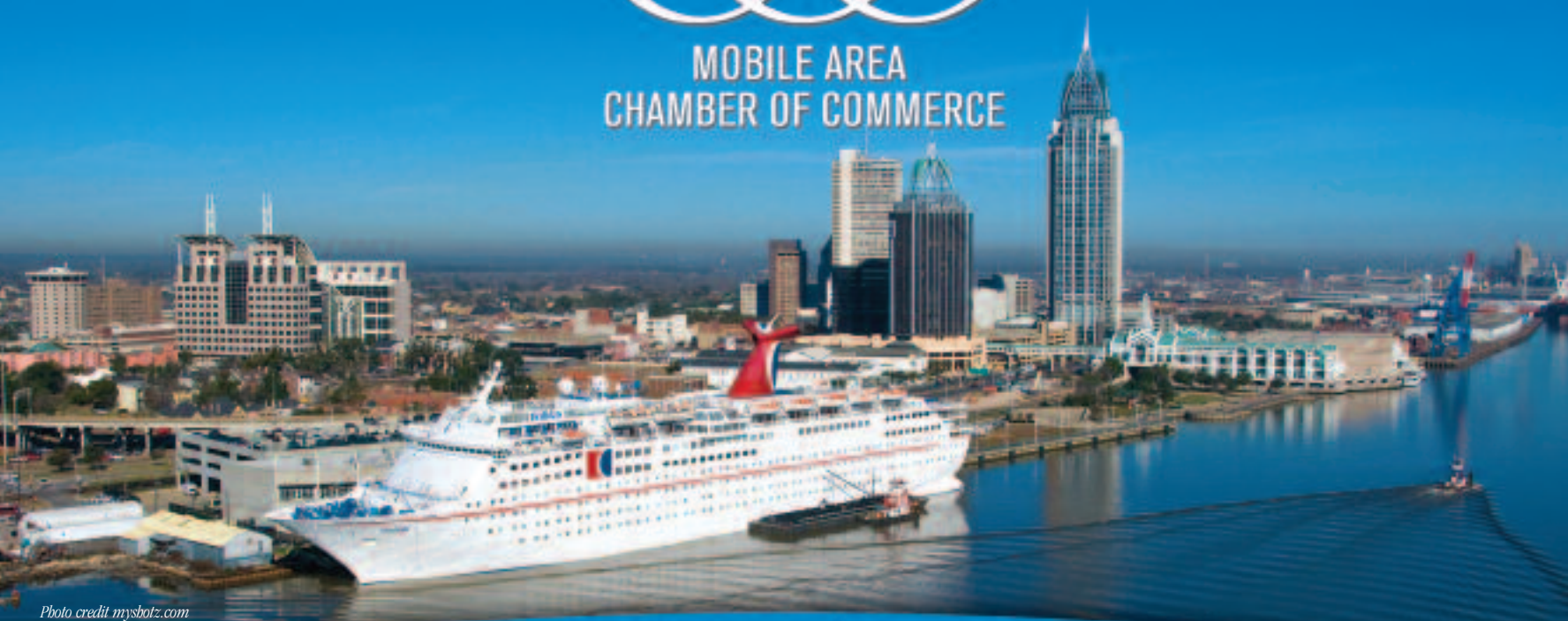




## MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



*Photo credit mysbotz.com  
Tad Denson*

# 2008 ANNUAL REPORT

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

In a year of ups and downs in the national economy, there has been a common theme in Mobile – stability.

For more than two decades, the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce has worked to diversify the bay area's economic base, and all indications show that it's working. Many of us vividly remember the devastating impact Brookley Field's closing had on Mobile's economy in the 1960s, and more recently the demise of our pulp and paper industry in the late '90s. Unemployment numbers at a time reached double digits, and Chamber leaders were called to rewrite the long-term plan for industry recruiting and retention efforts.

Today's Mobile looks much different than that of year's past. We are focused on recruiting in more areas, including shipbuilding, maritime, healthcare, technology, oil and gas exploration and transportation and distribution. And if 2008's successes are any indication of what's to come in 2009, Mobile is in a good position to be insulated from some of the recession's impacts.

This past year I am pleased to say the Chamber's leadership passed a sound position in support of the I-10 bridge to alleviate congestion. With the recent news from the Alabama Department of Transportation that the northern route will no longer be considered an option, we must move forward to build consensus on the location that will have the least negative impact on our maritime industry and the environment.

The Chamber, through its lobbying efforts worked in the state legislature to provide tax credits for small businesses offering health insurance for their employees. Other key issues in government included federal funding for a turning basin in the Mobile River, immigration reform, support for Northrop Grumman's aerial refueling tanker and tax credits for ST Mobile Aerospace Engineering.

Our small business development department increased the number of clients by a whopping 58 percent this year. An increase in the number of professional SCORE counselors and the Alabama Minority Business Enterprise Center were just two of the reasons for these results.

On behalf of the 2,500-plus members of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce, which represents 90,000 employees in the area, I invite you to look through the following 15 pages of Chamber accomplishments over the last year. From it, I hope you will see the value of your membership in the Mobile Area Chamber, and how we are committed to making it easier for your business to be successful here in the Mobile Area.

Sincerely,

William R. Seifert II  
2008 Chairman, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce  
South Alabama Executive, Regions Bank





# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**W**hile the national economy slows, the Chamber's economic development team maintained a steady course. Recent announcements, expansions and new hires have helped insulate the local economy from the volatility seen at the national level.

With ThyssenKrupp under construction and the KC-45 refueling tanker contract on hold, Mobile's lead economic development announcements were all expansions in 2008, the majority of them at local shipbuilders. Growth at these long-time area companies prove confidence in the Mobile region is high.

This year, announcements included Atlantic Marine, Austal USA, C&G Boatworks, Evonik Degussa, SSAB Alabama Inc. and Silver Ships, and resulted in 1,641 high-paying jobs and \$846.5 million in capital investment.



Mobile Container Terminal became operational in August 2008. Pictured above on the property in front of the massive loading cranes are (left to right): Project Manager Brian Clark; Bert Maylin, marine manager; Scott Martin, IT manager; and Eddie Cabrerra, health, safety, security and environment manager. The cranes are ZPMC Post-Panamax cranes with a lifting capacity of 65 long tons. They are capable of reaching 18 containers wide onboard a vessel and can lift two 20-ft. containers at a time.

## Seize It

Partners for Growth, the Chamber's economic development campaign fund, raised \$10,441,900, exceeding the group's \$10 million goal. Co-chaired by Harris Morrisette of China Doll Rice and Bean Co., and Sandy Stimpson of Gulf Lumber Co., the program had an appropriate tagline of "Seizing the Opportunity." Efforts through 2012 will focus on four key areas — existing business retention and expansion, new business development, workforce development and infrastructure advancement.



During a reception held at the Mobile Area Chamber to celebrate progress of the Partners for Growth — Seizing the Opportunity campaign, Sandy Stimpson with Gulf Lumber Co., left, has Chamber staff members Kim Perrone and Shelly Mattingly roll out the amount raised as of May 24, 2008. As the campaign came to a close, officials announced \$10.4 million was raised.

In a unique private-public partnership, more than half of 200 investors pledged to support the program from 2008 to 2012, including the city of Mobile and Mobile County. The Mobile Area Chamber, through contracts with the city and county, is the lead economic recruiter and collaborates with various entities to secure projects for the Mobile Bay area.



The initiative has aggressive goals of creating more than 3,750 jobs from 2008 - 2012 with targeted annual salaries of \$38,500, and more than \$1 billion in capital investments locally. The previous effort exceeded its key goals in just four years, securing \$6.37 billion in capital and landing 7,807 new jobs at salaries averaging \$48,249 per year.

## Job Growth

Mobile continues to have the fastest job growth in Alabama — having created more than 16,000 jobs over the past four years.

In 2008, the Chamber helped secure 1,641 jobs at an average annual salary of \$52,548 and \$846.5 million in capital investments.

## Forbes Certified

Forbes.com named Mobile the No. 1 Small Business Metro Area on its Best Places list of America's Fastest Growing Metros. The acknowledgement boosted interest in the area with its statement that the gross metropolitan product (GMP) is expected to grow 34.1 percent through 2012. Research was based on Moody's Economy.com and included 363 metropolitan areas with a core urban area of at least 50,000 people.



Mobile made the lucky no. 7 spot on *Southern Business & Development's* list of the Best Places in the South to Locate Your Company - Mid Markets, later that spring.

## Our Favorite Number

The Chamber's economic development team was named number one in the state, according to the Alabama Development Office. The 2008 Economic Development Achievement Award for extraordinary achievements over the past year, was presented at the Alabama Manufacturer of the Year Awards.

## Shock and Angst

Mobile found itself embroiled in an emotional roller coaster when Northrop Grumman was first awarded the aerial refueling tanker contract in February, known as the KC-45. The decision was challenged by competitor Boeing and reviewed by the Government Accountability Office. From there, as the presidential election was looming, the U.S. Department of Defense chose to delay the contract rebidding process until the Barrack Obama administration took office.

Built. Flown. Tested. These are the top three strengths of the local team's proposal to fulfill an urgent and critical need for the U.S. military.

