

2020-2021

THE SHOALS

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
ANNUAL REPORT

BETTER TOGETHER



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Caitlin Holland
President

This year taught us to expect the unexpected. Our community was tested, our weaknesses were exposed, and some of us felt the weight of the world more than others. However, this year also showed us the strength of our community, and how “resilient” is a word that can forever be used to describe the Shoals. In a year of division and separation, our community worked toward the betterment of the Shoals as a whole through partnerships, donations, and overwhelming support. While there is no way to know what this new year will bring, we are confident in the Shoals’ ability to overcome and thrive – and that is because of you.

While some of our businesses closed their doors and almost all pivoted operations, we worked often around the clock—knowing our members and our community needed us more than ever. We listened to your needs, we advocated on your behalf, and we encouraged our community to support your business. As one member put it, “I just wanted to say thank you all for keeping us informed and being a light. This is exactly why we need our Chamber.”

This past year, the Shoals Chamber was pressed to re-evaluate, to ensure we were committed to best practices, and to safeguard the healthy quality of life that exists in the Shoals. Here is how we did that:

We Led.

- We co-branded with the Shoals Economic Development Authority to create a united workforce recognizable to the state and nation. The co-branding initiative allows for new programming opportunities for our members, enhanced funding for current programs, and collaborative goals for the economic growth of the Shoals.
- Our board formalized the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee to proactively establish best practices for our businesses in terms of HR processes, internal unconscious-bias trainings, and the connection, awareness, and inclusion of minority-owned businesses in the Shoals.
- We created the “VOTE2020” Campaign to establish opportunities to educate voters and create platforms for the citizens of the Shoals to communicate with, learn from, and make their voices heard by the local, state, and federal-elected representation. We partnered with NextGen Shoals to organize virtual mayoral forums that allowed each of the quad-cities to hear from their mayoral candidates, and we constructed a brand-new website (www.whoswhoshoals.com) that provides citizens of the Shoals with contact information for our elected officials.

We Adapted.

- With the help of the Shoals EDA, we designed the Shoals Shopper website that allowed for all businesses of the Shoals to participate in a centrally-promoted resource for our citizens. This website curated up-to-date policies, operations and information on the ever-changing landscape of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- -We re-imagined our online communication tools to effectively connect with our members, including the ability for members to correspond with each other about member-to-member benefits and needs.

We Engaged.

- As a member of this community, you are important to us. Whether your business is a member or not, we pledge to support you to the best of our abilities. Throughout the year, we hope that you felt our genuine concern for you, your business and your family. We made personal phone calls and visits to our businesses, and while we know those are just nice touches, we truly hope that you know we care.
- While we consistently have promoted the tagline Shop the Shoals, we worked to increase the strength of this mantra, to generate more interest in our businesses on social media platforms, and to engage more of our industries in the idea of shopping locally.



We made an Impact.

- We know it might not ever be enough, but we hope your business felt the positivity generated from our “Keep the Cheer Here” campaign. Our staff worked around the clock to energize the Shoals to shop and support our local businesses through social media videos, member-only deals, and partnerships with our local radio and news networks to publicize our local businesses. Community engagement with the Chamber’s social media platforms rose 125%, which allowed us to put more of your content and information in front of our residents.
- With the support of our board, we entered the new year with a newly-formed partnership with the Small Business Development Center Network of Alabama. This partnership gives new business owners and entrepreneurs the opportunity to receive free one-on-one business advising, training and technical assistance to ensure the tenure and success of a business in the state of Alabama.

As a collective-impact organization, we are strong because of members like you. Your investment allowed us to help and to serve our community in so many ways. Thank you for continuing to support our community and enhance the economic vitality of the Shoals through your investment in the Shoals Chamber.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Holland
President

CONTENTS

3 BOARD
OF
DIRECTORS

4 FINANCE &
ADMINISTRATION

5 EDUCATION &
WORKFORCE
READINESS

6 MEMBERSHIP

7 COMMUNICATIONS
& EVENTS

8 PUBLIC POLICY &
GOVERNMENTAL
RELATIONS

MISSION & VISION

The mission of the Shoals Chamber of Commerce is to enhance the economic vitality of the Shoals through **advocacy**, **connectivity**, and **education**.

