

Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce

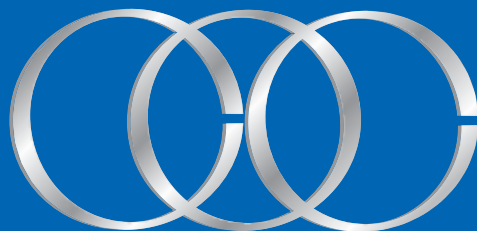
FEBRUARY 2018

the businessview

ANNUAL REPORT

JOB

VALUE



MOBILE AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ADVOCACY

EXCELLENCE

**French
Companies**
Study Mobile

**Top Legislative
Issues** The Chamber
Will Focus On For 2018

2017

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF

From Our Board Chair

To see how far Mobile has come in only a year has me excited about what the future has to offer this charming place we call home. The year has been filled with economic, legislative and small business successes. Our economy is continuing to diversify itself, adding a new market for startups and fostering budding entrepreneurs. We are seeing much-needed investment in the city's and county's infrastructure that will only make us more appealing to local and international investors.

None of this would be happening if not for the people here in Mobile. During the 2017 annual meeting, I talked a lot about participation – be it with the Mobile Area Chamber, or a nonprofit, or on a legislative issue that seems daunting on the surface. During the last year, I was lucky enough to be the fly on the wall watching passionate, hard-working and committed women and men put aside differences and agendas to come together to do what's right for Mobile, and it's working.

It's easy to miss how one small action can have a large impact, which is why this year my eyes have been wide open watching, learning, participating. At the end of a fulfilling year, it's hard to think my year as chair of this organization has come to a close. The Chamber staff knows I am committed beyond this next year. There's even more to do.

Thank you everyone for the calls, visits, endless emails of encouragement and support for me in 2017. It has been an honor to work for you the last year, and thank you for your continued support for me personally, but most especially for your support of the Mobile Area Chamber.

Liz Freeman
2017 Chair, Board of Directors
Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
President, Long's Human Resource Services



Photo by Toni Riales

the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
businessview

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COMMERCE ANNUAL REPORT

WHO WE ARE

The Mobile Area Chamber divided its work into four strategic goals. This plan guides us through 2018 and includes measurable objectives.

JOBS

Retain, expand and recruit businesses, investment and jobs in the Mobile area.

Vision: By year-end 2018, the Mobile area will have steadily increased jobs, business and capital investments in our community. The Chamber will also lead business engagement in more efficient workforce development initiatives.

Success Indicators:

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

ADVOCACY

Create an environment that promotes business and community growth.

Vision: By year-end 2018, Mobile will have a stronger, more diversified business climate. Chamber-led efforts will have secured a more business-friendly environment and needed infrastructure improvements, balancing sustainable growth and ongoing development. Chamber programs and events will have encouraged diversity and fostered community growth.

Success Indicators:

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

VALUE

Provide value, services, opportunities and recognition for members.

Vision: By year-end 2018, the Chamber will be nationally recognized for consistently exceeding member expectations and delivering the value of membership.

Success Indicators:

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

EXCELLENCE

Operate the Chamber with excellence, innovation and efficiency.

Vision: By year-end 2018, the Chamber will be again recognized as one of the nation's best through accreditation by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber will be an effective, credible and vital organization known for its high standards, ethical behavior and responsive service.

Success Indicators:

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

JOBS

As the area's lead economic developer, the Mobile Area Chamber's jobs focus spans recruitment, retention, job creation, entrepreneurial assistance, small business development and workforce development.



The backdrop for Walmart's announcement was APM Terminals Mobile, signaling the impact the company's new direct import distribution center would have on both the Port of Mobile and the container terminal. It was the second economic development project announced by the Chamber in 2017.

Top Economic Development Announcements

Economic development successes for 2017 included two headquartered operations and some familiar names in the worldwide marketplace. As the lead economic developer for the City of Mobile and Mobile County, Chamber-led project announcements included \$350 million in capital investment and 647 new and retained jobs. In addition, there were 1,400 part-time positions associated with 2017 projects.

1 ▶ SSAB Americas – The company announced it would relocate the division's head office from outside Chicago to Mobile, and with it 95 high-paying positions. The company has nearly 600 employees at its steel mill in Axis.

To sell employees on Mobile, the Chamber organized several traveling delegations to visit with SSAB employees in the Chicago area in an effort to recruit them to move here. The local delegation provided pertinent information on housing, education and the Mobile economy.

2 ▶ Continental Motors Group – After an extensive international search, the company renewed its commitment to Mobile as its global corporate headquarters, retaining more than 300 high-paying jobs locally. The company will build a new manufacturing facility at Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley, estimated at approximately \$70 million.

3 ▶ Walmart – Within 48 hours of the Continental news, Walmart announced Mobile would be home to its newest direct-import distribution center in charge of stocking small distribution centers along the Gulf Coast, creating more than 550 new, direct jobs. The \$135 million investment includes a 2.5 million-square-foot facility, and will significantly increase traffic at the Port of Mobile and APM Terminals Mobile.

4 ▶ Kimberly-Clark – The company's latest investment in the Mobile facility is valued at \$75 million and is the first of multiple investments expected over the next two years.

5 ▶ Amazon – The internet retailer announced it would build a sortation center in west Mobile. The \$30 million facility is the first investment by the company in Alabama.

6 ▶ Safran USA – The aerospace company announced it would open a manufacturing operation at Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley to build engine casings for the Airbus Final Assembly Line.



The Airbus Engineering Center was announced by the Chamber in 2007. Celebrating a decade in Mobile, the company now has 220 employees, many of them engineers.

