



# North Baldwin Chamber of Commerce

## 2020 Annual Report

### MISSION

The North Baldwin Chamber of Commerce is a **business focused, member supported organization that works with the community** to develop sustainable economic growth and to enhance the quality of life for all residents, business owners and employees.

Our method is to develop a strategic plan for business and economic development and to designate committees that work with partners at local, county and national levels to deliver our projected outcomes.

**Our role is to represent the interests of our members and the wider community, and by doing so we are a united voice for progress in our area.**

### FOCUS AREAS

Business & Membership Development

Economic Development

Education & Workforce Development

Community Development

Governmental Affairs

Organizational Management & Staff

**\*\*Includes Special Work Report – COVID-19 and Hurricane Sally\*\***

**\*\*Social Media and Website 2020 Statistics\*\***

### 2020 ANNUAL REPORT BY FOCUS AREA

#### Business & Membership Development

**-53 new members** in 2020 with an 89.189% member retention rate and ending 2020 with **317 Members**; Average Dues Paid - \$186; Organizational Cost Per Member - \$695; Membership **Return on Investment 373%**

-Membership Development Manager hired in March 2020 to focus on and serve as a single point of contact for the Chamber Members

-Online Membership Application created to allow businesses an easier and faster way to join and engage with the Chamber

-24 Member focused events included: **3 Networking @ Noon Events, 10 Ribbon Cuttings, 8 Workshops/Virtual Events** (Grow With Google, EEOC Workshop, JP Morgan Market Update, Glenn Shepard Webinar, Google YouTube Workshop, BIS Cybersecurity Webinar, BBB Small Business Scams Webinar, 2x Congressional Updates with Congressman Byrne), **2 After Hours Events** (Hamburgers + Headshots Member Appreciation and Downtown Block Party), and **Annual Meeting & Dinner**

-Launched 'Meet our Members Monday' to highlight North Baldwin Advantage Partners – 4 Advantage Partners Participated

-Continue to offer Business Development Resources at no cost to potential and existing business owners

- #LocalLikeMe social media campaign continued in North Baldwin to encourage citizens and business to Shop, Eat and Play Local; #LocalLikeMe Lilly made a few appearances throughout the year as well.

-North Baldwin Advantage saw 10 partners in 2020 totaling approximately \$76,000 in investment to chamber programing and events

-Continued to offer Health Benefits Program (Health, Dental & Vision) for chamber members through partnership with CCAA and Iron ReHealth.

## **Economic Development**

-Continue to work with partners – City of Bay Minette, Baldwin County Commission, Baldwin County EDA, Utility Companies, Bay Minette IDB, Etc – to encourage business growth and development that will complement existing business and industry in our area.

-Continued to provide Administrative services to the Industrial Development Board for the City of Bay Minette.

-Continue to promote [www.DiscoverNorthBaldwin.com](http://www.DiscoverNorthBaldwin.com) and the assets in our area that attract tourists; Discover North Baldwin landing page had 1,369 pageviews in 2020, an increase from 1,299 in 2019; Most popular DNB webpages by page views are Fishing (306), Hunting (290), Historical Sites to See (275), Landings (271), Campgrounds (203), Close Encounters (202).

-The 2020 *Discover North Baldwin Magazine* was published and the Chamber distributed 3,000 magazines throughout local events, businesses, regional airports and welcome centers throughout Alabama.

-Distributed magazines and maps to all 8 welcome centers throughout the state of Alabama and to the Pensacola and Mobile Airports totaling 200 maps, and 1,030 Magazines to those locations alone.

-Due to the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic the Chamber building saw less than 1,000 visitors in 2020, averaging less than 20 people per week.

-Continue to promote ecotourism through partnerships with the Regional Tourism Council and [www.visitcoastalalabama.org](http://www.visitcoastalalabama.org). The VCA website continues to be a top ten referring website to NorthBaldwinChamber.com

-Coastal Alabama Partnership received a Restore Grant for Ecotourism in our Region; North Baldwin Chamber Executive Director is serving on the committee for selection of an agency and consulting with selected agency to implement Regional Ecotourism asset mapping, branding and promotion

## **Education and Workforce Development**

-Young Professionals awarded \$5,000 in scholarships to 8 local students at BCHS and Coastal Alabama Community College in Bay Minette

-Graduated 6<sup>th</sup> Class of Junior Ambassadors, awarding \$5,750 in scholarships total to the 9 graduating seniors along with 4 partial scholarships to Coastal Alabama Community College to 4 of the 9 graduating seniors.

