



ANNUAL REPORT 2024
monroe.org

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Roy Heatherly
President and CEO

It is a BEAUTIFUL DAY in Monroe, Louisiana. Actually everyday is a BEAUTIFUL Day in Monroe and all over Northeast Louisiana. We are blessed to live in the greatest community in the world. Look around this community, look at your work, at school, at church or just as you are out and about – our friends and neighbors are what make us unique and special – each of you reading this are community heroes and community super stars. Each of you are the community game changers and difference makers. I often quote Jeremiah 29:11 – for I know the plans I have for you declares the LORD – plans to prosper you and not harm you – plans to give you hope and a future.

Your chamber joins Mayor Ellis and the city of Monroe and Shane Smiley and our Police Jury, Mayor Brown of Richwood, Mayor Talbert of Sterlington and Mayor Mitchell of West Monroe, Richland Parish and all of Northeast Louisiana in celebrating this great place we call home and celebrating our bright future. 2024 was a great year for the community and for the chamber. I think that is worth repeating. 2024 was a great year. We kicked off the year co-hosting the Washington DC Economic Luncheon at the Washington Mardi Gras. This was a great honor, and we thank Senator John

Kennedy for choosing us and the St. Tammany Chamber. We enjoyed updates this year from Congresswoman Letlow, Senator Kennedy, Senator Cassidy, our Northeast Louisiana Delegation, from Governor Landry, Mayor Ellis, Shane Smiley, Mayor Talbert and Mayor Brown. We once again led a group of North Louisiana economic development champions to Baton Rouge to spend the day promoting North Louisiana at Northern Exposure. We honored over 47 business with our annual TH Scott Awards. We celebrated 73 nominees for our top 20 Under 40 awards. Our Ambassadors restructured under Mike Downhour and Josh Carroll. One of the added perks is monthly lunches at some very cool Monroe locations. Patience Talley leads our amazing Young Professionals who are engaged, excited and enthused about our future. Our Leadership Class ROCKED IT and had an amazing year. We networked monthly at our Coffee & Conversation plus had a lot of fun, we launched Monroe Mingle and Chamber 101. We held our 3rd Annual Cyber Security and Technology Summit. One of the state speakers remarked they wished every city in the state embraced this topic like Monroe. We also celebrated ULM, LDCC, and both K-12 systems. We sponsored Manufacturing Day, held 86 Ribbon Cuttings, and hired Ashley Dowling to grow our membership. Mike Downhour launched Business Alliances in Richwood and Sterlington. Special Thanks to Mayors Gerald Brown and Matt Talbert and Christina Davis. Terri Arthur once again coordinated our holiday gala which we believe kicks off the holiday season in our community and managed our finances – delivering another clean audit with no findings. Speaking of finances, The Chamber had maybe its best year ever with revenue growth. Daphne Garrett crushed all our events this year and led 36 businesses in a day of Golf at Frenchman's Bend. Our Leaders of Change accepted Mayor Ellis's challenge to change Hearts and Mouths. We launched a year long multi media campaign using both traditional and digital media celebrating this great place we call home.

The crown jewel of last year's campaign is a 10 foot by 20 foot wall mural at The Monroe Regional Airport highlighting many city attractions and boldly stating it is a BEAUTIFUL Day in Monroe, Louisiana. Our Leaders of Change, stormed into 2025 with the same passion as last year. The weekend of February 8 & 9 (Super Bowl Weekend) our Leaders of Change rolled out a state wide media blitz in conjunction with The Super Bowl in New Orleans. We ran a full-page story and a full page ad on our great city. Additionally, that story ran in the Baton Rouge Advocate (print & digital), The Lafayette Advocate (print and digital) and it ran in the Shreveport Advocate digital edition. We also geo fenced 200,000 digital ads over downtown New Orleans last weekend targeting hotels and restaurants and 100,000 digital ads in the other markets. All of the content and ads are driving people to a landing page off of our website call [MORE IN MONROE.COM](https://www.moreinmonroe.com).

Like Mayor Ellis we have an unapologetic love for this community and boldly say "WHY NOT MONROE" AND WHY NOT NORTHEAST LOUISIANA. Like I said 2024 was an amazing year and 2025 will be even better. Thank you to all our members, our sponsors, our staff and our Leaders of Change.



AIMEE KANE
Chairman 2025
St. Francis Health

A MESSAGE FROM AIMEE KANE

As We look ahead to 2025, it promises to be one of our best years ever. This is an exciting time to be part of the Chamber and watch our community generationally transform before our eyes. We welcome our friends from META, Turner Construction, DPR Construction, and M.A. Mortenson Company to our region. We can't wait to see the wonderful things about to happen and stand ready to assist in any way we can.

