

Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce

NOVEMBER 2015

# the businessview



Mobile Exports  
**on the Rise**

**Chamber Chase  
Exceeds Goal**

**Keeping  
Seas Safe**  
Local Vet Starts  
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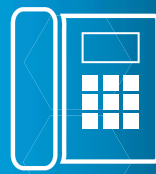
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From the Publisher - Bill Sisson

## Celebrating 25 Years at VT MAE

"Some people dream of success, while others wake up and work hard at it."

I cannot help but recall this quotable quote attributed to an unknown author when I think of VT MAE's highly successful 25 years in Mobile. To complete 25 eventful years and keep up the pace of winning accolades as a top-notch Aviation Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility is a herculean task – and MAE has accomplished it by providing good old-fashioned excellent service to its customers.

From the very beginning, MAE has been a dedicated and devoted corporate citizen. The company and its employees give back to the community in innumerable ways.



All you have to do is attend one of MAE's employee luncheons or family picnics to see the impact it has on our region. Its more than 1,000 employees and their families live, work, own homes, attend churches, go to school and shop here. They are what we in the economic development arena call the

"multiplier effect."

Congratulations to VT MAE on 25 years of excellence in Mobile. We look forward to working together for another 25 years to continue to advance this great community. Stay tuned for an update on VTMAE in the next issue of *The Business View*.



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**ON THE COVER** Jonathan McConnell took his combat experience as a U.S. Marine and turned it into Meridian Consulting, a successful worldwide maritime security company. See story on pg. 10.

Photo by L.A. Fotographee.

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# Mobile Exports on the Rise

Mobile saw the largest increase in exports of any metro area in Alabama in 2014, jumping from 9.2 percent of the state's share in 2013 to 11.4 percent in 2014. Mobile now holds most of state exports, based on value, among Alabama metros for the first time since 2009 according to the International Trade Administration.

And Mobile-based companies and manufacturing facilities continue to see growth in the global market. In the past five years, Mobile's exports have risen 33 percent. And since 2005, they've grown 92 percent, says **Christina Stimpson**, director of international trade at the Mobile Area Chamber.

According to the International Trade Administration, more than 70 percent of the world's purchasing power is located outside of the United States.

"If we are selling only to our neighbors, we are missing out on huge growth opportunities," says Stimpson.

Helping local companies find new markets is a priority for the Chamber, which is working with the Alabama Department of Commerce and the Export Alabama Alliance to lead trade and business development missions to Spain, Morocco, Germany, Switzerland and Mexico in 2016.

Exports not only create jobs, but they can sustain jobs as well, says Stimpson. Princeton University researchers cited in *Business Forward* found that "compared to firms of similar size and industry, exporters are able to generate greater sales, pay higher wages, hire more skilled workers, and are more


capital-intensive than non-exporters. They are also more likely to survive."

"These are the types of companies that we want in our community," says Stimpson.

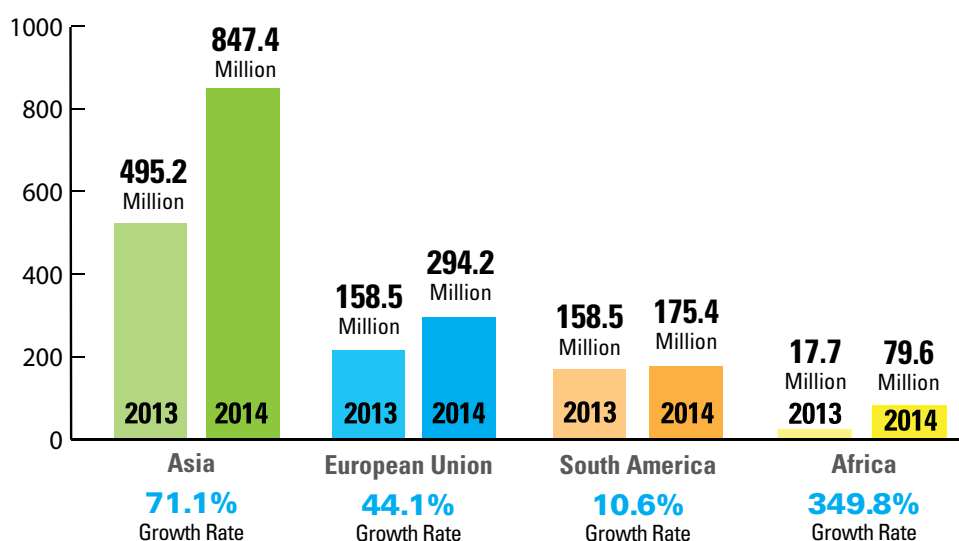
In addition to connecting

companies with potential partners in foreign markets, the Chamber's international trade division assists companies wanting to participate in overseas trade shows, hosts a number of educational workshops focused

on international trade issues and opportunities and works to educate the public on the importance of international trade.

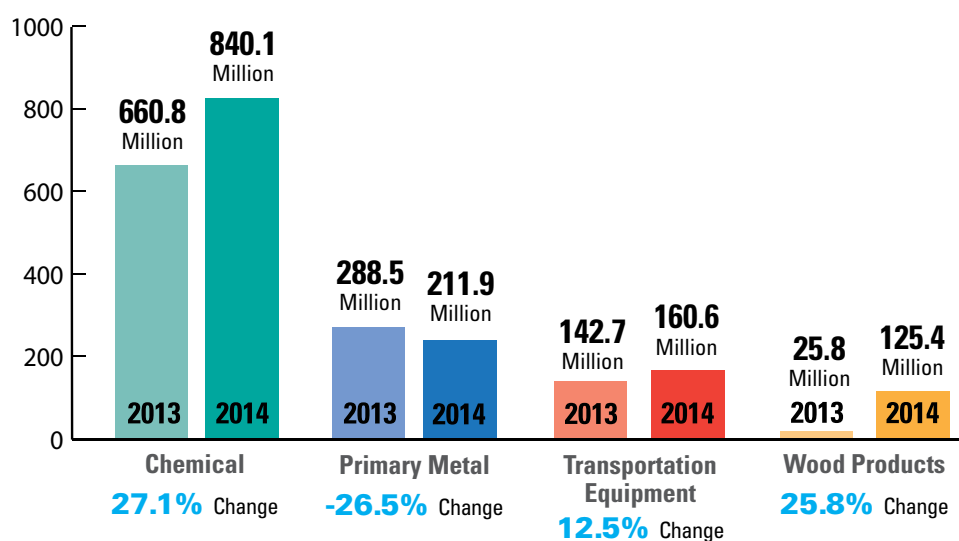
You'll see this symbol  with stories featuring Chamber initiatives.

## Destination of Mobile Exports



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce

## Type of Exported Products



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce

## Charitable Pharmacy Opens New Facility

Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy, a nonprofit organization providing life-sustaining medication at no charge to persons with severely limited income and resources, opened a new office at 109 S. Cedar St., in

downtown Mobile.

Executive Director **Shearie Archer** says the agency needed a bigger building so pharmacy students from Auburn University could counsel more clients on taking their medications correctly.

Serving nearly 1,700 patients in Baldwin, Escambia and Mobile counties, Ozanam is able to process 34,000 prescription drugs annually with a retail value of more than \$1.5 million.

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# Bellingrath Gardens and Home Celebrates 20 Years of Magic Christmas in Lights



Bellingrath Gardens and Home is celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Magic Christmas in Lights in 2015. The dazzling nighttime display features more than 1,000 set pieces, 3 million lights and 15 scenes, set out in a walking tour throughout the 65-acre estate.

Three new scenes have been created for the anniversary, including lily pads on Mirror Lake and animated scenes illuminating the Great Lawn.

Putting the show on is a labor of love, and a year-round project, according to **Bill Barrick**, executive director of Bellingrath Gardens and Home. "Each year, the set pieces for the holiday lights are designed and handmade on site by members of Bellingrath's staff," he said. "Two of our employees work full-time all year on the light display."

This year's show will run from Nov. 27 through Jan. 2, with the gardens closed only on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

For details about Magic Christmas in Lights, go to [www.bellingrath.org](http://www.bellingrath.org).

## FUN facts about Magic Christmas in Lights

### Where did the idea of Christmas in Lights come from?

In the 1990s, **Bob Pearson**, Bellingrath Gardens and Home's executive director, got the idea from the Fantasy in Lights show at Callaway Gardens in Pine Mountain, Ga. He visited Callaway Gardens and spoke with Dr. Bill Barrick, who was then Callaway's executive director. Pearson then launched the first Magic Christmas in Lights at Bellingrath in 1995. Interestingly enough, Barrick replaced Pearson at Bellingrath in 1999.

### Number of lights strung each year:

3 million  
**Most popular night in 2014:** Dec. 13, with 6,517 visitors. But in most years, the most popular nights have been on the weekend before Christmas. The overall attendance in 2014 was 73,260. Attendance has doubled since 2000, when it was 35,309.

### How long does it take to put up the lights?

Bellingrath staff gets started right around Labor Day. (They started a little early this year, on Sept. 1.) It takes about three months to finish stringing all of the trees and putting up all of the set pieces.

### Staffing Magic Christmas in Lights:

Two full-time employees work exclusively on the light display, year-round, three more light helpers are added in May and another three temporary employees come on board in August. Overall, Bellingrath Gardens and Home has about 75 full-time employees, but that number balloons to 100 for Magic Christmas in Lights, with additional temporary workers assisting in the gift shop, admissions building and café, and helping manage parking and traffic flow.

