson, Miss.

Currently the company's network spans west to Lafayette, La., east to Jacksonville, Fla., and north to Huntsville.



*Andy Newton and Paul Bullington with Southern Light in their new office space currently under construction.*

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# 3 Echoes Productions

## is Synonymous with Home Improvement



From left to right are Marrs Zakary; Arria Blanton, homeowner; Allen Lyle, "Today's Homeowner" co-host; Danny Lipford, "Today's Homeowner" host and 3 Echoes Productions president; Brad Rodgers, director of photography; and Nathaniel Lewis, production assistant.

If you've watched Danny Lipford's "Today's Homeowner" television show in the past 18 years, you've seen the work of 3 Echoes Productions.

The company was created in 1997 as the production arm of Danny Lipford Media, tasked with producing the show that took the Mobile contractor and home improvement expert to a national audience.

Since its inception, 3 Echoes has produced more than 300 episodes of Today's Homeowner and more than 3,000 videos that supplement the show, which can be seen around the country.

The Mobile Area Chamber's Small Business of the Month, 3 Echoes has used Lipford's show as a calling card to bring in a variety of commercial clients,

such as the Weather Channel, Home Depot and Black and Decker.

"We want to become the go-to video production company for national brands in the home improvement industry," said the company's General Manager, **Chad Kirtland**.

"We've identified and kind of made for ourselves a niche there. We feel like we are, if not the best, one of the best in the country doing work in that industry."

With a team of five within a larger group of more than 15 employees in Danny Lipford Media, 3 Echoes is a full-service production company that provides a variety of services, from video production and editing to branding and creative

services. Ever-evolving technology allows the company to continue to expand its list of services, improve quality and efficiency and create different types of images.

"When 3 Echoes began, they were shooting on tape with video cameras," Kirtland said. "These days we've moved from tape to digital media, where we don't even need film or anything like that, although we do still record to a card. Technology has given us a lot of new opportunities in terms of storytelling, visuals or video – everything from new, faster cameras that capture better images to drones that we can take aerial photography with."

The company recently won two 2015 Telly Awards for "Checking

in with Chelsea," an original series on simple household repairs and projects hosted by Lipford's daughter, **Chelsea Lipford Wolf**, and produced by **Brad Rodgers**. The Telly Awards, founded in 1979, honor outstanding work in video and film productions.

"With so much going on around here with new business, I see opportunity for commercial work, industrial work in this area," Kirtland said of the Mobile area. "We've started to take on a little bit of that."

Want to be featured here? Go to [mobilechamber.com](http://mobilechamber.com) to submit an application, or contact Danette Richards at 251-431-8652 or [drichards@mobilechamber.com](mailto:drichards@mobilechamber.com).



# A Banner Year for Economic Development in the Alabama Legislature



By: Troy L. Wayman, Mobile Area Chamber vice president, economic development

For years, Alabama has been at a disadvantage in the economic development incentives game compared with our neighboring states in the Southeast. But this year, thanks to some creative and well-conceived legislation, that playing field has been leveled significantly.

A series of bills was introduced to revamp Alabama's statutory incentives package in a number of ways. Two significant game changers in the package are for new industry recruitment and existing industry expansions.

House Bill 58, the Alabama Jobs Act, sponsored by Rep. Alan Baker, provides a long-needed jobs credit for new jobs created in Alabama for our citizens. This credit is

self-policing, as it is based on the previous year's payroll for the new direct jobs created. It is paid as a refund of taxes for utility services. This form of credit is a pay-as-you-go type incentive, as new revenues are generated from construction activity, withholding, sales taxes, property taxes, etc., before the incentive is paid out via utility taxes. Other states have long had jobs credit incentives, leaving Alabama behind in the competition.

The Alabama Jobs Act also overhauls our previous capital investment tax credit. For the sake of brevity, the old credit was complicated and unusable to many of our projects and therefore not used for site

location decisions.

The new investment credit simplifies the incentive and makes it far more usable. While it shortens the duration of the credits and lessens the amount, it allows the credit to be carried over or transferred (or sold) to another entity during the first three years, helping a company create cash for capital expenditures.

The second act is House Bill 59, the Alabama Reinvestment and Abatements Act, sponsored by Rep. Paul Lee. This act provides the opportunity to extend ad valorem tax abatements for an additional 10 years. Under current statutes, ad valorem taxes can be abated for up to

10 years for qualifying projects.

Other states offer those abatements for up to 20 years. This legislation allows us to do the same thing, but does not allow for any abatement of any portion of educational taxes, and rightly so.

Other bills in the package are advantageous to economic development, but these are the most critical and have been passed and signed by Gov. Robert Bentley. This package represents a great step forward in our ability to compete for new projects and help our existing industries secure expansions.

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## Small Business of the Year

McAlee's Office Furniture was named the Mobile Area Chamber's 2015 Small Business of the Year at the Small Business Week awards luncheon on May 7. This year, the Chamber expanded its small business recognition program by naming three finalists. American WeatherStar and Wilson Dismukes were also honored.

## Outstanding Entrepreneur

Also at the luncheon, the Mobile Area Chamber presented Ralph A. Hargrove, president and founder of Hargrove Engineers + Constructors, with the Outstanding Entrepreneur Award.

