

# THE VIEW

JUNE 2000

MOBILE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

XXXII, No. 6

## Chamber Chase Volunteers Off to a Good Start

Chamber Chase 2000 is only a third of the way complete, but already volunteers are figuring out the clues they need to solve the mystery of how to reach their \$825,000 goal. Having fun as detectives trying to solve a mystery, volunteers are searching out new memberships, member renewals, sponsorships for Chamber events, advertising in Chamber publications, cash contributions and in-kind donations.

Inspector **Kinnon Phillips** with Lewis Communications is leading the hunt. He's admittedly excited about the hard work his volunteers have shown throughout the month of May and is committed to making June and July just as entertaining and exciting.



Chairman Kinnon Phillips appeared live on WKRG-TV5 with Angela Poe.

"It was phenomenal to get out of the gate so fast during this year's kickoff breakfast," Phillips said. "We're going to maintain a fast track to victory."

Vice president of membership, **Carolyn Golson** is also excited about how motivated the volunteers are. Twenty-one teams with more than 150 volunteers are finding new and unique ways to package proposals in an effort to sell more sponsorships to companies and attract new members into the Chamber.

"This year's group is energized and has really been creative in marketing different events to existing members as well as potential ones," Golson said. "The enthusiasm is contagious and is really paying off in terms of us reaching our goal."

"Participating in Chamber Chase is a win-win situation. The Chamber can obtain the resources it needs to keep up its operations, and at the same time I'm able to bring in new customers to AmSouth and am rewarded for my efforts," said Chamber Chase volunteer **Mark Eiland**, a member of the AmSouth Bank team.

A big push during the 2000 Chamber Chase is to recruit new members. With an aggressive goal of 400 new Chamber members by the end of the campaign in July, Phillips presses that now is the time for volunteers to be working on recruiting.

"This year we're looking at a marked increase in new members to the Chamber," he explained. "But when you realize how many business owners are not Chamber members, 400 is a drop in the bucket, and certainly something attainable."

The campaign will wrap up with a victory celebration in late July. It is not too late for members to take part in this year's Chamber's Chase by donating door prizes, volunteering their time, or giving the volunteers leads on potential new members.

Contact the Chamber's membership department at 431-8638 or [pratt@mobilechamber.com](mailto:pratt@mobilechamber.com) for information.

## Alabama Fairs "OK" in Latest Export Statistics

Despite a decrease in exports of 2.63 percent, international trade experts believe Alabama fared well when the 1999 state statistics were released recently.

"Alabama did favorably by maintaining what it did. Ours was one of the smallest decreases among the states," says **Dr. Robert Lager**, director of the Foreign Trade Relations Commission.

Overall, Alabama is ranked 26 in exports, just one notch down from the previous year's position. State exports were valued at \$6,851,547,582 in '99 down \$184 million from 1998.

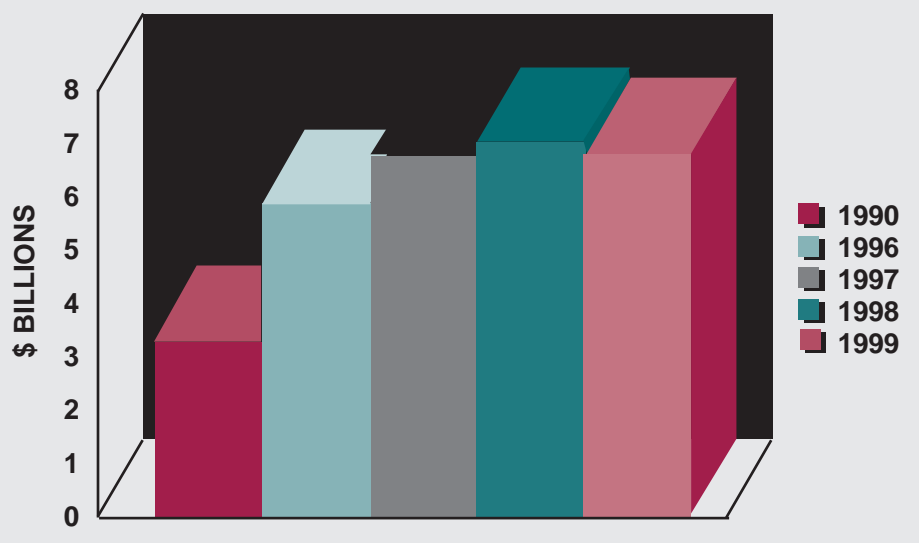
"Still we're leagues ahead of where we were before NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement that reduced tariffs among the U.S., Canada and Mexico encouraging increased trade between the three countries," adds **Tony van Aken**, the Chamber's director of Trade and Technology.

When looking for specific reasons exports dropped last year after a healthy increase in 1998 of 4.98 percent – the highest of the Southeastern states – experts list several reasons.

"There were a number of fluctuations in economies around the world," suggests van Aken. "The Asian market continued to suffer last year, Mexico, which was the U.S.'s second largest export partner in 1997, experienced a dramatic economic decline, and then there's the euro."

In January 1999, a union of 15 European countries including Germany, France and Italy,

### ALABAMA'S EXPORTS 1990-1999



launched a new currency to increase competitive pressure on companies that do business in high-cost countries. Despite economic growth throughout Europe, the euro fell 20 percent against the dollar, making U.S. goods more expensive and ultimately reducing exports.

According to **Jim Fitzgerald** with the International Trade Administration, several of

Alabama's exports are "price sensitive commodities. Wood, paper and general industrial products, don't stand up as well as computers for example."

In addition, both **Fitzgerald** and **Brian Davis** with the Alabama National Trade Center have observed a long-term decline in Alabama coal. "That's the real story in these export statistics.

*Continued on page 2*

## Chamber Updates New Projects



McNeil, IPSCO, Hertz, Austal – over the last few years Mobile has drawn several new projects promising additional jobs and capital investments. These new projects, along with the steady success of established area businesses, have kept the local economy flourishing and earned Mobile more than a few significant headlines in various regional and national publications.

What's the latest on these projects? Keep reading.

### McNeil Speciality

A subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson, McNeil has completed its \$160 million facility and is producing small amounts of its new artificial sweetener in McIntosh. The company plans to increase its quantities to capacity over the next several months. Its estimated that McNeil will hire 160-170 workers when they are fully staffed.

### IPSCO

Well under construction, company officials are projecting IPSCO Steel will beat its target start-up date of Spring 2001 and begin operations ahead of schedule by the end of this year. The company will create 450 new jobs, with a capital investment of \$395 million. Currently there are approximately 800 construction workers employed by approximately 50 contractors on site. The company has hired the management team for the facility and is using the Alabama Industrial Development Training program to recruit and train its production employees.

### Phenolchemie

Bringing a \$240 million investment to south Mobile County, Phenolchemie is fully staffed with approximately 120 employees. The company broke ground in the summer of 1998 and its phenol and acetone plant began operating this Spring. It held its ribbon cutting celebration late last month.

Phenol is used to make a variety of consumer products such as aspirin and compact discs; acetone is a common ingredient in paint thinners and nail polish remover. (Watch for a more in-depth story on start-up operations in July's issue of *The View*.)

Recently the company was recognized by the Alabama-Germany Partnership for its significant investment and operations in the state, and its part in promoting better relationships between German and Alabama companies, schools, organizations and individuals.

Near publication deadline, the Chamber learned that Phenolchemie is up for sale as a result of a plan by parent company Veba to merge two of its chemical company giants – Degussa-Huls AG, easily recognized in Mobile, and Viag AG, the company that owns SKW Trostberg AG which owns Phenolchemie.

### Hertz

People looking to rent a car from Hertz could now be talking to someone in Saraland. The company initially hired 200 employees who entered their final phase of training this Spring. The company expects to hire another 300 employees in the next two months. Capital investments are expected to reach \$10 million as Hertz finishes renovations, converting a former Wal-Mart building into its second U.S. call center.

### Skygen

With an expected start-up date of Fall 2001, Skygen is banking on its ability to reduce emissions from International Paper to take full advantage of the tax abatements offered by the Industrial Development Board. The natural gas fueled co-generation facility broke ground in late March. An estimated 200 construction workers are on site, and at year end the company will begin hiring 18-20 permanent employees.

### Austal USA

In the next few weeks Austal USA will begin construction on its new multi-million dollar shipyard where it will build high-speed ferries. The Mobile venture is a result of a partnership between the Australian shipbuilder and Mobile-based Bender Shipbuilding and Repair. Bender will oversee the construction. The initial phase, expected to be completed by later this year, will employ 110 people with expectations that the facility will grow to 1,000 jobs over the next five years.

Contact information for each of these projects can be found on the Chamber's Web site, [www.mobilechamber.com/economic/projects.html](http://www.mobilechamber.com/economic/projects.html).

**Alabama Fairs "OK" In Latest Export Statistics** *Continued from page 1*

Companies can get cheaper, cleaner burning coal from overseas," explains Davis.

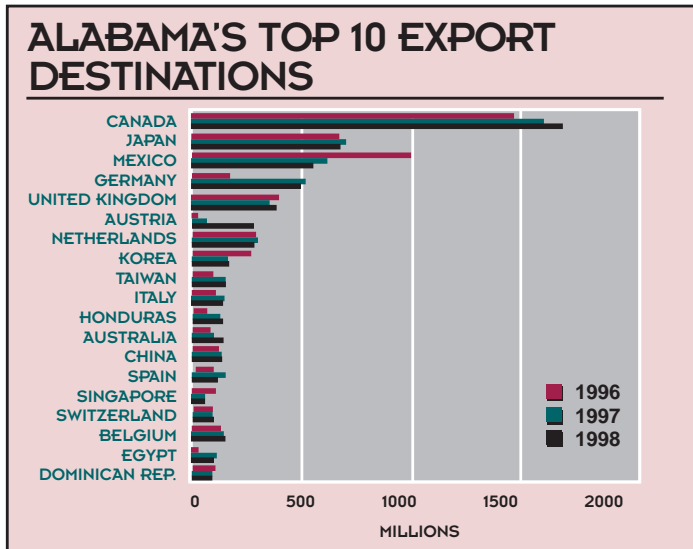
Coal exports in Alabama in 1997 were \$250 million and dropped to \$98 million by the end of 1999. Offsetting this loss are the steady increases in the transportation sector which has more than doubled since 1997 to \$102 million.

