



**GIVE
BIG.
SUPPORT
SMALL.**

2020 Annual Report

Table of Contents

3 INTRODUCTION

Letter from the President
Our Mission
Objectives

5 COVID-19 RESPONSE

Give Big. Support Small.
Business Resources
Webinar Series
Website
Community Outreach
Let's Keep West Alabama Working

9 MEMBERSHIP & INVESTOR RELATIONS

New Members
Retention
Ribbon Cuttings
4th Quarter Drive
Next Level Initiative

11 PROGRAMS/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Events
Committees, Councils, & Groups

13 WEST ALABAMA WORKS

Workforce Development
Outreach Efforts

14 LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors
Executive Committee
Ex-Officio

16 CONTACT US

Contact Information
Social Media

A Message From Jim



Jim Page

President and CEO
The Chamber

Friends,

It goes without saying, but 2020 was a year like no other. None of us could have predicted the profound impact COVID-19 would have on our business community, local economy, and overall way of life. There was no “how to” guide for effectively navigating a pandemic so we were all left to just figure it out as it happened. The resulting, collective community response, though, is what I’m most proud of about this great place we all call home. We didn’t let fear of the unknown paralyze us. Instead, we all had to pivot [word of the year] from the strategic plans we were operating under in the first quarter of 2020 to making sure this community would once again be resilient in the face of unprecedented adversity.

This Annual Report highlights much of the work your Chamber did in 2020. I hope you will review this and come away with the same sense of pride so many of us have after enduring such a challenging year.



I am extraordinarily grateful for the visionary leadership of 2020 Chamber Chairman Bobby Bragg, the unwavering support of a dynamic Board of Directors, the tireless work ethic and dedication of an exceptional professional staff, and, most importantly, for the remarkable businesses and organizations that make up the membership of this organization banding together as one Chamber family. That may sound hokey, but it’s the truth.

We’re certainly not out of the woods yet with COVID-19 and a host of other challenges will always confront us. However, as you use this Annual Report to reflect on a year that is finally in the rearview mirror, please remember how far we’ve come and know that our best days are ahead of us. Here’s to 2021,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JMP', written in a cursive, stylized font.

Jim M. Page, CCE, IOM
President and CEO
Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama

Mission Statement

The mission of The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama is to provide vision, leadership and be a catalyst for the advancement of the economic prosperity, the business climate and the quality of life for the total community.

Objectives

To overcome barriers to future economic development and to create a healthy, positive business climate.

To improve the region's ability to expand and enhance employment opportunities.

To improve the overall quality of life and standard of living for the total community.

To encourage development of the rich human, natural, and technological resources of the Tuscaloosa County and the West Alabama region to further enhance economic opportunities.

To provide support services and systems to benefit the members of The Chamber and consistently represent and advocate the best interests of the members of the organization.

COVID-19 Response



As COVID-19 threatened to impact the community, the Chamber took immediate action to aid small businesses across West Alabama, establishing a **Small Business Relief Fund** in partnership with the **Community Foundation of West Alabama** and the **City of Tuscaloosa**.



"There was no Paycheck Protection Plan at that point. We knew a lot of our small mom-and-pop retailers would not make it if they had to wait for funds, and we felt we had to step into that gap."

-Bobby Bragg,
2020 Chairman
Chamber Board of Directors

\$1.251

Million in Funding

305

 Small Businesses Funded

COVID-19 Response

Business Resources

To help businesses safely reopen after the COVID-19 shutdown, we created the [Work Hard. Work Smart. Work Safe. Playbook](#) for Reopening Your Business in the Age of COVID-19. Additional resources, such as a business rights playbook, a guide geared to the automotive industry, and a childcare database, are also available [on the Chamber's website](#).



“Beyond amazing | the best out there | tremendous resource | comprehensive | compelling”

Chambers from around the country took the materials we developed to guide you through your own recovery process, and reproduced them to assist their own members. Now, the resources you've used in your own business are assisting businesses across the nation.

Website COVID-19 Resource Section



BUSINESS



SMALL BUSINESS



SUPPORT



RESOURCE



REMOTE WORKING



NEWS +



CONFERENCE CALL +

[COVID-19 website section](#)

The COVID-19 resource section of the Chamber's website is a one-stop shop for updates, resources, helpful downloads, and business tools for members and the business community.

COVID-19 Response

Childcare Database



The Chamber quickly discovered working parents across West Alabama began experiencing childcare issues as a result of COVID-19. We developed the [Childcare Database](#) to provide help. The easy-to-use database serves as a resource for parents looking for information and assistance, as well as offering providers a place to upload their services.

