Chamber Connections

Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce

May 2024

Joshua Bane

Dave Guiler

Reginald Greenwood

2024 Small Business Person Of The Year Finalists

Sandi Hodge

Celebrating You

The Heart Of It All

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Fuel Alabama Expands Statewide Talent Programming

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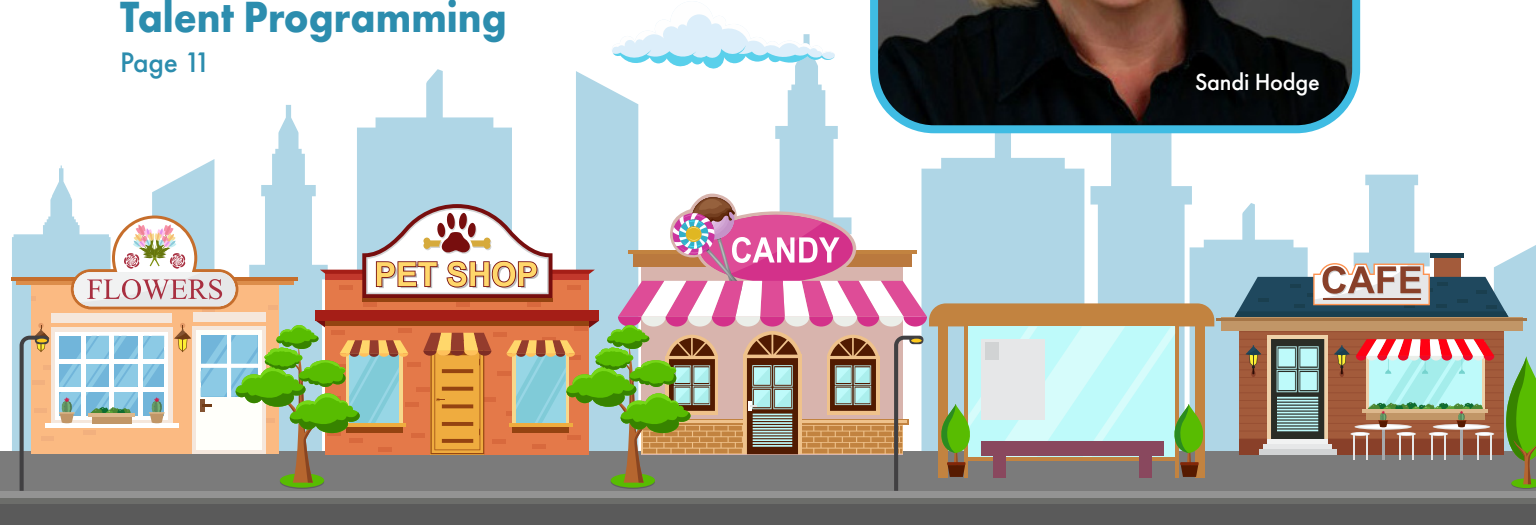

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Your Cover Photo

Your cover photo features the finalists for the Dothan Area Chamber's 2024 Small Business Person of the Year award. Pictured are Joshue Bane, Evergreen Creative Co.; Reginald Greenwood, Sister's Soul Express; Dave Guiler, Premier Entertainment Group, LLC; and Sandi Hodge, Shute Pecan Co. Inc. For more information about the events planned for Small Business Week and/or each of these outstanding business owners, see pages 4-5.

www.dothan.com

(334) 792-5138

UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE ACCREDITED

CCAA 2020 - 2024 ALABAMA ACCREDITED CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

EventsCalendar

May

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

1 **Youth Leadership Dothan-Houston County Closing Retreat – 7:45 a.m. – 4 p.m.**
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)

LEADS Group 2 Biweekly Meeting – 8 a.m.
Location: 1740 S. Oates St. (Ray's Restaurant)

Ribbon Cutting: Bishops Homestyle Cooking 20th Anniversary – 10:30 a.m.
Location: 4143 W. Main St.

6 **Ribbon Cutting: Small Business Week Kickoff Ribbon Cutting / Coffee and Business Networking – 9 a.m.**
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)
*See page 4 for more information.

7 **Ambassadors and Diplomats Committee Meeting – 9 a.m.**
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)

Small Business Person of the Year Award Luncheon – 11:30 a.m.
Location: 901 Montezuma Ave. (Calvary Baptist Church)
*See page 4 for more information.

Ribbon Cutting: Buff City Soap Grand Opening - 3 p.m.
Location: 3525 Ross Clark Circle, #201

8 **LEADS Group 1 Biweekly Meeting – 8 a.m.**
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)

Ribbon Cutting: Continental Roofing Co. Grand Opening - 2 p.m.
Location: 285 N. Foster St.

Youth Leadership Dothan-Houston County Graduation Ceremony – 6:30 p.m.
Location: 231 W. Main St. (The Forum)

9 **Wiregrass Women's Networking Coffee & Conversations – 8:30 a.m.**
Location: 1581 Ross Clark Circle (RaceWay #6927)
*Reservations required: (334) 792-5138 / **kthornton@dothan.com**

Ribbon Cutting: Encompass Health 30th Anniversary - 11 a.m.
Location: 1736 E. Main St.

Women's Night Out – 5:30-8 p.m.
Location: 102 Jamewstown Blvd. (Chamber)
*See page 4 for more information.

11 **Ribbon Cutting: Poplar Head Farmers Market Grand Opening - 8 a.m.**
Location: 1701 E. Cottonwood Road

14 **Ribbon Cutting: Diamonds 'N Bubbles Tutoring Grand Opening – 2 p.m.**
Location: 2129 Denton Road, Suite 1

New Chamber Member Business Builder 101 – 5:30 p.m.
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)
*See page 8 for more information.

15 **LEADS Group 2 Biweekly Meeting – 8 a.m.**
Location: 1740 S. Oates St. (Ray's Restaurant)

16 **Leadership Dothan Closing Retreat – 7:45 a.m. – 5 p.m.**
Location: 500 University Drive (Troy University Dothan)

17 **Ribbon Cutting: Southern Roots Nut Co. Grand Opening – 10 a.m.**
Location: 272 Sam Houston Blvd.

22 **LEADS Group 1 Biweekly Meeting – 8 a.m.**
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)

23 **Ribbon Cutting: Preemie Project of Dothan Grand Opening – 10 a.m.**
Location: 301 W. Lafayette St.