The Chamber is continuing its support and lobbying efforts for this critical project that will impact thousands of U.S. jobs and men and women fighting for our country. The contract has been valued at \$40 billion and if Mobile wins it again, could employ 1,500 people along the Gulf Coast and create another 5,000-plus indirect jobs.

## More Steel for Mobile

As the second largest capital investment in the Mobile area in more than a decade, SSAB Alabama Inc. announced Axis as the site for its new state-of-the-art heat-treating facility. A \$460 million capital investment, the expansion will increase capacity four-fold and bring 180 new jobs with average annual wages estimated at \$65,000. Construction is expected to begin in 2009, with operations up and running by 2011.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## An Economic Lift

Before the official opening of the long-awaited Mobile Container Terminal (MCT), word began to spread the site was ready and trucks started making appointments to deliver and pick up cargo. The new facility also serviced a ship scheduled to dock in New Orleans, when operations were interrupted by an oil spill.

The first of three phases is complete with 95 acres and an annual throughput capacity of 350,000 ton equivalent units (TEUs).

MCT is a project showcasing the area's unique ability to grow with private and public partners, including the Alabama State Port Authority and private industry APM Terminals and CMA CGM.

## Austal Builds!

There were a number of significant headlines that floated up from Austal USA in 2008. During the summer months, the company held a groundbreaking ceremony for its \$245-million, 700,000-square-foot Modular Manufacturing Facility — space executives say is necessary to construct large aluminum vessels in one location. Phase one of the facility is expected to open in July 2009. In the fall, Austal christened the Littoral Combat Ship Independence (LCS2), a new high-speed warship for the U.S. Navy. Austal was the vessel designer and builder for the General Dynamics team.

More good news followed in November when the U.S. Department of Defense awarded Austal a contract to design and build a next generation multi-use platform ship, a 103-meter Joint High Speed Vessel, with an option for nine more. The program is worth potentially more than \$1.6 billion.

## Record Progress

A total of 25,000 applications were submitted for salaried and hourly positions at ThyssenKrupp Steel USA and ThyssenKrupp Stainless USA. Company officials hired more than 300 people during 2008 for the joint 3,500-acre steel facility under construction in north Mobile County.

An estimated 1,500 construction workers were on site daily. When complete, TK is expected to create 2,700 permanent jobs.

German officials say progress on the \$4.2 billion carbon steel and stainless steel project is setting records. Of the more than \$1 billion in contracts awarded to date, Alabama companies successfully won contracts on half.

## In the Family

The Chamber welcomed Troy L. Wayman CECD as vice president of economic development. Wayman is a certified economic developer (CECD) and replaces Bill Sisson, who was named executive director of the Mobile Airport Authority.

Wayman will oversee and direct the Chamber's economic development functions, including new business development, business retention and expansion, international trade and the Center for Workforce Development. Additionally, he will oversee the day-to-day operations of the Chamber's current economic development program of work — Partners for Growth; and continue the partnership with the Washington County Economic Development Initiative.

## Nonstop Recruiting

The Chamber continued its presence at international air shows such as the Singapore Air Show and Farnborough Air Show in England. Partnering with the Mobile Airport Authority, the group hosted executives from Singapore Technologies, Northrop Grumman, EADS, Airbus and potential tanker suppliers.

Also, partnering with Baldwin County Economic Development Alliance as well as five other lower Alabama county economic development groups, the Chamber hosted more than 70 Atlanta-area site selection consultants at the Southern Economic Development Council's "Meet the Consultants" forum.

## New Tide

The Chamber revitalized its Maritime Affairs committee and met with maritime industry members on a number of port and waterfront-related issues, including the proposed I-10 bridge, additional manning of customs for the port and cruise industries and support for the turning basin at Mobile Container Terminal.

For years, Mobile leaders worked to see their dreams of a cruise ship with a homeport on the Mobile River become a reality. Carnival announced in 2008 that it was upgrading the city's original ship, the *Holiday*, with a larger vessel, *Fantasy*, increasing capacity by 42 percent. It is scheduled to launch in 2009.

## 125,000 Square Feet of Hope

The much anticipated, state-of-the-art 125,000-square-foot University of South Alabama Mitchell Cancer Institute (MCI) opened its doors in the fall of 2008. It is the first academic cancer research institute along the central Gulf Coast and the only outpatient cancer treatment center in the world with its combination of technology housed under one roof.

More than 25,000 patients are expected to visit in its first year of operation. With approximately 100 plus employees, MCI represents a total investment of more than \$135 million, including a \$75 million investment in construction and equipment.

A primary goal is to become a National Cancer Institute, which means that, through collaborations, MCI will meet rigorous criteria for science and clinical research, as well as for prevention, control and populations/behavioral sciences.

## Manufacturer of the Year

Aker Solutions started operations in 2003 with 33 employees and now has approximately 140 employees at its Middle Bay Port manufacturing facility in Theodore. The company manufactures umbilicals and other sub sea equipment used to extract oil and gas beneath the ocean floor for the offshore oil and gas industry. Umbilicals are cable-like bundles consisting of fiber optic, electrical and power cables, and high alloy stainless steel tubes and carry hydraulic or chemical fluids from an oil and gas platform or floating production facility to the sub sea well distribution center. These umbilicals can reach out as far out as 40 miles from the host facility and can be installed in the deepest water depths.

Aker continues to exhibit impressive employment growth, above average employee salaries, and steady facility investment. Aker has garnered a series of customer agreements over the years servicing large oil and gas clients sure to support its continued growth.

The state-of-the-art Mitchell Cancer Institute (CRI) opened its doors in November. The CRI is on target to become a nationally-certified research hospital. Pictured here from left to right are: Abraham Mitchell Chair and Director of the USA Mitchell Cancer Institute Dr. Mike Boyd; U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions; Gov. Bob Riley; and local businessman and philanthropist Abraham Mitchell at the Nov. 3 opening.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Brookley Bucks

U.S. Sen. **Jeff Sessions** announced a \$750,000 investment as part of the 2008 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill for the Mobile Airport Authority's Downtown Airport. Funds will allow the authority to make improvements to the airport's ramps, including any surface a plane crosses except for taxiways and runways. The project is important, as Brookley Field-based companies increased airline maintenance contracts and the community prepares to build military refueling air tankers.

## Renewed Energy

The Washington County Economic Development Initiative and the Mobile Area Chamber named **Jesse Quillen** as director of economic development for Washington County. Since 2004, the two partners have worked on regional efforts designed to meet the needs of both counties.

With ThyssenKrupp-related growth, Quillen's focus is helping Washington County prepare for a significant economic boom including expansion of key infrastructure such as wastewater services. The successful partnership helped secure a \$1 million state grant to address this critical need. The initiation of this infrastructure grant helped secure Norfolk, Va.-based G1 Mechanical who plans to manufacture and install small diameter metal and PVC pipe in Washington County and employ 100 people. G1 has existing contracts with Northrop Grumman.

## Business Retention & Expansion

Organized as community outreach to help existing companies, the Chamber's business retention and expansion (BRE) division continued its work with local companies seeking incentives for area expansion projects.

The program also lends a hand to companies working to overcome growth obstacles as well as identify opportunities to expand, and during interviews executives are made aware of various local programs that assist with business growth and expansion.

Efforts of this initiative were again recognized with top honors in 2008 for its positive impact on existing businesses

by the Synchronist Users forum in Chicago. The Chamber was honored in the annual competition of U.S. and Canadian groups. This was the fourth time the Chamber's BRE program earned accolades from a third party.

The BRE committee met with 46 company representatives, concentrating its 2008 visits and interviews on the maritime and oil and gas industry as well as service entities.

An Oil & Gas Taskforce was organized to support businesses and determine how best to take advantage of increased drilling activity in the Gulf of Mexico. The group completed a strategic planning process and created a directory of suppliers in the Mobile area. A web site marketing the oil and gas suppliers is on-line at [www.offshorealabama.com](http://www.offshorealabama.com).

## CENTER FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

There is no more critical challenge than the area's future workforce. In 2008, the Chamber re-staffed its Center for Workforce Development and joined forces with other organizations to create a regional initiative – South Alabama Workforce Development Council - Region 9. The center is also working with businesses, community colleges, youth employment programs and a taskforce spearheaded by the state Department of Human Resources.

## Business-Led, Business-Driven

As one of 10 councils created by the state office of Workforce Development, a local partnership emerged to form the Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council - Region 9 (SAWDC) in May 2008. Housed at the Community Foundation of South Alabama, SAWDC is the only council in the state managed by paid staff and designated as a nonprofit 501C3. The industry-led and industry-driven council's board includes business leaders from eight counties in Southwest Alabama who comprise 75 percent of the council, with the remaining positions held by elected and community leaders and workforce training providers.

The Chamber's role involves financial support of the new entity, including funding a workforce development director who devotes a portion to the SAWDC initiatives.

The mission is to develop strategic partnerships that will attract, educate and train students and workers to better meet employer needs and foster economic growth. Through these partnerships, SAWDC and the Mobile Area Education Foundation launched the Classroom Presentations Project, placing industry leaders in fourth grade classrooms across the region to discuss career paths and the importance of staying in school.



Two directors of area workforce efforts collaborate on best practices. Pictured are Jim Kellen of the South Alabama Workforce Development Council - Region 9 and Leida Javier - Ferrell of the Chamber's Workforce Development Center.