Webinar Series

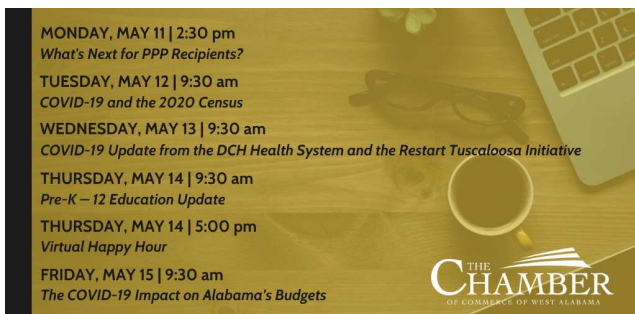


To support the businesses in our community, the Chamber hosted a series of webinars and conference calls to deliver timely information to business owners.

Presenters included state and local officials, healthcare experts, and education leaders, accountants, attorneys, and consultants.

An excellent resource for businesses throughout West Alabama, the webinars were free and open to the public. [Recordings of the series](#) are hosted in the [COVID-19](#) section of the Chamber's website.

5,250 Attendees



WWW.TUSCALOOSACHAMBER.COM

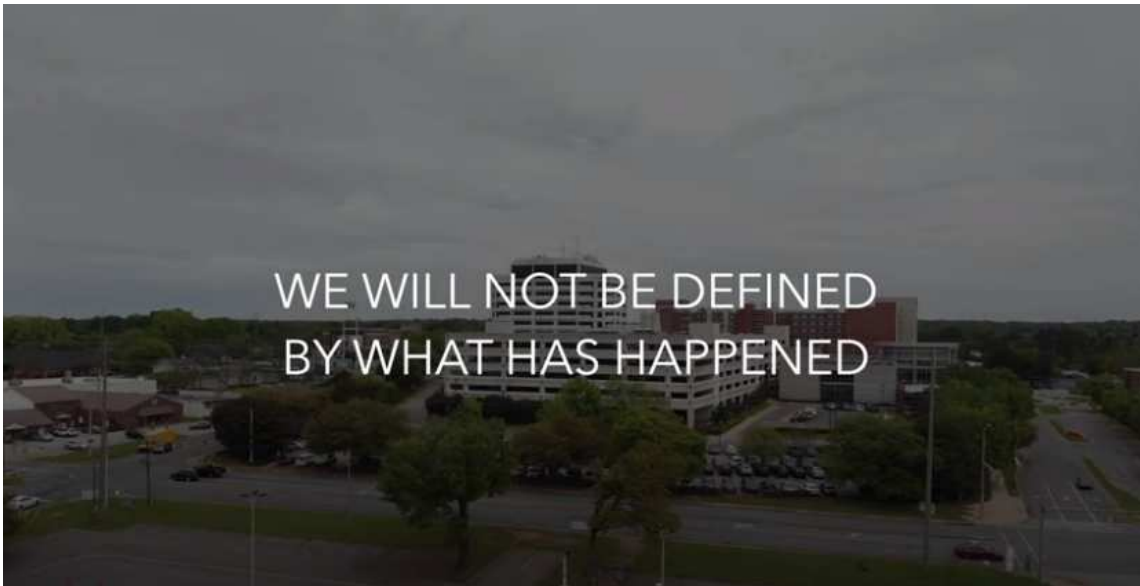


WWW.TUSCALOOSACHAMBER.COM

70+ Webinars

COVID-19 Response

Community Outreach: Commercials & Videos



The Chamber produced a video series entitled "We Will Get Through This Together." Distributed as commercials and via social media, the videos were designed to express support for the business community, promote safety, thank first responders and health care workers, and foster community spirit.

[Watch videos](#)

Let's Keep West Alabama Working



The Chamber partnered with business and industry to launch Let's Keep West Alabama Working, a grassroots campaign designed to encourage safety beyond the workplace.

The purpose of the Let's Keep West Alabama Working grassroots campaign is to encourage West Alabamians to practice social distancing, to wear masks, and to wash hands regularly and beyond the workplace so that our businesses can continue to serve our communities during these unprecedented times. We must unite forces, as a business community, for the greater good and health of our fellow neighbors and remind our employees that COVID-19 safety goes beyond the workplace.