I want to thank Jeremy Harrell, our 2024 Chairman, for the outstanding job he did and for his leadership during a great year. I would also like to thank our executive committee members: Shelva Thomas, Colby Walker, Ethan Hunt, Josh Carroll, Nathan Hall, Amanda Edge and Matt Dickerson, our 2026 incoming chairman. Our board of directors recently wrapped up our retreat in January, building a collaboration strategy and identifying the Monroe Chamber's role in this new evolving marketplace. Thanks to you for your service and support. Our mission remains the same: to create an environment where our local businesses thrive. To fulfill our mission, we will focus on economic development, workforce, and education, healthcare, technology, small businesses, and membership, community engagement, and an unapologetic love for this

great place we call home. We will continue to build on the collaboration that now defines us. We welcome our business friends from the Richwood and Sterlington Business Alliances and are excited to cheer on our friends in Richland Parish. This past year has shown us the strength of our local businesses, the tenacity of our entrepreneurs, and the results of working together. As I look around our community, I see the faces of those at the heart of this transformation — large and small businesses, nonprofit leaders, educators, and passionate community members. In the coming year, I am excited to work alongside each of you to build upon our progress. The Monroe Chamber of Commerce has always been a place of collaboration and innovation, and I am committed to ensuring that it remains a driving force for positive change. We have a lot of work ahead of us, but together, there is nothing we can't achieve. None of this would be possible without the hard work and dedication of our incredible Chamber staff and, of course, our members. Your commitment to Monroe's success is what makes this community truly special.

Finally, let me say this: Monroe isn't just a place; it's a family. A family that supports one another builds each other up and celebrates each other's successes. We are more than a community of businesses; we are a community of people who care about one another and share a common goal of making Monroe the best it can be. So, let's continue to work together, lift each other up, and move Monroe forward into 2025 with pride, purpose, and a shared commitment to excellence. Thank you for your continued support. Here's to another year of success for our wonderful Monroe community.



JEREMY HARRELL
Chairman 2024
Guaranty Bank

A MESSAGE FROM JEREMY HARRELL

Hello, I'm Jeremy Harrell, immediate past chairman of the Monroe Chamber and lifelong super fan of everything North Louisiana. Can you believe we actually get to live, work, worship and play here? I honestly could not be more proud of our community!

I've always been proud to say I'm "from here" and "stayed here," but never to this degree. It's not just the Chamber or the City or the Parish or the businesses or our churches, schools, family, friends and neighbors; it's the sum of all these. We're blessed with so many quality individuals who are do-ers and not just talkers. Please allow me to thank each of you for what you mean to this community. Every single Chamber member, business owner and employee is due a sincere "thanks" for what you do each day. Please allow me to offer a personal thanks to the Chamber staff, Roy, Daphne, Mike, Terri, Ashley and Haley for the depth and quality of their work, and their team approach to their jobs. Our Chamber board and committee members, along with event speakers, task force members, Leaders of Change investors, Chamber Ambassadors, Young Professionals, Leadership Ouachita members and so many more committed folks are the real workhorses for the quadriplex of Monroe, West Monroe, Sterlington and Richwood.

We're blessed with visionary mayors, caring police jurors and council members, and tireless and accessible legislative and congressional delegations. Everywhere you look, you'll find helpers, servants and leaders.

As we think back over the last year it's evident that we are in the middle of an era that we will always be proud of. If we were to talk about every good that's happened, we would be here all night. Chamber membership growth is incredible, we had 210 new members join last year. Businesses are flourishing all around, churches and non-profits are vibrant. The good news is everywhere you look! Families are hopeful and happy. Our economy is strong. Our people are strong. I think we can all agree that 2024 was a year to remember for all of North Louisiana. Who would have ever thought we would have an Amazon facility here in Monroe, not to mention Meta's largest data center right next door to us in Richland Parish. And let's not forget about our home grown heroes like EPC, Mid South Extrusion, Pulpmill Services, Intermountain Management, St Francis Health, banks, mechanics, accountants, car dealers, real estate investors and the thousands of other businesses right here making it happen every single day. Big or small, we're experiencing real economic growth that translates directly into better lives for the families that live here. Right now is truly a time of generational change for our area, and it sure does feel good! I'm fiercely protective of this area, and hope that you are too. If you don't love it here, please keep looking for things to love about it, trust me, there are plenty of reasons out there.

