



WILSON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**WILSON'S PREMIER
BUSINESS NETWORK**

2020

ANNUAL REPORT

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 2020. 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

**2020
CHAMBER
CHAMPIONS**

DIAMOND CHAMPIONS

BRIDGESTONE
Your Journey, Our Passion



WILSON
MEDICAL CENTER
A Duke LifePoint Hospital

greenlight
COMMUNITY BROADBAND

GOLD CHAMPIONS



S.T. WOOTEN

SILVER CHAMPIONS



Smithfield
Good food. Responsibly®



Since 1901
SouthernBank

BRONZE CHAMPIONS

State Farm
CHUCK FINKLEA
AGENT



ALLIANCE One

REYNOLDS AMERICAN
A MEMBER OF THE BRITISH AMERICAN TOBACCO GROUP

cinc | Community
Impact
North Carolina
PREVENTION TOGETHER



UTC Aerospace Systems

COPYPRO

WAL*MART



**WATSON
ELECTRICAL**

HUBERT VESTER
A TFC GROUP



Thomas Yelverton at Evergreen

Memorial Park, Funerals
and Cremations

Over 150 years experience of our family serving yours.

- Advance Funeral Planning Services
- Advance Cemetery Planning Services
- We honor all pre-need funeral contracts from other funeral services providers

Dignity[®]
MEMORIAL

LIFE WELL CELEBRATED™



2704 Nash Street N. • Wilson • 252-243-4100

Wilson Chamber of Commerce

200 Nash St. NE
Wilson, NC 27893
Phone: (252) 237-0165
Fax: (252) 243-7931

website: wilsonncchamber.com

Twitter: @wilsonncchamber

Instagram: @wilsonncchamber



Message from the President

The past year has been one of the most turbulent in the history of our community. Faced with a global pandemic, civil unrest, and natural disasters, 2020 will be a year remembered for how Wilson persevered through adversity. While all of us have been impacted by any or all of these issues to one degree or another, our local business community has been particularly hard hit.

Yet, hope abounds. Not only are there signs that businesses are emerging from these crises stronger than before, there is also optimism that Wilson is positioning itself as a leader among micropolitan communities in terms of innovation and market development. Consider some of the accomplishments:

* The Wilson Commerce Foundation was created, spearheading the #MyBrothersKeeper fund to grant

direct investment to microenterprises hurt most by the pandemic.

* The Wilson Chamber of Commerce became only the third local chamber of commerce in the state to earn Accreditation from the US Chamber of Commerce.

* New programs have been created to make the process of assisting businesses easier and more affordable. The Chamber's COVID-19 resource page is only one example of how that assistance has been archived.

Together with our partners at the City of Wilson, Wilson County, Greenlight Community Broadband, and a number of other state and federal agencies, and a robust nonprofit sector, the Wilson Chamber of Commerce is more prepared than ever to ensure that Wilson is a place where business can prosper.



Ryan W. Simons,
Chamber President

rsimons@wilsonncchamber.com

On behalf of our Chair, Heather Driver, I invite you to continue to #shoplocal, and do what you can to support our local business community in this time of need, and in the promising days to come.

