

Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce

FEBRUARY 2018

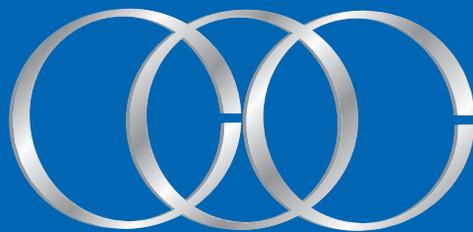
the **business**VIEW



ANNUAL REPORT

JOBS

VALUE



MOBILE AREA
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ADVOCACY

EXCELLENCE

**French
Companies
Study Mobile**

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



We work for your business.

When you choose us, you get more than just a technology provider. **You get an ally.**



You get account teams who show up in person.



Network engineers that deliver the highest levels of reliability.



Product teams who use your needs as the guide for innovation.



Support teams who live and work near you.

We've got the people, the technology, and the expertise to help your business win. And we won't stop until you do.

Because we work for your business.





ADMINISTRATION, CLERICAL & ACCOUNTING

Accounting, office administration,
sales personnel, file clerks & legal
personnel

HEALTHCARE



WAREHOUSE & MANUFACTURING SUPPORT

Warehouse & inventory staff,
shipping & receiving



CONSTRUCTION SKILLS

Electricians, production labor,
sheetmetal mechanics, carpenters
and safety personnel

INDUSTRIAL & TECHNICAL SKILLS

Welders, pipe fitters, riggers,
journeyman plumbers & crane
operators/heavy equipment operators

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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the business view is published monthly, except for the combined issue of December/January, by the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
451 Government St., Mobile, AL 36602
251-433-6951 www.mobilechamber.com ©2018

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

Additional Writers and Editors
Mike Herndon, Ashley Horn, Patty Howell,
Susan Rak-Blanchard and Carolyn Wilson

Printing Services: Interstate Printing/Direct Mail

Graphic Design: Wise Design Inc.

Advertising Account Executive: René Eiland
251-431-8635 reiland@mobilechamber.com

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, Infirmiry 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.

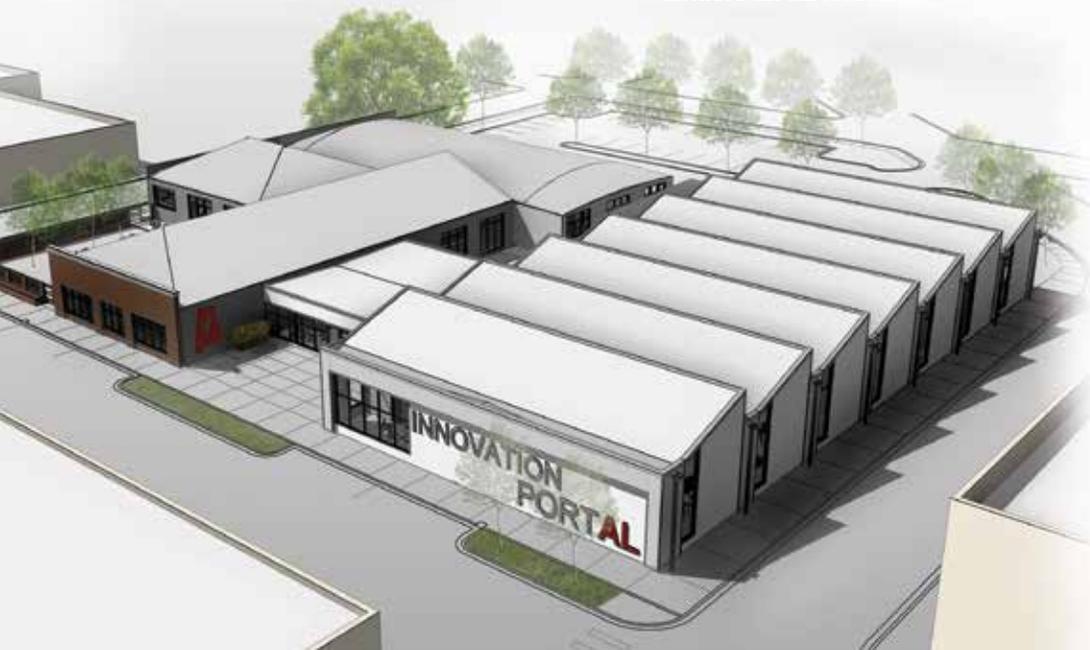
4 ▶ Small Business Bootcamps – Through this initiative from the Chamber's Growth Alliance Task Force, small and minority business owners learned how to more effectively start and/or operate a business. Approximately 270 participants attended the six sessions.

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.

