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As the great Alabamian Helen Keller once said, “The unselfish effort to bring cheer to others will be the beginning of a happier life for ourselves.” If that philosophy is not reason enough to give back to the community, keep in mind that giving back to the place we call home helps to unite us and bridge many of the social, economic and political gaps that exist in the world.

And don’t forget that giving back to the community is an excellent way to promote your business and get the word out about your products or services. Doors open when you volunteer and you can widen your network.

I often say that here at the Chamber, we have some of the best volunteers on the planet – and those types of volunteers exist in organizations throughout our region. It is without a doubt what makes the Mobile Bay area the superior place to live that it is.

So let’s celebrate those individuals and companies that continually give back to our great community, because giving back is among the most important and valuable things a business can do.
At the Mitchell College of Business we prepare students to be leaders in their fields. As soon as they step out of our door and into yours they are ready to shine. Learn more about how you can benefit from our internship program.

Megan Bennett, J.D. | Coordinator for Experiential Learning
internship@southalabama.edu | (251) 460-7194
News that APM Terminals and the Port of Mobile gained another distribution center trickled out this summer, followed by plans for an immediate expansion.

Santa Paula, Calif.-based BendPak manufactures and sells automotive lifts used in car dealerships and parking garages. This summer, company officials announced the opening of a 100,000-square-foot distribution center in Theodore to serve U.S. Gulf, Midwest, East Coast and Canadian markets via Mobile’s five Class I railroads. In September, the company announced it would add another 70,000-square-foot warehouse adjacent to existing operations to enhance its East Coast presence.

Upon opening, company officials called Mobile the “heart of one of America’s largest logistic hotspots.”

“This new distribution center will enhance our ability to get our customers what they need, when they need it,” said Jeff Kritzer, BendPak’s executive vice president. “Today’s consumer expects immediate delivery, and we’re focused on helping that become a reality. The definition of Mobile is agile and transportable.”

“Mobile’s logistical assets continue to draw interest from companies looking to reach their customers faster and more efficiently,” said David Rodgers, the Mobile Area Chamber’s vice president of economic development.

‘Today’s consumer expects immediate delivery, and we’re focused on helping that become a reality. The definition of Mobile is agile and transportable.’

Jeff Kritzer, executive vice president, BendPak
Austal USA expanded its footprint to extend its new construction and service business, buying waterfront land, buildings and an existing dry dock along the Mobile River previously owned by World Marine of Alabama, an indirect subsidiary of Modern American Recycling and Repair Services of Alabama.

The purchase includes ‘Pete B’ a 20,000-ton Panamax-class floating dry dock (pictured below), 100,000 square feet of covered repair facilities and 15 acres of waterfront property along the Mobile River and Gulf of Mexico.

“As we’ve consistently done over the course of our history, we’re adding capability to meet the growing demand from our customers,” Austal’s President Craig Perciavalle said.

The acquisition further increases Austal’s growing steel and aluminum business portfolio that includes U.S. Navy multi-ship contracts for the Independence-variant Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) and the Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF), research and development on unmanned and autonomous surface vessels, and an expanding global services business in San Diego and Singapore.

Airbus

In mid-September, Airbus celebrated the five-year anniversary of its U.S. Manufacturing Facility operations in Mobile.

The first aircraft assembly began on Sept. 14, 2015, an A321 destined for JetBlue. Since then, the Airbus production team has:

▪ Directly employed more than 1,000 people; 90 percent currently live in Mobile or Baldwin County and 26 percent are military veterans;

▪ Delivered more than 180 A320 family aircraft to eight customers that have subsequently flown 60 million passengers 500 million miles;

▪ Announced and opened a second assembly line for A220 aircraft, doubling the size of its footprint at Brookley Field; and

▪ Supported more than 40 local charitable and community organizations through money, time and donations.

A University of South Alabama report measured the company’s economic impact on the region at $1.1 billion, supporting more than 12,000 jobs through construction and payroll. Statewide, that estimate increases to $1.2 billion and more than 15,000 jobs.

“When we announced our intent to build A320 family aircraft in the United States, and to locate that facility in Mobile, Alabama, we also stated our intent to be a good neighbor, to create jobs and opportunities, and to help strengthen the U.S. aerospace industry,” said C. Jeffrey Knittel, president & CEO of Airbus Americas.
NEW WEBSITE MAKES IT EASIER TO DO BUSINESS WITH THE CITY OF MOBILE

Whether you’re just starting out or already have an established business, the City of Mobile recently developed a new tool to make it easier for small companies to prepare to do business with the city. Workwith.CityofMobile.org is a user-friendly online portal addressing the challenges some businesses encounter when pursuing a contract with a government entity.

The website has two areas – one for starting or growing your business and the other to certify your business and bid on a project.

“The website breaks down what could be an intimidating process to bite-size pieces,” says Danette Richards, the Mobile Area Chamber’s director of small business development. Richards and Darrell Randle, the Chamber’s vice president of small business, served on the research committee advising the city on what the new software needed to do.

Available to all area businesses, the site acts like a decision tree. Depending on your answer, you are given a custom list of steps to complete. Examples include getting your insurance in order, enrolling in e-Verify and registering to be a vendor.

For disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs), the site offers a detailed checklist on what is needed to qualify. In addition, the city created a list of local DBEs, minority business enterprises, service-disabled veteran-owned companies, Section 3 certified organizations and women-owned business enterprises for prime contractors to use.
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The Greater Gulf State Fair - The Thrill is On

Officials with The Grounds announced the Greater Gulf State Fair is a “go.” The new 2020 fair dates are Friday, Oct. 30 through Sunday, Nov. 15, an extra five days from the traditional run usually beginning in late October.

“We can all agree that 2020 has been a very challenging year, but we are very proud and excited to be able to put on the 66th annual Greater Gulf State Fair. While it may look a little different this year, the core is still there and we’re looking forward to sharing that experience with our community,” says Greater Gulf State Fair and The Grounds Executive Director Josh Woods.

Featured attractions will include: Balster Magic Productions, Paul Bunyan’s Lumberjack Thrill Show, Pirate Man Dan, Cowboy Circus featuring Danny Grant and more.

Vendors, rides and fair food will all be outdoors. Contingency plans and safe precautions include hiring a “clean team” to ensure constant sanitation, social distancing, screening employees and volunteers and requiring masks.

Last year, organization officials say the Greater Gulf State Fair had a $4 million-plus economic impact, generating $376,247 in taxes and creating more than 1,000 jobs.

Visit greatergulfstatefair.com or facebook.com/greatergulfstatefair for real-time updates.

AT-A-GLANCE

GREATER GULF STATE FAIR
WHEN: Friday, Oct. 30 - Sunday, Nov. 15
WHERE: The Grounds
SAFETY PRECAUTIONS: All rides and food outdoors, constant sanitation, social distancing, screening employees and volunteers, masks required
WEBSITE: greatergulffair.com
(watch the website for the latest updates)
Three years ago, Bry Shields made the decision to open his own insurance agency. From there it has grown to include locations in both Mobile and Birmingham. With three full-time employees, Shields Insurance Agency is licensed to write property and casualty insurance for clients across the Gulf Coast, from Texas to Florida, and into Tennessee. This includes commercial and personal insurance.

Shields Insurance Agency is the Mobile Area Chamber’s Small Business of the Month. “I have many clients I would not have if it weren’t for my involvement at Chamber events,” said Shields. He says some of the agency’s primary specialties – industries in which they are the most competitive – include construction and contractors, real estate (landlords), healthcare providers, restaurants/food service, nonprofit/religious, auto services, retail store and e-commerce, manufacturing and distribution, marine and professional services.

Shields Insurance has also found a niche in startup businesses. “As you start your business, it’s important to cover yourself and your team for the potential risks that come with it,” Shields says. As a business owner, if you don’t have insurance coverage, you’ll have to pay out-of-pocket for any damages or legal claims made against you, and that’s the last thing you want when starting up.”

‘As you start your business, it is important to cover yourself and your team for the potential risks that come with it.’
He says startup insurance policies businesses need to consider are a business owner’s policy, general liability, commercial property insurance, worker’s compensation, commercial auto, flood and umbrella, and professional liability. Shields works with clients to help them evaluate their risks, apply for coverage and review quotes before issuing coverage.

Potential and existing clients can stay up to date with the latest trends in insurance and more by subscribing to the company’s blog, social media and YouTube channel, where there’s information ranging from tips to keep a company safe from cyber-attacks to the best risk management strategies to what millennials need to know about life insurance.

In the community, Shields has been actively involved in raising money and awareness for several nonprofits, including this spring when he worked with Feeding the Gulf Coast on a project to provide food for school-aged children and their families. “As a company, we provide an annual donation of our profits to a selected charity,” Shields said. In 2018, it was Dumas Wesley, and last year it was Via! Health, Fitness, Enrichment.