anita's marketing

graphic design • printing
promotional products
trade show displays

anitasmarketing.com • 252.243.3993
437 Ward Blvd. Unit B, Wilson, NC 27893

Proud to be a member of
the most extraordinary
group of professionals

#WEBELONG



WILSON CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE

PLT

**CONCRETE
SERVICES**

A SUBSIDIARY OF

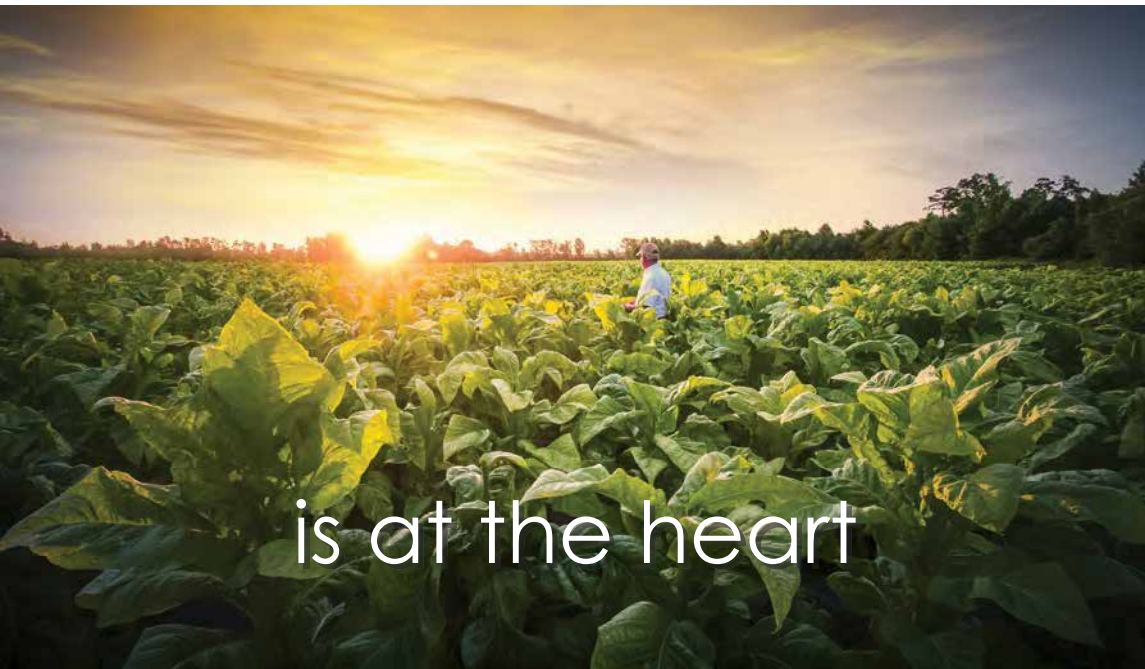


**"THE BEST CONCRETE AND
CUSTOMER SERVICE IN TOWN"**

Wilson Plant - 252.293.0909 • Wilson Office - 252.293.0500
Rocky Mount - 252.451.9450 • Selma - 919.965.3884
Zebulon - 919.404.1112



the farmer

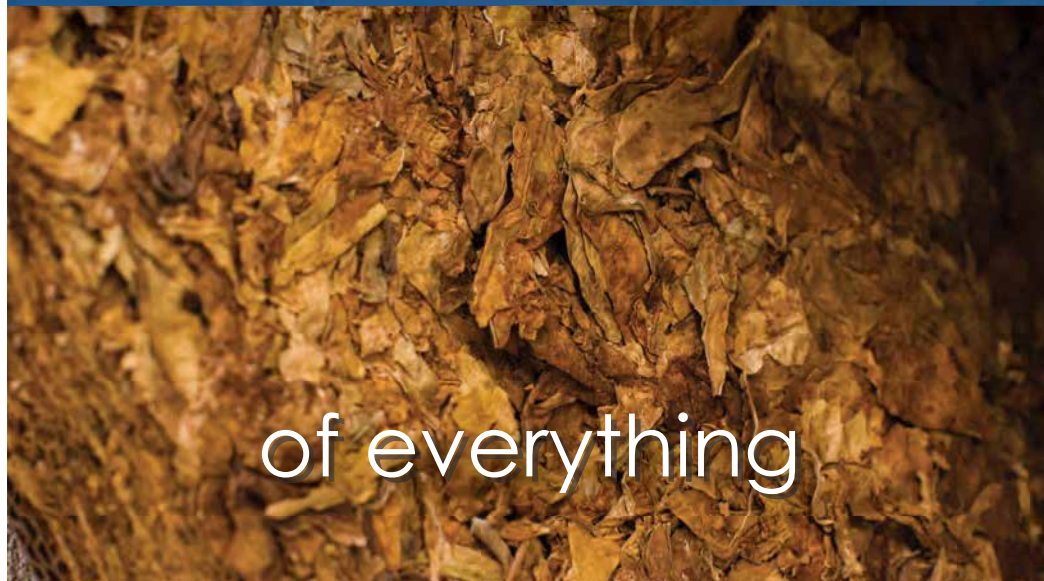


is at the heart



AllianceOne

www.aointl.com



of everything



we do.