# Preparing for Small Business Saturday 2015

It's the time of year where businesses and individuals are gearing up for gift-giving. Local retailers are working hard to earn "top-shelf presence" in every shopper's mind. And while stores are preparing for the surge of Small Business Saturday shoppers on Nov. 29 and the last-minute Christmas rush, savvy managers know holiday shopping begins long before then.

Here are five trends to help close the sale based on the 2014 holiday season, according to a Google report released this summer:

- 78 percent of shoppers researched their purchases online, and 40 percent actually purchased online – making 2014, according to Google, the most connected holiday shopping season ever.

- Cell phone and tablet searches influenced \$1 trillion in spending.

- 48 percent of shoppers made most of their purchases before cyber Monday.

- 41 percent of shoppers purchased from a new retailer, up significantly from 2013.

- YouTube product reviews were watched by 80 percent of shoppers.

"It's not too late to make sure you have an integrated online presence, and promote Small Business Saturday to win customers," said **Darrell Randle**, the Mobile Area Chamber's vice president of small business development.

"And consumers, please remember that money spent locally at independent businesses or local franchises and even big box stores, is an investment in Mobile," he added.



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# NASA Business Forum Offers a Chance to Meet Procurement Specialists



Local businesses have a chance on Wednesday, Nov. 4 to get a piece of a \$1.8 billion pie. That's how much NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville spent with direct and indirect contractors last year.

The Mobile Area Chamber will host the NASA Business Forum, featuring senior procurement experts from four NASA service centers in Alabama, Florida and Mississippi, as well as representatives from major aerospace prime contractors.

"Small businesses play a key role in helping NASA achieve its mission, and are essential to NASA's success in so many ways. Like helping us journey to Mars, or advancing our leadership in Earth and climate science, or improving our capabilities supporting the innovation economy," said **David Brock**, small business specialist with Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville.

At the day-long event, attendees will hear from NASA small business specialists on the acquisition process, upcoming business opportunities, best practices to win a direct contract or subcontract, and helpful marketing tools and advice. Following the presentation, attendees will also meet face-to-face with the representatives in a trade-show style forum.

"NASA's Business Forum is a rare opportunity for our local and regional companies to have one-on-one access to numerous procurement specialists at one time in one place. And, just as important, is meeting the other attendees. A lot of partnerships and deals start at the forum," said **Danette Richards**, the Chamber's director of small business development.

"Even if a company isn't in a position to do business directly with NASA, there are still many opportunities for companies in the supplier pipeline for subcontracting," she added.

Open to small, medium and large companies, the forum helps NASA reach out to small, disadvantaged, women-owned, disabled Veteran and Veteran-owned businesses, and those located in historically underutilized business zones. The Chamber last hosted this event in 2013, drawing 200-plus attendees and more than 20 prime contractors and business development agencies.

The NASA centers and contractors are in search of a variety of business partners, including those to help with:

- Aeronautics Research/Avionics
- Weather and Climate Monitoring/Clean Air and Water
- Fire Equipment/Body Armor/Protective Guard Service
- Advanced Manufacturing/Tooling
- Advanced Technology/Robotics
- Environmental Services/Logistics Services
- Architect Engineering/Engineering Services
- Analysis and Communications Support
- Project Management/Program Planning and Control
- Cost Estimation and Analysis
- Configuration and Data Management
- Construction Services/Supplies
- Various Software Systems, general and specific to aerospace, and maintenance

There is limited availability to attend the forum, scheduled from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center. The cost is \$75 and includes breakfast and lunch. Contact **Brenda Rembert** at 251-431-8607 to check on availability. ☺☺

**Small businesses plays a key role in helping NASA achieve its mission, and are essential to NASA's success in so many ways.**

**David Brock**  
small business specialist  
Marshall Space Flight Center

# Chamber to Present State of the Economy on Dec. 1

Is your business trending with the economy, or leading the indicators?

Are you making capital investments, or waiting for a better economy?

What about other businesses? How are they planning for 2016?

These and other questions were posed to Mobile Area Chamber members in October to solicit their thoughts on Mobile's economy. Results from that survey, along with a panel presentation on some of Mobile's industry recruiting clusters, will be presented at the Chamber's inaugural State of the Economy event set for Dec. 1 at the Battle House Renaissance Mobile Hotel & Spa.

Presented by Regions Bank, this new signature forum will be

limited to only 230 participants, and is sure to sell out quickly. The morning presentation will include the following panelists overviewing:

- **Aviation/Aerospace** – presented by **Rhett Ross** with Continental Motors;
- **Chemical/Manufacturing** – presented by **George Vann** with BASF;
- **Healthcare** – presented by **Mark Nix** with Infirmity Health; and
- **Maritime** – presented by **Brian Harold** with APM Terminals Mobile

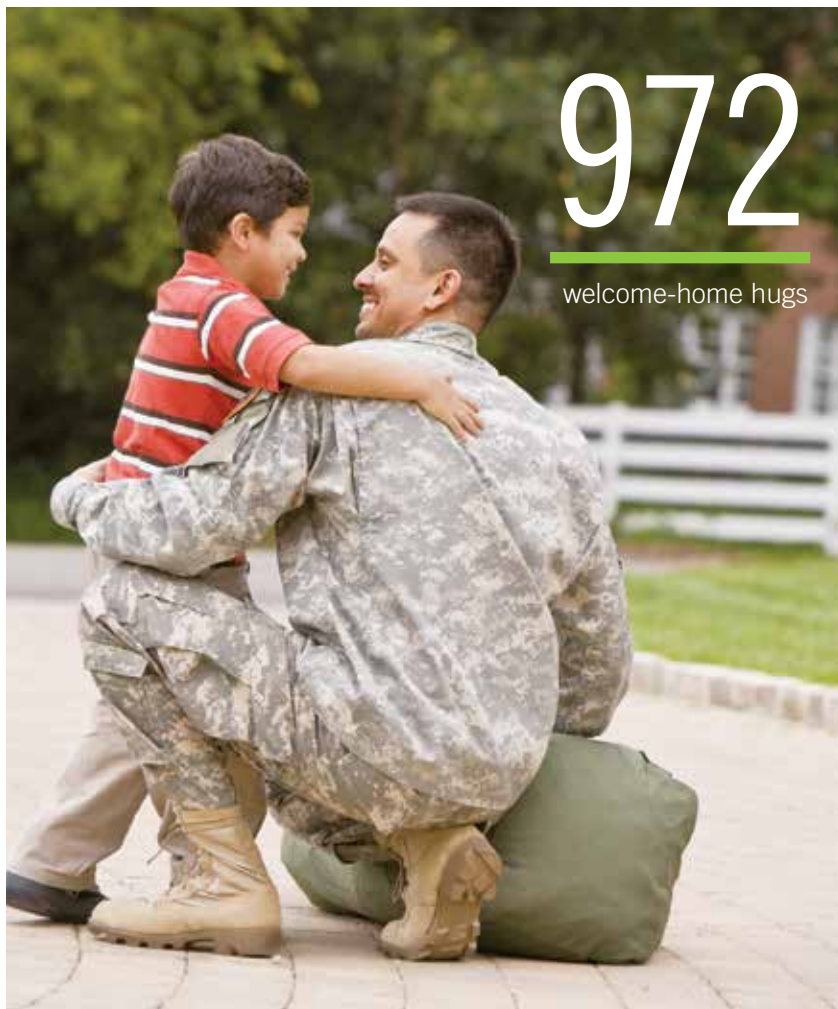
Following the morning panel, **Dr. Donald Ratajczak**, a leading economic forecaster and Regents Professor Emeritus of Economics at Georgia State

University, will be the luncheon keynote speaker.

Ratajczak produces weekly and monthly publications for Morgan Keegan, including a weekly economic commentary and forecast and a monthly forecast of short-term national and financial conditions.

The forum will begin at 10:30 a.m. and run through lunch. The cost is \$60 for Chamber members, and \$75 for potential members. Table purchases will also be available for this event.

For more information, contact **Katrina Dewrell** at 251-431-8611 or [kdewrell@mobilechamber.com](mailto:kdewrell@mobilechamber.com). Register online at [www.mobilechamber.com/events](http://www.mobilechamber.com/events).



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# Local Veteran Uses Military Experience to Create a Career Protecting Merchant Vessels

Anger and disbelief gripped **Jonathan McConnell** when he first heard, in April 2009, that the cargo ship Maersk Alabama was under siege by pirates off the Somali coast.

As the five-day ordeal culminated on Easter Sunday with the killing of three pirates by U.S. Navy snipers and the SEAL team-rescue of Capt. Richard Phillips, McConnell was finishing his first year at The University of Alabama School of Law.

"To me it was crazy," said McConnell, a Mobile native and highly-decorated combat veteran. "First, I was angry that an American was being held hostage, but that was followed immediately by confusion and asking, 'Why are we not guarding our merchant ships?' Then, it was just being a Marine and trying to solve the problem. It was much more fun – and satisfying – to come up with ways to solve that problem than to study for law school."

Nearly seven years later, McConnell is now president of Mobile-based Meridian Global Consulting LLC, one of the first maritime security companies in the world. Meridian is expected to generate roughly \$5 million in revenue by the close of 2015.

McConnell, who earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Auburn University and interned for U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.) before joining the Marines, was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with Combat "V" and the Combat Action Ribbon for his service on the outskirts of Fallujah, Iraq, in 2006, as well as the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal one year later for his actions at the Syrian border near Al Qaim.