Thank you for allowing me to be the board chairman in 2024, thank you so much for choosing to live and work here, and thank you for your Chamber membership. Please plug in where you feel led; you're valuable and your talents are needed. Starting right now, please help carry the positive message of North Louisiana across the world. I absolutely love living here and hope you do, too! Here's to continued momentum and here's to our shared future. Thank you!

MEET OUR STAFF



**TERRI
ARTHUR**
GALA Director
Finance Director



**DAPHNE
GARRETT**
Senior Director of Events
and Programming



**MIKE
DOWNHOUR**
Director of Membership
and Community Engagement



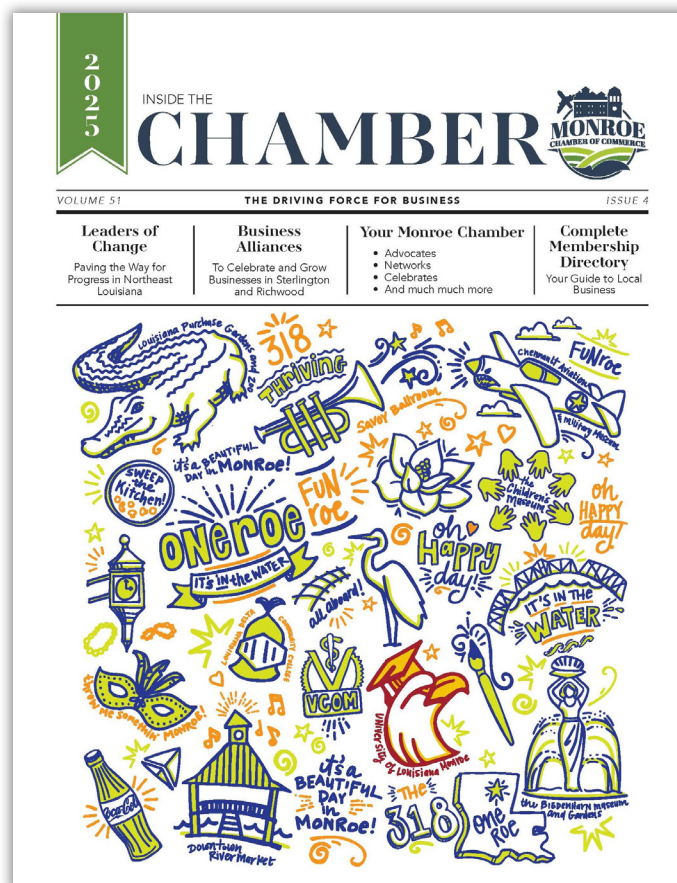
**ASHELY
DOWLING**
Membership
Director

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!

THE MONROE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MISSION IS TO:

**“Create an environment where our
local business THRIVE!”**

We do that in a variety of ways. Below you will find a link to this year’s “Inside the Chamber” magazine. Inside the Magazine you will get a recap of everything the Chamber did in 2024 including 80+ Ribbon Cuttings. We have an unapologetic love for this city and region. Join us in celebrating this great place we call home.



2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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VP of Finance
NELA Title Company



DR. WENDI TOSTENSON
VP Workforce Development
La. Delta Community College



PAUL HUTCHESON
VP Government/Non-Profit
Homeland Bank



JASMYNE MCCONNELL
VP Membership, Small
Business, & Diversity
Cajun Title Co.



LEANN BOND
VP Health
VCOM



COLBY WALKER
VP Community Engagement
InterMountain Renovations



JEFF LAUDENHEIMER
Commercial Capital Bank



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Monroe Housing Authority



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SnapMe Creative



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American National Insurance



ALANA COOPER
Discover Monroe-West Monroe



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Woods Family Estates, LLC



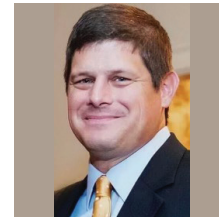
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ULM



MATT DICKERSON
Pulpmill Services Inc.



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ReMax



CHRIS HOLYFIELD
Holyfield Construction



KIRSTEN GLADEN
Catholic Charities of NELA



MARK KENT ANDERSON
Mid-South Extrusion



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Drax



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KTVE/KARD



JAMES MILES
Pelican State Credit Union



TAYLOR CAGLE
Origin Bank



MICKEY McCARTY
Neville High School



LAMONT WINDOM



PASTOR IKE BYRD
Mt. Zion Baptist Church



ANGELA CRUMPTON
Ouachita Parish Schools



KELSEY MCCRARY
City of Monroe



PATIENCE TALLEY
LA DCC



JANET DURDEN
United Way of NELA