Mercedes' sports utility vehicles account for the major portion of the transportation increases and Fitzgerald says we'll begin to start seeing Honda's impact this year.

Alabama's Gulf Coast neighbors also suffered slight decreases: Louisiana, -6.45 percent; Mississippi, -2.78 percent; and Florida, -2.91 percent. Lager attributes this to the economic trouble in the Far East, explaining that "those countries were not buying our forest products."

Other states in the region had mixed results. North Carolina and South Carolina had losses with -5 percent and -8 percent, respectively. Kentucky experienced a 9.32 increase, Tennessee, +2.43 percent; and Georgia, +0.73 percent.

valued at approximately \$693 billion, an increase of 1.8 percent bucking the -1.04 percent loss in 1998. With a 75.34 percent increase, the Virgin Islands led the top exporters list, followed by New Mexico with an increase of 71.66 percent.



**Forecast for 2000**

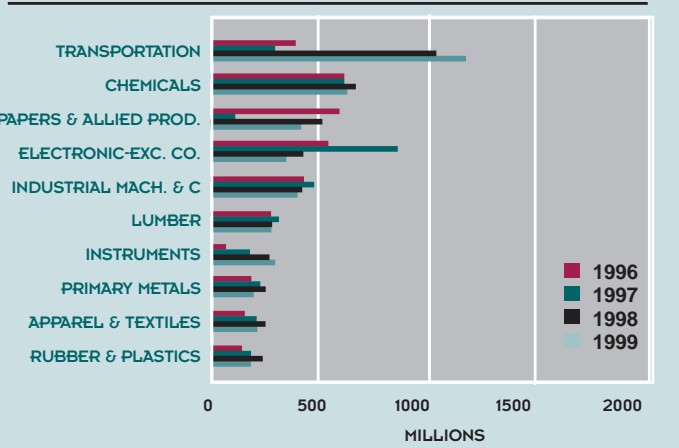
Lager expects the Mexican economy to strengthen again after elections and reclaim its number two spot in the list of top U.S. export countries. He sees changes in the Far East indicating their economies are continuing to recover from troubled times.

As far as the euro recovering, Lager doesn't expect that will happen any time soon. "The English pound is incredibly strong. And as long as England sits out and doesn't incorporate the euro, it will have an effect on its strength," he says.

Fitzgerald adds, "Both Honda and Mercedes will continue to have a positive impact on Alabama's export statistics, as will the medical sector and

engineering services in the northern part of the state. I'm also optimistic about the ship building and ship repair industry's influence in Mobile."

**ALABAMA'S TOP INDUSTRY SECTOR EXPORTS**



Twelve percent of world exports originate from the U.S. Including the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, '99 exports were

**Action Plan Directed at Reducing Area's Ground Level Ozone**

As temperatures climb to the warmest of the year, Mobile's ground level ozone season moves into its third month. Already there have been ozone alerts issued for the area and the trend is expected to continue throughout the summer.

So what's being done to educate the public this year about ground level ozone? Members of the Ground Level Ozone Reduction Initiative (GLORI) are hard at work implementing its 2000 Plan of Action in an effort to involve more people in ozone awareness issues.

"Last year's ozone season was unique for us in that we were really starting at ground zero. Most of us were unaware of what ozone was, and its health effects," said GLORI steering committee member Leigh Perry Herndon, director of communications with the Chamber. "That season was about educating ourselves and the media - this year committees are working on more specific actions."

The task force's committees for 2000 include industry, transportation, research and information, education and communications. Members of GLORI's steering committee are heading up the smaller committees and getting more people involved.

"The new committee structure is designed to enable more citizen participation and help us get

more accomplished during this ozone season," said **Casi Callaway**, executive director of Mobile Bay Watch and GLORI steering committee member.

Already the committees are producing results. For example, industry committee members are working with area call centers on van pooling programs and educational materials for employees; the communications committee will be flying ozone awareness flags at strategic locations throughout the city; and volunteers on the education committee will be working with area school children teaching the importance of lowering ground level ozone.

Mobile's ground level ozone season, monitored by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), runs from April 1 to October 31. During the ground level ozone season, volunteers for GLORI will continue working on its Plan of Action.

Daily ozone forecasts from ADEM can be found on their Web site, [www.adem.state.al.us](http://www.adem.state.al.us), along with tips on how individuals can help keep the air cleaners.

To volunteer on any of these committees, or to learn more about GLORI and ground level ozone, call Perry-Herndon at 431-8623 or e-mail [leigh@mobilechamber.com](mailto:leigh@mobilechamber.com).



**GLORI 2000 Plan of Action**

**GOAL #1 - INDUSTRY**

**Report on what businesses and industries are doing to educate and encourage employees to reduce emissions on ozone days.**

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Meet with companies during the ozone season to discuss specifically what they are doing on ozone days and what GLORI can do or provide them to make their ozone awareness programs more successful.
- Specifically with the construction industry, build awareness of ground level ozone and encourage carpooling to major construction sites and other specific actions.
- Create a recognition and awards program to honor individuals and companies who are committed to reducing emissions and making the public more aware of ground level ozone and its health effects.
- Contact similar ozone awareness groups to determine the types of companies they have worked with in the past. The purpose of this is to modify similar activities to support ozone reduction efforts.

**GOAL #2 - EDUCATION**

**Get representatives in both Mobile and Baldwin county school systems involved in GLORI and implementing programs in individual schools**

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Research other ground level ozone programs to see if any of them have written curriculums for the schools. If so, work with school system representatives to have similar curriculums implemented in the classrooms.
- Review the ozone skit video produced by the Pensacola ground level ozone committee.

**GOAL #3 - TRANSPORTATION**

**Create a strong partnership with the Mobile Transit Authority (MTA) to address the needs of mass transit in our area and find ways to solve some of the problems.**

*Envision Mobile-Baldwin's Transportation Action Team is working on this project. To date the team has re-submitted a grant proposal to the Federal Transportation. GLORI members will work with the Envision Transportation Action Team to complete this goal.*

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Partner with MTA to research and implement an express bus route for employees of downtown businesses to ride on a daily basis.
- Assist MTA with writing grants, creating partnerships and/or research for alternative transportation.
- Reward political attention to the mass transit issue through news media coverage.

**GOAL #4 - COMMUNICATIONS**

**Continue the public awareness campaign about ground level ozone.**

**ACTION ITEMS**

- Work with the *Mobile Register* and TV stations to present case studies about easy things the public can do to help reduce emissions such as how automobiles and gas-powered lawn equipment are big emitters.
- Create brochures and leaflets to pass out during citywide activities that provide the public with general information about ground level ozone.
- Continue to work with the local media on a regular basis by sourcing stories about ground level ozone, encouraging them to use ADEM's forecasting and giving them the most up-to-date information from EPA, ADEM, Gulf Coast Ozone Study, etc.
- Encourage the *Mobile Register* to participate in another ozone telephone survey to see measure how effective the 1999 season was, and identify areas GLORI needs to concentrate on.
- Create a speaker's bureau to visit civic clubs and organizations and discuss ground level ozone.

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# New Center Launched to Improve Workforce Quality

What's the number one issue for local businesses? "Workforce development," says Barbara Estes, executive director of the Chamber's new Center for Workforce Development. "Ask companies if the inability to find trained workers is impacting their profit margins, and they will give you an emphatic 'yes,'" Estes added.

In 1996, the Chamber took the lead in launching the Mobile School-to-Work Partnership (MSTWP), a coalition of the business community, the Mobile County Public School System and post-secondary education, to better prepare students to meet workplace needs.

The coalition's efforts have resulted in Mobile being recognized in 1999 by the Governor's School-to-Work Partnership as having the most advanced initiative in the state. Specifically, the initiative has been able to raise more than \$1.5 million with competitive grants and contributions from the business community to fund programs; organize the involvement of 30,000 students annually in School-to-Work programs (one-third of the student population); and secure the participation of 1,200 business partners.

The success of this partnership, coupled with companies' concerns about the difficulty in finding qualified people, led to the Chamber's launching of the Center for Workforce

Development (CWD) in February of this year.

The mission of the CWD is straightforward, according to Estes. "It is to improve workforce quality for area employers," she said. "We are working strategically to ensure that we have a system in place that can quickly mobilize to meet workforce challenges, as well as offer programs and services designed to meet employer and community needs."

Two years ago, the Chamber conducted a number of focus groups to get direct input on current Chamber programs, as well as other issues the organization could address that would make it easier for local businesses to grow and flourish. "What we heard time and time again was, 'help us build a pool of potential employees that are skilled and knowledgeable,'" said Chamber President Win Hallett.

"Now the business community has asked the Chamber to take a more strategic role," says Estes. "Put simply, they want us to figure out how to

connect employers who need workers with skilled and qualified people."

The CWD will serve business community needs, be a point of contact for information on education and training issues in the community, continue building strategic alliances with business community and education leaders, and maintain efforts needed to secure funding for workforce initiatives. "The Center will be a resource for connecting employers with potential employees, training programs, interns, recruiting tools – all aimed at improving workforce quality," explained Estes. (see related article, "What Does the Center for Workforce Development Offer My Company?")

**"Put simply, the business community wants us to connect employers who need workers with skilled and qualified people."**

"In this increasingly strong economy and competitive global environment, area businesses need competent workers with strong responsible work ethics," says Jim Apple, the Chamber's vice president of Economic Development. "Does Mobile have that type of employee? You bet. That's why we've been successful in recruiting a variety of companies like SkyGen, Mitsubishi and Hertz. Do we have enough of these employees to meet the future needs of area businesses? Not yet."

