



LIVINGSTON PARISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Annual Report 2017

2017 HIGHLIGHTS

Flood Recovery

Membership

International Award
Winner

New Events: Women's
Leadership Event,
Live2Lead, LYP

THE CHAMBER

Livingston Parish Chamber of Commerce is the leading advocate for business offering resources and opportunities to Livingston Parish businesses while developing leaders and promoting the community with a positive spirit.

2017 Board Chair



**CHAD BACAS, PE, MBA
FORTE & TABLADA
CHAMBER BOARD CHAIR**

BUSINESS MATTERS

In 2017 as we were picking up the pieces following the flood of 2016, we witnessed the incredible strength and resolve of the citizens in every area of the parish. Long standing businesses and those who had just opened nearly a year before were dealt a devastating blow.

Advocating for our businesses was never more important and business leaders offered important perspectives on recovery to legislators through Chamber channels. The tagline for our year is "Business Matters" as we strive to show the interdependence of each area of a community and its reliance on each other.

The beginning phases of establishing the "**Livingston Chamber Foundation**" were put in motion to offer a vehicle to businesses recovery along with offering a vehicle for community impact projects.

A record seven new chamber programs, initiatives and events were launched in 2017 and are listed below. It's our passion here to serve our businesses and to make our communities better.

Sincerely,

Chad Bacas, 2017 Chairman of the Board

April Wehrs, President

New for 2017



**APRIL WEHRS, IOM
PRESIDENT CEO
LP CHAMBER
2011-PRESENT**

2017 FIRSTS & HIGHLIGHTS

Even though we were only 5 months into the recovery of our area, we kept the organization moving forward for the benefit of the business community that depended on the Chamber.

Those efforts were recognized as the Chamber was awarded an international business award through ACCE for its **Back2Biz Campaign**.

That new programming & highlights included:

- **Live 2 Lead** - A top notch, half day leadership conference that is simulcast to our parish.
- **Women's Leadership Special Event** - Professional Women's programming
- **Chamber Cheers** - a fun, meet up type event that has a casual side
- **Dodgeball** - An idea of LYP Council chair to bring fun and funds to the LYP program for service.
- **Administrative Professionals Lunch** - to show appreciation to this vital role in our businesses
- **Livingston Business Network** - A referral program made to fit a busy schedule

Livingston Parish
BUSINESS
of the **YEAR**

2016 WINNERS
Awarded in 2017

Business of the Year

Small Category

Elite Chiropractic

Medium Category

Quality Engineering
& Surveying

New Business

Walk On's Bistreaux & Bar

New Member

Berkshire Hathaway

Legacy Business Award

Valery Watts
V.Watts Furniture

Community Impact Award

A Door of Hope

Chairman's Award

Chad Bacas



January - Annual Meeting
**KEYNOTE - WALK ON'S
BRANDON LANDRY**

JANUARY 2017



Annual Meeting Highlights

THEME: 2017 BUSINESS MATTERS

Business Keynote - Brandon Landry, Founder and CEO of Walk On's - Winner ESPN's # 1 Sports Bar in America, Saints Drew Brees

Presenting Sponsor:

Remarks by CEO Mark Rosa of Jefferson Financial Federal Credit Union Attendance: 215



Chad Bacas is sworn in by Judge Jeff Johnson as 2017 Chairman of the Board



Some of the data and numbers that signify growth, influence and attendance to Chamber functions. While these numbers don't tell the full story, they identify levels of movement and action.

Note: Businesses that were members of the Chamber were **90% more likely to succeed** in a post flood disaster.

MEMBERSHIP

Members: 514
New Members: 78



Representing
32,891 Total Employees

COMMUNICATIONS

Chamber Member Online Directory Hits:
Views: 124,804 Job Listing Views: 6343
Banner ads: 340,152 Sessions: 79,411



Total Likes: 6220
New Likes: 1,633
Reached: 903,300



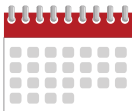
Total Followers: 875
New Followers: 180
Impressions: 39,902



2,324 Contacts
29,337 Read Emails

EVENT ATTENDANCE

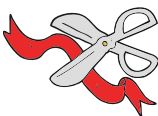
Ribbon Cuttings: 943
Business Meet ups: 350
Committee Meetings: 690
LYP Events: 172
Business Events - General: 2,378



168 Events and Meetings
+4,546 Total Attendance

RIBBON CUTTINGS

Back2Biz Flood Reopenings: 10
New Business Openings: 25



35 Total Ribbon Cuttings

EXPO | GALA GOLF

GOLF - Introducing Halloween Theme
Winning teams: **1st place**, GMFS; **2nd place**, Kent's Companies; **3rd place**, State Farm Byron Gill