The Next Chapter

The Chamber conducted its fourth Partners for Growth (PFG) campaign to fund its economic development program of work for 2018-2022.

Measurable goals include business recruitment, investment and jobs; expanding existing industry; assisting with opportunities for startups and entrepreneurs; increasing the number of highly-skilled employees; growing capacity and success of diverse companies through enhanced services and programs; and developing and supporting local, regional, statewide and federal policies that encourage and assist the growing population and improve Mobile's quality of life.

Campaign co-chairs were Elliot Maisel, Gulf Distributing; Mark Nix, Infirmity Health; Mike Saxon, Alabama Power; and Brian Willman, Regions Bank. PFG met its five-year

\$11 million goal with commitments and pledges from more than 140 private and public investors.

Program results from the previous effort were 1,802 full-time jobs created with wages averaging \$48,845 and investments of \$1.45 billion. Program goals were 4,000 jobs with a \$40,000 average annual salary and \$1.5 billion in capital investments.

What Else You Need to Know

- Keeping an eye on the world stage, the Chamber led a small delegation to the Le Bourget Air Show, just outside Paris, in an effort to keep Mobile at the forefront of future aerospace investment.
- Airbus again made headlines around the world with news it would establish a second assembly line in Mobile once its deal to acquire a majority stake in Canadian-based Bombardier's C Series Aircraft Limited Partnership is finalized.
- Just a few weeks later, Airbus made its largest contract announcement ever with additional implications for the Mobile Final Assembly Line. The contract with Indigo Partners includes 430 additional A320neo aircraft.
- Airbus celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Airbus Engineering Center opening in Mobile. During the past decade, the company grew to 220 employees, paid \$180 million in salaries, spent \$6 million with local companies and donated \$525,000 to community organizations.
- Austal began construction on the fifth ship named after the City of Mobile, and the first made in Mobile. The company expects to deliver the USS Mobile, a littoral combat ship (LCS), to the U.S. Navy in 2020.

Top Entrepreneurial Initiatives

Small business is the heart of the Mobile economy and innovation is the key to continued growth. The Mobile Area Chamber expanded its entrepreneurial emphasis in 2017.

1 ▶ Innovation PortAL – A project of the Mobile Area Chamber Foundation connecting entrepreneurs with tools, equipment and resources, Innovation PortAL launched Navigator, a structured pathway for entrepreneurs to transform an idea into a scalable business. In addition, the center is finalizing design on its new downtown facility and will soon be issuing a request for proposal to convert the former warehouse into a state-of-the-art facility on St. Louis Street.

Before year's end, the program won a U.S. Economic Development Administration grant to structure, raise funds and establish a seed fund for high-potential entrepreneurs in the Gulf Coast region.

2 ▶ Emerging Leaders – The Chamber recruited the U.S. Small Business Administration program to Mobile. Participants represented 20 companies from Mobile and Baldwin counties, Biloxi and Pensacola, more than half of whom were members of the Mobile Area Chamber. Each company president/CEO graduated from the stage-two entrepreneurial training program with a three-year strategic growth action plan. Chamber partner organizations were the City of Mobile, Mobile County, Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce, Alabama Small Business Development Center and the Women's Business Alliance.

This former downtown warehouse will soon be converted to an entrepreneurial hub along Mobile's growing technology corridor on St. Louis Street.



CigarClub.com's Chris Yokley (left) and Jeff Zeiders (right) are pictured with their wives, Lisa Yokley and Mary-Lacey Zeiders at Alabama Launchpad during the Mobile event in April. Yokley and Zeiders teamed up at the 2016 Startup Weekend and graduated from Innovation PortAL's inaugural program, also in 2016.

3 ▶ Startup Weekend / Take 2 This Techstars and Google for Entrepreneurs program was offered again in 2017, providing competitors with a crash course of the startup experience. The weekend's pitch competition drew 65 participants and was a collaboration of the Chamber, University of South Alabama and Innovation PortAL.

4 ▶ Small Business Bootcamps – Through this initiative from the Chamber's Growth Alliance Task Force, small and minority business owners learned how to more effectively start and/or operate a business. Approximately 270 participants attended the six sessions.

5 ▶ The Chamber partnered with the University of South Alabama and Innovation PortAL to offer the inaugural **Minority Business Accelerator**, a program for small, minority-owned companies to develop innovative growth strategies. Five companies participated.

6 ▶ 1702 – The third class consisted of 16 CEOs and business leaders who completed the training designed to foster a thriving entrepreneurial community.

7 ▶ Alabama Launchpad Startup Competition – For the first time, the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama program held its competition in Mobile, with two local companies as finalists. The Chamber mentored local competitors, and co-sponsored the event with the University of South Alabama.

8 ▶ As the Chamber wrapped up the **Young Entrepreneurs Academy** for high school students in partnership with the Alabama School of Math and Science, the organization participated in other youth programs including the City of Mobile's Youth Empowered for Success Initiative and Mobile County Public Schools' Summer Internship program.

Top Workforce Initiatives

One critical key to business growth is the availability of skilled candidates who can fill open positions. Here are several ways the Chamber works to respond to workforce needs:

1 ▶ The Chamber's **Gulf Coast Technology Council** granted \$8,500 in scholarships to six area university students pursuing technology-related careers in efforts to keep them in the area following graduation. It is the 11th year of the program. Monies were donated by 24 local businesses.

2 ▶ Along with a regional leadership team, the Chamber worked on garnering employer support for the **ACT Work Ready Communities initiative**. Mobile County met its assigned goal of recruiting 119 employers who agree to use the National Career Readiness Certificate to screen job applicants.