**COMPANY NAME:** Shields Insurance Agency  
**OWNER:** Bry Shields  
**PHONE:** 251.283.3800  
**WEBSITE:** shields-insurance.com

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**Happy Holidays**

During this magical time of year, full of hope and love, we’re reflecting on all the reasons why we’re thankful to be a part of your community. We extend tidings of comfort and joy to you and your loved ones this holiday season and look forward to a new year of serving you.
At Bryant Bank, we believe the good we do throughout our business and personal lives will determine how we are remembered. It is our mission to put care into action day-in and day-out, even when no one is watching.

Changing times come with challenges.
“

“If it doesn’t challenge you, it won’t change you.”

BCM is still here with YOU!
At our family of companies, we believe in servant leadership. From our perspective, the concept of success goes well beyond job descriptions and goals. We must pour into another to help them be successful so they may grow and develop.

Robert Greenleaf defined servant leadership this way: “The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then, the conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions. The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.”

If you lead by serving others first, then you will inspire a call to action for them to do the same. Our purpose statement is “to see all we can do with all we have been given,” meaning we must all be good stewards of the influence we carry in a community and within our own companies. Positive energy is just as contagious as negative energy.

Our purpose statement is ‘to see all we can do with all we have been given,’ meaning we must all be good stewards of the influence we carry in a community and within our own companies. Positive energy is just as contagious as negative energy.

A belief system and best practices centered around service over self both enhances the lives of our fellow society members and helps us create a more caring environment. A mentor of mine, Gen. Sam Wilson, who would have turned 97 on Sept. 23, used to always tell me, “Take care of the people, and the people will take care of you.” We must be intentional with this. Things will not happen without a desire to serve and the steadfast effort that must go into it. Care and empathy are powerful; they are fueled by courage.

So what does this mean for you?
As we approach the end of a tumultuous year full of stress, anxiety, divisiveness, election cycles and the like, we still get to have an opportunity to find a way to serve others. Our community needs each one of you to serve in some capacity.

If you are a business leader, I challenge you to support this initiative by demonstrating your actions and going first. Remember, that is what authentic leaders do: we model the behavior we would like to see in others.

By you, getting to do this, you empower your teams to know that they can do the same. In fact, you encourage it. Every company can go out and talk about making money, but how many of you can talk about making meaning as well? What do you want your legacy to be? You still get to make that choice. Remember, it is the small, seemingly insignificant things that we choose to do each day that will ultimately achieve the compounding effect in our lives. Just a few examples include bringing someone a meal, volunteering with a nonprofit you’re passionate about, donating food or clothing to groups that collect and distribute, helping build, restore, clean up a house or our parks, supporting veterans initiatives or mentoring at-risk youth. And before we start the self-justification on why we can’t do it this year, yes, all of these actions can still be done while social distancing.

Hundreds of opportunities exist throughout our community. Envision it, plan it, schedule it, then go out and do it. I can promise that you will not regret serving others. In fact, you might even enjoy it.

What will you choose?

ABOUT THE EXPERT
Brad Israel is the chief leadership officer with 68 Ventures LLC. He can be reached at 251.625.1198 or bisrael@68ventures.com.
Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Alabama CEO Aimee Risser talks with Wilkins Miller Managing Partner Allen Carroll (center) and Auditor Cody Scott (right) about the accounting firm’s successful partnership.

Photo by Mike Dumas
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY MAKES A ‘BIG’ DIFFERENCE AT WILKINS MILLER

Colleagues who volunteer together help each other grow as team members, leaders and compassionate individuals, while bolstering charitable causes and organizations that couldn’t survive without them. And the benefit to the companies who employ and support their efforts is tremendous, as they usually experience reduced turnover rates and higher levels of promotion and development among their employees.

“We want our firm to be a place where people make their careers and do good work, and giving back to the community is a natural extension of that,” said Allen Carroll, managing partner at the accounting and advisory firm Wilkins Miller. “When they’re excited and have the room and support to do what they’re passionate about, it makes for good business.”

Earlier this year, Wilkins Miller was awarded the Mobile Area Chamber’s Corporate Community Service Award in recognition of the company’s extensive history of charitable contributions. In 2019 alone, the firm provided 2,684 hours’ worth of in-kind accounting services to area nonprofits, sponsored 25 community activities, and its employees volunteered nearly 1,100 hours of their time.

Nine years ago, Wilkins Miller began its support of Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Alabama (BBBSSA), through that organization’s Corporate Big program. To partner with BBBSSA, a company needs passionate employees along with a culture of community support woven into the fabric of its business. In 2012, Wilkins Miller agreed to a year’s contract with the nonprofit, broken into one-hour-a-week commitments from employees (acting as big brothers and sisters, or “bigs”) and the little brothers and sisters (“littles”) with whom they were paired.

In nominating Wilkins Miller for the Corporate Community Service Award, BBBSSA CEO Aimee Risser wrote, “What separates Wilkins Miller from others in our eyes is that they not only give charitably, they go above and beyond by rolling up their sleeves weekly, for over eight years now, to invest their human capital in our mission that results in lives being truly changed for the better, forever.”

In the near-decade-long partnership, more than 20 of the firm’s employees have volunteered as “bigs,” affecting the lives of 28 “littles.” BBBSSA prides itself on measuring the impact of those relationships. Of those 28 mentees, said Risser, “91 percent improved academically, 93 percent improved relationships with their peers, 91 percent avoided risky behaviors and 98 percent reported being more confident they will graduate from high school.”

Cody Scott, a 27-year-old auditor at Wilkins Miller, is going into his second year as a big brother with the organization. A Louisiana native, Scott said his passion for volunteering comes from a mix of Southern hospitality and several role models who stepped in when his father died when Scott was 13.

“My mom was always a big proponent of ‘If I stayed busy, I’d stay out of trouble,’ and it paid off for sure,” he said. “And I know how those people poured into me, so I feel like it’s my duty to pour into other people. Once I got on that path, I’ve enjoyed it from that point on.”
Scott graduated from the University of Mobile, and it was through one of the school’s many open houses that he became aware of Wilkins Miller and the firm’s commitment to helping people achieve through business and volunteerism. He’s been there for four years, and during that time has taken advantage of the company’s open-door policy to present volunteer opportunities and to lead his colleagues when needed.

During weekly team meetings and the company’s annual retreat, employees are encouraged to share their stories and thoughts on issues, which directly led to Scott being asked to helm discussions surrounding inclusion and diversity.

“Whether it’s sexual orientation, gender, race, religion, whatever, we value diversity and wanted to open those conversations up,” Carroll said. “And Cody did a great job leading them.”

Scott said his volunteerism — going all the way back to fixing meals in homeless shelters as a kid — has taught him to be empathetic and selfless. He has not only become a more focused and effective employee, he said, but “those qualities alone help me be a better husband and a better father one day.”

He’s already a better big brother, according to BBBSSA’s Risser. She said several of the first matches between Wilkins Miller employees and their “littles” continue to this day, whether in the school-based or community-based programs. The relationships can last a lifetime, which is not only a testament to the commitment of the volunteers, but the growth of their mentees.

“This is a transformational volunteer opportunity, more than just transactional,” Risser said. And the encouragement built into certain company structures empowers those who “might have a good heart and want to do good, but feel like they’re not supported or confident enough in themselves.”

That empowerment is Wilkins Miller’s bread and butter, Carroll said.

Several of the first matches between Wilkins Miller employees and their ‘littles’ continue to this day, whether in the school-based or community-based programs. The relationships can last a lifetime, which is not only a testament to the commitment of the volunteers, but the growth of their mentees.

“It’s great to learn from each other and have some empathy for the different experiences that we all have. And volunteering is a big part of that,” he said. “I couldn’t be more proud of our team for coming together and giving back to the community.”
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- Monday, November 2, at 10 a.m.
- Tuesday, November 3, at 1 p.m.
- Tuesday, November 10, at 9 a.m.
- Wednesday, November 11, at 1 p.m.
- Thursday, November 12, at 9 a.m.
- Friday, November 13, at 10 a.m.
- Monday, November 16, at 10 a.m.
- Tuesday, November 17, at 1 p.m.
- Wednesday, November 18, at 3 p.m.
- Thursday, November 19, at 11 a.m.
- Friday, November 20, at 2 p.m.
- Tuesday, November 24, at 10 a.m.

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Heading into the holiday season this year, it’s obvious more individuals and families will need help more than ever before. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced people out of work, kids are being challenged by remote learning and the aftermath of Hurricane Sally has displaced families in Baldwin County. Local nonprofits who step up to assist are also facing similar crises.

So how can you help? Below is a list of Mobile Area Chamber member nonprofits looking for volunteers and partners as they gear up to support the community this holiday season. Talk with your co-workers and select a nonprofit to call and work with over the holidays, whether it’s organizing an in-office winter coat drive, preparing meals for families in need, collecting disposable diapers to donate or Christmas shopping for families in need. Your generosity and servant leadership will have a long-lasting impact on those you help, and yourself.