Utilizing its power to convene, the council hosted a two-day strategic planning session in September to form a comprehensive workforce development plan for the Region 9 counties – Baldwin, Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Escambia, Mobile, Monroe and Washington.

In addition to the Chamber and the Community Foundation, partner funding organizations include Mobile Works, city of Mobile; and each county within Region 9, and private industry.

## Filled to Capacity

The Chamber's annual Summer Scrubs, a week-long internship for Mobile and Baldwin County high school students at local healthcare facilities, was filled to capacity. More than 185 students participated in the program held in conjunction with the Bay Area Healthcare Coalition.

A local hospital hired one of the first graduates of the program that was initiated six years ago.

Partner sites were AltaPointe Health Systems, Infirmary West, Mercy Medical, Mobile Infirmary Medical Center, North Baldwin Infirmary, Providence Hospital, South Baldwin Regional Medical Center, Springhill Medical Center, Thomas Hospital, University of South Alabama (USA) Children's and Women's Hospital, USA Health Sciences Division and Victory Health.

## New Companies and Expansions in the Mobile Area 2008

Company	Type	Jobs	Investment	Average Salary	Product
Atlantic Marine	Exp.	250	\$21.2M	\$52,400	shipbuilding
Austal USA	Exp.	1,000	\$254M	\$50,000	shipbuilding
C&G Boatworks	Exp.	150	\$1.3 M	\$45,000	shipbuilding
Evonik Degussa	Exp.	10	\$65M	\$72,070	biodiesel
Frascati Shops Inc.	Exp.	5	\$2M	\$30,470	railcar modifications
Praxair	Exp.	6	\$38M	\$64,000	industrial gases
Silver Ships	Exp.	10	\$790,000	\$48,000	shipbuilding
SSAB	Exp.	180	\$460M	\$65,000	high strength steel
Teledyne	Exp.	30	\$5M	\$46,000	aircraft

**New: 0 Expansions: 9 Jobs: 1,641 Capital Investment: \$846.5 M Avg. Salary: \$52,546**

*NOTE: These listings represent only those businesses that have reported a capital investment, expansion or new investment to the Chamber. This list is only a partial listing of all commercial/industrial investments occurring in 2008 in the Mobile Area.*



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Quality Valve's Mac McCaffrey, left, and Raymond McCaffrey, right, accept the Governor's Trade Excellence Award from Gov. Bob Riley.



Gov. Bob Riley presents the Governor's Trade Excellence Award to International Shipholding Corp. Pictured from left to right: Sheila Dean-Rosenbohm, Riley, Erik Johnsen, Kevin Wild and Manny Estrada.

## Planting a Seed

The sixth annual Health Occupations Career Fair drew nearly 1,000 participants. Created six years ago to expose high school students to future healthcare careers, the hands-on, interactive event is a signature project of the Bay Area Healthcare Coalition and the Chamber's Center for Workforce Development.

Participating organizations were Bishop State Community College Health Professions; Faulkner State Community College; Mobile Infirmary; Providence Hospital; Thomas Hospital; Springhill Medical Center; Spring Hill College; University of Mobile; USA Children's & Women's Hospital; and USA Emergency Medical Services' education, clinical laboratory science and cardio respiratory care departments.

## TRADE

Trade efforts put a face on Mobile around the world. The area is well known, particularly in the logistics field. The Port of Mobile ranked as the 10<sup>th</sup> largest U.S. port, according to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Waterborne Commerce Statistics Center, in port cargo tonnage by volume. The list includes both foreign and domestic tonnage handled by the port.

Exports from Alabama have risen steadily, and as of December, were up 11.64 percent over the previous year, valued at \$13.6 billion. More than 216,000 jobs throughout the state are directly or indirectly linked to trade, and 15 percent of all manufacturing workers in Alabama depend on exports for their jobs. Main exports are vehicles, mineral fuel, industrial machinery, plastics, aircraft parts, and pulp and paper.

## The World is Our Market

The Chamber sponsored or co-sponsored five trade missions in 2008 to learn more about enhancing business, local representatives from more than 100 companies traveled to Turkey, China, Chile, Argentina and South Africa.

In addition, the Chamber conducted seven briefings attended by 185 people interested in learning the benefits of international trade.

## World-Focused

Opportunities for trade are there for any sized business, and the Chamber offered several seminars to help drive that point home. Topics included exporting financing for small business, the Panama Canal expansion, international economics, foreign exchange risks and export control guidelines.

The Mobile Area Chamber sponsored or co-sponsored five trade missions in 2008 to Turkey, China, Chile, Argentina and South Africa. Pictured during the trip to Turkey are representatives from the Chamber and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce with officials from the Turkish Chamber of Commerce.



## Trade Excellence

Alabama Gov. Bob Riley again recognized two Mobile-based companies, International Shipholding Corp, a maritime freight transporter, and Quality Valve, a valve distributor, with the Governor's Trade Excellence Awards.

## Others See it Too

Delegations for several countries also saw the opportunities that Mobile area companies have to offer. Representatives from Canada, Colombia, Mexico, Poland and Thailand visited Mobile. The Chamber hosted a Thailand expo featuring products from 10 companies, including specialty foods, furniture, flowers, home décor accessories and auto parts.

Believing in the value of free trade as a catalyst of the world economy and a necessity to being considered a world player, the Chamber gave its support to the Colombian Free Trade agreement.



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



The Mobile Area Chamber's Gulf Coast Technology Council awarded scholarships to local college students majoring in technology-related fields of study. Designed to ensure a growing technology talent pool, the scholarship fund is funded by private companies. Pictured are the scholarship winners (seated from left) Anthony Agee, ITT Technical Institute; Bryan Warren, University of South Alabama; Ryan Carr, Remington College; Tena Pettway, ITT Technical Institute; and scholarship sponsors (second row from left) Stephen Backman, Remington College; Garin Danner, The SSI Group Inc.; Mahir Butt (MAWSS and Scholarship Fund Committee Chair); Elizabeth Stanford, Callis Communications; Julie Marthaler, Enveloc Inc.; Keith Jones, Prism Systems; (third row from left) Chris Morton, MCG Business Solutions; Wayne Myers, Forté Inc.; Andy Newton, Southern Light; and Vince Mayfield, Bit-Wizards.

## GULF COAST TECHNOLOGY COUNCIL (GCTC)

As the focal point for technology in south Alabama and the central Gulf Coast, the Gulf Coast Technology Council (GCTC) is helping transform the area's economy to take advantage of strengths in three areas: software/information technology, engineering sciences and biomedicine/ biotechnology. Supported by the Chamber, the GCTC expects its efforts to foster long-term growth of the technology sector



on the central Gulf Coast and position the region as a global leader in the creation of technology-based jobs. With its Web site, [www.gulfcoasttechnology.com](http://www.gulfcoasttechnology.com), the group promotes members, job openings and a list of technology events.

### Investing in the Future

The GCTC stepped up its commitment and awarded four scholarships to local technology students at its October meeting. The GCTC Scholarship Fund was created in 2007 as part of its mission to grow a highly skilled technology workforce in the Mobile area, with a goal to expose local companies to potential future employees. A total of \$11,000 was raised by 12 companies including Bit-Wizards, Callis Communications, Enveloc, Forté Inc., ITS Inc., MCG Business Solutions, Pilot Catastrophe, Prism Systems, Remington College, Southern Light, The SSI Group Inc. and Thompson Engineering.

### Innovator of the Year

A year after ThyssenKrupp announced the Mobile area as home to the company's new steel making and processing facility, the changes at the Alabama State Port Authority prove the role they played in that recruitment was critical. The authority's innovative proposal for a new \$115 million marine terminal on Pinto Island that will receive loads from TK's new mill in Brazil was critical to the "yes" vote for the largest private investment the area, and the country, has seen in recent history. Prior to this forward-thinking solution, ocean-going ships could not continue up the Mobile River. The new terminal will be among the first to

use state-of-the-art magnetic lifting gear designed by TK with assistance from the authority. In addition an electronic technology will transfer inventory records, identification numbers, location and weight. Approximately 13,000 tons of steel slabs or 10 barges worth are expected to make the trip upriver to the ThyssenKrupp facility every day. In addition, storage capacity will be provided to accommodate 150,000 metric tons of slabs.

Headquartered in Mobile, the Alabama State Port Authority owns and operates the state's deepwater port facilities in Mobile, handling in excess of 25 million tons of cargo annually.

### Capital Investment Growth

Manufacturing investment and expansions in the Mobile metropolitan statistical area including Baldwin County.

'08	\$846.5M (preliminary)
'07	\$4.69B
'06	\$245.3M
'05	\$636.3M
'04	\$414M
'03	\$74.5M
'02	\$84.5M
'01	\$318M

*Source: Alabama Development Office*  
Capital investment data is collected by the Alabama Development Office with figures from local developers and the Alabama Department of Revenue, and is limited to manufacturing investments and expansions.

### Mobile Area Employment

Number employed in increments of 1,000

'08	275.6
'07	272.3
'06	260.7
'05	246.1
'04	230.1
'03	224.4
'02	225.5
'01	229.7

*Source: Alabama Department of Industrial Relations*

# SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

**The Chamber's small business development department in 2008 assisted 3,100 entrepreneurs, a 58 percent increase over the previous year. New resources, including additional volunteers at SCORE, the Alabama Minority Business Enterprise Center (MBEC), SBA Alternative Work Site and several business-to-business forums helped support the increased demands on small business services.**

## TK B2B

The lingo stands for ThyssenKrupp's Business to Business briefing and the company's commitment to hiring local vendors.