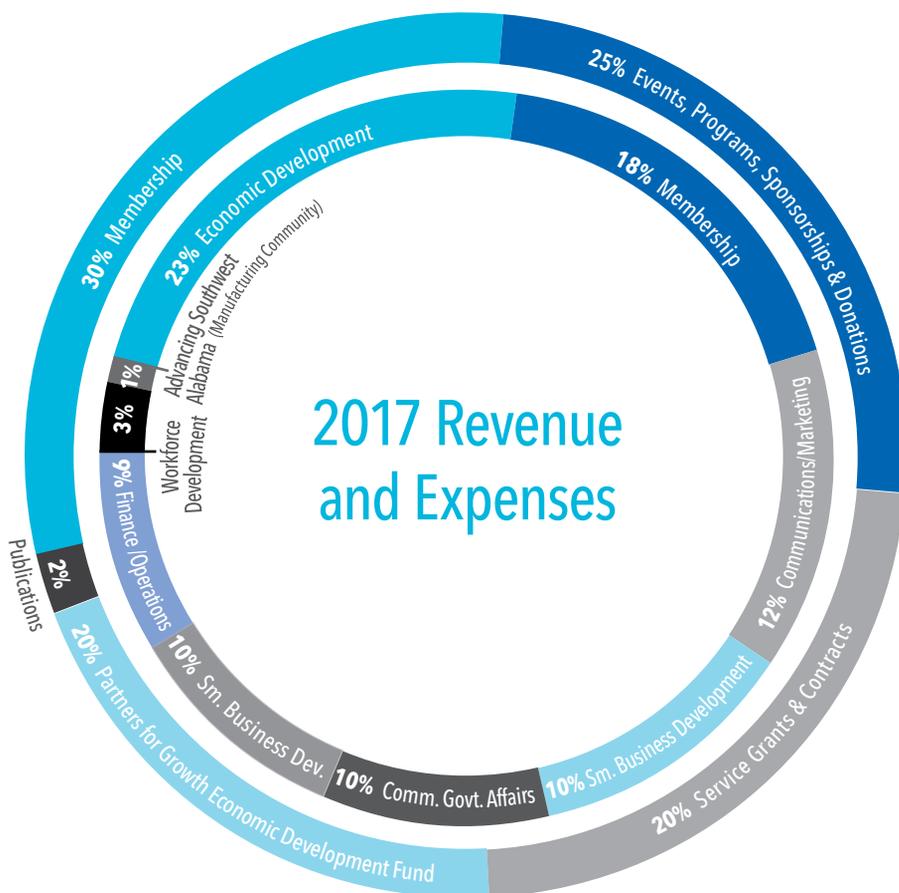
2017 Membership

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



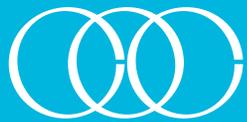
Rak-Blanchard



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.