The vision of the Shoals Chamber of Commerce is to be the bridge to an educated, productive workforce; an innovative, pro-business climate; and a connected, diverse community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Ryan Moore, Chair, Peoples Trust Bank
Billy Hammock, Chair-Elect, Creative Jewelers
Jill Andrews, 2nd Chair-Elect, Create Architects
Mark Reid, Immediate Past Chair, Reid Construction
Mike Randall, Vice-Chair Business Growth, Coldwell Banker Pinnacle Properties
Jackie Hendrix, Vice-Chair Government Affairs, Party Pros USA
Rhonda Richardson, Vice-Chair Finance & Administration, Florence Housing Authority

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Andrea Holt, Shoals CASA
Anita Whitaker, CB&S Bank
Ashley Morrow, Alchemy/Click Synergy
Brynn Albretson, Chick-fil-a Florence
Chris Estave, First Metro Bank
David Reed, State Farm
Deboral Bell Paseur, Johnson, Paseur & Medley, LLC
Dr. Glenda Colagross, North-West-Shoals Community College
Dr. Kenneth Kitts, University of North Alabama
Greg Taylor, CB&S Bank
Janyce Fadden, UNA College of Business
Justin Bishop, Pounders & Associates
Kathleen Edwards, KBE Creative
Keith Crowden, CB&S Bank
Kyle Buchanan, Helen Keller Hospital
Kyrel Buchanan, Sanoa Consulting
Mark Keech, North American Lighting, Inc.
Mickey McClure, Bank Independent
Mike McCrary, First Bank
Rebecca Hovater, State Farm
Russell Pigg, North Alabama Medical Center
Shaler Roberts, Retired
Sherri Ann Stout, Birthday Direct
Will Pebworth, Regions Bank



FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION

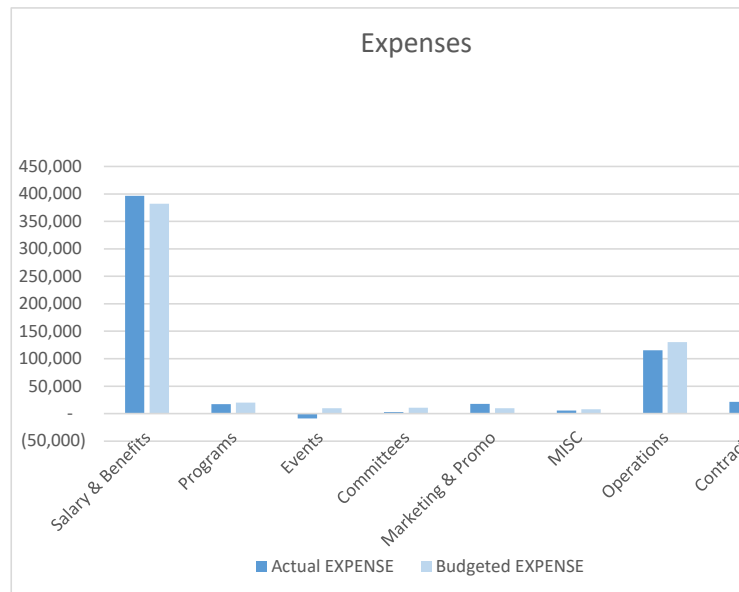


Barbara Hunt
Senior Vice-President, Finance & Administration

INCOME ACCOUNTS

The 2020-2021 budget experienced a unique year, as the Chamber's largest event, Annual Celebration, was postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions. The rescheduled event took place on September 17, 2020. Many of the Chamber's events, trips and external meetings were canceled throughout the year, as the Chamber and the Shoals pivoted away from meeting in-person. This allowed for an expense savings.