*Meridian Global Consulting, headquartered in Mobile, is one of the first maritime companies in the world. The company provides security aboard maritime vessels.*

Meanwhile, Meridian got its start placing Marine veterans, many of whom served with McConnell, aboard merchant vessels as they transited across the coast of Somalia. The firm has since conducted ground security operations in West Africa, Southeast Asia and other high-risk areas throughout the world.

"Seven years ago, if you told me I'd be doing this, I would have laughed," he said. "This industry didn't even exist seven years ago, but we've been able to find our niche and succeed." His legal expertise in international law and international tracking of arms regulations has allowed him to

perform his own due diligence as the company has grown, he said, saving an "incredible amount of money."

"Lacking that knowledge – or access to it – can be a huge barrier of entry for a lot of other people, so it's been a huge competitive advantage for us, creating the perfect storm for us to succeed," McConnell said.

In turn, the firm has grown from a one-man operation to a corporate office staff of five complemented by some 40 security operators, a figure that fluctuates depending on demand.

McConnell said the most pressing current issues facing the fledgling industry are lax

regulation and enforcement which can result in the transfer of large quantities of illegal weapons.

Although he cannot control the rate at which regulatory oversight is negotiated and executed for what remains largely uncharted territory, McConnell said the benefit of being an industry pioneer is the ability to set the bar exceptionally high for newcomers.

In fact, earlier this year Meridian Global became the only company in the western hemisphere to obtain International Organization for Standardization accreditation for maritime security companies providing privately contracted armed security personnel aboard ships.

A handful of companies in the United Kingdom hold the distinction, he said, but Meridian is the only company in the Americas to meet this international standard.

"It's a big deal for us and for some of our clients," McConnell said, noting the Marshall Islands near the equator in the Pacific Ocean will begin requiring the ship and maritime technology certification in January 2016.

Above all, McConnell said, he has managed to create his dream job because he works day-in and day-out with fellow military veterans eager to put their highly specialized skills to use in the civilian world.

"I definitely think it's a calling, but it's also my dream job. These guys are heroes, and how many people get to work alongside Silver and Bronze Star awardees every single day? I love telling stories about Marines, but I love even more helping them find jobs, even if it's not with me," he said.

**"I definitely think it's a calling, but it's also my dream job. These guys are heroes, and how many people get to work alongside Silver and Bronze Star awardees every single day?"**

**Jonathan McConnell**  
Meridian Global Consulting LLC



# Admiral Thad W. Allen, Patriot of the Year, to Speak During Veterans Day Luncheon

The Mobile Bay Area Veterans Day Commission will honor **Adm. Thad W. Allen** as the 2015 Patriot of the Year as part of the city's Veterans Day activities on Wednesday, Nov. 11.

Allen will speak from his experience as Commander U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Atlantic Area during the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001; as Commandant at the USCG Aviation Training Center in Mobile; and as USCG Chief of Staff in Washington D.C. Allen was assigned by President George W. Bush to take command



**Allen**

of the federal response and recovery organizations after Hurricane Katrina in 2005. After the BP Deepwater Horizon explosion in April 2012, President Barack Obama asked Allen to serve as the National Incident

Commander, leading the federal government response efforts.

The Mobile-area Veterans Day celebration begins at 10 a.m. with a parade through downtown Mobile, followed by a luncheon from noon to 1:30 p.m. at Fort Whiting at Brookley Aeroplex, where Allen will speak. A Freedom Celebration

will begin at 3 p.m. at USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park, and the day concludes with a concert by the Mobile Pops at 7 p.m., also at the park.

All events are free to the public except lunch, which is \$18 per person or \$144 for a table of eight. Reservations are required by Nov. 6. Register online or contact **Carolyn Hunt** [chunt@mobilechamber.com](mailto:chunt@mobilechamber.com) or **251-431-8621** or with payment information.

**Is your business veteran owned? Or do you work for a veteran owned employer?**

If the answer is "yes", please let the Chamber know. In 2016, we're planning to recognize our members who own a business and are military veterans. You can help us do that by contacting **Carolyn Hunt** at **251-431-8621** or [chunt@mobilechamber.com](mailto:chunt@mobilechamber.com). Registration is required by Nov. 6.

## Mobile Bay Area Veterans Commission 2015 Veterans Day Luncheon Wednesday, November 11

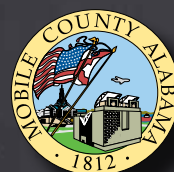
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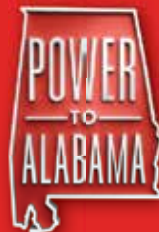
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# Personal Training Business Gives Clients an Edge

*Personal Edge Fitness prides itself on its educated and highly-trained staff (pictured from left to right) Gary Zakutney, bachelor of science in athletic training; Lindsey Smith, master's in exercise physiology and bachelor's in sports medicine; Joshua Gooch, bachelor's in exercise science; Garrett Williamson, master's of sports science in exercise physiology; Matt Miller, bachelor's in exercise science; and Lauren Carr, master's in exercise science.*

**Garrett Williamson** initially wasn't sure what he would name his new business, but he knew that its initials would be P.E.

"We had P.E. before we had the name," said Williamson, owner and president of Personal Edge Fitness. "P.E. is something I've been passionate about since probably 1986 – and it sounds strange, because I was a junior in high school. At that point in time, they were starting to cut physical education programs in schools. Even at that young age, I thought that was crazy. We were starting to look at obesity problems throughout the nation. ... That kind of stuck with me through high school and college."

Williamson's wife, Stephanie, ultimately suggested the name Personal Edge, saying that it would be a place where clients could get "their own personal edge."

Specializing in personal training for all ages, Personal Edge was founded in 2000, doubled the size of its Spring Hill Avenue facility in 2002 and recently renovated a new facility on Stein Street at the I-65 Beltline. Personal Edge is the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's Small Business of the Month.

"We do anything in fitness and sports that's not illegal, immoral or fattening," said Williamson, whose seven trainers work with more than 100 clients ranging in age from seven to 86. Those clients come to the facility for everything from athletic training and rehabilitation to weight loss.

"We've taught two people to walk again; we've got 13 scholarships to our name," said Williamson, adding that 35 percent of his clientele is over the age of 65. "Age does not dictate

ability. You can regrow muscle at any age."

Williamson said what sets the business apart is the expertise of its trainers, who carry a range of specialties from exercise physiology and kinesiology to athletic training and sports medicine. They all hold at least a bachelor's degree in their respective fields.

"The majority of clients we sign in all ages have some sort of pre-existing condition, an injury or what-have-you," Williamson said. "That's why we have sports medicine guys on staff, to be able to deal with that."

The staff members don't just preach fitness and performance, Williamson added – they also live it.

"Almost every member of our staff is still involved in some type of athletics or competition themselves," said Williamson, a former pole vaulter at the

University of Georgia who is now a nationally competitive triathlete. The UMS-Wright graduate was recently inducted into that school's athletic hall of fame.

The move into the new facility, expected by the end of the year, will allow for even more growth in the business. Personal Edge plans to add at least three new trainers and begin offering small-group training.

"Our mission is to make people feel better about being themselves," Williamson said. "If we're always doing that, then we're always going to be successful."

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).

# Contracting: The Next Frontier for Small Businesses

Does your company provide products or services that larger companies need? How about government agencies? Have you wondered what it takes to play in the “big league?”

These corporations and agencies seek out small- and medium-size companies for many of their purchasing needs. Many times these organizations have projects that specifically require small business participation including minority, women-owned and veteran-owned businesses, as well as those located in historically underutilized business zones (HUB zones).

Companies that gain entry in this market can find it lucrative yet also highly competitive.

Business-to-business forums, sometimes referred to as matchmaking events, provide opportunities for smaller companies to explore the complex procedures for doing business with the government and make important connections.

One of the most critical steps – meeting personally with the right person – is often the most difficult to accomplish. At these forums business owners have access to one-on-one meetings with key procurement specialists from government agencies at the local, state and federal levels, as well as major corporations.

Matchmaking forums don't guarantee a contract, but if

you've never approached government agencies or large corporations, they are an excellent starting point.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) offers Business Matchmaking events throughout the year across the country. In Mobile, the Alabama Small Business Development Center, SBA and the Chamber hold a Matchmaking conference annually.

On Wednesday, Nov. 4, local and regional business owners and entrepreneurs will have the opportunity to learn how to do business with NASA and other large corporations at the NASA Business Forum. The day-long event will include presentations

on upcoming contracting opportunities, the acquisition process to become a supplier, subcontractor or service provider, as well as marketing tips and best practices. (See more on page 8.)

Business owners interested in growing their companies through government contracting should take advantage of every opportunity that offers the chance to introduce themselves and your companies decision-makers.

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MUSIC DIRECTOR

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&  
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Beethoven

5

Da-Da-Da-Duuummm  
You'll know it after  
the first four notes!



Kevin Puts



Ran Dank

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the music is awesome!*

**Saturday**, November 21 at 8:00 p.m.

**Sunday**, November 22 at 2:30 p.m.

Saenger Theatre

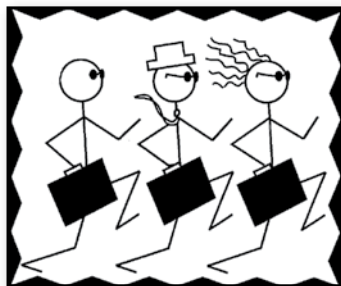
Dress down, leave uplifted! Join us for Beethoven & Blue Jeans, MSO's popular casual concert where even the orchestra wears jeans. This year we feature Beethoven's 5th Symphony and a piano concerto by our former composer-in-residence Kevin Puts – now a Pulitzer Prize winner. Pianist Ran Dank joins the orchestra for the piano concerto. **NOTE:** Remember that casual attire is fine for ALL concerts. There is no dress code. MSO concerts are about the amazing experience of classical music, not what you're wearing!