"That's why we are working to align economic and workforce development efforts," Apple said. "You can't recruit new industry or assist existing industry expansions without a qualified workforce."

One of the Center's most recent accomplishments was to assist the City and County with the organization of the local Workforce Investment Board that will manage federal training funds.

"We are acting as an information link between industry cluster groups and the Workforce Investment Board (WIB), feeding information from the business community to training providers. That's the link that must be in place for the program to be successful," added Hallett.

The Millennium Fund, the Chamber's economic and community development campaign, and a state grant provided the start-up monies for the Center. In addition, staff will be applying for grants to fund specific projects as well as other workforce development-related programs in the community.

If you would like more information on the CWD, access the website at [www.mobilechamber.com/workforce](http://www.mobilechamber.com/workforce), send an e-mail to [barbara@mobilechamber.org](mailto:barbara@mobilechamber.org), or call 431-8619.

## Employability Skills Assessment

In a recent survey area employers ranked priority skills for employees. Communication, teamwork and responsibility were the top three, followed by problem-solving, the ability to process information, adaptability and technology.

### Priority Level of Skills 1 = most important

	1	2	3
<b>COMMUNICATION</b> Exchanging ideas and information in oral, written or visual form with peers, supervisors, internal and external customers.	46%	9%	17%
<b>TEAMWORK</b> Working with others to analyze a situation, establish priorities and apply resources for solving a problem or accomplishing a task.	23%	17%	29%
<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b> Exhibiting individual behaviors that support the official goals and objectives of the organization and its members.	11%	20%	23%
<b>PROBLEM-SOLVING</b> Identifying problems and potential causes while developing and implementing action plans for solutions.	9%	20%	9%
<b>PROCESS INFORMATION</b> Acquiring and evaluating data, organizing and maintaining files, interpreting and communicating information.	0%	14%	14%
<b>ADAPTABILITY</b> Exhibiting flexibility and receptivity to changing technologies, methods, processes, work environments and organizational structure.	9%	11%	0%
<b>TECHNOLOGY</b> Using computers and other tools to manage information.	6%	14%	9%

## How Does the Center for Workforce Development Help My Company?

- ✓ Reduces employers' hiring and training costs by offering access to recruitment tools and involving them in activities resulting in improved workforce quality.
- ✓ Offers greater worker efficiency and productivity because youth will gain experience in industry through internships and apprenticeships.
- ✓ Reduces turnover. With students identifying and exploring career interests early, education is applied to future occupations.
- ✓ Offers free employer job postings on the CWD Web site.
- ✓ Provides access to resume bank for employer recruitment on the CWD Web site.
- ✓ Offers participation in industry cluster groups providing companies with a framework to present education and training needs to service providers helping to ensure that training programs reflect employer needs.
- ✓ Offers participation in the Mobile School-to-Work Partnership, which brings business and education together to design programs to ensure students are being educated to meet workforce demands. Programs include career/job fairs, business speakers' bureau, student job shadowing, industry tours, teacher and guidance counselor business internships and in-services that focus on employer needs.
- ✓ Provides access to information on training programs and referrals to other organizations' programs. Comprehensive Web site that hosts information and direct links to training programs and providers, plus a training program catalogue, as well as opportunities to become involved in CWD activities.
- ✓ Provides grantwriting assistance to secure resources for needed education and training programs.
- ✓ Offers integration and alignment of CWD efforts with other area workforce initiatives to create a systems approach to workforce development that will eliminate duplication and better use limited resources.

## The Mobile School-to-Work Partnership

"Successful students meeting employer needs to create an educated, highly-skilled workforce."

### Community Partners

- Mobile County Public School System
- Bishop State Community College
- Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
- Mobile Area Education Foundation
- Bayou La Batre Chamber of Commerce
- South Mobile County Education Foundation
- South Alabama Education Trust (Associated Builder's and Contractors Inc.)
- City of Mobile
- Mobile County Commission
- City of Citronelle
- Citronelle Chamber of Commerce

# Today, and in the Future, School-to-Work Programs Can Address Workforce Needs

Input from area business executives are helping shape the efforts of the Chamber's new Center for Workforce Development.

In a recent questionnaire, managers were asked to identify their company's greatest challenges concerning their current and future workforce needs and "if all things were possible" anticipate how they would address these needs.

Responses outlining current challenges included:

- finding quality employees;
- retaining good workers;
- hiring individuals with basic academic skills and a responsible work ethic;
- helping employees adjust to the rapid pace of change; and
- upgrading skills to stay current with advancing technologies.

Employers predict that many of the workplace's current challenges will also be a concern in the future such as the lack of qualified employees, training for new technologies and an employee's ability to adjust to change.

"Competition and speed will require the future employee to change quickly. They need the training to be able to adapt and even expect those challenges," wrote one respondent.

Based on current business trends, future employees will need a well-rounded education with a solid grounding in science/technology with a specific emphasis on reading and comprehension, according to another respondent.

Still another respondent identified the need for stronger interpersonal, communication skills. "As the team-based culture continues to expand in industry, "soft-skills" such as conflict resolution, team relations, team building and leadership will become more important."

The majority of solutions offered in the survey were directly related to education and training, from graduating students with a realistic view and expectation of salaries who understand the commitment it takes to succeed to involving industry in designing curriculum.

In addition to reconfirming that the K-12 foundation is critical and endorsing the area's current School-to-Work efforts, the survey sparked other initiatives for the Center.

"As a direct result of the comments we received from the survey, we formed the first industry cluster for technology companies," said Barbara Estes, executive director of the Chamber's Center for Workforce Development.

This cluster of companies with common needs and concerns together will identify and seek the necessary resources to develop training to address those needs. Responding to the industry's training shortage, Bishop State unveiled a new Information Technology (IT) Computer Training Institute this Spring.

"The Bishop State IT program is an example of how the Center can serve our community. We bring businesses and educators together to talk about problems in the workplace and discuss how they can be solved," said Win Hallett, president of the Mobile Chamber.

# School-to-Work Activities Are A Foundation of the New Center for Workforce Development

Times are good in Mobile. Citizens are enjoying a running streak of a healthy economy. Local businesses are expanding. Even the Spring weather was better than ever. A shadow creeping over this positive picture is a need for more skilled employees by area businesses. And this lack of manpower isn't just a concern to Mobile and Baldwin county, it's a challenge for many areas along the Gulf Coast and throughout the country.

To address this problem, the U.S. Departments of Education and Labor created School-to-Work, a partnership between business and education to ensure students are trained to meet workforce demands. The Chamber's efforts in this area have been recognized as the best in the state and is the foundation of what has expanded into the Chamber's new Center for Workforce Development (CWD).

As a local partner, the Chamber has been involved in efforts to develop specialized academy training programs that begin in high school helping to reduce dropout rates and prepare students for the world of work.

Approximately one-fifth of Mobile students dropout of high school—the state rate for dropouts is 23 percent. For those who get their diploma and head off to college, a 1999 report issued by the U.S. Department of Education shows that half of the students who enroll in four-year colleges and universities will not complete a bachelor's degree.

"High school academies keep kids in school because the programs connect students to the business community where they see the relevance

in what they are studying and a future where they can earn a good paycheck," says **Barbara Estes**, executive director of the Chamber's new Center for Workforce Development.

The reality is the workforce is changing and fewer jobs require four-year college degrees. Businesses need employees with a solid K-12 foundation who know how to learn and want to learn.

"Match these students with additional technical training, and these are exactly the type of employees our businesses are looking to hire," says **Jim Apple**, vice president of economic development at the Chamber.

To date, the Chamber's School-to-Work tentacles have reached thousands of students, teachers and businesses. Close to 16,000 students have participated in job shadowing, academies, internships and on-the-job-training. One hundred fifty teachers have taken advantage of the opportunity to intern at local businesses to bring workplace processes and ideas into their classrooms. And 75 counselors have been involved with in-service training.

The CWD has an intensive plan to expand School-to-Work activities that includes career fairs in elementary, middle and high schools, job fairs for high school students, a speakers' bureau for businesses and classrooms and a system to benchmark the success of the overall program.

Last year, the Chamber secured a portion of the state's \$24 million federal grant to expand local School-to-Work programs. The Center has already applied for the second phase of this grant that will be awarded later this year.

# Chamber Team Breaks Ground in Workforce Development

The Chamber has built an energetic and creative team to expand its efforts to help local businesses find and develop a well-trained workforce. The Center for Workforce Development (CWD) has created a partnership with the local business community to build a pool of qualified employees.

**Barbara Estes**, a member of the Chamber staff for more than three years, now serves as executive director of the Center For Workforce Development. Estes formerly was a director in the Community Development Department where she initiated the *Mobile School-to-Work Partnership*, a 53-member business and education coalition responsible for implementing education and training programs to prepare students for the workplace and address local businesses' needs.

In October 1999, Estes was asked to head the CWD, where her duties consist of managing the center and its staff, grantwriting, assessing business needs, and forming and maintaining strategic alliances in the business community.

"The Chamber is moving in a new direction at the request of the business community and is functioning in a more strategic capacity to ensure that the community's workforce development needs are met," Estes, a native of Atlanta, said. "This includes alignment with economic development efforts and working to eliminate duplication and fragmentation of existing training programs to better leverage our limited resources."

Estes began her career as a lobbyist for the Alabama Association of School Boards. She went on to become the special events manager for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. She graduated from Auburn University with a bachelor's degree in Corporate Journalism and holds triple minors in English, Psychology and Communication.

**Rachel Lunsford** is program coordinator for the Center. Previously she was with Ferguson Enterprises in Theodore serving as an accounts payable specialist. Lunsford also graduated from Auburn University, where she attained a bachelor's degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Transportation and Logistics.

