



WILSON CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

2019
ANNUAL REPORT

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BUSINESS NETWORK**



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Wilson Chamber of Commerce - Wilson's Premier Business Network

Our mission: Support and advance the interests of the greater Wilson business community by providing networking, advocacy, marketing and education value to our members.

Our vision: Be the respected, representative voice of the greater Wilson business community, leading efforts to make Wilson a premier destination for business.

Our core values:

Providing courteous SERVICE to our members and community
 Preserving TRADITION by building on past successes
 Influencing action through inspiring LEADERSHIP
 Inviting INNOVATION and respecting new ideas
 Establishing TRUST through honesty and reliability
 Exercising LOYALTY by putting our members first

This annual report is produced to summarize the Chamber's program of work, and highlight some of the accomplishments that happened in 2019. We invite you to learn more about us by visiting wilsonncchamber.com and to support our members who are listed in our print and online directories.



WILSON CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

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Message from the President

Earlier this year, personal finance website Wallethub.com named Wilson the 10th best small city to start a business, a recognition that complements CNBC’s ranking of North Carolina as the 3rd best state for business. What makes this place so special? How is it that we’re building a reputation as a premier destination for business?

The answers are complicated, but they include having leadership committed to sustainable and responsible community growth. Many of Wilson’s businesses, local governments, and nonprofit organizations have taken deliberate action to make sure our community is economically competitive.

Another essential part of ensuring long-term prosperity is having a strong chamber of commerce dedicated exclusively to advocating for our local business community. As we endeavor to fulfill this mission, I ask everyone to take part in our success by encouraging businesses to join the Chamber, and shopping local whenever possible.



Ryan W. Simons, Chamber President

Wilson Chamber of Commerce

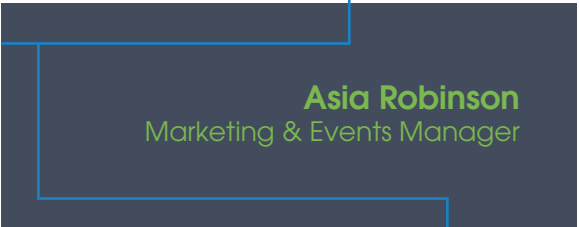
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2019 Chamber Staff



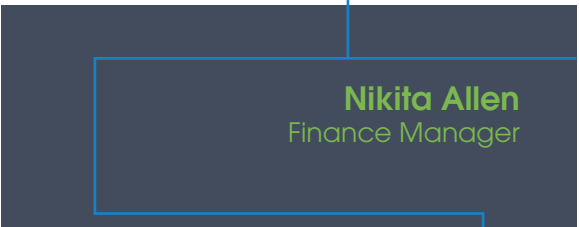
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Membership Services Manager



Asia Robinson
Marketing & Events Manager



Tyler Mayes
Membership Coordinator



Nikita Allen
Finance Manager



Bailey Whitley
Executive Assistant



Becky Rose
Project Assistant



Herman Batts
Facilities Manager

2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Message from the Chair of the Board of Directors

Membership in the Wilson Chamber unites us as business professionals. Having the opportunity to access the wisdom of such an extraordinary group of professionals has been instrumental in my personal growth as well as my business growth, and I'm thankful for being part of my Chamber family.

#WeBelong



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Anita's Marketing



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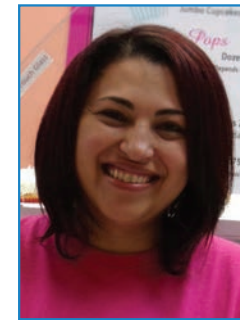