Alabama Coastal Foundation
joinacf.org
251.990.6002

Coastal Conservation Association Alabama
ccaalabama.org
251.478.3474

Girls on the Run South Alabama
girlsontherungerc.org
251.753.4586

Alabama Kidney Foundation - Mobile Region
alkidney.org
251.455.2123

Child Advocacy Center Inc.
cacmobile.org
251.432.1101

Goodwill Easter Seals of the Gulf Coast
gesgc.org
251.471.1581

American Cancer Society
cancer.org
251.344.9858

Dauphin Island Heritage and Arts Council
dauphinsilandarts.org
251.861.3300

Habitat for Humanity
habitatswalabama.org
251.476.7171

Anchor Cross Cancer Foundation
anchorcrossfoundation.org
251.607.5081

Dearborn YMCA
dearbornymca.org
251.432.4768

ISM - Alabama / Mississippi Gulf Coast
charitynavigator.org
251.461.1792

Autism2Ability Inc.
autism2ability.com
251.287.2420

Dora Franklin Finley African American Heritage Trail
dffaah.org
985.226.2748

Jubilee Youth Service and Leadership
jyls.org
251.308.6851

Babies First - United Methodist Children’s Home
umch.net
205.837.0141

Feeding The Gulf Coast
feedingthegulfcoast.org
251.653.1617

Junior Achievement of Mobile
juniorachievement.org/web/ja-birmingham/
251.340.8404

Big Brothers & Big Sisters of South Alabama Inc.
bbbs.org
251.344.0536

Friends of the Animal Shelter
Adoptapetmobile.org
251.208.2830

Junior League of Mobile
juniorleaguemobile.org
251.471.3348

Boys & Girls Clubs of South Alabama Inc.
bgcsouthal.org
251.432.1235

Fuse Project
fuseproject.org
251.265.3873

L’Arche Mobile
larchemobile.org
251.438.2094

Camp Rap.A.Hope
rapahope.org
251.431.9055

Girl Scouts of Southern Alabama
girlscoutssa.org
800.239.6636

Magic Moments Inc.
magicmoments.org
251.654.4510
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Crystal Linares, Customer Relationship Manager
Kaylee Sadler, Commercial Relationship Administrator
Witt Ruffin, Regional Commercial Loan Officer
Chris Conken, Regional Residential Real Estate Officer
Tracy Rippy, Regional Commercial Real Estate Officer
Lee Mitchell, Chief Real Estate Officer
Laurie Howard, Customer Relationship Manager
Debra Collins, Commercial Real Estate Portfolio Manager
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I'm after your money. Not the money you have—the money you should have because you're worth it. I want to help you find it. I'm not interested in long walks on the beach, and I don't like piña coladas. I want someone who has the hunger to outperform others. I have high standards, but I hope yours are higher. Life is too short to stay average. Let's build your legacy. Are we a perfect match?

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MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ANNUAL MEETING

- Wednesday, February 3, 2021
- 5:00 to 8:30 p.m.
- Mobile Convention Center

Presented by

Trustmark
Always willing to step in on a moment’s notice to help at an event, this hard-working group of professionals plays an integral role in the Mobile Area Chamber’s effort to reach a larger audience. You’ve probably seen them en masse at ribbon-cuttings and groundbreakings, or maybe they have greeted you with a firm handshake and a smile at a Chamber after-hours networking event.

These are the Chamber’s Ambassadors, who, for more than three decades, have stepped in and supported the Chamber’s program of work while boosting their own connections in the business community. They meet bi-monthly and receive briefings from Chamber staff on news and upcoming events to keep them in the loop.

“Our Ambassadors are second to none,” said Chamber President and CEO Bill Sisson. “One call for help, and they’re stepping up to the plate helping with event registrations, visiting Chamber members and supporting our team.”

Chaired in 2020 by Meg Murdock with Hampton Inn Providence Park, the work of this year’s group of 30-plus Ambassadors was stifled by COVID-19 due to the number of events postponed and ribbon-cuttings cancelled. That said, they’re ready to hit the ground running for the remainder of 2020 and beyond.

Joining the Ambassador program is easy. Your company must be a member of the Chamber, and you need to have some job flexibility that allows you to attend in-person events during the work week to network. Typically, the program is limited to one representative per company.

To learn more about joining this energetic group of volunteers, contact Dawn Rencher at 251.431.8649 or drencher@mobilechamber.com.
We asked our Ambassadors what they like about being a Chamber volunteer, and here’s what they had to say:

**Michelle Ard**  
Division Account Manager  
Seabulk Towing  
Ambassador since 2017

A friend of Ard’s who had been involved with the ambassador program for a while talked her into joining. “Personally, it has gotten me ‘out of my shell,’ and professionally, it has given me a better understanding of why Seabulk has been a Chamber member. The things that the Chamber does for the local economy helps the shipping industry.”

**Andrea Cape**  
Account Manager  
Kloud7 Business Voice Services  
Ambassador since 2019

Cape was looking for like-minded, business-focused individuals with shared common interests and professional goals when she joined the Ambassadors. “I’ve built lifelong relationships while making strong connections within the Mobile community.”

**Lane R. Elmore**  
Financial Advisor  
Edward Jones  
Ambassador since 2019

Elmore was looking for an opportunity to learn more about the inner workings of Mobile’s economy when he joined the Ambassadors program. “It has connected me to the community in a way I would not have been able to without it. I have been able to connect with like-minded individuals with interests in the continued growth of this area. One cannot help but get a sense of the bright future this city has to offer by getting involved.”

**John Garrett**  
Financial Advisor  
Edward Jones  
Ambassador since January 2020

Garrett was looking for a way to make business connections and get more involved in his community. “Personally, I’ve established relationships with great people that I wouldn’t have otherwise met and learned about other businesses my family and I support. Professionally, the Chamber’s Ambassador program has helped build awareness for my business.”

**Cecily Harper**  
Public Relations  
Harper Technologies LLC  
Ambassador since 2018

Harper personally experienced the benefits of the Chamber within her business and wanted to help other small businesses recognize value in their membership. “Aside from establishing friendships, you have a source of well over 30 people in various industries across Mobile and Baldwin counties. If you are in need of a product or service, need knowledge on a particular subject or just insight on something, it’s almost guaranteed that you have someone in the ambassador program you can reach out to for help. It also helped me gain confidence in speaking to others about products and services. Business promotion does not always have to be a high-pressure situation, and the ambassador program allows you the opportunity to develop your business presentation in a safe space.”

**Emily Hatcher**  
Realtor  
Roberts Brothers Inc.  
Ambassador since 2018

Hatcher worked for the Chamber for three years as an account executive. When she moved into real estate, she joined the Ambassador program. “Being involved with the Chamber allows me to always learn new things about Mobile, and I enjoy helping the Chamber carry out its mission to its members.”

**Ambassadors work with the Chamber staff to assist with a variety of special projects, including ribbon cuttings at new businesses. Pictured here are Ambassadors at Home2 Suites by Hilton’s grand opening.**
Susan Kangal
Account Executive
Lamar Advertising
Ambassador since 2017

Kangal was looking for ways to network and keep up with current happenings in Mobile when she joined the Ambassadors. “I’ve gotten to network with other business professionals and stay in the know. I love Mobile, and I’m very proud of the strides we’ve made.”

Austin Key
Service Center Manager
Arrow Exterminators
Ambassador since 2016

Key wanted to meet new business people and increase awareness of his company. “It has allowed me to meet new people in a different forum and build a working relationship with businesses I may not have otherwise called on for their business. Although they may not need our services at the time, they might have people they know who need it.”

Jourdan Henderson
Community Director
Stone Ridge at Somerby Park
Ambassador since 2017

Henderson decided to join the Ambassador program to become more involved in the business community. “Being an ambassador allowed me to learn so much about what makes Mobile not just an incredible place to live, but also the perfect location to start or grow your business. The friends I’ve made and people I’ve met while taking part in ribbon-cuttings and networking events are the icing on the cake.”

T. Scott Henne
Financial Services Professional
New York Life Insurance Company
Ambassador Since 2018

Henne joined the Ambassador program as he was starting his business and looking to get involved with other business owners in Mobile. As personal interaction and support is key to relationships and business growth, Henne said, “I have been able to expand my business network, a tremendous opportunity as I work with and help other businesses, as well as meeting new friends. With the craziness that has filled 2020, the value of relationships has only been enhanced.”

Kirsten Loper
Account Development Representative
Calagaz Printing
Ambassador since 2019

The desire to join a group of like-minded people with a passion for Mobile drove Loper to the Ambassador program. “Volunteering with the Chamber has provided me with renewed creativity, motivation and vision that has carried over into my professional life. It has also strengthened my ties to the community and helped grow my support network.”
In order to meet business professionals in the Mobile area, Lutley joined the ambassador program. “The Chamber has helped me make personal and professional connections that will last a lifetime. Business starts with a relationship, and the Chamber has created the perfect platform to do so. Through member visits and networking events, I have the opportunity to expand my professional network as well as my personal network.”