2020 Chamber Staff



Rebecca Tew
Membership Services Manager



Nikita Allen
Finance Manager



Gretchen Allen
Administrative Assistant



Becky Rose
Special Project Assistant



Herman Batts
Facilities Manager

2020 Board of Directors



Heather Driver
Chair;
CopyPro, Inc.



Anita Turnage Jones
Immediate Past
Chair; Anita's
Marketing



Dr. Latanya Simpson
Chair-elect;
Eastern Carolina
Chiropractic



Todd Anderson
Secretary/
Treasurer;
Select Bank &
Trust



Tracy Wellington
Chick-Fil-A



Blake Godwin
ST Wooten



Dindy Perry
A Cupcake
Dream



Joey Lamm
BB&T, now
Truist



Dail Turner
Retired



Tim Sharp
Towe
Insurance
Service, Inc.



Adrian Dixon
Self-Help
Credit Union



Carletha Ward
Legacy Life
Purpose
Coaching &
Empowerment



Dr. Tim Wright
Wilson
Community
College



Randy Tyson
Choices
Women's
Center



Jennifer Lantz
Wilson
Economic
Development
Council



Will Aycock
City of Wilson/
Greenlight
Community
Broadband



Rob Boyette
Wilson County

LOCALLY *and*
FAMILY OWNED
BUSINESSES

ACTION STAFFING GROUP



Charidy Corbett, Certified Staffing Professional (CSP) named President of The Action Group-Human Resources Solutions Tav Gauss, CEO and Chairman of the Action Group-Human Resources Solutions named Charidy Corbett President of the company. Charidy has over 30 years of experience in the staffing industry. She began her career with The Action Group in 1988, providing administrative support and growing market share. In her current leadership role, Charidy is responsible for overseeing day to day operations, managing special projects, increasing sales, and maintaining relationships. Charidy works alongside her team to identify talent and to create placement opportunities for candidates and clients. She believes in teamwork and an "all hands on deck approach" to successfully meet the needs of our clients, employees and staff. Charidy has two grown children and lives with her husband outside of Nashville, North Carolina.



Amy Stack joined The Action Group as Accounting Manager in 2019, bringing 15+ years of experience handling high volume accounts payable processing for large corporations. Amy is accountable to both internal and external customers in providing financial and accounting support for the entire operation. Amy strives to uphold The Action Group's customer-centric culture and she excels in delivering results that boost efficiency in financial reporting and cash flow. She is a hands-on manager with proven skills in analyzing and troubleshooting to help ensure The Action Group's financial health and bottom-line results. Amy and her young family relocated to North Carolina by way of Kansas.



Michelle Mills has joined The Action Group HR's team to lead business development and marketing. Michelle comes from the IT industry, having spent her early career in sales and management positions in telecommunications. She later transitioned into the computer hardware and software industry, where she developed and lead channel partnerships and managed an inside sales team. She is tasked with updating and maintaining the company's web presence through content creation and management, and igniting new and existing relationships with clients and candidates. She works out of Raleigh to apply her experience in managing people and projects toward The Action Group's continued success. Michelle has two young daughters and enjoys travelling with them in her Airstream trailer.

MEET OUR TEAM



The Action Staffing Group
314 Nash St. NE
Wilson, NC
252.237.9800

Hours:
Mon-Fri:
8 a.m to 5 p.m.

Owner: Tav Gauss

Connecting People to the Right Job For 40 Years.



Tav Gauss



Connect with us!



www.theactiongrouphr.com

WILSON AT A GLANCE

Wilson Tourism Authority

Due to its convenient location along I-95, abundance of traveler amenities and attractions, and close proximity to the growing Research Triangle region, Wilson has become a popular destination for tourism. Domestic visitors to and within Wilson County spent \$132.12 million in 2019, an increase of 3.3% from 2018. The data comes from an annual study commissioned by Visit North Carolina, a unit of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina.