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## CHAMBER CHASE '15

### TOP PRODUCERS

#### Category One

Terri Owler, Arkema Inc.  
Harris Oswalt, Mobile Gas, a Sempra Co.  
Sharon Murrill, Alabama Power

#### Category Two

Linda Faulkner, Evonik Industries  
Ross Seifert, Hancock Bank  
Sherry Coker, ServisFirst Bank

#### Category Three

Sherry Coker, ServisFirst Bank  
Spencer Wiggins, Hancock Bank  
Ross Seifert, Hancock Bank

#### Top Category One Teams

Regions Bank  
Arkema Inc.  
Hancock Bank

#### Top Category Two Teams

Evonik Industries  
Hancock Bank  
Jeff Tesney Photography

#### Top Category Three Teams

ServisFirst Bank  
Hancock Bank  
Regions Bank

#### Rookie of the Year

Allison Allen, Alabama Power

#### Teams Over Goal

Alabama Power  
Arkema Inc.  
BBVA Compass  
Century Bank  
Evonik Industries  
Hancock Bank  
Mobile Area Chamber Ambassadors  
Mobile Gas, a Sempra Co.  
Regions Bank  
ServisFirst Bank  
Trustmark National Bank



## Chamber Chase Surpasses \$1.625 Million Goal

In May, the Mobile Area Chamber's annual total resource campaign, Chamber Chase, kicked-off with a goal of raising \$1.625 million. Under the leadership of chairman **Lance Covan** with Mitternight Inc., an enthusiastic group of 54 volunteers once again exceeded the goal.

Over 14 weeks, volunteers representing 31 member companies surpassed the goal by bringing in \$1,733,812 through member dues, sponsorships and advertising contracts used for publications such as *The Business View* and *The Business View Weekly*, as well as securing donated goods and services from member businesses. Volunteers recruited 67 new members and 23 new board of advisors and 11 of the teams exceeded their goals.

"This was our 19<sup>th</sup> campaign," said **Carolyn Golson**, the Chamber's vice president of membership. "Our dedicated volunteers continue to work hard and our business community responds positively. Lance motivated the group at weekly reward sessions, and their efforts and dedication made our

organization better able to do the work that will keep our region moving forward."

Next year's campaign will begin in May and volunteers are encouraged to jump in and get involved at any time during the year.

#### Why participate?

"The campaign provides a unique opportunity to not only help the community," says Covan. "It also provides volunteers a way to generate valuable networking and business contacts."

Golson added, "Chamber Chase offers networking for the volunteers, a fun competitive spirit, and a great social outlet as well. The primary goal is to bring in new members to the Chamber and raise resources that ultimately come back

full-circle to the business community through the work of the Chamber."

To learn how your company can get involved in Chamber Chase, contact Golson at 251-431-8622 or [cgolson@mobilechamber.com](mailto:cgolson@mobilechamber.com).



#### CAMPAIGN CHAIRMAN

**Lance Covan**, Mitternight Inc.


**Alabama Power**  
**\$74,422**

**Mike Saxon**  
*Mobile Division  
Vice President*

**Sharon Murrill**  
*Captain*

Allison Allen ..... \$24,974  
 Sharon Murrill ..... \$49,448

**Arkema Inc.**  
**\$95,050**

**John Lakenan**  
*Plant Manager*

**Judy Smith**  
*Captain*

Terri Owler ..... \$68,127  
 Judy Smith ..... \$26,543  
 Bruce Weaver ..... \$380

**BancorpSouth**  
**\$53,583**

**Terry Harbin**  
*Market President*

**James Alexander**  
*Captain*

James Alexander ..... \$42,000  
 Terry Harbin ..... \$6,375  
 Christa Hilburn ..... \$2,408  
 Sarah Shuttlesworth ..... \$2,000  
 Team ..... \$800

**BB&T**  
**\$34,303**

**Edward H. O'Gwynn III**  
*Market President*

**Mark Spivey**  
*Captain*

Mark Spivey ..... \$25,564  
 Team ..... \$8,739

**BBVA Compass Bank**  
**\$21,943**

**Mark Fillers**  
*CEO*

**Ryan New**  
*Captain*

Ryan New ..... \$21,943

**Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Alabama**  
**\$15,553**

**Clay Walden**  
*District Manager*

**Nichole Edwards**  
*Captain*

Nichole Edwards ..... \$15,553

**C Spire**  
**\$56,400**

**Mark Geis**  
*General Manager*

Mark Geis ..... \$56,400

**Century Bank**  
**\$26,371**

**Peter vanLingen II**  
*President*

**Janet Johnson**  
*Captain*

Janet Johnson ..... \$26,371

**Community Bank**  
**\$6,960**

**Oliver A. Latil IV**  
*President & CEO*

**Ashley Watkins**  
*Captain*

Bart Lary ..... \$380  
 Ashley Watkins ..... \$1,000  
 Team ..... \$5,580



**CorroMetrics Services Inc.**  
**\$11,108**



**Harrietta Eaton**  
*CEO*

Harrietta Eaton .....\$11,108

**Crow Shields Bailey PC**  
**\$15,655**



**J. Kenny Crow Jr.**  
*Managing Partner*



**Colleen Dicks**  
*Captain*

Ryan Damrich .....\$405  
Colleen Dicks .....\$15,000  
Kristen Sokom .....\$250  
Jenna Summersell .....\$355

**Evonik Industries**  
**\$62,939**



**Bonnie Tully**  
*Vice President  
& Site Manager*



**Linda Faulkner**  
*Captain*

Linda Faulkner .....\$62,939

**First Community Bank**  
**\$4,097**



**William Blackmon**  
*President & CEO*



**Tammy Odom**  
*Captain*

Tammy Odom .....\$4,097

**Hancock Bank**  
**\$216,579**



**G. Robert Baker Jr.**  
*South Alabama Region  
President*



**Spencer Wiggins**  
*Captain*

Jamie Horton .....\$11,100  
Megan Owens .....\$7,310  
Ross Seifert .....\$68,156  
Spencer Wiggins .....\$99,948  
Team .....\$30,065

**IBERIABANK**  
**\$15,415**



**Russ Ford**  
*Executive Vice President &  
Regional Commercial Manager*



**Laura Searcy**  
*Captain*

Laura Searcy .....\$15,415

**International Shipholding**  
**\$23,000**



**Erik Johnsen**  
*President*



**Sheila Dean-Rosenbohm**  
*Captain*

Sheila Dean-Rosenbohm .....\$23,000

**Jeff Tesney Photography**  
**\$6,960**



**Jeff Tesney**  
*Owner*



**Elissa Tesney**  
*Captain*

Elissa Tesney .....\$6,960

**LLB&B Inc. Real Estate**  
**\$15,033**



**Melissa Morrisette**  
*Captain*

Melissa Morrisette .....\$15,033



### Mittnacht Inc. \$13,711



**Lance Covan**  
Chairman



**Bre Pryor**  
Captain

Bre Pryor ..... \$6,856  
Angie Shaw ..... \$6,856

### Mobile Gas, a Sempra Co. \$58,913



**James M. Fine**  
President



**Harris Oswalt**  
Captain

Harris Oswalt ..... \$58,913

### Mobile Area Chamber Ambassadors \$40,424

Nichelle Evans ..... \$550  
Karyl Hanisch ..... \$14,806  
Marylee Kilday ..... \$6,250  
Saty Putcha ..... \$13,380  
Donna Turner ..... \$668  
Kathy Williams ..... \$3,470

### Regions Bank \$140,841



**Brian R. Willman**  
South Alabama Area  
President



**Stephen Schlautman**  
Captain

Trish Banker ..... \$16,816  
Julye Clark ..... \$36,886  
Stephen Schlautman ..... \$17,640  
Team ..... \$70,129

### Mobile Area Chamber Board of Directors \$16,494



**Lance Covan**  
Captain

Team ..... \$16,494

### Roberts Brothers \$17,090



**Daniel A. Dennis IV**  
President



**Ann Akridge**  
Captain

Ann Akridge ..... \$1,410  
Bernadette Windle ..... \$10,605  
Team ..... \$5,075

### ServisFirst Bank \$231,322



**Bibb Lamar**  
Chairman & CEO



**Sherry Coker**  
Captain

Alex Arendall ..... \$15,113  
Walter Brand ..... \$14,998  
Beth Cazalas ..... \$46,155  
Sherry Coker ..... \$155,056

### Trustmark National Bank \$64,274



**Kevin Carey**  
Executive VP/  
Market President



**Rachel New**  
Captain

David Dugger ..... \$7,300  
Dawn Finch ..... \$300  
Wade Gordon ..... \$800  
Rachel New ..... \$33,787  
Lisa Owen ..... \$13,300  
Team ..... \$8,787



### Chamber Chase Weekly Campaign Reward Session

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Buffalo Wild Wings  
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Dreamland BBQ  
Georgia Roussos Catering  
Joe Jefferson Players  
Little Caesar's  
The Hungry Owl  
The Original HoneyBaked Ham  
The Melting Pot  
The Noble South  
Sonny's Real Pit Bar-B-Q

