

BUSINESSVIEW

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

DECEMBER 2019 / JANUARY 2020

**LOCAL
BUSINESSES
LEVERAGE
TECHNOLOGY
TO GROW**

NO EXCUSES:
25 Ways to Shop Local

**CHAMBER
AWARDS**
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BUSINESSVIEW

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

DECEMBER 2019 / JANUARY 2020

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Photo by Toni Riales



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ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

BUSINESS VIEW (USPS 952-700) is published 10 times a year, monthly, except for the June/July and December/January issues, by the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce.

451 Government St., Mobile, AL 36602
251.433.6951 • www.mobilechamber.com

POSTMASTER send address changes to
Attn: Finance Department BUSINESS VIEW
Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL 36652-2187
or email info@mobilechamber.com ©2020

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FROM THE EDITOR

Leigh Perry-Herndon, Vice President, Communications and Marketing



Talk about a labor of love. The overhaul of what's in your hand today – the new

Business View – has certainly been just that. A little over a year ago, our team started a discussion about the magazine – its mission, purpose and value, promoting area businesses and our advertisers.

During this time, we talked with so many of you – via focus groups and surveys – to make sure, first, there was a need for this magazine; and, second, to gain insight on desired changes.

I am so proud of where we are today, but it could not have happened without Jennifer Jenkins and Sarah Grube with JJPR and Michelle Wise with Wise Design, who have been in lock-step through every stage of this process.

And my amazing magazine team – Ashley Horn, Susan Rak-Blanchard and Carolyn Wilson – asked the right questions and challenged me to make this magazine one of which we all are so proud.

And of course you – the readers – are the reason we've worked so hard to get this right. For our members, thank you for your continued investment in the Chamber. And for potential members, I would strongly encourage you to consider becoming a member so you, too, can be included in this fantastic publication.

Here's to the new and improved *Business View*!

MOBILE'S OPPORTUNITY ZONES SPUR JOB GROWTH

Two local projects – Meridian at the Port, Mobile's newest downtown living community and Continental Aerospace Technologies headquarters, developed by Burton Property Group – are directly benefitting from the Opportunity Zones signed into federal law at the end of 2017. **Shelby Glover Zaricor**, director of business development for the Mobile Area Chamber, believes a new Opportunity Zone Guide for Mobile will lead to more.

Zaricor is one of several economic developers working to promote Alabama's 158 designated opportunity zones, and specifically the 14 in Mobile.

What are they and how does it help with new projects and expansions? Talking in general terms, explains Zaricor, the goal is to pair long-term private investment with underserved markets. Tax incentives in the form of capital gains are available to spur job growth in low-income urban and rural communities nationwide.

Locally, opportunity zones are primarily downtown Mobile, Africatown, Port of Mobile, both airports, one tract along Airport Boulevard and out near West I-65.

The guide is a working document on the Chamber's website, mobilechamber.com, to help market Mobile and its designated zones, along with the area's key assets that attract outside investment and economic growth.

Contact Zaricor at szaricor@mobilechamber.com or call 251.431.8616 for more information.

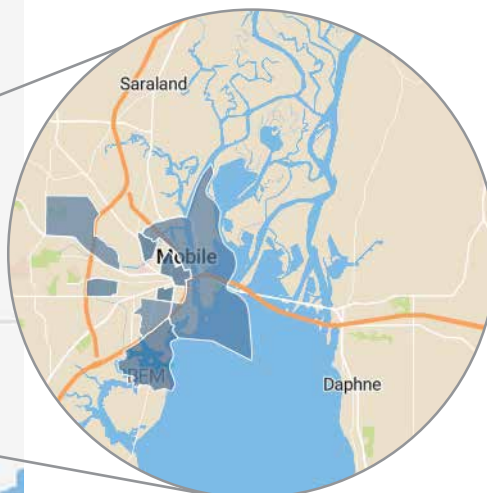
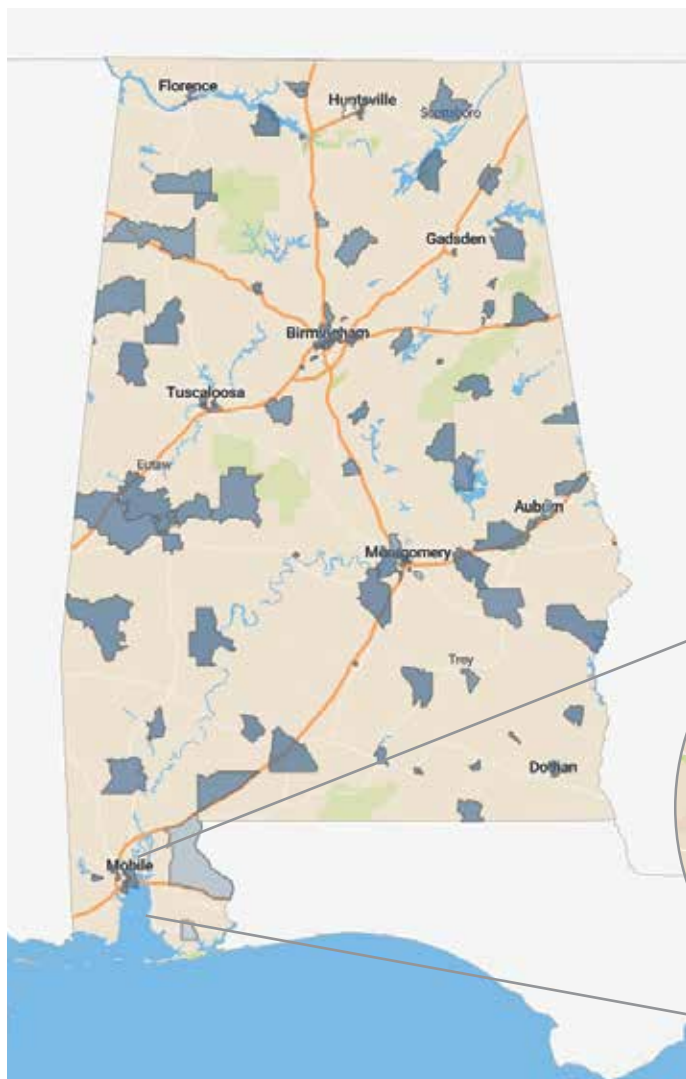
FAST FACTS ABOUT OPPORTUNITY ZONES

WHAT IS IT? Congress passed the Opportunity Zone program in conjunction with the December 2017 comprehensive tax reform package.

WHO BENEFITS? People or companies who have capital gains they would like to defer and developers who now have access to capital by a private third party investing in an Opportunity Zone fund.

WHERE ARE THEY? Mobile's 14 zones are primarily downtown, Africatown, Port of Mobile, both airports, one tract along Airport Boulevard and out near West I-65.

HOW TO GET CONNECTED? Contact Shelby Glover Zaricor, the Mobile Area Chamber's director of business development, at szaricor@mobilechamber.com or 251.431.8616.





CHAMBER'S WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS SHIFT TO ATTRACT TALENT

This statement has been uttered many times over by area employers: "We are not able to locate qualified workers." This familiar concern includes both hourly employees and certain salaried positions.

AM/NS Calvert is one of many Mobile area companies looking to hire specialized engineers, and the company's human resources team tells the Mobile Area Chamber they are not always able to convert an applicant into a full-time employee. The reasons vary. Often, out-of-state applicants decline an offer because they are not familiar with Mobile or their spouse is concerned about securing a job.

