



DECATUR – MORGAN COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

Year in Review

THE PAST TWO YEARS have been challenging for all of us as we've dealt with supply chain issues, soaring prices, and hiring challenges brought on by the Coronavirus pandemic. This past year, we cautiously moved forward, hosting events and programs in person. We had a few setbacks as new COVID variants spread throughout our community. With health and safety at the forefront, we adapted and found ways to move our city, county, and the Chamber forward.

All the while, the Chamber maintained focus on our five-year strategic plan that highlights four key areas: Business and Talent Development, Industry Partnerships and Education, Storytelling and Regional Partnerships, and Residential Development and Recruitment. In the area of workforce development and education, we needed to modify our programs to ensure we were working with our school systems to help connect local businesses and industries with a skilled workforce. We also added programs like the Workforce NOW Summit to help our business and industry partners navigate labor shortages.

Residential and business development has been a major focus as North Alabama continues to see historic growth. The efforts of our Residential Development Task Team paid off as more than 1,000 residential units are on track to become available in 17 new subdivisions. Eighteen upscale single-family townhomes are on the way to Old Decatur and most of them were sold before construction even began. The repeated request by our community for a downtown market is also being filled with the coming of the urban 609 Market to Bank St.

As a Chamber, I'm proud of how we have pulled together to support our members and community during these trying times. It's been an honor to serve as your Board Chairman. I am confident this organization will be in good hands with our new board chair Ray Hardin. We could not have a better leader to continue promoting Decatur-Morgan County.



JEFFREY BROWN

Board Chair, 2021-2022
Partner | Harris, Caddell, & Shanks PC



RAY HARDIN

Board Chair, 2022-2023
General Manager | Decatur Utilities

Ray Hardin is a Rotarian and on the Board of Directors for the North Alabama Industrial Development Association, Electric Cities of Alabama, the Morgan County Economic Development Association, and the Tennessee Valley Public Power Association.



In July, **CRYSTAL BROWN** was selected as our new President and CEO after John Seymour retired. Crystal joined the Chamber in 2012 and previously served as vice president of development.



We welcomed **RACHEL KEITH** to our team as the Director of Communications in January. Rachel is a lifelong resident of Morgan County and has 20 years of experience.



OUR FOUR *Initiatives* OF THE PARTNERSHIP:

- 1 Business & Industry-Driven Talent Development & Recruitment
- 2 Business & Industry Partnership with Education
- 3 Business & Residential Development
- 4 Community Image, Partnerships & Development

Supporting OUR MEMBERS

68

NEW
Chamber
Members

\$388,295

In **CARES ACT FORGIVABLE LOANS DISTRIBUTED** to 25 Decatur Small Businesses in Partnership with the City of Decatur and the Decatur-Morgan County Entrepreneurial Center



28

ADULTS ENROLLED
in Excellence in
Leadership program

52

EIGHTH GRADERS ENROLLED in Equip Student Leadership program



1,409

EIGHTH GRADERS from schools across Morgan County visited the Endless Opportunities workforce and education event



35

STUDENTS ENROLLED in Edge Student Leadership program

50

ATTENDEES at our first ever Workforce NOW Summit focusing on employee retention



26

RIBBON CUTTINGS celebrating their investment in the Chamber and Decatur-Morgan County



575

RECEIPTS SUBMITTED for the Chamber's Shop Small, Shop Local giveaway

33,000

VISITORS to our website since April 1, 2021

"The pandemic is slowing down (I hope), and it's tricky opening a brick-and-mortar business during this time. This is a time when any type of investment is thought out carefully but my investment into the Chamber is priceless. The efficient and friendly staff coordinated our ribbon cutting to perfection. They increased our exposure level 500%, which in turn increased our daily sales. I am forever grateful for all the professionalism, kind words, warm smiles and lastly the new friendships."



JANELLE BROWN | Owner, Brown Books and More



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THE MISSION of the Chamber is to promote business and commerce for the Decatur and Morgan County area through volunteer leadership in economic, political and social development.