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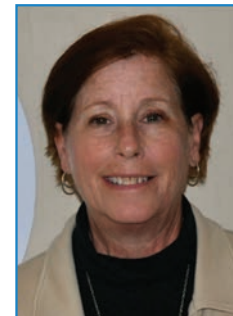
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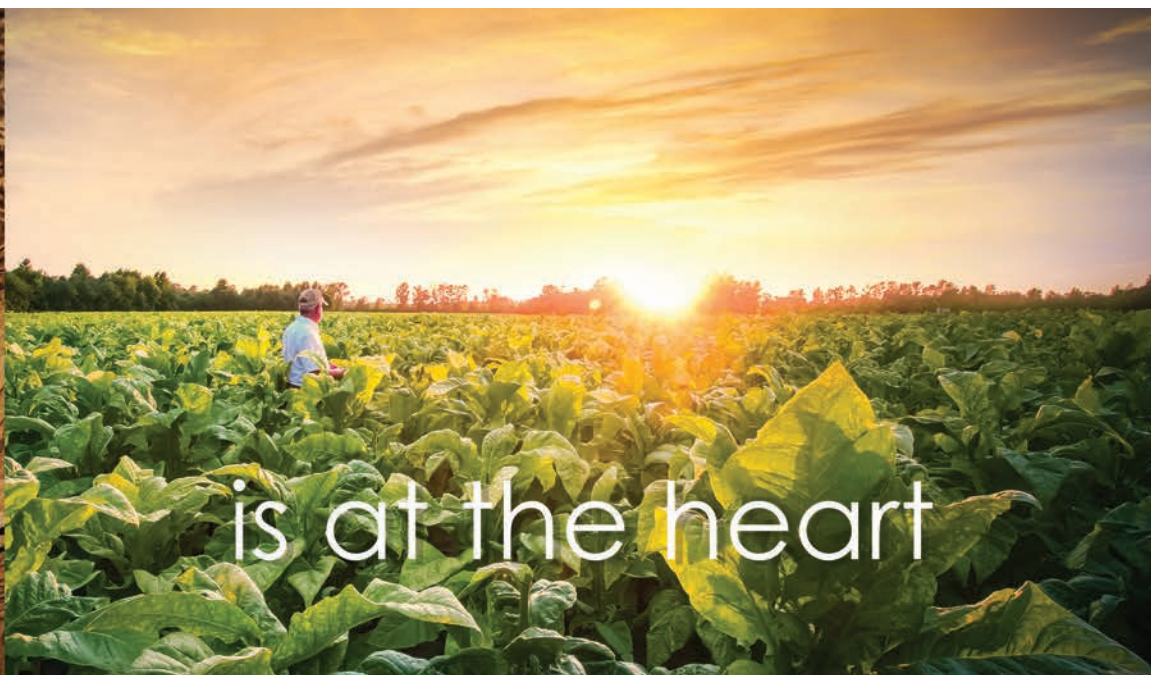
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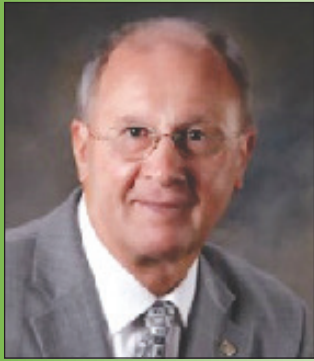
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Message from Bruce Rose Mayor of the City of Wilson

Our chamber of commerce is working every day to ensure that businesses can be built and grow here. Small businesses create jobs and allow everyone a chance to find the products and services they want in our hometown. Wilson is a better place to live because we have a strong chamber of commerce.



Wilson County

North Carolina

Message from Rob Boyette, Chairman, Wilson County Board of Commissioners

Our chamber of commerce cultivates business growth. This chamber fosters new ideas, bringing together business leaders and engaged citizens in a results-oriented manner.



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WILSON AT A GLANCE

Wilson Tourism Authority

The Wilson Visitors Center is essential to cultivating a robust tourist economy for Wilson that benefits all of our local businesses:

- Visitors to Wilson County spent over \$126.3MM in fiscal year 2018.
- Visitor spending increased 5.6% over 2017.

Wilson Economic Development Council

The chamber is proud to support the Wilson Economic Development Council, whose mission is to “retain and facilitate the expansion of high-quality business and industry resulting in an increased tax base and new jobs for Wilson County.”