Ribbon Cutting: HH.designs & co., LLC Grand Opening – 2 p.m.
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)

27 **Memorial Day – Chamber Closed**

29 **LEADS Group 2 Biweekly Meeting – 8 a.m.**
Location: 1740 S. Oates St. (Ray's Restaurant)

30 **Wiregrass Women's Networking Lunch – 11:30 a.m.**
Location: 3108 Ross Clark Circle (Red Elephant Pizza & Grill)
*See page 14 for more information.

Ribbon Cutting: Anna Kate Delavan – 2 p.m.
Location: 102 Jamestown Blvd. (Chamber)

Entrepreneurship Council Seminar: Getting Licensed – 5:30 p.m.
Location: 545 W. Main St. (Mixson Business Center)
*See page 14 for more information.

31 **Ribbon Cutting: Magnolia Preserve Apartments Renovation – 10:30 a.m.**
Location: 101 Magnolia Ridge Place

City Hope
3201 Montgomery Highway,
Suite 18
Dothan, AL 36303
Courtney Martin
(334) 333-6634
www.cityhopewiregrass.com
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Dothan, AL 36303
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www.wearetops.org
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120 Prestwick Ave.
Dothan, AL 36305
Steve Donner
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Flowers Hospital Doctors Center
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Dothan, AL 36305
Terri DuBose
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Michael Jackson
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Ayesha Boger
(334) 575-3009
www.ayesha-boger.clientsecure.me
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Slocomb, AL 36375
Kaleb Hinson
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103 Jamestown Blvd.
Dothan, AL 36301
H. Samuel Prim III
(334) 671-9555
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Celebrating You The Heart Of It All

Small Business Week 2024
The Heart of It All

Small Business is the heart of it all. You … America's entrepreneurs make every community vibrant and a great place to live, work and play! In recognition of the foundation you have laid, the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce will honor its small business members during the organization's Small Business Week 2024 celebrations.

Officially set for May 6-10, the week will be filled with some great activities where members can gather together and imagine the possibilities. There will be no place better to discover the power of shared knowledge.

Within the DACC membership, over 85 percent of its members report 25 or fewer employees on their payrolls and each year in recognition of this, the Chamber plans a series of events to honor small business owners for their contributions to the area's economy.

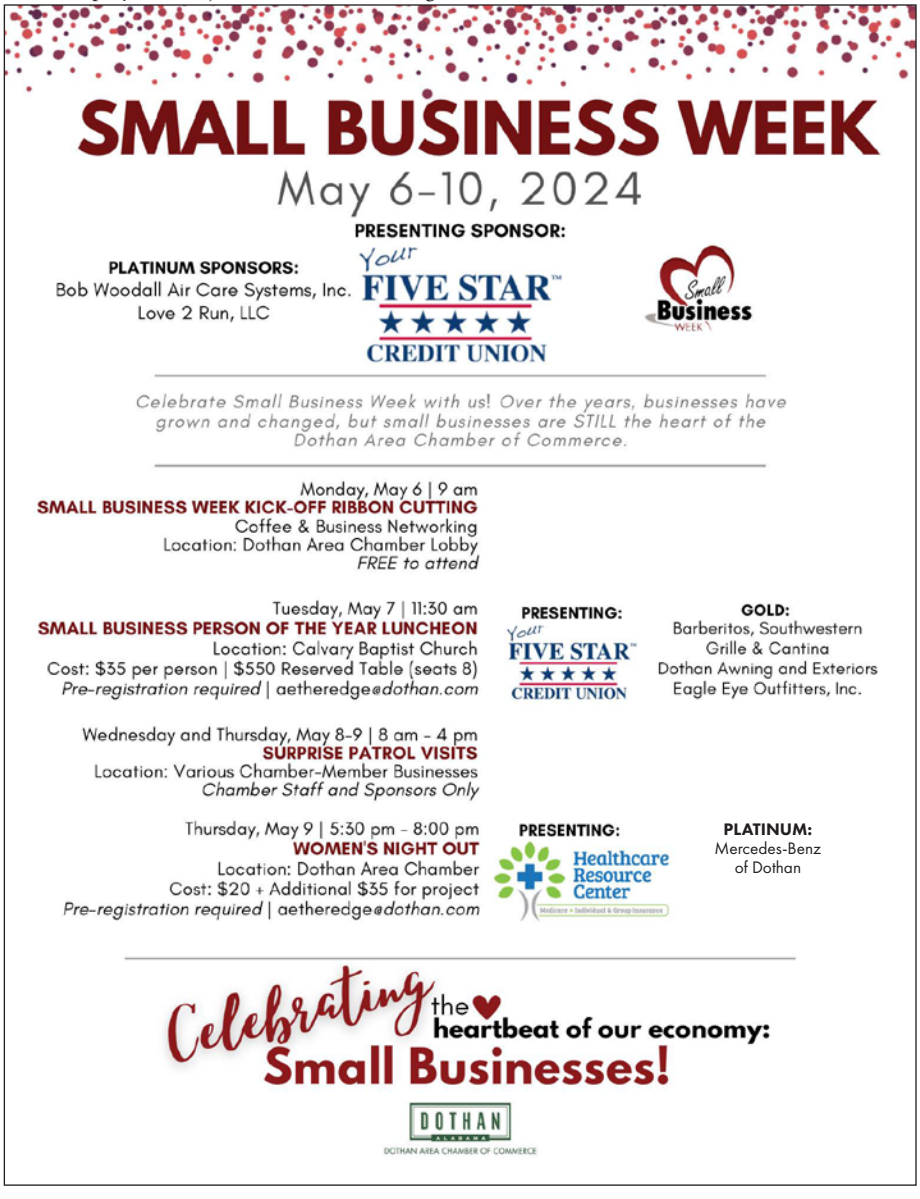
Even though Small Business Week doesn't officially begin locally until May 6, activities got underway Tuesday, April 23, when the Houston County Commission issued a Proclamation designating May 6-10 as Small Business Week. The Dothan City Commission will issue its Proclamation Tuesday, May 7.

The DACC's celebratory events will begin with a Coffee and Business Networking event followed by a Kick-Off Ribbon Cutting Monday, May 6, at 9 a.m. here at the Chamber.

