

# ANNUAL REPORT

January—December 2016

### Inside this issue:

Membership	2
Meetings	
Social	
Communications	
Education	3
Governmental Affairs	
LYP	
Leadership Livingston	4
Community Outreach	4
Events	5
Business of the Year	5
Board Chair	
Board of Directors	6
LABI Award	

### Special points of interest:

- Chamber Celebrates 50 Years of Incorporation
- The Great Flood of 2016
- Launch of Back2Biz campaign
- Awarded Statewide Economic Development Partner by LABI
- D.C. Fly-in

## 2016—The Great Flood

Without a doubt, the year 2016 has brought more challenges to our parish and each of its communities than any other. Everyone was impacted by the flood whether your home or office was directly flooded or spared from the waters.

We witnessed the resilience of our communities and the hard work of our business community to not only get their businesses back up and running, but also, even in their own hard times, continue to be good stewards and help those in need. You fed, assisted,

encouraged and participated in any way you could to reach out to those impacted. We are overwhelmed with pride to know you and have a connection with you.



Like you, we had a flooded facility in our care to contend with. As soon as we had the damage under control, we continued to operate, as many of you did, in a gutted building. The priority in those days following, as always, was you.

#lovelivingstonparish

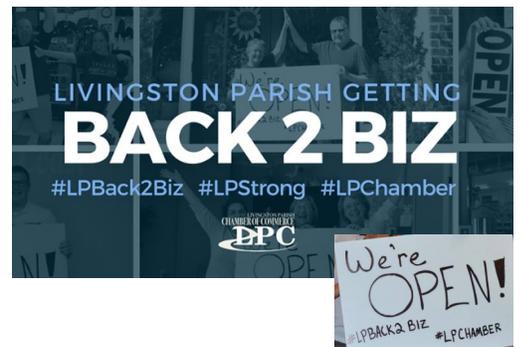


## Back 2 Biz & Flood Recovery

In about one week following the flood, the Chamber launched our “Back 2 Biz” initiative. You needed to know what was open and so did the nearby communities.

We were overwhelmed with your response. In the beginning days, the signage was markers on a piece of cardboard and that was enough.

The campaign reached over one hundred thousand and continues today as we highlight the businesses that are Back 2 Biz.



### CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



On November 23, 1966 the Chamber filed with the Louisiana Secretary of State as a non-profit corporation.

# Membership & Meetings

Over 117 events with 3,817 in attendance

Including annual meeting, general membership meetings, ribbon cuttings, committee meetings, Leads for Lunch, other networking events, signature events including EXPO : Gala : Golf

Our committees have shown much growth with over 100 volunteers and committee members engaged in the Chamber.

537 Members

17 Ribbon Cuttings



# Communications & Social



2,317 NEW LIKES    4,587 TOTAL LIKES    1 MILLION+ REACH



DOUBLED FOLLOWING WITH 368 NEW FOLLOWERS

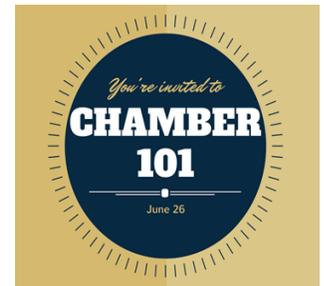


INCREASE IN OPENS 10,436 MORE THAN 2015  
SENT TO NEARLY 2,500 CONTACTS  
INCREASE OF 364 CONTACTS

Having an extensive reach benefits members of the chamber. More reach means more traffic driven to the Chamber's website and other online sources. That drives traffic to you—which we can review and know the reach. The Chamber's communications have grown dramatically after the flood where we nearly doubled our followers and reached nearly on million.

Twitter has more than doubled in followers. Community and businesses stay in touch through chamber communications. We streamlined and seg-

mented our email communications and increased our reach by more than 10,000 reads and an additional 364 contacts.



Members took advantage of Chamber 101 to keep up with all the new programs and offers.

# Member Website Presence/Exposure

**Businesses want EXPOSURE.** The Chamber provides access to opportunities for our members with the numbers to prove. Nearly **500,000 views** on our website in one year only! Sponsors have seen **402,259 hits**. Our job listings have also re-

ceived significant reach. A total of **10,732 clicks** on job listings posted by members. As this resource is used more, all benefit from the reach. Plus job seekers don't have to wade through thousands of jobs outside this area.



## Education

### Business & Education Partnership

Education Initiatives for 2016 included a continuation of the chamber's scholarship program and plans to broaden the reach of our "Student Leadership Conference" where business leaders interact with students on career paths. The conference included in 2015 segments were Career paths CEO roundtable, Team Building, Ethics in the workplace and beyond plus

resume and interview skills. Career readiness and hiring are priorities and focus for these education initiatives.

