



PRESS-REGISTER

Chamber receives national 5-star ranking

Mobile organization is one of 43 honored in U.S.

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Business Reporter

The Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce has achieved the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's top five-star ranking, the chambers announced Tuesday.

It is one of 43 chambers in the nation to receive the accreditation, which signifies "high standards of practice, full accountability to members and steadfast commitment to the community," according to Thomas Donahue, president of the U.S. Chamber.

Win Hallett, Mobile chamber president, called the honor "a significant milestone."

Chamber employees spent about four months preparing the in-depth application, which consisted of about 100 pages, Hallett said.

Members of an independent panel at the U.S. Chamber judged entrants based on programs, finances, human resources, government affairs, program development, communications, technology and facilities.

Chambers that achieve top ranking typically stand out because they help make major projects happen, Hallett said.

"The thing that everybody pays the most attention to is economic development, and we've just been blessed with so many of these projects coming to fruition," Hallett said, pointing to the \$4.5 billion ThyssenKrupp steel mill taking shape in north Mobile County, the newly opened, \$300 million Mobile Container Terminal, Austal USA's \$1.6 billion military shipbuilding contract, and the \$460 million SSAB steel mill expansion in Axis.

"It's just an avalanche of real positive things that took a long time, and efforts by a lot of different people, to come together."

Hallett said that of all U.S. chambers, only one-half of 1 percent reach the five-star level. The Mobile chamber last received the honor five years ago, he said.

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