In 1995, Hargrove started the company as the sole employee working from his home. Today, it is one of the largest privately held engineering firms in the state of Alabama, and is employee-owned with 11 offices across the United States. The company currently employs more than 950, including 332 locally.



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# Want to Get Paid?

## Practice Prompt, Smart Invoicing

Nobody likes the idea of resorting to a collections process to deal with delinquent accounts. Indeed, some entrepreneurs choose to do nothing rather than confronting customers about past due bills. That may delay any unpleasantness and hard feelings indefinitely, but it won't bring what you're owed any closer to your bank account.

Though many of the negative connotations of collections are exaggerated, the process itself can often be avoided entirely by adopting and adhering to sound accounting and invoicing practices. Author and entrepreneurship consultant **Terri Lonier**, president of Working Solo Inc., provides these tips for improving your invoicing habits:

**Invoice promptly.** If your customers don't have the paperwork, they can't pay you. And the longer you wait to invoice, the more distant your client's memory of the product or service you provided will be.

**Invoice clearly and completely.** State all terms and the circumstances of the business exchange. A vague or incomplete invoice will make collecting more difficult, especially on an overdue account.

**Know your customer's policies.** Do they need multiple copies of the invoice? Must the invoices be original hard copies, or are faxed or emailed invoices acceptable? Should the invoice be included

inside a shipment or be sent to a separate department? In many cases, if you don't enter the system properly, your invoice may be delayed – or never paid at all.

**Accurately record each payment you receive.** It's unsettling to have to pursue an overdue account, but it is humiliating to ask for a payment you've already received. You'll come off as unprofessional and may jeopardize a good client relationship.

**Don't get lost in a large-company shuffle.** Call the accounts payable department a few days before a payment is due and politely ask if the invoice has been processed properly. Invoices often have a way of

getting lost along the payment route.

**Take action the day an account becomes past due.**

Call or send a second notice with a polite reminder. A fax or emailed attachment carries with it immediacy and creates a visual image that often generates better response than a phone message. If you still don't get paid, phone the customer and request payment.

**Stay proactive.** If you don't, your weak demeanor will make it easier for your client to put you off.

*For more information on smart invoicing contact the Chamber's small business development department at 251-431-8607.*

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# What We Love

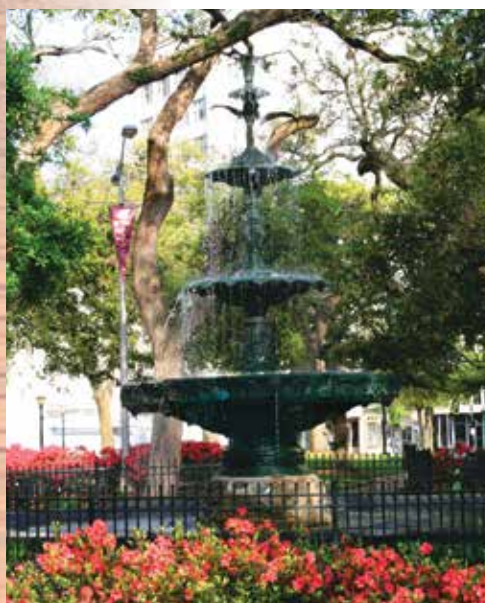
It's easy to continually fall in love with Mobile. It's the history, nightlife and family-friendly activities that make Mobile a great place to live.

We wanted to know about your favorite things to do in Mobile. And boy, did we get a lot of great ideas. With suggestions ranging from the architecture to parks to the waters that surround us to Mobile's signature events like Mardi Gras and BayFest, each help make Mobile unique. Here are the most popular, in no particular order.

- 1** Seeking out local artists during Art Walk
- 2** Local theater performances at Joe Jefferson Players
- 3** Lying by the pool, any pool, from March through November
- 4** Car races at the Mobile International Speedway
- 5** The friendliness and hospitality of Mobilians
- 6** Dancing in the streets during BayFest
- 7** Rooting for the home team – the Mobile BayBears



- 8** Downtown walking tours hosted by the History Museum of Mobile and Mobile Bay CVB
- 9** The ornate fountains in our many parks



- 10** Listening to live, local music at places such as the Mobile Symphony
- 11** The architecture of the Oakleigh Garden District and other midtown mansions



- 12** Walking down the Avenue of the Oaks at Spring Hill College
- 13** Eating local Gulf seafood on the Causeway, and of course throughout town



- 14** Tailgating before a University of South Alabama Jags game
- 15** Spotting the gracious Azalea Trail Maids all around town
- 16** Feeding stingrays at the Dauphin Island Estuarium
- 17** The countless festivals and food competitions throughout the spring and fall
- 18** Cherubim statues at Magnolia Cemetery
- 19** Sitting with Mr. Cooper at Cooper Riverside Park and watching the big Navy warships being built at Austal



# About Mobile

**20** The many quality museums, from the Mobile History Museum to the Mobile Museum of Art to the Mobile Carnival Museum, and Fort Condé



