



2023 ANNUAL **IMPACT REPORT**



Our **VISION** is to be the Leading Catalyst **FOR A BETTER OPELIKA.**

Our **MISSION:** The Opelika Chamber Strengthens our Community as the **Champions of Business.**

KEY PILLARS:



Build Bridges



Elevate Business



Cultivate Community



Achieve Excellence

CORE VALUES: Practice Positivity, Earnestly Build Bridges, Aspire to Excellence, Earn Trust, Seek Continuous Growth, Execute Servant Leadership



U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Chamber of Commerce



Association of Alabama



2023: 83 Years. Five Stars. One Exceptional Organization.

The Opelika Chamber champions business and 2023 only served to propel that mission to a new level of expectation. After our incredible Forward Opelika initiative helped the Opelika Chamber board of directors and the Opelika Chamber Foundation raise over \$3.1 Million last year, this year, we got to work. We closed on our construction loan in August and immediately started construction with our partners.

As we near that one-year-later mark, we are so close to seeing the finished product of our newly renovated 15,000 SF facility that will be home to our team, the Auburn Opelika Tourism Team, a state-of-the-art Auburn Opelika Visitor Experience, training center, meeting space, and so much more. We can't wait for you to see it. In December, we took that work one step further when we welcomed our director of business and workforce development to the team, Joel Alvarado. We also officially launched the Opelika Workforce Council, an entity made up of powerhouse CEO's and leaders who are committed to ensuring our business community has the workforce they need to succeed. More work to come on that front so stay tuned!

Following our successful re-launch of our annual REACH Campaign last Fall, we elevated our success by serving 240 businesses, beating our campaign goal by 11.5% and nearly 40% of our volunteers reached their goals to earn memorable rewards. We look forward to this Fall for our REACH 2024 Campaign to kick off!

Finally, we have so many incredible accomplishments to share, including that we:

- Welcomed 182 new members and celebrated a 95% retention rate.
- Celebrated 73 ribbon cuttings, of which, 43 were NEW businesses who chose to open their business in our community and invest with the Opelika Chamber!
- Launched the Opelika Young Professionals program, a membership organization for individuals age 21-45 who are looking to find their place in Opelika!
- Hosted the 2nd Annual All-Things Marketing Summit, a one-day marketing conference to serve businesses in the Southeast, to great success & an increase of 50% attendance.
- Introduced the community to two new first-responder appreciation events, including an annual family focused BBQ, and a black-tie Valor Public Safety Awards event (all of which are free for our first responders).
- Executed 256 events (another broken record) in the last 12 months.

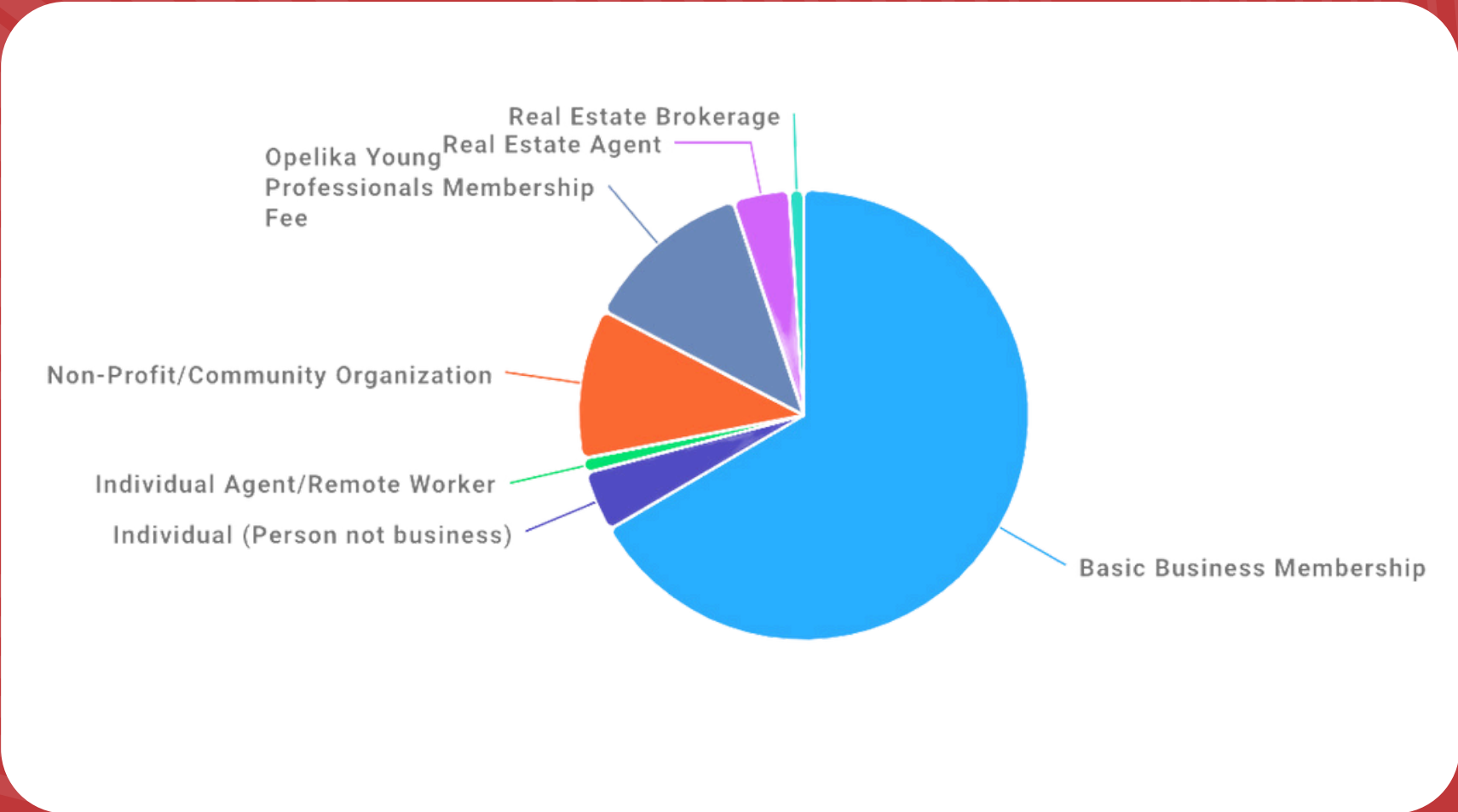
Accolades this year weren't in short supply either. Our Explore Opelika was named the best publication in the country through its Excellence in Communication Award by the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives. Additionally, I was honored to be named the "Chamber Champion" an award dedicated to an up-and-coming chamber executive across the State by Alabama Chambers.