Lynam’s company is a longtime Chamber member, and she always attended Business After Hours. From there, she decided she wanted to get more involved to help grow her business. “Joining the Chamber has given me the opportunity to meet some amazing people and help get my foot in the door with local businesses. Talking about the Chamber is an excellent icebreaker, and I get the reward of making new contacts, strengthening relationships and accessing a wealth of information and resources.”

Moore, a longtime Chamber volunteer, initially joined the program to promote the Chamber to prospective businesses and network with individuals from companies he normally wouldn’t be able to get face-to-face with. Since then, “I have made so many close friendships that will follow me throughout life, not just through the Chamber. Professionally, it has given me knowledge of how businesses work and how the Chamber genuinely cares about small business and small business owners.”

Murdock became an Ambassador when she was looking for ways to get more involved in her community and opportunities to network. “Volunteering over the years has provided our company with referrals and recommendations to help us grow our business. I’ve personally grown as a person from the Ambassador community we’ve built, and I look forward to many more years of service.”

A client and friend recommended the program to Turner, who says she’s drawn to the peer interaction. “I have enjoyed being in a group with people who have similar jobs and getting to meet everyone.”

Williams joined the Ambassador program three years ago to learn more about the community and make some peer connections. She says her favorite part of volunteering for the Chamber is attending ribbon cuttings. “This program has given me the opportunity to show up on a company’s first and probably most stressful day and allow them see that fellow Mobilians are here for them and want to see them succeed. I leave with knowledge of a local company I can support and recommend to others.”

In the image above are Ambassadors at Honest Air’s grand opening.
MEET OUR AMBASSADORS

Michelle Ard
Seabulk Towing

Trish Banker
Regions Bank

Andrea Cape
Kloud7

Torrian Davis
All In Credit Union

Patrick Dungan
Adams and Reese LLP

Lane Elmore
Edward Jones

Nichelle Evans-Pugh
John Garrett
Edward Jones

Chris George
Christopher L. George PC

Karyl Hanisch
Renaissance Mobile
Riverview Plaza Hotel

Cecily Harper
Harper Technologies LLC

Emily Hatcher
Roberts Brothers

Jourdan Henderson
Stone Ridge at Somerby Park Apartment Homes

T. Scott Henne
New York Life

Susan S. Kangal
Lamar Advertising

Austin Key
Arrow Exterminators Inc.

Marylee Kilday
The SSI Group Inc.

Kirsten Loper
Calagaz Printing

Whitney Lutley
Cox Media

Missy Lynam
iHeartMedia Mobile

Dorothy S. May
The Gathering of Jewels Inc.

Sarah McAleer
McAleer’s Office Furniture

Phillip Moore
AHI Corporate Housing

Megan Murdock
Hampton Inn & Suites
Providence Park/Airport

Dixie Pellegrino
The Hillard Cos.

Justin Rodgers
University of Alabama - Alabama Productivity Center

Ron Sivak
DataPerk

Michelle Tice
Strategic Wealth Specialists

Donna Turner
Southeast Toyota Finance

Jessica Turner
WKRG-News 5

Laura Williams
APM Terminals Mobile LLC

Tim Wills
Boys & Girls Clubs of South Alabama Inc.

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Today, it’s easier than ever to do business with the City of Mobile. While a number of new programs, policies and procedures are in place, what stands out are those that assist disadvantaged businesses and service-disabled Veteran-owned companies.

As a result, the city is hiring more of these types of businesses for contracted jobs such as landscaping, construction, mechanical work and more. Even its prime contractors are required to include at least 15 percent minority and/or service-disabled Veteran-owned companies.

For this work, the Mobile Area Chamber named the City of Mobile as its Rev. Wesley A. James Minority Business Advocate at the Eagle Awards in October.

A couple of key initiatives, beginning in 2016, paved the way for progress. First came the creation of the city’s Office of Supplier Diversity. Archnique Kidd, who has a vast background in establishing supplier diversity programs in the public sector, was named manager.

“In the Office of Supplier Diversity, we are expanding economic opportunity for disadvantaged business by giving these businesses access to the procurement process and providing a framework to successfully do business with the city and other governmental agencies,” says Mayor Sandy Stimpson. “Through these measures, we are encouraging job growth and business opportunity for all citizens in every area of our city, which is necessary for the City of Mobile to grow and thrive.”

Tracking spending and breaking large projects into smaller projects also created more opportunities for small and disadvantaged business enterprises.

Mobile’s blight program is specifically geared toward hiring small, minority-owned businesses to refurbish or demolish distressed houses. This initiative brought attention to the gap between companies ready to start work and those needing additional education, licensing, bonding and insurance before they could be approved as a city contractor.

Kidd says the mind shift from “best effort” to “requirement” for all contracts over $250,000 has had the greatest impact.

“Our prime contractors and consultants know that we expect them to be intentionally inclusive when providing services for the City of Mobile and in their business practices,” says Kidd.

This past summer, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic, the city rolled out a new website, workwith.cityofmobile.org, along with an interactive software program. These resources help prepare companies to competitively bid as well as outline needed certifications. (Read more about this initiative on page 8.)

“The city has the unique ability to nurture small businesses, which contributes directly to their likelihood of success and their ability to grow,” says Darrell Randle, the Chamber’s vice president of small business development. “The latest programs not only expand the city’s supplier base, they help establish a bigger pool of minority-owned businesses for all contractors.”
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This year’s annual Chamber Chase campaign kicked off at the end of May in the early stages of a global pandemic, with a goal of raising $1.5 million through memberships, sponsorships, advertisements and in-kind sponsorships for goods and services.

The campaign kicked off a month late and extended two months longer due to COVID-19, but Mobile Area Chamber volunteers never skipped a beat. Under the creative, enthusiastic leadership of campaign chair Melissa Cross, president of McAleer’s Office Furniture, a committed group of 37 volunteers, representing 28 member companies, once again exceeded goal.

Using the slogan #ChamberChase LikeABoss, the campaign started with a bang and never slowed down, even when Hurricane Sally blew through the Gulf Coast in September.

Cross started each weekly reward session with a motivational comment or sales tip and coached everyone to share her “aggressive positivity,” suggesting that “if you don’t get a no, then there’s a chance for a yes!” Cross also had her marketing team at McAleer’s create “Bill Bucks,” featuring a photo of Chamber President and CEO Bill Sisson, to shoot out of a money gun at top producers each week.

“This was our 24th campaign,” said Carolyn Golson, the Chamber’s vice president of membership. “We have a core group who participates year after year, and there are always new volunteers looking to get involved in the fun.”

To keep the group energized each week, Cross made the reward sessions lively, entertaining and full of surprises. “Nobody wanted to miss a weekly meeting,” Golson said, noting that she even went live on Facebook each week for volunteers working from home.

Volunteers surpassed their goal by bringing in $1.5 million through member investments, sponsorships of Chamber events such as the annual meeting, advertising for Business View and Business View Weekly and securing in-kind goods and services from member businesses. Volunteers recruited 56 new members and 11 new board of advisors members, and 14 of the teams exceeded their goal.

While the 2021 campaign will officially kick off next April, volunteers are welcome to get involved at any time during the year.

“The Chamber is the only organization in Mobile bringing business together for a common goal: improving Mobile,” said Cross.

The primary goal of the campaign is to bring in new members and raise resources that ultimately come back full circle to the business community through the work of the Chamber.

“Chamber Chase offers unique networking opportunities for the volunteers, a fun cooperative spirit and a great social outlet as well,” said Cross.

To learn how your company can get involved in Chamber Chase, contact Golson at 251.431.8622 or cgolson@mobilechamber.com.

Why Volunteer with Chamber Chase?

We asked our volunteers why they volunteer year after year for Chamber Chase, and here’s what they said:

- Enjoy being around energetic people and supporting the Chamber
- Helps me grow professionally
- Meeting people
- Networking
- Connecting with new folks
- Access to business leaders
- Great camaraderie

How to Help

- Sponsor an event by visiting the campaign website ChamberChase.com/ sponsorship.aspx, to see the variety of options available.
- Register a team to represent your company. This gives your company great exposure and provides your staff fun opportunities to meet others in our business community.
- Participate as a volunteer.