To address the growing need for employees, the Chamber is expanding its workforce efforts and delving into a formal talent attraction initiative by engaging Development Counsellors International (DCI), an economic development marketing firm.

"This is a top priority for the Chamber," said **David Rodgers**, the Chamber's vice president of economic development. "Our efforts to recruit new and expanding companies directly hinge on their ability to fill the positions they need with people who have the skills they need."

DCI visited Mobile for three days in November, conducting focus groups with dozens of local business and industry leaders, young professionals, educators, representatives from the arts community and others. The meetings and an immersion tour will help DCI identify Mobile's strengths, formulate a plan and develop the stories about what Mobile has to offer as a great place to live, work, play and raise a family.

"Much effort has been exerted on developing pipelines and partnerships to ensure a continued supply of non-salaried workers in Mobile, and while the Chamber will continue to support these initiatives, we are now giving attention to developing pipelines to also attract salaried workers, as both types of workers are needed in our area," said **Cheryl Nicholls**, the Chamber's director of education and workforce development.

"This is a top priority for the Chamber. Our efforts to recruit new and expanding companies directly hinge on their ability to fill the positions they need with people who have the skills they need."

Here's What You Need to Know

What: The Chamber is developing a new program focused on talent attraction of salaried employees.

What it Means: The Mobile community is going to get better at telling the story of what our city has to offer.

Why: Area companies are having trouble locating workers with specialized resources – engineers, accountants, human resources professionals and IT specialists.

The Timeline: DCI will present its action plan and recommendations in the first quarter of 2020.

What's Next: Following the presentation, implementation will include ways to best tell our story and help prospective employees learn about the area.





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IT'S LUCKY NO. 13 FOR EXPRESS EMPLOYMENT PROFESSIONALS

Just over 13 years ago, **Angela** and **Chris Ashcraft** opened their first Express Employment Professionals franchise in Mobile. Soon, they added a second location in Summerdale, and both locations have continued to grow with combined client sales of more than \$18 million.

The Ashcrafts are most proud of the company's mission – to exceed clients' expectations by finding them the most qualified candidates and seeking the most desirable jobs for associates.

"The goal is to be the preferred place of employment for (our) community, as well as the go-to staffing company for clients," said Chris.

For their work in the local market, the Mobile Area Chamber named Express Employment Small Business of the Month. As part of an international franchised staffing company, Express Employment has more than 800 locations across the U.S., Canada and South Africa. The local office has 10 full-time employees.

According to Chris, the firm provides a range of employment options including full-time, temporary and part-time employment in fields such as professional, commercial, heavy and light industrial, human resources and office services. Current job postings are listed on the company's website, which includes an online portal to upload a resume directly from the homepage.

Each of the company's two locations has achieved the Circle of Excellence award from Express, with both offices also having two sales representatives in the company's top 50 rankings internationally. Also in 2016, the Ashcrafts were named Express Franchisees of the Year.

Building the Express brand, Chris is active in the Mobile community, serving on the Chamber's board of advisors and on the board of trustees for St. Luke's Episcopal School. Express belongs to several other chambers in the area, and actively supports the Children's Miracle Network and Waterfront Rescue Mission.

COMPANY NAME: Express Employment Professionals

LOCATION: 3662 Dauphin St., Suite B

WEBSITE: expresspros.com/MobileAL

PHONE: 251.476.8210

COMPANY OWNERS: Angela and Chris Ashcraft

LENGTH OF CHAMBER MEMBERSHIP: 13 years



“The goal is to be the preferred place of employment for (our) community, as well as the go-to staffing company for clients.”



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Photo by Toni Riales

ADAPTING TO THE NEW AGE OF SELLING LOCAL

Whether online shopping, a shrinking media market, being saddled with more debt or even up-cycling, there's no denying today's successful retailers are being forced to adapt a new business model to stay in front of new and existing customers.

Rule number one, according to **Danette Richards**, director of small business development for the Mobile Area Chamber, is a hyper-awareness of one's customer base and what they want.

"A business owner has three options, and they must get them right to succeed," said Richards. "You need to figure out how to recruit new customers, retain customers or upsell to your current client base."

Small business is more pivotal to a community's economic health than its ever been. There are a number of reasons for this, but one, according to **Quint Studer**, author of *Building a Vibrant Community: How Citizen-Powered Change Is Reshaping America* and founder of the Studer Community Institute, is that over the past few decades, most communities have lost the "pillars" that once sustained them. Globalization caused locally owned institutions such as department stores, hospitals,

banks, grocers, television and radio stations, and newspapers, to be bought by large corporations.

Richards points out that successful small business owners like Reney's Honey Butter, Harvest Jewels, Joe Bullard Automotive Group, Tony's Tejas Salsa and McAleer's Office Furniture are committed to adapting to a new way of selling. One example she gives is a furniture store selling new and used sofas and chairs, where it once only sold new items. Selling new and gently used gives a store owner an opportunity to increase his or her customer base, build brand loyalty with quality service and then bring that customer back into the store for future higher-end purchases.

These five Mobile-area business owners are innovating and shaking it up to keep the cash register ringing. If you're feeling inspired and more committed to buying local, the *Business View* offers a "no excuses" guide featuring 25 suggestions by Mobile Area Chamber staffers on items you can buy locally this holiday season.

“If I had to sum up the journey so far, it would be an adventure.”

Photo by Toni Riales

With one Facebook post by her sister in 2016, **Meredith Simmerman** became an entrepreneur overnight.

Fast forward to fall 2019 and Reney's Honey Butter is in more than a dozen area locations and is shipped nationally and internationally. She has a new storefront, The Cottage, in west Mobile where she makes the butter – now in five flavors that change seasonally; serves breakfast; and carries food items from other popular vendors. The Cottage also hosts Food Truck Fridays as a way to meet her customers' demand for food and promote other entrepreneurs.

“That wasn't the plan,” she said referring to breakfast and the storefront, “but doors have been opened for me every step of the way.”

A bountiful berry-picking outing on Easter Sunday 2017 inspired Simmerman to find ways to use all the blackberries she picked with her family earlier in the day. She made muffins, bread, jam and tons of butter flavored with honey and blackberries – so much that she gave it away to family and friends.

The feedback was so positive, she branded her product based on a childhood nickname from her sister, Sydney, and invited everyone she knew to a tasting party. After all the hype, “No one came, and I thought that was it.”

But then Sydney's Facebook testimonial – “we can't stop eating it” – and a montage of photos would sell \$1,000 of blackberry honey butter and an offer to carry her butter in a popular farmer's market – all in under 24 hours.

Simmerman continues to lean on Facebook to reach her target audience, and she had more than 500 people attend her grand opening in September. She's coined the hashtag #dolifebutter and plans a future blog and even a conference to help people tie into her core values – connection, communication and celebration.

“If I had to sum up the journey so far in one word, it would be an adventure,” she said.



Photo by Toni Riales

RENEY'S HONEY BUTTER

reneyshoneybutter.com

“Our real passion is creating pieces that are classic and timeless.”



HARVEST JEWELS

harvestjewels.com



Photo by Devon Ford

When **Rosemary Corte** started designing and selling jewelry four years ago, her vision was to help women feel beautiful through something as simple as jewelry. Her custom creations quickly grew from selling to a few friends to reaching an international audience thanks to organic and paid social media. Without it, she says, there is no way her business could have enabled her to partner with influencers and celebrity stylists to follow and grow the Harvest Jewels brand.