INCOME ACCOUNTS



BUDGETED INCOME

\$630,457

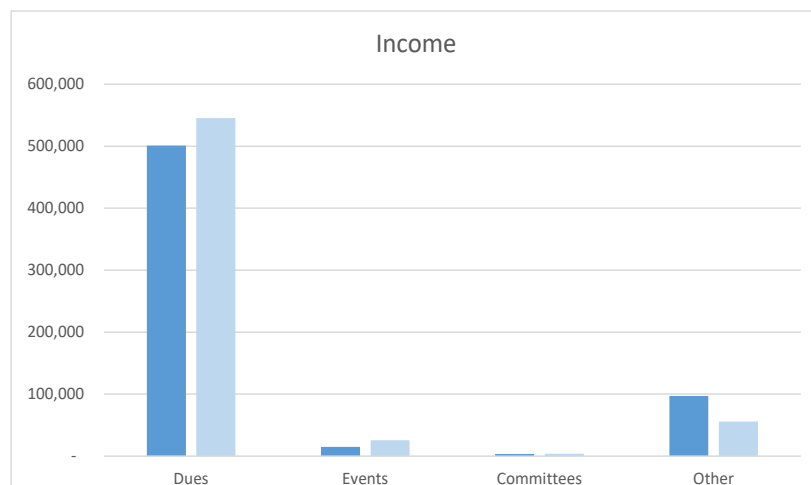
ACTUAL INCOME

\$616,442

VARIANCE

▼ \$14,015

EXPENSE ACCOUNTS



BUDGETED EXPENSE

\$582,048

ACTUAL EXPENSE

\$568,862

VARIANCE

▼ \$13,186

NET VARIANCE

\$27,201

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE READINESS



Stephanie Newland
Vice-President, Education & Workforce Readiness

Shoals Talent Pipeline Management (TPM) System

I took the “slow programming year” opportunity to attend (virtually) the U.S. Chamber’s Talent Pipeline Academy. The new Talent Pipeline Management program will enable us to help employers better meet their workforce recruiting and training needs using Supply Chain Management principles. TPM demand-driven, employer-led approach to close the skills gap that builds talent supply chains aligned to dynamic business needs, so employers will work in collaboratives to compare and show their shared “pain points,” so they can in turn better communicate their collective needs to training providers and establish specific training goals. Through continuous improvement, the collaborative, as end users, will evaluate results, then modify, communicate, and improve the process regularly.

TVA’s Workforce Institute

This ongoing program is establishing a method for how to evaluate and tell The Shoals local workforce story to employers, recruiters, and prospective talent.

Shoals YP (formerly NexGen)

Shoals YP has expanded its board and vision to increase future impact. One major goal is to develop a pilot professional mentoring program between their members and Chamber business members.

YouScience

YouScience SKILLS assessment system supports students with a one-of-a-kind platform that is proven to expand students’ vision of opportunities and create the future-ready workforce employers need. From aptitude to career discovery, YouScience helps build the foundation for students to be empowered, equipped, and engaged in skills and career development. Students accounts are active for ten years to allow for future assessments and new career alignments. The YouScience program is a great opportunity for schools to utilize COVID Relief funds for education and workforce development, and the program costs also qualify for Perkins funds.

2020-21 CANCELLED / VIRTUAL Educational Programs

CHOICES

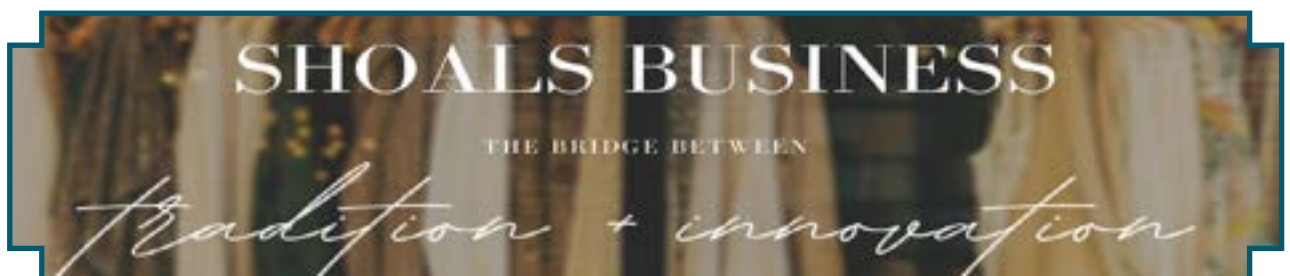
CHOICES shifted to a virtual version by November 2020, and though 15 volunteers were trained on the new program style, many were unable to based on bandwidth limitations and COVID restrictions within schools. One school was able to complete the virtual CHOICES class by March 31.