Between July 2017 and July 2019:

- 7 new industries chose to locate in Wilson.
- 7 industries chose to expand their operations in Wilson.
- \$492,350,000 in new industrial investment.
- 1,180 new jobs created by local industries, resulting in an additional 3,706 jobs created indirectly.
- Infrastructure complete at Wilson’s newest industrial park: the Campus @ 587.
- WEDC staff made 32 marketing visits to promote Wilson across the world.

Wilson Downtown Development Corporation

The Chamber recognizes the importance of Historic Downtown Wilson as our commercial core, and supports the Wilson Downtown Development Corporation and their efforts to preserve our commercial legacy.

During the fiscal year that ended in June 2018:

- Building rehabilitations: 6
- Façade Improvements: 3
- 13 new or expanded businesses created 18 full-time jobs and 70 part-time jobs.
- Total investment: \$5 million public; \$20 million private

The new Gig East Exchange being developed at 127 Goldsboro Street will be a hub for innovation in eastern North Carolina. Designed as a co-working and event space, the Exchange will build on Wilson’s reputation as a leading micropolitan community in broadband and technology infrastructure.

Wilson Medical Center

As a Duke LifePoint Hospital, Wilson Medical Center benefits from resources at both Duke University Health System and LifePoint Health. In early 2019, the hospital opened its new Women’s and Children’s Pavilion, part of an \$80 million renovation currently underway to provide an even greater patient experience.



Education

Wilson County Schools enrolls nearly 12,000 public school students in 26 schools. Among them are two early college academies whose graduates can earn both high school diplomas and college degrees. Wilson Early College Academy offers accelerated academics in small, learner-centered classes. Wilson Academy of Applied Technology equips students with advanced skills to meet the high-demand needs of industry.

Two charter schools provide unique educational options, and both are growing to accommodate high school enrollment. Sallie B. Howard School for the Arts & Education prepares over 800 students for careers in the performing arts, science and humanities. Wilson Preparatory Academy uses a technology-based blended learning concept to prepare students for college.

Among area private schools, Greenfield School is a non-sectarian independent school that promotes the development of the total student through balanced and challenging college preparatory academics.

Wilson Community College

Wilson Community College is an affordable option to earn an associate degree, transfer credits, certifications and continuing education. It’s AgriTech Training Program is helping keep Wilson on the cutting edge of agricultural production.

After opening in 2019, the Lee Technology Center campus hosts the Applied Engineering and Automotive Systems Technologies programs. Future renovations are currently being planned on both the Herring Avenue and Lee Technology Center campuses.

Barton College

Barton college is a co-educational liberal arts college offering 40 majors and programs at its campus near historic downtown Wilson. It’s MBA in Strategic Leadership program allows business leaders the opportunity to earn an advanced degree in as few as 16 months.

Beginning in 2020, Barton will compete in football at the NCAA Division II ranks. The Bulldogs last competed on the gridiron in 1950.

THE CHAMBER AT A GLANCE



Founded in 1897 as the only local chamber of commerce serving all of Wilson County.

481

Number of active members of the Wilson Chamber of Commerce on September 1, 2019, a net increase of 21 new members since April, 2018. Many are small, family owned businesses who have been members for generations.

1,443

Number of member representatives we engage with regularly. A net increase of 101 new representatives since April, 2018. Our contact list is always growing, and so is our reach to prospective clients, customers, and citizens.

42

Ribbon Cutting ceremonies held since January, 2018.

53

Networking, advocacy, marketing, and education events hosted by the chamber the past 12 months.

20+

Types of industries represented in the Chamber. No matter your business type or size, we have a membership option that fits.

A 2012 study by the Schapiro Group found that businesses who are members of a local chamber of commerce are:

29% more likely to be thought of as using good business practices

44% more likely to be thought of favorably by consumers

63% more likely to be revisited by a consumer again in the future

Small business leader of the year

Wilson's Small Business Leader of the Year was recognized in May for his work in the community as much as his efforts in the courtroom.

"I was doing research on the history of BB&T, and when one of the founders, Alpheus Branch, passed, there was a comment about him that fits Will Farris: "Every account of his life underscores his philanthropies as well as his attention to the civic affairs of Wilson," said Joey Lamm, a small business specialist with BB&T and a Wilson Chamber of Commerce board member. "We couldn't be here honoring a better person today than Will."

