







CHAMPIONING

MNOVATION,

INSPIRING

PROGRESS

At the SouthWest Mobile County Chamber, we believe leadership is not simply about holding a position—it's about inspiring others, serving with purpose, and shaping a brighter future for our community. This belief drives our commitment to programs that build leaders at every level, from students just starting their journey to business professionals deepening their engagement.

One of the programs that embodies this mission is our T.A.L.L. (Tillman's Corner Area Learning Leadership) Program, designed specifically for high school seniors. These young leaders are the future of our community, and we believe it's never too early to invest in their growth. Through T.A.L.L., students gain exposure to local businesses, government, and community service, while developing essential skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving.

This year, we are proud to have twelve students representing nine local schools—each bringing unique talents, interests, and dreams for the future. As they participate in workshops, networking opportunities, and real-world learning experiences, they are not only preparing for future careers—they are learning what it means to be engaged, responsible citizens who make a difference.

But programs like T.A.L.L. can only thrive with strong support from our business community. We invite chamber partners to sponsor a student or become involved as a mentor, speaker, or host for program activities. Your involvement ensures that these young leaders have access to the resources and guidance they need to succeed—not just in school, but in life.

In addition to investing in tomorrow's leaders, we are also building stronger connections among today's business professionals through our Diplomat Program. Diplomats are the welcoming faces of the chamber—greeting new partners, assisting with events, and fostering connections that strengthen our local economy. But this program is much more than a networking group—it's an opportunity for business representatives to learn more about our community, share best practices for success, and inspire others to become more engaged.

We encourage every chamber partner to consider selecting a representative from their business to participate in the Diplomat Program. Not only will this individual gain valuable exposure and connections, but they will also play a vital role in helping our chamber grow and thrive.

Together, programs like T.A.L.L. and the Diplomat Program reflect what we value most—people. We believe that when we invest in people, we invest in the future of SouthWest Mobile County. We invest in stronger businesses, a stronger workforce, and a stronger community.

As we look ahead, I encourage you to join us in this work. Whether it's sponsoring a student, nominating a representative, or simply attending an event to connect with others, your involvement matters. Leadership begins with action, and together, we are creating opportunities that will make a lasting impact for years to come.

Thank you for your continued support of our Chamber, our programs, and our shared vision for a thriving community.

Josh Woods

SWMCC Board President

THE SOUTHWEST MOBILE COUNTY CHAMBER'S

EVENT CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 2025

1

Gun Giveaway Tickets

Our Annual Guns & Gear Giveaway Tickets are on sale now! Purchase yours online or from a Board Member today!

Proceeds from this fundraiser support our TALL Scholarship Program.

3

Monthly Business Luncheon

Time: 11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Location: John C. Williams Auditorium

Speaker: Mary Beth Grant, Innovate Alabama

Caterer: Grand Catering of Mobile

15

CAP Meeting

Time: 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm

Location: John C. Williams Auditorium

SMIA hosts a Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Meeting each month. The objective is to provide citizens the opportunity for an open dialogue with industry, to help citizens better understand industry, and to help local industry understand community concerns.

16

Coffee with the Chamber

Our monthly Coffee with the Chamber is a great opportunity to network with other business leaders and representatives. This event is open for both current SWMCC partners as well as prospective partners.

19

Sporting Clay Shoot

Join us on Friday, September 19th for our 3rd Annual Sporting Clay Shoot at Taylor Creek Sporting Clays. Proceeds from this event benefit



26

October Luncheon Preregistration Deadline

The deadline to purchase an online ticket for the September Luncheon is September 26th at 5:00 pm.

No tickets will be sold at the door.