JOBS

New Jobs RECRUITED

647
Full-Time

\$66,808

Average Salary of Jobs Created



Partners for Growth INVESTORS

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

1,030

Legislative Bills Monitored



135,310

Unique Website Hits

8

Political Networking Events

VALUE

Chamber Professional Development Seminars Attendees

2,083

79



EMPLOYEES of Highlighted Small Businesses of the Month



9,328

The Business View Weekly SUBSCRIBERS



The Business View CIRCULATION

22,100



46

Ribbon Cuttings & Grand Openings Held at Member Companies

35

Small Business-Focused Workshops and Seminars

Membership Networking Event Attendees

4,457



6,707 LIKES

8,462 FOLLOWERS

62 Membership Networking EVENTS

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

110,000

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

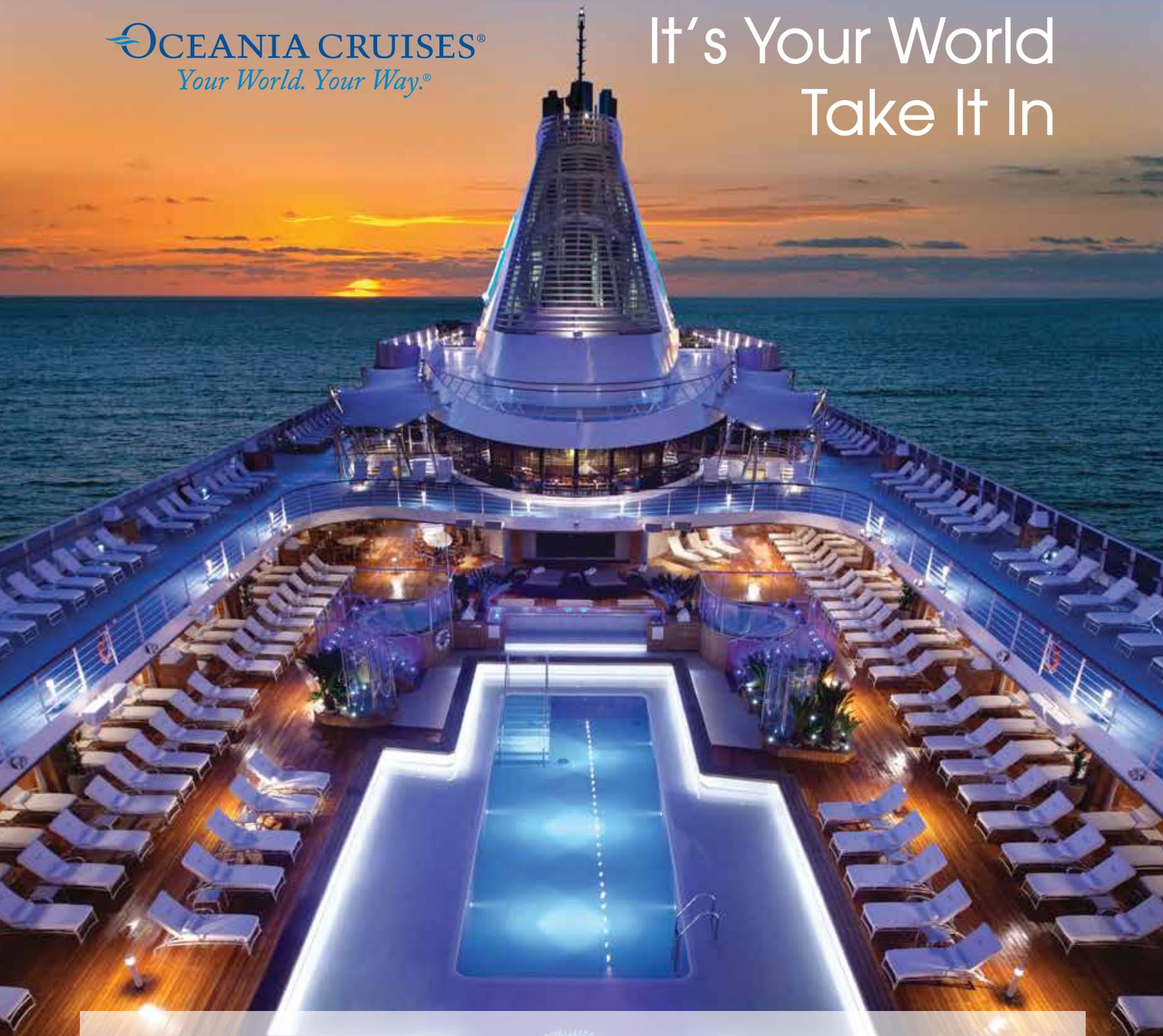
Director: 251-431-8652

Brenda Rembert

Assistant: 251-431-8607

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Airbus to Add Second Manufacturing Line in Mobile for C-Series Aircraft Assembly

Airbus and Bombardier Inc. announced in October their intent to become partners on the C-Series aircraft program, and that the Mobile manufacturing site would expand its footprint to handle additional capacity.

At press time, the U.S. International Trade Commission was holding hearings between Boeing and Bombardier over a trade dispute. It is not known if the ITC ruling will have an effect on the Airbus-Bombardier partnership.

“Potentially, we could be looking at major expansion of our aerospace sector, creating more jobs, and requiring substantial additional capital investment,” said **Troy Wayman**, vice president of economic development for the Mobile Area Chamber.

According to Airbus officials, the agreement brings together Airbus’ global

reach and scale with Bombardier’s newest state-of-the-art jet aircraft family, positioning both partners to fully unlock the value of the C-Series platform and create significant new value for customers, suppliers, employees and shareholders. The project’s headquarters and primary assembly line and related functions will remain in Québec, Canada.

The single-aisle market is a key growth driver, representing 70 percent of the expected global future demand for aircraft. Ranging from 100 to 150 seats, the C-Series is highly complementary to Airbus’ existing single-aisle aircraft portfolio, which focuses on the higher end of the single-aisle business – 150 to 240 seats.

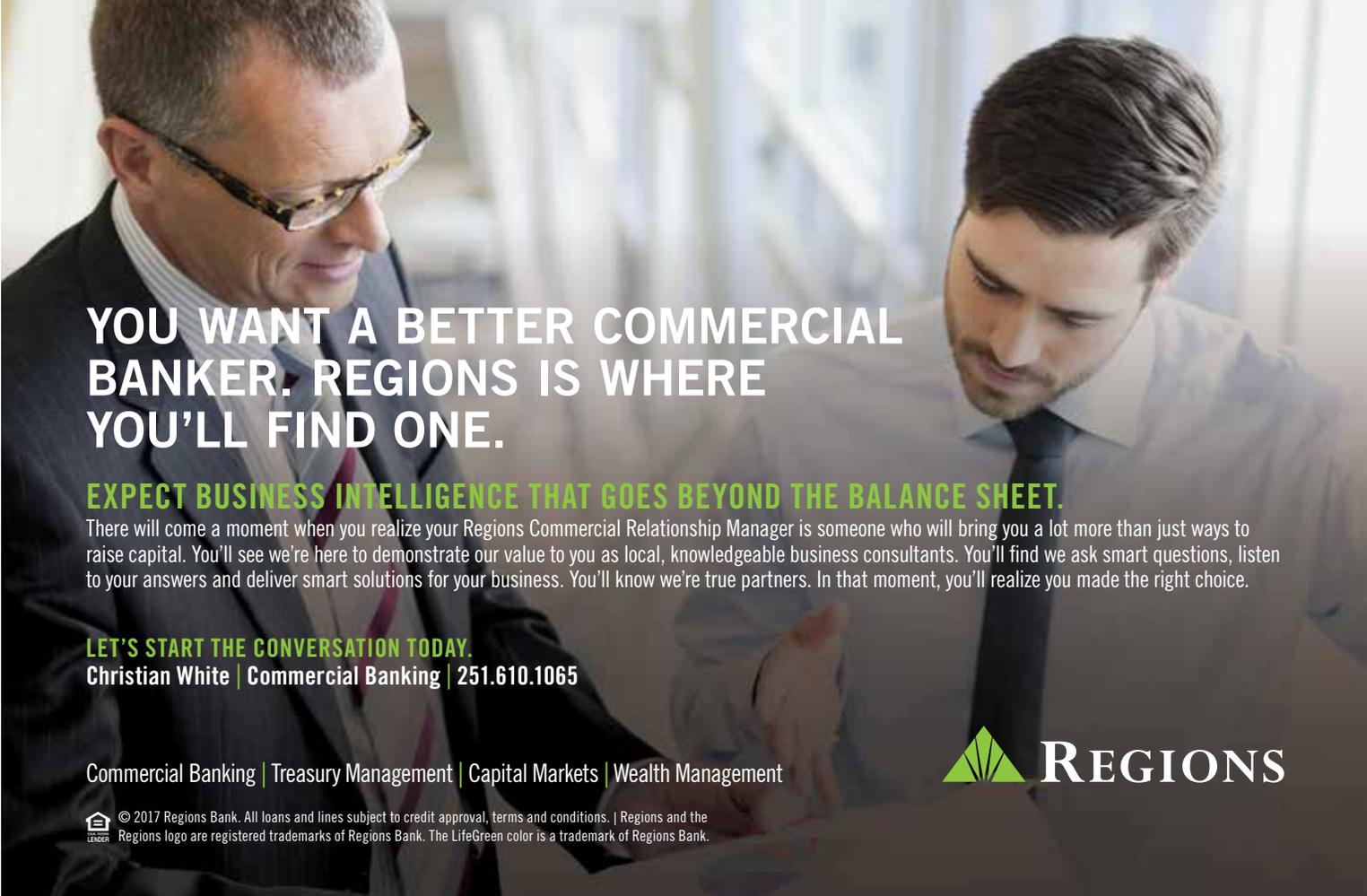
Mobile’s final assembly line continues to ramp up operations, working on increasing its