The BIG event of the week will be the announcement of the DACC's 2024 Small Business Person of the Year during the organization's annual Small Business Week Award Luncheon being held Tuesday, May 7, at Calvary Baptist Church. The guest speakers this year will be each of our four award finalists: Joshue Bane, Evergreen Creative Co.; Reginald Greenwood, Sister's Soul Express; Dave Guiler, Premier Entertainment Group, LLC; and Sandi Hodge, Shute Pecan Co. Inc. The luncheon will get underway at 11:30 p.m. Tickets are $35 per person and $550 for a reserved table (seats eight). Pre-registration is required.

On Wednesday and Thursday, May 8-9, Chamber staff and sponsors will conduct Surprise Patrol Visits to a variety of area businesses within the community. Then to close out the week on Thursday, May 9, a Women's Night Out event will be held at the Chamber. It will be a great evening with refreshments, hors d'oeuvres and different art projects. Pre-registration is required.

We hope you will join us for this exciting



Small Business Person Of the Year

2024 Finalists

Joshua Bane

Evergreen Creative Company

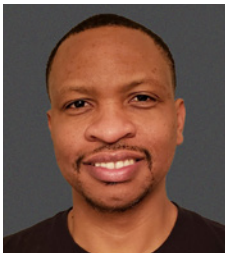
As the owner of Evergreen Creative Co., Joshue Bane is dedicated to providing clients with high-quality, impactful content. The company is not just a video production and photography studio, but a team that is passionate about telling your stories. Their commitment to clients has been recognized, as they have been voted Best in the Wiregrass Videographer since 2018.

Bane's journey with Evergreen Creative Co. began as a tech YouTube content creator. A friend saw potential in him that he didn't know existed and developed this potential into a thriving business. His passion lies not in photography or videography, but in the art of storytelling. He sees his work as a platform to bring out the best in others, and he finds immense joy in this process. He is a maker-entrepreneur driven by the power of stories.

Bane is deeply grateful for the support of his wife, family and community. It is their belief in him and his work that has brought him to where he is today.

The future of Evergreen is exciting. They can't wait to move into their new downtown Dothan studio space and continue their work where it all began. They love downtown and are grateful to be able to invest in the heart of their city.

Bane and the team want to cultivate a healthy, creative community by providing an environment for collaboration, employment and investment. #teamevergreen



Reginald Greenwood

Sister's Soul Express

"Welcome to Sister's Soul Express" is the warm welcome you receive when entering the building. Due to the business name, customers automatically assume that females prepare the food. However, Sister's Soul Express represents influential and inspiring female singers like Aretha Franklin, Whitney Houston, Dolly Parton, Mariah Carey and others. Pictures of females are displayed throughout the restaurant along with Reginald Greenwood's daughter, Reagan.

He has visited many other restaurants that usually display males, so he thought it would be a unique idea to represent females. By the way, it is only males in the kitchen!

Greenwood was in the food industry for over 12 years. Throughout the years, food became his passion. He learned all aspects of the food industry and decided that it was time for him to follow the path God had prepared for him. Sister's Soul Express, often called Soul Sisters, was his goal and he was able to attain that along with his wife Jackie, his family and the Wiregrass Community.

Dave Guiler

Premier Entertainment Group, LLC

Dave Guiler is the owner and president of Premier Entertainment Group, LLC. He founded Premier Mobile DJ Services at the age of 13 with a passion for entertaining people at all types of events. This business matured in 2007 and officially became Premier Entertainment Group, a full-service concert and event production provider.

PEG specializes in providing audio, lighting, video and staging systems for concerts and events across the US and have done so for the past 17 years. The company also has an installation and integrations department, professional mobile DJ service and a newly announced "Pro Shop" storefront.

Dave and the PEG team aim to provide the most creative entertainment solutions and services to bring a client's vision to life. These needs have allowed PEG the opportunity to expand its inventory equipment as well as hire more staff and continue to search for talented individuals to add to the team.

PEG has become known in the industry for being the one call for a full turn-key solution. This has greatly increased coverage of their services from just the Southeast to clients as far west as Texas, north as Indiana, south as Miami and east to the Carolinas. Dave has seen great success in the entertainment industry and it's incredible to see the growth of such a company outside of a major metro center.

Sandi Hodge

Shute Pecan Co., Inc.

Sandi Hodge is president of Shute Pecan Co. Inc., a fourth-generation, family-owned wholesale and retail pecan business that began in 1929 in Dothan, Alabama. The retail division has seen significant growth since her return to the business in 2005.

Shute Pecan Co. was named the Bronze winner in the small business category (1-10 employees) for the 2022 Alabama Small Business of the Year. Hodge believes the key to success is to provide exceptional quality, great value and outstanding customer service all while being willing to adapt to customer needs. She loves to welcome out-of-town visitors to her store and the opportunity to showcase the true Southern hospitality of Dothan.

Hodge is a graduate of Auburn University, working in Atlanta and Orlando in education and the nonprofit arena prior to her return to the family business. She has been married to her husband, John, for almost four decades and they have three grown children and four grandchildren.

She currently serves on the Chrysalis Home for Girls Board of Directors as well as serving on the Personnel Advisory Team at Wiregrass Church. She is active with the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce and supports many other civic and charitable organizations. A great day for Hodge is spending time with friends shopping and eating at any one of our locally-owned businesses or walking the trails with her family at Forever Wild or Westgate Park.

Waxing The City

Sykes Management Group, LLC has been operating its Waxing The City franchise locations since 2017. Our studios in Dothan, Alabama, and Owasso, Oklahoma, provide body and facial waxing services that are sure to give you smooth and glowing skin. Our teams aim to provide a relaxing, pampering experience for every client delivering only the most exceptional service.

What makes your business organization stand out?
Our people. Across our entire portfolio we now employ over 30 employees, who are amazing and really are the heart of our business. While most businesses in this industry employ part-time, we primarily hire full-time and offer a variety of benefits to every team member including medical, dental, 401K and paid time off just to name a few. In addition, we are committed to every team member having an opportunity to share in the company's profit by offering bonus incentives for our entire team.

Describe an exciting recent highlight for your business/organization:
We were featured in Inc. magazine's Regionals list of fastest growing companies in the Southeast. We were specifically highlighted for being a "Women-founded and led company in the salon industry championing self-esteem and providing client-focused self-care services for all."

We are in fact led by an all-female leadership team and all of the studio managers have been with owner Melinda Sykes since day one of her studio's opening, which is a testament to her leadership and vison.