The Chamber assisted TK with two briefings in 2008. The first focused on construction needs, the second on service, supplies and equipment. Both events drew a total of 1,600 attendees.

In addition, TK representatives discussed procurement opportunities for minority-owned and local businesses during the Chamber's Diversity Business Network in February, drawing 70 attendees.

Other events designed to help businesses expand their client base included a matchmaker-type function to give attendees an opportunity to meet with various governmental agencies and organizations, co-sponsored by the Chamber and the University of South Alabama's Small Business Development Center. Sixty-six participants secured 177 appointments with 13 purchasing agents.

## Going to the Bank

Area bank presidents met with Mobile's Small Business Administration (SBA) senior area manager to learn more about the SBA loan process and options available for small business owners. This was one of several accomplishments for the new program.

In its first year as an SBA Alternative Work Site, there was a 55 percent increase in the number of SBA loans generated and a 118 percent increase in loan values, and nationally, SBA loans are down by nearly one-third. Additionally, this new revenue helped create 99 jobs.

The local SBA also presented several workshops to discuss disaster preparedness, capital access, bonds and SBA funding options.

## It Is What You Know

In 2008, the Chamber offered a number of quality workshops and forums where business owners and managers could learn tips and information to assist their businesses. At the annual two-day Smart Business conference, speaker, author and consultant Christine Corelli shared her expertise with more than 300 attendees. Corelli covered communication skills and the art of selling ideas, and she taught key leadership competencies at the event.

Also, the Chamber partnered with Dale Carnegie to offer seminars covering a variety of leadership, motivation and innovation topics. Other educational opportunities throughout the year attracted more than 400 small



Tom McPhillips, owner of Zoës Kitchen in Mobile, waits on lunchtime customers at the Legacy Village shopping center location. He and his brother, Mike, opened the first Zoës franchise in Destin, Fla.

business owners and managers and included legal issues, critical updates on IRS topics, employer compliance on occupational safety, health, labor and employment needs, and new legislation with tax implications.

## Big Turnout for Small Business

A new event, the Entrepreneur's Forum sponsored topics such as turning contacts into contracts, leveraging search engines, Web design and negotiation strategies. The monthly lunch forum was created to present practical business skills training and information to small businesses, and drew 140 participants.

Executive Roundtable, a monthly morning meeting exclusively for Chamber member small business owners and managers, had a total of 250-plus participants in 2008. The group heard from a variety of speakers including Rep. Jo Bonner, who explained the factors surrounding the economic bailout vote, and Dr. James Lowe, who spoke about Bishop State's now removed probationary status and the new curriculum plans.

Additional speakers included Alabama State Port Authority Director Jimmy Lyons, USA economist Semoon Change and Mobile Mayor Sam Jones.

## Diverse Crowds

The quarterly event Diversity Business Network continued its mission to give minority-owned business owners and managers an opportunity to promote their companies. The free forum brought 253 participants together throughout 2008.

## 2008 Small Business of the Month

Featured each month in *The Business View*, Small Business of the Month winners are selected by a volunteer task force. Criteria for the award include a growing financial base, outstanding reputation, community involvement and employ fewer than 100 people.

Winners named in 2008 were:

- Advanced Payroll Solutions
- Callis Communications
- Coastal Waters Federal Credit Union
- Lincoln Pharmacy
- Logical Communications Services Inc.
- Orion Engineering
- Paula's Hair Unlimited
- Technical Specialties Inc.
- Threaded Fasteners Inc.
- Zoës Kitchen

## Small Business of the Year

Mobile Bay Transportation was the 2008 Small Business of the Year. The company's ability to identify service gaps and fill them, such as picking up the area handicapped transportation service in less than 48 hours, earned Mobile Bay Transportation the award. The company has four divisions: airport limousine and shuttle; parking; paratransit service to elderly and disabled citizens; and Yellow Cab of Mobile. The company also expanded its service area by creating a sister company in Pensacola. In just five years Mobile Bay Transportation has doubled its revenue.



# SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

## Hammer Time

Armed with his story about his rise and fall as a music superstar and how it parlayed into recent success as an entrepreneur, MC Hammer was the keynote speaker at the Chamber's Eagle Awards. The annual program honors five minority-owned businesses demonstrating a commitment to growth and the community. Nominees must be at least 51 percent owned, operated and controlled by African-American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian or Asian-American persons.

2008 winners were: Bay Security LLC, Black Classics Books & Gifts, Muskogee Metalworks, Shore Acres Plant Farm and Trinity Kids Learning Center Inc.

## SCORE

Serving 350 entrepreneurs in 2008, SCORE, a group of volunteers who offer free and confidential consulting at the Chamber, recruited several new associates.

In addition, **Dorothy I. Ryan** was recognized for her 10 years of volunteer service to the Mobile Chapter.

## Mighty Big Effort

The Chamber honored the Alabama State Port Authority with its Minority Business Advocate Award. As part of its minority outreach and support, the Alabama State Port Authority set its 2008 Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal at 17 percent design and construction costs for all projects receiving federal funding. This award recognizes a Mobile area company that supports minority-owned businesses. To qualify, nominees must have a commitment to supplier diversity with offices in Mobile, Baldwin or Washington County and at least three years in operation.



Eight local companies were honored at Minority Enterprise Development Week. Award winners are pictured with keynote speaker Rep. Artur Davis (center) and Pam Ramos with the Alabama Minority Business Enterprise Center (second from right).

## MBEC

The Alabama Minority Business Enterprise Center (MBEC) is operated by the Mobile Area Chamber and funded by a federal grant from the Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency and match-grant funding from the city of Mobile.

In 2008, MBEC consulted with more than 150 minority business enterprises who were awarded in excess of \$9.27 million in procurement contracts. Clients experienced an increase above last year's total revenues by more than \$7 million. In addition, these clients secured financing exceeding \$4.7 million. The cumulative effect of the business contracts, increased revenues and business financing, helped generate 106 new jobs in the Gulf Coast Region.

During the local Minority Enterprise Development Week, MBEC hosted a day of networking, a professional development workshop, a minority business mini expo, along with an award ceremony honoring minority businesses. Honored in 2008 were: Construction Firm of the Year, ThomCo Enterprises; Manufacturer of the Year, Aeroteam Inc.; Service Firm of the Year, KHAFA; Technology Firm of

the Year, LogiCore Corp; Best Client Relationship of the Year, Bay Security Co. LLC; High Performing MBE of the Year, Carter's Contracting Services; MBDA Regional Director's Award, Southeast Cherokee Construction; and Youth Entrepreneur of the Year, Klu Clothing.

Other activities included sponsoring a pre-bid conference for development of an 88-unit seniors' building to be constructed in Mobile with the Mobile Housing Board and initiation of a new minority business directory sponsored by the city of Mobile.

The 2008 Gulf Coast Access to Capital Summit provided minority businesses the opportunity to meet with bankers and lenders in one location. Some attendees made a presentation outlining their financing requests to the lenders. Additionally, strategic partnerships resulted in co-hosting the University of South Alabama Small Business Development Center's procurement matchmaking event and other workshops presented at the university, and co-hosting a workshop series to make available the latest information and newest techniques in business with the Mobile Area Water and Sewer System.

The Eagle Awards were held in October and honored minority-owned businesses in the Mobile area. Pictured below with keynote speaker MC Hammer (center) are Constance Dial, Trinity Kids Learning Center; Monique Rogers Henley, Bay Security; Mal McGhee & Chief Buford Rolin-Muskogee Metalworks; Oliver Washington IV & Oliver Washington III, Shore Access Plant Farm; Adeline Clarke, Black Classics Books & Gifts; and Joseph Treadcraft, Alabama State Port Authority.





# COMMUNITY & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS



U.S. Rep. Jo Bonner met with the Mobile delegation prior to his appointment to the appropriations committee of the U.S. House of Representatives. Pictured from left to right are: Herschel Vinyard, Atlantic Marine; Jim McIngvale, Northrop Grumman; Win Hallett, Mobile Area Chamber; Bill Sisson, Mobile Airport Authority; Merceria Ludgood, Mobile County Commission; Alan Spencer, chief-of-staff to Bonner; Darrell Randle, Mobile Area Chamber; Connie Hudson, Mobile City Council; Cheryl Thompson, Alabama Power; Al Stokes, City of Mobile; Bill Seifert, Regions Bank and Mobile Area Chamber board chairman; City of Mobile Mayor Sam Jones; Bonner; Mike Lee, Page & Jones; Judith Adams, Alabama State Port Authority; and Ginny Russell, Mobile Area Chamber.

**O**n your side – that's the best way to describe the Chamber's efforts in community and governmental affairs. There are three committees backed by more than 60 members who monitor local, state and federal legislation and its impact on local businesses.

## On Their Turf

Area leaders again flew to Washington D.C. to meet with the local federal delegation of Rep. Jo Bonner, Sen. Richard Shelby and Sen. Jeff Sessions, regarding strategic local projects that require federal support.

Critical 2008 topics on the agenda were the Northrop Grumman bid for the aerial refueling tanker contract, funding for the Port of Alabama's turning basin, workforce training essential to new and expanding industry, and establishing a railroad quiet zone from the GM&O building to the Alabama Cruise Terminal.

