



THE PARTNERSHIP  
DECATUR-MORGAN COUNTY  
WORKING TOGETHER  
ACHIEVING MORE  
2024-2028



## A Message from our Campaign Chairman

The Decatur-Morgan County Chamber's mission defines its goals and the values it will embrace to achieve them. By contrast, a vision is a more abstract idea of how the organization intends to impact society. Rather than setting specific goals, it's a destination to strive for.

Our Chamber leadership had a vision all the way back in the early 1990s that we could do better. We could do more as a Chamber for our businesses, for our industry and for our citizens who faced adversities on multiple fronts. Our Chamber leadership then set forth with the mission to develop strategy, set specific goals and implement programming to begin to address our communities' challenges. We knew then, as we still do today, that although the focus may shift over the years, the challenges are major and without quick or easy fixes.

As we developed the Chamber's last five-year strategic plan 2018-2023, no one could have predicted the next two years. Dealing with the global pandemic reinforced that we must convene like-minded organizations, educational partners, business and industry to work together to address adversities and offer solutions. As we emerge from the pandemic, we must now build on the successes of the last five years and refocus our time, talents, energy and resources required by this new reality.

Our Chamber leadership is poised and eager to take these next steps to partner with all stakeholders throughout Morgan County to enhance workforce availability, training, career opportunities and quality of life. ***The Partnership 2024-2028*** is laser-focused on three key initiative program areas moving forward:

- **Business/Industry-Driven Workforce Development and Recruitment**
- **Pro-Business/Industry Advocacy and Community Betterment**
- **Business/Industry Growth and Retention**

I have been personally involved in the planning of ***The Partnership's*** new program of work along with incorporating input from more than 80 of Morgan County's public and private sector leaders. I am an early adopter of this new mission, as are the community leaders whose names you will find displayed throughout this Case Statement. We are confident you will join us in this vitally important effort.

A handwritten signature of Kent Lawrence in black ink, written in a cursive style.

**Kent Lawrence**  
TVW Electrical Supplies

## Campaign Leadership

### Chairman

**Kent Lawrence**, *TVW Electrical Supplies*

### Cabinet

**Jeff Brown**, *Harris, Caddell & Shanks, PC*

**Leifje Dighton**, *GE Appliances, a Haier company*

**Mary Grace Evans**, *Redstone Federal Credit Union*

**Jack Fite**, *Fite Building Company*

**John Holley**, *Calhoun Community College*

**Michelle Howell**, *3M*

**Keith Jackson**, *Jackson Plumbing Heating Cooling & Electrical*

**John Joseph**, *Decatur-Morgan County Entrepreneurial Center*

**Willie LaFavor**, *Contractor Service & Fabrication, Inc.*

**Tim Lovelace**, *Renasant Bank*

**Sam Mozeb**, *Access Real Estate*

**Victor Pacheco**, *Bunge Corporation*

**Kelli Powers**, *Decatur Morgan Hospital*

**Jamie Reeves**, *MeritHouse Realty and Capital Management*

**Skip Thompson**, *Thirdmark Capital*





## A Message from our Chamber President and CEO

Since assuming the role of President & CEO of the Decatur-Morgan County Chamber of Commerce in 2021, I have been blessed and honored to serve you, our community leaders, who drive the vitality of business and industry.

This Chamber has a proud history of meeting the needs of our business and industry partners. We've never shied away from facing big challenges head on in an effort to better serve our investors and membership. In 1992, our Board alongside my mentor and predecessor, John Seymour, took what could be considered the boldest step in our Chamber's history.

Having recognized the significant challenges facing the businesses, industry and our community's quality of life as a whole, the Chamber confidently embarked on its first five-year strategic plan to address those needs and provide solutions. There has been a solid track record of achievement and progress over the years, but the challenges continue to shift as we evolve as a community.

Once again, we will build on our past successes and take on the current tasks as we launch the next five-year initiative, The Partnership 2024-2028. With the guidance of a strong Board of Directors, I am proud to lead our dedicated team as we partner with other like-minded organizations to achieve our common goals.