Lunsford, a native of Mobile, will concentrate on the School-to-Work (STW) partnership initiative, including managing all STW programs, employer recruitment and partnership-building activities required to guarantee the initiative is successful. She is currently developing a speaker's bureau and launching career fairs in area elementary, middle and high schools.

"I feel privileged to be involved with influen-



Leading the Chamber's new Center to Workforce Development are: **Aleida Hill** (seated), **Rachel Lunsford** (standing on left) and **Barbara Estes** (standing on right).

tial Mobile business leaders and interact with the business community to continue its partnership with the school system," Lunsford said.

Rounding out the team is **Aleida Hill**, the administrative coordinator for the Center. She worked with the Chamber as an intern in the Communications Department in the spring of 1999. Before joining the Chamber, Hill worked with Haston Construction "doing a little bit of everything from answering the phone to ensuring subcontractors were meeting wage requirements." She graduated from the University of Mobile last year with a bachelor of science degree in Communication with an emphasis in Public Relations and Journalism.

"My current position here at the Chamber is giving me valuable experience in a wide range of skills," Hill, a native of Mobile, said. "The Chamber really has a great team here, and we're looking forward to making a difference and better equipping Mobile's workforce to serve in the modern workplace."

Hill focuses on School-to-Work initiatives, grant management, planning special events and working on the Center's newsletter. She is currently coordinating the Chamber's participation in Vital Link, a mentoring program for 8th graders. The Mobile Area Education Foundation operates the program, which "links" middle school students with business mentors so they can see the relationship between what they're learning in school to what they'll need to know in their future jobs.

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# METZGER'S

## May I Help You?

There's a new team greeting visitors and fielding phone calls at the Chamber's front desk. Zandra Fenley and Glinda Hardy, who have worked together since February, give the Chamber an energetic and professional first impression.

"Glinda and Zandra are a joy to work with. They show a lot of enthusiasm and I'm delighted to have them working as receptionists at the front desk," Reeda Taylor, director of Customer Service said.

Fenley came to the Chamber as a temporary receptionist through Remedy Intelligent Staffing in November 1999, and became a permanent member of the Chamber team in April. She also wears the hat of phone coordinator, managing the internal system. Fenley has an associate's degree from Southeast College of Technology in computer programming.

"I enjoy the challenges of my position – helping people find information about the city and Chamber members. I learn something new everyday," said Fenley.

Hardy holds two associate degrees from Bishop State Community College, in sociology and mass communication. She has been with the Chamber since February, and "looks forward to coming to work everyday."

"It makes my day when someone says 'You've been such a big help,'" Hardy said. If you need general information at the Chamber contact Fenley and Hardy at 433-6951.



Glinda Hardy (left); Sandra Fenley (right).

## Chamber Hires Community Development Coordinator

Michele Rumpf is the newest addition to the Chamber's Community Development Department, having joined the team in April as department coordinator. Her duties include grant writing for the Chamber and leading various Community Development projects.

"I'm really happy to have entered such a positive and supportive environment," Rumpf said. "The Chamber gives me the opportunity to be involved with so many things."

Rumpf is currently helping with the area's long-range strategic plan, Envision Mobile-Baldwin, and will be coordinating Character Counts, a value development program for elementary school children, and *The Leading Edge*, a directory of minority leaders willing to serve on boards and committees.

"Michele has the perfect combination of skills for her job," Jodi Swiderek, vice president of Communications/Community Development for the Chamber. "She has worked in the nonprofit arena, university settings and has considerable grant writing experience. She is a great addition to our staff."

Rumpf, a native of Ft. Lauderdale, holds a bachelor's degree in Public Administration from Auburn University. She came to Mobile from the University of Michigan Health System's Department of Pediatrics, where she coordinated special events/publications, and managed appointments and promotions.

Contact Rumpf at 431-8630 or michele@mobilechamber.com.



## Chamber Hires Additional Project Manager

The Chamber is pleased to announce a new addition to the Economic Development Department's staff, Kevin Mapp. As a project manager of business development he will work with existing businesses and recruit projects and new jobs to the area, focusing on the Chamber's target markets including medical suppliers, computers and aerospace.

Mapp says he is "really excited to be here in Mobile, and I'm looking forward to immersing myself into the local business community."

A native of Hattisburg, Miss., he comes to the Chamber from the University of Southern Mississippi where he received bachelor's and master's degrees in History, and a master's in Economic Development.

"Kevin is young and energetic," Jim Apple, vice president of Economic Development, said. "He had a tremendous internship opportunity while he was in school and staffed the Walthall County Industrial Development Authority in Tylertown, Miss."

Mapp reported to a board, managed the day-to-day operations of the office, developed proposals for companies interested in the area and communicated regularly with the state's economic developers.

Contact Mapp at 431-8616 or kevin@mobilechamber.com.



## Small Business of the Month EAP Lifestyle Management

With the increased demand and pressure associated with many modern offices, EAP Lifestyle Management offers solutions to employee "burn out," tension or depression. EAP is an employee assistance program offering free, confidential and professional assistance to help resolve individuals' problems.

A major benefit to employees who take advantage of the program is that it's confidential and free of charge. For example, an employee suffering from marital problems can contact one of the EAP counselors without having to go through his company's human resource department or boss. If necessary, the EAP counselor can recommend further treatment while working with a person's financial status and health insurance coverage.

Patricia A. Wheat LPC, purchased EAP Lifestyle Management about two years ago, and in addition to running the EAP office, maintains her private practice. With eight employees, the company has increased its services to include local and nationwide companies.

Wheat believes EAP offers the most comprehensive program for employers looking to increase their range of services for employees. While every company working with EAP Lifestyle Management receives an individualized employee assistance plan, examples of its services include:

### Direct Services

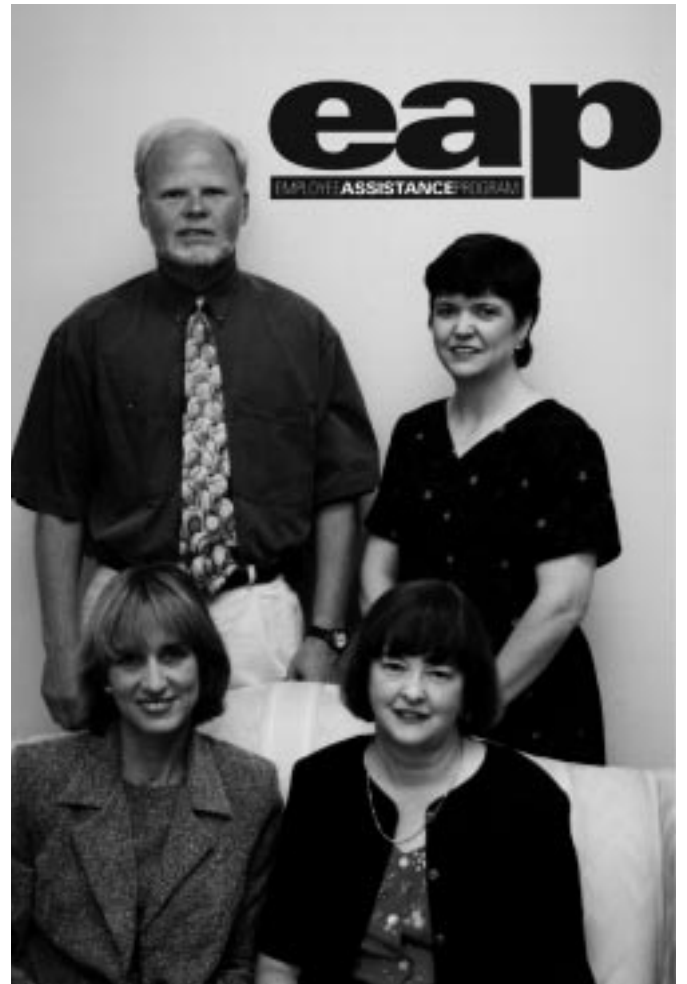
- Counseling with weekend and evening appointments available
- Legal consultation and referral
- Eldercare and childcare needs assessment and referral
- Critical incident response

### Management Services

- On-site and off-site consultation with troubled employees
- General employee assistance consultation on an unlimited basis
- On-site seminars on workplace issues

### Employee Communication

- On-site employee orientation
- Posters, brochures and business cards for all employees



Patricia A. Wheat, left, owner of EAP Lifestyle Management, and her team of dedicated professionals work with companies nationwide, providing them with assistance programs for their employees.

- Seminars on workplace, family and self-help issues

To learn more about the benefits of employee assistance programs, contact EAP Lifestyle Management at 800-7688-2077 or 344-5863, or e-mail them at EAPLftyl@aol.com.

### Guidelines for the Small Business of the Month selection:

- ◆ Current chamber member
- ◆ Fewer than 100 employees
- ◆ Apparent solid financial base
- ◆ Considered successful by peers
- ◆ Expanding number of employees
- ◆ Sales growth and/or profit growth
- ◆ Outstanding public service contribution
- ◆ In business a minimum of a year
- ◆ New product line

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## Business Spotlight of the Month Blue Chip Properties



Most people who invest in rental property depend on a professional to manage the facility and the needs of tenants. This month's Business Spotlight, Blue Chip Properties, serves the needs of both the owners and those companies leasing space.

Owner Nelson Brown CPM has more than 22 years experience in commercial real estate management, brokerage, valuation and finance. His company specializes in long-term client relationships and provides a variety of services to meet their needs including building and ground management, lease management, investment analysis and planning, representation in condemnation and planning/zoning proceedings, and other activities involving the ownership and management of real estate.

He loves what he does and says its the variety in his business that keeps him motivated. "Every deal is different. You might lease the same place twice or even three times, but the needs and tastes of every business client is different.

Owner Nelson Brown stands in front of one of the buildings leased in Winthop Square, a Williamsburg-style office community on Hillcrest Road.

Following a career in insurance, Brown entered the real estate business. When Pope & Quinn, a successful real estate firm, closed its doors, Brown grabbed the opportunity to start his own business managing properties.