**21** Bellingrath Gardens – every day of the year

**22** Biking, walking trails and playgrounds at the parks from west Mobile to downtown to Brookley



**23** Beautiful churches, especially downtown's Christ Church Cathedral and the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

**24** Azalea Trail Run – both as a runner and as a spectator

**25** Watching the Moon Pie Drop, ringing in another new year



**26** The sculpture garden at USA Children's and Women's Hospital

**27** Buying fresh local fruits and vegetables at local farmers' markets, such as Market on the Square

**28** A wide variety of shopping from chains like Belk at Bel Air Mall to local small retail stores such as The Ivy Cottage in Legacy Village and Downtown Mobile Alliance's Urban Emporium

**29** Rain – yes, really – and how it keeps everything green

**30** Birdwatching on Dauphin Island

**31** Sailing and boating on Mobile Bay and surrounding rivers

**32** Fishing off the pier at Arlington Park

**33** Following local artists' work along the Oyster Trail



**34** Going to Mars via the Gulf Coast Exploreum

**35** Fishing for redfish and King Mackerel

**36** Distinguished Young Women activities

**37** Chocolate dobash cake from Pollman's

**38** The 50 courts at the Mobile Tennis Center and numerous sports programs throughout the community

**39** The droves of people who contribute to the Recycling Center in Midtown and west Mobile

**40** Kayaking at Five Rivers



**41** Spanish moss and Mardi Gras beads draped from the trees

**42** Boating to the Sand Island Lighthouse

**43** The diversity of people, cultures and traditions



**44** How the skyline changes colors with the peaks of the RSA Battlehouse Tower, Renaissance Mobile Riverview Plaza Hotel and RSA Trustmark building.

**45** Being a part of the college football postseason, thanks to the GoDaddy Bowl



**46** Noshing on Mobile – original cuisine – fried crab claws and West Indies salad

**47** USS Battleship ALABAMA, war memorials and vintage aircraft

**48** Getting autographs from college all-stars at the Reese's Senior Bowl

**40** Blooming dogwoods, azaleas and wisteria



**50** Spectacular sunrises over Mobile Bay

**51** Mardi Gras – Laissez les bon temps rouler



Send us pictures of you, your friends and family doing what you love most in Mobile to [info@mobilechamber.com](mailto:info@mobilechamber.com). Watch some of them on the Chamber's Facebook page this summer at [www.facebook.com/MobileChamber](http://www.facebook.com/MobileChamber). Like us to follow along.





# BancorpSouth

Since 1875, BancorpSouth has served customers in the U.S. BancorpSouth is located at the 65 Dauphin building at the intersection of Dauphin Street and Interstate 65. Seated from left to right, are Virginia Knight and Jamie Warren. First row: Kristin Peterson, James Alexander, Christa Hilburn, Terry Harbin, Sarah Shyttlesworth and John Hardin. Second row: Kerry O'Connor, Phil Domke, Jack Rester and Patrick Ladd.

**Company officials:** Terry Harbin, market president; Hugh White, senior vice president and senior lender; John Hardin, vice president; Phil Domke, senior vice president; James Alexander, vice president; Patrick Ladd, vice president; and Kerry O'Connor, community bank president, Baldwin County.

**Years in business:** Since 1875

**Brief company description:** BancorpSouth, a wholly-owned subsidiary of BancorpSouth Inc., operates in more than 300 locations in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee and Texas, including an insurance location in Illinois. While BancorpSouth is a large regional bank, it is comprised of community banks close to its customers and the cities and towns it serves and provides all financial services.

**Why are you located in Mobile?**

“BancorpSouth chose to locate in Mobile eight years ago to participate in the rich history of the Port City and become part of what we see as an incredibly bright future full of growth and opportunity,” said Harbin. “The Mobile market provided an opportunity to participate in an area of economic growth second to none in our eight-state footprint, while filling in the missing piece of our other community banks in Montgomery, Birmingham and Huntsville. We now have 28 branches in the state of Alabama, including our two in Mobile and three in Baldwin County.”

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

“I have been personally involved in the PFG campaign beginning with the ‘Tell the World’ campaign in

the 1980s, and have been able to see the incredible value of our community pulling together to bring economic growth and job creation to the region. Running successive five-year campaigns consistently over an extended period of time has kept Mobile in the forefront of economic development, sharpened our skills and built camaraderie among participating businesses. As business owners and managers, we all like to see an investment pay dividends, and Partners for Growth does just that.”

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

“Our civic, governmental and business leaders have a long history of doing the hard work to secure a bright future for economic growth for the region,” said Harbin. “Our greatest potential is in further developing and maintaining a spirit of

inclusiveness and opportunity for all our citizens. In short, our people, coupled with employment and recreational opportunities, are our greatest asset.”

**Length of continuous Chamber membership:**

Since 2007



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



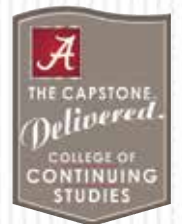


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# Military Appreciation Luncheon



In April, the Mobile Area Chamber hosted its 28<sup>th</sup> annual Military Appreciation Luncheon at the Battleship Memorial Park. More than 350 people attended this luncheon that included an awards presentation to the local military community and local JROTC members. Pictured left is keynote speaker Lt. Gen. Michael W. Wooley (Ret.). Also during the luncheon, Crown Products was named the local military community's "Above And Beyond" business of the year.