I appreciate those of you who have supported our efforts as an investor over the years. If you have not, I hope you will review our plan in the pages to follow, observe how the Chamber's efforts are producing measurable, positive outcomes and consider investing with us as we continue to move Decatur-Morgan County forward as partners.

Best regards,

**Crystal Brown**  
DMCCC President and CEO

## Chamber Staff

**Crystal Brown**  
President & CEO

**Leissa Hill**  
Vice President of Finance & Operations,  
Chief Financial Officer

**Judy Brown**  
Director of Member & Investor Relations

**Amber Fortenberry**  
Director of Talent Development & Recruitment

**Rachel Keith**  
Director of Communications

**Denice Marco**  
Director of Program Development

**Megan Holloway**  
Administrative & Events Coordinator

# Track Record of Success (2019-2023)

## Business & Industry-Driven Talent Development & Recruitment

**7,000**



assessments taken by students using *YouScience* to connect with local businesses and industries

**204**



students graduated from the *Equip Leadership* program that introduces 8th graders to careers that do not require a four-year degree

**6,800**



students attended *Endless Opportunities*, the Chamber's annual hands-on career opportunities day



**10**

job fairs hosted for Chamber members and the community

## Business & Industry-Driven Partnership in Education

**65**



companies connected with 6800 students during our *Career & Workforce Expos*

**134**



high school students participated in one of the Chamber's educational summer camps

**38**



area companies linked with area schools through our *Partners-In-Education*



Click [here](#) to view *The Partnership: Empowering Decatur-Morgan County Today...Tomorrow...Together* online.







## Business & Residential Development

2,000



residential units approved by the City of Decatur in two dozen subdivisions across the city

150



new residential units are either under construction or on the way to downtown Decatur

\$64M



in new developments are under construction in downtown Decatur

## Community Image, Partnership & Development

519



participants graduated from the Chamber's leadership programs

\$30K



donated to local charities through the Excellence in Leadership program

141



businesses and organizations welcomed to the Chamber family with ribbon cuttings



# Lead Business/Industry-Driven Workforce Development and Recruitment

"The Chamber has taken a leading role in recruiting, training and assisting job seekers throughout Morgan County. Those efforts, coupled with helping existing business and industry of all sizes navigate challenges and pursue growth opportunities, have greatly contributed to economic vitality of our entire area."

—Jim Brown,  
NUCOR Decatur



## Mission

Lead an enhanced business and industry-driven workforce development program via collaboration with our community and educational partners to provide an educated and trained workforce adequately prepared to fulfill 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 sectors to Decatur-Morgan County.

## Deliverables

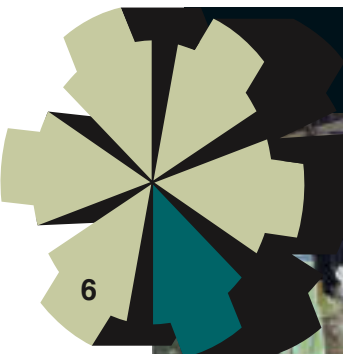
- Hire a Director of Workforce Training and Recruitment with the required educational background and relevant expertise to lead and elevate our workforce development efforts – *Hire by 2nd quarter 2024*
- Implement and lead a program to gather crucial information and maintain a database on the skilled workforce needs of business and industry in Decatur-Morgan County and align those needs with curriculum designed by our educational partners – *Launch end of 2nd quarter 2024*

"Developing and sustaining a highly qualified workforce is a constant challenge for all employers. The leading role the Chamber plays along with its education and training partners is critical to our community's workforce development strategies and overall economic well-being. ULA is proud to work with the Chamber on this important effort."