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Chris Black

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SEPTEMBER 3RD, 2025

SPEAKER:

Mary Beth Grant is the Capital Access Program Director at Innovate Alabama, the state's leading public-private partnership focused on fostering entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic growth. In her role, Mary Beth leads Innovate Alabama's Capital Access Initiative, including the launch of an evergreen venture fund and a statewide venture studio. Both initiatives are designed to increase

access to early-stage capital, catalyze venture-backable startups, and strengthen Alabama's innovation ecosystem. In addition to program execution, she oversees a 30-member advisory council of public sector stakeholders, corporate partners, and local investors to expand collaborative capital initiatives and drive sustainable economic impact across Alabama.

Prior to joining Innovate Alabama, Mary Beth worked within Birmingham's biotechnology ecosystem, supporting the business development of new biotech ventures and securing state and federal funding for translational research and commercialization efforts.

A graduate of Wofford College with a degree in government and economics, Mary Beth relocated to Alabama through the Venture for America fellowship. She remains deeply committed to supporting Alabama founders, advancing innovation, and promoting long-term economic development throughout the state.







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BUSINESS OF THE MONTH



Business of the Month: Dees Pecan Company – A Grand Bay Tradition Since 1925

The Southwest Mobile County Chamber proudly recognizes Dees Pecan Company of Grand Bay as our Business of the Month. A family-owned gem for nearly a century, Dees has grown from a small roadside stand into a beloved regional brand known for

its Southern charm, unbeatable pecan pies, gourmet coffees, and signature candies.

The company has expanded to offer year-round service, a nationwide online store, and an ever-growing menu of treats—including fan favorites like Bourbon Pecan Roast coffee and chocolate-covered pecans. Despite challenges like hurricanes and crop shifts, Dees continues to thrive, thanks to their commitment to quality, community, and tradition.

Whether you're stopping by their Grand Bay storefront or shopping from afar, Dees Pecan Company offers a true taste of South Alabama and stands as a shining example of local business excellence.

5960 Dawes Rd, Grand Bay, AL 36541

BECOME A PARTNER



Joining the SouthWest Mobile County Chamber means becoming part of a close-knit, family-like community where businesses support each other's growth. Unlike traditional memberships, the Chamber refers to its members as "partners," emphasizing collaboration and mutual success. As a partner, you'll have access to valuable resources, networking events, and business development opportunities that help you thrive in the local market. The Chamber's dedication to fostering relationships and providing support ensures

that your business is never alone in its journey.

With a strong focus on local prosperity, the Chamber advocates for a business-friendly environment and contributes to the region's economic growth. By joining, you're not only gaining visibility through marketing and event opportunities but also participating in initiatives that benefit the entire SouthWest Mobile County community. Become a partner today and experience the power of collaboration and connection that can take your business to new heights.





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Occupational Health Center
The Shoulder of the Central Gulf Coast



This year, the SouthWest Mobile County Chamber proudly celebrates 40 years of service, connection, and community impact. From our humble beginnings as a small group of dedicated business owners with a shared vision, to becoming a strong network of professionals, leaders, and advocates, this milestone is more than just a number—it represents decades of hard work, innovation, and partnership.

Over the years, our community has experienced tremendous change. Businesses have grown from family-owned start-ups to well-established enterprises. New industries have brought opportunity and diversity to our local economy. Neighborhoods have expanded, schools have flourished, and our area has become a place where families, entrepreneurs, and community leaders work hand-in-hand to build a brighter future.

Through every stage of this journey, the Chamber has been here—not only to provide resources and connections, but also to create an environment where local businesses can thrive. Our success is not ours alone—it belongs to every partner, volunteer, donor, and sponsor who has contributed to making the Chamber a cornerstone of this community.

To commemorate this milestone, we recently hosted our 40th Anniversary Celebration at the Annual Awards Gala, where we reflected on the past and looked forward to the future. One of the highlights of this special occasion was recognizing Mr. Jim Henderson of Mobile Lumber, our 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.

Mr. Henderson's story is one of dedication, vision, and a deep commitment to community growth. Mobile Lumber has not only served as a trusted business in our region but has also played an active role in building relationships and supporting the success of others. His leadership embodies the values that have carried our chamber forward over the past four decades—hard work, collaboration, and an unwavering belief in the strength of local business.