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 2020:

- * 12 new industries chose to locate in Wilson.
- * 10 industries chose to expand their operations in Wilson.
- * \$596,910,000 in new industrial investment.
- * 1,396 new jobs created by local industries, resulting in an additional 4,147 jobs created indirectly.
- * Infrastructure complete at Wilson’s newest industrial park: the Campus @ 587.
- * WEDC staff made 54 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.



WILSON
NORTH CAROLINA

DURING THE PAST FISCAL YEAR:

- Building rehabilitations: 8
- New Construction Projects: 1 (Truist)
- Façade Improvements: 10
- Housing Units Created: 56
- Public Improvement Projects: 17
- 5 net new or expanded businesses created 15 net full-time jobs and 2 part-time jobs.
- Total investment: \$46,310,895 MM (over \$6.2MM public; over \$40MM private)
- * 6,541 Volunteer Hours, with a value of \$158,227 (Current value of volunteer time in NC is \$24.19/hr-; www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time)
- * 14 Special Events bringing approximately 70,000 people downtown

Finalization of the Whirligig Station Apartments at 220 Goldsboro Street, a total of 94 market rate apartments, which are now fully occupied. Completion of the new state of the art BB&T, now Truist Building, on Pine Street, housing hundreds of employees from Wilson’s largest employer. The new Gig East Exchange nearing completion of their property at 225-227 Goldsboro Street, to become a hub for innovation in eastern North Carolina. Completion of the renovation Hagen building at 219 Barnes Street, now home to Wilson Economic Development Council and Vets Pets headquarters. The renovation of 220 Barnes Street that houses both Ruckus & Redemption Restaurant and Groove Geek Record shop. The renovation of 108 Tarboro, home to a micro manufacturing business called Samora Naturals, and the completion of the renovation of 227 Barnes

Street, home The Edge Gallery.

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.

Barton College

Founded in 1902, Barton College is a four-year, private, liberal arts college. The Barton Experience focuses on academic excellence within a wide range of professional and liberal arts programs leading to baccalaureate and graduate degrees, including master’s degrees in Nursing, Kinesiology, Criminology and Criminal Justice

Sciences, School Administration, and an MBA in Strategic Leadership. Barton celebrates innovation and bold thinking among faculty and staff as the College nurtures bold leadership development among students. Barton offers purposeful internships and practicums in academic disciplines; engaging co-curricular cohorts, including but not limited to: Presidential Fellows, Esports, ArtWorks, and Healthcare+ ; meaningful international travel and study; research and presentations through Day of Scholarship; opportunities to give back through community service; an impressive array of cultural events; and diverse athletic competition among 24 collegiate teams, including the newest addition of Bulldog football.

Wilson Community College

Wilson Community College is an affordable option to earn an associate degree, transfer credits, certifications, diplomas, and continuing education. WCC also partners with local businesses and industries to provide free customized trainings for their employees.

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.

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 2020, the hospital opened new Same Day Surgery and Endoscopy Suites, part of an \$80 million renovation currently underway to provide an even greater patient experience. Last year, they opened a new Women’s Pavilion which included spacious new rooms and bathrooms for laboring and postpartum mothers, a new Cesarean delivery suite and nursery.

CHAMBER AMBASSADORS



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.



Our interest is *You.*

252-206-5500

2300 Nash Street N, Wilson, NC 27896

252-206-5510

Member **FDIC** 1701 Forest Hills Rd W, Wilson, NC 27893



*Summit Place
Apartments*



1, 2 & 3 Bedroom Apartments Available

4913 Summit Place Dr NW, Wilson, NC



(252) 237-5437



summitplaceapts@dthmanagement.com

THE CHAMBER AT A GLANCE



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

471

Number of active members of the Wilson Chamber of Commerce on September 28, 2020. Despite serious impacts that the coronavirus has had on our business community, the Chamber has only 10 net fewer members than this time last year.