While the majority of his clients are commercial customers, Brown does manage a few residential properties as well.

Brown can be reached at 639-0100 or [sniper@zebra.net](mailto:sniper@zebra.net).

*Business Spotlight of the Month is selected from a random drawing of business cards collected at the prior month's Business After Hours event.*

## Plan Where They Land

### ◆ Unexpected neighbors could be deterred if Mobile County makes better plans for land development

Imagine this scenario. A person buys a five-acre parcel of land in Mobile County next to a farm. He builds a \$150,000 house with a pool. One year later, the farmer sells his land and the new owner opens a scrap metal business, complete with old washing machines, junk cars and other "recyclable" items. Impossible? Not at all.

Currently Mobile County has no land use planning and zoning regulations to stop such a venture. In other words, there are no designated areas for business, industry or residential development.

High-density development, development on poor soils and development that does not properly address road access and drainage problems could cause damaging drainage overflow across adjacent properties, as well as have a harmful impact on receiving water bodies. In the long run, good land management controls, equitably applied, will have less harmful impacts on the land and water and will be a big plus for community development."

According to the report, Mobile County's major hurdle is obtaining home rule (where local issues can be decided without having to go through the



This dilemma is being addressed by a team under the Envision Mobile-Baldwin long range strategic plan. As part of their research, the group completed its *Resource Management Information Brief*, a white paper outlining the current situation in Mobile and Baldwin counties regarding the regulation of land, water and air resources to help insure well-planned, beneficial growth.

Though Baldwin County has adopted and is enforcing countywide subdivision regulations, Mobile County has not sought local zoning authority from the state. Neither do they have a county planning commission or land development ordinances as does Baldwin County.

"The application of land use controls (zoning, subdivision regulations, flood hazard regulations, etc.) is perhaps the major governmental action, after taxes, that incenses the public and evokes ire of property owners," the report states. "However, it is precisely poor land development that causes problems for property owners and headaches for the local government.

state legislature). Baldwin County previously seized the initiative and was able to obtain limited home rule relative to planning and zoning. Even Baldwin County, however, would benefit from general home rule so they would have the ability to adjust some of the land use constraints that have been placed on them, the report said.

"Private rights are certainly important, but they must be tempered by exercising these rights responsibly with appropriate consideration and respect for the rights of neighbors and the community as a whole," the reports states.

"Envision Mobile-Baldwin must continue to play the role of provocateur to assure progress in achieving the goals and meeting the time frames of the Envision implementation phase that is in progress," it said.

The team, which prepared the report, will be going before the Mobile County Commission to present their findings and encourage the Commission to begin steps to gain resource management authority. For a complete copy of the report, contact Angela Erwin at the Chamber at 431-8621.

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# Area Universities Launch Programs Emphasizing Past Values & Future Trends

## E-Commerce Becomes Recognized Degree

### ◆ New Program at USA Trains Future Internet Entrepreneurs

Whether it's a used bicycle for sale or millions of dollars worth of a company product, the Internet is becoming the vehicle of choice in the marketplace for many. In a cutting-edge move to provide training in this global arena, the University of South Alabama (USA) is launching a Bachelor of Science degree in e-commerce.

Dr. Mohan Menon, director of new E-commerce program at USA was quoted recently in *USA TODAY* article about this new educational trend.

"The business people have no idea of the technology side and the tech people have no idea of the business side," he said.

University staff combined programs from both the School of Business and Computer Information Sciences to create this new course of study. Classes will span the two departments with technical instruction in programming, Web design and systems networking to the business side including Internet marketing, introduction to e-commerce and current topics in e-commerce. Though currently a bachelor's degree is being offered, plans are to eventually offer a certificate in e-commerce as well as a master's degree.

"The response has been tremendous," said Menon. "We've had calls from every state except Montana and Alaska."

One of the unique aspects of the course of study will be the final phase where each student will develop a fully functional e-commerce site. Menon

said that some students will have products or services to use on their site, but some will not and will be looking for businesses that are in need of an e-commerce site.

"This will be one of the only degrees where you actually start a business before you graduate," he pointed out.

According to Menon, extensive knowledge of computers is not necessary to take the courses.

"I had someone call recently who only used the computer for word processing," he said. "A person doesn't have to be sophisticated to get into this program. They can start from scratch." Once they're finished, however,

Menon says that students will be able to go into almost any type of business situation: work for themselves, a small or medium-sized business or become the Chief Information Officer of a large company.

The courses must be taken on campus at the University right now, but in the future it will also be offered on the web.

"We are starting this bandwagon, but soon other colleges and universities will jump on it," said Menon. "This degree will put Mobile and USA on the map internationally."

For information on the e-commerce program, log onto [www.usaecommm.com](http://www.usaecommm.com) or [www.ecdegree.com](http://www.ecdegree.com) or call Menon at 460-7903.

“This will be one of the only degrees where you actually start a business before you graduate.”

”

## Between Right and Wrong

### ◆ New Leadership Development Program takes the guesswork out of ethical decision-making

In the old days, it was pretty simple. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not bear false witness. Today, however, questions of morals and values aren't so easily categorized. "This bid is the lowest, so should I take it, even if it was late?" "They never billed us for that order, so it's their problem, isn't it?" "She's married to a guy who makes good money, so we can pay her less, right?" "Can't we just buy one copy of this software and load on everyone's computer?"

People are hit with a barrage of tempting choices, negative influences and "high stakes" opportunities requiring more complicated decision-making skills. The fact is, answers are not usually cut and dry, making it vital that people learn how to see through the layers of ambiguity and get straight to the heart of the matter. Often that takes leadership — value-centered leadership.

In response to this growing dilemma, the University of Mobile (UM) has established a School of Leadership Development to meet the need for ethical, moral direction in today's society. The program is designed to provide both college students and area citizens with practical leadership training. It will include a minor in leadership, adult studies in organizational management, professional development seminars and continuing education courses in value-centered leadership.

In addition, UM President Dr. Mark Foley will teach a course this fall on "Issues and Leadership" featuring discussions with leaders in business, government, technology, civic organizations and the church community.

"I sense in business a growing desire for ethical, moral leadership," said John Davis, president and CEO of Mobile Gas. "While technical ability, training and drive are important, more business people are putting an emphasis on

character and leadership. There are enormous resources for training people, including the Internet. But what you can't get over the Internet are ethics, quality and character."

The UM leadership courses are designed so every student who attends the University will have at least one course in ethics since it's part of the core curriculum.

Ethics related to business are considered upper-level courses such as the one on Social

Responsibility and Managerial Ethics.

"Making a positive impact in the world takes determination and responsibility," said Foley. "It takes a commitment to excellence and personal integrity. It takes a person of character who has the courage to be a leader."

For more information on the program, contact Kathy Dean, director of Public Relations at UM at 442-2215.

“It takes a person of character who has the courage to be a leader.”

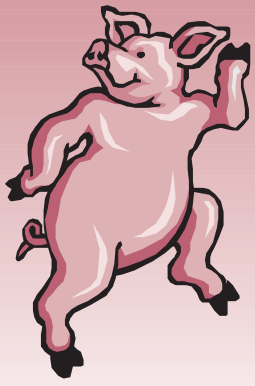
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# Pork & Politics

Last month at the Chamber's annual political mixer, Pork & Politics in the Park, attendees got a chance to shake hands and talk one-on-one with candidates running for office. Sponsored by The Mitchell Company, a record crowd of more than 600 participated in the event, in addition to 60-70 official candidates.

This year voters will elect members of the school board, county commission, Supreme Court and circuit and district judges and the public service commission president.



John Saint with Mobile Mayor Mike Dow.



Lee Ward (left) talks to Judge candidate Jimmy Fry.



Naxton Marshall (left) with John Davis.



## Diplomat of the Month Marvin Dismukes

In addition to his full-time job as a sales and marketing representative for Commercial Contracting Service, for the past four years Marvin Dismukes has volunteered his time and talents as a Chamber Diplomat. Honored as the Chamber's Diplomat of the Month, Dismukes admits the program has been good for business.

"It's been a great program for me," Dismukes said as he described the Diplomat program. "I've been given an opportunity to network with other dedicated and hard working volunteers, promote my business and attract new clients."

Commercial Contracting Service focuses on renovating existing facilities around the Mobile area and Dismukes believes attending different Chamber functions has gotten the word out about his employer.

While Dismukes' favorite Chamber event is Business After Hours, he's regularly spotted at morning marketing meetings, First Fridays and new member orientations. Explaining why he made such an effort to attend so many events, Dismukes stated, "You just never know who you're going to run into!"

A first-time Diplomat of the Month, Reeda Taylor, director of customer service for the Chamber was honored to give Dismukes the award for April. She said, "He's a dependable, hard worker who represents the Chamber well."



Saucy Q served 600 plates of barbeque ribs, pork and beans and potato salad.



Judge candidate Sue Bell Cobb talks with chamber staff.

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**An End to Bumpy Rides?**

In a report about insurance claims published in *The Southeast Edition of the Wall Street Journal*, Southeasterners are "getting a smooth ride."

Relying trends from the "Trends in Auto Injury Claims" report by the Insurance Research Council, regional drivers are filing fewer auto property damage claims than the rest of the nation.

Experts believe that residents in the Southeast pay less for both property damage and bodily injury in part, because when the report was published, it wasn't mandatory for Alabama and Tennessee drivers to carry insurance. When all drivers are required to have insurance more bad drivers are included in the system and that can influence claims.



Starting June 1, it is law that Alabama drivers have liability insurance or drivers will receive a \$500 fine plus a \$100 fee to reinstate their car tag.

On average auto damage claims in the Southeast were 3.76 out of 100 compared to the U.S. average of 4.09. Alabama had the lowest rate of 3.35 per 100 insured cars.