# Legislative Reception



The Mobile Area Chamber held its annual legislative reception in Montgomery in April. The event, which drew a large contingency of statewide elected officials, allows Mobile's business community to thank the delegation for their work on behalf of local business and industry. This year's event was sponsored by AT&T, ExxonMobil and Hurricane Electronics Inc.

Pictured above (from left to right) are Mobile and Baldwin County legislators: Rep. Napoleon Bracy, Rep. Chris Pringle, Rep. Jack Williams, Sen. Rusty Glover, Sen. Vivian Davis Figures, Rep. Margie Wilcox, Rep. James Buskey, Rep. Elaine Beech, Rep. Randy Davis, Rep. David Sessions, Rep. Adline Clarke, Rep. Victor Gaston, Rep. Alan Baker, Sen. Bill Hightower, Rep. Barbara Drummond and Rep. Harry Shiver.

Pictured (from left to right) are: Sen. Bill Hightower, Dirk Young with Hurricane Electronics, Rep. Chris Pringle and Bill Sisson with the Mobile Area Chamber.



# Katherine Wills

**Company:** PANGEATWO

**Title:** Director of client relations

**Hometown:** Bay Minette

**Education:** She earned both bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting from The University of Alabama. She is also a certified public accountant.

**First job:** Cashier at Winn-Dixie while in high school

**Previous experience:** Her work experience includes staff accountant with Ernst & Young LLP accounting firm in Birmingham; internal auditor and financial accounting at Standard Furniture Manufacturing Co.; and Wilkins Miller Hieronymus.

**Accomplishments:** Wills served on the board of directors for the United Way of Baldwin County for five years and was chairman in 2014. She assisted in raising funds and reaching campaign goals during her term.

**Secret to success:** "I have three primary principles that are the keys to success: listening to everyone, being patient, and being a team player in your organization."

**Brief company description:** PANGEATWO is an executive search, consulting and staffing firm in downtown Mobile.



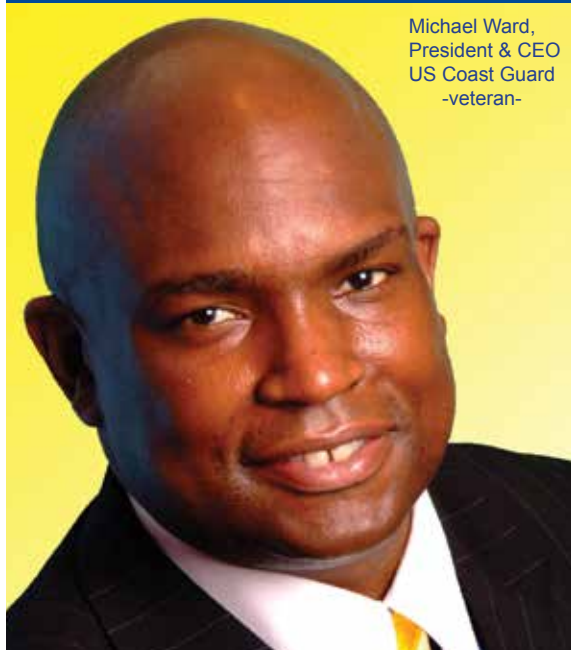


# Member Appreciation Day

In April, the Mobile Area Chamber held a fish fry on the Chamber lawn as a thank you to its Chamber members. Perfect weather was on tap, and a large crowd came to enjoy the afternoon. Plans are already underway for next year's event scheduled for April 12, 2016. Pictured above are some of the event's guests. They are (from left to right): Virginia Jackson, Leslie Sauer, Maggie Robertson and Darius Spencer, all with SMG-Mobile Convention Center.



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# Chamber Seeks Travelers for Trip to Spain

Spanish charm and hidden gems await Mobile Area Chamber members and guests choosing to travel to the famous cities of Madrid, Cordoba, Seville, Granada and more on a nine-day Spanish Treasures trip set for Nov. 1-9.

The trip costs \$3,349 per person, based on double occupancy, and includes air travel from Mobile to Madrid, hotel accommodations, many meals, tour guides, motorcoach travel, transfers and more. An optional two-night add-on to Barcelona is also available for an additional \$599 per person.

The vacation begins in Spain's capital, Madrid, where participants can taste authentic cuisine at fabulous restaurants, shop for trinkets and treasures and marvel at the stunning art and architecture the city offers. Famous museums, plazas and

fountains are around every corner of this exciting Spanish city.

In Cordoba and Seville, tour a UNESCO World Heritage Site, an 8<sup>th</sup> Century mosque and other ancient gothic architecture. In Granada, the world-famous Alhambra Palace awaits with its gardens, fountains and massive stone walls. A visit to Toledo, with time to visit St. Tome and the masterpiece of El Greco, is the final stop before returning to Madrid.

Only 10 seats remain for this trip. A deposit of \$500 and a completed registration form will hold your space. To learn more, or to receive a full travel brochure and register, contact **Leigh Perry-Herndon** at 251-431-8645 or [lherndon@mobilechamber.com](mailto:lherndon@mobilechamber.com).

