



COMMUNIQUE

Celebrating 97 Years

1922 - 2019

APRIL 2019

Join Us Next Week For the 5th Annual Taste of Bessemer and Business Expo

The Taste of Bessemer and Business Expo is set for Thursday, April 11th from 4-8 pm at the Bessemer Civic Center. It's not too late to sign up as a sponsor, business vendor, food vendor or purchase tickets.

We would like to thank our 2019 sponsors



We are excited to introduce our newest feature, the cooking segments. Tickets for the cooking segments are an additional \$5 each and will be held beginning every hour in 30 minutes sessions. Each session is limited to the first 50 guests. The four chefs that will demonstrate their recipes are:



1918 Catering – Chefs Jamal and Jason Brown

I would like to welcome you to 1918 Catering LLC, where our motto is “Let us do the work”. 1918 is a full-service catering establishment, which was founded by Brothers Jason and Jamal Brown. The Brown brothers earned their culinary stripes watching and learning from their mother, as she whipped up family recipes passed down by their late grandmother Fannie Mae Brown. After an epiphany at a church event, two 6-year-old church members were so impressed with the presentation and food quality, that they suggested that the Brown brothers open a business.



Lawson State Community College - Chef Adam Elliott, Lead Culinary Instructor

A native of St. Louis, MO, Chef Adam Elliott has over 30 years of food service and hospitality industry experience. While his love of food and kitchen explorations began as a child learning at his mother's side, it was the U.S. Navy where Chef Adam truly discovered his passion for culinary arts aboard the U.S.S. Leftwich – DD 984, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Elliott used his G.I. Bill towards a refined culinary education at the world-renowned Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY. Earning an Associate in Occupational Studies degree in International Cuisine and the Bachelor of Professional Studies degree in Culinary Arts Management. Currently Chef Elliott has blended his love of cooking along with his love of learning as one of the first Culinary Chef Instructors at Lawson State Community College's New Culinary Arts Degree Program. Chef Elliott is a professional member of the following organizations: Culinary Institute of America Alumni Association, The American Culinary Federation, The World Association of Chef's Societies and The National Restaurant Association. Chef Elliott is a professional volunteer with the American Heart Association, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. Chef Elliott is a Certified Serve Safe, Food Safety Manager, Jefferson County Dept. of Health. Certified Executive Chef (CEC), and Approved Certification Evaluator (ACE), with the American Culinary Federation.



The Bright Star – Chef Austin Davis

Since 1999, Chef Austin Davis has been Chef de Cuisine for the evening meal at The Bright Star Restaurant. He works all areas of the kitchen but is especially known for being our Sauté Chef creating and overseeing all the delicious baked and stuffed seafood dishes. Prior to his tenure at The Bright Star, Chef Davis worked at the Merritt House and Niki's restaurant. He loves presenting cooking demonstrations and sharing his talents with our guest.



The Homestyle Kitchen – Chef Julia May

Julia May is admired as one of Birmingham's finest and successful catering services specializing in fine, southern cuisine with an African-American flare. Chef May has built a reliable, first class catering service with an impeccable list of professional clients that include once a month on Fox 6 WBRC, Cox Radio, University of Alabama, St. Vincent's Hospital, Kirklin Clinic, Black Entertainment Television (BET), Western Hills Mall, Rich's Department Stores, Parisian/Neiman Marcus Department Stores, Wal-Mart Stores, McRae's Department Stores, Birmingham Bar Association, Birmingham Coca-Cola Bottling Company, Jack Daniels, Alabama's ABC 33/40, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Alabama Power, Alagasco, James Rushton I Foundation (J.R.I. CDC), Highland's United Methodist Church, Sixth Avenue Baptist Church, Hot 107.7 Radio, Faith Chapel Christian Center, Hopewell Baptist Church, WVTM Channel 13, and a host of celebrities. In Everything, Give Thanks. 1 Thes. 5:18

CHAMBER NEWS

Fox 6 Good Day Alabama

Good Day Alabama! Bessemer Area Chamber of Commerce representatives inform Fox 6 viewers about the Taste of Bessemer and Business Expo on April 11th, 4-8pm at the Bessemer Civic Center. Call us at (205) 425-3253 to get your vendor space and tickets.



TASTE OF BESSEMER



**& BUSINESS
EXPO**

April 11th 4-8 pm

Gospel songwriter, singer, radio host and record producer James Fortune stopped by Bessemer City High School Friday to share his life's story and serve as a motivational speaker to the students. He is pictured here (from left to right) with councilman Ron Marshall, former councilman Chester Porter, Bessemer City High School administrator Angela Bedgood, James Fortune and Mayor Kenneth Gulley.

PHOTO →



BUSINESS AFTER HOURS

Business After Hours

The Bessemer Area Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours was held on Thursday, March 14th from 5-7 pm at the Bessemer Chamber of Commerce. Members enjoyed networking, great food and door prizes. The Business After Hours is a great opportunity to pass out your business cards, meet new business owners, network with elected officials and enjoy food and door prizes. We hope that you will mark your calendar and make plans to join us for the next Business After Hours to be held on Thursday, May 16th from 5 – 7 pm at the Bessemer Chamber with an old-fashioned seafood boil outside and behind the building.



BUSINESS AFTER HOURS



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Your Chamber Leadership Team



Reggie Mays
United Prosthetics & Orthotics
Chairman



Charles King
Regional Paramedical Services
Chairman Elect



Connie Fuell
Dex Imaging
Past Chairman



Carlton Jackson
Edge Realty
Treasurer



Mitch Avery
Spire
Finance Chairman



Cynthia Anthony
Lawson State



Natalie Bailey
Alabama Power



Laurence Baird
Oak Trace Care & Rehab.



Nate Coleman
Dollar General



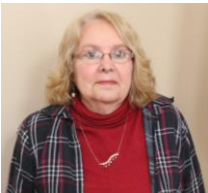
Adriene Crane
Buffalo Rock



Tabitha Dudley
Legacy YMCA



Jeffrey Gibbs
United Johnson Bros.



Judy Mathis
Moore Coal Co.



Keith Pennington
Medical West



Dr. Keith Stewart
Bessemer Bd. of Educ.



Randy Tate
Comfort Care Home Health



Deaunka L. Webster
AAA Alabama



Bryonda Collins
Chambers Funeral



Pete Winslett
The File Depot

AMBASSADORS



Sitting – Left to Right

Cathy Ackerman (First Financial Bank), Lori Chisem (Lawson State Community College), Sarah Belcher (Retired), Connie Full (Dex Imaging / 2018 Board Chairman), Sarah Beasle (Joe Beasley Memorial Foundation, Inc)

Standing – Left to Right

Claire Mitchell (Individual), Teco Stephens (3 Way Cleaning Company), Dorian Waluyn (Lawson State Community College), Tamala Briggins (Oak Trace Care & Rehabilitation), Erin Cooney (Holt Insurance Agency), Anna Wooten (First Financial Bank), Lula Walter (City of Bessemer), Daryl Owens

Not pictured

Andie Sloan, Comfort Care Home Health

Ambassadors are the key resource in extending hospitality in the Bessemer area and are experienced in business, community, and promotional arenas.

An Ambassador must serve as an active public relations arm of the Chamber and be prepared to meet visitors, local businesses, and various forms of the media.

We encourage you join the ambassador program. The ambassadors meet on the 1st Tuesday of each month at 8:30am at the Bessemer Area Chamber of Commerce.

NEWS

New Mercedes Tech Certificate Program Offered at Lawson State Community College



Mercedes-Benz U.S. International (MBUSI) and Lawson State Community College Launch New Mercedes Tech Certificate Program, which could lead to full-time employment in the automotive industry. MBUSI also donated two vehicles to Lawson to train students on the latest automotive technology and the increasing complexities in today's vehicle.

"This partnership means the world to Lawson State Community College; we're currently partners with several other auto manufactures. This partnership really solidifies Lawson State Community College as a leader in training for the automotive industry and while these students will not be participating as dealer technicians, they will earn a long certificate that will allow them to go to work as entry level persons in the actual plant in Mercedes-Benz." - Tommy Hobbs, Assistant Dean of Workforce Development at Lawson State Community College

Students that are interested in the program can go to LawsonState.edu or call 205-925-2515, or go to MBUSI.com

**Presented By The District Attorney's Office
Bessemer Cut-Off**

Lynneice O. Washington, District Attorney

Monday, April 8, 2019 at 6:00 pm



Candlelight Vigil

For Victims' of Violent Crimes

Join Us In The Jury Room- 1st Floor

Jefferson County- Bessemer Justice Center

1851 Second Avenue, North Suite 110

Bessemer, AL 35020

BUSINESS NEWS

Protecting Your Business From Counterfeiting



Here are some steps you can take to reduce your risk and protect your business from counterfeiting.

Alexander Reichmann is the CEO of iTestCash, a supplier of money handling and retail security equipment. Reichmann's knowledge of the counterfeit world goes beyond his current post. In fact, in addition to the years of research and knowledge he's compiled on the matter, protecting business owners from fake cash is somewhat of a family affair. Reichmann's grandfather, under their family-owned business, Dri Mark, patented their counterfeit money detection pen.

Counterfeit Detection Tools

It's likely you're aware of the counterfeit detection pens, and they are one way to help protect your business from fake bills. However, advancements in technology have made it possible for counterfeiters to produce bills that can even trick the pens, says Reichmann. For that reason, counterfeit money detection machines can be an excellent addition to your business, especially if you're specifically vulnerable due to the nature of your business (retail shops, restaurants, convenient stores, and any other bustling store that has a high percentage of cash transactions).

There are multiple tools out there to fit your budget. Some devices are equipped to detect security marks and magnetic ink, and analyze things like a bill's color spectrum and optical density.

Security and Signage

As a consumer, you've likely seen a few signs that warn potential criminals of an establishment's willingness to prosecute for theft or forgery. And though they may not mean much to you, in his research, Reichmann found that these seemingly innocuous signs play a vital role in your overall protection. In fact, he was quick to add that companies that utilize these types of signs are less likely to experience criminal activities like robberies.

Additionally, security cameras can play the same role. Not only that, but should you find that your business accepted a counterfeit bill, security footage can be harnessed during your report and hopefully circulated to local businesses to catch the culprit, which brings me to our next tip.

Raise Awareness

If you're the victim of counterfeiting, spread the word to local establishments so that they can inform their employees, keep an eye out, and hopefully catch the criminal customer.

"If you're a small business, and you're friends with other small business owners, share tactics or how you've caught a counterfeiter, and basically if all businesses share awareness, you can more easily deter counterfeiters," says Reichmann.

Education

Finally, and perhaps an ode to saving the best for last, is education. When I asked Reichmann what his best piece of advice was, particularly for small business owners who are on a tight budget and may not have the means to immediately purchase other forms of protection, he was quick to name education as the most important tool available.

The U.S. Currency Education Program offers excellent resources to help educate citizens on the security features included in each bill denomination. Employees handling cash should be properly trained to analyze and recognize counterfeit cash. Beyond recognition training, your business should be equipped with a plan of action should a counterfeit bill be received. For example, what should an employee do after receiving the bill? The U.S. Department of Treasury has a series of recommended steps in place, and they are worth reviewing and posting within your organization.

Counterfeiting is an unpredictable crime that can have potentially devastating consequences, particularly for the small business owner. But by being proactive, and following the tips above, you can empower your employees to protect your company and, of course, your bottom line.

DON'T FORGET TO BUY YOUR

TASTE OF BESSEMER

TICKETS AT THE CHAMBER BY TUESDAY, APRIL 9TH

2019 Board of Directors “Working Together Works” Spotlight

CARLTON JACKSON

Company/Organization: **Building Areas of Excellence, LLC / Edge Realty**

Address: 1957 Hoover Court Hoover, AL 35226

Phone: 205.296.7742

E-mail: carlton@carltonjackson.net

Web Address: www.baellc.org



WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT LIVING AND/OR WORKING IN BESSEMER?

- My favorite part about working in the City of Bessemer is the feeling of family and closeness we share. Our motto for this year is “Working Together Works” and that stands true for this community. We as a city have always put our community and citizens first, and that’s how we are able to achieve in so many remarkable ways and will continue to strive for excellence!

TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMPANY/PROFESSION?

- Building Areas of Excellence purpose is to uphold the highest level of integrity while providing attentive, personalized, and diligent service to all of its clients. We are your concierge service with an unparalleled professional track record of helping you meet your real estate goals. We create an environment of trust and confidence in the buying and selling process which benefits our clients from experienced negotiating on their behalf by Building Areas of Excellence one home at a time!

WHAT’S THE BIGGEST OVERALL LESSON YOU’VE LEARNED DURING YOUR PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY?

- The biggest overall lesson that I have learned in my professional journey is to never stop learning, meaning never get to the point that you think you have all the answers. This world is constantly changing; therefore, you have been able to adapt to any and all situations that may come your way. If a problem occurs in your business and you are willing to listen to helpful insight, then you can achieve by learning and growing!

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO SERVE AS A BOARD MEMBER?

- My motivation for serving as a board member is to enhance the community and city in which I love! I have the honor in expressing how great our city is and how businesses should definitely be a part of it. I enjoy developing new relationships with our business community and community leaders, and even before I became a board member, I always expressed that I am an ambassador for the City of Bessemer!

TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE (TESTIMONY) SERVING WITH THE BESSEMER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?

- My experience serving with the Bessemer Chamber of Commerce has been amazing, because you have a collective group of individuals that come together for the betterment of the City of Bessemer. We have so much experience in our board of directors from every aspect of working fields. I can honestly say, we all care for the City of Bessemer and our goal is to make sure that we add value to an already marvelous city!

WHAT ARE SOME HOBBIES/PERSONAL INTERESTS YOU ENJOY IN YOUR FREE TIME?

- My hobbies and personal interests that I enjoy in my free time are golf, traveling and real estate. Golf is a relaxing, fun and yet humbling sport, that I can honestly say has taught me lessons on adapting because I can play great like Tiger (in my mind) one day and like Charles Barkley(lol) the next! My wife and I love traveling to wherever; all we need is a reason and opportunity. But I really enjoy real estate; having the opportunity to purchase properties, renovate them and make it a dream home for someone is priceless! But none of these opportunities and blessings would be attainable without our Heavenly Father!

2019 Board of Directors “Working Together Works” Spotlight

CHARLES KING

Company/Organization: **Regional Paramedical Services**
Address: 3925 Old Birmingham Highway, Jasper, AL 35501
Phone: 205-434-5494
E-mail: Charles@RPSEMS.com

Regional
Paramedical Services

SERVING ALABAMA SINCE 1987



WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT LIVING AND/OR WORKING IN BESSEMER?

- The people! I have worked in Bessemer since 1976 in the ambulance world. There are a lot of good people and friends. Also, the food is some of the best in the world!

TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMPANY/PROFESSION?

- Regional Paramedical Services has been around for 32 years. They allowed me to serve a different group in the community.

WHAT'S THE BIGGEST OVERALL LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED DURING YOUR PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY?

- Always treat people the way you would want to be treated, and always be there for others.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO SERVE AS A BOARD MEMBER?

- To promote the city of Bessemer as a jewel in the south. I always say if we can get you here, you will stay or come back many times to visit.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE (TESTIMONY) SERVING WITH THE BESSEMER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?

- The people I have met over the years serving on all parts of the board is what makes Bessemer so special. Seeing new businesses coming to Bessemer to do business is exciting!

WHAT ARE SOME HOBBIES/PERSONAL INTERESTS YOU ENJOY IN YOUR FREE TIME?

- I volunteer for Elk's Lodge 721, Bessemer Library, Dave the Youth, and Boy Scouts as Chairman for the Cherokee District.



2019 Ambassadors “Working Together Works” Spotlight

ERIN COONEY

Company/Organization: **Holt Insurance**
Address: 1423 4th Avenue N Bessemer, AL 35020
Phone: 205-424-8368, ext. 301 Fax: 205-424-5207
E-mail: erincooney@holt-insurance.com Web Address: www.holt-insurance.com



WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT LIVING AND/OR WORKING IN BESSEMER?

- Definitely the people. During my years in Bessemer I have come to know many remarkable individuals who care so much about their community! I love being a part of a city that values relationships like a smaller city, but also has major resources that are hard to find elsewhere!

TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMPANY/PROFESSION?

- I have been an agent with Holt Insurance for the past six years. We are a full-service agency that can provide personal, business, and life insurance. I am also proud to say we will be celebrating our 40th anniversary of serving the Bessemer community this year!

WHAT'S THE BIGGEST OVERALL LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED DURING YOUR PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY?

- Sticking to your word is the most valuable service you can provide to others. I am a firm believer in doing what you say you will do, and I feel that helps establish trust and great, long-term relationships with clients and colleagues.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO SERVE AS AN AMBASSADOR?

- I love people and building relationships and the Chamber is a great way to do that while bettering the community at the same time. There is a lot of value in being an active participant in the city you work or live and I have seen the benefits of that over the years.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE (TESTIMONY) SERVING WITH THE BESSEMER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?

- As someone who is not from Bessemer, I highly recommend getting involved to learn the history of the city. Not only have I made great professional relationships and friendships, I can now be an advocate for our city and let everyone know why we are a great place to do business.

WHAT ARE SOME HOBBIES/PERSONAL INTERESTS YOU ENJOY IN YOUR FREE TIME?

- In my free time I enjoy cooking, reading, playing tennis, and spending time with my friends and family!



2019 Ambassadors “Working Together Works” Spotlight

ANDIE SLOAN

Company/Organization: **Comfort Care Home Health and Hospice Consultant**
Address: 245 Cahaba Valley Parkway Suite 200, Pelham 35124
Phone: 205- 988-9620
E-mail: Andie.sloan@comfortcarehomehealth.com



WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT LIVING AND/OR WORKING IN BESSEMER?

- Because I grew up in Bessemer, my family still lives in Bessemer and my spouse works for Bessemer Fire Department, I feel privileged and honored to work for a company that can help residents in the area get healthcare that they need.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMPANY/PROFESSION?

- At Comfort Care we provide care at home utilizing nursing and/or therapy to improve their condition to live independently at home. For patients who are just needing palliative care for pain management and symptom control; we can provide hospice services.

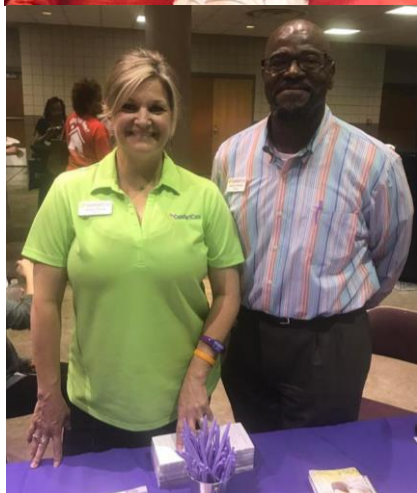


WHAT'S THE BIGGEST OVERALL LESSON YOU'VE LEARNED DURING YOUR PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY?

- I've been in the healthcare industry for over 25 years, and what I've learned the most is that it is constantly changing.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU TO SERVE AS AN AMBASSADOR?

- I love serving as an ambassador because this is my home town and where I work. I love being able to help people whether it's about healthcare needs or what's going on in the city.



TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE (TESTIMONY) SERVING WITH THE BESSEMER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE?

- Through the ambassador program I have met several wonderful people, learned about other companies and been a resource for others.

WHAT ARE SOME HOBBIES/PERSONAL INTERESTS YOU ENJOY IN YOUR FREE TIME?

- I am a mother of 4 beautiful daughters and have spent many hours at ballparks for softball or football games for cheerleading. I have a loving spouse of 28 years and find enjoyment in my spare time at the YMCA.

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William Parsons CPA