3 ▶ Two student programs by the Chamber-led Bay Area Healthcare Coalition continued in 2017. In its 15th year, the two-day **Health Occupations Career Fair** offered more than 700 Mobile and Baldwin County 10th graders hands-on exposure to high-demand, high-wage healthcare jobs in the area. The three-day job shadowing program **Summer Scrubs** provided 104 regional high school students the opportunity to learn about the health industries in area hospitals, clinics and doctor's offices.



High school students who participated in the Chamber's Summer Scrubs visited the USA Children's and Women's Hospital. They shadowed doctors in labor and delivery, radiology, the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, surgery, pediatrics and other areas of the hospital based on the students' specific area of interest.



In September, the Chamber and Alabama Department of Commerce led a statewide trade mission to Australia and New Zealand. The group participated in a networking reception at the home of the U.S. Consul General Valerie Crites Fowler in Sydney.

What Else You Need to Know

- The Chamber implemented eCertify, an electronic process for certificates of origin documents often used in export shipments. The new software created a seamless and streamlined solution, reducing costs and potential errors as well as turnaround time.
- The Chamber renamed its minority business initiative "Diversity and Inclusion" to better reflect its comprehensive efforts to create jobs.

Presenting New Markets

Helping businesses connect to global markets is the focus of the Chamber's international trade efforts. In 2017, trade mission destinations were Australia and New Zealand, Canada, and Denmark and Germany. The Chamber also hosted delegations from Australia, Canada, France, Indonesia, Italy and Malaysia.

At the Table

The Chamber is often the community partner that brings people with common goals together.

- Ongoing committees addressing economic development issues in 2017 were: Business Retention and Expansion, consisting of 142 large and small businesses and entrepreneurs; Gulf Coast Technology Council, comprised of 183 companies; OffshoreAlabama.com, a partnership of 119 oil and gas producers, service providers, suppliers and associated companies; the Growth Alliance Task Force, involving 45 minority-owned small businesses; and the Small Business Council, consisting of 45 members who advocate for small and disadvantaged businesses.
- Several members from OffshoreAlabama.com promoted Mobile's oil and gas industry at the world's largest global oil and gas trade show held in Houston.

Workforce Development Advisory Council

– This newly-established group is a cooperative industry effort to produce successful and diverse job candidates from the Mobile area. The council has four sub-committees – business and industry; education; community and social barriers; and resources.

ADVOCACY

The Mobile Area Chamber has your back when it comes to following local, state and federal issues that may affect business. We know that having a balanced, business-friendly climate encourages economic growth.



Supporters of the Alabama Historic Tax Credit renewal gathered in Mobile in front of the Staples-Pake Building, under renovation thanks to the previous tax credit legislation. Renewing the tax credit was a significant goal of the Chamber's legislative agenda.

Top Advocacy Initiatives

The Mobile Area Chamber monitored more than 1,000 bills introduced during the Alabama legislative session, in addition to following local and federal issues. The Chamber is also an advocate for business news.

1 **Legislative Lunch** – Forming the Legislative Agenda with member input, the Chamber presented its 2017 plan at this event in January and its 2018 plan in December, giving the business community access to the Mobile-Baldwin legislative delegation. Combined, there were approximately 300 attendees at the two events.

2 **Representing Business Interests** – The Chamber's governmental affairs team, along with a contract lobbyist working in Montgomery, kept the lines of communication open with the Mobile-

Baldwin state legislative delegation, engaging them on key legislative issues affecting your business and the local business climate.

Key legislative victories in 2017 included the renewed Alabama Historic Tax Credit Program, previously responsible for 52 projects across Alabama, including several in Mobile; increasing the cap of the Alabama Jobs Act, aimed at keeping the state competitive on job-generating projects; and a bill to allow alcoholic beverages to be ordered and delivered to your sidewalk table at restaurants with outdoor seating.



Despite a hard push by the Chamber and business interests across the state, a bill that would increase the gas tax and dedicate those funds to roads and bridges did not get enough votes to pass.

3 **Promoting Business News** –

With a continuously changing media landscape, the Chamber remained a leading resource for business news with its monthly magazine, *The Business View* (circulation 22,100) and its electronic newsletter *The Business View Weekly* (circulation 9,328).



More Ways We Engage Our Audience



With more than 6,707 Facebook likes, more than 8,463 followers on Twitter and 2,163 members in our LinkedIn group, the Chamber again grew its social media influence. While these are the strongest channels, the Chamber also publishes videos on YouTube and photos on Instagram.

Your Chamber At Work, a new video series comprised of 10 questions asked and answered, was produced in 2017 and will be released in 2018 via the Chamber's social media channels and website.

The Chamber's website, www.MobileChamber.com, underwent a comprehensive update and relaunched mid-year with additional photos, resources and easier navigation for the user.



The Chamber ran a social media campaign in 2017 to increase blog subscribers. Pictured with Chamber employee Odetta Stutts, is one of the campaign winners, Marston Raue with Mott MacDonald.



In January, the Mobile Area Chamber's Governmental Affairs Committee presented its 2017 legislative agenda to members of the Mobile-Baldwin legislative delegation, Mobile City Council and Mobile County Commission. The agenda is a comprehensive overview of pro-business legislation for which the Chamber is seeking the delegation's support during the session.

While *The Business View* and its weekly supplement are the primary tools the Chamber uses to share business headlines, the Chamber expanded its electronic presence in 2017 with a campaign to draw additional subscribers to its blog. Used for breaking news and key columns and stories published in our magazine, the number of subscribers doubled.

With its extensive market reach, the Chamber continued its partnership with Lamar Advertising to promote its marketing message – “Believe in Mobile. Belong to the Chamber.”