How has your business/organization changed in the last 12 months, and what do you see for the future?
We hired a director of operations to help lead our team and expand our franchise locations. We have plans to open two to four more Waxing The City locations over the next few years and have extensive plans to expand our other franchise businesses.

We had our highest revenue year in 2023, so we are making it a focus to show our clients our appreciation for their unwavering support. In 2024, we are focused on innovation on the client level, whether that be offering a new service, finding new ways to connect with our clients or by elevating the studio experience.

We've also made it a focus to invest in our community by partnering with amazing local nonprofits. In the past, we've supported the Exchange Center for Child Abuse Prevention, Southeast Alabama Child Advocacy Center and more.

What advice would you offer to someone looking for the type of services your business/organization provides?
Whether you are looking for smoother, more glowing skin or a moment to relax, kick back and get pampered, we are the place for you! We will meet you wherever you are in your waxing journey. Never been waxed? That's great too! Our team will take the time to understand your needs, educate you on our services and provide a smooth, relaxing experience. For more information, visit **www.waxingthecity.com**.

Business Spotlight Presenting Sponsor
Krispy Kreme DOUGHNUTS

New**Members**

Clip and add these to your Membership Directory.

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3201 Montgomery Highway, Suite 18
Dothan, AL 36303
PH: (334) 333-6634
www.cityhopewiregrass.com
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Dothan, AL 36303
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Dothan, AL 36303
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https://photo360events.godaddysites.com
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PH: (850) 381-0224
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Richard King
112 Blissett Drive, Suite 1
Dothan, AL 36301
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145 Tidewater Drive
Madison, AL 35758
PH: (256) 348-9813
www.setatech.global
MANUFACTURING / PRODUCTION / WHOLESALE

Southeast Renovation and Repair, LLC
Tanner Ciecierski
1018 Tate Drive
Dothan, AL 36301
PH: (334) 790-7746
CONSTRUCTION

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Brandon Harrell
272 Sam Houston Blvd.
Dothan, AL 36303
PH: 251-283-0812
www.southernroots.org
MANUFACTURING / PRODUCTION / WHOLESALE

The Cochran Firm
Bonnie Niver
430 W. Main St.
Dothan, AL 36301
PH: (334) 793-1555
www.associationsmanagement.com
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The Royale by Southern Hospitality
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1500 Eastwood Drive
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PH: (334) 790-7756
www.southernhospitality eventplanning.com
EVENT FACILITIES & SUPPLIES

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Todd & Sons

40-49 Years
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Southern Lumber Supply

30-39 Years
Ameris Bank
Branton Land Surveyors
Calvary Baptist Church
Wiregrass Museum of Art

25-29 Years
Exchange Center for Child Abuse Prevention

20-24 Years
Construction Partners Inc.
Wiregrass Human Resource Management Association
Wiregrass Human Resource Management Association

15-19 Years
Davis Direct
River Bank & Trust
Summerford Pallet Co. Inc.

10-14 Years
Angel Hands Home Care
C Spire
Camping World of Dothan
Davis Body Shop
Dothan Steel Fabricators

5-9 Years
CBW Cabinetry
Country Financial - Adam Saucer Agency
Fast Stop
Hancock Whitney
Jesse's Barber Shop, LLC
Kingdom College
Little Caesar's Pizza
Ray's Restaurant
Smoothie King
Woodruff Property Management Co.

1-4 Years
Apex Commercial Janitorial Solutions, LLC
Dante's Pizza
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Hines Chapel AME Church
Kim & Associates
Move 4
Pittman Wealth Management
Seminole Communications Inc. dba SCI2WAY
Something Special Boutique & Gifts
The Peanut Gallerie
Wiregrass Blues Society
Wiregrass Elks Lodge #810 & Temple #566
Wiregrass Homecare, LLC

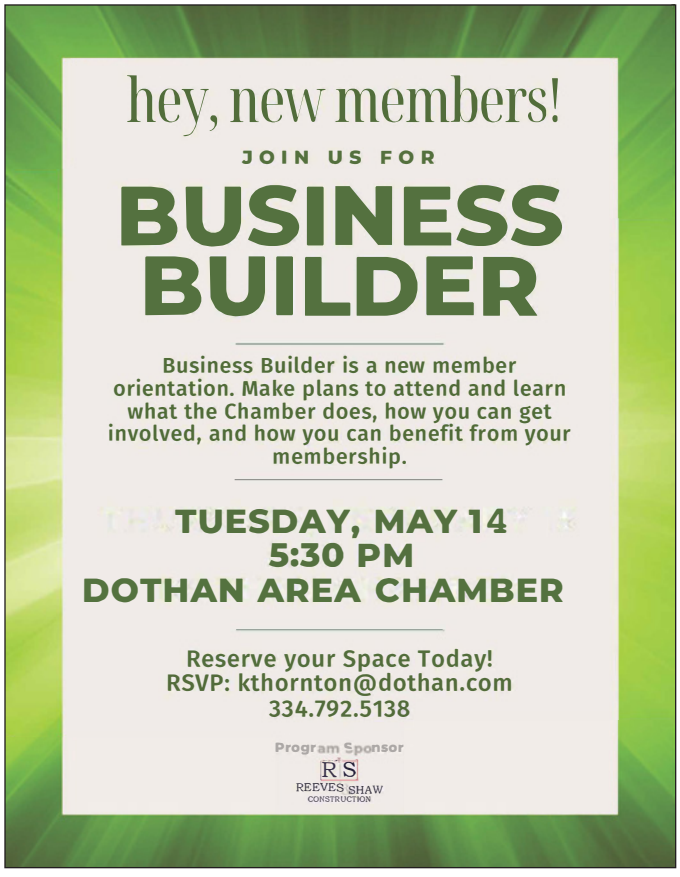
Star Of The Month

Blake Seymour
Edward Jones - Brandon Apida Financial Adviser

The Star of the Month is awarded to the DACC Ambassador or Diplomat who has achieved the most points during the month for attending Chamber events, performing renewal calls, recruiting new members and delivering new member packets.

Joan McDonald
Wiregrass Museum of Art

The Ambassador and Diplomat Spotlight of the Month is awarded to the DACC Ambassador or Diplomat who has received the most nominations from their peers for going above and beyond the general duties as an Ambassador/Diplomat during the month.