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Skin Care Centre  
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Aker Solutions  
Alabama Credit Union  
Alabama Orthopaedic Clinic  
Alabama Power  
Alabama SBDC Network  
Alabama State Port Authority  
Alabama Technology Network  
Alec Naman Catering  
Al-Fla Plastics  
All a Bloom Florist & Gifts  
Allure Nail Lounge  
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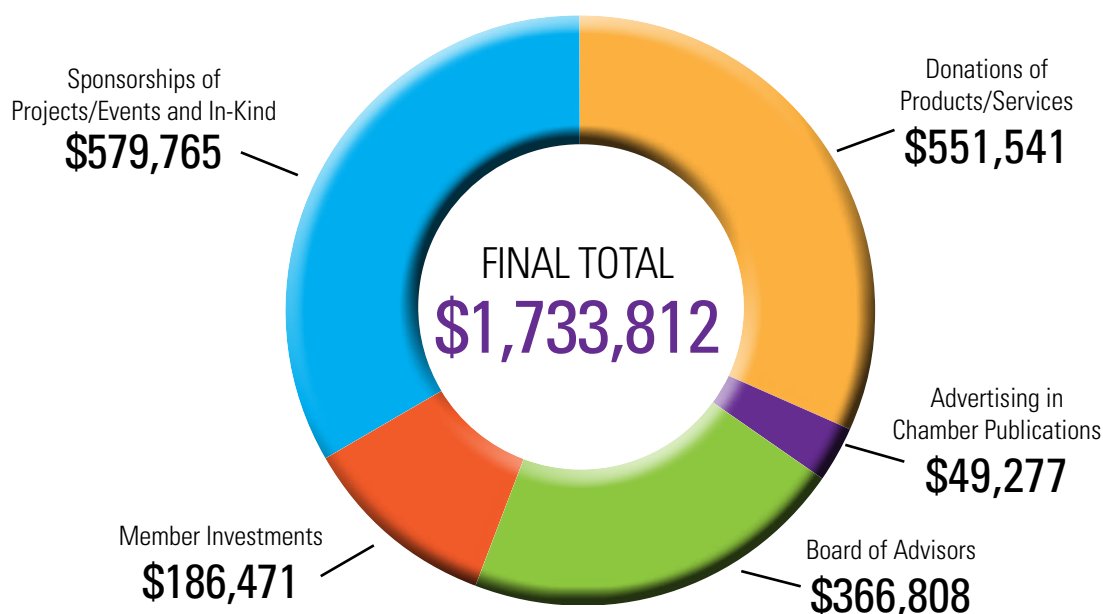
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Swimming Pool  
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Agency  
AT&T  
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Austal  
Avadian Credit Union  
Azalea Manor  
B.A.G. Corp.  
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BancorpSouth  
Bay Area Community Medicine  
Bay Steel  
Bay View Realty  
Bayer Crop Science  
BayFest  
BayView Professional Assoc.  
BB&T

BBVA Compass Bank  
BellCor Logistics  
Big Brothers Big Sisters of South  
Alabama Inc.  
BIS Technology Group  
Bishop State Community College  
Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Alabama  
Bodies by Cindy  
Bonded Collection Corporation  
Brand Energy Solutions  
Brandon Shreves State Farm Agency  
Brenner Corp.  
Briquettes Steakhouse  
Buffalo Rock  
Buffalo Wild Wings  
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Chick-fil-A RSA Building  
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Comcast Business  
Community Bank  
Community Coffee  
Continental Motors  
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Dean McCrary Imports  
Delaney Property Group  
Dex Media  
Dick Russell's BBQ  
Dickey's Barbecue Pit  
DiRecManagement  
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EcoSouth Services  
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Exit Realty Lyon  
Explosive Signs  
Express Employment Professionals  
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FastSigns  
Faulkner State Community College  
Felder Services

*Continued on page 20*

### CHAMBER CHASE 2015



FireTrol Protection System	Helmsing Leach Herlong Newman & Rouse	Joseph M. Crow Dentistry	Mississippi Export Railroad
FlexiCrew Staffing	Heritage Compounding Pharmacy	Junior Achievement of Mobile	Mitsubishi Polysilicon
Fortis College	Hieronymous CPA LLC	JR's Coach LLC	Mobile Airport Authority
Friends of the Mobile Animal Shelter	Hixardt Technologies	JW Legacy Group	Mobile Area Association of Realtors
FusionPoint Media	HKA Enterprises	KELLSINC	Mobile Area Water & Sewer System
G & D Farms	Hobby Lobby	Kuehne + Nagel	Mobile Bay Area Apartment Association
Georgia Roussos Catering	Hoffman's Furniture	L.A. Fotographee "Gallery 450"	Mobile BayBears
Gerth & Rossi LLC	Holiday Inn Airport/I-65	Labor SMART	Mobile Christian School
Global Resettlement	Holiday Inn Express & Suites	Lamar Advertising	Mobile Gas, a Sempra Co.
Greer's Catering	Holiday Inn Mobile - Downtown Historic District	Leaf & Petal Florist & Gift Shop	Mobile International Festival
Gulf City Body & Trailer	Horizon Shipbuilding	Leroy Hill Coffee Co.	Mobile Memorial Gardens
Gulf Coast Containers	Hunter Limousines	Level 3 Communications	Mobile Museum of Art
Gulf Coast Exploreum Science Center	Hurricane Electronics	Little Monkey Toes	Moe's Original Bar B Que
Gulf Coast Truck & Equipment	Infirmary Health	Little Sisters of the Poor	Moe's Southwest Grill
Gulf Coast Underground	Information Transport Solutions	Logical Computer Solutions Inc.	Murphy Business & Financial
Gulf South Pipeline	Ingalls Shipbuilding	Long's Human Resource Services	Murphy USA
Gwin's Commercial Printing	Inspired Business Furniture	Los Arcos	Naman's Catering
Hafez Corp. d/b/a McDonald's	International Shipbuilding	Making Waves Charters	National Assoc. of Retired & Active Federal Employees
Half Shell Oyster House	Irish Network Mobile Bay	Malaga Inn	Navigator Credit Union
Hampton Inn & Suites Mobile Downtown/Historic District	ITT Technical	Mamun Real Estate	New Horizons Credit Union
Hampton Inn & Suites Providence Park Airport	Izzie's Corner Kitchen	Marks Furniture Co.	Newk's Eatery
Hancock Bank	J.O. Acree	Mary Kay Cosmetics – Tesa Gueret	Nfina Technologies
Hand Arendall	Jeff Tesney Photography	Maynard Cooper & Gale	Office Solutions & Innovations
Harbor Communications	Jim Owen Studios	McAleer's Office Furniture	Oil Recovery Co.
Hargrove Engineers + Constructors	JMF Solutions	McConaghy Drug Stores	Omega Properties
HDR Engineering	Joe Jefferson Players	MCG Business Solutions	Outback Steakhouse
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## Our Team is Ready to Build.



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MORTGAGE LOAN  
ORIGINATOR



**Wayne Roe**  
VICE PRESIDENT



**Lisa May**  
MORTGAGE LOAN  
ORIGINATOR



**Bart Lary**  
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT



**Ashley Watkins**  
ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT



**Rob Downing**  
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Rainbow of Mobile  
Rainbow Package Stores  
Ramsay Farms  
RE/MAX By the Bay  
Read-Write: The Learning Center  
Regions Bank  
Remington College  
Renaissance Hotels of Mobile  
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Roberts Brothers  
Roberts Brothers Commercial &  
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Ruby's Boutique  
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Setpoint Integrated Solutions  
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Southern Cancer Center  
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Southern Earth Sciences  
Southern Home  
Southern Light  
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The AHI Group  
The First, a National Banking  
Association  
The Grand Band  
The Hungry Owl  
The Lathan Co.  
The Maids  
The Melting Pot  
The Noble South  
The Original HoneyBaked Ham Co.  
The Pillars of Mobile  
The Retreat at Schillinger Apartments  
The Rose Bud Flowers & Gifts  
The Salvation Army  
The SSI Group  
The Stewart Lodges at Steelwood  
The Timeless Bride  
Thompson Engineering  
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Shell Chemicals Mobile Refinery mechanics recently celebrated 20 years accident-free. Pictured are members of Shell's maintenance department.

# Shell Chemical Mobile Site

## Company officials:

**Tammy Little**, general manager

**Years in business:** 19

## Brief company description:

Shell Chemicals Mobile Site is an 85,000-barrel-per-day refinery capable of processing both domestic and foreign crude oils. Shell Chemical acquired the plant in August 1996 and has expanded several times over the years to reach its existing capacity.

Approximately 200 Shell employees staff the Mobile site, where gasoline is one of the company's primary products.

The company supplies more than 70 percent of the gas online sold in the Mobile area. Other products include diesel fuel, jet fuel and liquid petroleum gases distributed locally and transported to markets in the Florida Panhandle.

## Why are you located in Mobile?

"The site was originally constructed in Mobile to process local crudes from the surrounding area," said Little. "It is logistically located with access to water, road and railway systems."

## Why do you support the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's Partners for

## Growth initiative?

"At Shell, we believe in making investments in the sustainability and health of the communities in which we operate," said Little. "The Chamber's Partners for Growth initiative is a natural way for Shell to support a cause and an investment we believe in."

## What do you see as Mobile's greatest potential?

"Mobile's growing transportation infrastructure is one of its greatest assets," said Little. "It is a key enabler for future growth and development of business and industry."

## Length of continuous Chamber membership:

19 years



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 [kdewrell@mobilechamber.com](mailto:kdewrell@mobilechamber.com).