Best Witches Brew, Quality Engineering; **Best Decor**, Essential Fed. Credit Union
Best Food, Stewart Family Medicine (Porky's)

Putting Contest, Chris Husser (GMFS); **Poker Run**, Ben Smith (The Glass Guru); **Closest to Pin**, Jimmy Durbin;
Longest Drive, Betsy McDowell (The Advocate);
Raffle, Chuck Lauderhill (Quality Engineering)



EXPO 6TH ANNUAL

100 plus Vendors: Flood recovery vendors, restaurants, businesses hiring, community organizations, restaurant samples and flood recovery information with a parish council cook off and you get the Livingston Parish Expo. The chamber's expo, highlighting all things Livingston, in its sixth year stayed on track and moved forward with its Back 2 Biz theme. The enthusiasm, participation and determination was maintained showcasing once again the resiliency of the area.



Parish Councilman
John Wascom Wins
Stirrin' the Pot

GALA 2017
Cancelled- due to flood



Essential - Winner Best Decor

22ND ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Party on every hole! The 22nd Annual Golf Tournament took on a spooky Halloween theme with plenty of ghosts and ghouls on the course. Everyone went all out and showed off their best costumes and tent decorations while competing for the best "witch's brew", best food and best decorated theme on the course. Winner best drink: Quality Engineering's "Putting Green"



Stewart - Winner Best Food & Party!



Best Party Team - Blount Gen.



Snow White Theme

Education Initiatives

2017 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS (21)

Albany High School
Jasmine Hendry

Denham Springs High
Austin Barnes, Grace Dugas,
Krysta Mostert and Rachel Taylor
Thomas Fuentes

Doyle High School
Emily Beever, Haleigh Jones and
Kaitlyn Raborn

Holden High School
Eric Forbes, Jessica Litolff and
Nathan Penalber : Macy Dufrene

Live Oak High School
Jack Dalbeg | Gabrielle Chanier

Springfield High School
Reeves Blankenship and Shelby
Chandler

Walker High School: Evan Bergeron,
Cameron Hood and Katelyn Prescott
Samantha Hebert



BUSINESS & EDUCATION

SCHOLARSHIPS

April 12, 2017: Scholarship and Sponsor Recognition Breakfast with Superintendent Rick Wentzel reporting on the status of the school system following the flood.

Sponsored by: Jefferson Financial Federal Credit Union

\$10,500 Total Awarded

Academic	Applied: 49	Awarded: 17
Alice Sibley	Applied: 11	Awarded: 3
Ability Beyond	Applied: 4	Awarded: 1
Schools	Applied: 9	Awarded: 7

STUDENT CAREER CONFERENCE

The Chamber's Education Committee, in coordination with Livingston Parish Public Schools, hosted Connecting to Success, a student business conference for Maurepas and Albany High School Juniors.

CONNECTING TO SUCCESS



114 Students from Albany High School & Maurepas High School
22 Volunteers presenters and Business Leaders

Students were instructed by businesses on sessions
Skill Development

- Working in teams
- Communicating Personal Value
- Creating a resume
- Job interviews how to
- Professional and ethical behavior in the workplace



Front row: Joey Goldsmith, Maryanna, Autumn Payton, Angela 'Nikki' Sykora, Cynthia Wooster, Julie Forbes
Back Row: April Wehrs, Class faciliator, Brian Skelton, Larry Daigle, Judge Jeff Johnson, Kevin Foster, George McCallum, Chis Hughes, Jason Shaffer, Amy Nicole Jarreau, Jason Harris, Dylan Ivy, David Bennett



"SUPPORTING OUR SENIORS"

Purpose: To restore items that were lost in the flood to the Council on Aging site in Denham Springs.

Items replaced: Exercise bikes, a new and larger TV, DVD's, Wii plus games, weights, projector, sound bar, a Bingo Machine valued at over \$3,500.00

Events Held: Fish Fry with hundreds of seniors and volunteers in attendance.

PROJECT IMPACT:
\$13,453.00

VOLUNTEER HOURS:
272+

IMPACTED:
Hundreds directly,
Thousands indirectly

ABOVE & BEYOND WINNER:
Nicole Jarreau

Class Community Projects



"RESTORE MIGHTY MOMS"

Purpose: To restore the pantry inventory that was lost in the flood waters.

Volunteered: The team volunteered the man hours needed to restore Mighty Moms pantry. Assisted in sorting 5 tons of food. Assisted in packing 1000 bags of food.

Partnership developed: Library partnership called "Feeding Young Minds" developed and is ongoing as a result of this project.