— Steve Crow,  
United Launch Alliance



*Link to more information about Workforce Development and Recruitment [here](#).*





- 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 – *Launch 3rd quarter 2024*
- Expand career technical education offerings such as modern manufacturing, construction trades, and health sciences in every Morgan County school system by connecting business and industry with education partners – *Underway with expansion in 2024*
- Elevate the current Director of Talent Development & Recruitment's job responsibilities and title to Director of Education & Workforce Programs to better define specific roles within the realigned and enhanced workforce development efforts – *Complete 4th quarter 2023*
- Lead the *Workforce Coalition*, in partnership with the Morgan County Economic Development Association, in an effort to identify and address pressing workforce challenges faced by business and industry in Morgan County – *Underway with increased business/industry/educator engagement of 25 plus monthly participants through 2024 and beyond*
- Align with the State of Alabama's Region 1 AlabamaWorks! Regional Workforce Council to establish the Chamber as the lead organization for Decatur-Morgan County, working with our

"The Chamber is all about creating partnerships to make our region a destination for tourists and visitors from all around the nation—community leaders, public officials and hundreds of volunteers all working together on programs and events—fueling a positive image and adding to the economic well-being of our communities."

— Danielle Gibson  
Decatur Morgan County Tourism



community and educational partners, for strategic workforce programming implementation – *Begin 2nd quarter 2024*

- Maintain a supportive role in the workforce development efforts defined in Launch 2035 – *Underway and ongoing*
- Forge stronger partnerships with the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship, Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT), Alabama Technology Network (ATN) and other similar organizations in North Alabama to better leverage workforce training programs and outcomes – *Underway with enhanced engagement through 2024 and ongoing*
- In support of the Alabama Office of Apprenticeship, increase the number of students and adults participating in apprenticeship programs – *Underway and ongoing*





"The Chamber plays a vital role in enhancing and igniting resources that help make Decatur-Morgan County a vibrant area. The Chamber convenes partners from small business to large corporations to collaborate on economic and workforce development initiatives which are making a positive impact on our future."

—Dr. Karockas "Doc Rock" Watkins  
Ability Plus, Inc.



- Expand Partners-In-Education program through increased business/industry engagement to provide enhanced skill-oriented educational opportunities for students, increase the awareness of area business and industry leaders regarding the program benefits, heighten awareness of present and future job skill-set needs, improve the overall education of future employees and increase broader community understanding of the quality and needs of public school systems – *Underway with 37 current partners and increased engagement through 2024 and ongoing*



- Lead the effort to connect displaced, underemployed individuals with available programs to return/retain them into the workforce, thereby improving the areas quality of life while at the same time meeting the employment needs of businesses – *Launch 2nd quarter of 2024*
- Through increased business/industry engagement, expand the YouScience program that provides aptitude assessments of local 9th – 12th grade students to fill the future talent pipeline – *Underway with continued expansion on the current 4,478 students engaged*
- Continue to promote and elevate Educational Camps – [SWeETY Camp](#), [CyberPatriot Camp](#) and [Advanced Automotive Academy](#) – *Underway and expand on the current 91 students participating*





- o Explore new camp opportunities in the areas of manufacturing and healthcare – *Launch in 2024*
- Further enhance Workforce and Education Events Hosted by the Chamber - *Underway*
  - o New Teacher Breakfast
  - o Partners-In-Education Breakfast and Work Session – *Expand on the current 37 partners*
  - o Career & Workforce Expo – *Grow the current 65 companies participating*
  - o Endless Opportunities – *Expand on the current 1,600 students enrolled*
  - o Industry Day for Teachers – *Increase teacher participation to 25+ by 2024 and beyond*
  - o Workforce NOW Summit – *Grow business, industry and education participation to over 75 by 2024*
- Lead the community in developing comprehensive strategies to address workforce barriers such as quality childcare, affordable workforce housing and public transportation - *Underway*
- Increase the number of community outreach and hiring events across the region to help increase the labor force participation rate – *Underway with increase to 6 events by 2024*
- Support business and industry hiring efforts through expanded postings on the DMCC Chamber website – *Underway with expansion of the current 140 annual job postings*
- Sponsor and support the CEO Program – Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities – *Underway and ongoing*
- Support the Best and Brightest Initiative, facilitated by the Decatur-Morgan County Entrepreneurial Center, to further implement strategies to attract, recruit and retain young professionals to the Morgan County workforce – *Underway and ongoing*

“The Chamber’s leadership and proactive efforts continuously help position our community to be competitive and has greatly enhanced our quality of life. They consistently bring innovative ideas and strategies to the table that quickly turn into action.”