Wilson Chamber of Commerce President Ryan Simons said Farris, of Farris & Farris Attorneys, is a staunch supporter of the community, advocating for economic development and Wilson businesses wherever he goes.

"We couldn't be more fortunate than to have someone like Will Farris speaking on our behalf," Simons said.



Business Profile



Anita's Marketing is the result of a young woman's dream, and in 2010 that dream came true. Anita Turnage Jones moved her marketing company from home to 431 Ward Blvd. in Wilson, NC and there the printing world for Anita became a marketing hub for her clients. Her passion to serve and dedication to each person that walks through the door, calls on the phone or emails creates an environment for success.

As her dream grew, so did her staff. She is overjoyed by God's gifts of talent and the fact that He blessed her with a staff full of creativity and joy and a love for what they do.

Whether you are a new or an established business, we are sure to have just what you need with graphic design (logos, email blasts, flyers and more), printing (brochures, door hangers, posters and more), promotional products (cups, umbrellas, t-shirts and more) and tradeshow displays (tents, pop-up banners, table covers and more).



Anita Turnage Jones, Owner, Anita's Marketing

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Distinguished citizen of the year

Nancy Sallenger was named the Distinguished Citizen of the Year in January, yet the community champion turned the attention to others as she accepted the honor.

“Wilson is just where I’m supposed to be. Wilson embraced me and I also embraced Wilson,” she said. “I could not do what I do here at the crisis center if it were not for everyone in our community. Everyone supports us and they help us enhance the quality of life for people no matter what age, sex, religion or race. I applaud everybody.”

Sallenger served as a volunteer and board member for the Wilson Crisis Center for 12 years, then became the agency’s executive director in 2007. She and 50 volunteers provide around-the-clock telephone assistance for a range of issues, from giving out referrals to just listening to callers in need.

“I am just honored. I am very humbled because it takes everyone to

do this,” she said. “I could not do this if we did not have all the people in this community helping us 24/7.”

Her sentiments were echoed by her brother, Thomas Sallenger, who introduced her for the award and shared stories of his selfless big sister saving a chicken leg during Sunday dinners, teaching him how to write on their Bertie County farm and being a role model within the family’s church. While Nancy Sallenger never had children of her own, she said her brother noted how fitting that was because she is a mother to thousands through her work at the Wilson Crisis Center.

“Through the strength and direction of the members on the board, their belief in making Wilson County a better place to live, she and the board and all of you made the Wilson Crisis Center a respected, outstanding, noteworthy organization that does what it does just because Wilson cares about one another,” Thomas Sallenger said.



Nancy Sallenger displays her Wilson Chamber of Commerce 2019 Distinguished Citizen of the Year award with her brother, attorney Tom Sallenger, who presented her with the honor. JANELLE CLEVINGER

What is the Wilson Leadership Institute?

The Wilson Leadership Institute (WLI) is a rigorous, 18-month course in applied leadership, designed to instruct individuals with demonstrated leadership potential, and deploy them to highly visible public service leadership opportunities in Wilson. Participants are given practical, real-world training in the discipline of public service leadership, and work as a team to address an urgent community need.

Created in 2015 as a collaborative project between Wilson Forward, the Wilson Economic Development Council and the Wilson Chamber of Commerce, WLI began as an effort called the Impact Initiative. The Impact Initiative graduated two classes before being rebranded as the Wilson Leadership Institute in 2019. WLI endeavors to be the authoritative source of leadership talent in Wilson.

Beginning with the initial interview, and continuing throughout the program, coordinators will be assessing the talents and interests of participants. As leadership opportunities emerge to lead on community boards and initiatives, program coordinators will be referring present and past participants that meet those organizational needs.

The Wilson Leadership Institute endeavors to be the authoritative source of leadership talent in Wilson.



