

Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce

MAY 2019

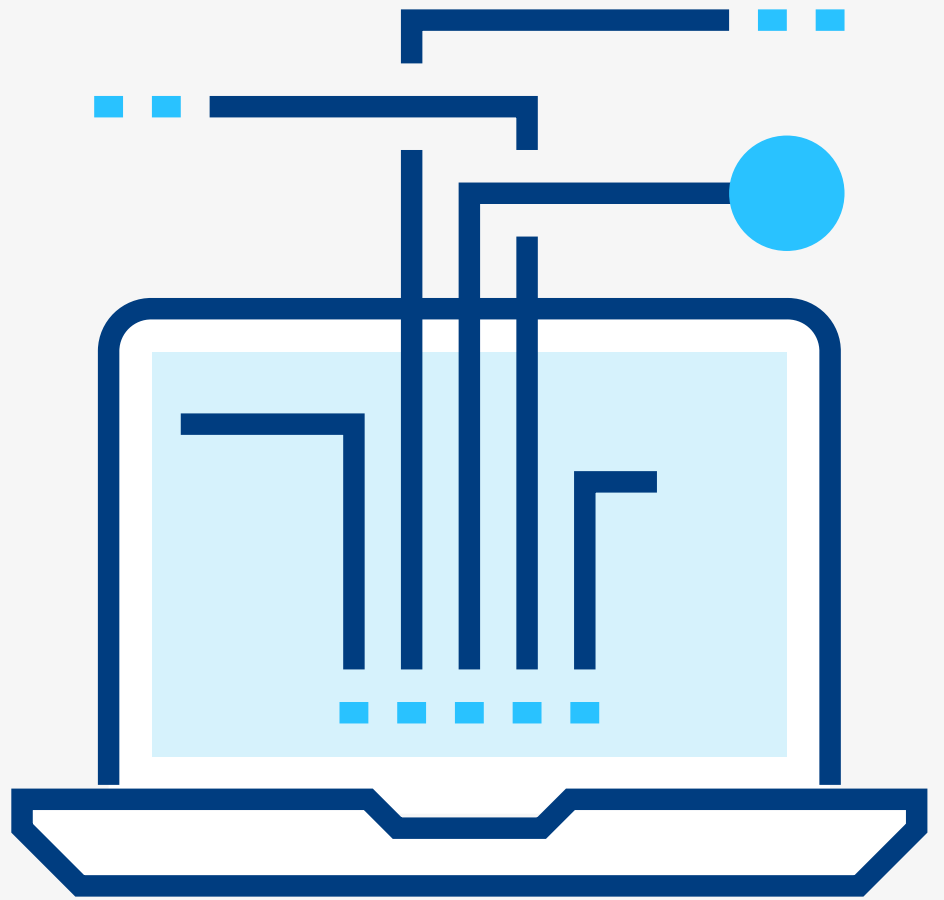
the **businessview**



AeroStar Receives
State Trade Award

Chamber Chase
Kicks Off

Container Service
Expands in Mobile



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From the Publisher - Bill Sisson

Shopping Locally is Vitrally Important to the Local Economy

Spring is in full swing here in the Mobile Bay region, and that means summer is just around the corner. In preparation for the vacation season, many of us will be purchasing items for the summer and for myriad outdoor activities. People will be shopping for clothes, bathing suits, and buying new equipment for various lawn care and garden needs. And it won't be long before lots of parents and their school children will be shopping for back-to-school needs.

In the hustle and bustle of this brisk shopping season, many shoppers will turn to the internet to make their purchases. Shopping on the internet can be fun, convenient, and at times can result in huge bargains and savings. But before you head straight to your computer or phone, I encourage you to consider shopping locally.

Why should you shop locally? There are a million reasons why you should, but the most

important reason is because it directly supports the local economy. You are helping to support local jobs and are helping local businesses. And these businesses give back to the community in ways big out-of-town retailers simply can not because they are not physically located here. That's not to say internet sales are completely bad for Mobile,



since we're blessed to be a distribution hub for retailers like Walmart and Amazon. But before automatically defaulting to the internet for all your purchases, I encourage you to also consider the local small businesses that depend on all of us to keep them healthy and growing.

By the way, shopping locally is fun and provides a customer service experience unlike any you'll find on the web. Local businesses tend to be much more service-oriented and responsive – and I can guarantee that you will be greeted with a warm welcome at their stores. They will undoubtedly go out of their way to satisfy you, their customer.

So next time you need to make a purchase or just go shopping for fun, take a look around our city at the hundreds of options available right here at home. You'll be supporting your friends and neighbors and pumping up our local economy.

The Mobile Area Chamber

has had fun using its branding campaign to encourage the community to spend their dollars right here at home. Through our media partners, Lamar Advertising and Lagniappe, we've created messages such as Believe in Mobile. Shop Local for Father's Day. We've done the same with Mother's Day, graduation and Christmas.



ON THE COVER

Chamber Chase volunteers are working to raise more than \$1.45 M in new members, event sponsorships, donated services and more. Pictured on the cover are key volunteers: Ryan New, Valencia Cherry, Linda Faulkner, Jennie Campbell (chair), Sherry Coker, James Alexander, Rachel New, Kay Williams and Nate Patterson. See the story on pgs. 12-15.
Photo by Jeff Tesney.

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CMA CGM Expands Port of Mobile Service

The Alabama State Port Authority (ASPA) announced CMA CGM added to its PEX-3 Asia Service, offering new market options for containerized cargo shippers at the Port of Mobile this spring. Ports of call will now include Port of Vung Tau, Vietnam, and the ports of Singapore, Hong Kong, Shekou, Ningbo, Shanghai and Busan.

"Vietnam's domestic consumption for U.S. steel, machinery, aircraft, automobiles and machinery is rapidly growing, presenting new opportunities for Alabama manufacturers seeking to sell into the Vietnamese market, and an opportunity

for the port to service that trade," said **Jimmy Lyons**, director and CEO for ASPA.

Vietnam posted 6.8 percent gross domestic product growth in 2017, and PricewaterhouseCoopers predicts the country will have the strongest average GDP growth until 2050, exceeding 5.1 percent a year, and will move from the 32nd largest economy to the 20th by 2050.

The larger ships add much-needed capacity for our exporters shipping into Asia.

Jimmy Lyons
Director and CEO,
Alabama State Port Authority

Additionally, CMA CGM is phasing out its 6000-plus TEU (20-foot equivalent units) ships in the PEX-3 service and replacing them with 8000-plus TEU ships. The company is the second to provide this size vessel and weekly service.

"The larger ships add much-needed capacity for our exporters shipping into Asia," said Lyons. The PEX-3 service has 12 vessels assigned to it resulting in a weekly call into the Port of Mobile.



Threaded Fasteners's new galvanizing facility means components like these will now be manufactured and galvanized in Mobile. The 40-year-old company serves utilities and utility contractors. Pictured here is a cell phone tower model with Threaded Fasteners-made components.

Threaded Fasteners Adds New Galvanizing Facility

Large bolts that help anchor highway directional signs, cell phone towers and even commercial buildings are now going through the needling protection process to avoid rust and corrosion here in Mobile.

Threaded Fasteners recently completed a \$1.5 million, 12,000-square-foot galvanizing facility and added six new positions, according to **Brian Pugh**, the company's corporate counsel. With the new investment, Threaded Fasteners can complete the galvanizing process onsite for the majority of its products, be more responsive to customer needs and even take on galvanizing products for other companies.

Founded in 1979, the Mobile-based company makes a variety

of large bolts, ranging from two feet to 20 feet in diameter, at its five-acre manufacturing center in Semmes. Threaded Fasteners serves primarily utilities and utility contractors around the country.