Call the membership department at 251.431.8622 for details.
TOP VOLUNTEERS

OVERALL
Jennie Campbell, The Stewart Lodges
Rachel New, Trustmark Bank
Bernadette Windle, Roberts Brothers

CATEGORY ONE
Rachel New, Trustmark Bank
Bernadette Windle, Roberts Brothers
Jennie Campbell, The Stewart Lodges

CATEGORY TWO
Jennie Campbell, The Stewart Lodges
Linda Faulkner, Evonik Corp.
Kirsten Loper, Ambassador Team

TOP ROOKIE
Kirsten Loper, Ambassador Team

MOST NEW MEMBERS
Dawn Finch

TOP PRODUCERS

ALABAMA POWER COMPANY
$67,289

Patrick Murphy
Vice President, Mobile Division

Valencia Chaney
Captain

Ryan Allenbach .............. $24,482
Valencia Chaney ............ $35,757
Team .............................. $7,050

BB&T NOW TRUIST
$21,252

Edward O’Gwynn III
Market President

Mark Spivey
Captain

Mark Spivey ..................... $12,078
Team .................................. $5,974

“aggressive positivity”

ARKEMA INC.
$38,050

Rene Neron
Plant Manager

Terri Owler
Captain

Terri Owler ...................... $38,050

BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF ALABAMA
$29,570

Clay Walden
District Manager

Kay Williams
Captain

Nichole Edwards .......... $13,485
Kay Williams ................... $16,085

BLUE FISH
$30,035

Marcus Neto
Creative Director

Marcus Neto .................... $30,035

TOP TEAMS

OVERALL
Trustmark Bank
The Stewart Lodges
Regions Bank

CATEGORY ONE
Trustmark Bank
Regions Bank
McAleer’s Office Furniture

CATEGORY TWO
The Stewart Lodges
Evonik Corp.
Ambassador Team

MOST NEW MEMBERS
Trustmark Bank

TEAMS OVER GOAL
Alabama Power
Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Alabama
Blue Fish
Century Bank
Hancock Whitney Bank
LL&B&B Inc. Real Estate
McAleer’s Office Furniture
Mobile Area Chamber Ambassador Team
Regions Bank
Renasant Bank
Roberts Brothers
ServisFirst Bank
The Stewart Lodges
Trustmark Bank

BANCORPSOUTH
$41,508

Terry Harbin
Market President

James Alexander
Captain

James Alexander ................ $31,800
Elizabeth Bailey ............... $6,000
Team ............................... $3,708
**C SPIRE**
$29,507

Philip McKibbin
Director of Sales

Team ........................................ $29,507

**CENTURY BANK**
$31,111

Peter vanLingen II
President

Janet Johnson
Captain

Janet Johnson ....................... $31,111

**CROW SHIELDS BAILEY PC**
$8,930

J. Kenny Crow Jr.
Managing Partner

Team ....................................... $8,930

**EVONIK CORP.**
$39,663

Ken Boisvert
Vice President and Site Manager

Linda Faulkner
Captain

Linda Faulkner .......................... $39,663

**HANCOCK WHITNEY BANK**
$49,360

Guy Helmsing
Senior Vice President and Market President

Spencer Wiggins
Captain

Spencer Wiggins ....................... $22,755
Team ....................................... $26,605

**iBERIABANK**
$5,075

Ken Brown
Executive Vice President and Market President

Virginia Knight
Captain

Virginia Knight ....................... $5,075

**JEFF TESNEY PHOTOGRAPHY**
$1,525

Jeff Tesney
Owner

Elissa Tesney
Captain

Elissa Tesney ......................... $1,525

**HARGROVE ENGINEERS+ CONSTRUCTORS**
$1,453

Vicki Studstill
Vice President
Relationship Building

Ashley McKeithan
Captain

Ashley McKeithan .................... $1,453

**HARPER TECHNOLOGIES**
$8,124

Abe Harper
President

Abe Harper ............................... $8,124

**LLB&B REAL ESTATE**
$17,404

Melissa Morrissette
Captain

Melissa Morrissette .................. $17,404

**“Chamber Chase like a boss”**

**“Wake up. Kick ass. Repeat.”**
“another COVID record”

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER AMBASSADORS $19,868

Kirsten Loper ....................... $18,068
Donna Turner ....................... $1,800

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER BOARD $6,400

Melissa Cross
President

Team ................................ $6,400

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER GROWTH ALLIANCE TASK FORCE $17,591

Nate Patterson
Captain

Carita Koen ......................... $2,268
Nate Patterson ...................... $3,390
Team ................................. $11,933

Robert’s Brothers $54,505

Daniel A. Dennis IV
President

Ann Akridge
Captain

Ann Akridge ......................... $640
Bernadette Windle ............... $50,565
Team ................................. $3,300

REGIONS BANK $104,270

Christian White
President

Stephen Schlautman
Captain

Trish Banker ....................... $13,437
Julie Jenkins ....................... $32,299
Stephen Schlautman ............. $18,600
Team ................................. $39,934

SERVISFIRST BANK $45,469

Bibb Lamar
Chairman and CEO

Sherry Coker
Captain

Sherry Coker ....................... $42,803
Team ................................. $2,666

“But wait, there’s more.”

RENAZANT BANK $24,915

Mark Fillers
President

Ryan New
Captain

Ryan New ....................... $24,915

SPIRE $29,148

Karl Ficken
General Manager

Harris Oswalt
Captain

Harris Oswalt ..................... $29,148
Chamber Chase reward sessions may have looked a little different in 2020, but the volunteers had a blast, thanks to Chamber Chase Chair Melissa Cross and her team.

**THE STEWART LODGES**
$109,400

- **Jennie Campbell**
  - President and CEO, Captain

  Jennie Campbell ................ $99,500
  Team ................................ $9,900

**TRUSTMARK BANK**
$116,230

- **Mike Fitzhugh**
  - South Alabama Region President

- **Rachel New**
  - Captain

  Dawn Finch ....................... $32,000
  B.J. Griswold .................... $4,700
  Rachel New ..................... $70,293
  Team .............................. $9,237

**FINAL TOTAL**
$1,511,280

Chamber Chase volunteers help recruit much-needed resources in support of the Chamber's core programs.

- Advertising  
  - 5% $70,431

- Member Investments  
  - 11.5% $173,567

- Board of Advisors  
  - 28.5% $432,025

- Sponsorships and In-kind  
  - 55% $835,257
THANK YOU TO THE SPONSORS OF 2020 CHAMBER CHASE

EVENT SPONSORS
1031 Meals
Blaze Pizza
Blaze Pizza
Burton Property Group
Container Yard
Harper Technologies
McAleer’s Office Furniture
Taco Mama
The Stewart Lodges
Trustmark Bank
Which Wich

MEMBERS THAT SUPPORTED CHAMBER CHASE 2020
1031 Meals
22nd State Bank
3 Circle Church
A and Remodeling
Adams and Reese
AEB Technology & Enterprises
Airbus
Alabama Court Reporting
Alabama Insurance Agency
Alabama Power
Alabama State Port Authority Co.
All A Bloom
All In Credit Union
AltaPointe Health
America’s First Federal Credit Union
Anytime Storage
APM Terminals
Arkema
ASM Global
ASM Recycling
AT&T
Austal USA
Athy Greer & Sons Inc.
Azalea Insurance Advisors
Ball HealthCare Services
BancorpSouth
Baumhower’s Victory Grill
Bay Area Printing & Graphics Solutions
BB&T now Truist
BBVA
BCM Morning
Benville Bites Food Truck
Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Alabama
Bishop State Community College
Blackwell Realty
Blaze Pizza
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama
Blue Fish
Bluewater Yacht Sales
BNI South Alabama
Bonefish Grill
Boys & Girls Clubs of South Alabama
Buffalo Rock-Pepsi
Burr & Forman
Byrd Safety and Maintenance Professionals LLC
C Spire
Cakes by the Pound
Calagaz Printing
Campus Book Store
Century Bank
Chevron
Chickasaw City Schools
Chicken Salad Chick
Chris & Carla’s Catering
Claimpay Inc.
Clark Personnel
Coast Diagnostics
Coastal Alabama Community College
Commonwealth National Bank
Container Yard
Convention Center
Cooper & Co. - Andreda Randelson
CORE Industries Inc.
Counterthreat Analysis
Mitigation Ops
Courtyard & Fairfield Marriott Eastern Shore
Crow Shields Bailey
Crowne Health Care of Springhill
Cumulus Radio
Cypress Employment Services
D&D Construction
Dauphin’s
Dick Russell’s BBQ
Dortch, Figures & Sons
EAP Lifestyle Management
Easy Heating & Cooling
EcoView Windows, Doors, Siding & Bath
Employers’ Administrative Services
Esfeller Construction
Everbee’s Bright e-worc marketing & advertising
Express Employment Professionals
FASTSIGNS of Mobile
Faulkner University
Fausak Tires & Service
Feeding the Gulf Coast
Firehouse Subs
First US Bank
Fort Condé Inn
Fortis College
FusionPoint Media
Georgia Roussos Catering
Gilmore Services
Green Magic Landscape
Guardian Integrators
GulfQuest National Maritime Museum
Gulf Coast Containers
Gulf Coast Studios
Gulf Electric
Gwin’s Commercial Printing
Hampton Inn Providence Park
Hancock Whitney Bank
Harper Technologies
Harvest Jewels
Harvey and Thomas Orthodontics
Haul It Off
Hembree Heating & Air
Herc Rentals
Hickory Pit Too
Homestead RV Community
Horne LLP
Hummingbird Ideas
Hydro Technologies
iCater Weddings & Events
Identity Signs
iHeartMEDIA Mobile
IMMIX Strategic
Imperial Dade Paper
Infirmary Health
Ingalls Shipbuilding
Jeff Tesney Photography
Jet Services
JPR
Jubilee Youth Service and Leadership Academy
Junior Achievement of Mobile
Karen’s Kleaning Services
Keep Mobile Beautiful
Keesler Federal Credit Union
Lagniappe Home Store
Lamar Advertising
Landshark Promotions
Las Floriditas
Leaf & Petal Gift Shop
Leavell Investment Management
Lening Fibers
LLAHDDOT Inc.
LXIS Management Solutions
Lynn Nolen Construction
M&M Bank
Mark Nelson Preston - Roberts Brothers
Matthew Roberts Enterprises, Inc. d/b/a MRE Inc.
McAleer’s Office Furniture
MCG Business Solutions
Mediacom Business
Merchants Plaza
Merchants & Marine Bank
Meridian at the Port
Merrill, a Bank of America Co.
Mighty
Millard Maritime
Mississippi Export Railroad/Alabama Export Railroad
Mitternight
Mobile Airport Authority
Mobile Area Council Boy Scouts of America
Mobile Area Interfaith Conference
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Mobile Christian School
Mobile County Commission
Mobile Sports & Entertainment Group
Mobile’s Best Storage
Mott MacDonald
Mount Man of Mobile
Naman’s Catering
New Horizons Credit Union
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Oak Hollow Farm
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Omega Properties Inc./Mobile’s Best Storage
On the Run Logistics
Orangetheory Fitness
Outokumpu
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Parker Human Resource Services LLC
Payroll Vault
Peak Alkalinity
Personal Edge Fitness
Phelps Dunbar
Pittman Tractor Co.
PNC Bank
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Port City Industrial
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Premier Medical
Prism Systems
Quality Valve
Quincy Compressor
Red or White
REEL USA Corp.
Regions Bank
Renasant Bank
Richardson Stevedoring & Logistics
Roberts Brothers
S&S Sprinkler
Scott Strategic Solutions
Shields Insurance Agency
Shoe Station
Shoreline Events
Signature Aviation
Snelling Staffing Services
SOHO Events & Rentals
Southern Earth Sciences
Southern Nutrition
Spire
Springhill Medical Center
State Farm - Makeda Nicohols
Stone Ridge at Somerby
Strong Arm Axe Throwing
SW Administrative Concepts
T.C. Bright Productions
Taco Mama
The Admiral Hotel
The American Equity Underwriters Inc.
The Battle House Renaissance Mobile Hotel & Spa
The Maids
The Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail/Magnolia Grove
The Stewart Lodges
The Tommy Morse Band
The Weavil Co.
Thompson Engineering
Titanium Wireless
Troy University
Trustmark Bank
Tydall Federal Credit Union
University of South Alabama
USA Alumni/Athletics
Vader’s Fortress
Village at Midtown
VisionSpot Consulting Group
Volkert
Walks and Wags Inc.
Ward International Trucks
Which Wich
Williams
Williams Appraisal
Willis Towers Watson
Wilson Dismukes Parts & Equipment
Wind Clan Construction
Wintzell’s Oyster House
Women’s Business Alliance
Wonderfully Made
Gourmet Organic Treats
Workforce Ancillary Management
Yellowhammer Investment Group
Yesterday’s Treasures & More LLC
2021 TOP GIVEAWAY TRENDS