capacity. Wayman noted this announcement could help reach the economy of scale for supply-chain industries working to make a business case to locate here. “While there are no guarantees, the deepening and widening of our aerospace capabilities and needs only helps us make the case to the entire supply chain,” he added.

“Not only will this partnership secure the C-Series and its industrial operations in Canada, the U.K. and China, but we will also bring new jobs to the U.S.,” said Airbus Chief Executive Officer **Tom Enders**.

“Airbus will benefit from strengthening its product portfolio in the high-volume single-aisle market, offering superior value to our airline customers worldwide.”

Completion of the transaction is currently expected in the second half of 2018.



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In partnership with Business France, a national agency supporting the international development of the French economy, the Mobile Area Chamber hosted a delegation of French aerospace companies in December. During their visit, the participating companies met with Chamber representatives to discuss Mobile's economy and current business climate, met with the Mobile Airport Authority for a presentation and tour of Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley, and toured and met with representatives of the Airbus U.S. Manufacturing Facility. The delegation also had private one-on-one business meetings with interested Mobile partners and concluded their visit with a networking reception. Participants represented Aeromicrotech, Aerospace Valley, APSYS, AXYAL, Business France, CRYLA, LIFCO, Solicis and VP Plast.

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Headquartered in Daphne, JMF Solutions provides technology consulting services. Pictured are: front row (left to right) CEO Mike Francis, Caleb Brown, Lisa Arnold and Ryan Gipson; and back row (left to right) Devon Harris, Ed Forbess and Rick Miller.

JMF Solutions Focuses on Innovation and Service

Daphne-based solution provider poised for expansion into new markets

Since it was established in 2005, JMF Solutions has built its business on innovation and service.

With locations in suburban Atlanta and Santa Rosa Beach, Fla., along with its Daphne headquarters, JMF is a solution provider for midmarket, enterprise, carrier and other managed services providers.

The company strives to give its clients with the most efficient and technologically innovative means of providing internet, voice and data – such as WaveFly, its intellectual property, which provides complete managed cloud, fiber, VoIP, network, transport and security services.

The company is currently planning an expansion with new offices in Philadelphia, New York, south Florida and New Orleans.

“JMF is fundamentally based on faith, wisdom, honesty and excellence,” said **Alex Hamlin**, JMF’s vice president of market strategy. “We are a boutique service provider focused on providing high-quality, fully managed products and services to meet and exceed our clients’ needs and expectations. We are making our JMF and WaveFly brands the standard of excellence in business, while providing significant value to our employees and stakeholders.”

JMF Solutions is the Mobile Area Chamber’s Small Business of the Month.

In addition to its products, services and support, JMF provides technology consulting to a select set of clients, including network security, advanced network services, virtualization and datacenter services.

Helping to empower global business, JMF’s team has traveled to Africa and many other countries to provide network engineering solutions.

JMF is also community-focused, providing discounted or free services – as well as time and money – to local schools and charities such as the Ronald McDonald House, Wings of

Life, Prodissee Pantry, Catholic Social Services, Goforth Media and Power 88 Radio.

Employees are given paid time off to take part in mission trips and other charitable or religious pursuits. The company also sponsors or is active in local events such as the Kiwanis Club Gumbo Cook-off, Christ the King Life Group Chili Cook-off and the Jubilee Festival.

Want to be featured here?
Go to mobilechamber.com to submit an application, or contact Danette Richards at 251-431-8652 or drichards@mobilechamber.com.

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In business for 53 years, Keith Air Conditioning's company officials are (from left to right) Matt Keith, Wayne Keith and Brent Keith.

Keith Air Conditioning

Company officials: Wayne Keith, president; Brent Keith, vice president; and Matt Keith, vice president

Years in business: 53

Brief company description:

Keith Air Conditioning is a full-service residential and commercial HVAC contractor. The company handles residential and commercial service, repairs, replacements, new installations, duct work and more.

Why are you located in Mobile?

"We have always been in Mobile and always will be. We love Mobile," said Brent Keith.

Why do you support the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's Partners for Growth initiative? "Because we see the value and importance of the Chamber," said Brent. "We know that a thriving economy and new business is good for everyone. We have always been committed to being involved and making Mobile the best it can be."

What do you see as Mobile's greatest potential?