In addition to the Semmes manufacturing center, the 40-year-old company's headquarters are in Mobile, with six other U.S. offices in Mississippi, Florida, Oklahoma and Tennessee, and approximately 175 employees – half of them in Mobile County. In 2017, Threaded Fasteners added a second manufacturing center in Tampa, Fla., with the acquisition of the privately held Bolt & Nut company.

AeroStar Receives Trade Excellence Award



Gov. Kay Ivey is pictured with Greg Guzman, president of AeroStar.

Mobile based AeroStar was one of eight companies across the state receiving the 2019 Governor's Trade Excellence Awards, recognizing companies fueling Alabama's robust export business and selling innovative designs and products in markets worldwide.

Providing component maintenance on civilian aircraft, with global customers from Asia, Europe, Africa and the Americas, AeroStar opened in 2011 with two employees and a 6,000-square-foot facility. The company has grown to 35 employees and more than 25,000 square feet, with space to grow its workforce to 60. The company is targeting Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the Pacific Rim to capitalize on projected air traffic growth in those regions.

Interestingly, the week AeroStar received its state award, the company held

a grand opening on its \$2 million expansion project at Mobile Aeroplex at Brookley, announced in 2018.

"Our winners this year range in size from the small business to the large corporation, and also hail from different parts of Alabama. They each represent the type of company that makes us strong as a state," **Governor Kay Ivey** said.

"We also see a concentration of firms in the aerospace and automotive industries, which underscores the importance of these industries to our economy."

Other winners were: GKN Aerospace-Alabama, Help Lightning, Polyvance, Port of Huntsville, RMCI Inc., Trinity Highway Products and Zorn Molds Inc. According to the Alabama Department of Commerce, the value of Alabama exports topped \$21 billion in 2018 as shipments reached 191 countries.

The Test of Time - Several Mobile Organizations Celebrate Milestones

The Hiller Companies 100 Years



Hiller has 20 offices around the country employing 780 employees. This Mobile-based fire protection equipment company serves commercial and maritime customers worldwide. Pictured are a group of employees, including Patrick Lynch, president and CEO (left of the giant fire extinguisher) and Duncan Greenwood, board chair (right of the extinguisher) in front of their headquarters building in west Mobile.

After being founded in New Orleans in 1919, The Hiller Companies relocated its headquarters to Mobile in 1981.

Today, the fire protection equipment company serves commercial and maritime customers worldwide and has 20 offices around the country, with 780 employees. Approximately 144 work in the Mobile office.

Officials attribute the company's success to, among other things, the ability to combine mechanical and electrical engineering; years

of experience; and the latest industry projects.

"What makes Hiller the best of the best is our ability to design, install, and service some of the most complex fire protection systems in some of the harshest environments in the world today," said **Patrick Lynch**, Hiller President and CEO.

The company client list includes the National WWII Museum, Smithsonian and Harvard. Also, Hiller systems can be found on every active U.S. Navy combatant ship.

Metzger's -100 Years



Metzger's has been a local clothing store in Mobile since 1919. Pictured above is owner Ken Metzger.

Since 1919, family-owned Metzger's Clothing has been a tradition in fine retail clothing for men and ladies in Mobile.

Originally located in The Battle House in downtown Mobile, the store moved to Bel Air Mall in the late 1960s until relocating to its current custom-built, stand-alone space at 3702 Dauphin St. in 1997. Today, the company has 10 employees.

Ken Metzger, a third-generation owner, said the store has survived all these years thanks to loyal local customers. He credited Metzger's quality products, exceptional customer service and great prices as keys to its success. "When you buy clothes from us, you know they will last," he said.

Mobile Bar Association Celebrates 150 Years



Members of the Mobile Bar Association have been working to plan their 150th anniversary celebration. Pictured from left to right are: Tammy Anderson, Mobile Bar Association; Beth Rouse, McFadden Rouse & Bender LLC; Mark Newell, Ambrecht Jackson; Ann Sirmon, Mobile Bar Association; and Mary Margaret Bailey, Frazier Greene.

Pictured left is Rosa Gerhardt, the Mobile Bar Association's first female president. She served as president in 1948.

In April of 1869, the Mobile Bar Association was 32 members strong, with each one paying collateral to start the association. Its objectives were to establish a law library in the city of Mobile, increase professional learning and create social opportunities among its members.

In 2019, the group has more than 1,000 members and a committee that still assists with the law library. Its updated mission is to elevate the legal profession to the highest possible standard, provide professional development and cultivate networking opportunities.

One of the oldest bar associations in the country, the group celebrated its 150th anniversary in late March with several events culminating with keynote presentations from former U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions and Judge William H. Pryor Jr.

Thompson Engineering - 65 Years

For 65 years, Thompson Engineering has helped define skylines, coastlines and transportation lines across the Southeast.

Company projects have resulted in the creation of 112 acres of marsh and the restoration or stabilization of 71,000 linear feet of shoreline.

This employee-owned firm, founded in 1953, boasts 300 personnel in multiple disciplines spanning the engineering and architectural services. The company has 14 offices in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee and Texas.

Thompson employees operate by the motto 'It's Up to Me,' and that mindset makes a big difference in our everyday approach to project execution and client satisfaction," said **John Baker**, the firm's president & CEO.



Mobile-based Thompson Engineering operates in eight Southeastern states, serving clients in the transportation, industrial, commercial, federal, state and local markets. Employees from the Mobile office are pictured at the Crichton Fire Station, where the company provided civil, structural, environmental, geotechnical and surveying services for the new facility that opened in 2018.