Later in the spring, the Chamber held a reception in Montgomery for the entire Alabama State Legislature, with more than 25 state elected officials in attendance and nearly 50 Chamber volunteers participating.

In November the Chamber hosted the entire Mobile-Baldwin legislative delegation to present the organization's 2009 Legislative Agenda. The annual gathering is designed to give area decision makers face-to-face time with the elected officials influencing state policies.

## One-on One

While Mardi Gras was the draw to get Alabama state legislators to visit Mobile, the real prize was giving them a lesson about why their ongoing support is crucial. More than 60 legislators and their families attended a weekend of festivities and toured the Alabama State Port Authority and the University of South Alabama.

Other activities and meetings with elected officials included city/county/Chamber lunches and weekly attendance by Chamber staff at city council and county commissioners meetings, plus a number of annual events and forums including the Pork & Politics in the Park political rally, drawing 500 attendees; Forum Alabama, designed to address state and national issues and featuring Sen. Richard Shelby and Rep. Jo Bonner, collectively attracting 300 participants, the Legislative Lunch, where the Chamber's coming year's agenda is presented to state and local officials with 150 attendees; and Champagne & Oysters, a year-end networking event for members and elected officials that drew 160 attendees.

## Not Plain English

The Chamber spoke before an Alabama State Senate government committee in opposition of two proposed Senate bills to require driver's license exams to be given in English only and to make English the state's official language. In the remarks, the far-reaching implications for recruiting industry and Alabama's workforce were explained as two examples of why these bills were counter-productive. Neither bill passed through the Senate during the 2008 session.

On a positive note, the Chamber lobbied for the passage of a small business bill that included tax deductions for health insurance for companies with 25 employees or fewer. Employee participation is encouraged by allowing them to deduct twice the amount they contribute from their income taxes.

At the national level, on behalf of members of the local business community, the Chamber monitored energy, trade, immigration and card check legislation.

## Vital Connection

For more than 10 years, Mobile leaders have debated the need to alleviate congestion through the Wallace Tunnel on I-10. The Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) identified three sites for a proposed new bridge.

In 2008, Chamber volunteers and staff began meeting with members, various community and business leaders, as well as groups expressing opposition to a downtown bridge across the Mobile River. The meetings were ground-work for a consensus, according to the group's leaders, Mike Lee with Page & Jones and the Chamber's Maritime Affairs Committee; and Bill Seifert with Regions Bank and the Chamber's board chairman. Consensus gives Mobile and Baldwin businesses an opportunity to have input on this critical issue.

As the Mobile community continues to wrestle with growing congestion along I-10, the Chamber passed a position statement, requesting officials eliminate the southernmost route C because of its impact on the maritime community. Further, it was requested that ALDOT and the Federal Highway Administration review current data on the "northern route's" capability to address the project's stated purpose and need, especially given recent economic developments, including the Mobile Container Terminal, ThyssenKrupp, Berg Steel and Northrop Grumman/EADS.

Finally, in the event the proposed "northern route" does not comply with the project's purpose and need as defined above, then the Chamber supports a bridge route that passes no farther north than route A and no farther south than route B. By year's end, the northern route was eliminated from future plans.



# COMMUNITY & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS



At the Chamber's Annual Legislative Luncheon, state Legislators Ben Brooks and Vivian Figures Davis share the podium.

## 100 Strong

Each year the Chamber gathers a team of more than 100 community leaders and takes them to a city addressing an issue pertinent to the Mobile area. In 2008, the destination was Charlotte, N.C. Topics included community college partnerships with business and industry, mass transit, road and bridge construction, downtown development and the economic impact of racing.

The Chamber has planned 21 of these trips, garnering local results such as the Mobile Area Education Foundation, CitiSmart, the Chamber's workforce development division, Envision, the University of South Alabama's Research and Technology Park and Engaging Youth in Engineering.

## Resilient & Sustainable

Two of the most envied traits for any community are resiliency and sustainability. The Chamber continued its quests for funds to pursue a regional framework for economic and environmental benefits developed by planning expert **Michael Gallis**. Funded by NOAA, a digital report was completed in February covering the current state of and desired direction of the region's economy/workforce, transportation/movement of people, infrastructure and environment.

Chamber president **Win Hallett** joined Gallis and NOAA Coastal Services Director **Margaret Davison** as a presenting panelist at the 2008 National Corporate Community Investment Conference sponsored by the U.S. Chamber's Business Civic Leadership Center. The presentation served as a vehicle to present Mobile's project to potential funding foundations and organizations.

A grant awarded by Mississippi Alabama Sea Grant Consortium early in 2008 funded the creation of a brand and logo to enhance understanding and recognition of what has been known as simply the Gallis project. Now called **interCHANGE**, the new name will allow staff and volunteers to effectively market the program to fund organizations and generate feedback and buy-in from a broader cross-section of the regional community.

A portion of the Chamber's PFG funds will support the project. Further backing is needed to continue the project.

## Meet & Greet

**Dr. Roy Nichols** took the helm of the Mobile County Public School System as superintendent. His immediate goals were to work with the school board, the Mobile Area Education Foundation and area business and industry leaders. High on his list also was restoring taxpayer confidence. The Chamber co-hosted a welcome reception for Nichols with the Mobile Area Education Foundation. More than 125 business and community leaders, as well as elected officials, attended the event.

## Service to Country

Mobile is one of only 38 committees with nationally recognized Veteran's Day activities.

The Mobile Bay Area Veteran's Day Commission, with the support of the Chamber, held its annual November Veteran's Day festivities. The annual parade was followed by a luncheon where U.S. Army General **John P. Abizaid** was honored as Patriot of the Year and Col. **Harry Moreland**, U.S. Air Force (Ret.) was named Veteran of the Year. Moreland is one of only a few to have flown in



Abizaid



Werneth

three wars — WWII, Korea and Vietnam.

Abizaid was the keynote lunch speaker for a crowd of more than 560.

For his more than 35 years of reporting on veterans' and military affairs, *Press-Register* reporter **George Werneth** was also recognized at the event.

In May during Armed Forces Week, the annual luncheon featured United State Navy Rear Admiral **Victor Guillory**. A total of 293 people attended the event. Local JROTC participants, veterans and current military personnel were honored for their service to our country.



Guillory

## Partner of the Year

For its support over the past nine years to organize efforts and make residents aware of the negative impacts of the state's antiquated constitution, the Alabama Citizens for Constitutional Reform presented the Mobile Area Chamber with a Partner of the Year award.

## Corporate Community Service Award

Alabama Orthopaedic Clinic P.C. won the 2008 Corporate Community Service Award. According to the company's entry, compassion and understanding define the AOC commitment to the delivery of quality healthcare services. The physicians' generosity and spirit of giving sets the example with their contributions to more than 60 charities, including seeing the medically underserved through Victory Health Partners. In addition, the AOC team believes helping the community begins at home, and provides assistance when AOC employees are in need.

The Alabama Citizens for Constitutional Reform (ACCR) presented the Mobile Area Chamber with a Partner of the Year award for the organization's support spanning nine years. Pictured with Chamber President **Win Hallett** (third from right) are: keynote speaker **Jack Edwards** (left), **Jo Ann Cummings**, AAUW of Alabama, Partner of the Year; founding ACCR member **Dr. Wayne Flint**, Bailey Thomson Award; **Hallett**, **Leevones Dubose**, Bay Area Women Coalition, Educator of the Year; **Hallett**; **Barbara Drummond**, City of Mobile, emcee; and **Dr. Jim Nash**, ACCR chairman.





# COMMUNITY & GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

## Envision

In the regional strategic plan's second decade of existence, volunteers showed there is still a significant commitment and follow-through to the program created with citizen input in 1997.



Envision Coastal Alabama represents a successful regional partnership formed between Mobile and Baldwin Counties. The group's efforts were set forth by a unified vision guiding the community's goals, established more than 11 years ago. Notable accomplishments range from regional transit coordination to the development of an affordable housing initiative.

## Building Community Dialogue

At the Envision annual meeting, keynote speaker **Steven Seibert**, then with the Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida, focused on the visioning process for communities working to enhance the quality of life for its residents. Recognizing the success of Envision Coastal Alabama's 11-year strategic visioning process, Seibert motivated volunteers present to continue their efforts in promoting regional sustainability initiatives for the betterment of future generations. The event drew 225 participants.

Leaders of the 2008 initiatives were co-chairs **Ron Martin**, Alabama Power Co. (Mobile County); and **Phil Norris**, University of South Alabama (Baldwin County). The e-team chairs are: Economy - **Judith Adams**, Alabama State Port Authority (Mobile) and **Larry Merrihew**, Warrior Tombigbee Waterway Association (Baldwin); Education - **Rhonda Neal Waltman**, Neal-Waltman & Associates (Mobile) and **Jim Kellen**, Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council - Region 9 (Baldwin); Environment - **Bob Haskins**, Keep Mobile Beautiful (Mobile) and **Jim Connors**, University of South Alabama (Baldwin); and Equity - **Chris Miller**, South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (Mobile) and **John Whitfield**, Community Foundation of South Alabama (Baldwin).

