













A Call to Action

Decatur-Morgan County offers big city conveniences with the warmth and charm of smaller communities and is known for recapturing the spirit of true Southern Hospitality. Decatur, the county-seat is a clean, safe, family-oriented and business friendly city; has an ample workforce; diverse job opportunities; air, barge, rail and ground transportation; a historic downtown; good public services; and many outstanding cultural, historical and recreational sites.

The Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce has a long-standing record of community involvement and contributions to the business economy and quality of life of the citizens throughout Morgan County.

All this said, there is no "steady state" and in strategizing this next five-year (2019-2023) Chamber plan, "The Partnership—Empowering Decatur-Morgan County," our volunteer and professional staff leaders were guided by a broad spectrum of input provided by 55 one-on-one, in-person interviews in both the private and public sector plus group sessions conducted with community leaders and young professionals. In fact, the four initiatives in this new plan are the direct result of a clearly stated challenge to the Chamber to step-up, take-on, and help bring solutions to specific problem areas that are directly tied to taking maximum advantage of current and future industry growth in North Central Alabama. The Chamber Board of Directors and professional staff accepted this challenge and top-quality business leaders in our communities have stepped up to each lead a key initiative:

- 1. "Business and Industry-Driven Talent Development and Recruitment"
 Team Leader: Michelle Howell—3M
- 2. "Business and Industry Partnership with Education"
 Team Leader: Nat Richardson—Decatur Morgan Hospital
- 3. "Residential Development"

 Team Leader: Jack Fite—Fite Building Company
- 4. "Community Image, Partnerships and Development" Team Leader: George Kitchens—Joe Wheeler EMC

In the pages that follow you will find an individual program of work for each initiative that defines the Mission, Objectives, Expected Outcomes and the Timelines to accomplish real results. I encourage you to join us with your time, talent, and dollar resources as we as unified communities take a Quantum Leap Forward.

John Seymour Chamber President /CEO Message from Campaign Chair

Tim Lovelace

Market President, Renasant Bank

Rebirth. Reemergence. The language of "New."

New industry. New schools. New destination attractions.

For Decatur and Morgan County it's here. It's now.

Old challenges. Things we have talked about for years.

What are we going to do?

As a native and businessman who has spent most of my life in Decatur-Morgan County I understand our challenges and opportunities. As your Chamber Chairman I am asking you to join me, other organizations of like mind, and community and Chamber leadership, all of whom have already stepped up to partner together as the Chamber leads the four initiatives set forth in "The Partnership."

This new five-year plan "The Partnership-Empowering Decatur-Morgan County" is not a plan created by the Chamber board and staff. It is a plan of all our communities in Morgan County because it is crafted based on community leader input about what is important to all of us.

Join us TODAY as we work toward a better TOMORROW for Decatur-Morgan County TOGETHER.

Tim Lovelace

Chairman The Partnership





Business & Industry-Driven Talent Development and Recruitment

Mission

Establish a business and industry-driven talent development program via collaboration with our community and educational partners to provide an educated and trained workforce fully prepared to fulfil the workforce needs of our business and industry; as well as establish a recruitment program to bring qualified and willing employees from across all industry segments to Decatur-Morgan County.

Reporting and Communications

- Oversight by the Talent Development and Recruitment Task Team and reporting to the Chamber Board of Directors
- Semi-annual investor and community partner update and results meeting beginning in 2019
- Quarterly Partnership e-newsletter
- Timely emails on announcements, successes and business spotlights
- Designated Director of Investor Relations to communicate with and respond to investor and community partner needs











- Establish a Business & Industry-Driven Talent Development & Recruitment Task Team to define and execute a program of work and engage in collaborative efforts with community partners and schools—beginning 1st quarter 2019 and ongoing
- Hire a Director of Talent Development and Recruitment with the required educational background and relevant expertise to lead this critical and highest priority of our new 5-year program of work
- Implement and lead a program to gather crucial information and maintain a database on the skilled workforce needs of businesses and industry in Decatur-Morgan County and to align those needs with curriculum formation by educational partners and design of recruitment initiative—begin immediately
- Lead a workforce recruitment program, in partnership with other local
 organizations, to meet the growing needs of our existing business,
 industrial, educational, professional and medical employers through the
 coordination of annual recruiting visits with local businesses to colleges
 and universities—beginning 2nd quarter 2019 and ongoing
- Align with the State of Alabama's Region 1 Regional Workforce Council to establish the Chamber as the lead organization for Decatur-Morgan County, working with community educational partners, for strategic workforce implementation—by 1st quarter 2019 and ongoing
- Maintain a leadership role in the workforce development efforts defined in Launch 2035