"We have been very encouraged by the downtown redevelopment in Mobile and think that this is still where our greatest potential lies," said Brent. "As Mayor Sandy Stimpson likes to say, 'Every great city has a great downtown.'"

Length of continuous Chamber membership:

Since 1968



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.

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2018 Legislative Agenda

Jobs. Advocacy. Value. Excellence. These are the pillars on which the Mobile Area Chamber stands and the heart of the Chamber's work in legislative affairs.

With the 2018 Alabama Legislative Session already underway, the Chamber's Legislative Agenda serves as a guide to issues key to Southwest Alabama's growth and competitiveness.

The core focus of the Chamber's advocacy work continues to be in the areas of economic development and taxes; education and workforce development; energy, environment and infrastructure; small business; and healthcare. In particular, this year the Chamber will emphasize legislation that supports southwest Alabama's growing small business and entrepreneurial companies. State-led support of seed funding, cabinet-level resources and expansions of

business classifications will help keep Alabama competitive with the many states vying for these new and expanding companies.

As well, transportation infrastructure remains a key focus as the region continues to grow. Today's more fuel-efficient vehicles use less gas per mile, greatly affecting the revenues-per-gallon collected by the state to maintain Alabama's aging roads and bridges.

The Mobile Area Chamber will work with other metro areas and legislative partners across the state to identify new ways to fund and manage the critical infrastructure necessary to provide safe and efficient roadways.

To learn more about the Chamber's legislative agenda or to get involved, contact **Patty Howell** at phowell@mobilechamber.com.

Economic Development & Taxes

- Keep Alabama competitive by supporting economic development incentives such as the **Alabama Historic Tax Credit** program, **New Markets Development Tax Credit** program and **Alabama Film Credit**.
- Maintain **federal military contracts** with Mobile-area based employers, particularly for the construction of Austal USA's Frigate Littoral Combat Ships and Expeditionary Fast Transport vessels and the future small Surface Combatant ships, as well as Ingalls Shipbuilding's LHA/LPD Amphibious Assault Ships, destroyers and Coast Guard cutters.
- Support fair trade and investment agreements that **expand access to international markets**, reduce trade barriers and increase foreign direct investment, creating a level playing field to put Mobile-area families, businesses and workers first and improving the overall international competitiveness of Alabama exporters.
- Support all efforts to **decrease workers' compensation medical costs** in Alabama by decreasing fraud in unemployment and workers' compensation claims with stronger statutes.
- Support the continuation of federal payments to Alabama and Mobile and Baldwin counties from the 2006 Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) in 2018 federal budgets.
- Support **federal immigration reform** that will secure our borders, establish reasonable and effective visa policies/procedures, and recognize the need to attract professional and highly-valued workers to the U.S.
- Preserve jobs and economic growth in all sectors through the **reduction of overly burdensome regulations** that increase the cost of doing business, create uncertainty and have the potential to stifle growth.

Education & Workforce Development

- Continue to **adequately fund Alabama's education budget**, including Alabama's First Class pre-kindergarten, career tech, dual enrollment and other innovative programs, in order to

ensure a competitive increase in student scoring, higher graduation rates and competitive college- and career-ready graduates; maintain high academic standards and expectations for all Alabama students.

- Seek a fiscal year 2019 **state budget appropriation for the University of South Alabama** that reflects the institution's successful enrollment growth and increased graduation rates over the past 10 years, and additional **funding to support USA Health** and its specialized healthcare mission.
- Support funding to establish a program coordinated by the University of South Alabama to support the needs of communities in southwest Alabama to **recruit, train and retain the more than 5,000 seasonal workers needed for the region's hospitality industry**.
- Support demand-driven **strategic workforce training initiatives** in south Alabama's key economic growth sectors, including aerospace, maritime and advanced manufacturing.
- Support measures to **address the growing opioid crisis** in Alabama that has detrimental effects on the availability of a qualified workforce, workplace safety and overall community health.

Energy, Environment & Infrastructure

- Support the funding and construction of the proposed **I-10 Mobile River Bridge and Bayway widening project** and partner with the Alabama Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration to actively seek construction funding through Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grants and other sources.
- Continued support to fund the **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mobile District Civil Works** program in support of the **deepening and widening and the annual operations and maintenance dredging of the Mobile Ship Channel**; as well as the deepening of the Bayou La Batre and Coden ship channels.
- Support **increasing Alabama's investment in transportation infrastructure** to sustain and promote economic growth, job creation, quality of life and public safety.



In December, the Mobile Area Chamber board of directors and advisors hosted Mobile's local elected officials and regional state legislators for a lunch and presented the Chamber's annual Legislative Agenda. 2017 Chamber Chair Liz Freeman with Long's Human Resource Services announced key areas of pro-business legislation focused on economic development, taxes, healthcare, education, workforce development, energy, environment, infrastructure, small business and entrepreneur growth. The luncheon's keynote speaker was Gov. Kay Ivey, who pledged support for Mobile's economic needs, and recommitted her efforts and those of the Alabama Department of Transportation to hold a groundbreaking for the I-10 Mobile River Bridge within the next year.