[Learn more about the campaign](#)

Membership



108
New Members

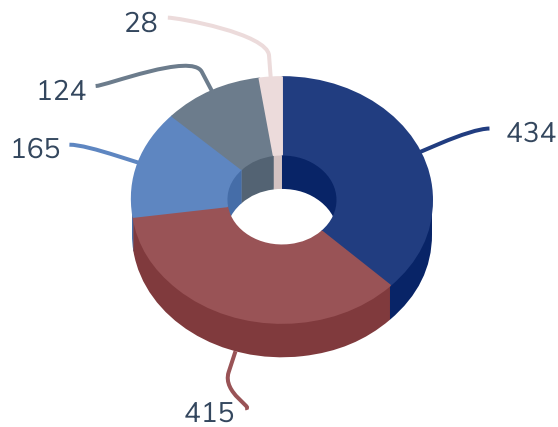


25
Ribbon Cuttings



92%
Retention Rate

Members By Employee Count

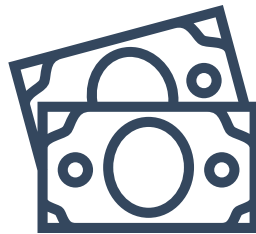


● 1-5 Employees ● 6-25 Employees ● 26-50 Employees ● 51-250 Employees ● 251+ Employees

4th Quarter Drive



200 Sponsors



\$359,649 Total



35 Events/Programs

Next Level Initiative

The Next Level Initiative, a five-year strategic plan developed using input from the public and private sectors, enhances the Chamber's economic and community development impact.

The Next Level concentrates on these key initiatives:

Lead Workforce Readiness and Quality Education

Diversify Our Economic Growth

Engage the Community to Create True Quality of Place

Drive Public Policy and Business Advocacy

These Chamber members have collectively pledged more than \$3.5 million over the initiative period to make the Next Level Initiative vision a reality.

Game Changers



Chairman's Circle



CEO Council

BFGoodrich Tire Manufacturing | Cardiology Consultants, P.C. | Harrison Construction Company, Inc. | Hunt Refining Company | JamisonMoneyFarmer PC | Knight Sign Industries, Inc. | Shelton State Community College | Synovus | University of Alabama College of Arts & Sciences

Investor Leaders

Adams Beverages | Alabama Credit Union | AT&T | Barge Design Solutions, Inc | Cintas | Industrial Warehouse Services Inc. | John Plott Co. Inc. | McGiffert & Associates, LLC | Paragon HM Wealth Management | Parker Towing | Pritchett-Moore | Spire Energy | The Onin Group | The Westervelt Company | Thompson Tractor Co., Inc. | TTL, Inc. | Tuscaloosa Coca-Cola Bottling Company | ZF Chassis Systems, LLC

Growth Partners

Belflex Staffing Network | Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama | Buffalo Rock Company / Pepsi-Cola | Burk-Kleinpeter, Inc. | Community Service Programs of West Alabama, Inc. | DT Freight, LLC | Ellis Architects, Inc. | Fitts Agency | Harrison Galleries, LLC | Hotel Indigo | Jalapeños Mexican Grill | Lance Hocutt Financial Group | Lear Corporation | Northport Auto Supply | Plaster, Scarvey & Shumaker of Ameriprise Financial | Robertson Banking Company | The Builders Group of West Alabama | The Legacy Connection | The Radiology Clinic | University of Alabama System | Ward Scott Architecture | Way, Ray, Shelton, CPA

Community Colleagues

ARD Logistics - Alabama, LLC | BankFirst | Bama Concrete Products Co., Inc. | BBVA | Cadence Bank | Chick-fil-A of Northport | Echols, Taylor, & Associates, P.C. | Hampton Inn | Kyle Office Solutions | Metalsa Tuscaloosa, Inc. | Raymond James & Associates | Remmert & Co. | Renasant Bank | SmartBank | Spiller Furniture & Mattress | The Locker Room | TotalCom, Inc. | Winter McFarland

Programs | Community Engagement

Committees and Councils



23
Committees
and Councils

The Chamber has a variety of committees and councils open to members that allow them to have a voice on a range of topics. They include areas of interest such as public policy and governmental affairs; women's leadership issues; non-profit organizations; diversity, equity, and inclusion; and military and veteran's affairs.

Awards Committee




The Chamber's Awards Committee is an engaged group of volunteers committed to ensuring members are recognized for their exemplary business practices and service to the community. In 2020, the committee's nominees were successful in the **BCA/CCAA Small Business of the Year Award**, receiving Gold, Silver, Emerging Finalist, and Finalist honors for Chuck's Fish/Five, JNJ Apparel, Session Bar, and EatMyBeats, respectively.