We Connect You to Elected Officials

Getting to know your elected officials, shaking their hands and looking them in the eye is important if ever there is a time you need help on a legislative issue. In addition to the Legislative Lunch, the Chamber provided a number of opportunities for you to do just that.

Another sellout crowd exceeding 900 attendees makes State of the City and County the third largest event the Chamber offers. City of Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson, Mobile County Commission President Merceria Ludgood and Chamber President and CEO Bill Sisson presented major accomplishments and future plans.

The Chamber hosted Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey as she kicked off her “Listen, Learn, Help & Lead” tour in Mobile. While here, she visited the future Innovation PortAL facility and heard of the critical importance of a new I-10 bridge over the Mobile River.

Other events included Champagne & Oysters to honor newly-elected and re-elected officials; Coffee with Rep. Bradley Byrne, held in May, where Byrne updated and answered questions prior to returning to Washington D.C. and Forum Alabama in October, where Byrne shared his perspective on several national issues; a small group meeting with then-Sen. Luther Strange, who also updated and answered questions; and an annual reception held in Montgomery to thank the Mobile and Baldwin legislative delegation for their work during the session and promoting Mobile's agenda.

At the Table

Ongoing volunteer Chamber committees addressed advocacy issues in 2017. These included the State Governmental Affairs Committee, consisting of 50 large and small business representatives who review and research legislative priorities, help develop the Chamber's community legislative agenda and make issue and policy recommendations to the Chamber's board of directors; and the Federal Governmental Affairs Committee, consisting of 30 members who monitor issues and guide positions the organization adopts.

The Best Examples

The Chamber's 30th Leaders Exchange traveled to San Diego. More than 75 participants learned about San Diego's success in innovation and entrepreneurial development, tourism, workforce, bio-innovation and more.

Battle Cry for the Bridge

The Chamber's Build the Bridge Coalition heard updates on the Alabama Department of Transportation's (ALDOT) environmental impact study for a new I-10 bridge over the Mobile River, along with proposed financing structures.

In November, ALDOT received four statements of qualifications for the Mobile River Bridge and Bayway project. Next steps include a request for proposal process and selection of a finalist, with construction scheduled to begin in 2019.



More than 75 of Mobile's business leaders and local elected officials participated in the Chamber's 30th annual Leaders Exchange, this year in San Diego. Participants spent three days learning best practices, lessons learned and the keys to San Diego's success in the areas of innovation and entrepreneurial development, port operations, university partnerships and tourism marketing. Participants visited the Austal-built USS Independence homeported at San Diego Naval Base, pictured above.



Photo by Jeff Tesney

The Chamber supports shopping local, as it has a net positive impact on city and county services. á la cork wine and gift shop was the Chamber's site of a CashMOB in November. Attendees committed to spend at least \$20 at this local retailer.

What Else You Need to Know



- Foreign Direct Investment released its American Cities of the Future 2017/18 with Mobile landing the No. 3 spot in Small Cities – FDI strategy category.
- The *Wall Street Journal* published an article on delayed infrastructure projects in the U.S. and highlighted Mobile's quest for a new I-10 Bridge and Bayway expansion.
- In *Business Facilities* magazine's annual ranking, Mobile landed three Top 10 positions in the economic growth potential category. Mobile was No. 2 in cities with populations of 300,000 or less. The Port City also landed the No. 3 spot in foreign direct investment and was 8th in low-cost living.
- The Chamber supported its retail members through a shop-local holiday message with the help of Lamar Advertising, and a CashMob where attendees commit to spending \$20 at a Mobile business at á la Cork.
- Offering members and their guests opportunities to network while traveling socially, Chamber groups visited Italy, Croatia and a Danube River Cruise through Europe. A total of 101 passengers participated in the three trips, which generate non-dues revenue for the organization.



VALUE

We strive to exceed your expectations when it comes to the value of your Chamber membership. What our members say is most important are networking opportunities and professional development workshops.



Again in 2017, Business Expo drew more than 200 vendors and more than 2,500 attendees. It is the largest business-to-business trade show in the Mobile area.

Top Networking Events

Our members tell us over and over how important networking is to their business success. In 2017, more than 4,457 attendees participated in the Chamber's 62 networking events.

1 ► Business Expo – With more than 200 vendors and 2,500 attendees, this business-to-business trade show is the largest of its kind in the area and the Chamber's largest event. In conjunction with expo, the Chamber offers a business resource fair and, in advance of the event, holds a strategy workshop to help vendors get the most traffic for their investment. Kicking off the event was a luncheon featuring the Chamber's Outstanding Entrepreneur Andy Newton as keynote speaker.

2 ► Annual Meeting – A new location, format and live music created a new atmosphere for the Chamber's annual meeting. With nearly 1,100 attendees, it is the organization's second-largest event. The changes continue for the 2018 meeting set for Feb. 22.

In-Person Opportunities

Other popular networking events included Business After Hours, Coffee with the Chamber, Networking@Noon, Membership 101, Member Appreciation Day, Nonprofit Roundtable, Women's Roundtable and the Chamber Classic annual golf tournament.

We Make You Wiser

In the quest for innovative ideas to tackle business challenges and increase their bottom line, more than 2,300 attendees participated in 52 workshops and seminars in 2017.

Topics ranged from cybersecurity at the Small Business Executive Roundtable to public relations for small businesses held in partnership with the Public Relations Council of Alabama to developing effective proposals for government contracting offered with the Alabama Small Business Development Center.

A unique forum focused on U.S. trade policy in the new administration featured two national experts to help local business owners and managers understand where national trade policies were headed and the implications for the local, state and national economies.

Other trade-related workshops covered the basics of exporting and how to develop a website to reach a global audience.