- 7<sup>th</sup> Class of Junior Ambassadors launched in Summer 2020 with 9 students.
- As of 2021, 48 Students have participated in the Junior Ambassador Program since 2014
- Continued partnerships with Baldwin County Board of Education, Southwest AL Works (SAWDC), North Baldwin Coalition for Excellence in Education and the Baldwin County Education Coalition
- All schools in the North Baldwin Feeder Pattern have maintained membership with the chamber
- Partnered with the Alabama Career Center to host Annual Career (Job) Fair in Bay Minette

## **Community Development**

- Continued promotion and assistance with community events hosted by chamber members and the City of Bay Minette (i.e. Baldwin County Career Expo, National Day of Prayer, Firehouse Golf Scramble, BCEC Golf Tournament, NBI Foundation Golf Tournament, Burgers & Bingo, Ladies Night Out Raffle, etc.)
- Continued production of the following North Baldwin Chamber community events – 10 Day Giveaway, Crawfish Cook Off (cancelled due to covid-19 in 2020 – replaced with a Crawfish Carry-out Event), 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Delta Dash (cancelled due to Hurricane Sally in 2020), Veterans Day Parade and Korean War Memorial Ceremony, 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Christmas Fest (cancelled due to covid-19 in 2020 – replaced with Virtual Vendor Viewing event and Santa Clause through Town event)
- Continued partnership with the City of Bay Minette through the Chamber Foundation on the Bay Minette in Bloom Campaign, donating \$2,900 at our Annual Meeting (March 2020) for the project, and collected more \$2,750 in 2020 to be awarded in 2021
- Chamber Foundation continues to serve as the designated nonprofit development corporation which represents public and private interests for the purpose of seeking funding for community development initiatives, as an Alabama Community of Excellence (ACE) designated community

## **Governmental Affairs**

- The Baldwin County Chamber Coalition (all 5 Baldwin County Chambers) collaboratively published the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Baldwin County Business Legislative Agenda representing 3,500 members and 74,000 employees
- Hosted U.S. Congressional Candidate Forum prior to Primary Election for US House District 1 in partnership as the Baldwin County Chamber Coalition
- Published ongoing voter education (i.e. resources for how to vote, where to vote, when to vote, sample ballots, links to find information on candidates and amendments, etc.)
- Census 2020 education and promotion – continuous throughout 2020, participated in Census Day promotion in Alabama in August 2020
- Attended the Business Council of Alabama Legislative Reception
- Baldwin Beach Express 2 amendment education campaign to members and community

-Conducted the 2021 Legislative Agenda Survey in preparation for the 2021 Alabama Legislative agenda and session

### **Organizational Management & Staff**

-2020 Board of Directors' Retreat held for annual planning in February 2021

-2020 Budget approved by Board of Directors

-Board Members & Executive Director attended the CCAA Board Bootcamp (4 Board Members attended)

-Baldwin County Commission Contract Annual Reporting completed along with request for and approval of renewal of appropriations agreement

-New, streamlined, membership dues structure implemented in August 2020

-Executive Director attended CCAA Summer Professional Development Conference

-Entire Chamber Staff attended CCAA Fall Professional Development Conference

-Chamber hosted watch party for BCA/CCAA Annual Meeting and Alabama Small Business Awards as North Baldwin had 2 Finalist in separate categories for awards – Blooming Fabulous and BC Fitness

-Operational Software and Website upgrade approved by the Board of Directors in December 2020, to be implemented in 2021

- North Baldwin Chamber of Commerce maintains state accreditation through 2022

-Executive Director, Ashley Jones Davis, served on the Chamber of Commerce Association Board of Directors in 2020 and as the Vice Chair of Programs for the statewide organization.

-Membership Development Manager, Cameron Lewis, began the 2020-2021 Leadership Baldwin County Class and will graduate in May 2021

-Staff participated in Coastal Alabama Partnership's Coastal Chambers Planning Retreat to explore opportunities to work together to benefit the Coastal Alabama Region

### **\*\*Special Work Report – COVID-19 and Hurricane Sally\*\***

#### **COVID-19 Specific Work Report**

-Created and maintained COVID-19 Resource Page for business on website

-Maintained up to date and accurate communication regarding state regulations, funding opportunities (PPP, EIDL, Loans, Grants, etc), local information on COVID-19, and more through all social media channels and email distribution (to include 25 COVID-19 Specific emails sent between March 18<sup>th</sup> & May 29<sup>th</sup> sent to an average of 1,400 email addresses each time, with an average open rate of 28.03%)

-Created Social Distance Dining page on website with up-to-date information on local restaurants (Hosted 2 Takeout Blitz Weekends, Launched Social Distance Dining Campaign on Social Media, hosted Support North Baldwin Business Virtual Event daily on social media for April 2020)