— Angela Casciano  
Regions Bank



“Chambers of Commerce are the voice of business in communities throughout Alabama and the most effective Chambers make no apologies for fighting for the private sector, economic and workforce development. Our Chamber provides a unified voice for all industries and businesses in Morgan County.”

— Ray Long, Chairman  
Morgan County Commission



“We must stay focused on developing the skilled workforce needed in our area. Calhoun Community College is committed to partnering with our Chamber as well as academic and business leaders in the development of innovative educational and training programs incorporating the latest in technological advancement.”

— Dr. Jimmy Hodges  
Calhoun Community College



# Drive Pro-Business/Industry Advocacy and Community Betterment

"The Chamber is a vital resource for our community when it comes to public policy advocacy. From education, to transportation, to housing, and everything in between, the City's partnership with the Chamber continues to be vital in making Decatur a great place to live, work and play."

—Tab Bowling  
Mayor, City of Decatur



"Strong non-profits are critical to a community's economic development efforts and overall quality of life for its residents. The Chamber has embraced this, becoming a trusted partner and vocal champion for initiatives of the United Way and other non-profit organizations in our area."

—Kathleen Ross  
United Way of Morgan County



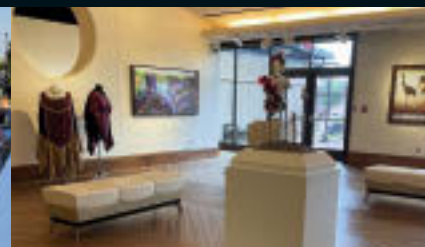
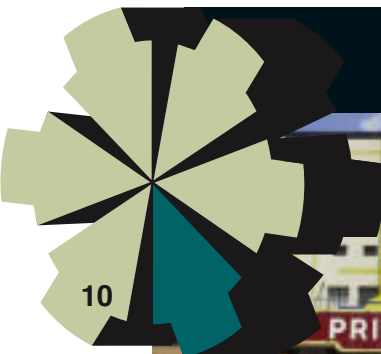
## Mission

Lead with a unified voice, the proactive and strategic efforts that focus on and influence pro-business/industry policy decisions at the federal, state and local levels in support of community, economic and workforce development opportunities.

## Deliverables

- Development of an annual public policy agenda, through a series of meetings open to all investors, in an effort to ensure a consistent message on issues at the local, state, and federal levels – *Underway and ongoing*
- Partner with organizations of like-mind on key policy issues to increase influence on legislation, – *Underway and ongoing* including;
  - Business Council of Alabama (BCA)
  - Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama (CCAA)
  - Economic Development Partnership of Alabama (EDPA)
  - Manufacture Alabama
  - Alabama Retail Association
- Conduct forums, such as "State of" events and Legislative Updates, that allow area business leaders to engage with policy makers and proactively advocate for issues – *Underway and ongoing*

Link to more information about Pro-Business/Industry Advocacy and Community Betterment [here](#).