# Alejandro Barthold

**Company:** Norton Lilly International (NLI)

**Title:** President and CEO

**Hometown:** Santiago, Chile

**Education:** Merchant marine officer; post-graduate program for management development at the Harvard Business School

**First job:** Served in the Chilean Navy for three years, then Transmares Naviera Chilena Ltda – Ultramar Group of Companies, Valparaíso, Chile

**Previous experience:** Barthold began working for the Ultramar Group in 1979, holding positions of increasing responsibility until most recently becoming CEO of Agencies at Ultramar Agencia Maritima. Barthold has been involved with Norton Lilly as a member of the board of directors since December 2012, when Ultramar and Norton Lilly formed a partnership. In April, he was named president and CEO of Norton Lilly.

**Accomplishments:** Barthold was involved in the start-up of a container terminal in Valparaíso. He developed several partnerships in different countries in the Americas where Ultramar was expanding, moving from a local agency located in Chile and other South American countries to a multi-regional company with operations in 16 countries in the Americas.

**Secret to success:** “Having the right team in place, being a team player, having the right attitude, working hard and some luck as well! Family support is also key to success.”

**Brief company description:** NLI, through its subsidiary companies, is engaged in the business of ship agency services, logistics, brokerage, vessel planning and other marine activities. Founded in 1841 as the Norton Co., it is one of the oldest ship agencies in the United States, NLI and its related companies provide services for all types of liner, bulk, tanker, reefer and passenger vessels, and handle more than 20,000 port calls per year.



### Southeast U.S./Japan Delegation to Meet

The Chamber will participate in and sponsor the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Joint Meeting of the Southeast U.S./Japan and the Japan-U.S. Southeast Associations (SEUS Japan) in Birmingham later this month. This year's conference, "Initiative for a Sustainable Future through Continuous Innovation," is a gathering of global business leaders celebrating long-standing economic and cultural ties.

### Staff Participates in Media Training

In September, several members of the Chamber staff spent a day and a half with media trainer Dr. Joe Trahan with Trahan and Associates. The purpose of these sessions was to help staff feel more comfortable in media interviews and to effectively develop clear

and concise messages. The Chamber's communications and marketing department has worked with Trahan for more than five years.

### Chamber Names New Ambassadors

Several Chamber members were named ambassadors. This group of professionals assists the staff with registration and event seating, makes member visits and supports the overall Chamber mission. New members are: Brent Baggett, Business Interiors; Sherry Coker, ServisFirst Bank; Torrian Davis, Army Aviation Center Federal Credit Union; Kelley Eby, CORT Business Services; and Dale Hall, Dale Hall Agency. 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 Virginia College – New Welding Facility, Domke Market, The Timeless Bride, Alabama Credit Union, Mattress Firm, Hobby Lobby, Bay Printing & Graphics, Ashley Furniture Home Store and John Cauley Jeweler. 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).

### Assisting with Airbus Grand Opening

In September, several members of the Chamber staff worked with Airbus executives on the grand opening of the U.S. Manufacturing Center in Mobile. The communications and marketing team assisted with planning events for more than 40 international journalists and more than 30 members of the national press. Some of the national and international media outlets here for the grand opening were: CNBC, CNN, Reuters, Bloomberg, the *Daily Telegraph*, *Agence France-Presse*, *Les Echos* and *Aviation Week*.

## How healthy is your business?



Michael Ward,  
President & CEO  
US Coast Guard  
-veteran-

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**AMBASSADOR** of the month



Photo by Jeff Tesney

Since joining the Mobile Area Chamber's ambassador program in January, **Liz Brewer** has established many connections in the local business community that she wouldn't otherwise have made, she said. Brewer, assistant vice president/branch manager of the Bank of the Ozarks, is the Chamber's Ambassador of the Month. She holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from The University of Alabama.

*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).*



## The House Restaurant & Bar

*The House Restaurant & Bar is situated at the end of Holiday Place, in the heart of Spring Hill, at 4513 Old Shell Rd. The locally-owned restaurant features a wide wraparound porch, patio and inside dining in the restored historic house with hardwood floors and 12-foot ceilings. Menu items include appetizers, salads, sandwiches, burgers, po-boys, seafood and steaks. The courtyard is available for any event. For more information, visit [www.thehouserestaurantmobile.com](http://www.thehouserestaurantmobile.com) or call 251-408-9622. Pictured above is Chef/Manager and Owner Kevin Brooks.*



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## BOARD of advisors



**Jerry Carl** is president of the Mobile County Commission, representing District 3. Before his public service career, he started, built and sold numerous businesses. A sampling of his entrepreneurial efforts during his 30-year career includes church furniture manufacturing, wholesaler of home medical equipment and funeral home supplies, retail sales of medical equipment and supplies via 20

outlets across multiple states, timber sales and management, and commercial and residential development. He serves his church as a deacon, and is involved in church missions. Mobile County is a Partners for Growth Investor.



**Jerrime C. Kitsos** is vice president of HUB International Gulf South Ltd. He graduated from St. Stanislaus and attended Spring Hill College in Mobile. After working in both residential and commercial real estate, Kitsos began his career in commercial insurance in 2008. His practice focuses on serving large coastal real estate portfolios, including professional office space, retail, industrial, multifamily and

healthcare assets. Kitsos sits on the board of directors for Dog River Clearwater Revival, where he serves as chairman for the group's annual fall fishing tournament. He is also an active supporter of the American Cancer Society and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.



**W. Hunter Lyons Jr.** is president of Gulf City Body & Trailer Works Inc. He graduated from Virginia Military Institute with a bachelor's degree in economics. Lyons is a board member for the Alabama Truckers Association. He is a member of Mobile and Baldwin counties' Road Builders Association, National Truck Equipment Association, the Coastal Conservation Association and the Alabama Wildlife Association.

He is a member of the boards of Thomas Hospital Foundation, Point Clear Charities and Bayside Academy, where he serves as head of the development committee. Gulf City Body & Trailer Works is a Partners for Growth Investor.

*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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# NOVEMBER

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

## 4 CURRENT PROSPECTS FOR MAJOR U.S. TRADE DEALS WITH ASIA AND EUROPE

Join us to hear insight from a global law expert on Trans-Pacific Partnership and Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership and potential business opportunities for local exporters.

**When:** 8:30 to 9:30 a.m.

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

**Speaker:** Patrick Fazzone, International Trade Attorney, Montgomery & Fazzone

**Contact:** Emily Jerkins at 251-431-8602 or [ejerkins@mobilechamber.com](mailto:ejerkins@mobilechamber.com)

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

## 4 NASA: GET READY FOR TAKE OFF

Explore how your company can do business with NASA by connecting with agency representatives and prime contractors. Discover what it takes to launch your business as a NASA supplier, subcontractor and/or service provider.

**When:** 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Where:** Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center

**Cost:** \$75 per person

**Contact:** Brenda Rembert at 251-431-8607 or [brembert@mobilechamber.com](mailto:brembert@mobilechamber.com)

Registration is required by Oct. 28. See page 8 for details.

**Sponsors:** Brand Energy Solutions, Gulf States Engineering, University of South Alabama Office of Research and Economic Development

## 4 NETWORKING @ NOON *\*Members Only*

Make 30-plus business contacts in 90 minutes over lunch. Only one representative per company.

**When:** Noon to 1:30 p.m.

**Where:** Zea Rotisserie Grill, 4671 Airport Blvd.

**Cost:** \$10 and must be paid at time of reservation

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

**Sponsors:**



## 11 VETERANS DAY LUNCHEON

The Mobile Area Veterans Day Commission will host its annual Veterans Day Lunch.

**When:** Noon to 1:30 p.m.

**Where:** Fort Whiting Auditorium, 1630 S. Broad St.

**Cost:** \$18 or \$144 for a table of 8 and must be paid at time of reservation

**Contact:** Carolyn Hunt at 251-431-8621 or [chunt@mobilechamber.com](mailto:chunt@mobilechamber.com)

Reservations required by Nov. 6. See page 11 for details.

**Sponsors:**

**BAE SYSTEMS**

Mobile Bay Area Veterans Day Commission, Mobile County, Baldwin County

# STATE OF THE ECONOMY

December 1, 2015



10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

The Battle House Renaissance Mobile Hotel & Spa

Members \$60 / Table of Ten \$600

Featuring Local Business Sector Panel and

**Dr. Donald Ratajczak**

Economic Forecaster and Consulting Economist

Presenting Sponsor: Regions Bank

Alabama State Port Authority - AltaPointe Health Systems - Evonik Industries - Page & Jones - Phelps Dunbar - Willis of Alabama

Register online at [www.mobilechamber.com/calendar](http://www.mobilechamber.com/calendar)

Photo by Austal USA

## 17 EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE *\*Members Only*

A monthly forum for Chamber-member business owners and managers.