- Support legislation to allow for a board-governance structure and a non-political, **board-appointed director of the Alabama Department of Transportation.**

Small Business & Entrepreneurial Growth

- Encourage the creation of a cabinet-level position in the executive branch to focus on the creation and growth of **small businesses and entrepreneurial development in Alabama.**
- Support the growth and development of Mobile's entrepreneurial community and **Innovation PortAL's mapping of entrepreneurial talent** to meet the growing technological needs of industry **with early state funding opportunities such as the State of Alabama Full Sail fund.**
- To support the growing "social enterprises" entrepreneurial demand in Alabama, expand the legal definition of a Limited Liability Company in Alabama's code to include a **low-profit limited liability company, or 'L3C'** and a **Benefit Corporation or 'B Corp'**, for-profit, social-benefit corporate entity.
- To support the growth and expansion of local restaurants and consumer offerings in the restaurant industry's fastest growing segment, work to achieve the **local authority necessary to implement the statewide "Brunch Bill"** passed in 2017 that allows for 10 a.m. on-premises alcohol sales on Sunday.

- **Close the loophole in Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA),** by providing clearer rules for identifying and correcting ADA access violations and allowing business and property owners the opportunity to address and correct minor ADA infractions in a defined period of time, prior to an allowable civil law suit.
- Protect an **employer's right to provide a safe workplace** by opposing any legislation that would keep an employer or property owner from restricting firearm possession on company or private property.

Healthcare

- Support a health provider-driven approach to **reforming Alabama's current Medicaid program** to ensure access to care, control costs and maximize the return of Alabama's tax dollars to the state.
- Seek an equitable resolution on the **Medicare wage index issue** so that hospitals in the region will be fairly reimbursed for the services they provide to the Medicare population.
- Seek a permanent funding source for Mobile's **Programs for All-inclusive Care of the Elderly (PACE)** and the expansion of such programs across the state in order to draw down increased federal funds for the medical care of the state's growing nursing home population at a cost savings to Medicaid.

These winners were randomly selected at Mobile Area Chamber's Business After Hours events.



Mobile ARC

Mobile ARC (MARC) is a nonprofit advocacy and service system for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. MARC helps them become active members of the community by providing opportunities for education, employment, transportation, housing and recreation.

Pictured are some MARC clients participating in an art class with instructor Carolyn Greene (standing).



The Admiral - Mobile

Set in the heart of historic downtown Mobile, The Admiral is a full-service 12-story hotel originally opened in 1940. It offers 6,000 square feet of function space for meetings, social events and weddings; a 24-hour fitness center; two on-site restaurants; and more. The hotel is within walking distance to shopping, businesses and area attractions.

Pictured is the hotel's sales team: (l-r) Carrie Friduss, Amanda Harshman, Veronica Stallworth and Cindy Carroll.



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"The greatest benefit of being a Chamber ambassador is networking," said **Sara Polansky**, one of the Chamber's Ambassadors of the Month. "There are so many amazing people in the business community, and you never know who you're going to meet."

Polansky is a marketing and sales producer for Thomas, Harrison & Associates, a family-owned and operated independent insurance agency that specializes in personal and commercial lines of insurance. She has been in the ambassador program for four years.



Ava Trahan joined the Chamber's ambassador program in the summer of 2017 and says she enjoys making new businesses feel welcome in Mobile, while increasing professional contacts. Trahan is vice president of operations for IMS Management, a Tuscaloosa-based property management company. She is one of the Chamber's Ambassadors of the Month.

Trahan moved to Mobile to oversee marketing of a new luxury apartment community, Highland at Spring Hill, currently under construction.

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Since the December/January issue of The Business View is a combined one, two ambassadors are featured here and two Business Spotlights on page 32. To learn more about the Chamber's volunteer program, contact Dawn Rencher at 251-431-8649 or drencher@mobilechamber.com.



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FEBRUARY 2018

For information on Chamber events, visit events.mobilechamber.com.

1 MEMBERSHIP 101

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

When: 8 to 9 a.m.

Where: Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.

Contact: Carolyn Golson at 251-431-8622 or cgolson@mobilechamber.com

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

7 COFFEE WITH THE CHAMBER

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

When: 7:30 to 8:30 a.m.

Where: Atlanta Bread, 3680 Dauphin St.

Contact: Carolyn Golson at 251-431-8622 or cgolson@mobilechamber.com

No charge.

Sponsor:



20 EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE **Members Only*

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

When: 8 to 9 a.m.

Where: Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.

Speaker: Jeff Brinson, Southwestern Consulting

Topic: "Creating a Top Performing Sales Culture"

Contact: Brenda Rembert at 251-431-8607 or brembert@mobilechamber.com

No charge, but RSVP requested. Free parking.

Sponsor:



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Mobile Area Chamber

12-13 CHAMBER CLOSED - MARDI GRAS

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 203 are accredited, and of those only 103 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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22 181ST ANNUAL MEETING

The Chamber's 181st Annual Meeting will be held at the Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center. A short program will feature 2017 Chair Liz Freeman and Brian Willman, 2018 Chair. One of Mobile's largest networking receptions will take place in the South Exhibit Hall. Guests will be greeted with four of Mobile's top caterers serving a custom-created menu for attendees. Afterwards, guests will be entertained with live music from Americana favorites Willie Sugarcapps.

When: 5 to 8:30 p.m.

Where: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center

Cost: \$60 per person/\$70 for nonmembers or discounted group rate of 10 tickets for \$550

Contact: Carolyn Wilson at 251-431-8606 or cwilson@mobilechamber.com

Reservations required by Feb. 19. No refunds after that date.

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Caterers: Alec Naman's Catering, Chef Rob & Company, Don's Café and Catering Service, Georgia Roussos, Tyner's Catering

Desserts: Cakes by Judi and Pollman's Bake Shop

28 WOMEN'S ROUNDTABLE **Members Only*

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

When: 8 to 9 a.m.