Workforce Readiness Institute – Career Education for Educators

Twenty-nine educators were ready to participate when Covid cancelled the 2020 program. Those same educators have been invited to participate in the 2021 summer program without needing to reapply.

Leadership Shoals

Twenty-two participants were enrolled in 2020-2021 Leadership Shoals program, and offers have been extended to the same participants for the 2021-2022 year without needing to reapply.



MEMBERSHIP



Rebecca Moon
Director, Membership

As our President, Caitlin Holland mentioned in her end of the year communication to our members, “This past year, the Shoals Chamber was pressed to re-evaluate, to ensure we were committed to best practices, and to safeguard the healthy quality of life that exists in the Shoals.”

Membership pressed forward in our re-evaluation and here is how we did that:

ACQUISITION

- Daily adding Potential Members to our weekly infographic email list that is up to 313
- Weekly contacting former Members to Win Back their support up to 613
- Monthly communicating to Active Members who are available for upgrades
- Quarterly posting FB Ads and Special Offers

RETENTION

- Education on Member Benefits in 30-60-90 day intervals
- Direct phone communication at 10 month status

IMPACT

- Yearly retention rate of 85%
- March 2021 had the highest new member count all year since the outbreak of COVID-19



 **63**

NEW CHAMBER MEMBERS

 **10**

RIBBON CUTTINGS

 **897**

PEAK MEMBERSHIP COUNT



COMMUNICATIONS AND EVENTS

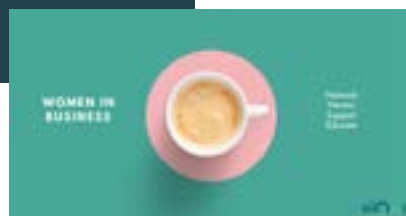
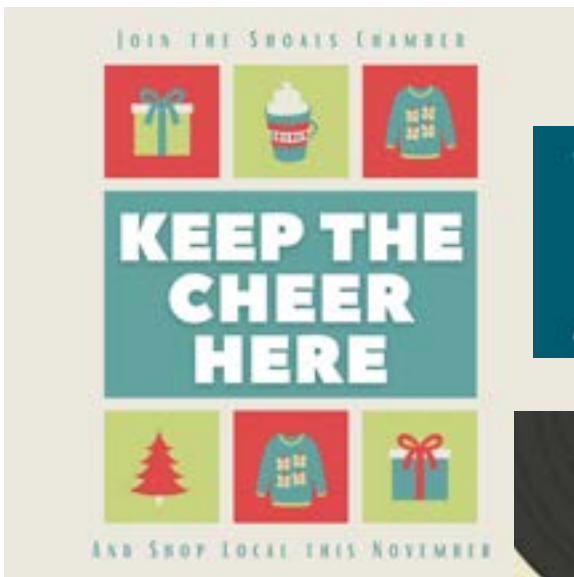


Olivia Bradford
Director, Communications and Events

Throughout the past year, the Shoals Chamber seized the opportunity to refocus efforts on the programs, events and initiatives that matter to The Shoals most. In order to effectively serve the entire region, the Shoals Chamber co-branded with the Shoals Economic Development Authority to produce a lasting, intentional brand.

The circular brand mark serves to present The Shoals as a unified community, nestled around the Tennessee River, that supports the people and activities of The Shoals.

In alignment with the core values stated in the Chamber's mission - advocacy, connectivity, and education - the Communications & Events division worked diligently to provide messaging, programming and events that would promote and encourage the business community of The Shoals.





PUBLIC POLICY AND ADVOCACY



Sam Mashburn

Director, Public Policy and Governmental Relations

MISSION

Governmental advocacy is critical to the Shoals Chamber's mission to serve as the voice of the business community. The mission of public policy and governmental relations efforts at the Shoals Chamber is to enable economic development in the Shoals by encouraging business-friendly public policy and improving community quality of life.

