



Embargoed: Friday, Oct. 16 at Noon

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Mobile Area Chamber Honors Minority Companies & Advocate

- Blue Fish, Easy Heating and Cooling and Paula's Hair Unlimited Named Eagle Award Winners
- City of Mobile Honored as Minority Business Advocate
- Founder, Chairman and CEO of Operation Hope John Hope Bryant Returns as Keynote Speaker

Mobile Area Chamber's
Eagle Awards 2020 Event

When: Friday, Oct. 16
Luncheon: 11:30 a.m.

What: Celebrating
Minority-Owned Businesses

Where: The Battle House
Hotel Moonlight Ballroom

Sold-Out Event

[Mobile, Ala., 10.16.2020] The Mobile Area Chamber honored three local minority-owned companies and named its 2020 Minority Business Advocate today at its annual Eagle Award luncheon held in-person and virtually.

Blue Fish, an ad agency owned by Marcus Neto; **Easy Heating and Cooling**, owned by Enoch Smith; and two-time winner **Paula's Hair Unlimited**, owned by Paula Jones; are this year's Eagle Award winners, earning recognition by the Mobile Area Chamber for business success and community contributions or involvement.

The **City of Mobile** was presented as the 2020 Rev. Wesley A. James Minority Business Advocate, receiving the award for the second time for its commitment to supplier diversity. Among the highlights of the city's application were several new programs developed to assist disadvantaged businesses and service-disabled Veteran-owned companies; a new website rolled out during the COVID-19 pandemic to help companies with the process to submit a competitive bid; and resources created to establish a larger pool of minority-owned businesses for all contractors to draw from.

The award is named after a former champion of minority-owned businesses, Rev. Wesley A. James. The city previously won the

award in 2013 for its efforts to award home improvement contracts to minority-owned companies.

John Hope Bryant was the event's keynote speaker. Bryant is an entrepreneur, author, philanthropist and prominent thought-leader on financial inclusion, economic empowerment and financial dignity. He is the founder, chairman and CEO of Operation HOPE, a nonprofit organization working to disrupt poverty and empower low and moderate-income youth and adults.

For more than two decades, recognizing minority business owners has been a priority of the Mobile Area Chamber. Since the event was initiated in 1998, the Chamber has presented 127 Eagle Awards to 98 different companies, and 16 Minority Business Advocates to 14 different entities, including the 2020 winners as part of its commitment to diversity and inclusion.

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About the Mobile Area Chamber

The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce is a private business organization with approximately 1,900 members that employ 98,255 people, and the economic developer 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 Chamber's [website](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#).