### Scholarships 2016

**8 of the 9 High Schools** in the Parish with **14 scholarships** total were awarded.

Academic Scholarships: Madelynn Varnado, **French Settlement High School**; Michael Starkey, **Holden High School**; Kacie Chopin & Jordan Paline, **Denham Springs High**

**School**; Logan Mayers, **Walker High School**; Madison Larson & Trevor Landry, **Live Oak High School**; Holly Garland, **Maurepas High School**; Matthew Arnett, **Holden High School**; Ability Beyond—Breanna Price, **Denham Springs High School**; Toby Ard, **Walker High School**; Career & Technical to Sydney McCreary, **Doyle High School**; Brianna Lobell, **French Settlement High School**; Erica Abels, **Springfield High School**.



## Livingston Young Professionals



*Formed in 2015 to provide an opportunity for young professionals to have actions, activities, leadership development and a voice of their own.*

**Livingston Young Professionals (LYP)** continues to grow with a total of 28 Charter Members! LYP was eager to hold a "Forgetting the HORRORible Flood" themed mixer with a respectable attendance.

Overall, there were nearly 300 attendees at both Mixers & Luncheons for the year. Great start to the newest group of the chamber!

### Charter Members

**Include:** Amy Konieczka, Brandy Roberts, Brittany Needham, Byron Gill, Chris Williams, Crystal Schmolke, Deidre Carney, Hannah Kimbrough, James McCants, Jeffrey LaRosa, Jennifer Olivier, Jessica McMorris, Krystal Dunaway, McHugh David, Mel Robertson, Tammy Copeland, Tasha Guarisco, Tiffany Gueho-Sicard, Nikki Sykora, Francesca DeLaune,



Nicole Elmore, Jamie Seal, Brittni Blankenship, Kacie Stewart, Tim Whittington, Kayla Matens, Lindsay Brumfield, and Kevin Foster

## Governmental Affairs

Adding an additional layer to business advocacy, in 2016, the Chamber's governmental affairs committee took on new agendas.



A DC Fly In was scheduled and held. It included an agenda that advocates for the parish's transportation and infrastructure.

Also part of the agenda was a flood control issues and NFIP concern for not only businesses but the full parish and region. Ironically, extensive conversations were held on the flood control sur-

rounding the lakes and the activities of other areas and how it affected residents of Livingston Parish.

Included were visits to each of our federal delegation, the US Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Issues, Education -Healthcare.



**Congressman Graves office in Washington DC.**

# Leadership Livingston

## 4th Year Class with 23 Total Graduates

**Class of 2016** Amie Barton, Regions Bank; Steven Bernard, Client Technology Services; Brittini Blankenship, Quality Engineering & Surveying, LLC; John C. Blount, Blount General Contractors, LLC; Michele Crosby, Attorney; Carl Duplessis, Jefferson Financial Credit Union; Tracy Girlinghouse, Livingston Parish Council; Lana Guay, Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce; David Hobbs, Media Choice, LLC; Cheryl Jeane,

Triton Healthcare; Percival Kane, North Oaks Health System; Mary Kistler, Livingston Parish President's Office; Amy Konieczka, Amy K & Co.; Kay Landry, Covington & Associates; Wayne Mack, Livingston Parish Assessors Office; Craig McGehee, Mayor of Killian; Todd Peters, Our Lady of the Lake; Sabrina Puryear, Ochsner Health Systems; Michael Sanchez, Labarre Associates, Inc.; Jennifer Seneca, Livingston Parish Library; Lori Steele, Livingston Parish Sheriff's Office; Clint Trant, First Guaranty Bank; Denisse Velazco, Papi's of Watson



## Community Projects



### Albany Community Park

"Team Vision" brought their talents and resources together to assist the efforts of two Albany High School students in bringing the first community park to the town of Albany. Contributions included web design & launch, marketing, surveys, engineering, conceptualizing & implementation.

**Project Impact: \$37,235**  
**Volunteer Hours: 1,000 +**



### Lighting in Antique District

A series of break-ins in the Denham Springs Antique District brought attention to a need for additional street lighting, not only to deter criminal activity but also to make the area more night friendly. The team responded by initiating and facilitating the installation of 9 additional street lights.

**Project Impact: \$11,850**  
**Volunteer Hours: 198**



### Killian Helipad

Team Heart & Sole partnered with Town of Killian by assisting with efforts to fulfill the need for a helicopter landing pad to be used for emergency operations.