Where: Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St./ Tricentennial Room

Speaker: Dr. Kellan E. Ashley, Cardiology Associates
Topic: "Love Your Heart"

Contact: Carolyn Golson at 251-431-8622 or cgolson@mobilechamber.com
No charge, but RSVP requested.

Sponsor:



28 LOVE YOUR HEART

Springhill Medical Center will provide health screenings for cholesterol, blood pressure and BMI.

When: 7 to 10 a.m.

Where: Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St./Atrium

Contact: Carolyn Golson at 251-431-8622 or cgolson@mobilechamber.com

No charge, but RSVP requested.

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Who's New

Mobile Airport Authority named **Thomas "Chris" Curry**

its new executive director. Curry holds a bachelor's degree in professional aeronautics from Embry Riddle University and an associate's degree from Community College of the Air Force. He is also an Honorary Tuskegee Airman.


University of Mobile named **Dr. Kathy Sheppard** dean of the school of nursing in the college of health

A 30-year veteran faculty member, Sheppard holds a bachelor's degree in nursing and a master's degree in marriage and family counseling



from the University of Mobile; a master's degree in nursing administration from the University of South Alabama; and a doctorate in nursing from The University of Alabama at Birmingham.

University of Mobile added seven new faculty and staff members. **Dr. Todd Greer** is dean of the School of Business. He has a bachelor's degree in communication from Defiance College, a master's degree in ministerial leadership from Amridge University and a doctorate in organizational leadership from Regent University. **Kyle Beshears** was appointed instructor in the School of Christian Studies. He holds a bachelor's degree in biblical studies from Moody Bible Institute, a master's degree in religious education from Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary and a master's degree in divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. **Dr. Steve Bowersox** is the

assistant professor and chair of worship leadership in the Alabama School of the Arts. Bowersox earned a bachelor's degree in music from Heidelberg College, a master's in music education from the University of North Texas and a doctorate in Christian media from Logos Christian College. **Gholamreza Tashbin** is an instructor of mathematics in the College of Arts and Sciences. She received a bachelor's degree in applied mathematics and a master's degree in business administration from Spring Hill College. **Dr. Michael Rands** is assistant professor of English in the College of Arts and Sciences. Rands earned a bachelor's degree in English literature and philosophy and a master's degree in creative writing from University of Cape Town, and a master's degree in fine arts from Louisiana State University. **Tammy Brown** is instructor of nursing in the College of Health Professions – School of Nursing. She holds an associate's degree

in nursing from Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, a bachelor's degree in nursing and master's degree in nursing from the University of Mobile.

Hillary Seay is an instructor of nursing in the College of Health Professions – School of Nursing. She received a bachelor's degree in nursing from The University of Alabama and a master's in nursing as a pediatric nurse practitioner from University of Alabama at Birmingham.

In other news, **Dr. Pamela Buchanan Miller** was named dean of the Alabama College for Professional and Continuing Studies at the University of Mobile. Miller holds a bachelor's degree in journalism and a master's in English from Southwest Texas State University. She received a doctorate in instructional development in design from the University of South Alabama.

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Dr. Maryann Kyle, professor of music and chair of graduate programs at the **University of Mobile**, will

Kyle lead the new graduate programs in the university's Alabama School of the Arts. She holds a doctorate in vocal performance and theatre from Louisiana State University; a master's degree in vocal performance and pedagogy; and a bachelor's degree in voice performance, both from the University of Southern Mississippi.

McDowder Knight Roedder & Sledge LLC added **Sarah Jane Lindsay** and **T. Hart Benton III** to the firm's general litigation group. Lindsay brings 30 years of experience. She earned a law degree from the University of Tennessee College of Law and a bachelor's degree from Maryville College. Benton graduated from Birmingham-Southern College

with a bachelor's degree in political science and a minor in philosophy. He received a law degree from Loyola University New Orleans College of Law.

Spring Hill College

announced the addition of retired U.S. Coast Guard Capt. **Joseph S. Snowden** as the first assistant vice president for campus operations. Snowden spent 31 years as a senior officer in the Coast Guard, most recently as commander of the base in Mobile.



Butts



Lee

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Cooper & Co. Inc. Realtors welcomed new

associates **Hailee Butts** and **Michelle Lee**.



Howell



Rodriquez



Lincoln



Moore



Byrd



Burch



Owens



McCollough



Bowen



Pearson

New agents at **Roberts Brothers** are: **Ariel Howell, Juan Rodriquez, Jackie Lincoln, Tiffany Moore, Ginny Byrd, Butch Burch, Randall Owens, Skip McCollough, Colleen Bowen, Karen Pearson and Melissa Dickinson.**

Infirmiry Health welcomed **Matthew Hasley DO** to **Infirmiry Medical Clinics - Rehabilitation**



Hasley

Specialists. **Hasley** earned a bachelor's degree in biology from Spring Hill College and a doctoral degree in osteopathic medicine from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine - Georgia Campus.

Collen Harrison was promoted to community director of **Parkside at Cottage Hill** apartment homes.



Harrison

Susan Cornejo is the new chief operating officer for **Providence Hospital**.



Cornejo is a certified public accountant who earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis and a master's degree in business administration from Indiana Wesleyan University.

Mitchell McLeod Pugh & Williams recently hired **Shannon R. McClure** as an investment counselor.