- Aggressively support pro-business legislation and fight against legislation that would have a chilling effect on business and industry at all levels of government – *Underway and ongoing*
- Coordinate annual in-person delegation visits to advocate for public policy priorities with elected and appointed officials in Montgomery and, as needed, Washington D.C. – *Underway and ongoing*
- Build on the success of the Chamber's Residential Development initiative 2018-2023 and continue the momentum of single-family housing, as well as an enhanced focus on multi-family and affordable workforce housing – *Underway and ongoing*
- Enhance advocacy for transportation and infrastructure needs that benefit travel, logistics and commerce throughout Morgan County – *Underway and ongoing*
- Support, as a key community partner, the execution of the [Positively Decatur Initiative](#) and [Launch 2035](#) regional efforts – *Underway and ongoing*
- Support, advocate and promote the [Decatur Morgan Hospital system](#), the [Mental Health Center of North Central Alabama](#) and other local healthcare providers to provide first class healthcare for all citizens throughout Morgan County – *Underway and ongoing*

"The Chamber is important to the non-profit sector, particularly human services, because creating jobs can reduce the number of people who rely on services and a flourishing economy puts more people in a position to become donors, benefiting all non-profit organizations."

— Pamela Bolding  
*Neighborhood Christian Center*



"Knowing the Chamber will provide an accelerated agenda for progressive, positive change in the Decatur area, that supports and enhances the lives of those who live, work and visit our community, will aid in addressing the desired lifestyle of those who call communities in Morgan County home."

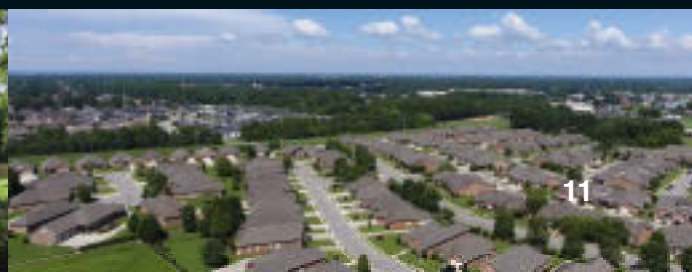
— Ray Hardin, Decatur Utilities  
*Chamber Board Past Chair*



- Coordinate and lead community visits to benchmark ourselves with other successful regions – *Begin in 2024 and ongoing annually*
- Support, advocate and promote the [Decatur-Morgan County Entrepreneurial Center's](#) Young Professionals program in an effort to

attract and retain young professionals – *Underway and ongoing*

- Advocate for cultural arts initiatives, expanded recreational/tourism opportunities and signature community events that provide unique quality of life experiences for both residents and visitors – *Underway and ongoing*



# Business/Industry Growth and Retention

"The Chamber is a true partner in our economic development program outreach in Morgan County by providing assistance in our industrial recruitment efforts whenever called upon. Our Chamber is instrumental in developing our workforce talent pipeline, as well as, upholding a unified focus on quality of place so that we are the community of choice when site selection decisions are being made."

—Jeremy Nails  
Morgan County Economic Development  
Association



## Mission

Identify opportunities, develop strategies and implement programming to best encourage and support the strategic growth of existing business and industry, as well as new retail, commercial and technology-based businesses throughout Morgan County.

## Deliverables

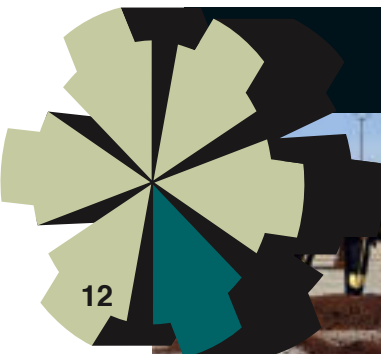
- Drive existing business and industry growth through targeted outreach, strategic programming/training, investor networking opportunities, and special events – *Underway and ongoing*
- With partner organizations, develop plans to capitalize on the continued technology sector growth of the Huntsville area via the strategic recruitment and development of knowledge-based and technology sector businesses – *Beginning in 1st quarter 2024*
- Actively support the recruitment of targeted, new-to-market retail and commercial businesses – *Underway and ongoing*

"The growth of existing business is crucial to our community. More jobs are created by those of us already vested here. Knowing the Chamber will focus on the needs of existing business and industry is important to the DoubleTree by Hilton."