### Shoes for Students

The team also coordinated a shoe drive which resulted in 155 pairs of shoes delivered to students in 17 Livingston Parish schools. Efforts are ongoing.

**Project Impact: \$36,567**  
**Volunteer Hours: 391**

**TOTAL PROJECT IMPACT**

**\$85,652.00**

**1,589 Hours**

**Impacting Thousands!**

**I SURVIVED!**

**SIMSOC**

#LeadershipLivingston

## Leadership & Chamber Connects

Challengers' Field & Walk-On's Check | Mighty Moms Check | Shoes for Students after the flood



## Events



### Gala

One of our funnest events. This years' Casino Night Gala featured MJ of Nola, silent auction, DJ, and good times with even better company.



### Golf

Even following the flood, members & golfers contacted the Chamber and encouraged us to move forward with the golf outing—so we did. It was great to get everyone together for the first time after the flood.

## Business & Community Expo & Job Fair / Stirrin' the Pot: Mayors' Cook-off

2016 was our largest EXPO yet! Over 1,000 in attendance and 120 vendors. The expo was 3 events in 1—Business & Community showcase, job/career fair, and adding a fun piece with the Mayors' Cook-off. "Stirrin' the Pot: Mayors' Cook-off" jambalaya challenge made for an entertaining afternoon. Mayors' called foul as Denham Springs Mayor Gerard Landry won the "people's choice award" with his version of jambalaya aka gumbo showing the importance of your community coming out to vote.



## Business of the Year & 2016 Board Chair

### 2016 Businesses of the Year

**Elite Chiropractic**—Small  
**Quality Engineering and Surveying, LLC**—Medium  
**Walk-On's Bistreaux & Bar**—New Business  
**Berkshire Hathaway Bobby Tallo Realty**  
 New Member of the Year—  
**Scott Innes' Hug Magazine**—Member of the Year  
**Congressman Graves**—Associate

**A Door of Hope**—Community Impact Award  
**Valery Watts, V. Watts Furniture**—Legacy Award  
**Chad Bacas**—Chairman's Award

**2015 Businesses of the Year**  
**Great American Cookie**—Small  
**Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers**—Medium  
**North Oaks Health System**—Large -  
**Rouses**—New Business

**Chick-fil-A**—Main Street  
**Southern Heirs Auction Company**—New Member  
 Member of the Year -  
**Quality Engineering & Surveying, LLC & Regions Bank**—Member Award  
**-Sheriff Jason Ard** Associate of the Year  
**John W. Fridge III, Livingston Waste Management, LLC** – Entrepreneur of Year  
**Jeff McHugh David of The Livingston Parish News**  
 Legacy Business Award -  
**Karla Needham** Chairman's Award -



**Brian Abels**  
 2016 Chairman  
 Boyer, Hebert, Abels & Angelle, LLC

[www.LivingstonParishChamber.org](http://www.LivingstonParishChamber.org)

2016

Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce  
P.O. Box 591—248 Veterans Blvd.  
Denham Springs, LA 70726

Contact Us:  
(225) 665-8155  
staff@livingstonparishchamber.org



2016 Livingston Parish Chamber wins State-wide award as Economic Development Partner presented by Louisiana Association of Business & Industry (LABI) for its efforts in business & community advocacy in promotion of the free enterprise system.



#SHOPLIVINGSTONPARISH  
#LOVELIVINGSTONPARISH



## 2016 Board of Directors

**Brian Abels**, Boyer, Hebert, Abels & Angelle LLC, Board Chair.; **Chad Bacas**, Forte & Tablada Inc., Incoming Chair; **Wayne Dugas**, Lard Oil Co., Outgoing Chair; **Kim Sanders**, L.A. Champagne & Company, LLP, Treasurer; **Candy Forbes**, Denham Springs

Housing, Vice Chair; **John Blount**, Blount General Contractors, Vice Chair; **John Holmes**, Holmes Building Materials; **Amie Barton**, Regions Bank; **Shannon Bernard**, Primerica; **Mike Cotton**, Office Depot; **Todd Caruso**, Attorney at Law; **Ronnie Foshee**, First

Guaranty Bank; **Margot May**, The Livingston Business Journal; **Sherry Mely**, BancorpSouth; **Deric Murphy**, Quality Engineering & Surveying LLC; **Craig Schimpf**, Entergy; **Regina Scott**, North Oaks Health System; **Jill Wyble**, Our Lady of the Lake; **April Wehrs**, Chamber President/CEO. Not pictured: **Todd Caruso** Attorney & **Kacie Steward**—Stewart Family Medicine

**STAFF:** **Karla Needham**, Office Manager & Executive Assistant; **Lana Guay**, Communications & Marketing Assis-