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

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

**Speaker:** Nathan Slater, C Spire

**Topic:** "How the Cloud is Transforming Business"

**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.

**Sponsor:**  **BancorpSouth**

## 19 BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

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

**Where:** The Admiral Hotel, 251 Government St.

**Cost:** \$5 for Chamber members/\$10 for potential members

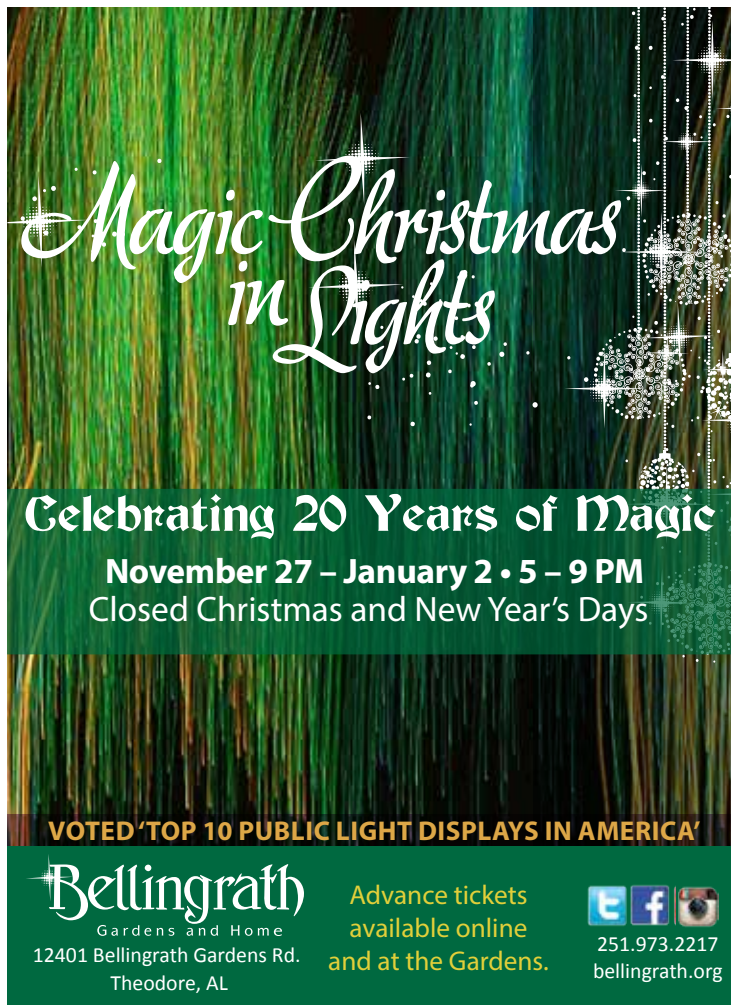
**Contact:** Alison Unger at 251-431-8617 or [aunger@mobilechamber.com](mailto:aunger@mobilechamber.com)

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# MOMENTUM MOBILE

## Join us for the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce 179<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting

Tuesday, January 19, 2016  
5:00 - 8:30 pm  
Mobile Civic Center



Tickets are \$50 or \$485 for a table of 10 (Chamber members),  
\$60 for potential members

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## MEMBER news

### Who's New



Kahalley



Russ



Andrews



Martin

**Allison Kahalley** and **Wilson Russ** joined **Willis of Alabama Inc.** Kahalley, a senior client services specialist, graduated from Spring Hill College with a bachelor's degree in literature and earned a law degree at The University of Alabama School of Law, where she won the Wythe Holt Civil Rights Award. Russ, a client advocate, earned a bachelor's degree in general business from the University of Mississippi.

**Cindy Andrews** and **Peter Martin** also joined the Willis team as client advocates. Andrews earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Louisiana-Lafayette and has earned Group Benefit Associate (GBA) and Group Benefit Disability Specialist (GBDS) designations. Martin graduated from Spring Hill College with a bachelor's degree in business/marketing and earned the Certified Health Consultant designation from Purdue University through the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.

**GulfQuest National Maritime Museum of the Gulf of Mexico** hired **Stacey Stater**

as group visitors' manager. Stater previously worked as a VIP Tour Services Coordinator for Walt Disney World Resorts.



Stater



Bias

**Goodwyn, Mills and Cawood Inc.** architecture and engineering firm hired community and regional

planner **Brandon Bias AICP**. Bias graduated from Auburn University with master's degrees in community planning and landscape architecture and a bachelor's degree in environmental design, and is a certified planner and LEED Green Associate.

\*



Reeves



Hester



Var



Amberger

**University of Mobile** announced new faculty members: **Dr. Katherine Reeves, Dr. Charlotte Hester, Aimee Var, Melanie D. Amberger** and **Karon Bishop**.



Bishop

Reeves, assistant professor in the school of education, earned a doctorate from Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and holds master's and bachelor's degrees in education from the University of South Alabama.

Hester, an assistant professor of music at the Center for Performing Arts/School of Music, received doctorate and master's degrees in music from the University of Mississippi and a bachelor's degree in music from the University of Montevallo.

Var, assistant professor of psychology in the college of arts and sciences, received a master's degree from the University of South Alabama and a bachelor's degree from the University of Alabama-Birmingham.

Amberger, assistant professor of nursing, earned a bachelor's degree from Birmingham-Southern College and bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing from the University of South Alabama.

Bishop, an instructor in the school of education, received a master's degree in education from the University of South Alabama and a bachelor's degree from Mississippi University for Women.

The partners of **Russell Thompson Butler & Houston** hired **Blake Neal** as a staff accountant. Neal



holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Mississippi.



**United Way of Southwest Alabama** named **Clifford Grimes** president and CEO. Grimes earned a bachelor's degree in sociology from Indiana State University.



Paul



Lewis

**First Community Bank** promoted **Cindy Paul** to retail banking analyst/assistant vice president and **Kendell Lewis** to customer care manager/assistant vice president.

**BIS Designs Technology Group**, a web design and digital marketing firm, promoted **Liz Miller** to chief operating officer.

**Providence Health System** named **Todd Kennedy** as its president. He earned a bachelor's degree in health administration from Auburn University, and master's degrees in health administration and business administration from The University of Alabama at Birmingham.



**Franklin Primary Health Center Inc.** hired **Matthew Lursen CPA** as chief financial officer. Lursen graduated from Spring Hill College with a bachelor's degree in business administration with an emphasis on accounting and a master's degree in business administration.



May



Rogers



Phillips

**Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Cooper & Co. Inc. REALTORS** welcomed new associates **Victoria May, Kyle Rogers and Lynn Phillips.**

**Ben Bradley** is the new assistant vice president of **Army Aviation Center Federal Credit Union**



Mobile operations. Bradley earned a bachelor's degree in marketing and a master's in business administration from Troy University.

**Jennifer Eslinger** is the new president of **Infirmary Health**. She received an undergraduate degree from Georgia Southern

University and a master's in business administration from the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business, and has worked in the industry for 20 years.

**The Grand Hotel Marriott Resort, Golf Club & Spa** named **Cory Garrison** executive chef.



The Texas native, Garrison who has more than 24 years of culinary experience, graduated from the Scottsdale Culinary Institute in Arizona.

**Harbor Financial Services LLC** hired **Ellen Doherty** as director of finance. She earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of West Florida.



Doherty

## Business Endeavors

The 95-suite **SpringHill Suites by Marriott** opened at 3566 Springhill Memorial Dr. The property will operate as a Marriott franchise, owned and managed by Image Hotels of Savannah, Ga.

Hilton Worldwide announced **The Admiral Hotel Mobile** (formerly the Admiral Semmes Hotel) will join Curio - A Collection by Hilton, a global set of upscale and luxury properties. The Admiral recently underwent a multi-million-dollar renovation.

**Crow Shields Bailey** merged with **McKean and Associates**. Under the name Crow Shields Bailey, the new firm will employ more than 40 employees who provide professional accounting, tax and consulting services to clients throughout the Gulf Coast.

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**GulfQuest National Maritime Museum of the Gulf of Mexico** launched its new website, [www.gulfquest.org](http://www.gulfquest.org). The website was designed by **Dogwood Productions**.

### Well Done

**McDowell Knight Roedder & Sledge LLC** announced 10 of the firm's attorneys are named in the 2016 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*. Attorneys: **Jerry A. McDowell, Michael D. Knight, William C. Roedder Jr., Edward S. Sledge III, Forrest C. Wilson III, Russel Myles, Brian P. McCarthy, Walter T. Gilmer Jr, Archibald T. Reeves IV and Thomas M. O'Hara**.

**Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Cooper & Co. Inc. REALTORS** was ranked third among real estate companies in Berkshire Hathaway's U.S. South Region, which spans from the Carolinas to Texas. The rankings are based on residential units sold in the second quarter of

2015, and offices are categorized by number of licensed agents.



Rogers

In addition, the real estate firm recognized **Michelle Rogers** as the recipient of the David D. Roberts

Award for 20 years of service to the profession. The award was named for a distinguished Alabama Realtor who contributed to the industry at state and national level.

**Robert C. Campbell III of Campbell, Duke & Campbell** was included in the 2016 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*, selected by his peers in five separate legal categories.

**Professional Collision Services Inc.** was certified as a collision care provider by Assured Performance, a nonprofit consumer advocacy organization.

**Mobile Area Water & Sewer System (MAWSS)** received the Best Operated Plant award by Alabama's Water and Pollution Control Association.

Other MAWSS awards went to the H.E. Myers Water Treatment Plant and Distribution System, recognized as best in its category based on size and amount of water treated each day, and the E.M. Stickney Water Treatment Plant, which received an award of excellence.

Four Chamber member companies ranked on *Inc.* magazine's 34<sup>th</sup> annual "Inc. 5000 Fastest Growing Private Companies." They are **ASF Intermodal (882), Flexicrew Staffing (2,258), Hargrove Engineers + Constructors (3,167)** and **Southern Light (4,954)**.

**Jessika Kirkland** from **FASTSIGNS** of Mobile received the Outside Sales Certification award at the 2015 FASTSIGNS Outside Sales Summit.

**Mobile Bay Convention & Visitors Bureau** was awarded with the Destination Marketing Accreditation Program seal by Destination Marketing Association International, in recognition of its commitment to industry excellence and meeting the industry standard for performance and accountability.