This year has been one for the record books, with cancelled in-person events, trade shows, remote learning and more. But as the United States begins to open up to more face-to-face marketing opportunities, promotional/specialty companies have been working to find the top trends in specialty/giveaway items for the coming year.

TouchTool
Give attendees something they won’t want to leave the house without. This giveaway is a small and compact tool to keep hands from touching surfaces with a lot of germs like door handles and buttons. Available in durable, high-strength plastic or in solid, antimicrobial brass, this tool can be attached to keys for quick and easy access.

Blue Light Glasses
Blue light glasses are a triple threat promotional item: useful, durable and customizable.
As people spend more time looking at screens, they need to protect health and sleep cycles from the intense blue light that screens and other modern LED lights give off. As promotional products, blue light glasses deliver a low cost-per-impression because people will want to wear them everywhere and can showcase your brand with messaging around the temples.

Reusable Two-Ply Face Masks
Face masks are a giveaway that attendees can use daily to protect themselves and others. With an over-the-ear-loop that allows for comfort and ease of taking on and off, and a fully sublimated exterior, this promotional product will prevent the spread of germs and promote your brand.

Custom Socks
Logo socks are a great trade show giveaway because they are inexpensive for an apparel item, yet highly effective for making big impressions. Customers want apparel items they’ll actually wear, and socks are a gift that universally pleases everyone. Socks can be custom-knit with a unique design for trade show giveaways, but don’t forget to order some pairs for employees as well.

Microfiber Cloth with Full-Color Booklet
Why settle for a typical pamphlet when you can combine it with a promotional item? A Tek Booklet with Microfiber Cloth is versatile, portable and the ideal way to get your message across. The microfiber cloth, a must-have for cleaning screens, cameras and glasses, comes packaged neatly in a PVC pouch.

Screen-Cleaning Spray and Microfiber Cloth
A spray and wipe is a modern microfiber cloth that easily removes smudges and fingerprints from phone or laptop screens. It’s the perfect size and contains both a screen cleaning spray and microfiber cloth.
Reusable Metal Straw with Case

This eco-friendly reusable metal straw will be a hit with any recipient. The extendable design can become any length you need, and the rubber tip makes drinking from this straw enjoyable. Recipients will love the carrying case that allows them to keep this straw in their bag and use it at a moment’s notice.

Card Holder with Metal Ring

Cell phone accessories are never out of style when it comes to trade show giveaways. This phone pocket, made of polyurethane leatherette, includes a rotating metal ring that can be used as a grip or a stand. Credit cards and more can be inserted into the useful pocket.

Webcam Covers

Show clients and leads you’ve got their privacy covered in a fun and creative way. Instead of just a rectangle with a logo, webcam covers can be personalized to the exact design of your choice. Because people spend so much time looking at screens, earning a spot on a laptop or monitor is a huge marketing win. For a bonus, pair the webcam cover with a custom card. Expand on the messaging of the webcam cover itself with a fully customizable card that the webcam cover comes attached to. The cover itself is a reminder of your brand every time your lead or customer looks at their device. The card is your space to explain why they should remember you. Your company’s imprinted logo is sure to stand out.

Mobile Area Chamber Member Promotional Item/ Specialty Companies

Ad Venture Specialties Co.
251.344.0526
adventurespecialties.net

Calagaz Printing
251.478.0488
calagazprinting.com

Camellia Trophy & Specialties
251.342.9638

e-worc marketing & advertising
251.414.3130
e-worc.com

FastSigns of Mobile
251.410.7446
fastsigns.com/2068-mobile-al/about

Geiger Brothers
251.342.5704
geiger.com

Gwin’s Commercial Printing
251.438.2226
gwins.cc

Image360 West Mobile
251.344.5491
westmobileal.image360.com

J.O. Acree Co. Inc.
251.473.3764
joacree.com

Landshark Promotions
251.259.5432
landsharkpromos.com

MH3 Printing & Ad Specialties
251.476.4643
mh3printing.com

Zebra Marketing
251.438.2422
zebrapromos.com
Company officials: Kenneth Nichols, chair; Walter Bell, vice chair; Sheri N. Weber, secretary-treasurer; Commissioners Raymond Bell Jr., Barbara Drummond, Maria Gonzalez, Thomas Zoghby; and Charles E. Hyland, director

Address: 4725 Moffett Rd., Mobile

Number of Employees: 400

Website: mawss.com

Years in business: 68

Brief company description: The Mobile Water Service System started Oct. 1, 1952, when the Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners entered into a contract with the City of Mobile to purchase water and sanitary sewer systems on behalf of the city. Raw water was purchased from the City Water Works Board from 1952 to 1968. The two boards were merged on Jan. 1, 1968, with the Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners taking over the raw water system. Today, water is delivered from the 3,600-acre lake and pumping station by pipes to two reservoirs, where it is diverted either to domestic or industrial use. The reservoirs are at an elevation of 220 feet, and industrial water is delivered by gravity to industry at an elevation of about 25 feet. Pumps at Big Creek Lake provide treated water to Mobile and untreated water to local industries.

Why do you support the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce’s Partners for Growth Initiative? “The Partners for Growth Initiative is an investment in our community which benefits all of us,” said Hyland. “The focus for this initiative includes supporting existing businesses, recruiting new businesses and investment, developing and retaining a strong workforce, helping to develop a diverse business community and proudly telling the story of the great resources we have to offer here in Mobile. All of these actions help us grow economically and provide a better quality of life for our citizens.”

How long have you been a continuous Mobile Area Chamber Member? Since 1985
We Pay Attention to the Details of Selling Your Business So You Can Focus on Running Your Business

Why Transworld?