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CHAMBER AMBASSADORS



The Wilson Area Student Health Clinic at Beddingfield High School opened in March, with the official ribbon cutting organized by the Wilson Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber's Ambassadors are an extraordinary team of volunteers who reach out to their peers in the business community, serving as representatives of the Chamber, while building their own personal network of business contacts. This "common ground" approach achieves two goals: it provides the Ambassador an opportunity to directly engage prospective clients for their own business, while also allowing them to gain valuable feedback about the member's Chamber experience. We use this information to constantly improve the value we deliver to our members.

Additionally, you'll meet Ambassadors at many of the Chamber's most popular networking events, including Chamber B2B, the Women of Wilson Group, ribbon cuttings, and our Annual Meeting.

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What is the Executive Academy?

The Chamber's Executive Academy introduces today's business leaders to the dynamics that make Wilson a unique place to live and work. During the 10-month program, participants get a firsthand account of the issues facing our community. They form lifelong bonds with peers across Wilson's diverse industry sectors. They gain an appreciation for the challenges other professionals face in our market, and become trusted representatives of their organizations in the community.

How is this program different?

The Academy is about more than equipping leaders to succeed in Wilson. It's also about improving the community that enables our organizations to prosper. Each Academy class takes on a community service project designed to leave a lasting, positive impact on Wilson. Many of the projects initiated by past DLW classes continue to benefit our community today.

Who participates?

The Academy is open to any employee of a chamber member in good standing. However, members should understand that the program is a commitment and an investment. Members should only refer employees who have demonstrated leadership potential and represent the very best their organization has to offer, especially those whose career aspirations include a long-term stay in Wilson. Both newcomers and Wilson natives will come away with a better understanding of our community.

Past participants have included CEOs, senior managers, nonprofit executives, superintendents, politicians and other leaders with significant responsibilities. The reputational success of the Academy is entirely dependent upon recruiting participants who fully embrace the opportunity as a way to grow personally and professionally.

Each class includes no more than 20 participants, selected on a first-come, first-served basis.

How does the program work?

The Academy begins with an off-site executive retreat in September that focuses on team chemistry, assessing and enhancing individual leadership skills and selecting the class project. After the retreat, the class meets for a full day, once a month, to immerse itself in one of eight session days. Each session is an immersive experience devoted to a dynamic that contributes to Wilson's unique identity: agriculture, education, economic development, healthcare systems, judicial system, media and cultural arts, local and state government. Each session day also includes an opportunity for the class to collaborate on their chosen project.

What is the Passing the Torch Reception?

The "Passing the Torch" Reception is the culmination of one class' progress, and the beginning of the next class' journey. Held in June, the reception serves as a joint graduation and introduction ceremony. We invite our members, Academy alumni, participants and their families to attend.

At the reception, the President's Torch is symbolically passed from one class to the next as a reminder of the trust we place in the leaders who participate in the Academy. The President's Torch is kept permanently at the Chamber, and is inscribed with a description of the most recent class project.



Cost:
\$800

A non-refundable \$150 deposit must accompany application. Balance due on date of Executive Retreat. Diamond-level Chamber Champions are eligible for one free tuition per class.

Applications accepted:
April 1 - May 31

Applications accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Passing the Torch Reception occurs on a weekday in mid-June. Executive Retreat occurs on a weekday in mid-September. Session days take place monthly during the week.

Ready to get started or want more information?

Contact Tyler Mayes:
(252) 237-0165
tmayes@wilsonncchamber.com

or visit:
wilsonncchamber.com/pages/ExecutiveAcademy

A LOOK AHEAD



WILSON COMMERCE FOUNDATION

Founded in 2019, the Wilson Commerce Foundation endeavors to achieve the following objectives:

- Coordinate, sponsor, and promote physical improvements and other initiatives vital to maintaining a healthy and competitive business community and local economy.
- Provide educational resources that facilitate the personal and professional development of business and civic leaders in Wilson.
- Aid in the recovery of Wilson businesses damaged by natural disasters.
- With other organizations, sponsor activities and research projects that help advance a competitive business climate in Wilson.



Some of the newest members of the Chamber of Commerce as of October 2019, as displayed in front of the Chamber offices at 200 Nash St. NE in Historic Downtown Wilson.

For additional information on the Chamber and its current services and programs, be sure to visit our website:

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