Understanding the power of the brand is nothing new to Corte and her family. For many years, she and her husband have owned and managed a farming business. Her background in art history and design led her to begin thinking about taking inspirations from her environment to create something different - a feminine yet modern line of artistic jewelry incorporating her surrounding farmland and southern roots. Rosemary would often find herself in jeans and work boots adding feminine touches to her attire even when she was out on the farm. She began drawing and designing pieces using inspiration from the saddles of their horses, the animals she watched from her front porch, and the nature all around her. Feathers, acorns, peanuts, cowboy boots and even a late afternoon Southern sky are what led her to create Harvest Jewels, named for her family's farming heritage.

Corte has grown the jewelry company from a small designing outlet to a line featured in retailers in Alabama and across state lines, as well as online at www.harvestjewels.com. “Our real passion is creating pieces that are classic and timeless,” she says. “The design goal is a piece that takes you from jeans to cocktail and anywhere in between.” Her design background allows her also to create custom one-of-a-kind pieces for clients.

The collection's materials include oxidized sterling silver that gives it a dark patina, and gold vermeil over sterling silver. All of her gemstones are natural, semi-precious and precious, and are set using pave diamonds.

Photo by Toni Ricles



“The consumer is way more educated on the products.”

Gone are the days of salespeople sitting in a car showroom waiting for customers to come to them. Technology has mostly changed that business strategy, according to **Ty Bullard**, president of Joe Bullard Automotive Group.

“It has certainly created efficiencies to speed up processes” for buying a car, said Bullard. “It has created more transparency, which creates a greater customer experience. It has connected us with more customers faster than we would have ever done in the past.”

His customer base extends beyond Mobile County, and prospective customers know what they want to buy before they walk into the showroom for a test drive.

“The consumer is way more educated on the products,” said Bullard. “I think the latest stat I heard was the average consumer does 18 hours of research before coming in to the dealership.”

Bullard sees his business like any other retail business that has to adapt to customer expectations and how they shop.

“Business is always changing,” he said. “Part of the challenge is to stay up to date with all the changes fast enough.”

Being in business for 60 years, one of the company’s greatest gifts is customer loyalty. But loyalty is becoming harder to keep, Bullard said. “We have so many awesome customers that are so loyal to our company and our people. But we can’t become a company that thinks people aren’t or won’t be loyal. We must find ways to build value and serve our customers in ways others can’t. You aren’t given loyalty. You must earn it, and that is what our team has to do to stay ahead and stay relevant.”

Joe Bullard Automotive Group serves customers in Mississippi, Alabama, Florida and beyond with a selection of new and pre-owned vehicles.

Photo by Toni Ricles



JOE BULLARD AUTOMOTIVE GROUP

joebullard.com

“My sole purpose of selling my salsa was to develop ‘The World’s Best Salsa.’”



Photo by Toni Riales



Photo by Toni Riales

TONY'S TEJAS SALSA

tonystejasalsa.com

After a friend told him his homemade salsa was the best he'd ever had and encouraged him to sell it, **Tony Ingram** had the idea to brand himself and his salsa into Tony's Tejas Salsa.

"I invented my salsa to be a salad dressing for a fajita salad on my catering menu," said Ingram. "I did the market research and, at the time, salsa was on the verge of being America's number one condiment."

Technology – especially social media – has played a key role in the development of his brand, he said. "The more I learned how to utilize the technology at my disposal, the more effectively I have been able to operate my business."

Ingram says he uses his website to educate potential customers about the differentiating qualities of his product and to push traffic to his retailers and restaurants that carry his salsa. His customers are like everyone else's, he said – they care about what they're eating and the ingredients in their food.

"As a whole, our nation is moving towards eating natural foods without unnecessary preservatives," he said. "That's why I don't compromise on the ingredients in my salsa. It is very clean and natural."

Even with technology giving him so much customer outreach, the surprising part of his business was all the legwork involved, including worrying about logistics.

"My sole purpose of selling my salsa was to develop 'The World's Best Salsa,'" he said. "I actually didn't imagine I would have to spend so much time in the kitchen making salsa, and every year I have had to evolve my logistics strategy to scale my business."

Tony's Tejas Salsa's extensive distribution network includes eight Southeastern U.S. states. The brand is available locally in nine grocery stores in Mobile including Greer's and Whole Foods, as well as three area restaurants.

“How challenging it has been to convince customers that shopping local does not always mean paying more.”

Photo by Toni Riales

McAleer's is Office Furniture. That slogan has kept McAleer's Office Furniture alive and well in the Mobile and Pensacola markets for many years, including earning the Mobile Area Chamber's Small Business of the Year Award in 2015.

Started in 1979, McAleer's is a family business that has garnered customer loyalty along the way. “Loyalty and name recognition often makes all the difference when a customer recognizes our brand, sees our strong online presence and our website,” said **Melissa Cross**, president of McAleer's Office Furniture. “People may decide to go browse online first to look for what they want, but because they trust our name and know they will get local support and service, they give us a chance.”

Cross recognizes technology has changed customers' savviness about the products they want, but she says it has also helped them dispel misconceptions.

“How challenging it has been to convince people that shopping local does not always mean paying more,” says Cross. “We fight every day to let people know we are just as competitive as big box retailers or going online, especially when you consider you get local support for your purchase, as well as the best price. And you get to see and touch the furniture before purchasing it.”

Once she took over the business, Cross says the biggest change to the business was advertising. “Our primary focus now with advertising is internet-based, with search engine marketing, SEO (search engine optimization) and social media being our go-to strategies.”

“With a computer (phone) in our hands at all times, I think it is a positive that people are more aware. And when they truly do their research, we easily come out ahead,” said Cross. “In the end, what our customers most care about is getting the customer service and help they deserve. When you get that and you pay a good price, it really is the best of both worlds.”



Photo by Toni Riales

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NO EXCUSES: 25 WAYS TO SHOP LOCAL RIGHT NOW



1. DECORATE WITH FRESH FLOWERS

from the nearest market or florist.

2. ORDER SOME OR ALL OF YOUR CHRISTMAS MEAL OR PARTY FOOD FROM A CATERER

or enjoy a holiday meal or break from holiday prep work at a local restaurant.



3. BOOK YOUR PET WITH A PET SITTER

or play date at doggie daycare.



4. Get a new 'do and SUPPORT YOUR HAIR STYLIST.

5. CALL A MAID SERVICE

to help with pre- or post-holiday company.



6. ASK A LANDSCAPER
to handle your outside plantings.

8. Plan ahead for the new year by
HIRING A FITNESS TRAINER OR
JOINING A GYM before the rush.

9. ORDER PERSONALIZED
CALENDARS AND
HOLIDAY CARDS
from an area printer.



7. Make an
appointment for a
TOUCH OF SUMMER
SUN AT THE
TANNING SALON.



10. PICK UP THAT “HOMEMADE”
HOLIDAY TREAT AT YOUR
FAVORITE BAKERY.

11. Too busy wrapping
presents or finishing
end of year deadlines?
HAVE A DELI TRAY
DELIVERED.

12. USE A LOCAL TRAVEL AGENT

to book a trip in the new year.

**13. BUY THAT SPECIAL OUTFIT OR ACCESSORY**

at a local boutique or mall.

14. CLEAN THE GRIME OFF YOUR CAR BY VISITING THE LOCAL CAR WASH OR USE A DETAILING SHOP

or take your vehicle to your car dealer for an oil change and they might just wash it for free.

**15. HIRE A PHOTOGRAPHER**

to make a special lasting family memory.