• World’s largest business brokerage company
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• Attention to detail and control of information flow
• We create competition for your business
• We negotiate the best deal for you

Our Value is Maximizing Your Value

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251-259-6665
MICHAEL LEDGER
FEEDING THE GULF COAST

TITLE: President & CEO
HOMETOWN: Springfield, Ill.
EDUCATION: Ledger earned a bachelor’s degree in management from the University of Illinois, Springfield, along with a degree in electronic technology from the U.S. Navy.
WHO/WHAT INSPIRES YOU? Building systems and teams that can make a difference and accomplish goals.
HOBBIES: Fitness/athletics and music
HIDDEN TALENT: Singing
WHAT WORD WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF? Thoughtful or funny
SECRET TO SUCCESS: Passion, kindness and hard work
WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR LONG-TERM PROFESSIONAL GOALS? I hope to be able to use my experience and skills in ways that can make a difference for organizations and individuals.

WHAT IS THE MOST USEFUL THING YOU OWN? Smartphone
YOUR FIRST CAR? Cutlass Supreme
WHAT ARE TWO OF YOUR FAVORITE NAMES? Dolly and Floyd (the names of my dogs)
WHAT IS THE BEST THING ABOUT YOUR JOB? Bringing people together to find the best ways to help others.

BRIEF COMPANY DESCRIPTION: Feeding the Gulf Coast, formerly Bay Area Food Bank, serves a 24-county area spanning the Florida Panhandle, south Alabama and south Mississippi. In 2019, the food bank distributed more than 24 million meals to more than 400 church pantries, soup kitchens and other nonprofit organizations throughout its service area. The food bank also operates multiple hunger-relief and nutrition programs. Feeding the Gulf Coast is a United Way member agency and a member of Feeding America. For more information, visit feedingthegulfcoast.org.
KEN R. BROWN  
iBERIABANK

Brown is executive vice president and market president for iBERIABANK. With more than 15 years of banking experience, he most recently served the bank as senior vice president and private banking and business banking manager for the Mobile market. Brown serves on the board of Goodwill Easter Seals of the Gulf Coast and on the UMS-Wright Preparatory School alumni advisory board. He is a past board member for United Way of Southwest Alabama. Brown is a graduate of The University of Alabama.

ABE L. HARPER JR.  
HARPER TECHNOLOGIES LLC

Harper is president/CEO of Harper Technologies LLC. He is a graduate of the Alabama School of Math and Science and attended both Florida A&M University and The University of Alabama. Harper is a member of the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce, the Eastern Shore Coastal Conservation Association, Prichard Preparatory School board of directors and the CityHope Church. He was named a member of the Alabama Innovation Commission or Innovate Alabama, Gov. Kay Ivey’s statewide commission on entrepreneurship and innovation.

J. DAY PEAKE III  
PHELPS DUNBAR

Peake, an associate with Phelps Dunbar, practices labor and employment law. He counsels businesses on employment practices, from developing an employment handbook and drafting non-compete agreements to protecting trade secrets and proprietary information. Peake is a member of the Alabama State Bar, the Tennessee State Bar and the American Bar Association, and serves on the board of directors of Ronald McDonald House. He was recognized by Mobile Bay Magazine in 2012 with a 40 Under 40 award and as a Mid-South Super Lawyers rising star. Phelps Dunbar is a Partners for Growth investor.
NEW STRATEGIC PLAN Over the summer and into early fall, the Chamber worked on updating its long-range strategic plan. Board members and staff met regularly to identify new areas of focus and enhanced services. The board is expected to approve the plan in January.

CHAMBER PLANS ADDITIONAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS OWNERS
In response to having to cancel Emerging Leaders in 2020 due to COVID-19, the Chamber’s small business development team, in partnership with University of South Alabama Office of Research and Entrepreneurship, University of Mobile, Melton Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation and the Alabama Small Business Development Center, created Roadmap for Growth, an intense executive-level entrepreneurial education program for small business owners. The program includes 12 participants and will run through December.

EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE CONTINUES MONTHLY MEETINGS The Chamber’s Executive Roundtable of small business owners and managers continues to meet the third Tuesday of each month at 8 a.m., via Zoom for the time being. These monthly sessions provide an opportunity for business owners to discuss common issues, network with one another and hear timely presentations. If you’re interested in joining this group, contact Brenda Rembert at 251.431.8607.

SMALL BUSINESS COUNCIL MEETS To meet the demand of its clients and members, the Small Business Council moved from quarterly to monthly Zoom meetings. The group is collaborating on programs, counseling and other issues, discuss best practices, and how to serve the community.

NEW BOARD OF ADVISORS NAMED Calagaz Printing, Easy Heating & Cooling, Hummingbird Ideas, JJPR, Merchants & Marine Bank, The Cowart Group, PangeaTwo and WaveFly joined the Chamber’s board of advisors, bringing the number to 262. To learn more about this group of influential members, contact Shelly Mattingly at 251.431.8655 or smattingly@mobilechamber.com.

NETWORKING – IN PERSON! The Chamber’s Coffee with the Chamber is a quarterly event providing attendees the opportunity to network before work. The August event was held in person at the Hampton Inn Providence Park. To learn about the November session, to be held on Nov. 4 at Stone Ridge at Somerby Park Apartment Homes, see the calendar of events on page 47.

MEMBERS MEET TO DISCUSS EMPLOYMENT LAW
In August, the Chamber hosted a Business First seminar on employment law during the pandemic. Day Peake with Phelps Dunbar discussed best practices and recent changes from the Department of Labor.
4
**COFFEE WITH THE CHAMBER**

Start your day with the Chamber for coffee and networking.

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

**Where:** Stone Ridge at Somerby Park Apartment Homes, 1200 Somerby Dr.

**Contact:** Carolyn Golson at 251.431.8622 or cgolson@mobilechamber.com

No charge.

**Sponsor:** Stone Ridge at Somerby Park Apartment Homes

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18
**NETWORKING@NOON**

*Members Only; one representative per company

Make 20-plus business contacts in 60 minutes over lunch.

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

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

**Cost:** $10 and must be paid with reservation

**Contact:** Dawn Rencher at 251.431.8649 or drencher@mobilechamber.com

**Sponsors:** Keesler Federal Credit Union and Outback Steak House

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17
**VIRTUAL EXECUTIVE ROUNDTABLE**

*Members Only

**VIA ZOOM:** A monthly forum exclusively for Chamber-member small business owners and managers featuring speakers on important business topics.

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

**Speaker:** Dr. Stephen McNair, owner, McNair Historic Preservation Inc.

**Topic:** "Historic Preservation Efforts and the Expiring Historic Tax Credit program"

**Contact:** Brenda Rembert at 251.431.8607 or brembert@mobilechamber.com

RSVP required for ZOOM meeting code.

**Sponsor:** BancorpSouth

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26 & 27
**THANKSGIVING**

The Chamber will be closed for Thanksgiving holidays.

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**COMING UP:**

**DECEMBER**

2
**A GLOBAL TRADE OUTLOOK**

*VIRTUAL EVENT: The Mobile Area Chamber presents a virtual discussion on U.S. trade policy and global supply chain issues featuring a panel of national experts and local industry leaders.

**When:** 9 to 10:30 a.m.

**Cost:** $15 for members; $25 for potential members

**Contact:** Kayley Shepard at 251.431.8629 or kshepard@mobilechamber.com

Registration requested for virtual meeting code.

**Sponsors:** Alabama Department of Commerce, Alabama State Port Authority, APM Terminals, Export Alabama Alliance and Page & Jones

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**THANK YOU TO THE SPONSORS OF OUR NOVEMBER EVENTS**

Note: Watch the Mobile Area Chamber’s website, web.mobilechamber.com/events, and our social media channels for updates as we balance in-person and virtual events.
**WHO’S NEW**

**USA Health Names First Chief Human Resources Officer**

Andrea Rosler joined USA Health as the health system’s first chief human resources officer. Rosler earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Millsaps College in Jackson, Miss., before earning master’s degrees in business administration and hospital administration from The University of Alabama at Birmingham.

**New Agents Join Roberts Brothers**

Baranyuk, Bryant, Gamble

**Winstead Joins Infirmary Medical Clinics**

Winstead joined the staff at Gulf Coast Gastroenterology. Winstead earned his medical degree from the Tulane University in New Orleans. He completed a residency at Tulane University Health Sciences Center where he served as chief resident and clinical instructor of medicine.

**Crow Shields Bailey PC Builds Gulf Shores Office**

Crow Shields Bailey PC broke ground on the construction of its new, 3,600-square-foot building at 1550 2nd St. W. in Gulf Shores. The building was designed by Holmes & Holmes, a division of Clark, Geer, Latham, & Associates Inc., with construction by Rogers and Willard Inc. Construction is scheduled to be completed in January 2021.

**Spring Hill College Reduces Tuition**

Spring Hill College announced a reduction in tuition to make its Jesuit Catholic education more accessible and affordable to more students. The new tuition price will be reduced by approximately 50 percent from the previous year. This price reduction makes Spring Hill among the most affordable private colleges in the country.

**Spring Hill College Appoints Interim Co-Provosts**

Spring Hill College appointed Steven Almquist PhD and Lisa Hager PhD as interim co-provosts for the 2020-21 academic year. Almquist serves as professor of English, the chair of the division of languages and literature and the faculty athletics representative. Hager is a professor of psychology and the chair of the social sciences division.