## Relieving Pain at the Pump

When gas prices hit record highs last year, Bayline, a joint partnership between The Wave Transit System of Mobile and the Baldwin Rural Area Transit System, became even more critical to getting workers across the bay. Bayline began a third route in June 2008 traveling from Fairhope, Daphne and Spanish Fort to Bienville Square in downtown Mobile. Monthly participation in the unique route ranged from 1,600 to 2,000 riders.

To further efforts, the South Alabama Regional Planning Commission (SARPC) offered its solution — a free, Web-based, ride-matching initiative — CommuteSmart Mobile.



At a media conference held at the Mobile Area Chamber are Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Partner representatives. Pictured in the front row (l-r): Elaine Beck, IRS territory manager; and Rose Johnson with the Alabama Department of Human Resources. On the back row (l-r): Major Ted Morris, Salvation Army; Frank Harkins, Goodwill Easter Seals; Jimmy Knight, Mobile Community Action; and Shirley Sessions, Envision equity team co-chair and Regions Bank.

## A Sign of the Times

A packed house of 300 people gathered to hear a representative from the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. at the 2008 Coastal Economy Outlook. Topics included U.S. and regional credit markets, the economy's impact on local markets and the future of the area economy.

The forum was sponsored by Envision, University South Alabama Center for Continuing Education, University of South Alabama Center for Real Estate Studies, Baldwin County Economic Development Alliance and the Chamber.

Earlier in the year, Gulf Coast leaders in commercial real estate and properties reported data and interpretations of the local market as well as the Coastal economy and water and wind insurance. The Gulf Coast Commercial Real Estate Summit was the only program of its type in the region and was a strategy of Envision.

## VITA is Vital

Prior to tax season, Envision partnered on a public outreach campaign to encourage low-income working families to utilize the free Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program to claim money that is rightfully theirs through the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).

Envision Coastal Alabama's equity team, along with a coalition of community-based organizations (listed with

the photo above), combined efforts to start the program extending across Mobile, Baldwin, Washington and surrounding counties.

Created by Congress with bipartisan support in 1975 under President Gerald Ford, and greatly expanded since then during the administrations of Presidents Reagan, Bush and Clinton, EITC provides a lump-sum payment to individuals and families within certain income levels.

## Green Coast

The premiere green build conference on the Northern Gulf Coast, GreenCoast was produced by Smart Coast in collaboration with the U.S. Green Building Council — Alabama, Mississippi and Northern Gulf Coast, Florida chapters. Smart Coast is an Envision Strategy Partner and a regional nonprofit organization promoting balanced development and a healthy Gulf Coast region. The GreenCoast conference featured interactive education sessions on commercial and residential design and construction as well as public topics related to sustainability.



# MEMBERSHIP



As Chamber Chase ended, volunteer teams over goal were recognized with this group photo. Right: Carolyn Golson, Chamber vice president of membership, praised Chamber Chase Chair Melissa Morrisette, right, for her leadership.

**M**ore than 2,500 businesses are members of the Mobile Area Chamber. In 2008, 522 companies joined the organization. Of those, approximately 85 percent employ less than 10 people.

The Chamber works hard to meet the many needs of its members and earned a retention rate of nearly 90 percent, making it one of the best in the country.

## Recruiting Members & Resources

Every year from May until August, a team of volunteers pursues an annual resource development goal. The target for the 2008 Chamber Chase, a total resource development campaign, was \$1.2 million in new members, sponsorships and advertising. Under the leadership of Melissa Morrisette with LLB&B Inc. Real Estate, 90 volunteers representing 44 companies surpassed the goal in July. Their total: \$1,253,696 with 115 new members.

## Business Connections

With the goal of adding value to membership offerings, the Chamber revamped its Business & Technology Expo to combine several events into a day's worth of professional

development and networking. The August event began with a resource fair for small business owners, followed by lunch with a keynote speaker and then the expo. The new format drew more than 1,500 attendees and 206 exhibitors.

## Chamber Investment

In 2008, 30 new companies joined or upgraded their dues to Board of Advisors (BOA) level, bringing the total number to 258.

Dues from this group represent the Chamber's most generous supporters, and BOA memberships provide company chief executive officers, owners and principals an avenue for valuable input on critical Chamber and community issues. Additional benefits include advance information on Mobile's business progress and quarterly meetings with the Chamber's governing Board of Directors.

## Nonprofit Special

The Chamber initiated two programs specifically for its nonprofit members. First, chaired by Becky Jo Peterson with America's Junior Miss, a bi-monthly roundtable was held where executives were offered information and speakers addressing timely topics. And second, the Chamber added a comprehensive nonprofit section to its 2009 *Membership Directory and Buyers Guide*.



## Early Birds & Night Owls

One of the most popular reasons for Chamber membership is the networking opportunities. More than 2,000 attendees were counted at the three regular networking events in 2008 – Business@Breakfast, Networking@Noon and Business After Hours.

## Chamber Ambassadors

The Diplomat of the Month is featured monthly in *The Business View*. The award is based on participation of volunteers who visit new members, attend member ribbon-cuttings and work Chamber events. There are 40 volunteers in this group representing 36 member companies.

Those recognized in 2008 were:

- Trish Banker, retired, Regions Bank
- Suzanne Campbell, Virginia College of Mobile
- Patrick Dunn, AXA Equitable Life Insurance Co.
- Linda Faulkner, Evonik Degussa
- Marylee Kilday, Austal USA
- Lloyd Meyers, Mobile BayBears
- Sheila Murphy, Southern TeleCommunications
- Christine Presken, Mobile Arts and Sports Assn
- Pam Sullivan, Zebra Marketing
- Elissa P. Tesney, First Community Bank
- Randy Scott, Solid Rock Promotions
- Kay Watson, Adecco Employment Services

## Diplomat of the Year



Sheila Murphy with Southern TeleCommunications Inc. was named 2008 Diplomat of the Year. Murphy has participated in the program for 20 years, and previously earned this distinction in 1997. She was recognized as Diplomat of the Month in the

Chamber's December/January 2008 issue for her involvement in Chamber events and visiting new members.

BaySide Dinners was one of more than 200 exhibitors at the Business & Technology Expo where more than 1,500 attendees strolled through the aisles and networked.





# COMMUNICATIONS

**The Chamber strives to be the voice of business, and representing more than one third of the area workforce employed at more than 2,500 Chamber member businesses, it is a responsibility taken seriously. From sharing local business headlines in its monthly magazine, *The Business View* and the electronic weekly e-mail, *The Business View Weekly*, to maintaining media relationships, coordinating dozens of printing projects for the Chamber's various departments and advocating for the KC-45 tanker contract bid by Northrop Grumman, efforts in 2008 have rarely been more significant.**

## Sharing Our Message

The Chamber works to maintain local media relationships and books appointments to share our message or position on various business and economic development topics. The *Press-Register* printed opinion-editorial articles covering the U.S. Air Force defense contract for refueling tankers, the Chamber's position on a potential I-10 bridge aimed at relieving congestion through the tunnel and the 2009 pro-business legislative agenda.

In addition, the Chamber met with area public relations professionals quarterly to discuss potential regional and national story ideas.

## And They Came . . .

Mega-projects captured headlines around the country, and Mobile is primed to reap the benefits of a curious public about the Port City. In an effort to combine resources, the Chamber partnered with the Alabama Development Office and the cities of Huntsville and Montgomery to retain Development Counsellors International (DCI), the economic public relations firm the Chamber worked with from April 2006 to April 2007.

Media outlets with nationwide coverage of Mobile's burgeoning economy appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Der Spiegel* (German), *The Economist*, *New York Times*, *Seattle Post*

*Intelligencer*, *Wall Street Journal* and on various national broadcast outlets including FOX Business Network and National Public Radio.

In a DCI perception survey of corporate executives responsible for site selection, the state earned a no. 8 ranking in the most favorable business climate. Comments about Mobile and its proactive measures were mentioned.

## Strength in Numbers

Phase II of the Chamber's marketing campaign based on member testimonials were again featured in print venues, such as *The Business View*, *Press-Register* and *Lagniappe*, and on Lamar billboards and signs at Mobile



Stephanie Constantine, owner of Constantine Human Resources Consulting LLC, was one of six members featured in the Chamber's 2008 campaign.

The effort launched originally in 2007 under the direction of Red Square Agency.

Regional Airport. The campaign includes the stories of six members and what they believe are their strongest benefits of Chamber membership, and continues the *Strength in Numbers* headline.

Featured in the 2008 effort were:

- Stephanie Constantine, Constantine Human Resource Consulting
- Preston Griffith Jr. & Stephen Griffith, Griffith Shell
- Rhoda Hardy, Sand Dollar Lifestyles
- Andy Newton, Southern Light LLC
- Dennis Variali, Denny Manufacturing
- Damon Wickware Sr., Bayview Ford-Lincoln-Mercury

## Annual Checkpoint

For more than a decade, the Chamber has hosted the annual State of the City and County luncheon, an event highlighting a look at the past year's accomplishments and a forecast of what's ahead.

Held in April, the sold-out event featured presentations from Mobile Mayor Sam Jones and 2008 Mobile County Commission President Stephen Nodine. In addition, Bill Seifert with Regions Bank and Chamber board chairman, offered the team perspective of the three entities on economic development.