During Small Business Week, the Chamber secured a Google expert, who offered tips to help businesses with online identity, and financial lenders prepared attendees on how to prepare for conversations about funding. The week culminated with the Chamber's small business awards ceremony.



Janice Malone, fourth from left, led a workshop in advance of Business Expo to help vendors get the most from their investment.



Nationally-known educator, author and businessman, Stedman Graham (center) is pictured with representatives from Harper Technologies and Gaines Plumbing during the Chamber's 20th Eagle Awards celebration. Chamber Chair Liz Freeman and Chamber President and CEO Bill Sisson flank the winners.



In November, the Chamber hosted the NASA Business Forum. More than 100 people attended this bi-annual event where NASA representatives and prime contractors outlined business and purchasing opportunities.

Happy Anniversary, Eagles

Since the award's inception in 1998, the Chamber has presented 91 Eagle Awards to the owners of 79 companies, several more than once. The award was created to

recognize the accomplishments of minority-owned businesses and bring awareness of their expertise and economic impact to the general business community. The Chamber held its 20th awards ceremony in October, featuring nationally-known keynote speaker Stedman Graham.

Prior to the event, the Diversity Forum featured a panel of experts who led a discussion on marketing, digital and social media, branding and communications strategies.

Chamber Chase 2017

Kevin Carey, president of the Mobile market for Trustmark Bank, chaired the Chamber's total resource development campaign, Chamber Chase. Fifty-five volunteers, representing 32 member companies, surpassed the \$1.17 million goal, raising \$1.18 million in needed resources. In addition, the campaign is responsible for 67 new members and 14 new board of advisors members.



Helping the Chamber achieve its goal for the annual total resource development campaign Chamber Chase were 55 volunteers, representing 32 member companies. Chamber Chase volunteers gathered for an update at a weekly Reward Session.

What Else You Need to Know



- Local business leaders offered input on their projected business growth and new hires in 2018, and identified potential opportunities and challenges in the local economy. The results of the survey were presented at the

Chamber's annual State of the Economy. Making up the business panel were leaders from the distribution, information technology, downtown development and shipbuilding sectors.

- Chamber staff and volunteer ambassadors assisted 46 businesses with grand openings and ribbon cuttings in 2017.
- Higher visibility is one of the benefits afforded to the Chamber's more than 250-member board of advisors. The group represents the organization's largest dues-paying members. This group meets twice a year with the Chamber's governing board of directors, and receives top investor invitations throughout the year.



Chamber staff and ambassadors helped At Home with its ribbon-cutting event in 2017.

- The Chamber again presented its Military Appreciation Day luncheon, featuring awards by the Navy League, Air Force Association, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, U.S. Coast Guard and National Guard and Reserve. The event also recognized JROTC and ROTC cadets.

Supporting the Mobile Bay Area Veterans Day Commission, U.S. Air Force Gen. Douglas Fraser was honored as the 2017 Patriot of the Year and Capt. George Krietemeyer, U.S. Coast Guard (Ret.), as Veteran of the Year during the Veterans Day lunch. More than 400 people attended.



In April, the Chamber held its annual Military Appreciation Day luncheon at USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park. Attended by more than 400 people, civilians, active military men and women, and members of the Mobile County Public Schools (MCPSS) JROTC all received awards.

2017 Award Winners

The Chamber presented several awards to member companies to highlight their success and community impact. Award winners were featured in the Chamber's magazine, *The Business View*, the e-newsletter *The Business View Weekly*, and cross-promoted through the Chamber's blog and social media channels.

Manufacturer of the Year

Continental Motors Group, a leading manufacturer of new and rebuilt FAA-certified piston engines, spare parts and components for small propeller-driven airplanes, was named the Chamber's 2017 Manufacturer of the Year. The company renewed its commitment to Mobile, maintaining hundreds of high-paying jobs, and is building a new facility at Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley. The award was presented at the State of the Economy event in December.

Corporate Community Service Award

Infirmity Health was named the 2017 Corporate Community Service Award winner. This award recognizes companies for their service to the community and is jointly presented annually by the Chamber and Junior League of Mobile. The company will be recognized at the Chamber's annual meeting in 2018.

Small Business of the Year

Founded to produce *Today's Homeowner* in 1997, 3 Echoes Productions was named the Chamber's Small Business of the Year. The video production company was honored for its client and employee growth, studio expansions and additional service options.

The other finalists recognized were Altaworx and Waite's Cleaners.

Small Businesses of the Month

These Chamber-member companies were featured in *The Business View*. The stories were then cross-promoted through the Chamber's blog and social media channels. Each company received its award at a Chamber board of directors meeting.

- Bellator Real Estate & Development
- Blue Fish
- Bottles Up
- Claude Moore Jeweler
- Hunter Limousines
- Inspect Mobile
- Lagniappe
- McElhaney Insurance Agency
- Payroll Vault
- RockBridge Wealth Management
- UPS Store

Outstanding Entrepreneur

Andy Newton, who at the time was president & CEO of Southern Light, was honored as the Mobile area's Outstanding Entrepreneur. The Mobile-based broadband infrastructure provider has since been sold to Uniti Group, and Mobile was chosen as its division headquarters for Uniti Fiber. Newton founded two other companies before partnering to launch Southern Light.

Eagle Award Recipients

Gaines Plumbing and Harper Technologies were named the 2017 Eagle Award winners. The award recognizes the growth and success of local minority-owned companies.

Minority Business Advocate

FOX10 was the recipient of the Rev. Wesley A. James Minority Business Advocate award. The station was recognized for its support of the Chamber's efforts to honor minority-owned businesses since the inception of the award in 1998.

Ambassador of the Year

Lisa Kavanagh with Junior League of Mobile was named the 2017 Ambassador of the Year. The award was presented during the Chamber's November board of directors meeting.