### Community News

Nine **University of South Alabama** engineering seniors were selected to the Tau Beta Pi national engineering honor society. Tau Beta Pi scholarships are awarded on the competitive criteria of high scholarship; campus leadership and service; and promise of future contributions to the engineering profession. Each of the following scholars will receive a cash award of \$2,000 for their senior year of engineering study: **Benjamin Burleson** of Satsuma; **Bradley Harris** and **William Spikes** of Mobile; **Ryan**

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**Hutchison** of Seattle; **Brannon Kerrigan** of D'Iberville, Miss.; **Robert Mines** and **John Mullins** of Pensacola, Fla.; **George Moore** of Lucedale, Miss.; and **Boni Yraguen** of Roseburg, Ore. No other university in Alabama had more than two recipients.

In addition, another USA team of senior students recently won the first Airbus Innovation Showdown, a national competition among college students to help Airbus create the "Aircraft of the Future." Each of the following winners received \$1,250: **Micah Calhoun** of Mobile; **Brandi DePineuil** of Ocean Springs, Miss.; **Dan Smithson** of Wetumpka; and **Andrew Tindell** of Pensacola, Fla.

\*

**Airbus Americas Engineering** and **United Way of Southwest Alabama** announced a series of grants worth nearly \$10,000 in the second year of their education partnership created to invest in community programs and

services that improve education. The programs will address student needs from pre-school to high school and beyond.

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).



The Mobile Area Chamber was awarded a five-star rating by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the highest designation given. Of the 6,936 chambers in the U.S., only 301 are accredited, and of those only 43 have achieved five-star distinction. The Mobile Area Chamber has been accredited by the U.S. Chamber since the designation's inception more than 40 years ago.

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Know a company interested in benefiting from Chamber membership? Contact Jackie Livingston at 251-431-8642 or [jlivingston@mobilechamber.com](mailto:jlivingston@mobilechamber.com). Also, you'll find the membership directory at [www.mobilechamber.com](http://www.mobilechamber.com).

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[www.ashleyfurniturehomestores.com](http://www.ashleyfurniturehomestores.com)  
*Furniture Stores*

#### Batteries Plus Bulbs

Ray Sandoval  
3653 Airport Blvd., Ste. A  
Mobile, AL 36608  
251-517-4399  
[www.batteriesplusbulbs.com](http://www.batteriesplusbulbs.com)  
*Retail*

#### Bay Area Printing & Graphics Solutions Inc.

Stephanie Justice  
755 Downtowner Loop West  
Mobile, AL 36609  
251-447-2078  
[www.bayareablue.com](http://www.bayareablue.com)  
*Printing*

#### Bay Windows

Andre Baskin  
P.O. Box 6676  
Mobile, AL 36660  
251-753-3480  
[www.baywindowcleaning.net](http://www.baywindowcleaning.net)  
*Window Cleaning - Commercial & Residential*

#### Bluegreen Services

Albert Reynolds  
4904 Oak Circle Dr. N.  
Mobile, AL 36609  
251-458-6133  
[www.bluegreen.marketing](http://www.bluegreen.marketing)  
*Energy Management*

#### Dex Media

Tammy Henry  
Spanish Fort, AL  
251-463-2503  
[www.DexMedia.com](http://www.DexMedia.com)  
*Advertising*

#### Eastern Shore Centre

Kristin Kammer-Hattox  
30500 State Hwy. 181, Ste. 451  
Spanish Fort, AL 36527-5805  
251-625-0060  
[www.easternshorecentre.com](http://www.easternshorecentre.com)  
*Retail*

#### Evans Restorative Services

Ida Evans  
564 Shady Oak Dr.  
Mobile, AL 36608  
251-348-3399  
*Janitorial Service*

#### Farmers Insurance -

Brietzke Agency  
Luke Brietzke  
9037 Independence Ave., Ste. A  
Daphne, AL 36526  
251-621-9055  
*Insurance*

#### Grover and Sara McKenzie Family Foundation Inc.

Gerald McKenzie  
RSA - Battle House Tower  
11 North Water Street, 10th Floor  
Mobile, AL 36602  
251-460-3221  
*Nonprofit Organization*

#### John Cauley Jeweler

John Cauley  
15 Upham St., Suite C  
Mobile, AL 36607  
251-660-4759  
[www.facebook.com/cauleysjackson?ref=aymt\\_homepage\\_panel](http://www.facebook.com/cauleysjackson?ref=aymt_homepage_panel)  
*Jewelry/Jewelers*

#### Kloud 7 LLC

Nick Segers  
7675 Cottage Hill Rd., Ste. C  
Mobile, AL 36695-2843  
855-430-3873  
[www.kloud7.com](http://www.kloud7.com)  
*Technology Business Solutions*

#### Landrum Human Resource Companies Inc.

Jerold Hall  
6723 Plantation Road  
Pensacola, FL 32504  
800-888-0472  
[www.landrumhr.com](http://www.landrumhr.com)  
*Human Resource Consulting*

#### Little Monkey Toes

Susan Hightower  
3286 Bel Air Mall  
Mobile, AL 36606-3204  
251-605-4279  
[www.LittleMonkeyToes.com](http://www.LittleMonkeyToes.com)  
*Children & Infants Wear*

#### Loves Travel Stop

Courtney Franklin  
P.O. Box 26210  
Oklahoma City, OK 73126  
[www.loves.com](http://www.loves.com)  
251-330-2991  
*Convenience Stores-Gas-Oil*

#### Mary Kay Cosmetics - Tesa Gueret

Tesa Gueret  
Mobile, AL  
251-610-8372  
[www.marykay.com/tesagueret](http://www.marykay.com/tesagueret)  
*Cosmetics & Perfumes*

#### Mattress Firm

Justin Keane  
3075 Government St.  
Mobile, AL 36606  
251-471-3827  
[www.mattressfirm.com](http://www.mattressfirm.com)  
*Mattresses*

#### Metal Roofing Center & Supply

William Akridge  
9392 Hard Dr.  
Foley, AL  
251-970-3320  
[www.metalroofingcenter.com](http://www.metalroofingcenter.com)  
*Roof Contractors*

#### MH Outdoor Media LLC

Gary Fondren  
11757 Katy Freeway #1500  
Houston, TX 77079  
251-622-0150  
[www.mhoutdoormedia.com](http://www.mhoutdoormedia.com)  
*Advertising-Outdoor*

#### National Benefits Group

Michael Cowart  
3662 Dauphin St., Suite C  
Mobile, AL 36608  
251-342-0446  
[www.nbginc.com](http://www.nbginc.com)  
*Insurance & Financial Services*

#### Office Environments of Mobile

Michelle Bronstein Touchton  
3374 Moffett Rd.  
Mobile, AL 36607  
251-604-0186  
[www.officenvironments.com](http://www.officenvironments.com)  
*Furniture-Dealers*

#### Jerome C. Olsen CPA, PC

Jerome C. Olsen  
10121 Airport Blvd., Ste. 7  
Mobile, AL 36608-9529  
251-776-7340  
*Accountants-Certified Public*

#### Park First LLC

David Buchanan  
8 S. Water St.  
Mobile, AL 36602  
251-725-4237  
[www.parkfirstllc.com](http://www.parkfirstllc.com)  
*Parking*

#### Red Bar

Summer Phillips CPCE  
P.O. Box 6798  
Mobile, AL 36660  
251-301-6723  
[www.redbarcatering.com](http://www.redbarcatering.com)  
*Bar Service*

#### RMI Pressure Systems

Robert Collins  
6599 Old Birmingham Hwy.  
Jasper, AL 35501  
205-483-0350 Ext:105  
[www.rmipsl.com](http://www.rmipsl.com)  
*Manufacturers*

#### Seapac Inc.

Larry Matthews  
P.O. Box 5178  
Mobile, AL 36605-0178  
251-602-1882  
[www.seapac-inc.com](http://www.seapac-inc.com)  
*Chemicals-Industrial*

#### Ship Architects Inc.

Altug Basaran  
P.O. Box 2546  
Daphne, AL 36526  
251-621-1813  
[www.shiparch.com](http://www.shiparch.com)  
*Engineering Services*

#### Socialize Your Bizness

Cindy Ross  
4674 Airport Blvd.  
Mobile, AL 36608  
251-635-7477  
[www.socalizeyourbizness.com](http://www.socalizeyourbizness.com)  
*Marketing*

#### SpringHill Suites Mobile

Ann Crabtree  
3655 Springhill Memorial Dr.  
Mobile, AL 36608  
251-378-3800  
[www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/mobsh-springhill-suites-mobile/Hotels&Suites](http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/mobsh-springhill-suites-mobile/Hotels&Suites)

#### Vallas Realty

John P. Vallas Jr.  
165 W. I-65 Service Rd. N.  
Mobile, AL 36608  
251-344-1444  
[www.vallasrealty.com](http://www.vallasrealty.com)  
*Real Estate-Commercial/Development*

#### WebSouthEast

JC Smith  
118 N. Royal St., Ste. 505  
Mobile, AL 36602  
251-273-5650  
[www.websoutheast.com](http://www.websoutheast.com)  
*Website Design*

#### William Bruce Business Sales & Acquisitions LLC

William Bruce  
P.O. Box 236  
Fairhope, AL 36533  
251-990-5934  
[www.williambruce.org](http://www.williambruce.org)  
*Business Brokers*

As of 8/31/15

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Mobile Area Chamber

# believe in **mobile** belong to the **chamber**

## **connect ... succeed ... grow**

At the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, our goal is simple – to help your business grow. Membership links you with resources and contacts for success during challenging times. Join us. Get involved in the Gulf Coast's most dynamic business community. Connect to our more than 2,200 members – network, ask questions, learn, share insights and form important business relationships. Believe in a strong future for Mobile. Belong to the Chamber – because it's good for business and good for Mobile.