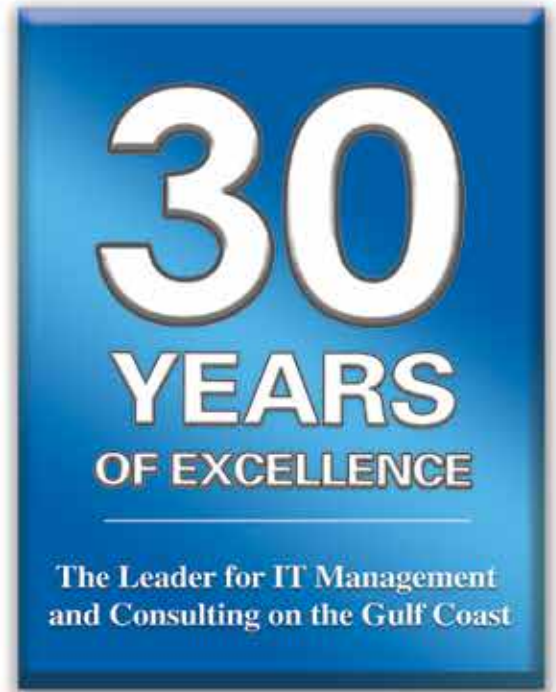
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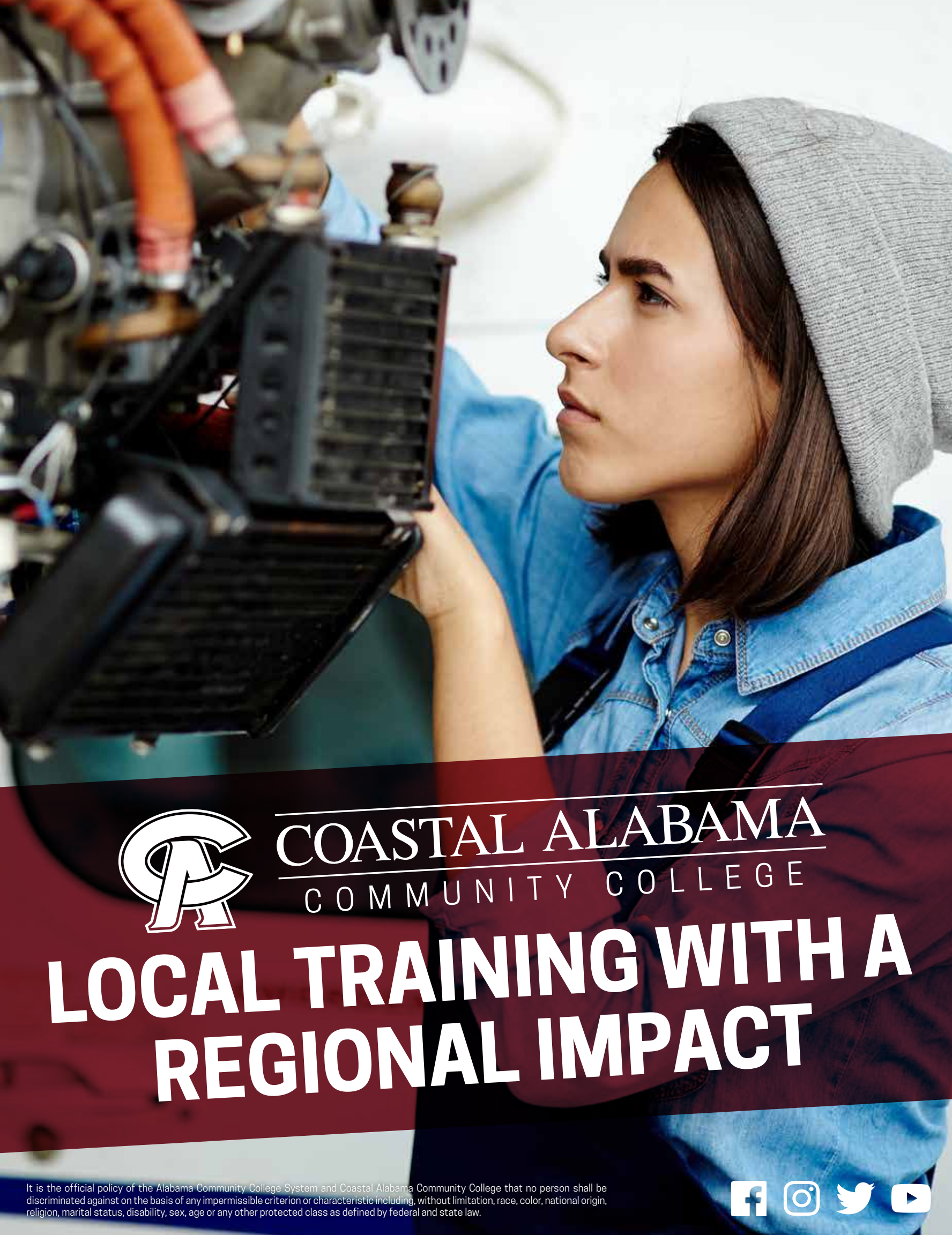
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Photo by Devon Ford

For Stephen McNair, Historic Preservation Means Progress

Stephen McNair has always had a natural interest in historic buildings and neighborhoods. He's using that interest to help fuel the revitalization of Mobile's downtown area and historic neighborhoods.

McNair's company, McNair Historic Preservation Inc., has been involved in more than 15 restoration projects utilizing the state's Historic Tax Credit in the Mobile area, turning crumbling buildings into fully functional showpieces. McNair says the tax credit is leading to a renaissance of revitalization in Mobile and across the state.

"For the first time in a generation across Alabama, we are witnessing a renewed interest in historic urban centers and rural main streets, thanks to these historic development initiatives."

Founded in 2015 and still with only one full-time

employee, McNair's firm also specializes in National Register nominations, architectural design, regulatory compliance and government relations, along with the historic tax credit work.

McNair Historic Preservation is the Mobile Area Chamber's Small Business of the Month.

After studying historic preservation at The University of Alabama and Tulane University and interning during the summers with the Mobile Historic Development Commission, McNair participated in the post-Katrina recovery in New Orleans while working with the city's Historic District Landmarks Commission and Vieux Carré Commission as an architectural plans reviewer and architectural historian.

While his role there was focused on regulatory issues, compliance and historic design guidelines, his experience

working with private developers led him to return to Mobile and open his own consulting firm.

"The field of historic preservation is important to me because it allows for creative solutions for preserving our architectural heritage, all the while preserving and promoting the historic character of neighborhoods," he said. "When viewed from a pragmatic lens, historic preservation is about progress, job creation, increasing quality of life and preserving architectural character."

McNair, whose firm now has clients in five states, is also giving back to the Mobile community through support of the Downtown Mobile Alliance and pro bono services, such as evaluating All Saints Episcopal Church as part of a preservation master plan and helping to save and relocate the Mon Luis Island schoolhouse.

He says restoring old buildings downtown can ultimately spread renewal throughout the city, if given a chance.

"Based on what we have seen in other communities, the economic impact of downtown revitalization will soon spread to adjacent neighborhoods, creating a 'halo effect' of rejuvenation and economic activity," he said.

Want to be featured here?
Go to mobilechamber.com to submit an application, or contact Danette Richards at 251-431-8652 or drichards@mobilechamber.com. There is no cost/fee associated with the Small Business of the Month program.

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Mobile Mural - Dauphin and S. Warren - Skye Walker, 2019 Photos by Jeff Tesney

Campbell to Lead Chamber's Total Resource Development Campaign

Each year, the Mobile Area Chamber organizes a total resource campaign, Chamber Chase, with volunteers and staff recruiting new members, securing sponsorships for Chamber events and more to help the Chamber continue its mission of being a progressive business advocate. The 2019 effort is being led by **Jennie Campbell**, president and CEO of Stewart Lodges at Steelwood.

Campbell is encouraging prospective members to join with the Chamber's 1,900 members, representing 105,000 employees,

to continue strengthening the south Alabama and entire Gulf Coast region.

"Participation is critical for our Chamber to continue to grow the business community and to move our progressive city forward," said Campbell.

"Together, we will all make Mobile stronger through a quality-driven work and living environment."

Chamber

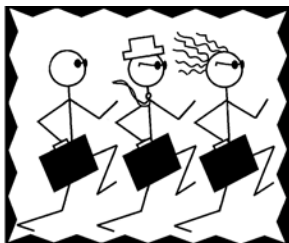
Chase volunteers recruit event sponsorships and donated services, to support the Chamber.

"Volunteers interact with the business community by contacting their clients and

customers," said **Carolyn Golson**, the Chamber's vice president of membership.

"Teams benefit from the exposure and networking with other volunteers and it's a link to developing stronger

relationships with customers. The volunteers can let their customers know about opportunities available at the campaign to open doors with potential customers."



CHAMBER CHASE '19



O'Daly's Mural - Dauphin and S. Warren - Artist Harlan Toole Shwall



Mobi Mural - St. Francis and N. Dearborn – Artist Bradford Fuller, 2019

When asked why she participates each year, **Rachel New**, of Trustmark Bank said, “I participate to enjoy the friendship with fellow Chamber Chase volunteers, to network with employees of other companies and help grow the Chamber. Mobile has so much to offer, and I want to be a part of the growth.”

“I participate because I believe the Chamber is an essential driver of economic development in our community, which directly results in more jobs, better salaries, and ultimately a higher standard of living in our community,” said **James Alexander** of BancorpSouth.

The Chamber Chase campaign officially kicks off with a breakfast, announcing a goal of \$1.45 million in memberships, sponsorships, advertisements and donated goods and services. To volunteer, participate with a company team, donate a door prize for the volunteers or to get involved, contact **Carolyn Golson** at 251-431-8622 or cgolson@mobilechamber.com.