**16. Make reservations for relatives IN A NEARBY BED-AND-BREAKFAST INN OR HOTEL.****17. LET THE DRY CLEANERS FRESHEN UP AND PRESS your party attire.**

- 18. BUY TICKETS TO SPECIAL PERFORMANCES**
at community theaters.



- 19. RENT A CAR INSTEAD OF DRIVING YOURS ON A LONG ROAD TRIP**

or get your tires rotated before you leave on your journey.

- 20. Add to your holiday décor WITH ITEMS FOUND AT LOCAL GIFT SHOPS.**



- 21. GIVE THE GIFT OF A SPA DAY**
and “gift” one to yourself.

- 22. FIND YOUR FAVORITE HOLIDAY “SPIRITS”**
at specialty wine shops.



- 23. SAY THANK YOU TO YOUR HOLIDAY HOST WITH A POTTED PLANT.**

- 24. Remember others by DONATING TO YOUR FAVORITE CHARITY.**

- 25. Be a local tourist and VISIT A FEW OF YOUR FAVORITE MUSEUMS.**





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Source: *Barron's* "Top 1,200 Financial Advisors" list, March 11, 2019. The ranking considered advisors with a minimum of seven years financial services experience and have been employed at their current firm for at least one year. This is a list of the top advisors in each state, with the number of ranking spots determined by each state's population and wealth. Other quantitative and qualitative measures include assets under management, revenues generated by advisors for their firms, and the quality of the advisors' practices, regulatory records, internal company documents, and 100-plus points of data provided by the advisors themselves. *Barron's* is a trademark of Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All rights reserved. Rankings and recognition from *Barron's* are no guarantee of future investment success and do not ensure that a current or prospective client will experience a higher level of performance results and such rankings should not be construed as an endorsement of the advisor.

Source: *Forbes* "Best-in-State Wealth Advisors" list, February 2019. The ranking for this list by SHOOK Research is based on due diligence meetings to evaluate each advisor qualitatively, a major component of a ranking algorithm that includes: client retention, industry experience, review of compliance records, firm nominations; and quantitative criteria, including: assets under management and revenue generated for their firms. *Forbes* is a trademark of Forbes Media LLC. All rights reserved. Rankings and recognition from *Forbes*/SHOOK Research are no guarantee of future investment success and do not ensure that a current or prospective client will experience a higher level of performance results and such rankings should not be construed as an endorsement of the advisor.

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MANUFACTURER OF THE YEAR 2019: KEMIRA

At a groundbreaking in May, Kemira officials announced its new Mobile facility was designed with the “best available technology and most automated and sophisticated control system to ensure the highest level of safety, quality and efficiency.”

“That commitment, solidified by a \$70.8 million investment and the promise of new jobs, made Kemira stand out when it came to naming the Mobile Area Chamber’s Manufacturer of the Year,” said **David Rodgers**, the Chamber’s vice president of economic development.

Kemira, a leading global polymer producer serving the pulp and paper, oil and gas, and water treatment industries, will receive the award at the Chamber’s State of the Economy event on Wednesday, Dec. 18.

“The journey can be intense and awards like this are a great way to reaffirm that we are going in the right direction. To be the best we really must aim beyond the best that we know,” said **Richard Ryder**, Kemira’s Mobile plant manager.

Construction on the new site is underway, and commercial production is scheduled for early 2021. Once completed, the company plans to increase its workforce by one-third and

expects to hire 20 additional employees to handle new process operations, logistics and support functions.

Kemira’s parent company, Kemira Oyj, is based in Helsinki, Finland, with its American headquarters in Atlanta.





INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR 2019: AKER SOLUTIONS

In August, Norway-headquartered Aker Solutions held a grand opening ceremony for its unique Oscilay umbilical manufacturing facility at Middle Bay Port. Umbilicals link surface and seafloor oil and gas equipment for controls, power or heat.

“The new building and introduction of [the] Oscilay production method supports the strategy of transforming the Mobile site into Aker Solutions’ global center of excellence for manufacturing of umbilicals and distribution equipment,” said **Vigleik Sexe**, Aker’s vice president of products for the U.S.

The company’s Oscilay advanced manufacturing process reduces the number of splices needed for long-length cables, reducing costs and project time. The company’s first order is under production at the Mobile site, and the company won another contract with design, engineering and manufacturing being performed by the Mobile team.

“Aker’s continued investment in technology and the role it plays in the Mobile facility’s success is why we are honoring the company with the Mobile Area Chamber’s 2019 Innovator of the Year Award,” said **David Rodgers**, the Chamber’s vice president of economic development.





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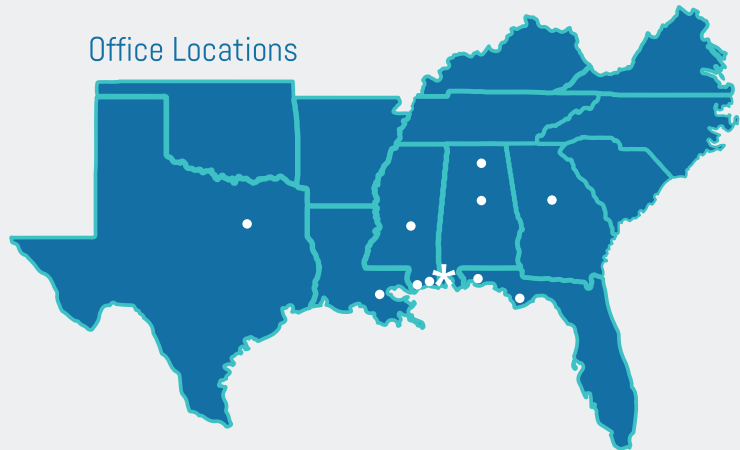
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Cardiology Associates of Mobile is led by Dr. Gerry M. Phillips, president/chairman (seated) and Vance M. Chunn, CEO/administrator.

CARDIOLOGY ASSOCIATES OF MOBILE INC.

About Partners For

Growth: Growing Global, Investing Local 2018-2022, Partners For Growth is a five-year, public-private initiative of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, to grow and diversify Mobile's economy. Its five pillars include: 1) new business recruitment and investment attraction; 2) existing industry support, innovation and entrepreneurship; 3) workforce attraction, retention and development; 4) diverse business development; and 5) business advocacy and quality of place.

Join the Chamber's economic development investors by contacting David Rodgers, vice president, economic development, at 251-431-8657 or drodgers@mobilechamber.com.



Company officials: Gerry M. Phillips, MD, president/chairman; and Vance M. Chunn, CEO/administrator

Website: cardassoc.com

Years in business: 34 – established July 1, 1985

Brief company description: Cardiology Associates offers comprehensive and advanced treatment for cardiovascular disease in adults and children, employing nearly 30 board-certified physicians, 20 physician assistants and nurse practitioners and more than 250 employees, serving Mobile and Baldwin counties and four outreach areas within a 100-mile radius of Mobile.

Why are you located in Mobile? “Mobile is my home, and when I began practicing here in 1985, I saw the need to provide a complete source of heart and vascular care to patients in Mobile and its surrounding communities,” said Phillips.

Why do you support the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's Partners for Growth initiative? “Cardiology Associates believes in the future of Mobile and the Chamber's role in its growth and momentum,” said Chunn. “Cardiology Associates will continue to help build on Mobile's history and success and is invested in keeping Mobile moving forward.”

What do you see as Mobile's greatest potential? “Continued growth and development in all areas, especially in business as well as the healthcare community,” said Phillips.