- Work together with other regional partners in North Alabama as identified by the Task Team
- Collaborate with educational partners to better reach students who will not pursue a college career path to inform and educate them about technical and skilled work opportunities thereby connecting those students to actual jobs in the community—begin immediately
- Lead the effort to connect displaced, underemployed individuals with available programs to return/retain those individuals in the workforce, thereby improving individual and community quality of life and meeting the employment needs of businesses—beginning 2nd quarter 2019

Outcomes

- Task Team Co-Chair and CEO to have new Director of Talent Development and Recruitment in place by end of 2nd Quarter 2018
- Populate and manage an ongoing data base of existing business and industry employment needs and skill sets. Align those needs with educational partners and recruitment efforts
- Assess the needs and assist 20 business and industry partners per year in meeting their employment needs in 2019 and ongoing
- Increase the number of high school students enrolled in targeted career technical programs by 20% in the next 5 years resulting in better meeting the workforce needs of our employers
- Increase the number by 10% each year of local high school seniors not seeking a college degree, in becoming "workforce ready" over the next

years

- Identify areas of need for business and industry and recruit a minimum of 30 new college graduates annually to Decatur-Morgan County employment through college recruiting program
- Connect a minimum of 25 underemployed/ displaced individuals annually to educational opportunities to improve their employment status
- By recruiting workers from other areas, identifying high school seniors ready to enter the workforce, and retaining unemployed and displaced workers in the area, we will help meet the ever-growing demand of additional workforce and project reducing the qualified workforce shortage by 20% over the next 5 years.



"My business and many others in Morgan County have had to face the unfortunate situation of declining projects because we do not have enough qualified workforce. Morgan County is home to many large industrial businesses that have the potential to employ a large percentage of our population. Having worked with the Chamber, I believe they are the right organization to lead this new approach in collaboration with our education and training partners."

— Willie LaFavor Service and Fabrication, Inc.



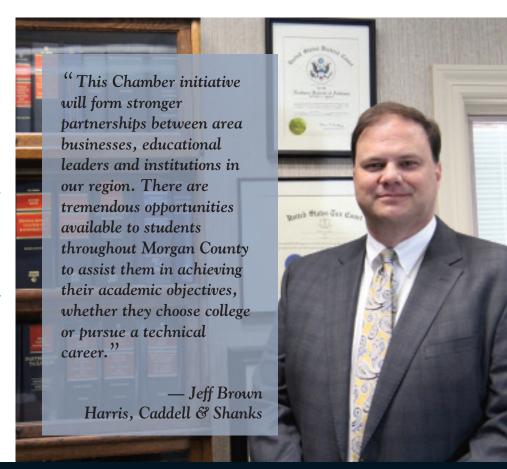




- Form a Business Advisory Council to work directly with our school superintendents and leaders to provide strategic counsel and public support of key actions and initiatives—by 3rd quarter, 2018
- Recruit and support quality candidates for city and county school boards—begin 2019
- Through strategy sessions, meetings and public forums, fully support all our educational leaders on issues and changes needed to improve our system of schools at all levels—begin 1st quarter, 2019
- Update the Chamber's 2005 *Education as a Relocation* study to clearly identify new challenges and issues
- Lead efforts to remove barriers that restrict our schools from hiring and retaining the best and brightest faculty and staff
- Support the development of diverse curriculum that provides educational and career pathways that prepare every student for success
- Enhance the Partners in Education program by recruiting volunteer tutors—begin recruitment 2nd quarter, 2019
- Champion efforts that will allow for the best possible facilities and equipment to enable the faculty to deliver the highest level of education and training
- Identify opportunities and implement programs for students that offer hands-on experiences through internships, apprenticeships and job skills training
- Promote and partner with Calhoun Community College and Athens State University to best champion our higher educational institutions
- The Chamber will be a principle partner with Strayer University with National Geographic; including Chamber representation on the advisory committee to ensure the successful launch and ongoing success of the new 50 scholarship program
- Establish mentorship opportunities for professionals from business and industry to engage with students in the classroom and out in the business community to explore career pathways begin 2nd quarter, 2019
- Collaborate with the Business and Industry-Driven Talent
 Development and Recruitment Task Team to identify
 opportunities and support important educational issues—begin
 immediately