## Generation Future

The Chamber partnered with the Mobile Area Young Professionals Association to cross-market the two organizations' events in an effort to reach 20- and 30-something business men and women. The two groups will promote each other's membership and encourage participation in each organization's activities.

## PR Recognition

The Chamber's Partners for Growth – Seizing the Opportunity program and an opinion-editorial penned by Chamber President Win Hallett responding to a Boeing executive's comments about Mobile's inability to provide a trained workforce to build aircraft refueling tankers for the U. S. Air Force received top honors from the Southern Public Relations Federation and the Public Relations Council of Alabama in their annual competitions.

## Publications Going Green

The Chamber created a new electronic version of *The Business View*, the monthly magazine printed and distributed to 22,200 Chamber member company owners and managers as well as those businesses on the Dun & Bradstreet list. Promotion of the "green" alternative netted nearly 1,800 electronic readers.

## No Boundaries

The Chamber entered the world of social media with accounts on Facebook, a popular social Internet networking venue, and LinkedIn, an Internet networking tool for professionals.

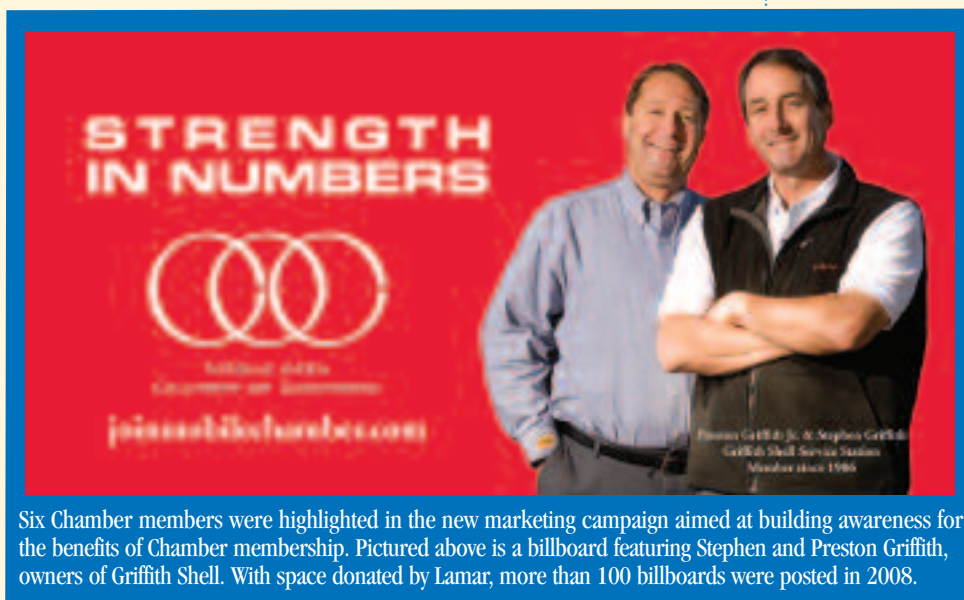
With this new exposure the Chamber was able to share photos, blogs written by senior Chamber staff and links to publications such as *The Business View* magazine as well as activities.

## Setting the Tone

Each January, the Chamber hosts an annual meeting outlining the previous year's most significant accomplishments and the new year's plan of action. The event is underwritten by local businesses.

In addition, a number of local food and beverage sponsors who create a mini taste of Mobile-type networking reception following the event also contributed to the event's success.

In 2008, more than 1,800 people attended, continuing the tradition of the Chamber's annual meeting as the largest business networking event in the area.



Six Chamber members were highlighted in the new marketing campaign aimed at building awareness for the benefits of Chamber membership. Pictured above is a billboard featuring Stephen and Preston Griffith, owners of Griffith Shell. With space donated by Lamar, more than 100 billboards were posted in 2008.



# CHAMBER NEWS



At the Chamber's annual joint meeting between the governing board of directors and key investors comprising the board of advisors, Chamber Chairman Bill Seifert and Chamber President Win Hallett were presented with 5-star accreditation for the Mobile Area Chamber by former U.S. Board Chairman Paul Speranza with Wegmans Food Markets. Of the 6,936 Chambers in the U.S., only 301 are accredited, and of those only 44 have achieved a five-star distinction.

## 5-Star Rating

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors awarded the Mobile Area Chamber a five-star rating, the highest given, for a second consecutive five-year period.

Of the 6,936 Chambers in the U.S., only 301 are accredited, and of those only 43 have achieved a five-star distinction.

Accreditation recognizes those Chambers that have defined, reached and maintained defined operational performance standards and have significantly contributed to the good of their community, region, state and country. The Chamber has been accredited since the designation's inception more than 40 years ago.

Another honor came from the American Chamber of Commerce Executives. The organization presented the Mobile Area Chamber with a Membership Achievement Award for its Top 10 Ranking for Member Retention. Mobile remains a leader among Chambers across the country for retaining more than 90 percent of all members after their first year.

## Habla Español

The Chamber was recognized by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a community partner for its help in organizing its Hispanic Heritage Celebration. In addition, the Chamber's Center for Workforce Development assisted the Associated Builders and Contractors and the Association of General Contractors with their Hispanic outreach programs to recruit and train more legal Hispanic workers in the construction trades.



## Fore! Golf

The Chamber, through a partnership with the Bell Micro LPGA Classic held at the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, served as the official pick-up location for all tournament volunteers. Over the course of two days, more than 200 Mobile Bay area residents, many whom have never been to the Chamber, came to pick up packets and uniform clothing.

## Dr. Hallett

Chamber President Win Hallett received an honorary doctorate in humane letters during the 2008 graduation ceremonies at Spring Hill College. Hallett was recognized for his work to grow Mobile and the surrounding area's economy, as well as his personal service to the community.

## Chamber Certified

Chamber Executive Vice President Bob Chappelle joined the ranks of only 500 Chamber executives in the country by earning the designation of Certified Chamber Executive (CCE). The only national certification for chamber professionals, the American Chamber of Commerce Executives program assesses the applicant's knowledge through a series of essays, an oral presentation and an exam testing core areas such as management, planning and development, membership, communications and operations.

## Regional Business Champion

The Chamber's Director of Small Business Development Danette Richards was named the 2008 Region IV Women in Business Champion by the U.S. Small Business Administration. Award winners were selected at the state, regional and national levels and are recognized for their advocacy of the women-owned business community and improving the environment for the creation and expansion of women-owned and operated businesses.

## McGowin Room Makeover

The Chamber's largest meeting/conference area, named the McGowin Room, underwent a major renovation and technology enhancement. The new modern look was designed by TAG - The Architects Group.

## A Chamber Welcome

The Chamber held spring and fall new CEO receptions to welcome the latest business and community leaders, many of whom moved from outside the area. The Chamber's board of directors, board of advisors and Partners for Growth investors were also invited. Approximately a dozen new CEOs were in attendance at each reception.

Grubb & Ellis/Peebles & Cameron sponsored the fall event and The Andrews Institute sponsored the spring event.



The latest class of new area executives were honored at a CEO reception at the Chamber in October. Row 1 – Hon. Stephen Nodine, Mobile County Commission; Win Hallett, Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce; Mayor Sam Jones, City of Mobile; Bill Seifert, Chamber Board Chairman and Regions Bank; Row 2 – Uwe Arenz, Berg Spiral Pipe; Maj. Pamela Morris, The Salvation Army; Maj. Ted Morris, The Salvation Army; Row 3 – Sally Greene, Wilmer Hall Children's Home; John Eskew, Occidental Chemical Corp.; Michael Guy, Waste Management; and Michael Druhan, SouthPoint Bank; Row 4 – Aaron Edwards, Verizon Wireless; Mike Fine, Mobile Gas Service Corp.; Most Rev. Thomas Rodi, The Catholic Archdiocese of Mobile; Joe Rella, Austal USA; and Dennis Odom, Holcim (US) Inc.

*Photo by Tad Denson, MyShotz.com*



# ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

## Chamber Staff

### Administration

Winthrop M. Hallett III, President: 431-8610  
Robert L. Chappelle Jr. CCE, Executive Vice President: 431-8644  
Katrina Dewrell, Executive Coordinator: 431-8611  
Judy Winfield, Information Technology/Webmaster: 431-8626  
Jackie Davidson, Administrative Assistant: 431-8605

### Communications

Leigh Perry-Herndon, Vice President: 431-8645  
Ashley Horn, Director: 431-8623  
Susan Rak-Blanchard, Senior Communications Specialist: 431-8641  
Carolyn Wilson, Communications Assistant: 431-8606  
René Eiland, *The Business View* Advertising Account Executive: 431-8635

### Community and Governmental Affairs

Ginny Russell, Vice President: 431-8618  
Patty Howell, Director of Regional Affairs: 431-8601  
Shayla Jones Beaco, Director of Community Affairs: 431-8628  
Ailey Arrow, Administrative Assistant: 431-8621

### Economic Development

Troy L. Wayman CeCD, Vice President: 431-8650  
Shelly Mattingly, Coordinator: 431-8655

### Divisions

#### Business Development

Jesse Quillen, Director, Washington County Initiative: 251-847-2810  
Herman Tinsley, Senior Project Manager: 431-8657  
Claudia Zimmermann, Senior Project Manager: 431-8616  
Al Ruffin, Research Manager: 431-8656  
Graham Jones, Project Manager: 431-8636  
Administrative Assistant: 431-8636