How long have you been a continuous Mobile Area Chamber member? Since 1991.



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.

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GINA McKELLAR

CROW SHIELDS BAILEY PC

TITLE: Managing Shareholder

HOMETOWN: Mobile

EDUCATION: McKellar earned a bachelor's degree in business administration with a concentration in accounting from the University of South Alabama. She is a certified public accountant and certified valuation analyst.

FIRST JOB: "Babysitting. When I was a teenager, I loved children, so babysitting was a win/win for me," she said. "I was able to do something I loved and be paid for it."

WHO/WHAT INSPIRES YOU? "I have great respect for former First Lady Laura Bush. I heard her speak in Mobile recently, which reminded me why I have always admired her. She is a champion for education and literacy and for women's health issues. From my perspective, she has always been an example of intelligence, elegance and grace."

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: Member of American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Alabama Society of Certified Public Accountants, Mobile Chapter of Alabama Society of Certified Public Accountants and National Association of Certified Valuators and Analysts; serves on boards of McGill-Toolen Foundation and Smart Home Alabama.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SEASON AND WHY? "Fall. I love the cooler weather, changes in the foliage, football and the anticipation of the holidays."

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE HOLIDAY? Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday because it is centered around family time. There is nothing I would rather do than spend time with my family, especially since my sons all live in different states now.

DO YOU HAVE A HIDDEN TALENT? "Water skiing. I love all activities that involve being around water."

WHAT WORD WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF? "Calm. Raising three boys who are very close in age tested this trait at times, but overall I am an easy-going person. I think it has helped me in my career, especially since accounting tends to be a stressful field at times."

BRIEF COMPANY DESCRIPTION: Crow Shields Bailey PC (CSB) is a full-service accounting and consulting firm, headquartered in Mobile, with additional offices in Daphne and Gulf Shores. CSB has more than 30 years of experience and institutional knowledge in accounting, tax and consulting services. A talented team of more than 40 professionals provides expertise in auditing, taxation and estate planning, business consulting, business valuations, litigation support, client accounting services, community association services, payroll services and more.



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ALEX EMME TRIUMPH AIRBORNE STRUCTURES

Alex Emme joined Triumph Airborne Structures in 2010 as the vice president of operations with responsibilities in customer service, engineering and production. Prior to joining Triumph, he worked for Goodrich, where he served in multiple roles that covered operations, on-site customer interface and business development, eventually becoming director of sales and marketing in Foley. In August 2018, Emme was appointed president at Triumph Airborne Structures and Triumph Interiors. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Alameda University in Boise, Idaho. He also served in the U.S. Navy.



LEEANN MAY HARTMANN, BLACKMON & KILGORE PC

LeeAnn May is the principal of Hartmann, Blackmon & Kilgore PC and is the director of the Mobile office location. May has been with the company for more than 10 years. She began her career with the firm after graduating from Troy University in 2008. May is a member of the Alabama Society of Certified Public Accountants and American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, and she serves as the financial advisor for the University of South Alabama's Chi Omega chapter.

PAUL SHORROSH ACCUREG SOFTWARE

Paul Sorrosh is the founder/CEO of Database Solutions Inc. d/b/a AccuReg Software. He has nearly 30 years' experience managing Patient Access and Revenue Cycle teams and processes for hospitals, including Providence Hospital, Mercy Medical and Springhill Medical Center. Shorrosh started Database Solutions Inc., d/b/a AccuReg in 2005. Today, AccuReg serves nearly 300 hospitals in 42 states and employs nearly 100 health care revenue cycle software experts, mostly out of the company's headquarters in Mobile.



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NEW STAFF

CHAMBER NAMES VP OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Neil Christopher is the Mobile Area Chamber's new vice president of finance and operations.

In this role, he will manage all aspects of financial accounting, expense control and cash management for the Chamber, the Chamber Foundation, Industrial Development Board of the City of Mobile, Industrial Park Board, Industrial Development Authority of Mobile County, economic development funds and other special funds and accounts, retirement plans and performance contracts. He also leads the Chamber's human resources responsibilities and oversees maintenance and security of Chamber buildings.

Christopher comes to the Chamber from Warren Averett LLC, where he provided various services for clients that included tax preparation and planning, outsourced CFO projects and attestation engagements. Prior to that, he was a controller for Precision IBC Inc., managing day-to-day operations of the accounting department.

"We're thrilled to have Neil as a part of our Chamber team," said **Bill Sisson**, the Chamber's president and CEO. "Neil brings a wealth of knowledge and experience, and that background will undoubtedly serve the Chamber well as we continue to grow and expand programming and services."

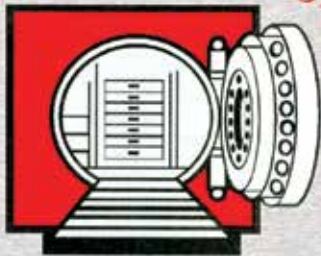
"I love this city that I call home, and it's an honor to serve and promote the local businesses of Mobile," said Christopher.

He graduated from the University of South Alabama with a bachelor's degree in business administration, and is a CPA.

Christopher can be reached at 251.431.8625 or nchristopher@mobilechamber.com.

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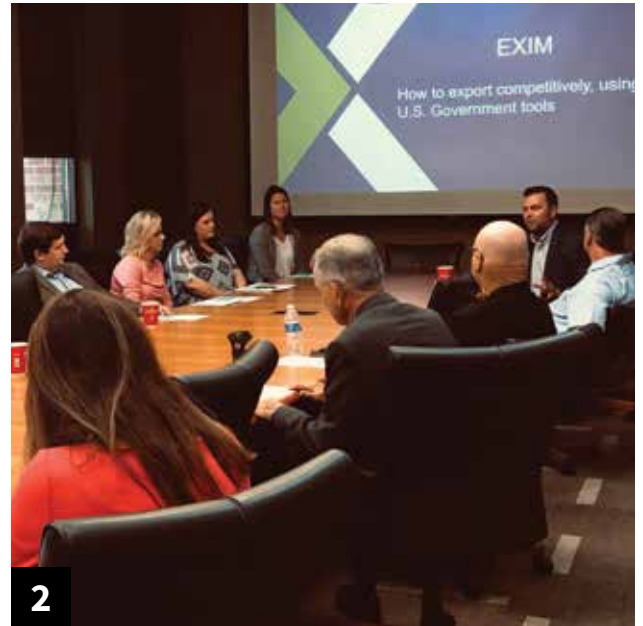
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CHAMBER AT WORK





6

1 NATIONAL MEDIA IN MOBILE TO LOOK AT

MANUFACTURING The Mobile Area Chamber worked with reporter Peter Zampa with Gray TV's Washington Bureau on a visit to Mobile in August. While in Mobile, Zampa was interested in learning more about the city's manufacturing and shipping industries. He toured facilities and interviewed Brian Harold with APM Terminals, Craig Perciavalle with Austal USA and Kristi Tucker with Airbus. Zampa's stories were offered to Gray TV's network of 93 stations, including three in Alabama – Montgomery, Birmingham and Huntsville.

2 MEMBERS LEARN HOW TO INCREASE FOREIGN SALES

More than a dozen Chamber members attended an international business division-hosted workshop on "Attracting Foreign Sales with EXIM Bank." Jennifer Simpson, regional director for EXIM (formerly Export-Import Bank of the U.S.), presented on trade financing solutions – including export credit insurance, working capital guarantees and guarantees of commercial loans to foreign buyers.