Outcomes

- An engaged business and industry community in support of education and our educational leadership
- Strong advocacy to provide the best opportunity to make critical changes in local schools
- Complete new Education as a Relocation study 1st quarter 2019
- Ensure that Partners in Education is provided at least one Student Volunteer Mentor from business and industry for each of the 35 city and county schools to offer 5 volunteer tutors per school each year
- Increased student success in choosing career paths towards higher education or the skilled trades
- Enhanced partnerships at all levels of education with business and industry















Residential Development

Mission

Create an environment that will foster the demand for builders and developers to bring new quality residential developments to Decatur-Morgan County and allow our county to capitalize on the imminent growth coming to the region.

Reporting and Communications

- Oversight by the Residential Development Task Team and reporting to the Chamber Board of Directors
- Semi-annual investor and community partner update and results meeting beginning in 2019
- Quarterly Partnership e-newsletter
- Timely emails on announcements, successes and business spotlights
- Designated Director of Investor Relations to communicate with and respond to investor and community partner needs









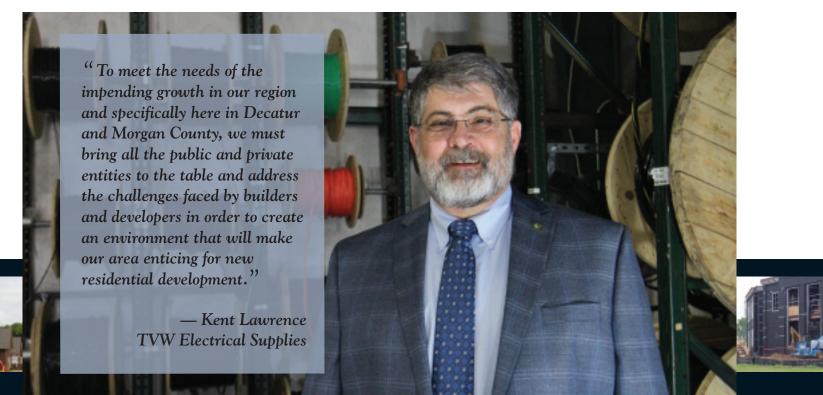


- Convene key public and private stakeholders in order to identify opportunities for residential development—begin 1st quarter, 2019
- Conduct a thorough study of the current zoning, building regulations, municipal and county fees and the appraisal process throughout Decatur-Morgan County to identify barriers to development—begin 2nd quarter, 2019
- Develop strategies to address and then reduce or eliminate barriers to development
- Create a platform in order to position and encourage the City and County to hire a full time Community Planner
- Work with the City of Decatur, Morgan County, local utilities and the school systems to develop a "Community Master Plan" with a united vision and an enticing incentive program—begin 2nd quarter, 2019
- Develop a Decatur-Morgan County map identifying current and future developable residential land options, including land costs, zoning, building regulations, fees and possible incentives—complete 3rd quarter, 2019
- Establish a database of potential builders and developers—complete 1st quarter, 2019
- Conduct a Survey of the builders and developers in order to understand what would make the Decatur-Morgan County market attractive to new residential development—complete 3rd quarter, 2019
- In collaboration with the Business and Industry-Driven Talent
 Development and Recruitment Task Team, identify builder and
 developer workforce challenges in order to address these issues and
 provide a qualified workforce to meet their needs—begin immediately

- Research and maintain a database of residential development lending options for developers—begin 1st quarter, 2019
- Conduct a new "Home Buyer" study to gain a full understanding of the challenges and perceptions of the residential market. Study to be conducted in collaboration with a local or regional university
- Partner with the local and regional building industry associations in order to best support their mission and advocacy issues
- Identify and study similar community's success and challenges in residential development efforts focusing on such key elements as, infrastructure, schools, business/retail growth, utilities, incentives, fees, appraisals, zoning and regulations

Outcomes

- Two new residential housing developments underway by 2021
- Create the environment to foster new quality residential multifamily by 2021
- In partnership with the City of Decatur and Morgan County hire a City Planner by 3rd quarter 2019
- Complete a builder/developer survey to best understand their needs to develop in Decatur-Morgan County – complete by 3rd quarter 2019
- New Home Buyer Survey to be completed by 1st quarter 2019
- More favorable zoning and building regulations
- Reduced government fees
- Incentive programs for developers meeting specific criteria
- Stronger advocacy for the building industry
- Morgan County becomes known as Residential Development "friendly"



