

T H E  **C H A M B E R**
GREATER TALLAHASSEE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

...the catalyst for local business growth.

2018 ANNUAL REPORT

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HEIDI OTWAY
President & Partner
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“My hope is that you sense the changes and are excited about Tallahassee’s future. My hope is that you are compelled to increase your involvement with the Chamber to keep the momentum going.”

HEIDI OTWAY
Chair 2017-2018, Greater Tallahassee
Chamber of Commerce

Dear Chamber members,

Wow, what an experience! It has been an honor and pleasure to serve as Chair of the Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce over the past year. The time has flown by, yet as I reflect on the last 12 months I’m pleased to report that the private sector has expanded, and the Chamber again proved why it’s the catalyst for business growth and change.

In alignment with the Chamber’s three priorities of Growing Business, Advocating for Business and Driving Value to our Members, I issued a call to action and urged you to say yes to supporting the Chamber’s efforts to:

- Establish a vision for our community that can be realized by 2024;
- Advocate for business;
- Retain and attract talent and;
- Serve as the convener of initiatives and programs that provide resources and insight to strengthen local businesses.

Thanks to my Board of Directors, dozens of volunteers, past Chamber board leaders, and the dedicated Chamber staff, we have achieved what we set out to do.

While we started off bold and intentional, a number of issues also arose which required the Chamber and the board to lean in and demonstrate our role as the leading voice for the business community.

Chamber discussions to build the foundation for a community plan, and get past a crisis that hit Tallahassee, spurred a greater focus on our government structure and a study on whether a merger of the City of Tallahassee and Leon County is necessary to make it easier to do business here.

That sparked a community-wide dialogue and got everyone sharing ideas about Tallahassee’s brand and how we want to talk about this place we call home. News articles and social media chatter sought consensus on our unique story — Who are we? What do we have to offer? What do we want to be when we grow up?

The Chamber also weighed in on societal issues like economic segregation, crime and the needs of children that have plagued our community for years.

When it came to economic development and growth, the Chamber was there to assist our top industries, universities, hospitals, developers, and city and county officials as they sought community insight for transformative projects and infrastructure to enhance the way we live, work and play in Tallahassee.

From all of this and more, we saw the Chamber take the lead and/or partner with other community stakeholders in a collective effort to move Tallahassee forward.

So what does this all mean to you, our members? My hope is that you sense the changes and are excited about Tallahassee’s future. My hope is that you are compelled to increase your involvement with the Chamber to keep the momentum going. My hope is that you say yes and lend your voice to help chart a community vision that benefits you and improves our business environment well into the future — from now through 2024 and beyond.

While I’m pleased with the work we’ve done this past year, I’m more excited about what’s ahead. This Annual Report provides a review of the past year and plans for the year to come. You’ll see that every action we take at the Chamber is aimed at living our mission, focusing on our priorities and following our guiding principles to benefit you.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. It has been a great experience.

Business Strong. Member Driven.

HEIDI OTWAY
Chair, Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce



BETH CORUM
EVP & Co-Chief Operating Officer,
Operations and Delivery
Capital City Bank



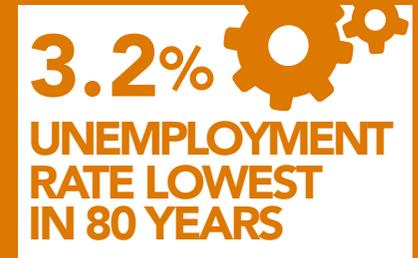
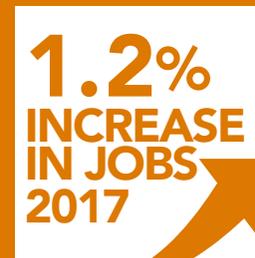
Growing Business

Our approach to business starts with you. As the catalyst for local business growth and driver of economic development, the Chamber strives to understand the needs of our members. We know when we help individuals who power businesses, those businesses flourish. Through unique programs, powerful resources and interactive experiences, we help you and your business achieve success and have focused our efforts in four priority areas: talent, entrepreneurship, existing industries and business environment.

“Tallahassee’s economy continues to show strong signs of growth. In order to sustain that growth and reach new heights it is critical for our community to invest in talent, entrepreneurship, industry and the business environment. The Chamber works with community partners, volunteers and members to elevate these priority areas across the community as a means of growing business in Tallahassee and Leon County.”