This year, the Chamber developed comprehensive Public Policy Agendas for state and federal legislation focusing on six key policy areas:

1. Business Development
2. Infrastructure
3. Education & Workforce Development
4. Employment & Labor
5. Taxation
6. Health Care

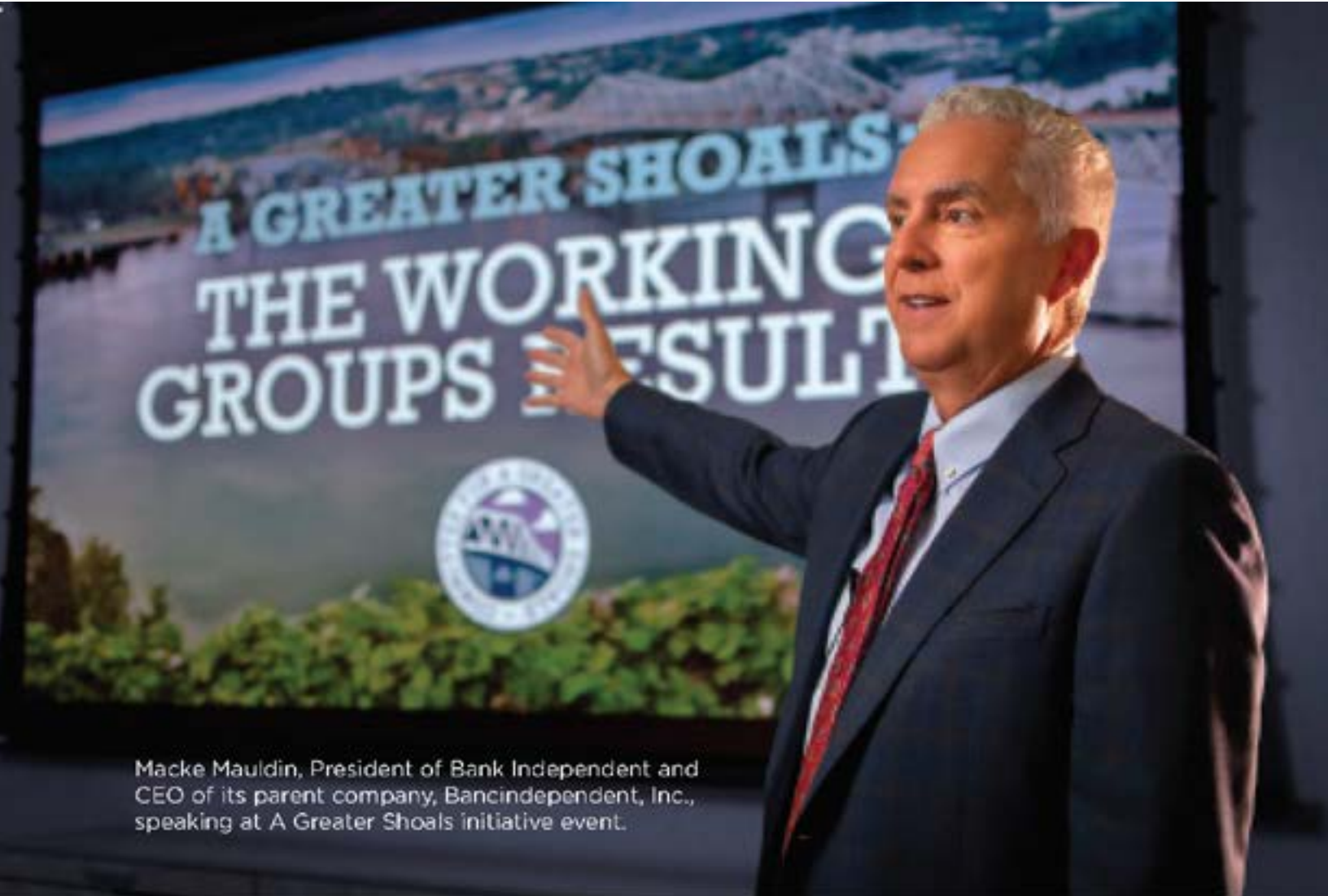
For more information on the Chamber's specific policy positions, please go to shoalschamber.com.

Washington Trip:

In April, representatives from the Shoals Chamber traveled to the nation's capital with the mayors of the Shoals' four cities. The trip was a great opportunity to meet with our elected representatives in Washington and bring important local issues to attention.