We invite you to experience the celebration and hear from Mr. Henderson himself by watching our 40th Anniversary Video, now available on our Facebook page. This video is a tribute to the people and partnerships that have shaped our chamber into what it is today, and we encourage you to share it with friends, family, and fellow business leaders.

While we take this moment to honor our history, our focus is firmly set on the future. The next chapter of our Chamber will be defined by growth, innovation, and stronger connections than ever before. Programs like the Diplomat Program are helping local business representatives engage more deeply with the community, while initiatives like the T.A.L.L. Program are inspiring the next generation of leaders by connecting high school students with real-world business experiences.

Our goal is simple yet ambitious—to ensure that every partner, every business, and every member of our community feels the positive impact of what we do. Whether through networking opportunities, professional development, or advocacy, the Chamber will continue to be a hub for progress and partnership.

Reaching this milestone would not have been possible without you—our partners, sponsors, and community members. Your trust, support, and active involvement are the driving force behind every success story we share. As we step boldly into the future, we invite you to remain an active part of this journey. Together, we will build on the foundation of the past and continue to create opportunities that shape the future of SouthWest Mobile County.

Here's to 40 years of growth—and to the decades of success and community impact yet to come.

Tina Poiroux

Executive Director

SouthWest Mobile County Chamber of Commerce

(251) 666-2846



SOUTHWEST MOBILE COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



BY: RON SIVAK

THE REAL ESTATE CORNER



Automation and software provider Prism Systems announced the relocation of its corporate headquarters and lab operations to 857 Dauphin Street in Downtown Mobile. The move is a \$6.4-million capital investment and includes the addition of 52 new, high-wage positions and the retention of 44 existing jobs in their Mobile location. Founded in 1989, the company has grown to become a global software and automation presence, with implemented projects in more than 45 different countries. These include supplying electricity to Haiti, building safety and controls software for autonomous vehicles, implementing advanced robotics and helping build theme parks around the globe. Prism currently has engineering offices in Los Angeles, Orlando, Beijing and Shanghai, as well as two manufacturing facilities in Washington County. In a media release, Prism expressed their reaffirmation of its long-term commitment to creating a hub for automation engineering locally. Modifications to the current site are set to begin next month, with operations transitioning by April 2026. Former tenant of the acquired property, co-working & shared workspace hub Container Yard, will reportedly relocate next month into former office space footprint occupied by local radio station 92 Zew situated at 1100 Dauphin St in Midtown Mobile.

Merrill P. Thomas Co. Inc. (MPT) announced the sale in August of a 9,016-square-foot retail property found at 7519 Theodore Dawes Road in Theodore for \$705,000. Mike Reid of MPT represented the seller, and Tommy Praytor of Praytor Properties, LLC, represented the buyer in the deal. The property was bought by an investor seeking income-producing assets. It is currently being leased to Dollar General, and the retailer has shown steady growth over the past five years. This transaction reportedly reflects continued investor confidence in the thriving commercial market found in areas due west of metropolitan Mobile.

In August, the Mobile County Commissioners signed and hoisted into place the inaugural steel beam for the main building of the Mobile County Aquatic Center, found at 3701 Hall's Mill Road in West Mobile inside the 200-acre Sportsplex. When completed next year, Phase I of construction will meet the requirements for accreditation by USA Swimming, and when fully built (Phase I and Phase II), the center will reportedly be the second-largest aquatic facility in the state of Alabama.

Last month the Prichard Housing Authority hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for four new single-family affordable residences for construction on Moreland Drive and completed this fall. The city teamed with the Prichard Housing Authority, Mobile County Commission and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for this \$600,000 investment. Those funds are coming from the federal Community Development Block Grant Program.

For questions or news tips about local real estate, please email ron@hflend.com or call/text 251-219-8914.

Start the School Year Strong — Update Your Children's Vaccinations!

Reuniting with friends means sharing smiles, stories, and sometimes germs.

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SOUTHWEST MOBILE COUNTY CHAMBER

FIRST RESPONDER SPOTLIGHT

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE



Congratulations to Officer Thomas Andrews of the Mobile Police Department, our Officer of the Month! Officer Andrews is being recognized for his outstanding dedication, professionalism, and commitment to serving and protecting our community. His consistent efforts to go above and beyond in his duties reflect his strong sense of integrity and his passion for public safety.

We are proud to honor Officer Andrews for the positive impact he continues to make in Mobile. His work reminds us of the vital role law enforcement plays in creating a safe and thriving community for all. Thank you, Officer Andrews, for your service and dedication!



Congratulations to Deputy Jaqueline Bittner of the Mobile County Sheriff's Office, our Deputy of the Month! Deputy Bittner is being honored for her unwavering dedication, professionalism, and commitment to protecting and serving our community. Her hard work, quick thinking, and dependable service exemplify the highest standards of law enforcement and reflect her strong sense of integrity and duty.



Deputy Bittner continues to go above and beyond in her role, ensuring the safety and well-being of those she serves. Her efforts not only uphold the values of the MCSO but also build trust and confidence within our community. We are proud to recognize her outstanding contributions and the positive impact she makes every day.



SPONSORED BY

The SouthWest Mobile County Chamber of Commerce would like to thank Century Bank for sponsoring our Officer of the Month and Deputy of the Month Programs. We so appreciate their willingness to continuously recognize such outstanding members of our community.

"Century Bank is a proud member of the communities we serve. Our involvement in extracurricular activities, fund raisers, organizations and other local events is a priority for directors, officers and employees of Century Bank."





CLASSICAL GREECE

Are you ready to embark on an unforgettable adventure while connecting with fellow community leaders? The Southwest Mobile County Chamber of Commerce invites you to join their "Classical Greece" trip, departing March 8–18, 2026. This once-in-a-lifetime journey will take you through the cradle of Western civilization, exploring iconic landmarks such as the Acropolis, the Parthenon, and the charming streets of Athens' historic Plaka district. From there, you'll set sail across the Aegean Sea, experiencing the beauty and culture of the Greek islands, including Mykonos, Patmos, Rhodes, and the world-famous Santorini. This thoughtfully curated itinerary offers a perfect blend of breathtaking sights, fascinating history, and relaxing moments along Greece's stunning coastline.

This trip is more than just sightseeing—it's an opportunity to strengthen bonds within our chamber community. As you explore ancient ruins, enjoy shared meals, and watch sunsets over the Aegean with fellow travelers, you'll build lasting connections and friendships. The chamber's group travel experience combines expert planning, comfortable accommodations, guided tours, and seamless transfers, allowing you to focus on making memories instead of worrying about the details. Whether you're a history enthusiast, an adventurer at heart, or someone simply looking for a remarkable getaway, this trip promises an experience you'll never forget.

Registration forms and full itinerary details are available on the Chamber's website at swmcchamber.com, where you can also find information about pricing, payment options, and travel requirements. Don't miss your chance to explore Greece's timeless beauty while connecting with other members of your community—reserve your spot today and prepare to experience the trip of a lifetime next March.

DRIVING GROWTH

Tillman's Corner continues to be one of the fastest-growing commercial corridors in South Mobile County, contributing significantly to the region's overall economic health. Its locationjust minutes from downtown Mobile, Interstate 10, and the Port of Mobile—makes it a prime destination for retail, dining, industrial, and service-based businesses. This access to major transportation routes has created an ideal environment for companies looking to expand while staying connected to larger markets.

Over the past year, the area has seen steady growth, with new businesses opening their doors and existing ones expanding to meet rising demand. Commercial development along Highway 90 has brought in fresh investment, creating jobs and drawing more customers to the area. These improvements not only support local employment but also attract outside visitors, increasing revenue for the community.

In addition to retail and dining, industrial and logistics sectors continue to thrive, driven by proximity to the port and major shipping routes. This growth strengthens Mobile County's role as a key hub for trade and commerce along the Gulf Coast.

The Chamber plays an active role in supporting this economic momentum. Through networking events, workforce development initiatives, and programs like the T.A.L.L. (Tillman's Corner Area Learning Leadership) program for high school students, the Chamber helps build a pipeline of skilled workers while fostering strong business connections.

INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT



The Southwest Mobile County Chamber is proud to spotlight Brown & Root Industrial Services, a leading industrial services provider with a strong presence Brown & Root in the Tillman's Corner area. As a national company with deep roots in the

Gulf Coast region, Brown & Root plays a pivotal role in supporting the industrial, petrochemical, and energy sectors that fuel our local economy.

Brown & Root specializes in a full range of industrial services, including construction, maintenance, engineering, and turnaround support. Their operations in Southwest Mobile County serve key industries across Alabama and the broader Gulf region, with a focus on safety, quality, and innovation.

What sets Brown & Root apart is its commitment to local workforce development and community engagement. The company actively recruits skilled tradesmen and women from the Mobile area, providing stable, high-paying jobs and opportunities for longterm career growth. Through apprenticeships, safety training, and technical education, Brown & Root is helping to build the next generation of industrial talent right here in Tillman's Corner.

With its continued investment in people, projects, and partnerships, Brown & Root exemplifies the kind of industry leadership that strengthens our regional economy and enhances the quality of life for families throughout Southwest Mobile County.

TILLMAN'S CORNER COMMUNITY CENTER

The Tillman's Corner Community Center, located at 5055 Carol Plantation Road in Mobile, Alabama, has long served as a cornerstone of the local community, providing a welcoming space for gatherings, celebrations, and events of all kinds. The facility offers a variety of rooms that can accommodate different group sizes, from small, intimate meeting spaces to a large auditorium complete with a stage for performances, ceremonies, or large-scale programs. Each space is equipped with essential amenities such as tables, chairs, ample parking, restroom access, and wheelchair accessibility, making it a convenient and functional venue for weddings, birthday parties, family reunions, business meetings, and special community celebrations. With its central location and versatile layout, the community center has become a trusted venue for residents and organizations throughout the area.

Beyond private events, the Tillman's Corner Community Center plays an important role in hosting many well-known local programs that foster connection and support for families in the region. Signature events such as the Annual Kids Day have become beloved traditions, offering free backpacks, school uniforms, haircuts, games, and other resources to help children prepare for the school year. Throughout the year, the center also welcomes vendor fairs, seasonal festivals, networking events, and other gatherings that bring people together and strengthen community bonds. Its accessibility and ability to host both large and small groups make it a valuable resource for residents and visitors alike.

The center's ongoing role as a hub for both social and civic activities reflects its commitment to serving the diverse needs of the Tillman's Corner area. Whether it's providing a place for families to celebrate milestones, offering a venue for businesses to connect with the community, or supporting outreach programs that benefit local children and families, the Tillman's Corner Community Center continues to be a vital space where people can come together, create memories, and build lasting relationships. It stands as more than just a rental facility—it is a gathering place that embodies the spirit of community and provides opportunities for connection, support, and celebration year-round.

Auditorium: holds up to 295 guests Camellia Room: holds up to 40 guests Azalea Room: holds up to 20 guests





NEW PARTNERS



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Hope Driskell hdriskell@swmcchamber.com **Event Coordinator**

Jillian Baxter ibaxter@swmcchamber.com

Event Specialists

Calvin Dickerson and Catherine Hartsock

For Rental Information call the Tillman's Corner Community Center at (251) 666-2488 For Chamber Information call the SWMCC at (251) 666-2846













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JOIN THE SWMCC TODAY!

SOUTHWEST MOBILE COUNTY CHAMBER

CALL (251) 666-2846

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