BETH CORUM
Chair, Grow Business Committee

- Produced and distributed the Talent Lives Here video series featuring young professionals who choose to make Tallahassee home
- Hosted a series of Small Business focus groups to discover feedback on Chamber initiatives
- Hosted bi-monthly CEO Series events featuring executives from Tallahassee’s most interesting and successful companies
- Launched the Chamber Podcast to feature stories from business leaders and community influencers making an impact in Tallahassee
- Hosted forums on Entrepreneurship, Talent Recruitment & Retention, Education & Workforce and the state of the economy to keep members informed on topics affecting their businesses
- Curated sessions at the Annual Community Conference featuring insights on areas such as marketing, taxes, legal strategies, local developments, residential housing, southside opportunities, a changing workforce and tourism





JAY SMITH
Vice President & Owner
Ajax Building Corporation



Advocating for Business

As the premier voice of business in the Capital region, we are cultivating a community that is vibrant, impactful and an exciting place to be where every person and every business can thrive. Through member feedback, continued meetings with our public partners and alignment of our six guiding principles, we are creating a business environment that supports a growing economy.

“The importance of the Chamber’s advocacy efforts cannot be understated. Every day there is an army of volunteers working with Chamber staff to monitor, engage and impact public policy in Tallahassee and Leon County. The Chamber is committed to establishing the best possible business environment in our community as a key strategy for growing the local economy.”

JAY SMITH
Chair, Business Advocacy Committee

- Developed strong position statements on important community issues including:
 - Blueprint Gateway District Project
 - Independent Study of Potential Government Consolidation
 - Airport Authority Consideration
 - Proposed Children’s Services Council
- Created the Local Government and Community Study Committee to evaluate critical needs for the successful future of Tallahassee and Leon County
- Created the 2018 Local Government Candidate Survey to inform members on the positions and beliefs of those seeking office on the City and County Commissions
- Served on the Leon County Charter Review Committee to evaluate and recommend changes to the systems of government at the county level
- Hosted the Legislative Dialogue Breakfast to inform members of issues affecting business and the community from Florida’s Legislative Session

5 POSITION STATEMENTS

679 DOWNLOADS OF THE CHAMBER CANDIDATE SURVEY

120 DAYS STUDYING COMMUNITY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEEDS



JEREMY COHEN
*Business Development,
Target Print and Mail*



Driving Value to Members

Our focus this year has been effectively communicating to our members and engaging these businesses with opportunities to help them receive the highest return on their membership investment. By driving higher value into our membership benefits, we've created an enhanced experience for businesses no matter which membership option they choose. With 1,400 businesses, representing more than 60,000 employees, we have solidified a strong foundation for every member to thrive.

“The value of a Chamber membership is ever expanding. Each year, the Chamber adds new events, communication channels and unique opportunities to learn about the many benefits available to businesses in Tallahassee and Leon County. Members will find that an investment in the Chamber is a long term way to ensure the best possible outcome for a business.”

JEREMY COHEN
Chair, Communications and Engagement Committee

- Launched job board to allow members to share job openings
- Released quarterly reports to keep members up-to-date on industry specifics and Chamber data
- Conducted member exit surveys and testimonial campaign
- Hosted small business focus groups for input on business environment and Chamber benefits
- Reported monthly job numbers and other economic information to members
- Began monthly calls to members as a way to better connect them to Chamber benefits and resources
- Created a Veteran Leads Group exclusively for Veterans and spouses
- Restructured and revamped Chamber benefits
- Increased social media presence and reach to tell the great stories of business expansion and updates
- Completed the fourth Total Resource Campaign by engaging 40 volunteers who assisted nearly 300 businesses in gaining additional exposure and helped drive business success
- Led multiple committees with the help of over 200 volunteers to ensure we understood all aspects of our member businesses

61
RIBBON CUTTINGS

88%
RENEWAL RATE FOR CHAMBER MEMBERS

96
EVENTS
8,100
ATTENDEES



G. MARK O'BRYANT
President & CEO,
Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare

“We should recognize the Chamber’s essential role in shaping our economic landscape. No other organization impacts our business community more.”

G. MARK O'BRYANT
Chair 2018-2019, Greater Tallahassee
Chamber of Commerce

A Look Ahead

Dear Chamber members,

Your support of the Chamber is critically important to the economic health and expansion of our region. For nearly a century the Chamber has been an integral component of Tallahassee’s evolution from a sleepy government town to a thriving city built on intellectual industries. Much of that transformation has occurred because our business community has not been satisfied with the status quo. More so now than ever, the Chamber is committed to positioning Tallahassee as a leader in growth, laying the foundation for future opportunities for new and existing businesses.

Today those themes remain in place as we enlist your support and active engagement for another year. Looking ahead, we stop to wonder what possibilities await us recognizing that we are in a time of great change. Developments will rise, roads will be laid, and doors will be opened for new waves of graduating students, researchers, entrepreneurs and business leaders wanting to establish their place in our community. With those changes there will be decisions about how Tallahassee should grow. When that happens, you can count on the Chamber to be fully engaged.