"Now, more than any time in recent history, it is critical that we embrace the boundless assets of our county -

"Now, more than any time in recent history, it is critical that we embrace the boundless assets of our county - the river, the refuge, the people and all the tourism opportunities that lie within those resources - and begin to capitalize on this renewed momentum. We must form partnerships throughout Decatur, Morgan County and the region, create a common message that promotes our great assets and communicate a positive image of a well-rounded, growing community. It's important that we tell the story of Decatur and Morgan County to create jobs, business opportunity, tourism and stand united with our neighbors as we work to improve North Alabama."

— George Kitchens Joe Wheeler EMC

Community Image, Partnerships and Development

Mission

In response to the impending local and regional growth of business and industry, the Decatur-Morgan County Chamber will be the lead organization driving local and regional partnerships with cities, counties, organizations and private sector businesses in order to best position Decatur-Morgan County to capitalize on this new regional growth.

Reporting and Communications

- Oversight by the Regional Partnership and Community Development Task Team and reporting to the Chamber Board of Directors
- Semi-annual investor and community partner update and results meeting beginning in 2019
- Quarterly Partnership e-newsletter
- Timely emails on announcements, successes and business spotlights
- Designated Director of Investor Relations to communicate with and respond to investor and community partner needs











- Identify key stakeholders/organizations locally and existing efforts underway regionally to develop partnerships
- Define clear roles and responsibilities with stakeholders/organizations that will result in the best ultimate impact and outcomes for Decatur-Morgan County and the region
- Convene regional leadership to strategize and develop a plan for infrastructure development needed to better serve the region impacted by the new growth
- Play an integral role as a partner with the City of Decatur in the implementation of the *One Decatur* plan going forward
- Lead the effort in collaboration with the City of Decatur and Morgan County to provide a plan to move our branding

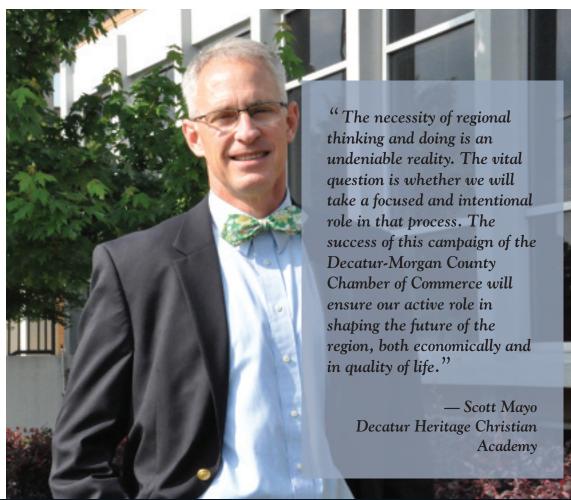
up to the next level

- Produce and implement a marketing strategy to successfully launch and execute the re-imaging campaign
- Support and leverage successful developments, like the Princess Theater and the Cook Museum, that will bring more opportunity, tourism dollars and future downtown development that will benefit all of Morgan County
- Support and take a leadership role in *Launch* 2035



Outcomes

- Regional partners identified and development of "Memorandums of Understanding" with defined roles by 2nd quarter 2019
- Regional Infrastructure Task Force in place by 3rd quarter 2019
- Re-imaging and marketing strategy developed and ready for implementation by 4th quarter 2019
- Chamber successful implementation of *One Decatur* responsibilities completed by 2020
- Measurement process to determine local and regional image improvement in place by 2020











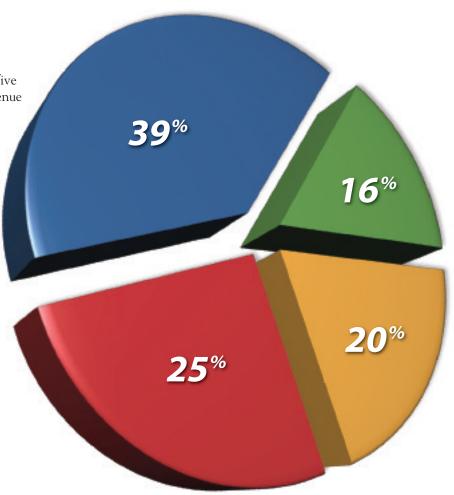
The Partnership Campaign Goal

How Your Investment Dollars Are Spent

The five-year investment goal for the campaign is \$2.5 million over five years (\$500,000 per year) in new dollars over and above existing revenue primarily received from Decatur-Morgan County Chamber member dues. The funds would be allocated in the following manner:

Annual Budget \$500,000 Five-Year Budget \$2,500,000

- Business and Industry-Driven Talent Development and Recruitment 39% — \$195,000
- Business and Industry Partnership with Education 16% \$80,000
- Residential Development 20% \$100,000
- Community Image, Partnerships and Development 25% \$125,000



Annual Investment Levels

\$25,000 + Strategic Partner \$15,000 + Diamond Investor \$10,000 + Platinum Investor \$5,000 + Gold Investor \$2,500 + Silver Investor \$1,500 + Bronze Investor



Annual Investment Levels

Strategic Partner: \$25,000 +

- Chamber membership dues included in your investment
- \$2,500 annual credit toward event/sponsorship purchases
- Highest recognition at Chamber events
- Quarterly meetings with CEO to ensure we are delivering your ROI
- Most prominent recognition of your company's logo on the Chamber's website
- VIP invitations to investor-only events/meetings
- Access to Chamber senior staff to address issues important to your business/organization

Gold Investor: \$5,000 - \$9,999

- Chamber membership dues, up to \$500, included in your investment
- \$500 annual credit toward event/sponsorship purchases
- VP of Investor Relations will actively engage with you to ensure we are delivering your ROI
- Recognition for your investment on Chamber's website
- VIP invitations to investor-only events/meetings
- Access to Chamber senior staff to address issues important to your business/organization

Diamond Investor: \$15,000 - \$24,999

- Chamber membership dues, up to \$1,500, included in your investment
- \$1,500 annual credit toward event/sponsorship purchases
- Special recognition at Chamber events
- VP of Investor Relations will actively engage with you to ensure we are delivering your ROI
- Prominent recognition of your company's logo on the Chamber's website
- VIP invitations to investor-only events/meetings
- Access to Chamber senior staff to address issues important to your business/organization

Silver Investor: \$2,500 - \$4,999

- Chamber membership dues, up to \$250, included in your investment
- \$250 annual credit toward event/sponsorship purchases
- VP of Investor Relations will actively engage with you to ensure we are delivering your ROI
- Recognition for your investment on Chamber's website
- VIP invitations to investor-only events/meetings
- Access to Chamber senior staff to address issues important to your business/organization

Platinum Investor: \$10,000 - \$14,999

- Chamber membership dues, up to \$1,000, included in your investment
- \$1,000 annual credit toward event/sponsorship purchases
- Recognition at Chamber events
- VP of Investor Relations will actively engage with you to ensure we are delivering your ROI
- Recognition for your investment on Chamber's website
- VIP invitations to investor-only events/meetings
- Access to Chamber senior staff to address issues important to your business/organization

Bronze Investor: \$1,500 - \$2,499

- Chamber membership dues, up to \$150, included in your investment
- VP of Investor Relations will actively engage with you to ensure we are delivering your ROI
- Recognition for your investment on Chamber's website
- VIP invitations to investor-only events/meetings
- Access to Chamber senior staff to address issues important to your business/organization

One Vision, Once Voice, One Morgan County 2014-2018 A Record of Success

Community Building/Leadership/Networking

- Excellence in Leadership, the Chamber's premiere leadership development program, has graduated more than 130 community leaders, business professionals and non-profit executives.
- As part of the Excellence program's community project component, participants donated over \$30,000 and hundreds of service hours to local charities.
- Edge Student Leadership has graduated 175 area 10th and 11th grade students from its programs designed to develop young people as future leaders.
- YP Leadership Lunch, a young professionals leadership program, hosted a group of 40-50 "YP's" every other month for a "lunch and learn" program that featured both networking opportunities and top-notch speakers.
- The Chamber hosted more than 60 networking opportunities open to all Chamber members.
- The Commodores welcomed over 180 businesses into the Chamber family with ribbon cuttings, and volunteered for countless community and Chamber events.