Old Mobile and Future Mobile - Dauphin and S. Dearborn – Artists Devlin Wilson, Adam Underwood and the Boys & Girls Club of South Alabama

2019 Chamber Chase Teams

Alabama Power
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BancorpSouth
BB&T
Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Alabama
C Spire
Century Bank
Crow Shields Bailey
Evonik Corp.
Hancock Whitney Bank
Hargrove Engineers + Constructors
Harper Technologies
iBERIABANK
Jeff Tesney Photography
LLB&B Inc. Real Estate
McAleer's Office Furniture
Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors
Mobile Area Chamber Board
Mobile Area Chamber Growth Alliance Task Force
Regions Bank
Renasant Bank
Roberts Brothers Inc.
ServisFirst Bank
Spire
Stewart Lodges at Steelwood
Trustmark Bank

As of 3/25/19

How can the business community be a part of the Mobile Area Chamber's annual campaign, Chamber Chase?

Visit the campaign website, www.chamberchase.com, for ideas.

- Join the Chamber.
- Raise your visibility by joining the Chamber's Board of Advisors.
- Gain exposure for your company by sponsoring an event.
- Promote your business with an advertisement in a Chamber publication.
- Contact Carolyn Golson at 251-431-8622 for details.



Delta Bike Project Mural - N. Warren and St. Francis – various artists



#Heart of Mobile - Conti and Joachim - Artist Jeff Butler, 2017



The Lost Garden - Dauphin St. - Acom Farm 2016, Lucy Gafford



Mobile's Hidden Figures - Dauphin and N. Claiborne – Artist Rando Dixon, 2018



Mural - Dauphin and Lawrence – Artist Ashelea Penquite, 2013



Murals - Dauphin and S Franklin - Ali & Bob Marley: Artist Noelle Goodson, 2016 | Unity & Love, Hate & The 27 Club, Artist Diplomat, 2016 | American Rebels & The Creation, Artist CONZ8000, 2016 | When Doves Cry & 2Trill: Underground Kings & Man in the Mirror, Stallworth Unltd, 2016 | Fearless Girl, Artist Jeff Butler, 2017



Mobile's Downtown Walls are Talking

Colorful artwork on buildings throughout downtown Mobile has brightened the streetscape in recent months. *The Business View* recently spoke to **Shellie Teague**, executive director of the Mobile Arts Council (MAC) about the downtown murals.

How many murals are there in downtown Mobile?

There are roughly 15 murals in downtown Mobile. This doesn't include sculptures we group together as a body of public art.

Where are they?

The entire listing of public art can be found online at ArtGO: mobileartgo.com. The idea by Leadership Mobile was to list all the public art and focus on the downtown art to create an outdoor walking trail.

How do the murals happen?

Public art downtown comes about as the result of several factors, depending on the individuals or groups behind them. Murals highlight individuals or ideas, beautify a building or neighborhood, or celebrate history and culture of the area.

How are the buildings chosen?

For the Mobile Arts Council, we like to choose buildings on a number of factors: visibility, traffic; historic/non-historic (historic buildings/neighborhoods have more requirements/restrictions); location in relation to other public art; and engagement. We want to be sure our murals/public art aren't all located in the same area or even on the same street.

How are the artists chosen?

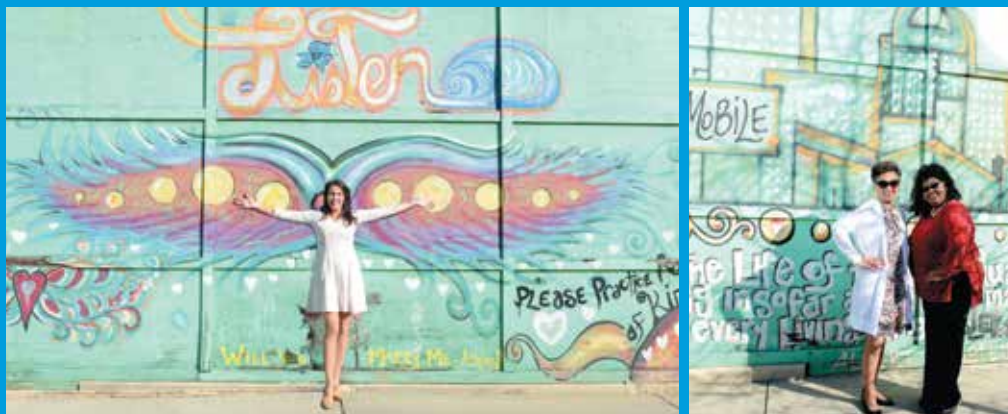
Artists can be chosen through an RFP process or by the artist approaching MAC with a proposal. Many times, there are businesses and groups looking to do a public art piece and we can connect the artist to those businesses to make it happen.

Why have murals?

Public art and murals are so very vital to the culture of a city. Murals build a sense of community, making the area welcoming and walkable. They create conversations, inspire connections and are a great way of promoting the city.



Mural located at Dauphin and Lawrence – Artist Ashelea Penquite, 2013



Mural located at Dauphin and Lawrence – Artist Ashelea Penquite, 2013



O'Daly's Mural - Dauphin and S. Warren – Artist Harlan Toole Shwall



Barton Academy Mural - Dauphin St. – Artist Devlin Wilson, 2017



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Get Your Plans in Place Now for Managing a Disaster

Stop for a moment and think about all the time and resources you've invested in your small business. Now, imagine that it's all gone – facilities, equipment, everything. What do you do?

Every year, this hypothetical question becomes very real to thousands of small business owners who suffer losses due to fires, natural disasters and other events.

The Gulf Coast has seen its share of disasters, and hurricane season starts next month. A thoughtful, proactive disaster management plan can mitigate the impact on your business and help speed your return to normal operations should it be needed.

Here are some tips for developing a disaster management strategy:

Identify Potential Hazards

Consider both natural events (e.g., hurricanes, floods,

earthquakes and ice storms) as well as man-made disasters such as fires, toxic material spills, even civil unrest and terrorism.

Develop Operational Contingency Plans

Assess the feasibility of operating out of rented office space, a nearby storefront or even your home, and what equipment/resources will be needed (e.g., computers, data files, inventory). Important documents, back-up copies of computer records and software and other vital information should be stored in a fireproof container, or at a secure off-site location.

Ensure the Safety of Employees and Customers

Develop an evacuation plan that includes access to shelters, hospitals and other emergency services. Keep emergency telephone numbers clearly

posted, maintain an up-to-date emergency contact list and have a comprehensive crisis manual readily available to all employees.

Perform a Safety Inventory

Invite your fire department, police department, your insurer and perhaps accountant and attorney to work with you to evaluate your current situation. They can make suggestions to improve processes, security of the facility both inside and out, recordkeeping and securing company paperwork.

Make Sure You Have Emergency Supplies

Your list should include well-stocked first-aid kits, fully charged fire extinguishers and a fresh supply of all types of batteries used in your business. If you have portable generators for emergency power, make sure the fuel is fresh and safely stored.

Review Business Insurance Coverage

At a minimum, coverage should be enough to get your business back in operation and cover the replacement cost of essential facilities and equipment. Note that most general casualty policies do not cover flood damage, nor may they apply to special tools or equipment. Also consider purchasing business interruption insurance, which can assist with ongoing expenses during a forced shutdown.

For more information, the American Red Cross, the U.S. Small Business Administration and the IRS have excellent resources and tools on their websites to assist you in your preparation and planning.