In 2024, Tallahassee will commemorate its 200th birthday. The bicentennial of our community will be a tremendous opportunity for us to celebrate our history while also setting the path to our future. That milestone can serve as a launching point for the greatest expansion of prosperity that our region has ever known, but it won’t come without hard work.

I’m proud to say that through meetings, forums, and committees of the Chamber of Commerce that work has already begun.

In the year ahead, the Chamber will begin to focus its attention on laying the foundation for our community’s brightest future. There will be considerations for our strengths and weaknesses, and plans to address both opportunities and threats. We will invest our time and energies now so that we can reap the rewards later. In doing so, we should recognize the Chamber’s essential role in shaping our economic landscape. No other organization impacts our business community more. And no other organization has the potential to engage and orchestrate all the pieces of our community puzzle more than the Chamber. I am proud to be a part of such an organization and I am excited to work with our members, volunteers and staff to help elevate the trajectory of our hometown.

Thank you for being a member of the Chamber. Your support and your belief in Tallahassee help to shape every action the Chamber takes. I am honored to Chair an organization that has forward looking members focused on a very bright future. When we all work together we can achieve amazing results for the place we love most.

Sincerely,

G. MARK O'BRYANT

Affiliate Programs

Leadership Tallahassee

Celebrating 36 years of cultivating a diverse network of emerging and experienced leaders committed to improving the community.

- 36 years of our signature program
- 1,200 program graduates, 10 annual alumni events
- 15 youth leadership classes for local high school juniors
- 544 program graduates
- Hosted 4 board trainings attended by over 200 community members.
- Distinguished Leadership Awards honored Steve Evans as the Lifetime Leadership recipient; Andy Miller as the Leader of the Year; Audra Pittman as the Pacesetter; J.R. Harding as the Servant Leader. The sold out event had over 400 attendees, raising \$44,000 for Youth Leadership Tallahassee
- Held annual Opportunity Tallahassee, a one day condensed version of our signature LT program
- Community partner programs include The Longest Table, with the Village Square, City and County Government; Tallahassee Lifelong Leaders program with the Senior Center and coordinated nonprofit board placements for more than 15 Youth Leadership Tallahassee graduates



2017 Distinguished Leadership Award Winners



Leadership Tallahassee Class 35



Affiliate Programs

World Class Schools

In an effort to gain awareness of the program, World Class Schools has recently updated its program logo, launched a new website and will continue to engage the community through new communication channels and a stronger social media presence.

World Class Schools of Leon County bridges the Chamber business community and Leon County Schools through:

Partnerships:

- The CHP Champions program addresses early childhood obesity issues and LCS wellness policies. In its 14th year-- over 9,000 students in Leon County participated last year in this free fitness program
- Active role in promoting student enrollment and business participation for the Building & Construction program at Lively Technical Center

Student Recognition & Talent:

- Best & Brightest Awards— Last year 158 students were awarded \$54,000 in scholarships. 60 business leaders serve as judges and volunteers each year. Over the past 13 years, \$623,150 in scholarships were awarded to 1,818 students
- Leon Works—Serve as business contact to connect approximately 400 students a year with employers and academic institutions to career opportunities in the categories of Health, Trade, Business and IT

Teacher Engagement & Recruitment:

- Provided Chamber resources and business contacts for LCS teacher recruitment and retention by hosting a “New Teachers” Welcome Reception
- Hosted the 2018 Superintendent’s Teacher Leader Academy on training and inspiring teachers to the next level of leadership in their schools and administration in LCS



Access Tallahassee

Access Tallahassee connects and engages young professionals through programs designed to help them build business relationships, grow personally and professionally, and contribute to the economic development and quality of life in our community. .

- 12 years of fostering opportunities for young professionals to connect with established leaders in the business community
- Hosted over 30 events over the past year including Access Annual Meeting featuring 4Rivers founder John Rivers, Day of Action with volunteer work benefiting HOPE Community, and YP Roundtables engaging young professionals in discussions on important issues in Tallahassee.
- Since launching in 2016, the Tally Job Hop has connected over 100 college and university students to local employers actively seeking talent. This unique program has expanded to industries such as tech, insurance, marketing, finance and accounting with more on the horizon



Our Membership

With more than 1,400 members we applaud our Visionary and Catalyst members for their support.

VISIONARY MEMBERS:



CATALYST MEMBERS:

Bank of America
Brown & Brown of Florida, Inc.
Childers Construction Company
City of Tallahassee
Flightline Group, Inc.
Florida A&M University
Golden Eagle Golf & Country Club, Inc.

Kia of Tallahassee
Leon County
Leon County Schools
PEPI Coffee Company
Publix
Rogers, Gunter, Vaughn Insurance,
a HUB International Company

Synovus
Tallahassee Ford Lincoln
Tri-Eagle Sales
Wal-Mart Supercenter
Wells Fargo

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YOUR FIGHT IS OUR FIGHT

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