- Launched North Baldwin Chamber Member Network Group through Facebook for our business owners to connect and share updates and tips during pandemic
- Hosted Chick-Fil-A food truck event at Chamber to serve dual purpose of offering 'something new' while advertising all local restaurants to all patrons that day; sparked a food truck influx in community
- Designated one staff member to serve as a dedicated SBA/CARES Act Expert for North Baldwin Businesses and Chamber Members (Staff continuously attended webinars with the SBA, SBDC and Alabama Works; continuously monitored everchanging legislation; and continuously served as THE resource for local businesses during the COVID-19 Pandemic with information on PPP and EIDL funding opportunities among other items)
- Condensed legislation, state orders and other COVID-19 guidelines to one page, easily interpreted information sheets made available to the business community
- By the end of April 2020 all 300+ chamber members were contacted by phone to check in, evaluate their needs and provide information and resources if needed
- Maintained contact with local industries deemed essential during the shutdown to evaluate current needs for the business and their employees to assist where needed
- Worked collaboratively with all 5 Baldwin County Chambers to survey memberships on multiple occasions to assess current business operations, their needs for reopening business and meeting state guidelines that was summarized and presented to the Small Business Commission Task Force on reopening Alabama, and to continuously monitor the ever changing needs of Baldwin County Businesses during the pandemic
- Partnered with Baldwin County EMA for long term recovery planning for business and staff served on the Baldwin County Recovery Task Force to create the Baldwin Together Recovery Center to serve the citizens of Baldwin County. Staff specifically served on the Economic Impact Subcommittee to evaluate and project potential impacts to the community
- The North Baldwin Chamber Foundation established the Small Business Relief Fund to provide immediate relief to local small businesses in North Baldwin. The Fund raised \$46,112.57 through private donations from business and individuals, awarded \$28,675 in grants to 20 local small businesses, and currently maintains a balance of \$17,437.57 to be awarded

### **Hurricane Sally Specific Work Report**

- Following Hurricane Sally the Baldwin County Emergency Management Agency (BCEMA) requested assistance from the North Baldwin Chamber of Commerce to assist with coordination of Business Information and Recovery Efforts inside the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The North Baldwin Chamber provided **70.5 hours** of staff time to assist the BCEMA inside the EOC
- North Baldwin Chamber Staff comprised a list of Business Resources for Recovery that was distributed through all 5 Baldwin County Chambers of Commerce
- Created, distributed, monitored, summarized, and provided results for a Business Survey to assess Baldwin County Business Operations and Needs following Hurricane Sally. All information was shared with each Baldwin County Chamber to provide follow up to businesses in each community by their local chamber of commerce

-Assisted in monitoring local city and chamber social media sites to share appropriate information through Baldwin County EMA

-Organized weekly calls between all 5 Baldwin County Chambers to provide updates from each community to EMA and for EMA to provide information and updates to Chambers

-Implemented, coordinated, designed, and promoted Facebook Friday Live Events with FEMA and SBA reps with updates for the community as well as with live Q&A opportunities with the representatives

-Provided graphic design services for information shared through BCEMA and pushed to the public through local municipal and chamber social media pages throughout the county

## Social Media and Website 2020 Statistics

### Social Media Updates

-The North Baldwin Chamber utilizes Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and Pinterest

-**Facebook** – 4,226 followers as of the end of 2020 and increase of 591 throughout the year (16.26% increase)

-**Twitter** – @NorthBaldwinCoC – 121 followers at the end of 2020 (108 at end of 2019 – 12% Increase)

-**Instagram** – @NorthBaldwinChamber – 1063 followers at end of 2020 (979 at end of 2019 – 8.58% Increase)

-**Pinterest** – 167 Followers, 2.3k views per month

-**LinkedIn** – Launched in 2020 – 74 followers and 102 page visits

### www.NorthBaldwinChamber.com // Website Stats for 2020

-48,988 Pageviews in 2020

-Averaging 4,082 pageviews per month

Lowest // January 2,963 page views

Highest // March 4,917 pageviews

#### Top Pages on northbaldwinchamber.com

Home page – 6,727

Members – 2,889

Calendar – 2,115

Delta Dash – 2,063

38th Annual Christmas Fest – 1,529

Member Listing 2697 – 1,416

Discover North Baldwin – 1,369

Coronavirus Updates & Resources – 1,176

#### Top User Cities

Bay Minette – 1651

Atlanta – 1645

Daphne – 1405

Mobile – 1066

Fairhope – 790

New Orleans – 758

Foley – 621

Spanish Fort – 595



2018-2022



ALABAMA ACCREDITED  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**\*Please note that these are just the highlights of the year, for more information on North Baldwin Chamber programs, initiatives and event please visit [www.NorthBaldwinChamber.com](http://www.NorthBaldwinChamber.com) or contact Ashley Jones Davis, Executive Director at 251.937.5665 ext2 or [ashley@northbaldwinchamber.com](mailto:ashley@northbaldwinchamber.com)**