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Representing Bishop State Community College and pictured from left to right are (front row) Wilbert Bryant Jr., Ann Clanton, Dr. Reginald Sykes, David Felton and Courtney Steele; and (back row) Dr. Terry Hazzard, Gloria Sterling, La'Keith Miller, Roderick McSwain, Vonicia Lowe and Karl Henry.

Bishop State Invests in Growing Mobile

Company officials: Dr. Reginald Sykes, president

Years in business: 92

Brief company description:

Bishop State is an accredited, state-supported, open-admission community college that provides a quality and affordable education for its students. The college's mission is to equip its students, both academic and technical, with the skills and knowledge needed to enter the workforce and succeed.

Why are you located in Mobile?

"Bishop State was established in 1927 as the Mobile branch of Alabama State College, now known as Alabama State University," said Sykes. "The teachers' training college operated only during the summer months, offering extension courses to African-American elementary and secondary teachers in Mobile."

Why do you support the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce's Partners for Growth initiative? "Partners for Growth is vital in recruiting

small businesses and industry to the Mobile area," said Sykes. "As a community college, it is our mission to train Mobile's workforce for these companies, which not only helps our local economy but also enhances the quality of life for our citizens."

What do you see as Mobile's greatest potential?

"Location, location, location," said Sykes. "Just like the college's downtown location is ideal to its mission, Mobile's access to land, air, sea and rail is an open invitation for more companies to call Mobile home."

Length of continuous Chamber membership: Since 1966



Partners for Growth (PFG) is the Mobile Area Chamber's long-term economic and community development program. For more information, contact **Natalie Franklin** the Chamber's investor relations manager, at 251-431-8636 or nfranklin@mobilechamber.com.



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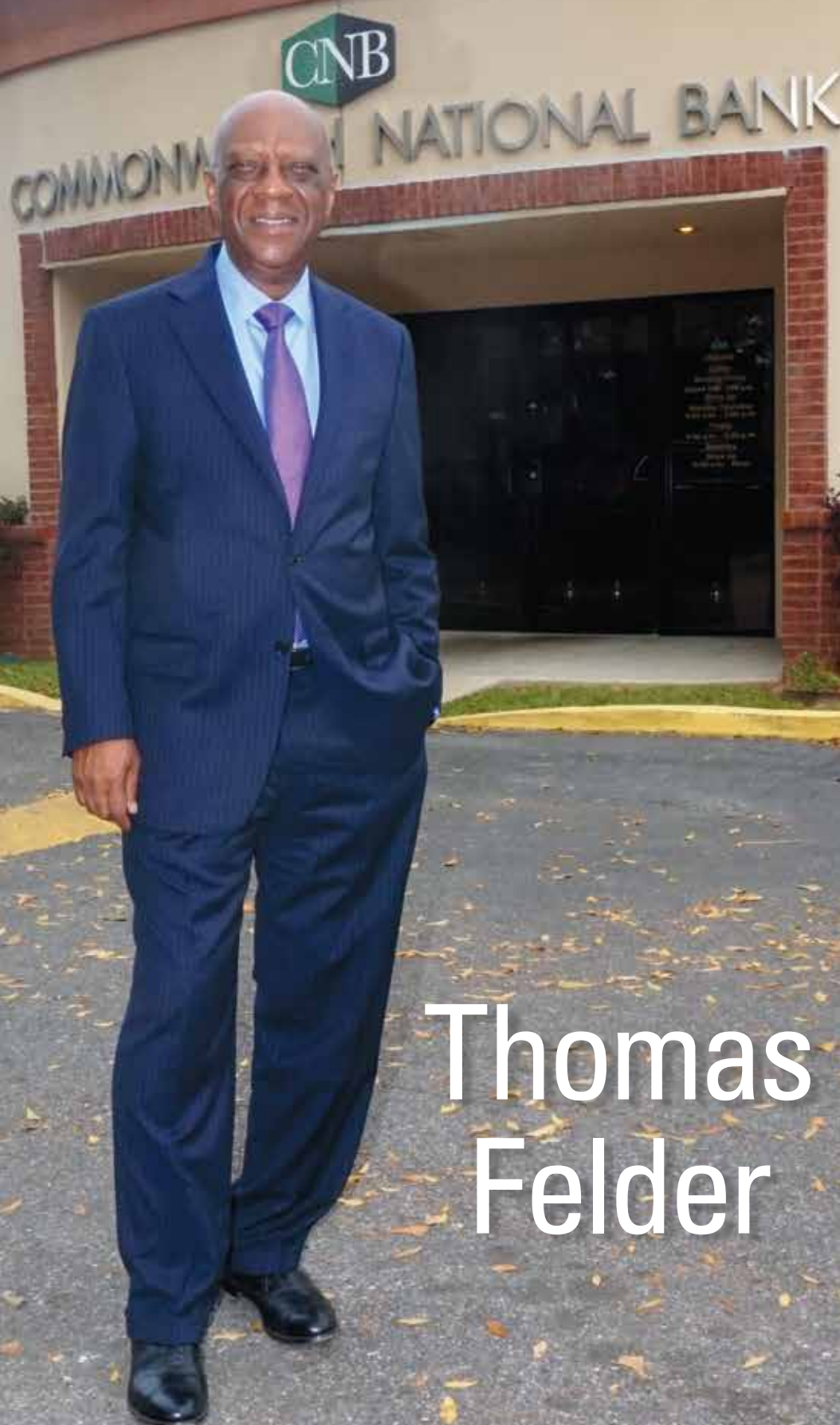
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Thomas Felder

Company: Commonwealth National Bank

Title: CEO

Hometown: Columbia, S.C.

Education: Felder earned a bachelor's degree from Voorhees College in Denmark, S.C., where he majored in business administration. He also earned a master's degree in business administration from Atlanta University in Atlanta.

First job: "I worked throughout my high school years in my father's commercial janitorial business," he said.

Previous experience: Felder brings more than a quarter-century of industry experience to Commonwealth. He began his career at First National Bank of South Carolina before going on to work for Victory Savings Bank, Bank of America, American State Bank in Tulsa, Okla., the U.S. Small Business Administration and Seaway Bank & Trust Co. in Chicago.

Accomplishments: Felder worked with restructuring small community banks under enforcement actions in South Carolina, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Wisconsin and Illinois. He is a Paul Harris Fellow, recognizing contributors to the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International for giving back to their communities, and a member of Omega Psi Phi fraternity, an international brotherhood.

Secret to success: "Set realistic goals for yourself. Don't define yourself by others' success. Make an effort to re-establish and embrace positivity. And embrace failure. Interpret failure as a call for self-reflection."

Brief company description: Commonwealth National Bank, an FDIC-insured institution headquartered in Mobile, provides individual and business financial services while supporting causes that impact the community and its subsequent health. The bank was founded in 1976.



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Briefing for Sen. Doug Jones Staff

In February, the Chamber hosted Dana Gresham, Sen. Doug Jones' chief of staff, at a meeting with several members of the Chamber's leadership team and industry executives as part of Gresham's first official visit to Mobile. Topics discussed included banking regulations, tariffs and federal funding for infrastructure programs. While here, Gresham also met with officials from the Alabama Department of Transportation, City of Mobile, Mobile Airport Authority and the University of South Alabama.

Trade Mission to Ireland and United Kingdom

The Chamber, in partnership with the Alabama Department of Commerce, in April hosted 19 organizations and businesses from across the state for a trade mission to Ireland and the United Kingdom. The mission trip focused on collaboration and partnerships in the areas of life sciences and health.

Increasing Foreign Investment in Mobile

Christina Stimpson, the Chamber's director of international business, attended the Invest in America summit at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce recently. With a goal of increasing foreign investment into the United States, this conference helps investors obtain better

quality returns on their investments. The Mobile Area Chamber has refocused its trade efforts to include foreign direct investment. While in D.C., Stimpson also met with a private consultant from The Netherlands and representatives from the British Embassy.