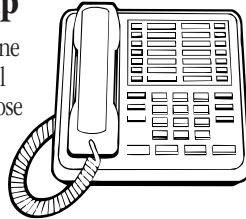
**Bellingrath Recognized Internationally**

Word is spreading around the world about some of the wonderful things available to tourists in Mobile. In May, Mobile's Bellingrath Gardens, an anchor attraction for the community, was featured in *The Rotarian*, a monthly magazine distributed to every Rotary Club member around the globe. Writers Jeff Corydon and Janice Somerville Chambers, highlighted the gardens and **Walter Bellingrath**, who was a co-founder of the Rotary Club of Mobile in 1914. In addition to the feature story about Bellingrath Gardens, an overview of Mobile's Mardi Gras and a preview of the Tricentennial celebration was also included in the publication.



**Voice Mail Tip**

Include your phone number in voice mail messages even for those who already know it. Reason: If they access their messages from outside their office, they may need the number. It also saves time.



Reprinted with permission from Communications Briefings. Source: TechnoStress: Coping with Technology @Work, @ Home, @Play by Michelle M. Weil and Larry D. Rosen, John Wiley & Sons Inc. 605 3rd Ave., New York, NY 10158.

**Mobile Hits the Spot**

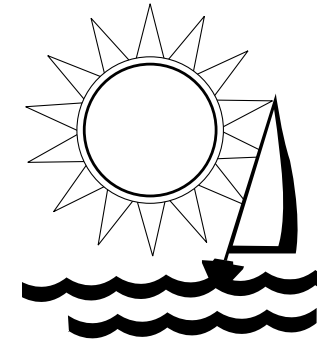
Here's a note e-mailed to Chamber President Win Hallett from a dad whose son was very impressed with Mobile and Gulf Shores.

"About five years ago, I brought my wife and son to Mobile on a business trip and we all had a good time. From there we went to Gulf Shores.

"About three years ago, the lottery in Georgia was up to about \$50 million and I casually asked my wife what she would do if she won.

"Without any hesitation whatsoever, Taylor exclaimed that he would go back to Mobile!

"(Given the fact that Taylor had been to Mexico,



Germany, Austria, Washington DC, the beach, the mountains and many points in between, you got the supreme compliment!")

**News Sources of Choice**

Pew Research Center for The People and The Press asked people who are most likely to vote how they get their news about political campaigns. Respondents could give more than one answer. *USA Today* listed the results in one of its recent USA Snapshots:

- Daily newspaper – 60 percent
- Network TV news – 56 percent
- Local TV news – 55 percent
- Cable TV news – 46 percent

**Competitive Selling**

Before lowering your price when a prospective client says your competitor's price is less, ask to review the proposal point by point. Say something like, "That surprises me because we're usually very competitive. Would you be willing to look at my proposal again along with theirs? Maybe my price includes a product feature you don't really need." This is an artful way to emphasize the quality and service of your product as well as identify a product that may be inferior to yours.

Source: Art Siegel, SalesDoctors, www.salesdoctors.com; provided by the U.S. Chamber's Business Builder.

**The Schwarzenegger Time Tip**

Tom Payne, author of *Quotes for a Changing Workplace*, says he learned a valuable time management lesson from Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The actor allotted two and half hours for his workouts. But he always stayed longer because he stopped to talk to others too often. His solution: "From now on, I'll stick to the time limit, even if I haven't finished. That will force me to decide if I'll stop to talk to someone or continue exercising. I can opt for either choice, but I can no longer do both."

Payne adapted the Schwarzenegger model by setting a firm 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. workday. Then, when someone asked for some of his time, he pondered this question: "Can I do it and still finish at 5:30?" A "yes" meant the meeting was on. A "no" meant he scheduled it for the next day.



Moral: When you think of your time as elastic, you tend to believe a day has 30 hours instead of just 24. For a more realistic view, set a time limit and stick to it.

Source: Communications Briefings, Lodestar, Lodestar Ltd. Co., 17 Anne Court, Tijeras, NM 87059.

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## Former Chamber Chair Receives 1st 'World-Changer' Award

Last month during commencement ceremonies, the University of Mobile recognized **John Davis**, president and chief executive officer of Mobile Gas for his many contributions to the community.

Davis was a recipient of the University's first "World-Changer" Awards, presented to Mobilians who exhibit an enthusiastic commitment to changing the world through their efforts.

Among his many community affiliations, Davis is former chairman of the Chamber board, charter chair of Envision Mobile-Baldwin, the area's long-range strategic plan, and a consultant on the University of Mobile's new leadership program. In addition, he is active with the Volunteers of America, United Cerebral Palsy and the Mobile Area Council of Boys Scouts of America.

Also honored for making an impact in the lives of young men and women in the health care field was **Patricia Holliday Dorsett**, retired nursing educator, who established the George W. and Patricia H. Dorsett Scholarship Fund at UM.

"These are people who are committed to accomplishing world change by utilizing their faith in God, their human and financial resources and their experience. They are individuals who promote and encourage ethical leadership, appreciate the value of Christian higher education, and understand and demonstrate the importance of expressing a strong belief in Jesus Christ in everyday living," said University President Dr. Mark Foley.

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# 1800s-Style Californian Visits Mobile

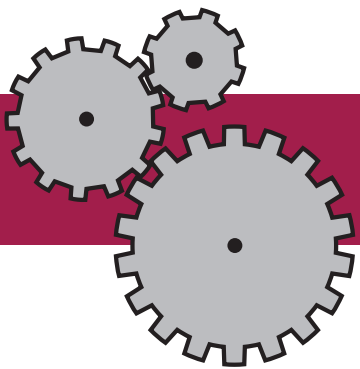
On the weekend of May 20, Mobile's waterfront resembled how it may have looked in the 1800s when the Californian arrived in the Port of Mobile.

The Californian, a 145-foot long grand vessel, complete with nine sails and a span of more than 5,000 sq. ft., sailed into Mobile with Mobile Mayor Mike Dow and members of the media as part of a kickoff for the Mobile Tricentennial celebration in 2002. Docking at Cooper Riverside Park, the Californian was open for public tours throughout the weekend, and played host to a variety of lunches and receptions for Mobile Tricentennial Inc. fundraisers.

On its millennium voyage, a year-long trek with more than 30 port stops in Canada, Mexico and the United States, the Californian was built to educate people about the importance of coastal marine environment. The ship has sailed over 400,000 miles and conducted more than 130 Sea Cadet programs – an 11-day at-sea program for high school and college students. The tall ship was built in 1984 as a re-creation of the C.W. Lawrence, a Revenue Service cutter built in Washington, D.C. in 1848.

For more information about Mobile's Tricentennial, call 343-9747.

# The Chamber At Work For You



## Mobile on TODAY

With the help of the Chamber and a national public relations consultant, Willard Scott of the Today Show promoted Mobile's Mardi Gras and upcoming Tricentennial celebration in full costume complete with beads and Moon Pies on Fat Tuesday.

## The Cream of the Crop

A record number of Future 30 nominations were received this year. A panel of four accountants reviewed them all and selected the 30 winners. The Chamber's Class of 2000 will be featured in next month's issue of *The View*.

## Sharing Our Expertise

Chamber staff gave presentations at two state School-to-Work conferences: "Write Grants...Get Results" was the topic at the Alabama Career/Technical Education Conference grant workshop in Gulf Shores for 97 participants; and at the Economic Development Partnership Association School-to-Work Stakeholder meeting in Birmingham, 60 stakeholders benefited from the presentation "Creating and Maintaining School-to-Work Partnerships."

## Face to Face

Several times a year the Chamber convenes legislators and representatives from the county, city and school board. At the recent Partnership Lunch designed as a casual get-together to talk about important area issues, the hot topic was school funding.

## Hitting a Moving Target

...That's how many area companies feel about staying up to date with technology. The Chamber recently hosted round table discussions with several representatives of technology-based companies.

## Commit to Kids

Several of the 152 Envision Mobile-Baldwin strategies address the needs of at-risk youth. Chamber staff met with the Mobile Commits to Kids coalition to learn about their plans for a 2001 meeting and renewed initiatives for youth at-risk.

# The House That Love Built

Thanks in part, to the generosity of many local businesses, the long-held dream of a Ronald McDonald House for Mobile became a reality earlier this year when more than 250 friends and supporters celebrated a labor of love that will benefit hundreds of families in the years ahead.

Located at 1626 Springhill Ave., it is the 204th such house in the world and the first of the new millennium. Like those before it, Mobile's Ronald McDonald House has become a temporary home away from home for families with seriously ill or injured children who are receiving treatment at any area hospital.

Area businesses and community volunteers donated thousands of dollars in building materials, professional services and labor. While there are many heroes who deserve the credit for this shelter, special credit must be given to a few who serve as examples of the area's generosity.

First on the list is E. Harmon "Andy" Anderson Jr., a retired architect and contractor, who "built this house as though it were his own," says Betty Hope, president of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Mobile Inc., the nonprofit organization that owns the new, 14,800 sq. ft. Ronald McDonald House.

Serving as the volunteer general contractor, Anderson's single-minded pursuit "to build the best possible home at the least possible cost" saved the charity literally hundreds of thousands of dollars. He assembled a cadre of local architects and contractors, including D P F Architects, Bachelor's Mechanical Contractors and Gulf Electric Co., to form an Architectural/Construction Committee. These contractors donated their time and expertise, as well as gave significant discounts or outright gifts of labor and services. Many approached their

Stabler Celebrity Golf Classic earmarked its net proceeds to the charity for the past four years to ensure the success of the House's capital campaign.

BellSouth Pioneers and the Communications Workers of America worked side-by-side with BellSouth management to wire the house for its telephone and computer systems. Alpha



## The First Family

It's 6 a.m. With less than three hours of sleep, Brian Seage was exhausted – physically and emotionally. His wife Kyle delivered their first child, a girl – Katie, the evening before at USA Children's and Women's Hospital. Doctors at Singing River Hospital in Pascagoula sent Kyle by ambulance to Mobile where Katie was born 10 weeks premature. Kyle was asleep, recovering from surgery. Katie was now in neo-natal intensive care. Brian was distraught. A nurse offered encouragement. "Have you heard that the Ronald McDonald House is opening this morning," she asked? With an eight-week hospital stay ahead for little Katie, Brian knew that "home" was not far away.