— Iris White  
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel  
Decatur Riverfront



Link to more information about Business/Industry Growth and Retention [here](#).





- Support the marketing, promotion and programmatic efforts of the [Decatur-Morgan County Entrepreneurial Center](#) in an effort to launch and grow businesses here in Morgan County – *Underway and ongoing*
- Educate the community regarding the positive economic impact and overall importance of supporting local businesses – Shop Local Campaign – *Underway and ongoing with increase in the current 468 promotion recipients*
- Be a proactive partner with the [City of Decatur](#), [Morgan County](#) and the [Morgan County Economic Development Association](#) in assisting with recruitment efforts as needed – *Underway and ongoing*
- Be a proactive partner in supporting [Decatur Downtown Redevelopment Authority](#) in its implementation of the Envision Decatur plan – *Underway and ongoing*
- Proactively monitor and support legislation that will help reduce the burden on local business and industry due to excessive workers compensation costs and other healthcare related expenses – *Underway and ongoing*

“The Chamber not only gives our cooperative a platform to invest into the continued economic growth throughout Morgan County but also helps us to create cross functional teams with other industry players to meet the demands of that growth. That teamwork allows us to remove obstacles to success and improve our responsiveness.”

— Gene Kanikovsky  
Joe Wheeler EMC



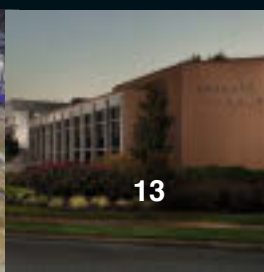
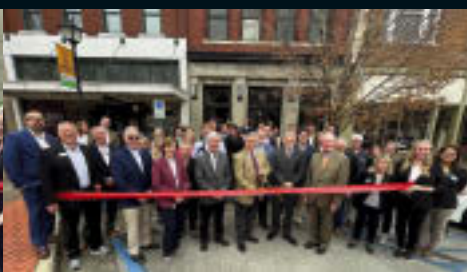
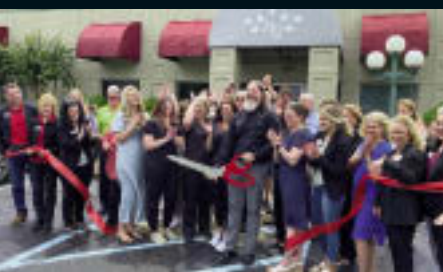
“The Chamber has been an excellent partner with the Decatur Downtown Redevelopment Authority. The Chamber helps provide a business-friendly, supportive environment and advocates for area businesses to create jobs and ultimately support families, while growing and developing our community.”

— Kelly Thomas, Decatur  
Downtown Redevelopment  
Authority



*“Engaged community partnerships are valuable, supportive relationships unmatched by any other. We look forward to working together and achieving more!”*

*-Your Decatur-Morgan County Chamber Team*



# Campaign Goal

## How Your Dollars Are Spent

The five-year investment goal for the campaign is \$3 million over five years (\$600,000 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:

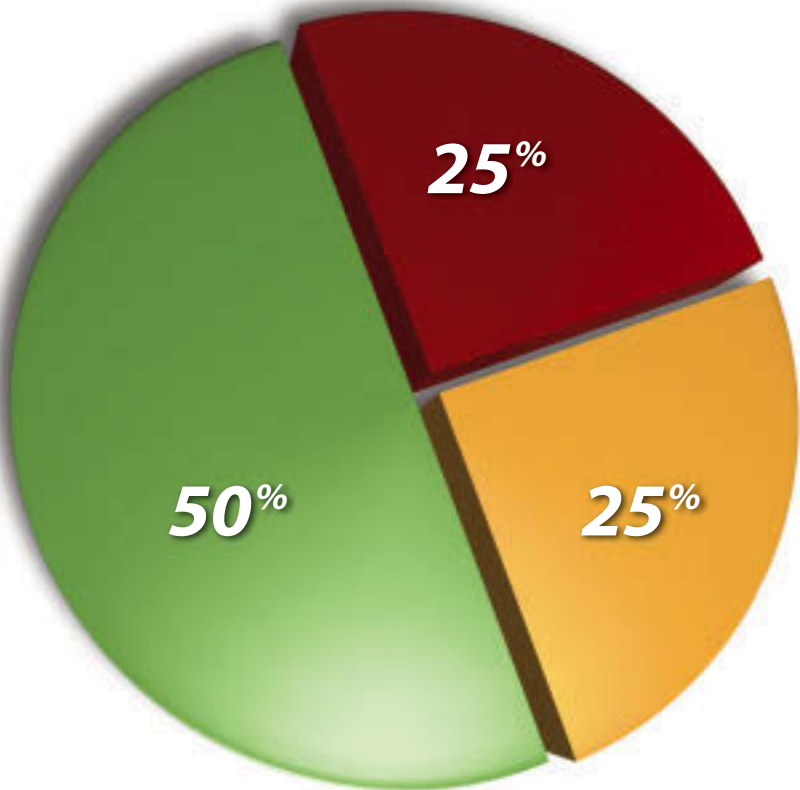
Annual Budget \$600,000\*  
Five-Year Budget \$3,000,000

-  Lead Business/Industry-Driven Workforce Development and Recruitment  
50% — \$300,000
-  Business/Industry Growth and Retention  
25% — \$150,000
-  Drive Pro-Business/Industry Advocacy and Community Betterment  
25% — \$150,000

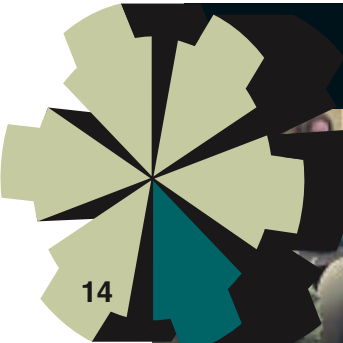
\*Projected 2024 budget

## 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



*Link to more information on Investor Benefits [here](#).*





# Investor Benefits

## Strategic Partner: \$25,000 +

- Chamber membership dues included in your investment
- 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
- Investor logo recognition continuously scrolling in Chamber lobby
- VIP invitations to investor-only events/meetings
- Access to Chamber senior staff to address issues important to your business/organization
- Complimentary use of the Chamber's boardroom and conference room

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

- Chamber membership dues, up to \$1,000, included in your investment
- Special recognition at Chamber events
- Director 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
- Investor logo recognition continuously scrolling in Chamber lobby
- VIP invitations to investor-only events/meetings
- Access to Chamber senior staff to address issues important to your business/organization
- Complimentary use of the Chamber's boardroom and conference room six (6) times annually

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

- Chamber membership dues, up to \$500, included in your investment
- Recognition at Chamber events
- Director of Investor Relations will actively engage with you to ensure we are delivering your ROI
- Recognition for your investment on Chamber's website
- Investor logo recognition continuously scrolling in Chamber lobby
- VIP invitations to investor-only events/meetings
- Access to Chamber senior staff to address issues important to your business/organization
- Complimentary use of the Chamber's boardroom and conference room four (4) times annually

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

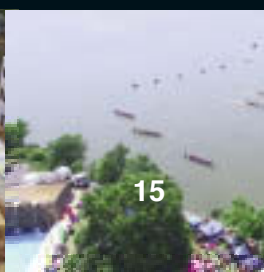
- Director of Investor Relations will actively engage with you to ensure we are delivering your ROI
- Recognition for your investment on Chamber's website
- VIP invitations to investor-only events/meetings
- Access to Chamber senior staff to address issues important to your business/organization
- Priority access/reservations for rental of the Chamber's boardroom and conference room

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

- Director 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
- Priority access/reservations for rental of the Chamber's boardroom and conference room

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

- Director 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
- Priority access/reservations for rental of the Chamber's boardroom and conference room







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Chamber of Commerce  
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