PROJECT IMPACT:
\$4,500

VOLUNTEER HOURS:
340

IMPACTED: 909 People Fed

ABOVE & BEYOND WINNER:
Sarah Colombo



"REBUILD AND RESTORE"

Purpose: To assist and bring awareness to homes needing rehabilitation from the 2016 flood.

Concrete needs: Raised funds and personally contributed.

Volunteered: Physical labor to three family homes plus a group home for volunteers from across the country assisting in rebuilding.

Awareness: The efforts of the group brought awareness to the devastation still being experienced by homeowners.

PROJECT IMPACT: \$5,050

VOLUNTEER HOURS: 180

IMPACTED: 3 Families directly, Thousands indirectly

ABOVE & BEYOND WINNER:
Nikki Sykora

21- 40's Chamber Program

LYP Formed in 2015, Launched in
2016, 2017 growing and going!

2017

LYP Council Chair

Jamie Seal

Quality Engineering & Surveying

Leadership Council:

Jamie Seal, Nikki Sykora, Kevin
Foster, Francesca Delaune

Members of LYP - **49**

Purpose: To engage young
professionals in business,
community and governmental
matters.

2017

Events

17 Events - Meetings
274 Attendees

Facebook Page: New 2017

264-Likes



LIVINGSTON YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

2017 Highlights:

In 2017 the Chamber's young professionals program picked up where it left off pre flood. With solid, dedicated leadership on the council roles and a membership base that has grown to 49 members, the program is on its way! Engaging young professionals in all aspects of business and community is the goal.

Here are some of 2017's highlights:

- **Launched Dodge Ball Tournament** to fund special programs and community initiatives of LYP. 16 teams, 96 plus players, 150 attendees, organizers and observers at the first event. March 21, 2017
 - Winners: 1st place - Pelican State Credit Union; 2nd place - Farm Bureau; 3rd place - Lofton Staffing
- Community Service Opportunities
- 90's Trivia | Christmas Mixer
- Linked In - What Not to Post



New for 2017- Women's Event

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP SPECIAL EVENT

Speakers: LSU Gymnastics Coach D-D Breaux on
North Oaks CEO - Michele Sutton

Sponsored by: Assurance Financial

Attendees: 175 attended Mini expo : 9 booths

If there was any question whether women in Livingston Parish would respond to a Women's specific programming event, all doubt has been quelled by overwhelming enthusiasm and response to the opportunity.

Michele Sutton, President & CEO of North Oaks Health System presented her Twelve Step Plan or "The Power of a Woman with a Plan". The event was headlined by LSU gymnastics **Coach D-D Breaux** who fired up the crowd with her three p's of guidance. "Pride – Purpose – Passion".

REGINA WALKER

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AWARD
Present to Regina Allen Walker, co founder of Livingston Parish Children's Choirs and well known community leader was awarded the inaugural Woman's Leadership Award.



TESTIMONIALS

"It's hard to believe this was a first year event. The program was top rated and the event was well organized."

"As a former female CEO, I applaud the Chamber for bringing the event to our parish. Highlighting the influences and challenges of women and their expectations is a score."

Livingston Parish
BUSINESS
of the **YEAR**

2017 WINNERS

Small Category

Stewart Family Medicine

Medium Category

Gator Milworks

Large Category

Jefferson Financial Federal
Credit Union

New Business

Kent's Companies

New Member

Berkshire Hathaway - Bobby
Tallo

Community Impact Award

A Door of Hope

Chairman's Award

Brian Abels

Associate of the Year

Livingston Parish Tourism

January - Annual Meeting

KEYNOTE - ALL STAR AUTOMOTIVE | MATT MCKAY



Annual Meeting
Highlights

Business Keynote -

Matt McKay, CEO
Allstar Automotive
Group

Attendance: 200

Presenting Sponsor:

COX Business

2017 CHAMBER BOARD OF DIRECTORS



Chad Bacas - Board Chair | Forte & Tablada

Front Row: **Todd Caruso** | Todd Caruso Attorney; **April Wehrs** | Livingston Parish Chamber; **Kacie Stewart** | Stewart Family Medicine; **Shannon Bernard** | Primerica; **Jill Wyble** | Our Lady of the Lake; **Amie Barton** | Regions Bank; **Regina Scott** | North Oaks Health System; **Margot May** | Livingston Business Journal **Back Row:** **Craig Schimpf** | Entergy; **Chad Bacas** | Forte & Tablada; **Sherry Mely** | Bancorp South; **Brian Abels** | Boyer, Hebert, Abels & Angelle; **Deric Murphy** | Quality Engineering & Surveying; Not pictured **Candy Forbes** | Denham Springs Housing; **John Blount** | Blount General Cont.