Katie went home recently with her parents and will return to USA for monthly visits with her pediatrician.

Communications donated a telephone system. Olde Blue Computer Services contributed new computers and software for the house's "cyber café."

The \$2.3 million home features 12 bedrooms with private baths, a large kitchen and dining room, living room, play room, offices, meeting room, and an apartment for its full-time resident manager. Furniture retailers in Mobile and Baldwin counties outfitted each of the bedrooms and gather-

ing areas. Mobile's OEC Inc. volunteered its interior design staff to lend its expertise. Teague Brothers covered the first floor in Pergo flooring. Mobile Gas donated appliances. Even America's Junior Miss candidates got involved, hand-painting tiles that now decorate the kitchen wall.

Nearly 50 caring volunteers from throughout the community work with a small, yet experienced staff to make each fami-



The 14,800 sq. ft. Ronald McDonald House located on Springhill Avenue offers families a temporary home away from home while their children who are injured or seriously ill receive care at area hospitals.


ly's stay as pleasant as possible. Like a haven in the storm, the Ronald McDonald House provides an environment for these very special families that is warm, comforting and supportive for only \$12/night.

"We're helping people you're never going to know, people you'll never meet," said Jim Murray, co-founder of the world's first Ronald McDonald House in Philadelphia. In the 25 years since that first house opened, thousands of parents and children have experienced life at a Ronald McDonald House. Now, hundreds more will derive comfort from Mobile's new "House That Love Built!"

For more information, call Brian Hartzell, executive director of the Ronald McDonald House, at 694-6873.

# Comparative Economic Indicators March '00 vs March '99

Unemployment Rates		4.0% March '00
		3.6% March '99

Business Licenses		297 March '00
		302 March '99

Homes Sold		416 March '00
		516 March '99

Air Passengers From Mobile		35,894 March '00
		31,056 March '99

# CALENDAR VIEW

**June 13** **Lessons in Government**

**Time:** Noon - 1:30 p.m.  
**Place:** International Trade Club  
**Cost:** \$15  
**Call:** Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612

**June 20** **Solutions for Human Resource Management**

**Time:** 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
**Place:** Chamber's McGowin Room  
**Cost:** \$15  
**Call:** Brenda Rembert at 431-8607

**June 22** **Business After Hours**

**Time:** 5:30 - 7 p.m.  
**Place:** Drayton Place, 101 Dauphin Street  
**Cost:** \$2 for members/\$5 for potential members

**June 27** **Member Reception and Briefing**

**Time:** 5 - 7 p.m.  
**Place:** Chamber Atrium and McGowin Room  
**Cost:** No charge  
**Call:** Pratt Vereen at 431-8638

## Solutions for Human Resource Management

Without proper attention to Human Resource issues a company can suffer devastating financial losses and time wasted in the court system. Companies, no matter their size, cannot afford to ignore the importance of good HR administration. In an effort to inform business owners and HR managers about how to solve many typical problems, on June 20, the Chamber will host a Net Gain seminar on "Solutions for Human Resource Management." Representatives from PeopleWorks (formerly CPS Staff Leasing) will discuss the benefits of Professional Employee Organizations (PEO) as well as workers' compensation, risk management and competitive business programs.



Cost to attend the seminar is \$15 and includes lunch. For reservations, contact Brenda Rembert at 431-8607.

## COMING IN JULY

**July 7** **First Friday**

**Time:** 7:45 - 8:45 a.m.  
**Place:** Prism Systems Inc., 200 Virginia Street  
**Cost:** \$2 members/\$5 potential members

**July 27** **Media Tour**

**Time:** 8:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
**Place:** Chamber  
**Cost:** \$20  
**Call:** Leigh Perry Herndon at 431-8623

## Seminar Speakers Needed

The Chamber's Small Business Department is planning its seminar series for the second half of the year and is looking for speakers to make a variety of presentations. Based on the most recent membership survey, small business owners and managers are most interested in learning more about:

- Advertising
- Business Planning
- Employee Recruitment
- Finance
- Marketing
- Business Time Management

Last year approximately 500 members attended a total of 16 seminars. Most programs begin at 11 a.m., last about an hour and a half and include a boxed lunch. If you are interested in presenting a seminar from the above list of topics, or know someone who is, call Walter Underwood at 431-8652.

## Media Tour Scheduled For July 27

In today's electronic age, visiting journalists in their offices and spending time in media newsrooms is becoming more obsolete, yet the latest articles boast the power of face-to-face communication. Plus the newsrooms can, at times, be very intimidating with noisy police scanners, televisions everywhere and telephone constantly ringing. Often it's difficult to concentrate on talking with a reporter in an effort to "sell" a story.

But these will not be major problems on Thursday, July 27 from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. when the Chamber hosts a Media Tour to visit the newsrooms of the Mobile Register, FOX 10 and WBLX/WDLT radio. The purpose of this seminar and tour is to give small business owners, marketing/PR representatives and newcomers to Mobile a chance to learn more about the day-to-day operations of the different media, learn the layout of some area newsrooms, and meet with reporters and editors to learn about how to get information or a story idea published or aired.

Participants in the Media Tour will meet in the Chamber lobby at 8:30 a.m. for coffee and an overview of the day, followed by a walking tour to the Mobile Register and FOX 10. After lunch, travel will be provided to WBLX/WDLT radio station.

Cost to attend this year's Media Tour is only \$20 and includes breakfast, lunch and transportation. Reservations are necessary and can be made by calling Leigh Perry Herndon, 431-8623 or via e-mail leigh@mobilechamber.org.

## CHAMBER ANNIVERSARIES

**35 YEARS**

Goldstein's

**25 YEARS**

Commercial Testing & Engineering Company  
 Gauld Equipment Company

**20 YEARS**

Elf Atochem North America

**15 YEARS**

Automated Payroll Centers  
 Entre' Computer Center  
 Expressway Carpet Sales  
 Health Partners of Alabama Inc.  
 HealthSouth Surgicare of Mobile  
 Infirmary Health System Inc.  
 Margaret Ann's Flowers & Gifts Inc.  
 J. F. Pate & Associates  
 Contractors Inc.

**10 YEARS**

Berney Office Solutions  
 St. Luke's Episcopal School

**5 YEARS**

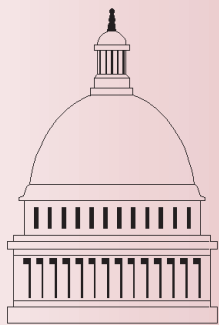
CEFCO National Claims Service  
 Colonial Village at Huntleigh  
 Colony Park Apartments  
 Haston Construction Company Inc.

## Lessons in Government

### ◆ State DOT Representative to Speak

It's once again time to get geared up for the Chamber's annual Lessons In Government. This year's series will begin on June 13 with a lunch at the International Trade Club followed by guest speaker, Mack Roberts of the Alabama Department of Transportation. Roberts will give an overview of what the DOT does for the state and will update the audience on current and upcoming projects in the Mobile-Baldwin area.

Reservations are necessary and tickets are \$15. For more information or to reserve a seat, contact Shelly Mattingly at 431-8612.



## Member Reception and Briefing

One of the advantages of being a Chamber member is having the entire staff at your service at all times. This month's event, held on June 27 at 5 p.m. at the Chamber, offers members an opportunity to learn more about the different departments within the organization, as well as meet staff members and other Chamber members. Bring plenty of business cards because it's a great networking event.

There is no charge to attend, but contact Pratt Vereen at 431-8638 for reservations.

## Business After Hours

Relax after a hard day's work with friends and potential business contacts during June's Business After Hours. Set for 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 22, Drayton Place in downtown Mobile is this month's location. Enjoy great food and music while promoting your company and networking with others.

Reservations are not necessary. Cost to attend is \$2 for members and \$5 for potential members.

*Drayton Place*

## First Friday

Start your morning networking with area professionals at the Chamber's next First Friday event sponsored by Prism Systems Inc. located at 200 Virginia St. Enjoy a continental breakfast between 7:45 - 8:45 a.m. on July 7. Reservations are not necessary. Cost for members is \$2, and \$5 potential members.



**ATTENTION MEMBERS!**

If you know of a company interested in benefiting from Chamber membership, please contact our account executives:

- Tom Lewis at 431-8629/pgr: 582-2076
- Melody Lipscomb at 431-8627/pgr: 371-9634

**WHO'S NEW?**

Aimee Beyle was named regional marketing manager for **BlueStar Communications**. Her territory will include Jacksonville, Gainesville, Ocala, Pensacola and Tallahassee, Fla.; Mobile; and Biloxi and Gulfport, Miss. Formerly, she was director of on-air product with ABC-25, WJXX-TV in Jacksonville, and assistant promotions manager with WECT-TV in Wilmington, NC.

**Leonard J. (Bo) Marks** joined **Whitney National Bank** as assistant vice president in commercial lending. He has more than eight years banking experience, primarily in the retail and commercial areas. Marks is a graduate of Wake Forest University in N.C.



**Marks**

**Adams Homes** announces site specialists for Baldwin County residential communities: **Matt Demers** is the new site specialist for Oak Hollow and Oak Village featuring homes from 1,400 – 1,800 sq. ft., located off County Rd. 24 in Foley. He can be reached at 971-3491. **Dee Gibson** is now representing Whisper Woods. Located on Hwy. 31 in Spanish Fort, this new community offers homes from 1,500 – 2,000 sq. ft. Gibson can be reached at 625-0271. **Ginny Johnson** is the contact for the new Camellia Woods with floor plans ranging from 1,700 – 2,000 sq. ft., located on County Road 49. Johnson can be reached at 945-1761.