McClure

Nicole Young is the new public relations director for the **Port City Tornadoes**. Young has a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Mobile.

White-Spinner Realty welcomed **Bowen Weir** to the firm as managing director of its



Eastern Shore realty division. **Weir** earned a bachelor's degree in business from the University of Mississippi and a master's degree in business from the University of Memphis.

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Brousseau

LandrumHR, a professional employer organization company, welcomed three new staff members.

Deborah Brousseau is the director of marketing, and a graduate of Leadership Pensacola. **Jeffrey Jones** is sales development representative for the Sarasota location. **Todd A. Stephenson** is a business consultant. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Fairmont State College in West Virginia.



Jones



Stephenson



Stuart

Mobile-based **Sam Winter & Co.** real estate sales and marketing announced the recent addition of **Bry Stuart**

to its team of agents. Stuart earned a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of South Alabama.

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Cooper & Co. Inc. Realtors welcomed **Jessica Thompson** as a new agent.



Thompson

Well Done

Clark Personnel Inc. promoted **Angela Tunstall** to manager for its direct hire division and hired **Dan Glies** as area manager for Baldwin County.

The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association awarded two President's Awards to the **Alabama State Port Authority's** Terminal Railway – Alabama State Docks. The award recognized outstanding achievements in safety within the short line railroad industry. The terminal railway earned the authority's Short Line President's Awards for Most Hours of Injury-Free Operation (zero accidents in a calendar year) and Best Safety Rate for 150,000 – 250,000 Man Hours worked in Calendar Year 2016.

Data from the U.S. Medical Licensing Examination and the Association of American Medical Colleges recently revealed medical students at the **USA College of Medicine** performed at the highest level when compared to other medical students from across the United States. USA medical students scored in the top quartile of medical schools on several

measures that demonstrate student academic performance and achievement.

Alabama Coastal Foundation announced that the Alabama Oyster Shell Recycling Program collected more than 4.75 million shells, which equates to the weight of 101 elephants and more than 12.2 acres of restored reef, in its first year.

H. Don Bowden of Bowden Architecture was awarded 10 medals for outstanding design at the annual meeting of the Alabama Chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers. They represented design excellence in residential, corporate and institutional design as well as a lifetime achievement award.



Bowden

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Scott Posey was elected to chair the

Posey Alabama Iron and Steel Council for 2018. Administered through Manufacture Alabama, the council advocates for the business and policy interests of the iron and steel industry in Alabama and includes among its members all of the state's major iron and steel makers.



Darrell R. Manning of Principal Financial Corp., earned the Retirement Income Certified

Manning Professional (RICP) professional designation from The American College of Financial Services. The distinction is an advanced

designation appropriate for individuals working in the retirement income planning field and for those with a general background in financial services.



For the second year in a row, **Mobile Infirmary** was named one of America's Best Breast Centers by the Women's Choice Award. The award signifies that Mobile Infirmary is in the top 7 percent of 4,789 U.S. hospitals offering breast care services.



The Alabama Retail Association recently honored the team at **Original Oyster House Restaurants and Trading Co.** as Alabama's 2017 Gold Retailer of the Year in the Annual Sales \$5 Million to \$20 Million category during the Alabama Retail Day luncheon.



The **University of Mobile** was named one of "America's Best Christian Colleges" for 2018, an annual recognition the

school has consistently received for over two decades. The recognition is determined from results of the 27th Annual National College Survey conducted by Institutional Research & Evaluation Inc.



Sherry Coker, a private banker with **ServisFirst Bank**, joined the board of directors of Ozanam Charitable Pharmacy.



Coker



The **University of Mobile** history department has assumed editorship of the *Alabama Review*, the quarterly journal of the Alabama Historical Association and the state's oldest historical journal. The Alabama Historical Association is an independent nonprofit organization that promotes exploration and study of all aspects of Alabama history.

Mayor **Sandy Stimpson** appointed **Breanne Zarzour** to the board of commissioners of the Mobile Housing Authority. Zarzour earned a law degree from the Cumberland School of Law and practices with Phelps Dunbar LLC.



Zarzour



Armbrecht Jackson LLP received 21 "Tier 1" rankings in the 2018 ranking of "Best Law Firms" in the Mobile market by *U.S. News & World Report* and *Best Lawyers*. The rankings are based on a rigorous evaluation process that includes the collection of client and lawyer evaluations, peer review from leading attorneys in their field and review of additional information provided by law firms as part of the formal submission process.

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Feeding the Gulf Coast received a \$75,000 grant from the Walmart Foundation to fund infrastructure that will ultimately help the food bank's partner agencies secure and distribute more nutritious food to families in need. It will also support investments in equipment necessary to handle perishable products.

*

Several local agencies received \$838,900 from the Alabama Children's Trust Fund. Among the Chamber members receiving funding were **AltaPointe Health Systems, Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Alabama, Goodwill Easter Seals, Mobile County Health Department** and **United Cerebral Palsy of Mobile.**

The Environmental Protection Agency's Gulf of Mexico program awarded the **Mobile Bay National Estuary Program** \$488,711 to improve water quality, protect, enhance and restore habitat and provide environmental education and outreach in the Three Mile Creek Watershed.

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.



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Know a company interested in benefiting from Chamber membership? Contact Jackie Hecker at 251-431-8642 or jhecker@mobilechamber.com or Emily Hatcher at ehatcher@mobilechamber.com or 251-431-8619. Also, you'll find the membership directory at www.mobilechamber.com.

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