Ambassadors are volunteers from member companies who assist the Chamber by visiting members and serving at various Chamber events.

Ambassador of the Month

Recognized for their involvement, these Chamber volunteers were featured in *The Business View*:

- Trish Banker, Regions Bank, retired
- Liz Brewer, Bank of the Ozarks
- Michelle Brown, Seabulk Towing
- Peggy Folz, Mobile Infirmity Medical Center
- Lisa Kavanagh, Junior League of Mobile
- Matthew Lollar, Slingshot
- Charlie McCants, Port City Tornadoes
- Phillip Moore, AHI Properties
- Megan Murdock, Hampton Inn Providence Park
- Sara Polansky, Thomas, Harrison & Associates Insurance Agency
- Ava Trahan, Highland at Spring Hill



In its monthly magazine, the Chamber highlights small businesses. Blue Fish, a digital design advertising company, was featured as the Chamber's Small Business of the Month in August.

EXCELLENCE

If you're going to do it – do it right. That's our motto. We believe in bringing you the strongest programs, economic development results, numerous networking opportunities, legislative victories and positive business news.

Fiscally Responsible

The Chamber's revenue streams include member dues, board of advisor dues, performance contracts, grants, Partners for Growth pledges, advertising sales and Chamber Chase-recruited sponsorships.

The Chamber staff also manages the finances of the Industrial Development Authority of Mobile County; Industrial Development Board of the City of Mobile; Industrial Park Board of Mobile County; the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization; and Innovation PortAL.

The Chamber's finances, as well as those of the five boards the organization manages, are audited annually to ensure adherence to accounting standards.

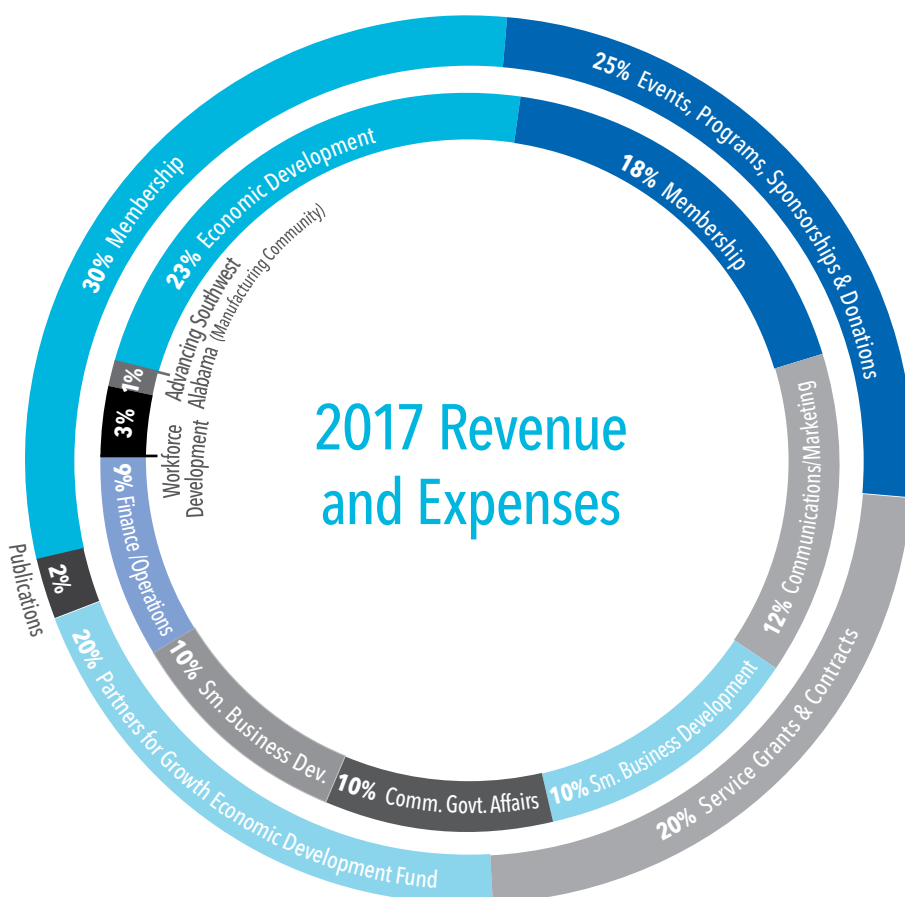
2017 Membership

In 2017, more than 275 businesses joined the Chamber, and our membership renewals continue to be above industry average.

We offer a money-back guarantee to our new members with just a few conditions, like attending a Membership 101 orientation, reading *The Business View* and taking advantage of member discounts.

Revenue and Expenses

Below is a representation of the Chamber's revenue in the outer circle and expenses in the inner circle. Small Business Development includes Innovation PortAL.



What Else You Need to Know



Rodgers



Rencher



Glover



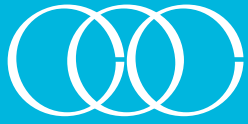
Rak-Blanchard



Stutts

- MobileConnect, a Partners for Growth program to acquaint new-to-Mobile professionals and executives with the community, hosted 45 individuals in its 2017 series.
- David Rodgers, senior project manager for the Chamber, completed the University of Alabama Economic Development Academy. He was named the Young Professional of the Year by the Economic Development Association of Alabama.
- Dawn Rencher, the Chamber's director of member relations, graduated from Leadership Mobile, a program of Mobile United.
- Two Chamber staffers completed Visit Mobile's tourism ambassador program – Shelby Glover, project manager and Susan Rak-Blanchard, communications and marketing director.
- Shelby Glover, project manager, and Odetta Stutts, help desk receptionist, both graduated from Dale Carnegie's eight-week leadership training course.
- The Chamber staff continued to give back to the community through its annual donations to various organizations, board service and participation in community events. In 2017, the staff joined in the United Way Day of Caring event, hosted a LifeSouth blood drive and invited our members to join in a holiday food drive for Feeding the Gulf Coast.