- Day 1 - Mobile to Madrid**
- Day 2 - Madrid**
- Day 3 - Madrid**
- Day 4 - Madrid/Cordoba/Seville**
- Day 5 - Seville**
- Day 6 - Seville/Granada**
- Day 7 - Granada**
- Day 8 - Granada/Toledo/Madrid**
- Day 9 - Madrid to Mobile**

*\*Optional add-on to Barcelona*

- Day 9 - Madrid/Barcelona**
- Day 10 - Barcelona**
- Day 11 - Barcelona to Mobile**



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### Staff Participates in Day of Caring

Sixteen Chamber staff members signed up and participated in this year's United Way of Southwest Alabama Day of Caring. Team members, along with a team from AM/NS Calvert, spent the day at the Bay Area Food Bank working on multiple projects, including helping to sort and bag 2,400 pounds of assorted fresh produce and 11,535 pounds of nonperishable food items for distribution to area agencies. Pictured above are some of the Chamber staff who participated. They are (L-R): Darrell Randle, Brenda Rembert, Alison Unger, Shelly Mattingly, Carolyn Golson and Ashley Horn.

projects, including event registration, member visits and attending ribbon-cuttings. To learn more about this group, contact **Dawn Rencher** at 251-431-8649 or [drencher@mobilechamber.com](mailto:drencher@mobilechamber.com).

### Chamber Participates in Member Grand Openings and Ribbon Cuttings

Chamber staff and ambassadors helped cut ribbons and celebrate grand openings at Transamerica Agency Network, Goodwill Easter Seals of the Gulf Coast, Viva Health Café, Hurricane Grill & Wings, Infirmary Health Diagnostic & Medical Clinic, The Melting Pot and C Spire – Pinebrook Shopping Center. If your business is a member and you would like assistance with planning a grand opening or ribbon cutting event, contact **Dawn Rencher** at 251-431-8649 or [drencher@mobilechamber.com](mailto:drencher@mobilechamber.com).

### Save Local Now Includes 100-Plus Members

Last month, the Chamber launched Save Local Now, an online tool for members to promote their goods and services, as well as discounts, to a wider audience. In the first month, more than 110 Chamber-member businesses signed up for this free service. To learn more about the free program, go to <http://blog.savelocalnow.com/training/>. From there, members can receive training on the program from the comfort of their desk, and learn how to use social media to market themselves.

### Chamber Names New Ambassadors

Lane Elmore, Edward Jones; Kaycee Goubil, AHI Corporate Housing; and David McLemore, Infinity Builders were named new Chamber ambassadors. Ambassadors are a group of volunteer members who assist the Chamber with a variety of

### Chamber Hires Summer Intern in Communications

**Harley Boykin**, a graduating senior in communications at Auburn University, is spending the summer working at the Chamber in the communications and marketing department. Boykin, who is from Mobile, has an extensive resume for a college student, including working on BayFest, the National 7-on-7 Championship and in the Auburn athletics department. Boykin will work on a variety of projects throughout the summer including Chamber events, social media and writing for the magazine and website.



**AMBASSADOR** of the month



**Lisa Kavanagh**, operations manager for the **Junior League of Mobile (JLM)**, is the Mobile Area Chamber's Ambassador of the Month. Kavanagh oversees the daily operations of JLM, a nonprofit organization of women committed to promoting volunteerism, developing the potential of women and improving communities. She joined the Chamber's ambassador program in 2011, while serving as associate director of alumni relations at the University of South Alabama. In 2012, she retired after 25 years of service but remained active in the ambassadors program.

*Ambassadors are volunteers who support the Mobile Area Chamber by visiting members, assisting with events and ribbon-cuttings. To learn more, contact Dawn Rencher at 251-431-8649 or [drencher@mobilechamber.com](mailto:drencher@mobilechamber.com).*

**Friends of the Mobile Animal Shelter**



*Friends of the Mobile Animal Shelter (FOMAS) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit animal adoption program focused on improving the quality of life for shelter pets housed at the City of Mobile Animal Shelter. The organization strives to place healthy, adoptable shelter pets and reduce the number of homeless and unwanted domestic animals roaming the streets through spray/neuter programs. For more information, visit <http://adoptapetmobile.org/>.*

*Pictured are: standing, L-R, Brenda Cashdollar, vice president; Donna Turner, president; Anna Bush, foster and publications coordinator; and kneeling next to BJ (the sheltie) is Vicki Dykes, treasurer.*



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**Hilton Billingsley Mostellar** is co-owner of Mobile Asphalt Co. and president of R. J. Billingsley Inc. She earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from The University of Alabama. A graduate of UMS-Wright Preparatory School, she has served on the school's alumni advisory committee and was inducted into the UMS-Wright Athletic Hall of Fame in 2009. Mostellar is a current member of the UMS-Wright board of trustees.



**John R. Goodloe III** is an attorney, a real estate developer and manager of Hatters Pond LLC. A native Mobilian, Goodloe is a graduate of Murphy High School. He earned a bachelor's degree in English from Birmingham-Southern College and a juris doctorate from The University of Alabama School of Law.