Chamber Supports Gas Tax

The Chamber emphasized its support of infrastructure funding by supporting the Rebuild Alabama proposal of a 10 cent increase in gas tax over a three-year period. Monies raised will go toward funding much-needed roads and bridges projects across the state and support the Port of Mobile. The bill passed the Alabama House and Senate, whose members strengthened oversight of the funds, and was signed into law in March.

Chamber Helps Develop Program for B.C. Rain

The Chamber partnered with the Boys and Girls Clubs to create a pilot program at B.C. Rain High School, with more than 20 students participating. The program is focused on students developing a five-year plan, preparing for high school graduation and more. Sessions are held bi-monthly and will cover a broad range of topics such as career exploration, identifying personal skills, choosing a career, developing



An Update on Alabama's Bridges and Roads

The Chamber hosted the Alliance for Alabama's Infrastructure in February. The group, TRIP (national transportation research) presented its findings on Alabama's transportation system and highlighted congestion and infrastructure needs in the Mobile/Baldwin region and around the state in advance of the opening of the Alabama Legislature.

personal goals, preparing for the job, preparing a resume, filling out a job application, etc.

Supporting Austal in D.C.

In February, the Chamber's Kellie Hope and David Rodgers traveled to Washington D.C., as part of a small local delegation supporting Austal. The two-day event included Austal buyers and suppliers from across the United States, as well as meetings with the U.S. Navy and federal legislators.

Supplier Diversity in Mobile

The Chamber's small business development team

participated in a stakeholders' meeting with the City of Mobile's supplier diversity office on the Startup in Residence (STIR) program. It identifies and addresses how small and disadvantaged businesses can better navigate the process to do business with the City of Mobile. STIR is a 16-week program designed to help startups collaborate with cities to identify and solve challenges and help improve cities.

New Board of Advisors

The Chamber announced that Mobile Area Council Boy Scouts of America and Saad Development Corp. are new Board of Advisor members. To learn more about this group of 249 influential members, contact Shelly Mattingly at 251-431-8655 or smattingly@mobilechamber.com.

Member Ribbon Cuttings and Grand Openings

Chamber staff and ambassadors helped celebrate the grand opening of AeroStar, BarKing Optical, Profile by Sanford in Pinebrook Shopping Center, Salon West and Waterfront Mission Thrift Store. For more information, contact Dawn Rencher at 251-431-8649 or drencher@mobilechamber.com.



Chamber President Trade Mission to Israel

In February, Chamber President & CEO Bill Sisson traveled with a small delegation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce on a business trade mission to Israel, where they met with top Israeli and U.S. government officials and corporate

executives during the Israeli government-subsidized trip. The group explored firsthand the business and innovation ecosystem of the country and discussed opportunities for Chamber-led engagement and initiatives.



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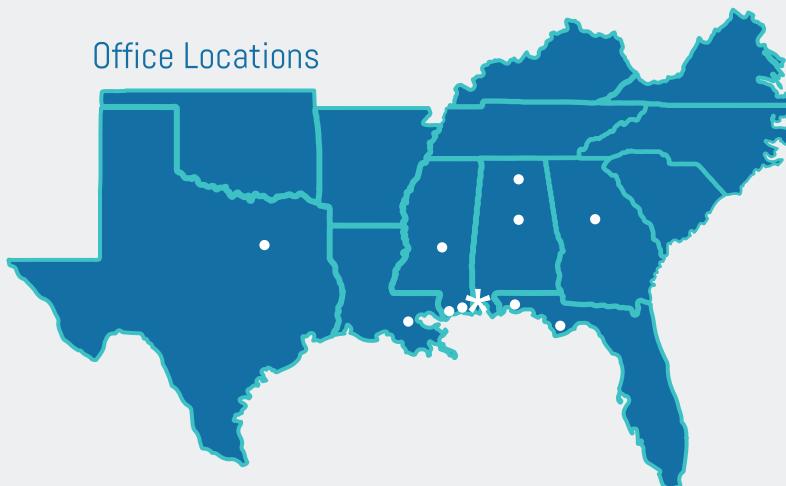
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Marc Allen is president and CEO of Momentum IT Services. He has worked in the local IT industry for 24 years, starting as a support technician for a leading healthcare IT provider, and later as systems administrator for a large advertising firm. After earning his Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert designation, he joined a top solutions provider serving many local clients. He founded his own company in 2010, and is proud to serve more than 40

area businesses, churches, schools and nonprofits. Allen earned bachelor's degrees in computer science and math from Spring Hill College, while achieving All-American honors for basketball. Allen lends support to Southern Alabama Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Dumas Wesley Community Center, GreekFest Charity Gala, Compassion International, World Vision and Port City AAU Basketball.



Jason Slinkard is site director for BASF in McIntosh. Prior to coming to Mobile, he served in management positions for BASF in Italy, Germany, and Hannibal, Mo. He graduated summa cum laude from the University of Missouri-Columbia with a bachelor of science degree in chemical engineering. BASF is a Partners for Growth investor.

For more information about the Chamber's board of advisors, contact Shelly Mattingly at 251-431-8655 or smattingly@mobilechamber.com.

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Travel to Australia and New Zealand with the Chamber in January

The Mobile Area Chamber will host a small group on a bucket list trip for Chamber members and guests who have always wanted to travel to the South Pacific, most especially Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. Join in the adventure Jan. 14-28, 2020.

The excursion begins in Cairns, Australia, and takes in the Great Barrier Reef, wildlife tours and more, followed by a flight to Sydney, Australia, for city tours, an optional performance at the famed Sydney Opera House and boat tour.

Next up is a flight across the Tasman Sea to the historic city of Christchurch, New Zealand, for tours including Mount Cook region of the Southern Alps. The trip ends in the Queenstown, New Zealand, area with a cruise, scenic tour of where the *Lord of the Rings* movies were filmed, a visit to a sheep farm and birding trails. If that wasn't enough, you can end your once-in-a-lifetime vacation with a three-day relaxing stay in Fiji.

The cost of the trip is \$6,799 per person, based on double occupancy, or \$8,299 for single rate. This includes your motorcoach travel from Mobile to New Orleans and back, all flights, hotel accommodations, many meals, tours and more. If you are interested in upgrading your airfare, premium economy seating is an additional \$3,390 and business class is an additional \$11,090.

Learn more or make reservations by contacting **Leigh Perry-Herndon** at **251-431-8645** or **lherndon@mobilechamber.com**.

The itinerary is as follows:

Jan. 14-15

Leave Mobile by motor coach for New Orleans. Fly to Australia. Cross the International Date Line, skipping a day ahead.