2017 BY THE NUMBERS



Here is a snapshot of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's year in review.

JOB

New Jobs
RECRUITED

647
Full-Time

\$66,808

Average Salary
of Jobs Created



143

\$321 M

Capital Investment
of 2017 Projects

6 Project
Announcements

225

International
Appointments Made
to Help Local Companies
Expand into Foreign Sales



108



Entrepreneurs Receiving
Business Counseling and Advice

816
Students

Attending Workforce
Development Events

ADVOCACY

7,277



Build the
I-10 Bridge
Facebook Followers

8 Political
Networking
Events

1,030

Legislative Bills
Monitored



135,310

Unique
Website Hits



9,328

The Business
View Weekly
SUBSCRIBERS



The Business View
CIRCULATION

22,100



6,707
LIKES



8,462
FOLLOWERS

VALUE

Chamber
Professional
Development

Seminars Attendees

2,083

35



Small
Business-Focused
Workshops and
Seminars

79



EMPLOYEES of Highlighted
Small Businesses of the Month

62

Membership
Networking
EVENTS



46

Ribbon Cuttings &
Grand Openings
Held at Member Companies

4,457

Membership
Networking
Event Attendees



EXCELLENCE



YEARS
ACCREDITED

51

Since the designation
was instituted in 1966.



MACC
ESTABLISHED
1836



1,936

Current Chamber
MEMBERS

1,419

Individuals Serving
on Chamber Committees
and Task Forces

107,844

People Employed by
Chamber-Member Companies

CURRENT
MOBILE AREA
CHAMBER
EMPLOYEES

38

6

BOARDS
MANAGED BY
THE CHAMBER

BOARD LEADERSHIP

2017 Executive Committee



Liz Freeman
Long's Human Resource Services
Chair



Britton Bonner
Adams & Reese LLP
Vice Chair Governmental Affairs



Kevin Carey
Trustmark Bank
Vice Chair Membership/
Chamber Chase



Brad Israel
*Bellator Real Estate &
Development LLC*
Vice Chair Military Affairs



Jennifer Jenkins
JJPR
Vice Chair Communications
and Marketing



Jenny McCall
WESCO Gas & Welding Supply Inc.
Vice Chair Small Business
Development



Mark Nix
Infirmary Health
Immediate Past Chair



Henry O'Connor
Jones Walker
Vice Chair Workforce
Development



Jacquitta Powell-Green
Commonwealth National Bank
Vice Chair Minority Business
Development



Bill Sisson
Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
President & CEO



Jill Stork
Alabama Power
Vice Chair Economic Development



Jay Watkins
Maynard Cooper & Gale PC
Legal Counsel



Brian Willman
Regions Bank
Chair-Elect/Finance & Operations

Also Serving on the 2017 Board of Directors

Glyn Agnew
AT&T

Damian Bell
*RockBridge Wealth
Management*

Bob Bender
*Travel Leaders
Corporate – Mobile*

Trevor Boehm
Gulf Coast Containers

Robert Bryant
*Leaf & Petal Florist
and Gift Shop*

Beverly Cooper
*Christian Benevolent
Funeral Home*

James Fowler
Cooper/T. Smith Corp.

Jason Gregory
Willis Towers Watson

Monty Hamilton
Rural Sourcing Inc.

Terry Harbin
BancorpSouth

Abe Harper
Harper Technologies LLC

Guy Helmsing
Hancock Bank

Mark Hieronymus
Hieronymus CPAs LLC

Charles Hyland Jr.
*Mobile Area Water
& Sewer System*

Clarence Johnson Jr.
Bama Pest Control Inc.

Bibb Lamar Jr.
ServisFirst Bank

Robin Luce
JubileeScape Inc.

Janice Malone
*Business Resource
Design and Print*

Raymond McCaffrey
Quality Valve Inc.

Clint McFerrin
Cintas Corp.

Henry Morrisette
Hand Arendall LLC

Monica Motley
*Alabama School of
Math & Science*

Stephen Potts
PMT Publishing

Chris Richards
AM/NS Calvert

Maxey Roberts
*University of South
Alabama Foundation*

Mike Rogers
Rogers & Willard Inc.

Scott Rothermel
Performance Contractors

Vicki Studstill
*Hargrove Engineers +
Constructors*

Daryl Taylor
*Airbus U.S.
Manufacturing Facility*

Tony Waldrop
*University of South
Alabama*

Mike Williams
Outokumpu Stainless USA

2018 PLAN OF ACTION SUMMARY

Each year, the Mobile Area Chamber staff writes its Plan of Action, a list of tactics to achieve the goals of the Chamber's strategic plan, which covers the years 2016-2018. Below are each department's goals.