**Paul Weber** serves as manager of operations for Berg Spiral Pipe Corp.'s Mobile facility, where large-diameter pipe used in the oil and gas industry is manufactured. A native of Quebec, Canada, Weber earned a bachelor's degree from St. Mary's University and a bachelor's degree in metallurgical engineering from the Technical University of Nova Scotia. Berg Spiral Pipe is a Partners for Growth Investor.



**Bobby Wein** is vice president of Millard Maritime, a privately owned and operated port facility located in Theodore, where he is focused on developing the company's maritime business. He has been in the maritime industry since 1996, previously with Norton Lilly, where he held various maritime sales and operations positions. Wein earned a degree in aviation management from the School of Aeronautical Engineering at Auburn University.

For more information about the Chamber's board of advisors, contact Katrina Dewrell at 251-431-8611 or [kdewrell@mobilechamber.com](mailto:kdewrell@mobilechamber.com).

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## Emily McGrath Promoted to Director of Education and Workforce Development

**Emily McGrath** was recently promoted to director of education and workforce development at the Mobile Area Chamber.

McGrath, who earned her bachelor's degree in economics from Vanderbilt

University, will oversee some crucial programs including the Bay Area Healthcare Coalition's Health Occupations Career Fair and Summer Scrubs and the new Young Entrepreneur's Academy (YEA!) program.

In addition, she will serve as the Chamber's liaison to the Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council.

"One of my favorite aspects of working with the Chamber is



McGrath

seeing how our region works together toward a common goal of making Mobile the best that it can be," said McGrath. "Through education and workforce development, I'm able to be a part

of partnerships between education, training programs, industry and individuals to develop and strengthen the workforce pipeline for our area."

Nearly two years ago, McGrath joined the Mobile Area Chamber as a project coordinator in the economic development department.

McGrath may be reached at 251-431-8651 or [emcgrath@mobilechamber.com](mailto:emcgrath@mobilechamber.com).

## Laura O'Connor Named to Manufacturing Community Team

The Mobile Area Chamber and the University of South

Alabama added **Laura O'Connor** to the special projects manufacturing community team as assistant coordinator.

O'Connor brings 29 years of grant development and implementation, practice management and fiscal management to ensure regulatory compliance.

She was director/program administrator for the center for strategic health innovation at USA.

While at USA she authored the Alabama Regional Extension Center grant and launched the Gulf Coast Patient Care Network.

"I'm really glad to be working with the Chamber," she said. "This is a very impressive and

focused group of people with the best interest of Mobile, the

citizens and the business community at heart."

"We are very fortunate to have someone with Laura's skill set working with us. She will be a great asset to us as we capitalize on our manufacturing

community designation," said **Bill Sisson**, president and CEO of the Chamber.

O'Connor earned a bachelor's degree in English from Vanderbilt University and a master's degree in healthcare administration from The University of Alabama at Birmingham.

She may be reached at 251-431-8627 or [loconnor@mobilechamber.com](mailto:loconnor@mobilechamber.com).



O'Connor

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2. Your favorite TV show.
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### Contact:

Joe Mareno, Mobile Area Chamber, 251-431-8624, [jmareno@mobilechamber.com](mailto:jmareno@mobilechamber.com)  
Janet Keene, Bender Realty, 251-445-2468, [janet@benderrealestategroup.com](mailto:janet@benderrealestategroup.com)





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

**10 SPEED NETWORKING** *\*Members Only, one representative per company*  
Get ready...get set...go! Start your day with fast-paced networking.

**When:** 8 to 9 a.m.  
**Where:** Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.  
**Cost:** \$5  
**Contact:** Alison Unger at 251-431-8617 or [aunger@mobilechamber.com](mailto:aunger@mobilechamber.com)  
*Reservations required. Cancellations after June 9 not reimbursed. Free parking.*

**10 GCTC LUNCH**  
A bimonthly lunch hosted by the Gulf Coast Technology Council.

**When:** 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
**Where:** Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.  
**Speaker:** Travis Short, president & CEO, Horizon Shipbuilding  
**Topic:** "How Software Impacts Shipbuilding"  
**Cost:** \$20 for Chamber members and \$25 for potential members and includes lunch  
**Contact:** Emily Jerkins at 251-431-8602 or [ejerkins@mobilechamber.com](mailto:ejerkins@mobilechamber.com)  
*Reservations required. Cancellations after June 5 not reimbursed to cover lunch cost. Free parking.*

**Sponsor:**

**12 MEMBERSHIP 101**  
Come meet other members and Chamber staff to learn about the many ways to benefit from your membership.

**When:** 8 to 9 a.m.  
**Where:** Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.  
**Contact:** Alison Unger at 251-431-8617 or [aunger@mobilechamber.com](mailto:aunger@mobilechamber.com)  
*No charge, but seating is limited. RSVP requested. Free parking.*

**16 EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE** *\*Members Only*  
A monthly forum for Chamber member business owners and managers.