3 & 4 INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS DIVISION

TRAVELS TO THE UAE Christina Stimpson and Kayley Shepard with the Chamber's international business division participated in a multi-industry trade mission to Dubai and Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. Led by the Alabama Department of Commerce, 17 individuals representing 12 companies/organizations participated in U.S. Embassy briefings, business-to-business meetings with potential local partners and a networking reception hosted by the U.S.-U.A.E. Business Council and sponsored by the Chamber.



7

5 LEADERS EXCHANGE TRAVELS TO SAVANNAH

The Chamber's annual Leaders Exchange visited Savannah, Ga., in late October. This annual trip takes a delegation of local elected officials and business and community leaders to study best practices in cities with similarities to Mobile. More than 90 people participated in this year's trip. They learned about Savannah's history, tourism, warehousing and logistics operations and city policies, among other relevant topics, during the three-day visit.

6 & 7 CHAMBER STAFF TRAVELS TO MIRABEL FOR A220 UPDATES AND TOURS

Chamber President and CEO Bill Sisson and Shelby Glover Zaricor, director of business development, along with 20 community leaders, were invited to attend an Airbus event in Mirabel, Quebec, to tour the A220 line and receive briefings on Airbus plans for the Mobile assembly facility.

CHAMBER AT WORK



8 STAFFER RECEIVES AWARD FROM SBA

Danette Richards, director of small business development at the Chamber received a director's award from the Small Business Administration in October for her work with the SBA Emerging Leaders program. Richards has provided staff support for the training program's three classes with each group graduating 100% of its participants. No other program in Alabama has achieved a graduation rate this high.

9 MOBILE RECEIVES FDI AWARD In October, Christina Stimpson, director of foreign direct investment with the Chamber received an award from fDi magazine for Mobile's ranking as the fifth best city in the Americas with a foreign direct investment strategy. The awards were presented by fDi magazine editor-in-chief and Alabama native Courtney Finegar. The ranking was announced in the magazine's June/July 2019 issue. In early 2019 the Chamber announced a new economic development strategy focused on foreign direct investment to complement its international trade division.

10 JOHN HOPE BRYANT SPEAKS TO SOLD

OUT EAGLE AWARDS “My challenge to you Mobile is to reimagine everything.” This was how John Hope Bryant closed his remarks to a sold out Eagle Awards luncheon crowd in late October. Bryant, an entrepreneur and author, left the crowd on their feet with his powerful and motivational remarks that touched on everything from taking personal responsibility for your career to challenging successful minority business owners to support others. This annual luncheon recognized the accomplishments and achievements of minority-owned businesses with Eagle Awards, and also honors Mobile’s Minority Business Advocate (MBA). This year’s recipients were Dortch, Figures & Sons Inc. and Victory Professional Development Center. The MBA was presented to MAWSS.

11 & 12 RODGERS AND ZARICOR GRADUATE

FROM INSTITUTE This fall the Chamber’s Economic Development Department’s Vice President David Rodgers and Director of Business Development Shelby Glover Zaricor graduated from the University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute. The program is an intensive 117-hour certification program providing attendees with a broad spectrum of advanced education for economic developers. The program takes between one and two years, and includes business retention and expansion, real estate, credit analysis, marketing, strategic planning and entrepreneurship.

NEW BOARD OF ADVISORS NAMED The Chamber announced several new Board of Advisors members, bringing the total to 260. They are Alabama School of Math & Science, BlueWater Yacht Sales, Bryant Bank, Fausak Tires & Service and Quality Filters. To learn more about this group of influential members, contact Shelly Mattingly at 251.431.8655 or smattingly@mobilechamber.com.

TRAINING FOR NONPROFITS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Marcus Neto, creative director for Blue Fish, spoke to members of the Chamber’s Nonprofit Roundtable in November on the topic “Navigating Your Way Through the Social Landscape.” This group is made up of Chamber members who work for local nonprofits. To learn more about Nonprofit Roundtable or to join the group, contact Carolyn Golson at 251.431.8622 or cgolson@mobilechamber.com.

30 YEARS OF JAPAN-AMERICA SOCIETY OF

ALABAMA The Chamber’s international business division team attended the Japan-America Society of Alabama’s 30th anniversary dinner celebration in Birmingham. The event recognized new and expanding Japanese companies in Alabama, and featured remarks from Alabama’s Honorary Consul to Japan, Mark Jackson; Japanese Consul General, Takashi Shinozuka; the Embassy of Japan’s Deputy Chief of Mission, Kazutoshi Aikawa; and the founding president of the U.S. Japan-Council, Irene Inouye. The Chamber joined this organization in 1997, when the trade department was created.

MEMBER RIBBON CUTTINGS AND GRAND

OPENINGS Chamber staff and ambassadors helped cut ribbons and celebrate grand openings at La Quinta Inn & Suites, Glazed Doughnuts, 1031 Meals, The Salad Station, American Esoteric Laboratories and Bay Gourmet Catering. The Chamber works with all members on these types of events. For more information, contact Dawn Rencher at 251.431.8649 or drencher@mobilechamber.com.

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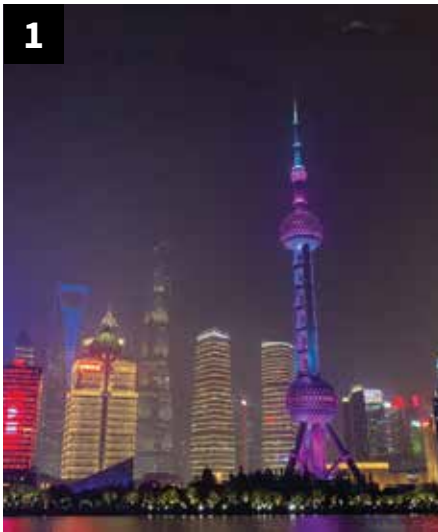


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TRAVEL WITH THE CHAMBER



Over a decade ago, the Mobile Area Chamber hosted a group of 95 women and men on a week-long adventure to China. It was the beginning of an international travel program that has taken several thousand guests to places spanning the globe to include Cuba, Portugal, Canada, Italy, Croatia and beyond. This fall the Chamber hosted over 140 people on two trips – a return trip to China and a river cruise along the Rhone River in France, preceded by two days in Geneva and followed by two days in Paris.

Trips in 2020 will include Australia and New Zealand in January, Greece in March and the Amalfi Coast in November, and all tours are on a waiting list. To be added, or learn more about what we're planning for 2021, contact Leigh Perry-Herndon at 251.431.8645 or lherndon@mobilechamber.com.



1- 3 CHINA 4-7 FRANCE



DECEMBER 2019

For more information on Chamber events, visit mobilechamber.com

4 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.

17 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: Bill Sisson, President & CEO,
Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce

Topic: "Economic Development and
Chamber Update"

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

No charge, but RSVP requested. Free parking.

Sponsor: BancorpSouth

18 STATE OF THE ECONOMY

The Chamber's annual State of the Economy event will feature a panel of business leaders representing leading industry sectors in Mobile. After the morning panel, participants will hear from a noted economist and results of the 2019 State of the Economy survey will be presented..

When: 8 to 10:30 a.m./Doors open at 7:30 a.m.