SmartBank Announces Promotion

Susan Wilkins, Senior Vice President, Corporate Banking

SmartBank continues to invest in its teams to grow the bank's capabilities in Alabama, announcing the promotion of Susan Wilkins to senior vice president, corporate banking.

Wilkins is a longtime resident of the Wiregrass region, who began her role at SmartBank as a corporate relationship manager focused on lending and treasury management in the market. Prior to SmartBank, she worked as vice president of commercial banking for BBVA, managing the banking needs of some of the Wiregrass area's largest businesses and government entities. Wilkins also has an IT background, which makes her uniquely qualified to assist the bank's clients with developing a high-level of automation and technology in their banking services to greatly improve efficiency and costs.

Wilkins has been giving back to the community for many years, serving on the board of Southeast Alabama Child Advocacy Center, as president of Dothan Tuesday Rotary Club and The Downtown Group, and is currently the Finance Chair of the Dothan Downtown Redevelopment Authority.

"SmartBank's commitment to the Wiregrass market is evidenced by our continued expansion of the team and investing in key leaders and bankers such as Susan. Since joining SmartBank, Susan has been continuously recognized as a top performing corporate banker throughout the franchise. She has done this through a laser focus on the client's needs and developing solutions which make their banking more efficient or lower costs. Further, she is consistently recognized by our clients as someone who is a trusted advisor for all their needs from commercial financing and treasury management to bringing in the bank's internal partners to assist with investments and insurance," said Jeff Williams, regional president. "Susan is very deserving of this promotion, which recognizes her superb capabilities and her passion for exceeding our client's expectations."

For more information, contact Kelley Fowler, senior vice president, marketing and public relations director, at **kelley.fowler@smartbank.com** or visit **www.smartbank.com**.

SARCOA Area Agency on Aging

SARCOA Completes Major Expansion

Southern Alabama Regional Council on Aging (SARCOA) has recently completed a large addition to its campus located on Brannon Stand Road in Dothan. The new addition will provide needed additional space and expansion capabilities into the future for this area's agency on aging.

SARCOA serves the seniors and individuals with disabilities of Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Dale, Geneva, Henry and Houston counties. SARCOA is continually seeking ways to better serve the rapidly growing senior population through planning, coordinating and developing community levels of service. SARCOA's focus today and every day is to provide services which improve the quality of life and enhance the independence of the seniors in the area it serves.

The 12,600 square foot expansion will provide 30 new offices for SARCOA case workers and its inhouse attorney and support staff. The space will also provide service areas for SARCOA's support of the statewide PANDA Project, a person/family-centered approach to provide supportive services to individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, older adults with disabilities who have a high risk of developing dementia, and their caregivers.

In addition to office space, the addition includes a large conference/media room that is twice the size of SARCOA's existing conference area. The new space will be large enough to allow SARCOA to expand its workshop and conference offerings and, when not in use, will be made available to local organizations.

"We are extremely pleased to have this added space," said Kimberly Falkner, SARCOA executive director. "In order to maintain federal and state support for our mission, a 12% annual growth rate is expected of us and we are proud to exceed that almost every year. This goal will probably be exceeded even further in the coming years as the baby boomer generation fully enters its senior phase, so this expansion is very timely."

For more information, call (334) 793-6843 or visit **www.sarcoa.org**.

DOTHAN LEISURE SERVICES

Upcoming Kids' Summer Camps

Dothan Leisure Services' The Art Circle will host several summer camps for kids during the summer. Planned activities include:

- **On the Dot Theatre Camp**
  Monday-Friday, June 17-1 and July 8-12, from 2-4 p.m. Campers will perform the play "The Great Race," a modern retelling of the Tortoise and the Hare story with fun characters and lots of action. Everyone gets a part and stage time. All campers must attend rehearsals each day and agree to be in the performance. No experience necessary, all levels of experience are welcome. The fee is $120 and includes costumes, scripts, snacks, art project, certificate and cast party.
- **Everybody's Gone Surfin'**
  Monday-Thursday, June 24-27, from 2-4 p.m. The surf's up and everybody is hitting the beach in this exciting art camp. Campers will get to create a variety of art projects with cool materials, all beach, ocean and surfing related. The fee is $100 and includes all art supplies, snacks and party.
- **Animals of Asia**
  Thursday, July 22-25, from 2-4 p.m. Join in this amazing art camp exploring the Animals of Asia. Tigers, Pandas and Elephants are just a few of the fascinating animals participants will create with a variety of materials. The fee is $100 and includes all art supplies, snacks and party.

All the camps will take place at The Trail Building, 400 Recreation Road, Dothan. To register, or for more information, contact Sharon Lewis-Saliba at (334) 701-5449 or visit **www.dothanleisureservices.org** in the Summer Program Guide.

YourChamber

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Wiregrass Hope Group Announcements

Susan Anderson, Executive Director

The Wiregrass Hope Group is pleased to announce that Susan Anderson has joined the organization as its executive director.

Anderson has been involved in some capacity as either a volunteer or board member with Wiregrass Hope for the last 15 years. She has a passion for this ministry along with mentoring young adult women at work and at church.

"God started preparing me for this position over the last few years and it's pretty amazing how the timing and details fell into place for this to happen right now," said Anderson.

The Wiregrass Hope Group is also excited to announce it will host its inaugural Walk for Life Saturday, May 4, at Dothan Preparatory's track and field. The event is free for everyone, so readers are encouraged to grab their friends and family and join the walk for life. The walk is not an athletic event, so whether you walk one lap around the track or 10 laps, everyone is welcome. The event will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 11 a.m. Bring the entire family and lace up the kids' tennis shoes for a 100-meter kid's dash that will take place at 10:15 a.m. The top three winners will receive a fun prize.

After the kid's race, stick around for the Pastor Dash. Local pastors will race to the finish line with the winner taking home a "date night" prize package. Encourage your pastor to come participate and bring your church family to cheer them on.

For more information, call (334) 793-5433 or visit **www.wiregrasshope.com/walk**.

Spring Fling Is Back!

Mark your calendar for a spectacular Spring Fling at the National Peanut Festival Fairgrounds May 3-12. Hosted by Reithoffer Shows, this event promises 10 days of thrilling rides, delightful games and irresistible fair food offering fun for the entire family.