**When:** 8 to 9 a.m.  
**Where:** Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.  
**Speaker:** Dr. Don Epley, Center for Real Estate and Economic Development  
**Topic:** Business Trends in Mobile  
**Contact:** Brenda Rembert at 251-431-8607 or [brembert@mobilechamber.com](mailto:brembert@mobilechamber.com)  
*No charge, but seating is limited. RSVP requested. Free parking.*

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## 17 WOMEN'S ROUNDTABLE *\*Members Only*

A bimonthly forum for Chamber-member women business owners and managers.

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

**Where:** Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.

**Speaker:** Sheila Egbert, director of diabetes education, Springhill Medical Center

**Topic:** Understanding Diabetes, Early Detection, Prevention and Lifestyle Choices that Make a Difference

**Contact:** Alison Unger at 251-431-8617 or [aunger@mobilechamber.com](mailto:aunger@mobilechamber.com)

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

**Sponsor:**



## 19 INTERNATIONAL TRADE LEADERSHIP SERIES: CREATING A STRATEGIC INTERNATIONAL SALES AND MARKETING PLAN

The Mobile Area Chamber, in coordination with the Alabama District Export Council, the Alabama International Trade Center and the U.S. Commercial Service, present this in-depth certification program to cross-train employees and advance international business skills for Alabama companies.

**When:** 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

**Where:** Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.

**Cost:** \$35 per session or \$120 for the series

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

*Reservations required. Free parking.*

### SAVE THE DATE FOR THESE UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL TRADE LEADERSHIP SERIES SESSIONS:

July 17 INTERNATIONAL FINANCE AND EXPORT INSURANCE

Aug. 7 INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION & LOGISTICS

Aug. 28 INTERNATIONAL LEGAL ISSUES: CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS

## 25 BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

**When:** 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

**Where:** Holiday Inn Express & Suites Mobile West I-65  
80 Springdale Blvd.

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

**Contact:** Alison Unger at 251-431-8617 or [aunger@mobilechamber.com](mailto:aunger@mobilechamber.com)

*Reservations are not needed.*

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Who's New



Daughtery



Keleher

**Kristi B. Daughtery** and **Colleen A. Keleher** were named partners at **Crow Shields Bailey CPA** firm. Daughtery graduated from The University of Alabama with a bachelor's degree in accounting. She manages the firm's Daphne location. Keleher earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from Spring Hill College and a master's in business from the University of South Alabama.



**Joan Dunlap** was named executive director of the City of Mobile's Innovation Team. She will lead the city's participation in the program sponsored by

Bloomberg Philanthropies. Dunlap holds a bachelor's in economics and Latin American Studies from Tulane University and a master's degree in business administration/finance from the Jones Graduate School of Management at Rice University.



**Edith Franklin** joined **New Horizons Credit Union** in the newly created position of controller.



**Stirling Properties** welcomed **Andrew Dickman** to its commercial brokerage division as sales and leasing executive. He will work at the company's downtown Mobile office at 1 St. Louis St, Suite 4100.



Franklin



Dickman

**Franklin Primary Health Center Inc.** promoted **Judy Mitchell** to chief operations officer. She has



Mitchell

12 years of experience and previously worked as director of nursing and director of healthcare quality. Mitchell graduated from the University of South Alabama with a bachelor's degree in nursing.

Business Endeavors

**Mobile Asphalt Co.** won the Alabama Department of Transportation Baldwin County resurfacing project that affects a nine-mile stretch along I-10 from the east end of the Bayway to SR-59 in Baldwin County. The project is expected to be completed by the summer of 2016.



**Tate & Lyle** launched a new low-calorie sugar, *Dolcia Prima*, the company's name for allulose. Similar to the taste of table sugar, allulose can be found in small quantities in some fruits and foods.



Fitch Ratings upgraded the **Alabama State Port Authority** to 'A-' with an outlook of stable, based on dock facilities' revenue bonds. Fitch's rating reflects the Port Authority's record volumes in steel, iron and forest products in fiscal year 2014, and its success in diversifying the authority's revenue stream that partly mitigates the organization's dependence on coal shipments.



**Viva Health Café**, a division of University of Alabama at Birmingham, announced it relocated its Mobile office to 3071 Dauphin St.



**FusionPoint Media**, a multimedia company specializing in creative services and web development, launched a new website for **Bellingrath Gardens and Home** at [www.bellingrath.org](http://www.bellingrath.org).

**The University of Alabama's** Culverhouse College of Commerce is offering a new, online degree, a master of science in marketing with a specialization in marketing analytics. For information, visit <http://cba.ua.edu/>.



**Goodwill Easter Seals** opened its newly renovated 33,000-square-foot facility at 300 Azalea Rd. The location includes an expanded retail store, a covered, drive-through donation center and community center.



**Mobile County Public School System** broke ground on Fournier-Chastang K-8 School, a new facility in the Trinity Gardens community that will front I-65. The 93,770-square-foot facility will include 27 classrooms, science, vocational and computer labs, a gym and a 6,633-square-foot tornado shelter.



**U-J Chevrolet** started an automotive service technician apprentice program in partnership with Saraland City Schools. School authorities will identify candidates on an annual basis for the program.



**Sam Winter & Co. Real Estate** moved its office to 660 Springhill Ave., in downtown Mobile.

Well Done

The Mobile Section of the **Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Alabama** named **White-Spunner Construction's** safety and compliance manager, **Ross Moyer**, 2014 Safety Leader of the Year. Moyer was honored for his dedication and innovativeness as a safety leader, and for his participation and contribution to safety in the construction industry.