Jan. 16 Cairns, Australia

Your tour opens in Cairns, the tropical gateway to one of

the world's most spectacular natural attractions and a UNESCO World Heritage site – the Great Barrier Reef. Established as a marine park in 1975, the reef is a haven for thousands of species of sea life, as well as turtles and birds. *(Dinner included)*

Jan. 17 – Cairns

Come to know the history of Australia's original inhabitants at the Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Center. Here you'll see traditional dances, learn how to play a didgeridoo or even throw a boomerang. Browse the renowned art gallery and center's artifact collection. At Hartley's Croc Farm, get up-close with crocodiles in their natural habitat. Boardwalks take you on a path through rainforests and woodlands, home to birds, reptiles and wallabies. You may meet some of the local koalas and chat with a wildlife naturalist to learn more about these cuddly creatures. Take an exciting cruise on the

lagoon and watch for crocodiles before enjoying a delicious Aussie barbecue. *(Breakfast, dinner included)*

Jan. 18 Great Barrier Reef

Board a high-speed catamaran for an exciting excursion to the Great Barrier Reef. This is an immense series of 2,800 coral reefs, home to amazingly diverse marine life. Explore the reef from your base on Green Island. Enjoy a glass bottom boat ride, stroll the island walking trails, relax on the beaches, snorkel or just watch the fish and sea turtles swim past from the pier. For a more adventurous encounter with the reef, an outer reef tour is also available. Whichever way you choose, you'll see some of the world's most fascinating marine and plant life. *(Breakfast, lunch included)*



Jan. 19 Cairns-Sydney

This morning, create your own adventure or simply relax and take in the tropical atmosphere. Later today, fly to the bustling city of Sydney. *(Breakfast included)*

Jan. 20 – Sydney

See where the original English colonists first settled in 1788 during a city tour of Sydney. Highlights include Kings Cross, the Harbour Bridge, Chinatown, the Rocks, Circular Quay, the Botanic Gardens and the fashionable suburb of Darlinghurst. Discover one of the world's most fascinating architectural sights as you take a guided tour of the Sydney Opera House, poised majestically on Sydney Harbour. Then you're in for a unique experience as you learn firsthand about opals during a special presentation at the National Opal Collection. Later this evening, you may choose to take in an optional dinner and performance at the Sydney Opera House. *(Breakfast included)*

Jan. 21 – Sydney

Embrace the exciting city of Sydney during a day of independent exploration. Your tour manager will be on hand to offer suggestions. Tonight, say farewell to Australia during a dinner cruise of Sydney

Harbour. Marvel at the scenic vistas of the harbour showcasing Sydney's magnificent skyline, the iconic Sydney Opera House and the Harbour Bridge. *(Breakfast, dinner included)*

Jan. 22 Sydney-Christchurch, New Zealand

Fly to the historic city of Christchurch, New Zealand. Devastated by an earthquake in early 2011, see firsthand how the city known as "the Garden City" is recreating itself. Make yourself at home this evening when a New Zealand family welcomes you into their home for dinner. This is sure to be an unforgettable experience. Make new friends, learn about the customs of the "Kiwis," and enjoy a home-cooked meal. *(Breakfast, dinner included)*

Jan. 23 – Christchurch- Mt. Cook Region

Journey through New Zealand's unspoiled wilderness and arrive in the Mt. Cook region, where permanent ice fields and glaciers blanket the ragged peaks. This is where famed New Zealand mountaineer Sir Edmund Hillary honed his skills before conquering Mount Everest. You may choose to take a nature walk or simply meditate on the beauty of the Southern Alps. *(Breakfast, dinner included)*

Jan. 24 – Mt. Cook Region-Arrowtown- Queenstown

Traverse the spectacular countryside as you set off for the beautiful turn-of-the-century Gold Rush settlement of Arrowtown. Take time to stroll its quaint, historic streets. Arrive in Queenstown and have time to explore independently. *(Breakfast included)*

Jan. 25 – Queenstown- Milford Sound- Queenstown

En route to Milford Sound, enjoy the rugged grandeur of the Hollyford Valley. You'll travel through ancient beech forest via the Homer Tunnel. During a cruise of the breathtakingly beautiful Milford Sound you will see why this fjord is one of the most visited sights on the South Island. With rock faces that rise nearly 4,000 feet on either side, the scenery will take your breath away. Following your cruise, you return to Queenstown. You may choose to return via a short optional flight (weather permitting) for spectacular views of New Zealand's Southern Alps. *(Breakfast, lunch included)*

Jan. 26 – Queenstown

A free day offers a variety of optional activities to enhance your tour. Shop or people-watch in the village; partake in an optional jet boat ride on the

Shotover River; or join the optional "Gold Seeker – Metal and Movie Discovery" tour which takes you through the majestic Remarkable Mountains and the breathtaking Queenstown countryside showcasing many of the spots where The Lord of the Rings movies were filmed. *(Breakfast included)*

Jan. 27 – Queenstown

Enjoy the spectacular scenery of the Remarkables, Cecil Peak, Bob's Cove and Mt. Earnslaw as you cruise across spectacular Lake Wakatipu to Mt. Nicholas High Country Farm. During an exclusive, behind the scenes visit to this authentic family-run merino sheep farm, you will follow the journey of merino wool from mustering sheep through the creation of modern wool garments. Enjoy a freshly prepared farmer's lunch before sailing back to Queenstown. Later this afternoon, it's your choice. Go bird-watching at the Kiwi Birdlife Park or take a gondola to the top of Bob's Peak for stunning panoramic views of the region. Gather for a farewell dinner overlooking Lake Wakatipu and the Remarkable Mountains. *(Breakfast, lunch and dinner included)*

Jan. 28 – Tour ends – or extends three additional nights in Fiji

Flight returns to New Orleans, then a motor coach to Mobile.



AMBASSADOR of the month



Matthew Lollar, a sales director for Momentum IT, has served as a Mobile Area Chamber ambassador for two years. He is the Chamber's Ambassador of the Month.

"I love the program because it gives me the opportunity to meet a wide range of members every month and discover new businesses and people that I would have never met," he said.

Ambassadors are volunteers who support the Mobile Area Chamber by visiting members, assisting with events and ribbon-cuttings. To learn more, contact Dawn Rencher at 251-431-8649 or drencher@mobilechamber.com.

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Experimac Central Mobile is a tech source for Apple product repairs and upgrades, pre-owned sales and trade-ins for iPhones, iPads, iMac computers, MacBook laptops and more. Originally started as a family business, the first retail location opened in Palm Beach, Fla., in 2012. The brand has now gone global. The Mobile franchise is located at 3202 Dauphin St. For more information, visit www.experimac.com/central-mobile-al.

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Chamber Promotes Elizabeth Nelson

In her new role as a membership account executive, **Elizabeth Nelson** will be responsible for recruiting local businesses to join the Mobile Area Chamber and upgrading existing members to board of advisors. She will work with prospective members to determine their business needs and better understand how the Chamber can help them.

Nelson joined the Chamber's membership department in 2018 as the membership administrative assistant, maintaining members' membership profiles, assisting with renewals and addressing membership benefits inquiries.

"Elizabeth has a good understanding of how to better serve members and prospective members from the work she



Nelson

was able to provide in her previous position," said **Carolyn Golson**, vice president of membership. "She will do very well."

Nelson has a bachelor's degree in human environmental science from The

University of Alabama.

"The Chamber is an incredible asset to the business community," she said. "The work that we do to serve others has become something I am very passionate about. I look forward to building relationships with current and potential members and sharing the many benefits that come with an investment in the Chamber."

Nelson can be reached at 251-431-8617 or enelson@mobilechamber.com.

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MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

THE 22ND ANNUAL STATE OF THE CITY & COUNTY LUNCH

Join City of Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson and Mobile County Commission President Connie Hudson as they discuss the state of our local government at this annual Chamber luncheon.

TUESDAY, MAY 21
NOON TO 1:30 P.M.
MOBILE CONVENTION CENTER

Tickets are \$30 per person or \$300 for a table of 10
(Chamber members only) or \$40 per person for nonmembers.

Reservations and advanced payment are required
by calling 251-431-8621 or register securely online at
events.mobilechamber.com.



Regional Business After Hours

The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce and the Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce invite you to join us for a night of networking.

Thursday, May 23

6 to 7:30 p.m.

**USS ALABAMA Battleship
Memorial Park Aircraft Pavilion**

\$5 for members and \$10 for potential members
Reservations are not needed.

visit mobilechamber.com or www.eschamber.com



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

8 COFFEE WITH THE CHAMBER

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

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

Where: Stone Ridge at Somerby, 1200 Somerby Dr.