Business Development

- The Chamber has played a central role in facilitating the development of the Beltline retail corridor, to include Marco's Pizza, Harbor Freight, Panda Express, Krispy Kreme, the Decatur Mall, Residence Inn, Holiday Inn Express and a second Mapco location.
- The Chamber has promoted "Shopping Locally" and its impact on our local economy.
- More than 1,800+ business owners, community leaders and citizens in our region have attended the Chamber's 35+business development programs to enhance their skills and celebrate the contributions of local businesses to our community's quality of life.
- The Chamber continues to work with builders, developers and realtors
 to increase single family and multi-family residential growth.
 Collaborative efforts with local and state associations to help raise
 comparable property values in our county continue to help spur
 residential growth.
- The Chamber serves as the "one stop shop" in Morgan County for government and developers interested in doing business in our communities to obtain information regarding demographics and economic indicators.
- The Chamber continues to partner with other economic development agencies, including the Morgan County Economic Development Association, Decatur Downtown Redevelopment Authority, Decatur Morgan County Tourism, and Decatur-Morgan County Entrepreneurial Center to diversify our economy and increase our tax base.

Public Policy

- The Chamber continues to develop the primary Public Policy Agenda for Decatur-Morgan County. During this period the Chamber hosted 15 agenda development sessions covering local, state and federal issues.
- The Chamber hosted 15 "State of..." events across the community, partnering with the City of Decatur, Morgan County Commission, and our State legislative delegation; and hosted special events with members of our federal delegation.
- Annual Public Policy trips to Montgomery and Washington D.C. strengthened relationships between our elected officials and our regional businesses and non-profits.
- The Chamber hosted 3 "Political Training Institutes" to help potential candidates understand and navigate the election process.
- The Chamber hosted 3 political forums to give the public a way to learn more about their choices for public office.

Workforce/Education

- The Chamber's "Starting Strong" initiative created access to early childhood education opportunities in Morgan County. Partnering with businesses, non-profits, state leaders and education professionals, the Chamber led the effort to add 15 new pre-K classrooms countywide, making Morgan the first Alabama county to achieve 100% pre-K access.
- 100+ students graduated from the *Equip Leadership* program, which focuses on 8th grade students across Morgan County. Students are provided leadership training, career development, soft skills and social engagement training, and are introduced to career and training opportunities that do not require a four-year degree.
- Endless Opportunities, the Chamber's annual hands-on career opportunities day, tripled in size and expanded to include the Morgan, Limestone and Lawrence three-county region. More than 3,000 young people are engaged in hands-on activities.
- Skills for Success was initiated in 2017 by the Chamber's Quality Education Committee. A collaboration of like-minded organizations created a road map for parents and teachers to discuss and chart the progress of young people who transfer between school systems.
- More than 150 high school girls from across Morgan County and north Alabama participated free-of-charge in SWeETy Camp, the Summer Welding and Electrical Technology Camp for 9th-12th grade girls.
- The first *Teachers on Tour* will be held starting in August of 2018 for teachers from Decatur City, Hartselle City and Morgan County schools. This program will provide teachers tours of local industry with industry leaders to give them a solid understanding of all the career opportunities available to students and to allow teachers to plan curriculum to steer students in the direction to become a strong workforce for our region.

Board of Directors

Executive Committee

Chairman of the Board

Tim Lovelace Renasant Bank

Chairman of the Board-Elect

Willie LaFavor

Contractor Service & Fabrication, Inc.

Past Chairman of the Board

Patrick Johnson

State Farm - Patrick Johnson Agency

Vice Chairman, Leadership and Networking

Kent Lawrence

TVW Electrical Supplies, Inc.

Vice Chairman, Business Development

Jerry Baker Cook's Pest Control

Vice Chairman, Workforce and Education

Michelle Howell 3M

Vice Chairman, Community Building

Lori Hardy Ho-Tung Renasant Bank

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Cronan Connell Valley Rubber, LLC

Darius Crayton Bridge Builders Church International

Tommy Davis
Decatur City Schools

J. Robert Fite Fite Building Company

Ray Hardin Decatur Utilities

George Kitchens Joe Wheeler Electric Membership Corporation

Brendan McCormick
Turner

Sen. Arthur Orr Alabama State Senate (Chairman, Morgan County Economic Development Association)

Amanda Parker, DVM Animal Tracks Veterinary Hospital

Jessica Payne Community Free Clinic of Decatur-Morgan County (President, Decatur Women's Chamber)

Raul Piers Synovus

Yvette Rice LLVE, Inc.

Nathaniel Richardson, Jr. Decatur Morgan Hospital

Kelly Thomas Courtyard by Marriott (President, Decatur Jaycees)

Terry White Edward Jones

