Moyer

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The company also received the Construction Safety Excellence Award in the building division for maintaining an excellent safety record throughout 2014. The company finished the year with more than 127,000 hours worked without a lost-time incident.

**Harrietta Eaton**, CEO of **CorroMetrics Services Inc.**, was elected chair of the Public Policy and Outreach Committee at NACE International's Corrosion 2015 Conference. NACE, formerly the National Association of Corrosion Engineers, is known as the worldwide corrosion authority made up of more than 34,000 members from 116 countries. Eaton is the first Alabamian ever elected to this position.



Eaton



**Lesley Baker CPA**, a manager with **Russell Thompson Butler & Houston LLP**,

Baker successfully completed the certification process with the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) for the Certification in Financial Forensics (CFF).

**Russell Thompson Butler & Houston LLP** won a Silver Addy for its "Discover Your Inner Elf" holiday marketing campaign in the category of Special Event Materials - Campaign at the annual American Advertising Awards.

The **University of Mobile** earned nine national awards, including a "Best of Show," in the 30<sup>th</sup> annual Educational

Advertising Awards, the largest educational advertising awards competition in the United States.

## Community News

**Mobile Area Education Foundation (MAEF)** was selected to receive a Lumina Foundation grant of \$120,000 over the next two years. Monies will be used to design and support efforts to improve college attainment strategies, outcome sustainability, community collaboration, program planning and impact. Lumina, based in Indianapolis, is an independent private foundation committed to increasing the number of degrees, certificates and other credentials.

**Goodwyn, Mills and Cawood** awarded \$2,500 to Davidson High School for its win at the 2015 Can Do Good Social

Design Build Competition among high schools throughout the Southeast. The company started the program to teach students about the architecture, engineering and construction industry and the importance of social responsibility.

Submission deadline for Member News is two months prior to publication. News releases should be one or two brief paragraphs.

Photos must be professional headshots, labeled with the person's last name, and must be 300 dpi at full size and saved in an eps, tiff or jpg format. Send your information to [news@mobilechamber.com](mailto:news@mobilechamber.com).



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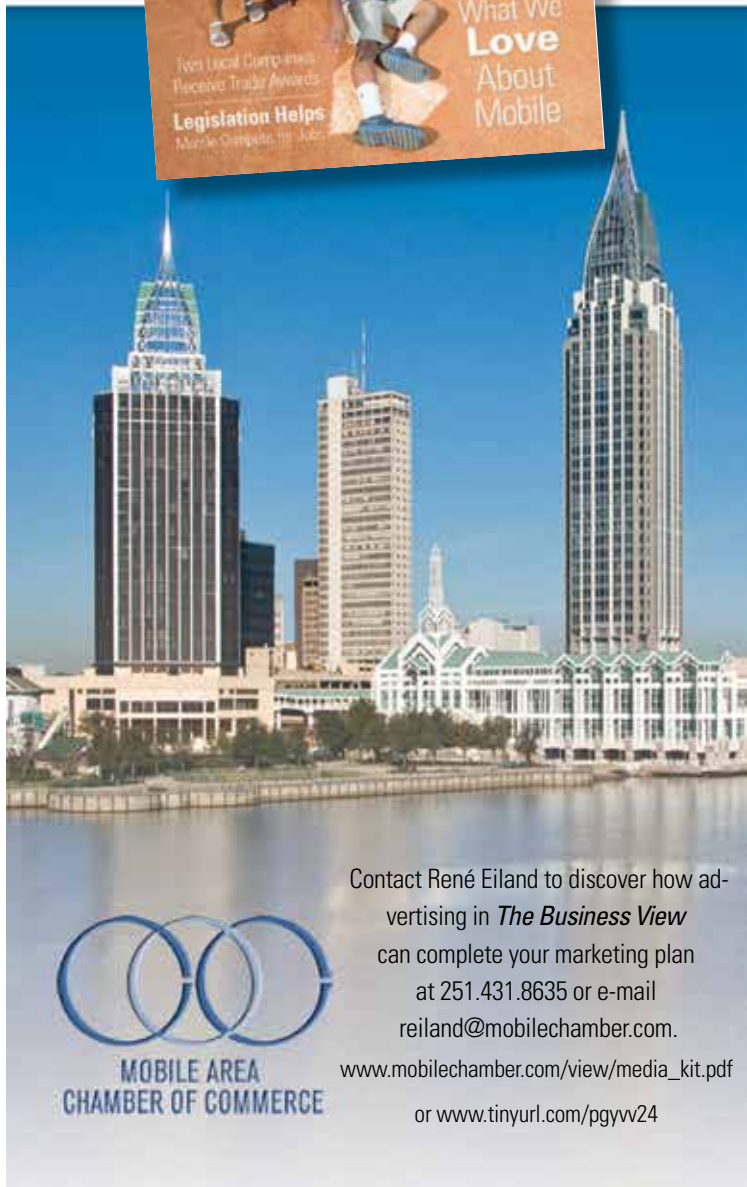
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