Communications & Marketing

- Provide a constant, proactive and interactive communications program to Mobile Area Chamber members to encourage and maintain an interest in the Chamber and support of our efforts. *(Supports strategic goal: Value)*
- To improve the Mobile Area Chamber's image in the minds of the public and make them better aware of who we are and our mission. *(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*
- Promote the Chamber and the Mobile area via the Chamber's websites, electronic publications and social media outlets. *(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*
- Improve dialogue with media outlets and promote Chamber activities and issues more heavily in the local market. *(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*
- Assist the economic development department with implementing a national marketing campaign. *(Supports strategic goal: Jobs)*

Community & Governmental Affairs

- Develop and obtain passage of the Mobile Area Chamber Community Legislative Agenda. *(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*
- Recognize and promote the importance of transportation infrastructure to continuing business growth. *(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*
- Promote a local, business-friendly political and legislative climate that encourages economic growth, is responsive to business needs and supportive of business success. *(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

- Convene key groups and organizations to identify and work on vital community issues. *(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*
- Improve communication with the membership, elected officials and Chamber staff on key community issues. *(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*
- Implement the Leaders Exchange with a focus on workable solutions to regional and local issues. *(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*
- Encourage positive military and civilian relationships. *(Supports strategic goal: Value)*

Economic Development

- Aggressively market the Mobile region for business locations and expansions based on community strengths, unique strategic advantages and governed by community quality of life objectives. Support the five-year Partners for Growth goal of creating an average of 800 new jobs per year. *(Supports strategic goals: Jobs and Advocacy)*
- Provide staff support and expertise to the Industrial Development Board (IDB), the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) and the Industrial Park Board (IPB). *(Supports strategic goals: Jobs and Value)*
- Involve Chamber volunteer leadership, city and county elected leadership and local agency allies in current Plan of Action implementation, as well as long-term economic development planning and funding. *(Supports strategic goals: Jobs and Value)*
- Generate, collect, organize, provide and publish information to support economic development activities that service the needs of prospects, global consultants, existing industries and members. *(Supports strategic goal: Value)*

- Further develop the Mobile region as a center for international trade and transportation to enhance the foreign sales of area products and services. *(Supports strategic goals: Jobs and Advocacy)*
- Improve Mobile's ability to respond to workforce needs. *(Supports strategic goal: Jobs)*

Finance & Operations

- Provide and maintain financial control and related services. *(Supports strategic goal: Excellence)*
- Develop and maintain all records, forms and reports relating to human resource management. *(Supports strategic goal: Excellence)*
- Coordinate maintenance of the Chamber building, grounds, fixtures and equipment. *(Supports strategic goal: Excellence)*
- Enhance Chamber and Chamber Foundation operations through improvement of processes and procedures. *(Supports strategic goal: Excellence)*
- Continue to enhance the Chamber's information technology assets. *(Supports strategic goal: Excellence)*

Membership

- Exceed budgeted goals for dues and non-dues income to support Chamber operations. *(Supports strategic goal: Value)*
- Provide innovative programs and services that our members desire and value. *(Supports strategic goal: Value)*
- Ensure awesome customer service to improve member retention and development. *(Supports strategic goal: Value)*

Small Business Development

- Market and provide technical assistance to area small businesses to help stimulate development and foster job creation. *(Supports strategic goals: Value and Jobs)*
- Provide business assistance to minority-owned businesses and encourage participation in all Chamber activities. *(Supports strategic goals: Value and Jobs)*
- Coordinate task force activities of select programs, products and services benefiting small businesses. *(Supports strategic goal: Value)*
- Create a system to share local funding sources with interested businesses. *(Supports strategic goal: Value)*
- Provide continuing education, training and business development opportunities for small businesses. *(Supports strategic goal: Value)*
- Serve as an advocate on issues of concern to the small business community. *(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*
- Facilitate assistance provided by other small business resources in the Mobile and Baldwin area. *(Supports strategic goal: Advocacy)*

How to Reach Your Chamber Staff

Administration

Bill Sisson

President and CEO: 251-431-8610

Shelly Mattingly

Executive Assistant: 251-431-8655

Bob Chappelle

Chief Operating Officer: 251-431-8644

Katrina Dewrell

Executive Coordinator: 251-431-8611

Laura O'Connor

Special Projects: 251-431-8647

Communications and Marketing

Leigh Perry-Herndon

Vice President: 251-431-8645

Ashley Horn

Director of Digital Media & Design:
251-431-8623

Susan Rak-Blanchard

Director of Communications &
Marketing: 251-431-8641

Marion Randall

Events Manager: 251-431-8640

René Eiland

Account Executive, Advertising:
251-431-8635

Carolyn Wilson

Assistant: 251-431-8606

Community and Governmental Affairs

Kellie Hope

Vice President: 251-431-8618

Patty Howell

Director of Regional Affairs: 251-431-8601

Mallory Tyson

Assistant: 251-431-8621

Economic Development

Vice President: 251-431-8650

Natalie Franklin

Coordinator Administrative Services:
251-431-8636

Business Development

David Rodgers

Senior Project Manager: 251-431-8657

Shelby Glover

Project Manager: 251-431-8616

Business Retention and Expansion

Jena Berson

Director: 251-431-8654

Stefany Walley

Research Manager: 251-431-8602

Kayley Edwards

Project Coordinator: 251-431-8629

Education and Workforce Development

Cheryl Nicholls

Director: 251-431-8651

International Trade

Christina Stimpson

Director: 251-431-8648

Finance and Operations

Matt Hariel

Vice President: 251-431-8625

LeMaris Alston

IT Manager: 251-431-8626

Chani Rider

Senior Finance Assistant: 251-431-8627

Donna Ikner

Finance Assistant: 251-461-8609

Jackie Davidson

Assistant: 251-431-8605

Grant Carrera

Security: 251-431-8658

Hope Bush-Collins

Custodian: 251-431-8634

Membership

Carolyn Golson

Vice President: 251-431-8622

Dawn Rencher

Director: 251-431-8649

Jackie Hecker

Senior Account Executive: 251-431-8642

Emily Hatcher

Account Executive: 251-431-8619

Odetta Stutts

Help Desk Receptionist: 251-433-6951

Small Business Development

Darrell Randle

Vice President: 251-431-8615

Danette Richards

Director: 251-431-8652

Brenda Rembert

Assistant: 251-431-8607