As the season blossoms, there's no better way to celebrate than by enjoying the vibrant atmosphere and exciting attractions at one of the most anticipated events of the spring. Don't miss the chance to create unforgettable memories at the Peanut Festival's Spring Fling.

Also taking place will be the Alabama Sheriffs Associations PCA Pro Rodeo being held May 9-11.

For more information, or to purchase tickets, visit **www.nationalpenutfetival.com**.

Tri-State Expo Plans Juneteenth Celebrations

The Tri-State Expo: Juneteenth Affairs Inc. has several exciting events planned for this year's annual Juneteenth Expo and Parade Celebration, including The 1865 Legends Ball to be held Friday, May 24, at 6 p.m. at the Dothan Civic Center.

Exploring Gullah Geechee Culture, the Ball will be an elegant evening celebrating culture, freedom and unity. Tickets are $125 per person and sponsorship opportunities are also available. To purchase tickets, or for more information, visit **www.juneteenthdothanal.com/1865legendsball** or call (334) 498-8543.

On Saturday, June 1, the Fourth Annual Dothan Juneteenth Parade and Celebration will take place from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. in downtown Dothan and conclude at the Dothan Civic Center. For more information, or to sign up as a parade participant, contact parade Chair Deborah Pearson at (800) 611-4197, ext. 1, or visit **www.juneteenthdothanal.com/about-3**.

With the mission of community participation and educational engagement for African Americans and others directly affected by the Transatlantic-Global Slave Trade, Tristate Expo hosts educational seminars and other activities throughout the year.

Local Realtors Receive Honors

Weichert Realtors, JBR Legacy Group is proud to announce that multiple agents from its brokerage were honored by the national franchise organization, Weichert Real Estate Affiliates Inc., for their outstanding real estate performance in 2023. The following agents were recognized for their sales achievements in 2023, based on gross commission income or units closed:

- Shane Corbin - Executive Club;
- Debbie Dawkins - Sales Achievement;
- Shaina De Jesus - Sales Achievement;
- Emma Dean - Sales Achievement;
- Larry Hand - Sales Achievement;
- Jim McGhee - Executive Club;
- Joanna McLain - Executive Club;
- Lily Mendoza - Executive Club;
- Heather Redmon - President's Club (Gold); and
- Connie Watkins - Executive Club

"We are very proud of all our affiliates and their agents for everything they were able to accomplish this past year," said Bill Scavone, Weichert Real Estate Affiliates Inc. president. "We are extremely fortunate to have such dedicated and knowledgeable agents who went above and beyond to offer exceptional service to their clients." For more information about Weichert, Realtors, JBR Legacy Group, contact Pam Roberts at (334) 794 - 7211 or **pam@dothanforsale.com**.

YourChamber

Remember your ABC's...

Always Buy Chamber!

Fuel Alabama Expands Statewide Talent Programming For Summer 2024

Fuel Alabama, a talent attraction and retention program of the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama, in partnership with Innovate Alabama, is proud to announce its collaboration with 10 select communities to offer summer programming for college students. Partnering communities will offer professional development, service opportunities, mentorship and social events to summer interns throughout the state, focusing on their experience outside the workplace.

Begun in 2021, FuelAL has connected undergraduate and graduate students to a region and its employers through community-building activities that showcase Alabama's unique assets. Through this summer's activities, interns will broaden their networks and socialize with peers through professional workshops, team-building exercises and more. With this program, FuelAL will deepen connections and position Alabama as an attractive place for students to grow roots and start their lives as young professionals.

FuelAL programming will be hosted within the following 10 communities across Alabama: Auburn, Birmingham, Baldwin County, Calhoun County, Dothan, Huntsville, Mobile, Montgomery, Opelika and Tuscaloosa.

"Each city's lineup is a testament to Alabama's commitment to cultivating a supportive and dynamic environment for our future leaders," said Miller Girvin, EDPA chief operating officer. "This summer will serve as a full-spectrum experience—professionally enriching and personally unforgettable."

To supplement the incredible experiences in interns' host cities, EDPA will also host two Summer Summits, designed to engage and fuel relationships among community-oriented young professionals in disparate regions. Interns who have participated in events in their community will be given the opportunity to sign up for a fun-filled weekend with 40 fellow interns based throughout Alabama. Details are forthcoming, but the summits are scheduled for June 28-30, 2024, and July 19-21, 2024.

"Innovate Alabama is honored to partner with EDPA to bring these incredible experiences to young professionals across the state," said Shannon Allen, Innovate Alabama program director. "The highlighted communities have so much to offer, and we know that they will showcase the very best of Alabama."

For more information and updates to come, visit the EDPA website **www.edpa.org/talent**. To learn more about unique programming within communities and intern applications, please see FuelAL Host City links and contact information below:

- **Auburn + Opelika**
  Dr. Amy Brabham, **abrabham@auburnalabama.org**
  Griffin O'Connor, **goconnor@opelika-al.gov**
- **Birmingham**
  Trevor Sutton, **tsutton@birminghambusinessalliance.com**
- **Baldwin County**
  McCall Lugo, **mlugo@baldwineda.com**
- **Calhoun County**
  Linda Hearn, **lindah@calhounchamber.com**
  Laurel Harp, **lharp@calhouncountyedc.org**
  Savannah Dempsey, **savannahd@calhounchamber.com**
- **Dothan**
  Jessica Steltenpohl, **jessicas@dothan.com**
- **Huntsville**
  Annie Davis, **adavis@hsvchamber.org**
- **Mobile**
  Abbey Huguley, **ahuguley@mobilechamber.com**
- **Montgomery**
  Kenneth (Kenny) Ward, **kward@montgomerychamber.com**
- **Tuscaloosa**
  Kelsey Rush, **krush@visittuscaloosa.com**
  Justice Smyth, **justice.smyth@tcoeda.com**

About Fuel Alabama (FuelAL)

FuelAL helps university students understand the range of opportunities available across Alabama by connecting them to communities and community employers. Through interactive events, such as industry treks, community service projects, social mixers and more, FuelAL helps young talent explore beyond the 9-to-5. With FuelAL, young professionals can make connections across the entire state and reap the benefits of living and working in Alabama. We believe that connecting talented students with communities and employers in every corner of the state is key to the success of Alabama's economic future. We are committed to providing a platform for students to discover the many opportunities available to them and creating meaningful connections between students and employers throughout the state.