**Business Endeavors**

**Infirmary Health System Announces New Hires**

Ball, Bedeir, Clarke

Infirmary Cancer Care hired Dr. Olivia Claire Ball. She holds a bachelor’s degree in biology from Washington and Lee University in Richmond, Va. She completed a medical doctorate and radiation oncology residency with the University of Alabama at Birmingham as well as an internship with Baptist Health System in Birmingham.

Dr. Kareem H. Bedeir joined Cardio-Thoracic and Vascular Surgical Associates (CTVSA) following the completion of his fellowship in cardiothoracic surgery. Bedeir earned a medical degree from the University of Alexandria in Egypt. He completed surgical residencies at the University of Alexandria as well as Sinai Hospital in Baltimore.

Infirmary Medical Clinics announced the affiliation of Dr. Christopher Clarke with Coastal Medical Group (CMG). Clarke joined CMG following the completion of a fellowship in pulmonary disease and critical care medicine at the University of South Alabama. He is a graduate of Tulane University and received both master’s and medical degrees from the University of Louisville.

**Infirmary Health System Names First Chief Human Resources Officer**

USA Health announced the appointment of Margo Holbart, joined the firm. Holbart has more than 15 years of experience in human resources, most recently as a human resources manager. She has a bachelor’s degree in business administration from the University of Central Florida in Orlando. She has more than 13 years of experience as a financial analyst in the title, energy, construction and property management industries.

**Margo Holbart**

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USA Health Extends Reach in West Mobile

USA Health is expanding its primary care network to better serve patients in west Mobile with the addition of Family Practice Associates/USA Health. The practice, formerly named Family Practice Associates of Mobile, will remain open at its current location at 2270 Hillcrest Rd. Hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

WELL DONE

Swann Named President-Elect of ADLA

Gerald Swann, a partner of Ball, Ball, Matthews & Novack PA, was named president-elect of the Alabama Defense Lawyers Association (ADLA). He practices in the areas of construction litigation, products liability, serious personal injury and wrongful death. Swann is a graduate of The University of Alabama and Samford University.

Maynard Cooper & Gale Attorneys Make Best Lawyers List

The Best Lawyers in America 2021 includes 168 Maynard Cooper & Gale attorneys. Evan N. Parrott was recognized among the “Ones to Watch” in bankruptcy and creditor debtor rights / insolvency and reorganization law and bankruptcy litigation. “Lawyer of the Year” awards were presented to 21 of the firm’s attorneys.

Wilkins Miller Receives Recognition

Wilkins Miller, an accounting and advisory firm, was named one of the 2020 “Best Companies to work for in Alabama” by Business Alabama and the Best Companies Group. The firm earned second place for best companies in Alabama and was the only accounting firm recognized.

In addition, Wilkins Miller was named a “Top 400 Firm” by INSIDE Public Accounting. The firm came in the 355th spot and was one of two Mobile-based firms named to the list.

More Than 100 Adams and Reese Attorneys Recognized

One hundred fifty Adams and Reese attorneys were recognized in The Best Lawyers in America® (by BL Rankings LLC) 2021. Also, Adams and Reese attorneys were included in the inaugural edition of Best Lawyers’ “Ones to Watch” listing that recognizes associates and other lawyers who are earlier in their careers for their outstanding professional excellence in private practice in the United States.

Family Health Receives Funding to Combat Opioid Crisis

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, through its Health Resources and Services Administration, was awarded funding for its Integrated Behavioral Health Services program. Family Health, the primary care division of the Mobile County Health Department, will use the money to combat the nation’s opioid crisis.

Attorneys for Johnstone Adams Make Best Lawyers & Lawyers of the Year

Johnstone Adams LLC announced 10 attorneys were recently selected by their peers for inclusion in the 2021 edition of The Best Lawyers in America: Celia J. Collins was also named the 2021 Best Lawyers: Lawyer of the Year for the Mobile area in Labor Law - Management. Additionally, Jessica L. Welch received Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in the category of Tax Law. This award recognizes extraordinary lawyers who have been in private practice for less than 10 years in the United States.

Spring Hill College Receives SSS Grant

Spring Hill College received a $1.3 million federal Student Support Services (SSS) TRIO grant aimed to help low-income, first-generation and students with disabilities succeed in and graduate from college.

Alabama State Port Authority Recognized for Safety

The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association awarded two of its president’s awards to the Alabama State Port Authority’s Terminal Railway – Alabama State Docks for achieving rail safety standards.

UM Records Highest Enrollment in 5 Years

The University of Mobile (UM) recorded its highest enrollment in five years for fall 2020. UM reported a total enrollment of 2,016 for the fall semester, up from 1,989 in 2019. The increase includes the largest class of graduate students in the school’s history, along with a significant jump in transfer students.

NAI Mobile Agents Achieve CCIM Designation

NAI Mobile announced Brandon Broadus, Niki Coker and John Thomas (J.T.) Jenkins earned Certified Commercial Investment Member (CCIM) designations from the Realtors National Marketing Institute.

14 Armbrecht Jackson Lawyers Honored

Armbrecht Jackson LLP announced that 14 of its attorneys were named in The Best Lawyers in America 2021. Of those, four attorneys were selected as “Lawyers of the Year” for 2021: Duane A. Graham for business organizations; M. Kathleen Miller for admiralty and maritime law; James D. Smith for corporate law; and Norman E. Waldrop Jr. for product liability litigation – defendants. One attorney, Robert S. Walker, was selected for inclusion in the 2021 edition of The Best Lawyers in America: Ones to Watch for Commercial Litigation.

Inc. List Includes Altaworx

For the fourth time, Altaworx appears on the Inc. 5000 List. Altaworx is ranked No. 2,756 on the annual list, the most prestigious ranking of the nation’s fastest growing private companies.

UM Dean Earns Alabama Nurse Educator Award

Dr. Sarah Barnes-Witherspoon, dean of the school of nursing at the University of Mobile, received the Alabama Nurse Educator Award honoring a career of outstanding accomplishments in the field of nursing education.

A panel of healthcare leaders and the Alabama State Nurses Association identified the Top 10 most inspiring nurses across the state, chosen from more than 500 nominations from patients, healthcare professionals and nurses.

Bishop State Community College Awarded $1.3M Grant

Bishop State Community College received a $1.3 million TRIO Student Support Services Grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The grant is designed to provide students from disadvantaged backgrounds with opportunities for academic development and assistance with basic academic requirements. It will provide an array of comprehensive services including academic advising, financial aid advising, career and college mentoring and assistance with academic tutoring.

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 first and 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.
Tesney has been around the photography business his entire life. The son of a former newspaper photographer, he has helped cover major local social events since his early teens. Because he had apprenticed with his father from such a young age, most people thought he was a professional photographer before the idea even crossed his mind.

Tesney officially went into business for himself in 1989. Over the past three decades, he has photographed more than 1,000 weddings and has shot portraits, social events and commercial projects around Mobile and throughout the United States.

He has been involved with the Chamber for more than 20 years.

In this issue, Tesney’s work can be seen in the feature on Ambassadors, the Small Business of the Month and the Chamber’s 2020 Minority Business Advocate.

To see more of Tesney’s portfolio visit jeftesneyphoto.com.
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Andrew Byrd
821 Bernard Cir.
Mobile, AL 36693
251.366.6336
Consultant

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Mobile, AL 36602
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David Wofford
201 N. Craft Hwy.
Chickasaw, AL 36611
251.452.2256
School System

COUNTERTHREAT ANALYSIS MITIGATION OPS
Guy Walton
4436 Jarrett Rd.
Eight Mile, AL 36613
251.272.0858
Risk Management

D&L CONSTRUCTION
Lorenzo Green
1653 Polk St.
Mobile, AL 36605
251.458.5556
Construction

EVERBEE’S BRIGHT LLC
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4446 Kingmill Rd.
Eight Mile, AL 36613
256.438.2252
Logistics - Full Service

SYNERGY FINANCIAL PARTNERS
Daymain Smith
7205 Sheehan Court
Derwood, MD 20855
202.350.1151
Loans - Business

VADER’S FORTRESS
JC Smith
1222 Hillcrest Rd., Ste. E251
Mobile, AL 36695
251.610.2451
Virtual Reality and Vintage Arcade

Know a company interested in benefiting from Chamber membership? Contact Jackie Hecker at 251.431.8642 or jhecker@mobilechamber.com. Also, find a membership directory at web.mobilechamber.com/search.

2020 Statement of Ownership, Management & Circulation
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(16) This Statement of Ownership will be printed in the November 2020 issue of this publication.
(17) Signature and title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager or Owner & Date: Leigh Perry-Herndon 9/30/2020

The Mobile Area Chamber was awarded the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s highest designation. Of the 6,936 chambers in the U.S., only 3 percent achieved five-star distinction.
stronger together
#believeinmobile

value

… we provide value in the services, opportunities and recognition we give to our members