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

No charge. Reservations are not needed.

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15 BUSINESS FIRST

A quarterly meeting focused on business retention and expansion.

When: 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Where: Mobile Area Chamber, 451 Government St.

Speakers: Alabama Technology Network: Karen Yarbrough and Jeff Thompson, University of Alabama in Huntsville

Cost: \$10 per person

Contact: Natalie Franklin at 251-431-8636 or nfranklin@mobilechamber.com

Reservations required by May 10. No refunds after that date.

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: John Terzo, site leader, Amazon

Topic: The Amazon Sortation Center

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

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

Sponsor:



21 STATE OF THE CITY AND COUNTY LUNCH

Join City of Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson and Mobile County Commission President Connie Hudson as they discuss the state of the city and county at this annual luncheon hosted by the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce.

When: Noon to 1:30 p.m.

Where: Arthur R. Outlaw Mobile Convention Center

Cost: \$30 per person or \$300 for table of 10 (members) or \$40 for potential members

Contact: Mallory Tyson at 251-431-8621 or mtyson@mobilechamber.com

Reservations and advance payment are required.

Cancellations after May 10 not reimbursed to cover lunch costs.

Sponsors:



23 REGIONAL BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

When: 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Where: USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park Aircraft Pavilion

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

Contact: Dawn Rencher at 251-431-8649 or drencher@mobilechamber.com

Reservations are not needed.

27 MEMORIAL DAY - CHAMBER CLOSED

Who's New

Mosquito Joe hired **Tiffany Northcutt** as operations manager. She brings more than 15 years of experience in Northcutt retail store management. Northcutt graduated from Johnson and Wales University in Providence, R.I., with a bachelor's degree in marketing and management.



Northcutt



Deakle



Henderson



Godfrey



Salter

Nichole Deakle, Amber Henderson, Patrice Godfrey and **Kristal Salter** are new associates with **Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Cooper & Co. Inc.**

The **Alabama Coastal (ACF) Foundation** hired biologist **Dr. Elizabeth Bevan** to support Share the Beach, Alabama's sea turtle conservation program. Bevan joined ACF on the heels of earning doctorate and master's degrees at The University of Alabama at Birmingham, where she studied the endangered Kemp's Ridley sea turtle in the Gulf of Mexico.

BBB Industries LLC made changes to its senior leadership team, naming **Michael Hansen** as executive vice president and chief financial officer, and **Ross Bratlee** as executive vice president and chief transformation officer. Hansen earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Bloomsburg University in Bloomsburg, Pa. Hansen earned

a bachelor's degree in accounting at the University of Natal (Durban) in South Africa and a master's degree in business administration from Heriot Watt University in Edinburgh, Scotland.



Morgan

Thompson Engineering selected **Eliska Morgan** as government relations/business development

manager. She most recently served as executive director for the Alabama Gulf Coast Recovery Council.

Burr & Forman added associate **Blake Richardson** to the transportation and maritime practice group in the firm's Mobile office. Richardson received a bachelor's degree in commerce and business administration from The University of Alabama and a law degree from Mississippi School of Law.



Richardson



O'Shea



Turk



Baker



Hutchinson

Roberts Brothers added five new agents to its real estate team: **Heather O'Shea, David Turk, Terri Baker, Cathy Hutchinson** and **Ann Braswell**.



Braswell



Morgan



Bolding



Turner



Loper

Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate welcomed new agents **Tesa Morgan, Randy Bolding, Bill Turner** and **Sydney Loper**.



Wilson



Foley

The **University of Mobile** Board of Trustees Chairman **Fred Wilson** was named interim president. **David Conner** will assume the role of chairman of the board. President Emeritus **Dr. Mark Foley** will serve as a consultant.

University of South Alabama Health office of development announced the following staff changes: **Leila Nichols** was promoted to director of medical affairs and alumni relations; **Nancy Calhoun** was promoted to development officer for USA Health Children's & Women's Hospital and USA Health Initiatives; and **Brittany Callaway** joined the staff as associate director.

Business Endeavors

Postmark Ink upgraded its mailing capabilities with the addition of a Neopost G4i inserter. The equipment can insert up to four different mailing elements into a range of envelope sizes at speeds up to 10,000 pieces per hour.

Providence Hospital

recently opened its new hybrid operating room. The hospital is the first in the Gulf Coast region to offer a hybrid operating room with the latest in high-definition 3D imaging, the ARTIS pheno robotic imaging system. The new facility will allow physicians at Providence Hospital to perform a variety of vascular procedures, including arteriogram, angioplasty and complex endovascular stent procedures.

The Explorem Science Center

is updating its dome theater to a digital laser-illumination system, installing new seating, flooring, lighting and a new state-of-the-art sound system. When complete, Explorem officials expect to expand the science center's education and professional programs to include live video conferencing, interactive presentations and streaming broadcasts such as NASA and TED Talks. The Poarch Band of Creek Indians are funding the upgrades through its planned giving campaign.

Well Done

The **University of South Alabama College of Medicine** recently achieved the highest level of accreditation available by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME). The accreditation – valid for eight years – signifies that the USA College of Medicine met all national standards for structure, function and performance.

Truland Homes, a leading private builder on the Gulf Coast, was recently recognized as a Platinum Builder in the 2018 Annual Builder Achievement Awards Program from 2-10 Home Buyers Warranty (2-10 HBW). The program acknowledges homebuilding that demonstrates craftsmanship while improving the quality of housing.

ServisFirst Bancshares received the 2018 Raymond James Community Bankers Cup, recognizing the Top 10 percent of community banks. For the fifth year in a row, ServisFirst has ranked in the Top Five community banks and is the only bank in the Southeast to receive the 2018 award.

Community News

Thompson Engineering made a \$20,000 investment to support ACCEL Day and Evening Academy's science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) project-based learning curriculum. Located in Mobile, ACCEL is Alabama's first public charter school. The studio will afford ACCEL scholars the opportunity to explore 3D printing, robotics, Lego engineering, electronics and coding.

University of Mobile established the Samuel Boykin Medal of Excellence to honor the life of Samuel M. Boykin, the university's first African-American graduate in 1969. The award will recognize future outstanding African-American graduates who reflect the ideals Boykin exemplified throughout his career, family and community. The first medallion was presented to Boykin's widow, Ellen Hardiman Boykin.

Submission deadline for Member News is two months prior to publication. News releases should be one or two brief paragraphs. Photos must be professional headshots, labeled with the person's last name, and must be 300 dpi at full size and saved in an eps, tiff or jpg format. Send your information to news@mobilechamber.com.

Evening Garden Stroll to celebrate
National Public Gardens Day
– May 9 • 5:30-7 PM

Mother's Day Evening Garden
Concert
– May 12 • 5:30 PM

Mrs. Bellingrath's Birthday
Celebration
– May 20

Wonderful Wednesdays
– June 5 – July 31

Kids Gulf Discovery Day
– June 12 • 9 AM – Noon

Fabulous events await you!

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Bellingrath
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Theodore, AL

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Forte

Saturday, May 4, 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, May 5, 2:30 p.m.

Vadym Kholodenko, piano

TCHAIKOVSKY
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RACHMANINOFF
Piano Concerto No. 2

Saenger Theatre
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NEWS 5 WKRG

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Mobile's Newspaper

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The Mobile Area Chamber was awarded a five-star rating by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the highest designation given. Of the 6,936 chambers in the U.S., only 203 are accredited, and of those only 103 have achieved five-star distinction. The Mobile Area Chamber has been accredited by the U.S. Chamber since the designation's inception more than 40 years ago.

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