About Innovate Alabama

Innovate Alabama is Alabama's first statewide public-private partnership focused on entrepreneurship, technology and innovation with a mission to help innovators grow roots here in Alabama. Innovate Alabama was established to implement the initiatives and recommendations set forth in the Alabama Innovation Commission's report, including smart policy solutions that will create a more resilient, inclusive and robust economy to remain competitive in a 21st-century world. With founding CEO Cynthia Crutchfield leading the charge, Innovate Alabama is also made up of a board of 11 innovation leaders appointed by Gov. Ivey, collaborating across sectors to advance industries, drive technology and facilitate an environment where innovation and entrepreneurship thrive. Learn more about Innovate Alabama at **www.innovatealabama.org**.

HUDSONALPHA INSTITUTE FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY
WIREGRASS

HudsonAlpha Wiregrass Opens Summer Programs Registration

HudsonAlpha Wiregrass has opened registration for its summer programs. Two programs will be offered this summer in Dothan: Code of Life and Genes & Greens. The dates and costs are:

- Code of Life - June 3-7 (cost $150);
- Genes & Greens: The Tech of Plant Science - June 17-28 (cost $275); and
- Code of Life - July 8-12 (cost $150).

Code of Life is a week-long, half-day camp for rising sixth-ninth graders that provides a foundational introduction to DNA. Young scientists begin the program by extracting DNA from a variety of organisms and end the week with a little genetic engineering. Students learn how the information coded in DNA influences physical traits and investigate how changes in DNA may cause the symptoms of some genetic disorders.

High school students will learn first-hand the science techniques used to improve agriculture in the Genes & Greens: The Tech of Plant Science program. Agriculture is a leading driver of the Wiregrass economy and provides multiple entries for careers. This dynamic two-week summer experience will introduce students to genetic research that is shaping the future of farming by improving agriculture and protecting the environment. Participants will learn lab skills through multiple experiments and explore plant genetics and research methods. The program is open to current 10th-12th grade students.

Both programs will be led by HudsonAlpha instructors and will be held at the Dothan High School campus. Space is limited. To register for the program or apply for a scholarship, visit www.hudsonalpha.org/summer-camps/wiregrass.

"DNA is an important part of all living things and a deeper understanding of it can lead to additional studies, careers in the genomics and biotechnology field, and better health decisions for all," said Dean Mitchell, HudsonAlpha Wiregrass director. "It is an exciting time to be in the Wiregrass for exceptional learning opportunities like these."

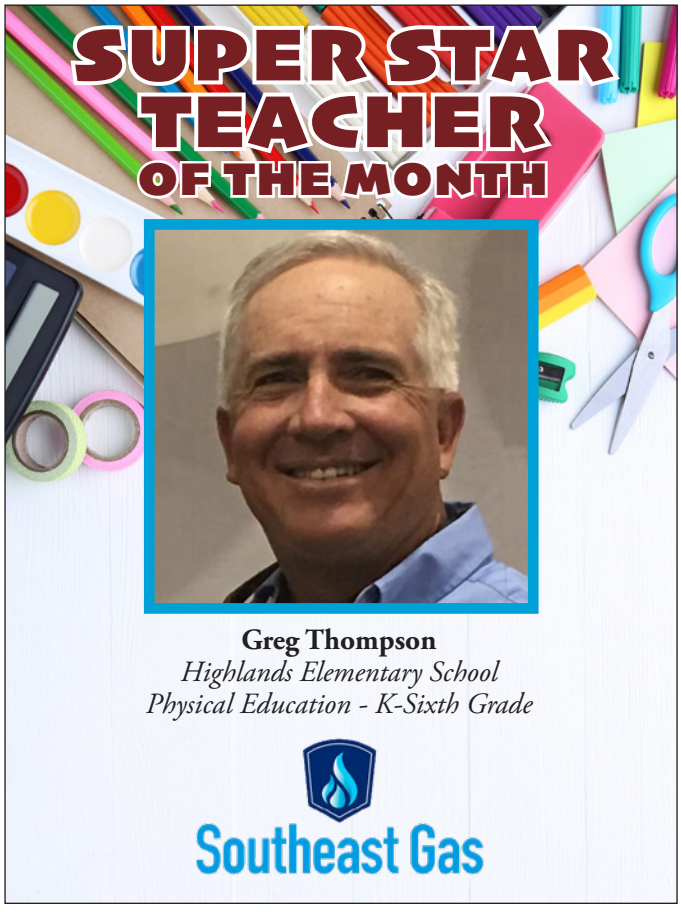
For more information, contact Mitchell at (334) 446-9111 or **dmitchell@hudsonalpha.org**.

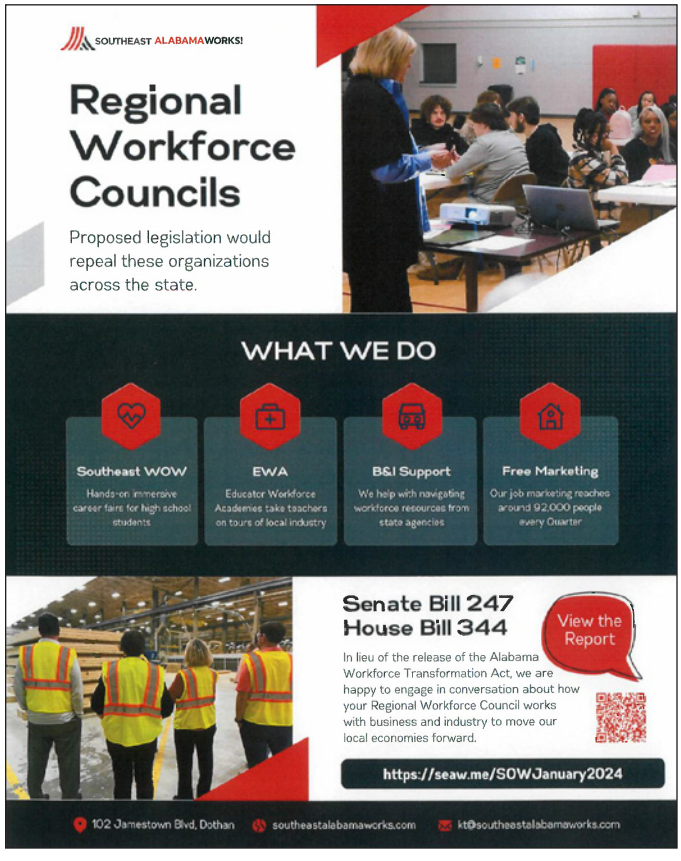
YourChamber

Are You A New Chamber Member?