Programming - ADVOCACY

Represented

- State Chamber of Commerce LABI through the Legislative Outlook by Stephen Waguespack, President. First time event for Livingston Parish. (70 attended)
- State Delegation meet up

MORE FLOOD ADVOCACY

- Met with Business leaders on phone calls with Congressional staff on Flood Recovery
- Testified that the Restore LA Program
- Provided a web page and info on recovery for business
- Supported and held meetings on Restore Loans for Business

Invited to update Chamber

- Parish President Layton Ricks
- Sheriff Jason Ard
- Superintendent of Livingston Parish Schools

ADVOCATING FOR OUR BUSINESSES AND PARISH

FEDERAL - Flood Recovery

With flood all the talk in 2016, the Chamber assured our area and businesses were properly represented to Washington DC with a DC Flyin.

While in DC, Chamber business leaders met with the

- US Senate and Representative Delegation
- SBA, FEMA, Economic Development,
- House Small Business Committee,
- Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives,
- US Chamber of Commerce - NFIP insight.

The recurring theme was the difficulty in navigating the processes, lack of grant funds for businesses and recovery efforts that would keep the population and residents in Livingston Parish.

Attended Fly IN: Chad Bacas, Brian Abels, Regina Scott, April Wehrs

BUSINESS PRIORITIES 2017

Livingston Parish Business Priorities

Successful influence - our scorecard

1. Opposed Gross Receipts Tax on Business - Impending Tax - Tax was defeated
 2. Opposed Minimum Wage increase. Approved tying to local markets. - Successful
 3. Support collection of Internet Sales Tax to ensure local businesses are not at a competitive disadvantage. - passed.
 4. NFIP Premium Expiration - Support reinstatement - passed.
 5. Supported School Tax Renewal on October Ballot - 7.12 ten year renewal millage used for maintaining and operating schools.
- Flood Recovery
 - Transportation priorities - align with delegation - Hwy. 447, Highway 190, I-12 to the state line and roadways which connect residents to local shopping verses going into neighboring parishes.
 - Support association health care plans for affordable plans for independent business owners.
 - Oppose Tax and Regulatory Burden on business.
 - Priority of Career & Job Development for employers

Launching Live2Lead

Live 2 Lead Speakers:

Dave Ramsey

Personal Money Management
& Bestselling author

Cheryl Bachelder

Former CEO Popeye's
Louisiana Kitchen, Inc.

Warrick Dunn

Former NFL Running Back
Baton Rouge Native

John C. Maxwell

Leadership Expert & Coach
Bestselling Author

NEW IN 2017 LIVE2LEAD - SIMULCAST TO LIVINGSTON PARISH

Leadership development is one of the key areas of chamber work and programming. When plans to bring the Live2Lead program to Livingston Parish in 2016 were derailed by the flood, we picked up where we left off and brought the program to our community in 2017. The speakers were top notch and no program like this has ever been brought to our area, until now.

The live broadcast event sold out two theaters at Movie Tavern to have a total of 165 attendants to the first showing of this event.

SPONSORED BY: Blount General Contractors



Ambassador of the Year

KATHY MAUST



Kathy Maust was awarded the 2017 "Ambassador of the Year" Award though her commitment to assuring new members of the Chamber feel welcome and have an initial great experience.

She is well know for her positive view of the Chamber and regularly lets businesses know of the Chamber opportunities.

She has been one of our longest standing Ambassadors and has been a dedicated Chamber member for many years.

Thank you Kathy!

2017 Extras * BIG DEALS!

- **Rebirth Grants Partner** which awarded grants to flooded businesses.
- **The Chamber Building** sustained over \$70,000 in damages.
- **Wall Street Journal** met with our members at our referral for input on the flood.
- **Large numbers of members** upgraded their member level.
- **We elevated members** rankings on Google.
- **Movie Tavern Opened Again**
- **LA Sec of State approved the Livingston Chamber Foundation as a non profit - July 12, 2017.**
- **Challengers Field Ground Breaking**

LIVINGSTON PARISH WINS INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION AWARD! BACK 2 BIZ CAMPAIGN



COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE

This is a very big deal!

Livingston Parish was internationally recognized! Right after our area flooded in 2016, the LP Chamber launched the **"Back2Biz Campaign"** with a piece of cardboard, a marker, and a camera with instructions to make sure the images of open businesses projected were positive and uplifting.

The campaign caught the attention of the Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives - an industry association serving worldwide - and the campaign was featured in the ACCE publication AND better yet was awarded a

COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE AWARD awarded for best campaign at the association annual awards ceremony.