Young Tuscaloosa



Young Tuscaloosa is Tuscaloosa's young professional organization for individuals between the ages of 21-40. YT connects young professionals in our city, engages with and serves our local community, and develops leadership and professional skills in young professionals.



146
Members



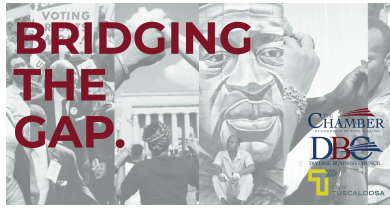
37
In-Person/Virtual
Events



575
Event Attendees

Programs | Community Engagement


Diverse Business Council





The Diverse Business Council fosters the growth and competitiveness of minority-owned businesses in West Alabama. The DBC provides inclusive programming beneficial to a diverse workforce.

The Diverse Business Council hosted four **Bridging the Gap** virtual discussions. Topics included voting, community policing, and economic opportunities.

The **Diversity Summit** was hosted virtually in October. Chair Mildred Black Hooks and three entrepreneurs community leaders presented on The Future of Work.

 **463**
Bridging the Gap
Participants

 **5,700+**
Bridging the Gap
Recording Views

 **91**
Diversity Summit
Attendees


Leadership Tuscaloosa





The **34 members** of the 2020-21 class of Leadership Tuscaloosa blazed new trails as the first-ever class to go through the 9-month program virtually. Leadership Tuscaloosa is instrumental in developing leaders committed to impacting West Alabama in a positive, collaborative way, and this year's class was nimble and flexible in their approach to the program.




In 2020, each school in the Tuscaloosa City and County systems had at least one adopter, with some partnering with more than one adopter. The Adopt-A-School Kickoff was held virtually. In September, the program held the Nucor Steel Tuscaloosa Adopt-A-School Golf Tournament.

 **55**
Schools

 **99**
Adopters


 **140**
Tourney Golfers

 **\$2,000**
Tourney Donation
to 4 Schools

 **4**
Coordinator
Meetings

 **231**
Coordinators
Trained

 **42**
Tourney Prize
Donors

 **68**
Tourney Event
Sponsors

Workforce Development

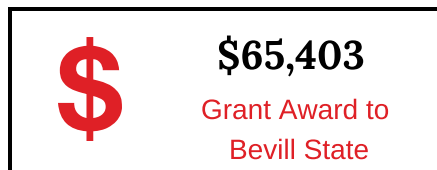
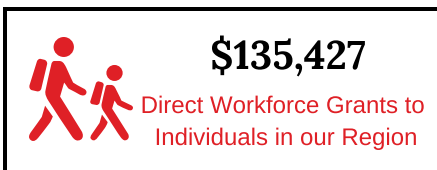
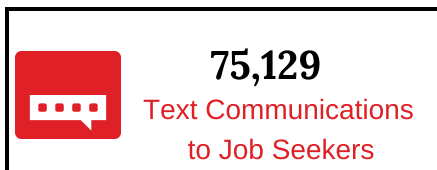
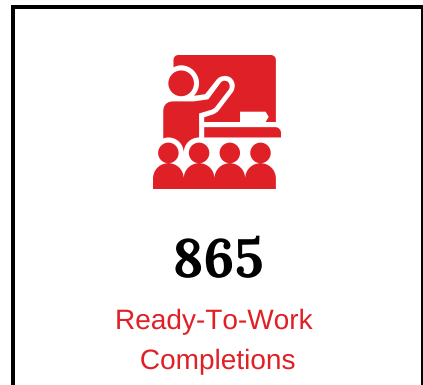
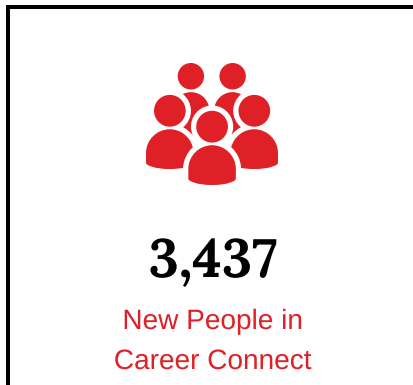


West Alabama Works continued to operate productively and efficiently throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, serving industry workforce and outreach needs throughout our nine-county region.