Where: The Battle House Hotel

Cost: \$40 for Chamber members /
\$50 for potential members

Contact: Vanessa Washington at 251.431.8636
or vwashington@mobilechamber.com

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24-25 CHAMBER CLOSED MERRY CHRISTMAS

31 CHAMBER CLOSED HAPPY NEW YEAR

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JANUARY 2020

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01 CHAMBER CLOSED HAPPY NEW YEAR

20 CHAMBER CLOSED MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

21 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: Dr. Reggie Sykes, President, Bishop State Community College

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

No charge, but RSVP requested. Free parking.

Sponsor: Bancorp South

22 PORK AND POLITICS IN THE PARK

Ahead of the primaries, come meet the candidates running for office and federal, state and local elected officials while enjoying barbeque at Battleship Memorial Park.

When: 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Where: Battleship Memorial Park, Aircraft Pavilion

Cost: \$30

Contact: Mallory Tyson, 251.431.8628 or mtyson@mobilechamber.com

Free parking.

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23 BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

When: 5:30 to 7 p.m.

Where: The Admiral Hotel, 251 Government St.

Cost: \$5 for members and \$10 for potential members

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

Reservations are not needed.

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THANK YOU TO THE SPONSORS OF OUR DECEMBER/ JANUARY EVENTS



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 2 percent achieved five-star distinction.

WHO'S NEW

Cunningham Bounds Adds Associate



Jayjohn

The attorneys of **Cunningham Bounds LLC** welcomed **Jennifer B. Jayjohn** as an associate.

Jayjohn graduated from Troy University with a bachelor's degree in political science. She earned a law degree from Cumberland School of Law.

USA Adds Staff



Butts

Caleb Butts MD joined **USA Health University Hospital** as a trauma and burn surgeon and the University of South Alabama College of Medicine as assistant professor in the department of surgery.

He earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Mississippi State University before returning to Alabama for medical school and residency training.



Addison-Sykora

Laura Addison-Sykora recently joined **USA Health** as a nurse practitioner in the department of surgery. She earned both bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing from the University of South Alabama.

Stirling Properties Hires Advisor



Bethea

Steadman Bethea joined **Stirling Properties'** commercial real estate team as an advisor. Bethea graduated from Samford University with a bachelor's degree in business

administration and finance and holds commercial real estate licenses in Florida and Alabama.

Premier Medical Names Eye Specialist



Salisbury

C. Drew Salisbury MD returned to Mobile to join his father in providing specialized eye care at **Premier Medical**. Salisbury earned a medical degree from the University of Alabama

at Birmingham and completed a fellowship in corneal surgery at Eye Consultants in Atlanta.

Exit Realty Lyon Hires

Lamoura Nettles joined **Exit Realty's** team of real estate sales professionals.

Wilkins Miller Promotes and Hires



Chen



Fox



Cooper

Wilkins Miller hired **Dottie Hill** and **Zach Enger**. Hill brings more than 30 years of experience to the firm's administrative team. Enger

joins the company's information technologies division as an IT support specialist. He received a bachelor's degree in commerce and business administration from The University of Alabama. The firm also promoted **Judy Chen** CPA to manager; **Simon Fox** CPA to supervisor; **Courtney McGehee** CPA to senior accountant; and **Morgan Cooper** to marketing director.

Franklin Primary Hires New Physicians



King



Brown

Lisa King MD and **Kevin Brown MD** joined the medical staff of **Franklin Primary Health**. King graduated from The University of Alabama with a bachelor's degree in biology and psychology. She earned a medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville and completed her residency in family practice at Franciscan Medical Center in Dayton, Ohio.

Brown earned a medical degree with a distinction in research from Chicago Medical School. He completed the Jackson Memorial Hospital/ University of Miami Internal Medicine Residency Program. He earned a bachelor's degree in microbiology/premed from Xavier University and a master's degree in biomedical science from Rosalind Franklin University of Science and Medicine in Chicago.

Synovus Names Market President



Fenderson

Tyrone Fenderson joins **Synovus** with nearly 30 years in the financial services industry. He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Faulkner University and a master's in business administration from Troy University. He is a graduate of the Alabama Banking School at the University of South Alabama, the

Graduate School of Banking at Louisiana State University and the Stonier Graduate School of Banking at University of Pennsylvania.

C² Wealth Strategies Names Advisors



Turlington



Bigness



Jones

C² Wealth hired **Joseph Turlington** as a financial advisor and **Chase Bigness** and **Greg Jones** as insurance advisors.

Bellator Real Estate Welcomes Agents



Irish



Goolsby



Flowers



Brown

Bellator Real Estate & Development added the following Realtors: **Amanda Irish**, **Shaun Goolsby**, **Connie Flowers**, **Charles Cullefer** and **Brittany Brown**.

RTBH Hires Accountant & Administrator



Marroquin



Leonard

The Partners of **Russell Thompson Butler & Houston** hired **Javier Marroquin** as a staff accountant and **Renee Leonard** as the firm's administrator. Marroquin earned his bachelor's degree in accounting from Spring Hill College in 2019. Leonard holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Western Governors University and her CAP-OM designation.

Container Yard Has New Team Member



Snyder

Container Yard, a member-driven coworking community located in downtown Mobile, welcomed **Mark Snyder** as its community manager assisting with daily logistics, planning and marketing goals. Snyder graduated from Spring Hill College with a bachelor's degree in marketing and management.

Mobile Convention Center Hires New Chef

The **Mobile Convention Center** welcomed **Phillip Mitchell** as the new executive chef. He brings more than 20 years of culinary experience to the ASM Global Mobile team. He has received numerous awards for food service and catering.

ACF Names Administrator



Brewer

Pamela Brewer joined the **Alabama Coastal Foundation** team as administrator.

Brewer earned a bachelor's degree in fine arts from the University of Southern

Mississippi. She has more than 25 years of administrative experience.

Valent Group Expands Mobile Bay Area Team

Valent Group, a risk consulting and insurance division of EBSCO Industries, hired **Paul Elliott**, a 24-year insurance veteran and senior risk consultant, to the Mobile team. He is a graduate of Troy University with a bachelor's degree in business education.

Symbol Health Solutions Adds to Sales Team



Reeves



Riley

Symbol Health Solutions, which runs employer-sponsored onsite health and wellness centers, added **Steven A. Reeves** and **Clint Riley** to the Alabama sales team. Reeves, a 30-year human resources veteran, is a senior development consultant specializing in local government. Riley, a former human resources employee services manager at Austal USA with 25 years of experience, is an account executive.

BUSINESS ENDEAVORS

Mobile Bay National Estuary Gets Funding

The **Mobile Bay National Estuary Program** recently hired a team, including Chamber members **Thompson Engineering** and **Moffatt & Nichol**, to conduct planning, engineering and design for Mobile Bay's western shore. The project will stabilize over one mile of shoreline and protect interior salt marsh identified as high priority. Funding was granted by the National Fish and Wildlife Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund as part of the BP oil spill settlement.

USA Receives Grant

The **University of South Alabama (USA)** College of Medicine received a \$4.4 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration to improve the health of underserved areas and increase the number of primary care physicians. Through a partnership with **Franklin Primary Health Center** and **AltaPointe Health**, USA students will also be able to complete rotations in these community health centers.

KMB Starts Urban Orchard

Keep Mobile Beautiful (KMB) is joining forces with Strickland Youth Center to establish an urban orchard that will provide fresh fruit to neighborhood residents and job skills to at-risk youth. Funds for the project come from a \$5,000 grant from Keep America Beautiful and United Parcel Service (UPS) and a \$1,000 grant from **Alabama Power** Foundation's Grass Roots Program. This winter, KMB and community partners will plant over 100 fruit-producing trees on the Strickland campus, located along the Three Mile Creek Greenway.