1,085

Number of member representatives we engage with regularly. Our membership includes many of Wilson's largest employers. Our contact list is always growing, and so is our reach to prospective clients, customers, and citizens.

22

Ribbon Cutting ceremonies held since January, 2019. New businesses to Wilson are joining the Chamber all the time. Our members are among the first to know which businesses have chosen to locate here.

61

Networking, advocacy, marketing, and education events hosted by the chamber the past 12 months. Whether it's a small educational seminar, or a business expo with thousands of guests, there are plenty of ways to connect your business with our community.

20+

Types of industries represented in the Chamber. No matter your business type or size, we customize our membership experience to benefit you and your employees.

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



(252) 237-1141 • stephensonmillwork.com
210 Harper Street NE • Wilson, NC



Payroll, Timekeeping, Tax Deposit, CPA Reporting

2837 Daisy Lane • Suite A
Wilson, North Carolina
(252) 234-2924

www.timeandpayroll.com

Your ticket to great insurance!

For over 100 years, Auto-Owners Insurance has been teaming up with local independent agents to provide award-winning service to their communities.



404 Nash Street NE, Wilson • 252-237-5361
www.toweins.com

Auto-Owners
INSURANCE

LIFE • HOME • CAR • BUSINESS



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

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.



PDSS

Professional Drug Screening Services, Inc.

***Over 30 Years of Experience...
It Matters!***

Nationally Accredited Drug Free Workplace
Program Management & TPA/DOT Consortia



252-243-7377

**24/7
Availability**

www.professionaldrugscreening.com



Melanie Womble, RN, CPCT, BAT-President



ADVENTURE IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD

LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE...EXPLORE WILSON!



wilson-nc.com
comeseewilson.com



UNITED STATES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

ACCREDITATION®

Accreditation with the United States Chamber of Commerce is the only program of its kind that defines excellence in chamber planning and recognizes chambers for outstanding contributions toward positive change in their communities. The purpose of the U.S. Chamber's Accreditation Program is to facilitate continuing excellence in the chamber industry and to foster a pro-business environment across America.

Who is Accredited?

There are over 890 chambers that have participated in the program since 1964. Currently, 202 chambers carry this distinction. With approximately 7,000 chambers in the United States, Accreditation with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce is a

prestigious honor that distinguishes the high quality, expertise, and strong leadership displayed by Accredited state and local chambers of commerce.

Why become Accredited?

- By earning Accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, a chamber shows its dedication to:
 - Reviewing, improving, and promoting strong business practices
 - Recognizing leadership and outstanding contributions to the community
 - Supporting the principles of free enterprise and promoting pro-growth policies at federal, state, and local levels
 - Establishing best practices and staying in-step with industry change.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

THOMAS J. DONOHUE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

1615 H STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20062-2000

November 7, 2019

Mr. Ryan W. Simons
President
Wilson Chamber of Commerce
200 Nash Street, NE
Wilson, NC 27893

Dear Ryan:

Congratulations to you and the Wilson Chamber of Commerce for meeting the high standards necessary to be granted Accreditation.

Accreditation is one of the highest honors bestowed on chambers that support pro-growth and economic policies at the federal, state, and local level. This distinction honors your commitment to helping advance the principles of free enterprise—the bedrock of our great country.

Ryan, you and your staff are to be highly commended on the quality of your chamber's performance.

Best wishes,

Sincerely,
Tom



3363 U.S. Hwy 301 North
Wilson, NC 27893
t: 252.2915181
www.3C-INC.net





FRESH
IDEAS



SEAMLESS
INTEGRATIONS



INNOVATIVE
RETAIL
ENVIRONMENTS

We lean on 45 years of experience to continuously chart new paths.

Maintaining brand integrity ensures updated designs conform to established standards.

Our objective for each project is to produce modern retail experiences.

WE MAKE WILSON WORK

*by supporting our communities and providing
access to high-quality education*



**WILSON
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE**



We offer dozens of courses and beyond-the-classroom experience to give you what you need to help you turn your education into employment.



(252) 291-1195



wilsoncc.edu