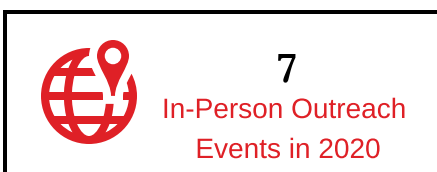
Notably, WAW, as part of Power1 grant and Energy Alabama efforts, took part in developing a web site/blog that will help automotive industry with issues around sustainability.

The **Enhancing the Workforce Pipeline Through Collaborative Partnerships** program will provide high school students in eight Black Belt counties educational and hands-on training through JumpStartAL and TransfrVR. This program will provide a virtual reality experience that gives youth the skills they need to get hired and find a career they are passionate about.

By the numbers



Outreach events began with large in-person events in 2020, but transitioned to virtual events in June, including healthcare and automotive events. In October and November, small pop-up events were held throughout the nine-county region, using socially-distant measures with mask requirements. Partnerships with other regions enabled us to assist in their hiring events. Virtual events are once again in place for the first quarter of 2021.



Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the governing body of The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama and is responsible for all policy-making decisions of the organization. Members are elected by the general membership and serve staggered three-year terms.

Paul Betz
DCH Health System

Bobby Bragg
JamisonMoneyFarmer PC

Rick Clementz
Mercedes-Benz U.S. International, Inc.

Michele Coley
Allstate Coley Agency

Thomas Dedrick
Raymond James

Heather Dill
Embassy Suites Tuscaloosa Downtown

Russell DuBose
Phifer Incorporated

Amy Echols
Kentuck Art Center & Museum

Mike Ellis
Eliis Architects, Inc.

Matt Fajack
The University of Alabama

Matt Feller
BFGoodrich Tire Manufacturing

Jheovanny Gomez
Jalapeños Mexican Grill

Chris Gunter
Buffalo Rock/Pepsi-Cola

Angela Hamiter
JamisonMoneyFarmer PC

Tim Harrison
J.T. Harrison Construction Co. Inc.

Carl Jamison
JamisonMoneyFarmer PC

James Leitner
The Radiology Clinic

Angela Martin
Hunt Refining Company

Scott McClanahan
Paragon HM at Morgan Stanley

Gary McGee
Urban Bar & Kitchen

Kimberly McMurray
Behavioral Health Facility Consulting, LLC

Dr. Jacqueline Morgan
The University of Alabama

Jordan Morris
Ward Scott Architecture

Brad Newman
ZF Chassis Systems, LLC

Gary Nichols
McAbee Construction, Inc.

Reed Norris
Nucor Steel Tuscaloosa

Whitney Oswalt
Alabama ONE

Jim Page
Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama

Tim Parker, III
Parker Towing Company

David Pass
The Sealy Companies

Gary Phillips
Premier Service Co., Inc.

Tripp Powell
Powell Enterprises

Jasmine Rainey
Tuscaloosa Tourism & Sports

David Rains
Randall-Reilly, LLC

Nikki Ray
Eatmybeats, Inc.

Steven Rumsey
Rumsey Environmental

Kelsey Rush
Bryant Bank

Sontonia Stephens
Community Service Programs of West Alabama

Elizabeth Winter
Regions Bank

Sandra Wolfe
The Arts & Humanities Council
of Tuscaloosa County, Inc.

Bill Wright
FRSTeam

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee of the Chamber is comprised of the officers of the organization, as elected annually by the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee oversees the execution of the strategic plan and customary functions of the Chamber, reporting its work monthly to the Board of Directors.

Bobby Bragg
Chair

David Pass
Vice Chair, Airport and
Transportation

Brad Newman
Vice Chair, Education and
Workforce Development

Matt Feller
Vice Chair, Public Policy
and Advocacy

Kim Ingram
Legal Counsel

Elizabeth Winter
Chair-Elect

Chris Gunter
Vice Chair, Communications
and Marketing

Dr. Jacqueline Morgan
Vice Chair, Leadership
and Community Engagement

Reed Norris
Treasurer

Kimberly McMurray
Immediate Past Chair

Carl Jamison
Vice Chair,
Economic Development

Michele Coley
Vice Chair, Membership and
Investor Relations

Jim Page
President and CEO/Secretary

Ex-Officio Members

Dr. Stuart Bell
The University of Alabama

Jessie Gardner
Young Tuscaloosa

Don Staley
Tuscaloosa Tourism & Sports

Dr. Cynthia Warrick
Stillman College

Contact Us

Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama



Our new home!

**2222 9th Street
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401**

205.758.7588

www.tuscaloosachamber.com

Connect:

@chambertusc



**Chamber of Commerce of
West Alabama in Tuscaloosa**