#### Business Retention and Expansion

Steve Russell, Director: 431-8654

### International Trade

Tony van Aken, Director: 431-8651  
Bridgette Clark, Trade Promotions Manager: 694-0702

### Workforce Development

Leida Javier-Ferrell, Director, Center of Workforce Development: 431-8631  
Jennifer Edwards, Project Manager, Ctr. of Workforce Development: 431-8619

### Finance and Operations

Joseph A. Mareno, Vice President: 431-8624  
Charlotte Cruthirds, Director: 431-8625  
Chani Johnson, Senior Finance Assistant: 694-0701  
Donna Ikner, Finance Assistant: 431-8609  
Jackie Davidson, Administrative Assistant: 431-8605  
Ballery Johnson, Custodian: 431-8634  
James Smiley, Security: 431-8634

### Membership

Carolyn Golson, Vice President: 431-8622  
Kim Perrone, Director, Customer Service: 431-8649  
Julie Luker, Events Coordinator: 431-8640  
Heather Bell, Senior Account Executive: 431-8627  
Rebecca Milam, Account Executive: 431-8647  
Missy Hartley, Administrative Assistant: 431-8638  
Quandra Thomas, Membership Service Representative: 431-8617  
Help Desk Receptionist: 431-8637

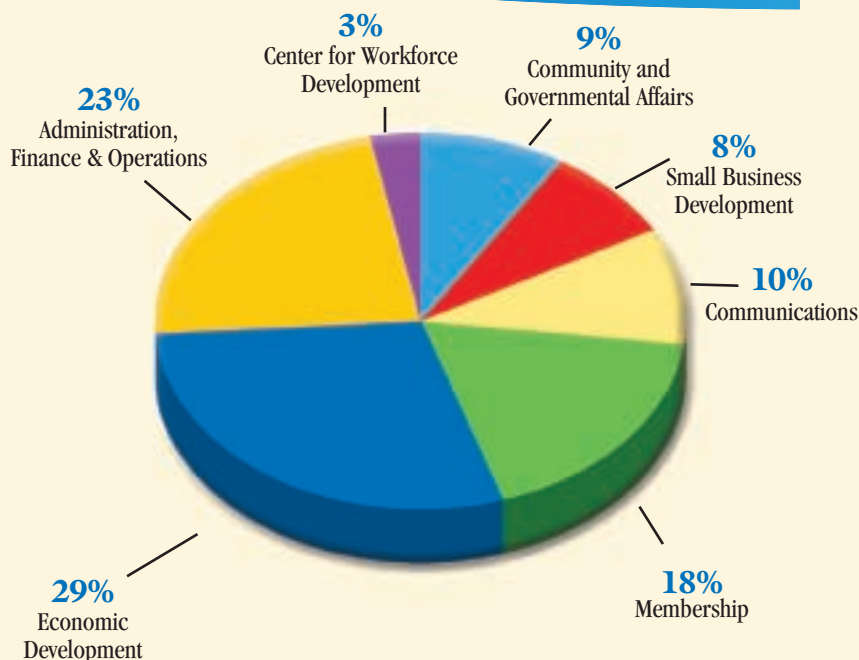
### Small Business Development

Darrell Randle, Vice President: 431-8615  
Danette Richards, Director: 431-8652  
Brenda Rembert, Administrative Assistant: 431-8607

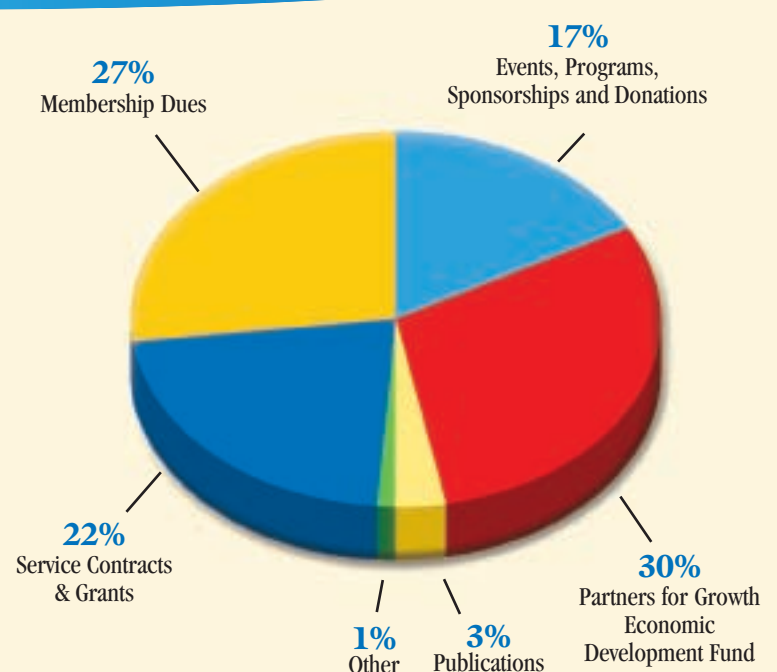
### Minority Business Enterprise Center

Pamela Ramos, Director: 433-2276  
Machelle Leslie, Business Consultant: 433-2250  
Pamela Gayle Boykin, Administrative Assistant: 433-2250

## 2008 EXPENSES



## 2008 REVENUE



*\* This is based on the organization's 2008 budget. The Chamber's financial statements are audited annually by McKean and Associates.*



# VOLUNTEERS

## 2008 Executive Committee



William R. Seifert II  
*Regions Bank*  
Chairman of the Board



G. Robert Baker Jr.  
*Whitney National Bank*  
Small Business  
Development



Brad Brightman BG  
ANG (Ret.)  
*University of South  
Alabama*  
Military Affairs



Angus R. Cooper III  
*Cooper Marine &  
Timberlands Corp.*  
Maritime Affairs



Sam W. Covert Jr.  
*Alabama Power Co.*  
Workforce  
Development



Randy Delchamps  
*Randy Delchamps  
Real Estate &  
Development Co. Inc.*  
Governmental Affairs



Winthrop M. Hallett III  
*Mobile Area Chamber  
of Commerce*  
President



David C. Hannan  
*Johnstone Adams Bailey  
Gordon and Harris LLC*  
Legal Counsel



Monique R. Henley  
*Bay Security Co. LLC*  
Membership



Gregory R. Jones  
*Hand Arendall LLC*  
Trade



Mary A. Mullins  
*ThyssenKrupp Stainless  
USA LLC*  
Community Development



Andy Newton  
*Southern Light LLC*  
Technology



Michael E. Pierce  
*MLK Avenue  
Redevelopment Corp.*  
Economic Development



William S. Stimpson  
*Gulf Lumber Co. Inc.*  
Finance & Operations  
Chair of the Board-Elect



T. Bestor Ward III  
*Safe Archives LLC -*  
Immediate Past  
Chairman of the Board



Ellen Praytor Wingard  
*Lewis  
Communications Inc.*  
Communications

In addition to the Executive Committee, serving on the 2008 Board of Directors were:

Owen Bailey  
*Infirmary Health System Inc.*

Lynda Burkett  
*Marshall A. McLeod PLS LLC*

Ralph A. Hargrove  
*Hargrove and Associates Inc.*

Melissa Morrisette  
*LL&B Inc. Real Estate*

Daryl Roberts  
*Arkema Inc.*

John H. Baker III  
*Thompson Engineering Inc.*

Hon. James E. Buskey  
*Alabama House of Representatives*

Dr. Bree A. Hayes  
*The Hayes Group*

Joseph Ng  
*ST Mobile Aerospace Engineering Inc.*

Beth McFadden Rouse  
*McFadden Lyon and Rouse LLC*

David R. Barnett  
*Bender Shipbuilding &  
Repair Co. Inc.*

W. Edward Dismukes Jr.  
*Wilson-Dismukes Inc.*

Erik L. Johnsen  
*International Shipholding Corp.*

Makeda Nichols  
*State Farm Insurance -  
Makeda Nichols*

Frank S. Seltzer Jr.  
*Superior Masonry Inc.*

Dean Brown  
*Alabama Orthopaedic Clinic PC*

Mark P. Eiland  
*Hancock Bank*

Keith A. Jones  
*Prism Systems Inc.*

Michael H. Payne  
*Gwin's Commercial Printing*

Dr. John W. Steadman  
*University of South Alabama*

Bob Browning  
*Austal Ltd.*

Patricia W. Esfeller  
*Esfeller Construction Co. Inc.*

Jeffrey Mayers  
*Renaissance Riverview  
Plaza Hotel*

Richard Perry  
*DuPont Agricultural Products*

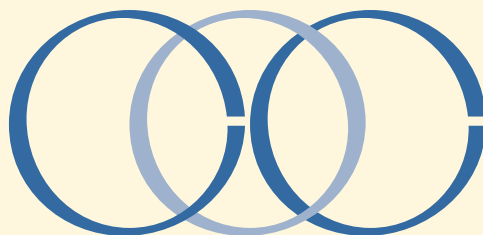
David L. Trent  
*Airbus North America Engineering*

Lorie Gaillard  
*Baldwin Transfer Co. Inc.*

Ron J. McAlear  
*Atlantic Marine Alabama LLC*

Mary Kay Polys  
*Mercy Medical*

Matt White  
*White-Spunner & Associates Inc.*



MOBILE AREA  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE