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2020 Annual Report

Message from the President

March 16, 2020. That was the day the Alamance Chamber closed to the public in response to the news of an unknown virus spreading and the need to “stop the spread”. My thought at the time was, this would be, at worst, an inconvenience, and we would soon get back to our “normal” lives within a few weeks.

March 2021. Here we are a full 12 months (and counting) later with the COVID-19 virus pandemic and the world’s reaction to it, still dictating our daily personal and business lives to a degree no one could have ever imagined. Added to the pandemic, 2020 served up other tumults, notably the divisive social unrest and a contentious election, which further challenged not only our livelihoods but also our personal, community, and national character.

Yet, given all our different circumstances, in all our different ways, we responded, we adjusted, we persevered. And now, we are forging ahead...together.

This report highlights the Alamance Chamber’s work during the past pandemic-stricken year to deliver on our mission which is to “enhance the welfare of business and to promote and stimulate economic vitality in the Alamance County area for the benefit of its members and the community.”

On behalf of the chamber staff, we thank you, the members and volunteers, for your continued investment in the chamber allowing us the opportunity to serve the membership and broader community

Sincerely,



Mac Williams
President, Alamance Chamber

Message from the Board Chair

While we reflect and take this opportunity to look back and review 2020, I believe the one word that we have all come to use frequently is “pivot”. This pandemic allowed each of our companies to reevaluate the way we conducted our business and delivery of our services.

At the chamber while we rely on a lot of in person social interaction, we also had to pivot and explore different avenues to deliver our services to our members. We found the best way to do that was through virtual programming and through the now popular Zoom. In fact communicating to our members in this matter actually allowed us to be more convenient and accessible to you.

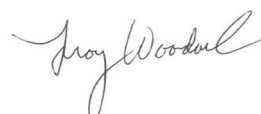
Our chamber team conducted numerous zoom calls over last year. They included business briefings, several roundtable discussions that included PPP loans, retail business and restaurants. We brought in our medical experts from Cone Health, Alamance County Health Department and Dr. Cohen from the state for health updates. Local school officials from Elon University, ACC, and Alamance-Burlington schools addressed how they were conducting classes and plans for reopening. Of course being an election year we were able to hear from the various candidates running for office. As you can tell our staff was hard at work, committed to continuing to deliver quality service and programming to you, bringing value to your chamber membership.

Even with what is going on in our country today, our county is experiencing exciting and solid growth. Alamance County is gaining the reputation as a great place to do business and live. I am confident that we will rebound from this pandemic stronger, and I believe our best years are just ahead.

As a chamber member, we thank you for your support. Please let us know how we can continue to better serve you. I want to thank each of you for what you do in our community to make our county a great place to LIVE, WORK, AND PLAY.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to serve in the role as Chamber Chairman. We have a tremendous staff dedicated to delivering quality programming to our members. We look forward to collaboratively working with you as an advocate on your behalf and the betterment of our great county.

Sincerely,



Troy Woodard, American National Bank & Trust
2020 Board Chair, Alamance Chamber

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Alamance Chamber is to enhance the welfare of business and to promote and stimulate economic vitality in the Alamance County area for the benefit of its members and the community.



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2020 Board of Directors & Economic Development Foundation Board

Board of Directors Executive Committee:

Chair: Troy Woodard, American National Bank & Trust
Past Chair: Lisa Pennington, Cone Health
Chair Elect: : LeAndra "Nikki" Ratliff, Burlington Housing Authority
Treasurer: Scott Thomas, Thomas Chandler Thomas & Hinshaw, LLP
Vice Chair of Marketing and Communications:
Willy Fisher, Fisher Wealth Management
Vice Chair of Membership Development: Ryan Moffitt, Vernon Law Firm
Vice Chair of Economic Development: Chris Bryan, BB&T Now Truist
Vice Chair of Workforce & Leadership Development:
Michelle Mills, Alamance County Sheriff's Department
Members at Large:
Reed LaPlante, First National Bank
Josh Chappell, Jennings Bryan-Chappell Insurance

Board of Directors Class of 2020:

Kristin Barrier, Elon University Love School of Business
Erin Cockman, Pinnacle Wealth Partners
Jordan Conklin, Conklin Oil/The Flame Company
Dan Daniele, Burlington-Alamance Airport Authority
Tab Joyce, Sandvik Coromant
Reed LaPlante, First National Bank
Christine Xoinis, Ethos Create

Board of Directors Class of 2021:

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Vickie Coon, Cobb Ezekiel Loy & Company, PA
Katharine Frazier, Profitize Us/Impact Fulfillment Services, Inc.
Brian Hall, Samet Corporation
Tyronna Hooker, Alamance Achieves
Griffin McClure, Green & McClure Furniture Company
Ryan Moffitt, Vernon Law Firm

Board of Directors Class of 2022:

Chris Bryan, BB&T Now Truist
Yonnie Butler, Alamance Community College
Rachael Dimont, Labcorp
Willy Fisher, Fisher Wealth Management
Michelle Mills, Alamance County Sheriff's Department
Sean Poole, Sheetz, Inc.
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Economic Development Foundation Board:

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Greg Lunsford, HUB International Southeast
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LeAndra "Nikki" Ratliff, Burlington Housing Authority
Scott Thomas, Thomas Chandler Thomas & Hinshaw, LLP
Mac Williams, Alamance Chamber
Troy Woodard, American National Bank & Trust

2020 Ambassador Council

Chair:
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Always Best Care Senior Services

Rachel Baldwin
Edward Jones

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Pinnacle Financial Partners

Mitzi Covington
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Liza Coombs
Prime Personnel Resources, Inc.

Vickie Coon
Cobb Ezekiel Loy & Co., PA

Greg Ellington
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Steve Floyd
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Lee Isley
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Chris Johnson
Brand Builderz Marketing, LLC

Ashley Lane
BB&T Now Truist

Barbara Millikan
Exceed Technology

Kristy Pardue
The Village at Brookwood

Tracy Pitts
Sawyer Exterminating

Cathi Roberts
Convergence Technologies

Steven Roberts
Opal Hotel Group - Holiday Inn Express

Cara Sweat
First Bank

Jennifer Turner-Taylor
Vocational Rehabilitation

Jordan Wood
Alamance-Regional Chairtable Foundation

Nelson Young

2020 Annual Sponsors

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Workforce / Leadership Development

Community Leaders' Retreat

In November, the 35th Annual Community Leaders' Retreat convened over 75 community leaders to Re-envision Alamance. Retreat Chair, Nikki Ratliff, focused on our community's agility and resiliency amid a pandemic and highlighted efforts put in place to support our community's most vulnerable members. The 2020 virtual retreat allowed time for reflection and small group discussion as attendees heard from non-profit agencies, experts on creating a quality talent pipeline, local education institutions, healthcare professionals, and the chamber's Vice Chair of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Alamance Youth Leadership Academ



Approximately 200 middle school students participated in the Alamance Youth Leadership Academy (AYLA) in 2020. 8th grade AYLA students attended the annual Capstone Event in March, where they had the opportunity to meet and speak with more than 30 community leaders over lunch. 7th grade AYLA students attended a week-long, virtual Summer Institute, hosted by Elon's Center for Leadership.

Leadership Alamance

In 2020, we said farewell to the Most Resilient Class Ever. The Class of 2020 visited over 35 sites across Alamance County and participated in two virtual field days to wrap up their program year, which officially ended on September 30 with an in-person Graduation. Class members took on a large, community-wide, class project and partnered with local fire departments and industries to collect and install over 200 smoke alarms in homes that didn't have working alarms.



Leadership Development

The Leadership Alamance Alumni Association used membership dollars to provide scholarships for four non-profit leaders to participate in the 2019-20 Leadership Alamance Class. The leadership development advisory committee organized a three-part leadership series focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Cary Worthy, former Executive Director was named the Leader of Distinction for 2020 at the chamber's Annual Meeting.

Classroom Collection Campaign



The 17th Annual Classroom Collection Campaign brought in approximately 39,000 school supplies to support students enrolled in Alamance-Burlington Schools. New in 2020, an option to give monetary donations online was made available and allowed community members to donate over \$2,800 which was applied to purchasing needed school supplies. Approximately 3,000 area students benefited from the campaign held during the 2018-19 school year.

Excellence in Education Awards Program

Forty area educators were honored at the Excellence in Education Awards Program held virtually in August. Kelly Poquette of E.M. Yoder Elementary School was recognized as the 2020 Teacher of the Year. She received an awards package that included a trip with Go Global NC to the Victoria Falls Region of Southern Africa. All finalists were awarded funds to attend a professional development opportunity of their choice. The community investment in this year's program was nearly \$50,000!



Education Council

Approximately 30 community members attended monthly to show their support for education. This forum encourages business leaders to be actively involved in education and school leaders to examine the needs of the business community.

Tuesday Tours for Teachers

This program provided educators with the opportunity to tour 5 area business facilities that align with the Career and Technical Education pathways available to students. Educators earned more than 18 Continuing Education Units through their participation in the program in 2020.

Member Engagement

All Business Briefing Program

As the COVID-19 pandemic started to impact the Alamance County Community in March 2020, staff and volunteer leadership started discussing the role of a Chamber during a pandemic. It was clear that access to information and resources for businesses was critical to resiliency during this time.

In response, the Alamance Chamber created the All Business Briefing program to address the needs of businesses. In total we hosted 18 of these Zoom events with topics and speakers ranging from education updates, healthcare professionals, small business experts, legislators, roundtable discussions, legal topics & discussions, accounting experts, and virtual marketing & communication workshops.

All Business Briefing Programming:

- SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program
- Local Government Managers Update
- NC Works Services for Employers & Employees
- State & Federal Delegations Update
- Local County Government Officials
- Local Banker Update
- Tax Implications & Strategies Around COVID-19 Relief Programs
- Alamance County Update
- Essentials for Re-Opening
- Small Business Resources
- Local Healthcare Providers Update
- Child Care & Business
- Local County Government Officials Update
- Human Resources & COVID-19
- Human Services During COVID-19
- Business Innovation & Leadership
- Legal Issues & COVID-19
- Local County Managers II - Next Phase

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiative

To think about the positive change the Chamber makes each year, there is no better year than this past one to notice a foundation being built for diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) within the organization. In January of 2020, the Board of Directors voted to add a Vice Chair of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to its executive positions, creating opportunities to improve our community all year long as it relates to DEI.

A committee was founded with diverse members who are not all Chamber members. Initiatives have been started to partner with other community groups that are doing great work in this area so that we can provide improvements to the Chamber and its membership. Focus areas for the committee include creating a resource guide, convening neighborhood leaders, and assessing the Chamber's program of work through a lens of inclusion.

The Chamber is focused on promoting economic vitality not just to its members but to the community. A big step was made in 2020, fully supported by the leadership and staff at the Chamber and we are looking forward to seeing what we can accomplish with more people at the table.



State of Series

In 2020 the Chamber hosted a “State of” series sponsored by Spectrum Reach. This series included an update on the region, healthcare, education, and business. Check out the recap of the series below.

- The **State of Business** webinar included speakers from the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, including Christopher Chung, Chief Executive Officer and John Loyack, Vice President of Global Business Services. They discussed the challenges of the COVID 19 pandemic and how it was affecting businesses. Topics included industry/ manufacturing impacts and projections, small business impacts and projections, and the future viability of workforce.
- The **State of the Region** webinar featured Ryan Combs, Executive Director of the Research Triangle Regional Partnership and Stan Kelly, President & CEO of the Piedmont Triad Partnership. The speakers offered perspectives of the conditions of the Piedmont Triad and Research Triangle regions.
- The **State of Education** webinar was a conversation about the state of local education with a distinguished panel of leaders. We were joined by Dr. Connie Book, President, Elon University; Dr. Algie Gatewood, President, Alamance Community College, and Dr. Bruce Benson, Superintendent, Alamance-Burlington Schools. Each of our speakers shared updates and exciting new developments happening withing each institution.
- The **State of Healthcare** featured speakers included Dr. Mandy Cohen, Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and Dr. Mary Jo Cagle, Chief Operating Officer of Cone Health. The conversation was moderated by Stacie Saunders, MPH, Former Health Director for the Alamance County Health Department. Both speakers offered perspectives on the impact of the pandemic at the local and state level.

The “State of” series offered an opportunity for members to engage with industry experts, ask questions and gain knowledge.

Communicating Effectively

The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted the way we do business and communicate with others. During the pandemic, new resources and information were available almost daily. As a business organization, we were tasked with effectively communicating this information in a way that was easily accessible. We utilized our email marketing system to deliver updated news and information, as well as to market upcoming informational sessions. In addition, we relied heavily on social media to get information out quickly and effectively. Because of these efforts, the Chamber saw major growth in our social media following. Through platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter, we were able to connect with members of the business community that we were not previously connected with.

Facebook: 3,198 Followers

Instagram: 1,196 Followers

Twitter: 1,169 Followers

LinkedIn: 287 Followers

Member Engagement

Choose Alamance: Support Local Campaign

In June of 2020, the Alamance Chamber launched “Choose Alamance” – a shop local, shop small campaign. The campaign was designed to show our small, local businesses just how much they mean to our community. The Chamber created and provided “Choose Alamance” yard signs for businesses to proudly display in their yards or storefronts to help spread the word about the campaign. In addition, thank you cards were printed for businesses to pick up and distribute to their customers.



To align with campaign promotion, the Chamber reached out to multiple member businesses to provide short video clips explaining what supporting local meant to them. In addition, community members were engaged through social media challenges where they were encouraged to share photos showing how they were supporting local.

Open & Safe Campaign

As North Carolina began the reopening process of our economy, we knew we all needed to do our part to ensure we continued to minimize the spread of COVID-19, while

also helping to regain consumer confidence. In order to keep Alamance County healthy and our economy strong, we introduced the Open & Safe pledge for our local businesses.



Businesses had the opportunity to take the pledge and commit to safely keeping their businesses open. Businesses signed the pledge, affirming that they were taking the steps necessary to implement safe reopening best practices as outlined in the “Smart Restart Guide” - a resource provided by the Alamance Chamber and Carolinas Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (CACCE). Once a business confirmed their commitment to the pledge, they received digital and printable materials to proudly display in their storefronts and online to show their customers that they were following the proper protocol and guidelines.

Annual Meeting

The 2020 Annual Meeting was held in January. This event celebrated the successes of 2019, recognized dedicated community leaders and programs, and looked ahead to the future. A keynote address titled “An Extraordinary Life” was provided by Jamie Valvano of the Valvano Foundation. The Duke Energy Citizenship and Service Award was presented to Jack Rogers Lindley Sr. of IP Products for his immeasurable impact on Alamance County and his commitment to volunteerism. This award was presented by Davis Montgomery of Duke Energy. Other awards presented are listed below.

Duke Energy Citizenship & Service Award: Jack Rogers Lindley Sr., IP Products

Leader of Distinction Award: Preston Hammock, Cone Health

Volunteer of the Year: Jim Bryan, Fairystone Fabrics

Ambassador of the Year: Joanne Pizzuto, Always Best Care Senior Services

Director of the Year: Reed LaPlante, First National Bank

Chamber Program of the Year: Leadership Alamance

Art in Business Award (Presented by Alamance Arts): Christine Xoinis, Ethos Creative Group



Golf Tournament

The Annual Golf Tournament was held in October at Indian Valley Golf Course in Burlington. This event was the Chamber's first in-person event open to membership since the start of COVID-19. Precautions were taken to ensure volunteers, sponsors, staff members and golfers enjoyed a day out on the course, safely.



Economic Development

Community Recovery Loan



Small businesses and entrepreneurs are a critical part of a community's economic development base, but also contribute greatly to the character of a community. For the past few years, the Chamber has had a goal to increase support for small businesses and entrepreneurs. Part of the support focused on providing alternative funding options for these enterprises as they often face challenges for securing traditional financing. This barrier can be due to the size of their business, length of time in operation, lack of relationships with banks, attorneys and accountants, and any number of other obstacles. As with so many other things during 2020, COVID-19 pushed us to move more quickly to make this happen.

In May 2020, a group of Chamber and community leaders came together to discuss the need and options for how to make a revolving loan program work and how to fund it. The Chamber quickly found partners in Alamance County, Alamance County Economic Development Foundation, the Alamance Community Foundation, and Self-Help Credit Union. Impact Alamance stepped in later in the process with an additional contribution of funds.

In August, we began promotion of the Community Recovery Loan Program, specifically targeted to those businesses that did not qualify or were not able to apply for other programs such as the Economic Injury Disaster Loan or Paycheck Protection Program, as well as those in geographically distressed areas or women or minority owned. Self-Help Credit Union has a long history of working with marginalized businesses and analyzing applications that may have low credit scores or gaps in financial documentation.

In addition to the financial assistance, applicants were paired with consultants at the Alamance Community College Small Business Center for technical assistance. An influx of funds cannot always be the full solution; businesses received one-on-one counseling to help address their problem areas and be set on the best path forward for success.

As of early 2021, over \$250,000 of the original \$350,000 has been lent to local businesses. One has already paid their loan in full and those funds are ready to be recirculated back into another local business. We continue to promote the availability of the program and plan for it to be another tool for continued economic development in Alamance County.



Apprenticeship Growth

The Career Accelerator Program quickly changed course in March 2020 as plans for orientation were right around the corner. With some quick thinking and a lot of behind the scenes planning, a virtual orientation was conducted for the student applicants. Between some students changing plans, as well as companies with hiring freezes and other COVID-related changes, a small class of four students signed on as new apprentices in August 2020. For 2021, partner companies have a better outlook on their hiring capabilities, and we have even added two new companies to the consortia: WestRock and Elevate Textiles. Virtual recruitment and transitioning to video tours of facilities and Zoom meetings with current apprentices have proved to be successful as we have a strong group of students who have already submitted applications.

A significant part of the success in transitioning to a virtual platform was support through the Eastern Triad Workforce Initiative. This initiative for workforce development in Alamance, Guilford, Randolph and Rockingham counties received an influx of CARES funding to address COVID-19-related expenditures. CAP was able to shoot video for all partner facilities, record student and company testimonials, purchase personal protective equipment, cover online learning subscriptions, convert to a digital application platform, and boost online marketing for the program.

While much of the focus for 2020 was on adjusting for COVID, we are very happy to also be planning the graduations for the very first cohort of apprentices this spring. We will also be putting forth a strong effort to recruit new companies to the program for increased placement options for students, and for companies to expand efforts to grow and train their own talent. To learn more, visit www.AlamanceCAP.com.

Economic Development

Business Support

It goes without saying that businesses faced a crisis and had questions arise they had not expected over the past year. What is an essential business? How do I ensure my employees can document they work for an essential business? How do I handle a COVID-19 positive case in my facility? What does EIDL mean? How do I apply for a Paycheck Protection Program loan? Existing industry support made a U-turn from a strong focus on workforce and talent to addressing COVID-19 questions and resource connections. The entire Chamber shifted to an existing industry support focus through many avenues which are detailed throughout this Annual Report. For economic development, several local manufacturers began to pivot production to personal protective equipment and had questions about supply chains and government contracts. Municipalities and industry struggled to locate masks for residents and employees. Others had revenue streams come to a complete stop and needed access to financial resources.

From mid-March 2020 the Chamber's existing industry support has continually been working with Alamance-area companies on an individual and group basis for all things Covid-19 related: local, state and federal resource connections and how to maximize their use; workforce guidance during a health crisis; documentation during state and local emergency declarations; access to and listings on supplier databases; avenues to both sell and purchase personal protection equipment; and vaccination planning among many other issues.

Services to our existing industries were able to grow and be more effective using virtual meeting platforms as we can reach a larger audience than our board room will allow. Expanded reach to companies came at a critical time to help a wide variety of local businesses from the small business up to our largest employer as they addressed the challenges and opportunities brought on by the coronavirus.

Chamber Partners in Promotion of Local Census



Almost lost in all the other news and events of 2020 was the federal effort to conduct the Census. However, the importance of the census was not lost on local officials and several efforts were undertaken to promote participation in the count.

The Chamber and the Alamance County Economic Development Foundation partnered with Impact Alamance to fund a coordinator to work with the county census committee to promote the impact of the census and to encourage people to respond.

Linda Jones was hired in February of 2020 and worked through August to bring attention to the census through speaking engagements (prior to COVID restrictions), organizing media campaigns, and other promotions. "It was important to try and get as strong a response as possible because of the financial impact those numbers have on our county" said Jones. "Once the census numbers are finalized", she continued, "those numbers dictate state and federal funding levels coming to the county for the next 10-years."

New Jobs & Investment - Welcome News During 2020



“Based on prospect activity in early 2020, Alamance County was poised to have a banner year” said Chamber President, Mac Williams. Williams, who also serves as the economic developer for the county, shared that “while the status of a number of those projects changed, we are fortunate the UPS and Chick-Fil-A projects continued their site selection process all the way through to final selection of sites in Alamance County.”

The Chamber is pleased to welcome these two iconic brands which formally announced their projects in the fall of 2020. UPS will build a \$262 million sorting hub eventually creating 450 jobs, and Chick-Fil-A will build a \$52 million distribution center employing 160 individuals.

Since both projects will involve new construction, it will take three to five years for both to reach full investment and job numbers. Both projects will be in Mebane with the UPS site located in the North Carolina Commerce Park and the Chick-Fil-A site in the North Carolina Industrial Center.

In 2016, the Alamance Economic Development Foundation set investment and job goals for a five-year period (2017-2021) to coincide with the 2016 fundraising timeframe. With these two announcements, the Chamber has far exceeded the 5-year goal of \$250 million in capital investment and are nearly at the 1500 jobs goal. Since 2017, eleven new and expanding industry projects have been announced totaling \$425,200,000 in capital investment and 1265 jobs. Williams said “2021 is starting off strong just as 2020 did. I am hopeful we can add some other exciting projects to this impressive list and meet all of our five-year goals.”

	Company	Investment	Jobs
2017	Cambro	\$10,000,000	*
	PRA Group	\$4,000,000	500
	Airgas	\$47,000,000	35
		\$61,000,000	535
2018	Honda Power Equipment	\$10,500,000	*
	Lotus Bakeries	\$17,400,000	*
	UPI	\$17,000,000	39
		\$44,900,000	39
2019	National OnDemand	\$1,100,000	33
	Chandler Concrete	*	*
	Flexaust	\$4,200,000	47
		\$5,300,000	80
2020	UPS	\$262,000,000	451
	Chick-fil-A	\$52,000,000	160
		\$314,000,000	611

* No figure announced

\$425,200,000

1,265



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