Some of the issues discussed included the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) change in guidelines defining Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), and the Essential Air Service Program (EAS). Our congressional delegation expressed support for working with the current administration to resolve the MSA designation issue that is putting federal funding in jeopardy for many projects in the Shoals, as well as potentially harming the economic development of the community. Additionally, our delegation expressed support of the EAS program, without which commercial air service in the Shoals would be impossible.

The Chamber will continue to monitor significant legislation in both Montgomery and Washington that is relevant to our membership community. We are committed to advocating for pro-business policies that enable growth in the Shoals.



Macke Mauldin, President of Bank Independent and CEO of its parent company, BancIndependent, Inc., speaking at A Greater Shoals initiative event.

The **DEVELOPMENT** *of* **OPPORTUNITY**

IMPROVEMENT · EMPOWERMENT · TRANSFORMATION

Economic development is measured by improvements to the economy and to the quality of life in a community. Bank Independent has built a 70-year history dedicated to boosting the economies and the people of the communities we serve. Ranked 4th largest bank in the State, we engage a workforce of over 600 team members and manage over \$2 Billion in assets. We deploy all our resources to empower our people to lend influence, time and talents to transform our region into a greater place to live, to work and to play. And by any measurement, we make a positive difference towards strong economic development.

Banking with impact. Bank Independent.

BANK  INDEPENDENT®

BIBANK.COM | MEMBER FDIC | 877.865.5050

THANK YOU FLORENCE

Mayor Andrew Betterton and the Florence City Council extend their gratitude to all Florence businesses for investing in our community.



City of Florence
P.O. Box 98
Florence, AL 35631



florenceal.org
256.760.6400



From Left to Right –
Bill Griffin, District 3;
Jimmy Oliver, District
6; Michelle Eubanks,
District 4; Mayor
Andrew Betterton; Dick
Jordan, Council
President, District 2;
Kaytrina Simmons,
District 1; & Blake
Edwards, District 5



START SMART.



Dream. Believe. Achieve. / nwsc.edu



SHOALS CHAMBER INVESTORS

VISIONARY PARTNERS (\$20,000+)

Bank Independent
City of Florence
Northwest-Shoals Community College

MISSION INVESTORS (\$10,000+)

Adventech & Ballman Metals
CB&S Bank
First Metro Bank
Helen Keller Hospital
North American Lighting
University of North Alabama

VITALITY INVESTORS (\$5,000+)

American Wholesale Book Company
BBVA Compass Bank
Bigbee Steel
Bobo Family Group, LLC
Essity
FirstBank
First Southern Bank
Flexco

FreightCar America
Listerhill Credit Union
Martin, Inc.
nSide, Inc.
Patterson, Prince and Associates, PC
Regions Bank
SunTrust Bank
TVA Community Credit Union

ADVOCATE INVESTORS (\$2,000+)

Abroms and Associates, PC
Alabama Land Services
Alliance Cancer Center
America's Thrift Stores
B Electric, Inc.
B.H. Craig Construction Co.
Bryan Legacy Services LLC
Buffalo Rock Pepsi
City of Tuscumbia
Constellium
CREATE Architects
ES Robbins Corporation
Florence Gas, Water, Waste Department
Hovater Construction
HPS North America
Johnson Contractors
JT Ray Printing Co.
Leigh, King, Norton and Underwood, LLC
Lewis Electric

Long-Lewis of the Shoals
Marriott Shoals Hotel and Spa
Milner Rushing Discount Drugs
Mitchell-Hollingsworth, Shoals Hospice, Shoals Home Health
Party Pros USA
Peoples Trust Bank
Pounders and Associates
Printers and Stationers, Inc.
Progress Bank
Sheffield Utilities
Shoals Hospice
Singing River Dentistry
Sirote & Permutt Law, PC
Southwire
Tandus Centiva by Tarkett
TASUS
The Assurance Group
The Long-Lewis Foundation
Trissl Sports Cars, TMT America, HP Schonox

SHOALS BUSINESS

THE BRIDGE BETWEEN

TRADITION &
INNOVATION