**BUSINESS ENDEAVORS**

A new agreement will keep the AFLAC Champions golf tournament in Mobile for the next two years. Raycom Sports, parent company of AFLAC, signed a two-year agreement with the **City of Mobile** and **Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail's Magnolia Grove** golf facility after a very successful 1999 event.

**Manpower** successfully deployed a new client/server software, Jacada for Java, recently. The new technology will provide a more efficient e-business infrastructure to process orders and employee assignments, track and process time sheets and match Manpower employees to job positions at customer locations.

**Infirmity Health System** developed a new partnership with a workers' compensation service company, Providers' Assurance Corp., to reduce costs for employers in Mobile, Baldwin, Washington and Clarke counties. Under the agreement, Infirmity Health System will offer preferred pricing on services and deliver occupational care through its hospital and clinics. For more information, call 431-5801.

In other news, the Infirmity also developed a new follow-up clinic to help amputee patients deal with their losses. **Dr. Charles Hall Jr.** with Mobile Bay Physical Medicine founded the program. Call 435-6410, for times and dates or more information.

**Don Pablo's Mexican Kitchen** opened last month on Airport Boulevard near I-65. Mobile is the first city to sample the company's new "MexLevel" dishes that include steak, seafood and pasta, in addition to its traditional recipes, before they are rolled out in other restaurants across the country.

**ERA Marie McConnell Realty** published a new Mobile Area Relocation Guide featuring the artwork of local artist **Blanche Sumrall**. The magazine-style book gives newcomers to the area a look at the community, local services and activities.

**MEMBER NEWS**

**BellSouth** recently introduced its PurchaseWise service, a new Internet supply management center targeted toward small businesses. The site offers more than 25,000 products including office and computer products as well as access to a variety of online supply management tools, including reporting and analysis capabilities designed to manage business purchasing.

For more information about PurchaseWise, visit the site at [www.bellsouthpurchasewise.com](http://www.bellsouthpurchasewise.com).

Another service launched recently in Mobile by **BellSouth** is its Internet Call Waiting service. Subscribers can know who is calling while online. A message appears on the computer screen and customers can either answer the call, send it to voice mail, hold the call until they're finished with the current Internet session or forward it to another number.

To find out more information about this service visit the company's Web site at [www.bellsouth.com/icw](http://www.bellsouth.com/icw).

**Bishop State Community College** is now offering computer workshops via the Internet. The non-credit courses offered include Web publishing, the Internet, Microsoft Office applications, Quicken and QuickBooks and PC Troubleshooting. Courses last six weeks and cost between \$49 - \$79. Students can also take automated quizzes, complete assignments, access interactive demonstrations and participate in discussion areas. For more information, call 690-6836 or e-mail [kmorris@bscc.al.us](mailto:kmorris@bscc.al.us).

Last month, **Southeast College of Technology** introduced a new program in Internet Information Systems. The program is an 18-month associate of Occupational Studies degree program designed to provide comprehensive, hands-on training in technology and techniques necessary to create, develop, market and maintain Web sites.

Courses begin in July. Call 343-8200 or 1-800-866-0850 for more information.



Five young women have been selected to represent **USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park** as its 2000-2001 Crewmates. **Leah Cooke**, University of South Alabama, is Miss USS ALABAMA and will receive a \$2,000 scholarship; and **Tara Greene**, University of Mobile, is Miss USS DRUM and will receive a \$1,500 scholarship.

Other Crewmates selected, each receiving a \$1,000 scholarship, are: **Sara Porter**, University of South Alabama; **Kerra Smith**, University of Mobile; and **Rachael Armitt**, University of Mobile.

**Region's Bank** announced recent staff promotions. **Renae W. Batson** was promoted to vice president senior accountant. She joined the bank in 1973. Batson attended the University of South Alabama, and is a graduate of the Alabama Banking School at University of South Alabama.

**Irma B. Bru** was promoted to vice president IRA product manager. She joined the bank in 1962. She also attended the University of South Alabama, and is a graduate of the Alabama Banking School at University of South Alabama.

**Janice L. Platt** was promoted to assistant vice president. Previously, she was branch manager of the Citronnelle office. Since she began with the bank in 1972, she has served in all areas of the office's Retail Division. Platt has completed numerous American Institute of Banking courses as well as internal bank-related courses.

Three **University of Mobile** employees received special recognition for their contributions to their professions. **Dr. Judith McPeak**, dean of the Department of Communication and professor of communications, received the William A. Megginson Teaching Award for excellence in classroom teaching, scholarly activity, and her contributions to campus and community life.

The Emma Frances Megginson Service Award presented to a full-time employee exhibiting excellence in promoting the philosophy of the university, performing responsibilities and contributing to campus and community life went to **Jane Nall**, assistant professor of biology.

**Dr. Sergio Castello**, assistant professor of global business and economics, received the Metford Ray Megginson Research Award for excellence in research performed during the past two years.

**Hutch Radcliff** with **The Robinson-Humphrey Company** recently completed training earning him the distinction of becoming a retirement plan consultant by **Saloman Smith Barney's Corporate Retirement Services Division**.



**Radcliff**

Radcliff excelled in meeting the retirement plan needs of corporations in the 401(K) marketplace and demonstrated considerable experience, knowledge and success in this business.

**Gov. Don Siegelman** appointed **N. William (Bill) Layfield**, the **Drug Education Council's** director of the prevention services in Baldwin County, to the Alabama Mental Health and Mental Retardation Board of Trustees for a three-year term.

The Press Club of Mobile board of directors recently elected new officers: **Paula Dicks**, Bayview Professional Associates, president; **Carol Hunter**, WALA-TV10, vice president; **Kathy Dean**, University of Mobile, secretary; and **Mary Ellen Keller**, Business Innovation Center, treasurer.

New officers elected for the **Museum of Mobile's** board of directors are: **Sidney Schell**, chairman; **Susan Miller**, vice chairman; **Paul Klotz**, treasurer; **Ruth M. Quackenbush**, corresponding secretary; and **Alma Foster**, recording secretary.

**Mike Fitzhugh** is the new chair of **Mercy Medical's** board of trustees. Other officers include: **Dr. Carol Harrison**, vice chair; **James Lenaghan**, secretary; and **Joe Dan Dunnam**, treasurer.

**Ann Doss**, infection control coordinator at **Providence Hospital**, is the recipient of the Sigma Theta Tau award. The organization honors contributions in nursing.

**FOR YOUR CALENDAR**

**Hank Aaron** is the honorary guest at a fundraising dinner on Thursday, June 22. Benefiting the programs and services of the **Salvation Army** in Mobile and Baldwin counties, tickets are \$100 each. Call 438-3478 for more information.

A professional development seminar focusing on innovative ideas for managing crisis situations and building a rock solid reputation is set for June 22 from 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the Mobile Convention Center. Sponsored by the Public Relations Council of Alabama, the event's keynote speaker, **Terrie Williams**, CEO and founder of the Terrie Williams Agency in New York, will present "How to Succeed and Network in Public Relations and Business." **Sally Jessy Raphael**, **Janet Jackson**, **Jackie Joyner Kersee** and **Eddie Murphy** are among her client list.

The \$65 fee includes a reception on June 21 and lunch the day of the workshop. Vendor booths are also available for \$75. For more information, contact **Joy Washington** at 460-6638.

The University of South Alabama's Department of Conference Activities and Special Courses is sponsoring a range of youth camps this summer. From baseball to golf and art to jazz, there are several to choose from. For a complete list of camps and dates, call **Beth Anne McCormick**, 431-6411.

**NEED TO KNOW**

The **Three Sisters Gift & Coffee Shop** held its grand opening and ribbon cutting last month. Located at the Loop, 2155 Airport Blvd. Shop hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday - Saturday. Stop by or call 470-0350.

**COMMUNITY NEWS**

**Providence Hospital Auxiliary** celebrated its 50th anniversary with several events last month. Over the years, the Auxiliary funded fetal monitors, a CAT scanner, the Providence Campus Chapel and televisions for patient rooms. Recent contributions include new surgical lights for the operating room, an orthopedic traction table and a nuclear medicine computer system.

If you have a medical artifact, photograph or history of a medical milestone, **Trinity Press** would like to hear from you. The company is publishing a book celebrating Mobile's three centuries of medicine. Call 928-9656 or 479-6944.

Member News features Chamber member announcements, such as grand openings and relocations, or employee news, such as promotions. All Member News is due by the 5th of the month to appear in the following month's issue. If you have a news item, please send your information to: Member News, The VIEW, MACC, P.O. Box 2187, Mobile, AL 36652-2187, fax to 431-8646 or E-mail to [susan@mobilechamber.org](mailto:susan@mobilechamber.org)

**WELL DONE!**

**Sam Digiambattista**, vice president and regional investment services manager at **AmSouth Bank**, was promoted to senior vice president. Also, **Robert J. Sanders**, vice president and regional mortgage manager, was promoted to senior vice president.



**Digiambattista**



**Sanders**

**Greg Davis** was promoted from field operations manager to regional operations director of **BlueStar Communications**. In addition to Mobile, his territory will include Jacksonville, Gainesville, Ocala, Pensacola and Tallahassee, Fla.; and Biloxi and Gulfport, Miss. He has more than 16 years experience in the telecommunications and computer industries.

Previously an account executive with **BlueStar**, **Ryan Johnston** was promoted to indirect channel manager in the Mobile and Pensacola markets. Before joining the company he was with Mercedes-Benz Credit Corp.

Mobile's **JCPenny** store was recognized for its "five-star" service. The company named 10 winners in five groups determined by store size and sales volume out of a total of 1,150 stores. Customer-service stores were based on the results of an annual survey of thousands of JCPenny's best customers.

In addition, **Gerald Hagmaier**, manager of the JCPenny department store at Bel Air Mall was honored with the Chairman's Award for his store's performance in 1999. The acknowledgment is the company's highest designation for managerial excellence and is based on sales and profit improvement.