If it isn't apparent, the Opelika Chamber is tackling big challenges with a focus on transformational impacts for our community, which helps us to fulfill our vision to be a leading catalyst for a better Opelika. We could not do what we do without the support and love our business community has shown to the Opelika Chamber this past year. Thank you!



Membership

1,061 TOTAL MEMBERS SINCE JUNE 2024



Member Services



73 Ribbon Cuttings



256 Events Held



182 New Members



95% Retention Rate

Building Community



Last year's **Snopelika Christmas Parade & Tree Lighting** was a massive hit! Over 15,000 attendees and their families gathered in downtown Opelika for a magical night!



This was the first-ever **First Responders BBQ!** Families & leaders were able to enjoy this free event with fun outdoor games, bbq, snacks, sponsor goodies, music and more! We served approximately 250 first responders & their families.



Food Truck Fridays happen every month, and average over 1,500 attendees per event! This event has also brought more food trucks to Opelika! In 2022 there were 38 food trucks compared to the 51 in 2023!



Our second **ATM Summit** filled a gap for marketing training & conference! Attendees heard from marketing, video, and media speakers. Year 1 attendance was 105. Year 2 attendance was 150.

Leadership Development Programs



Lee County Young Leaders is a county-wide program designed to nurture and develop positive leadership qualities in 34 high school students representing all of Lee County. 8 students are from Opelika! The program begins in September and includes 8 sessions concluding with a graduation ceremony in April.



Opelika's 20 Under 40 Program is made up of 20 outstanding individuals under the age of 40 who live in Opelika. The program is in its 15th year & is designed to expose highly motivated young professionals the intricate workings of The City of Opelika, school system, industry, public service and more through 2 retreats, 2 socials, 16 sessions and a class selected service project.



The Opelika Young Professionals (OYP) is a new membership organization of the Opelika Chamber of Commerce for people ages 21-45. OYP will provide opportunities to make meaningful connections with other young professionals and local leaders. We attract, retain, and empower young talent with skills and resources. We currently have over 200 young professionals interested in the program & plan to have even more with the official launch of the program in January 2024.

Online Reach



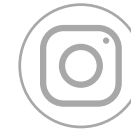
181,095 website page views



46% Average Open Rate for Emails
(10% higher than industry average open rate)
148 Email Campaigns >> 3,464 contacts
>> 123,475 opens >> 7,775 clicks



Facebook – 10,676 likes, **14,110 followers**



Instagram – **4,220 followers**



LinkedIn – **1,600 followers**



Youtube – **60 subscribers**



Opelika Young Professionals

Facebook – 243 likes, 310 followers
Instagram – 650 followers



Lee County Young Leaders

Facebook – 156 likes, 269 followers



20 Under 40

Facebook – 334 likes, 495 followers

2023 Board of Directors



DR. LINDA NORTH



DR. JASON BRYANT



JAY JONES



TABATHA WHITE



CLAY LANE



ROBYN BRIDGES



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MORGAN VICKERS



BARBI AGRICOLA



NICK ARMISTEAD



MALCOLM MARSHALL



MIKE SUTTERER



LORI HUGULEY



MAYOR GARY FULLER

5-Star Accreditation

The Opelika Chamber earned its Five-Star Accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. This designation is a “first” for the Opelika Chamber and was awarded for the organization’s sound policies, effective procedures, and positive impact in the community.

The Opelika Chamber worked through a six-month process to complete a 200-plus page application measuring organizational activity across nine different areas. Of the 7,000-plus chambers of commerce across the nation, only 201 are accredited and even fewer have received Five-Star status. The Opelika Chamber ranks among the top one percent of those who have achieved Five-Star Accreditation.