Providence Health Launches Online Program

Providence Health System, part of Ascension, launched its Ascension Online Care platform, giving consumers 24/7 access to a one-on-one video visit with a healthcare provider using the device of their choice: smart phone, tablet or laptop. The cost of a visit is \$49 and does not require insurance.

SIS Grows

Smith Industrial Services (SIS), a leading provider of industrial and environmental services, acquired Clean Rite Corp. of Saraland.

UM Adds New Athletic Training Program

University of Mobile added a master of athletic training degree. This will be the entry-level professional degree for athletic training professionals, with the recent decision by the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education to no longer accredit undergraduate athletic training programs after 2022.

Alabama Shipyard Continues Work

Alabama Shipyard LLC, previously EPIC Alabama Shipyard LLC, was reorganized and re-capitalized under consolidated ownership to continue operations in Mobile. The company's plans are to continue ship repair, modernization and overhaul for government and commercial ship owners and operators.

Hargrove Engineers + Constructors Extends Reach

Hargrove Engineers + Constructors engineering firm announced the expansion of its Southeast presence by opening a new office in Greenville, South Carolina. This is the company's 14th full-service operation and the first South Carolina location.

WELL DONE

An Epic Museum

Mobile's **GulfQuest National Maritime Museum** was one of four featured in Livability's "Epic Museums in Small (But Extraordinary) Cities." The museum's ocean planet theater was the article's featured photo promoted by the online resource for helping people find the best places to live, work and visit.

Rowan Associate Wins Award



Rowan

Dr. Leona Rowan, an associate with W. C. Rowan Associates Consulting and former **Spring Hill College** professor, received the Eleanor Roosevelt Award.

The award was presented by the Kappa Delta Pi (KDP) International Honor Society in Education in recognition of significant and longtime contributions to excellence in education. Rowan currently serves as an advisor to KDP.

Burr & Forman Partner Appointed

Burr & Forman Mobile partner **Ricardo Woods** was recently appointed by the Defense Research Institute (DRI) to serve in the role of national diversity chairman for the organization. Woods also serves as the chief legal counsel and city attorney for the **City of Mobile**.

Wilkins Miller Accountant Earns CPA

Wilkins Miller LLC accounting and advisory firm announced **Avril McRae** has successfully completed and passed the uniform certified public accountant examination. McRae earned a bachelor's degree of science in business administration with a concentration in accounting from the University of South Alabama.

University of Mobile Makes List

For the 23rd consecutive year, the **University of Mobile** was selected one of "America's Best Christian Colleges" by **Institutional Research & Evaluation Inc.** The "2020 America's Best Christian Colleges" list was chosen from among 1,431 colleges and universities in the United States included in the 29th Annual National College Survey. The annual survey was conducted by the higher education consulting firm.

AM/NS Calvert Earns Certification

AM/NS Calvert recently achieved Wildlife Habitat Council's (WHC) Conservation Certification for demonstrating a commitment to environmental stewardship. WHC's certification program is the voluntary sustainability standard designed for habitat enhancement and conservation education activities on corporate lands.

Symbol Health Solutions Ranks In Top 5

Symbol Health Solutions LLC was ranked 4th in Top Alabama Companies and 32nd in Top Health Companies categories in the 2019 *Inc.* 5000 list of the nation's fastest-growing private companies. Headquartered in Mobile, Symbol Health Solutions assumes the financial risk of establishing onsite medical clinics for employers with self-funded health plans.

Johnstone Adams Makes 'Best' List

Johnstone Adams LLC announced the inclusion of eight of its attorneys in the 2020 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*. Attorneys included on the list are **Charles C. Simpson III, E. Watson Smith, Celia J. Collins, Wade B. Perry Jr., Lawrence J. Seiter, R. Gregory Watts, Ben H. Harris Jr.** and **Tracy P. Turner**.

In addition, the firm was ranked in the 2020 *U.S. News* – Best Lawyers "Best Law Firms" list regionally in 12 practice areas: construction litigation, labor and employment litigation, real estate litigation, tax law, trusts and estate law, workers' compensation defense, commercial litigation, employee benefits (ERISA) law, employment law – management, labor law – management, healthcare law and insurance law.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Hancock Whitney Awards Nonprofits Grants

Hancock Whitney awarded \$200,000 in competitive grants to 16 eligible 501(c)(3) Gulf Coast nonprofit organizations engaged in affordable housing construction and rehabilitation for low-to-moderate income individuals, programs that support small businesses and youth programs for low-to-moderate income youth that provide job training, entrepreneurship training and internship opportunities. Goodwill Industries-Easter Seals of the Gulf Coast Inc. is one of the grant recipients.

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

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHER

TONI RIALES

Toni Riales is a commercial photographer with a studio located in Mobile. After starting out in radio, she became a fashion photographer who now has 20 years of professional photography experience. She works with local, regional and national magazines for fashion editorial; shoots commercial, food and product photography for small and large businesses; and creates portfolios for modeling agencies across the country. Her work has been featured in magazines including *Mobile Bay*, *Cliché Los Angeles*, *Fashion Chicago*, *EnVie Tokyo* and *Vogue Italia*, as well as numerous others. Toni's work is featured on the cover, as well as in the "Adapting to the New Age of Selling Local" story on pages 14–19. To see more of Riales' portfolio, visit toniriales.com.





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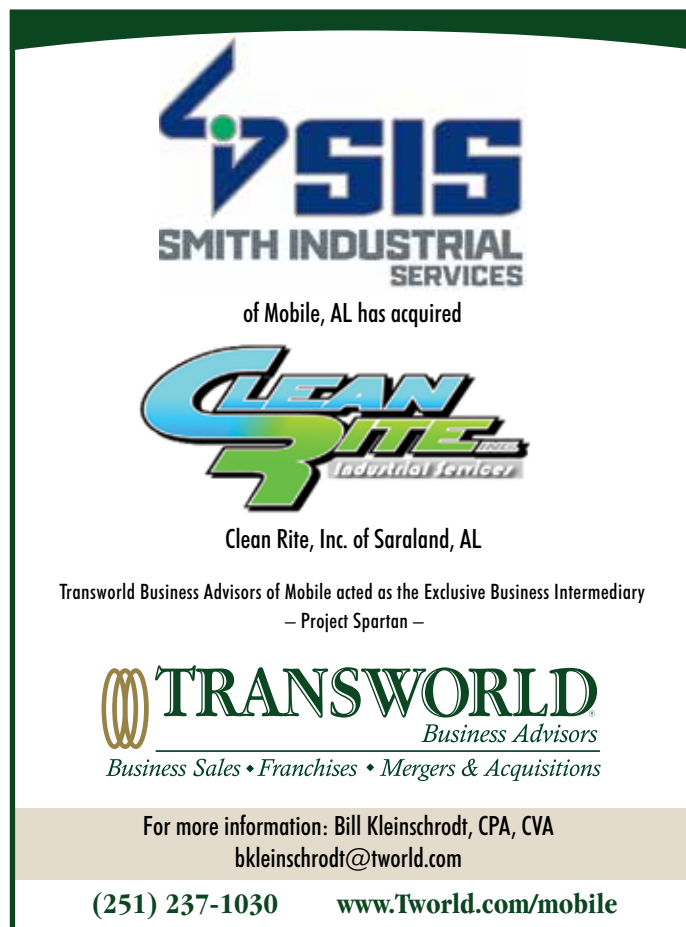
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