As a return on your investment as a Chamber member, you are entitled to one business card ad within 90 days in the Chamber's monthly newsletter, *Chamber Connections*.

Spotlight your business and boost its exposure! For more information, contact Melia McKean at (334) 792-5138 or **melia@dothan.com**.





LEADERSHIP DOTHAN

Leadership Dothan Class 42 News

The Leadership Dothan Class held a Putt Putt for Kids Mini Golf Tournament at Adventureland Theme Park in April to benefit the Southeast Alabama Child Advocacy Center's SANE program (Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner).

The SANE program provides a 24/7/365 specialized health care response to children and adolescents after a sexual assault. A special thank you to all the sponsors, especially the Blue Ribbon Presenting Sponsors FedEx and Southeastern Pediatric Associates, PA.

Leadership Dothan is a program of the Dothan Area Chamber Foundation and if you would like more information, contact Linda Kelley, director of community development, at (334) 792-5138 or **lkelley@dothan.com**.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP
Dothan • Houston County

Youth Leadership Dothan-Houston County Class 32 News

Youth Leadership Dothan-Houston County Class 32 held its Public Safety Day in April at the Wiregrass Public Safety Center.

The day began with a Wiregrass Public Safety Center overview from Jason Wright, facility manager. The day also included presentations from Dothan Police Capt. Rachel Davis and Lt. Brandon Peters; and Dothan Fire Department's Deputy Chief Chris Etheredge.

The class also had the opportunity to participate in several hands-on demonstrations including rope simulation, combat challenge, fire attack by the Fire Department and demonstrations by the Police Department's K-9 and SRT divisions.

Youth Leadership Dothan-Houston County is a program of the Dothan Area Chamber Foundation and if you would like more information, contact Linda Kelley, director of community development, at (334) 792-5138 or **lkelley@dothan.com**.

DAYP DOTHAN AREA Young Professionals 20 under Forty

Nominations Now Being Accepted

Deadline: May 31, 2024

The Dothan Area Young Professionals are now accepting nominations for its 20 Under 40 Young Professional award. The organization has been presenting this annual award since 2020. This prestigious recognition is awarded to an individual who has had great success in their chosen field, has made a positive contribution to their employer, and has shown character and great achievements in their professional and personal career.

Do you know a young professional with a success story who is making an impact to the local community? If so, nominate them. DAYP will accept nominations for the 2024 award through Friday, May 31, at noon. The winner will be announced in August at the 20 Under 40 Young Professionals Award Reception.

Each nominee should meet the following criteria:

- Currently works in the Wiregrass area;
- Work full time for a Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce member in good standing;
- Is under the age of 40 as of June 1, 2024;
- Is committed and motivated to serve the Dothan-area community; and
- Has not been a finalist in the past two years.

To nominate a young professional, please complete the required Nomination Form found at **https://form.jotform.com/chamberreminder/20-under-40-nomination-form**, on the DACC's website **www.dothan.com** or by scanning the QR code below.

For additional information, contact Alicia Etheredge at (334) 792-5138 or **aetheredge@dothan.com**.

Either mail, fax or email completed form to:
Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce
Attn: Alicia Etheredge
P.O. Box 638, Dothan, AL 36302
Fax: (334) 794-4796
aetheredge@dothan.com
Nominations are due by
Friday, May 31, 2024, Noon
Thank you for your nomination!

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Lori Wilcoxon at (334) 792-5138 or lori@dothan.com

ADELMAN DISCOVERIES

DOTHAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

LEADERSHIP DOTHAN

Applications Now Being Accepted

Deadline: June 10, 2024

The Dothan Area Chamber Foundation is now accepting applications for Leadership Dothan Class 43. The nine-month program focuses on community resources, education, quality of life, political arenas, health and human services and public safety. Local professional conduct lectures, participate and panel discussions, simulations, and tours to educate program participants about our community.

The program year begins in September and concludes in May. The two-day Opening Retreat will be held Sept. 18 and 19, 2024, and attendance is mandatory. Participants meet one day per month, usually the third Thursday, for nine hours starting in October.

Participation in Leadership Dothan is open to any person 25 years or older living or working in Houston County. The Steering Committee reviews applications solicited from all walks of community life to select a class of interested, motivated, and concerned individuals who have a desire to offer their time and talents to improving their community. One of the foundation's goals is to select emerging leaders and systematically inform, challenge, and educate participants about our community opportunities and needs.

The application will be available Thursday, April 5, on the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce's website www.dothan.com and the submission deadline is Friday, June 10. Approximately 40 to 44 people will have the opportunity to participate in Leadership Dothan each year. Tuition is $1,000 (Chamber members) and $1,500 (non-members) for each participant. The tuition covers the Opening Retreat, meals, program materials and transportation.

For additional information contact Linda Kelley at (334) 792-5138 or **lkelley@dothan.com**.

Either mail, fax or email completed applications to:

Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce
Attn: Linda Kelley
P.O. Box 638, Dothan, AL 36302
Fax: (334) 794-4796
lkelley@dothan.com

Applications are due by Monday, June 10, 2024

Chamber
Connections

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ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY

DOTHAN ALABAMA
DOTHAN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

		2023	2024
↑	Labor Force For The Dothan MSA:	65,319 63,650 (Employed)	66,846 64,494 (Employed)
↑	Unemployment For The Dothan MSA:	2.6%	3.5%
↓	Residential Building Permits For The City Of Dothan:	12 Issued ($4.2 Million)	8 Issued ($2.7 Million)
↑	Home Sales in Dothan:	122 Sold	139 Sold
↑	Enplanements For Dothan Regional Airport:	2,262	3,005
↑	Houston County & Dothan Sales And Use Tax Collections ($):	$1,914,795 (County) $7,390,600 (City)	$2,098,341 (County) $8,980,469 (City)

Editor's Note: Sources for this information vary; call the Chamber for details. Data as of 4/12/24. Visit www.dothan.com for the most current information.

Chamber Connections is published monthly for the members of the Dothan Area Chamber of Commerce, 102 Jamestown Blvd., Dothan, AL 36301. Subscription rate is $24 annually.

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