



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Summarizing 2018's Success – Mobile Area Chamber Releases Comprehensive Annual Report & Readies for 182<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting**

- Annual Meeting Set for Feb. 13 & Jonesy's Crowned Jewelz Band Headlines the After Party
- Organization Makes Changes to Economic Development Program of Work
- 2018 Annual Report features New Job and Investment Growth

[Mobile, Ala., 01.30.2019] The Mobile Area Chamber announced tickets are available for its 182<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting set for Wednesday, Feb. 13 at the Mobile Convention Center, beginning at 5 p.m. Tickets are \$60 for Chamber members and \$70 for nonmembers.

Bill Sisson, the Chamber's president and CEO, will kick-off the meeting by outlining upcoming changes in the organization's economic development activities, including the business retention and expansion program and launching a new foreign direct investment attraction strategy.

Outgoing 2018 Chamber Board of Directors Chairman Brian Willman, South Alabama/Florida Panhandle area president for Regions Bank, will highlight key 2018 accomplishments and recognize 2018 award winners from Small Business of the Year to Manufacturer of the Year. Willman will also present the 2018 Corporate Community Service Award in partnership with Junior League of Mobile.

Daniel Dennis, president of Roberts Brothers Inc., takes over as 2019 Chamber board chair. His comments will focus on this year's program of work.

Following the program, the anticipated crowd exceeding 900 attendees will move to the convention center's ballroom for the after party featuring Jonesy's Crowned Jewelz Band, a popular local R&B group.

### **2018 Annual Report**

In advance of the meeting, the Chamber published its 2018 Annual Report. Accomplishments are highlighted by the organization's four core values – Jobs, Advocacy, Value and Excellence, and include:

**Jobs:** Six economic development projects announced \$533.9 million in capital investments and 597 full-time jobs. In addition, the Chamber made 170 international appointments to help companies expand their sales globally and hosted four entrepreneur-focused programs and 210 participants start, manage and grow their businesses. As the lead economic developer for the City of Mobile and Mobile County, the Chamber works to retain, expand and recruit businesses, investments and jobs, including entrepreneurial assistance, small business development and workforce development.

**Advocacy:** With a commitment to be the voice of business, the Chamber monitored more 1,000 legislative bills and joined several beautification and environmental efforts. The Chamber's board of directors passed resolutions in support efforts to transition commercial air service to the Mobile Downtown Airport; Mobile County's Pay-As-You-Go referendum for needed road and bridge improvements; deepening and widening the Mobile ship channel to support growth at the Port of Mobile; and the University of South Alabama's drive to build an on-campus stadium. The Chamber's annual legislative agenda is directed toward creating an environment that promotes business and community growth.

**Value:** In 2018, the Chamber presented 51 professional development workshops and educational forums, including relevant topics such as taxes and trade tariffs. The Chamber assisted 53 area businesses with ribbon cuttings and grand openings and recognized 31 members and companies for their work, including Kimberly-Clark as Manufacturer of the Year; Blue Fish as Small Business of the Year; Clarence Ball with Ball HealthCare Services as Outstanding Entrepreneur; Bama Pest Control, Harper Technologies and VisionSpot Consulting as Eagle Award winners; (Ret.) U.S. Marine A.B. Grantham as the inaugural recipient of the Gen. Gary Cooper Outstanding Service Award; and Michelle Ard with Seabulk Towing, A Seacor Co., as Ambassador of the Year. In addition, the Chamber hosted 59 networking events and 10 events connected attendees to elected officials. Chamber members say networking opportunities and professional development workshops are two of the most important benefits.

**Excellence:** The Chamber was once again awarded five-star accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce based on the organization's best practices. The Chamber's program of work was judged on areas of governance, finance, human resources, government affairs, program development, technology, communications, facilities and benchmarking.

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The full 2018 Annual Report is on the Chamber's website: <https://mobilechamber.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/2-2019-AR.pdf> and is attached. Also attached is the one-page infographic highlighting 2018 By the Numbers and a jpg of the cover.

#### **About the Mobile Area Chamber**

The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce is a private business organization with 1,900 members that employ 105,000 people, and the economic developer of record for the City of Mobile and Mobile County. We represent business interests of the Mobile region, advocating for business-friendly legislative policies and serve as a resource for small businesses and area entrepreneurs. Additional information is on the Chamber's website at [www.mobilechamber.com](http://www.mobilechamber.com), Facebook @MobileChamber, Twitter and YouTube at @MobileChamber, Instagram @ Mobile\_Area\_Chamber and LinkedIn @Mobile Area Chamber.