We are
GREATER TOGETHER
2019/2020 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY
LETTERS from our Leaders

YVONNE WILLIAMS, PRESIDENT & CEO
Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce

Our Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce is proudly gearing up to engage, connect and cultivate community and economic development prosperity initiatives in partnership with community based OneMacon platforms.

In 2020 and beyond, we are committed to continuous collaboration with community and regional partners through establishment and management of partnerships for workforce and talent development.

Access to local quality universities, new technology partnerships and technical educational institutions allows us to innovate and grow local businesses through a continuous working process cultivating a technological-based talent pool and fostering business innovation.

Building on our past success in leading pro-business advocacy as the voice of business, your Chamber envisions leading the future and building our community and membership forward in success.

As a strong and proactive organization of committed membership, we are united together leading Macon Matters!

JULIA MAGDA, 2020 BOARD CHAIR
Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce

Thank you for the opportunity to lead the Chamber at this time in its storied history. It is an honor to work with our dedicated volunteer leaders and staff as we identify new ways to make Macon the best place to do business. We are poised to respond to the community’s call for the Chamber to lead in talent and workforce development, retention and recruitment in Macon-Bibb County, and we are simultaneously evaluating how we can bring more value to our members so they continue to invest in our mission as we support business and economic prosperity.

This activity, however, does not occur in a vacuum. Our members and their employees face increasing competition for time, money and expertise, and significant external threats – whether they are health-related, economic-driven or both – can instantly cause priorities to change. The Chamber stands on its promise to support businesses, large and small. Let 2020 be a year we recall as reigniting our community spirit and evidence of how we are better together.

About the Cover: Host Brother Stewart, Chamber President Yvonne Williams and Governor Brian Kemp talk about issues and share ideas at the Macon Matters Legislative Social.
“I want you to know how proud I am of what we accomplished working with the Macon delegation in my first legislative session. I know that our investments in education, healthcare, public safety and workforce development are going to yield big returns for our state.”

Governor Brian Kemp
Keynote Speaker at 2019 Macon Matters Legislative Social
Advocacy + Action

NATIONAL PARK DESIGNATION

Local leaders advocated on behalf of our community in Washington, DC, for the successful designation of the Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park, which is estimated to generate $233 million in annual economic impact over the next 15 years, supporting 3,171 jobs.

Better business

CLIMATE

Hundreds of Chamber members welcomed Governor Brian Kemp, legislators and special guests to a new local advocacy event hosted at Walnut Creek Shooting Preserve. The rustic setting prompted relaxed conversation about critical issues with members and the Macon delegation.

Macon Matters

Governor Brian Kemp and Mercer University President William Underwood talk at the Macon Matters Legislative Social.
HOSTING LEADERS

By hosting local and state leaders at major events, the Chamber’s role as a convener provided forums for important conversations with RAFB Brigadier General John C. Kubinec, Macon-Bibb Mayor Robert Riechert, GDOT Chairman Tim Golden and Georgia Agricultural Commissioner Gary Black.

EDUCATION PARTNERS

The Greater Macon Chamber advocated for the successful passage of the Macon-Bibb ESPLOST, funding continued improvements in the Bibb County School District in the areas of technology, security and infrastructure that will impact every student.

BUSINESS TAX TESTIMONY

Chamber President Yvonne Williams testified at a public hearing to officially oppose the Bibb Commission proposed tax increase for businesses with more than 250 employees.
The Greater Macon Chamber is engaged. We believe that each member brings value, with unique insights and perspectives.

A carefully curated series of events provides professional engagement for entrepreneurs, small businesses, corporations and government. Young professionals network at Nite. CEOs and salesmen conduct business after hours. Members connect over coffee and Chamber Ambassadors welcome new enterprises with signature ribbon cuttings and personal contact.

The Chamber provides greater access and awareness for members with an enhanced website, active social media channels and special events.
In **2019**, the Chamber held **112** networking events connecting businesses with **4,963** attendees.

**NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES**

Business After Hours  
Connecting over Coffee  
Young Professionals Network  
Good Morning Macon  
Leadership Macon

**Annual Signature Events**

State of the Community Luncheon  
Macon Matters Legislative Social  
Engage! Workforce Summit  
Salute to Business Awards Luncheon  
Annual Golf Tournament  
Annual Meeting & Celebration
Macon-Bibb tourism supports 3,800 jobs and generates $101.45 million in payroll.

Visit Macon's Aaron Buzza and Gary Wheat champion Macon-Bibb tourism efforts and support Georgia's booming film industry.
$2.9 billion in direct investment in Georgia film industry in 2019, including Macon-Bibb projects.

8

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Visit Macon’s Aaron Buzza and Gary Whea to champion Macon-Bibb tourism efforts and support Georgia’s booming film industry.

- Networking events like Connecting Over Coffee and Business After Hours
- Professional development classes and webinars
- Special discount programs including the Anthem healthcare plan for Chamber members
- Active social media updates to Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram
- Dynamic website loaded with important information
- Weekly electronic messages to all members

GET ENGAGED WITH GREATER ACCESS

2,650 Facebook followers and 26,672 new web users engaged with Greater Macon Chamber in 2019

Chamber volunteers celebrate at TRC Victory party at Wesleyan

Chamber business connections
Salute to Business Luncheon & Awards
Leaders celebrate a great year

Chamber Ambassadors surprise members with gifts on Party Patrol
**Economics + Education**

**Workforce and TALENT Objectives**

- Align existing workforce pathways and foster new collaborative opportunities to close talent gaps with employers, workforce partners and K-12/post-secondary education.
- Broaden awareness of, and access to, high-quality career pathways offered by K-12 and post-secondary education.
- Develop programs that assist in creating a qualified workforce to meet the current and future needs of Middle Georgia businesses.
- Work with the Bibb County School System and Central Georgia Technical College to increase participation in the dual enrollment program and in career pathways.
- Connect teachers into the targeted workforce councils to increase industry relevance in the academic curriculum related to these expanding career fields.
- Create an extern program to enable teachers and counselors to spend time with local employers to assist them in having a better understanding of our workforce needs and the workplace environment.
- Increase opportunities for students by working directly with employers to develop and strengthen apprenticeships, internships, job shadowing and other work-based learning experiences to build industry awareness and showcase career paths.

Executive Chef **Stuart Hardy** of W.S. Hutchings College and Career Academy serves an appetizer to **Dr. Cassandra Miller-Washington**, CTAE Director of Bibb County Public School District and Greater Macon Chamber Director **Lynn Farmer** at the upscale Rose Café, which is located onsite.
The Chamber and local partners welcomed new medical residents to Macon at a reception showcasing attractions, arts and quality of life.

The Engage! Workforce Summit brought stakeholders together. Workforce Development Director Jamie Jordan from the Technical College System of Georgia crunched the numbers and delivered an impactful message.

The Greater Macon Chamber of Commerce made significant advances with a new talent development strategy, bringing education, business, technology and government partners together. By creating an optimal environment for education, engagement and employment, Macon-Bibb will successfully attract and retain talent.

The Chamber and Georgia Power partnered with Bibb County Schools to develop a career guide, which will be distributed to every 9th and 10th grader in digital and printed formats. The new resource will introduce students and parents to prospective employment opportunities and present a clear curriculum to prepare for future education and employment in preferred fields of interest.
The 2019 Leadership Macon class project supported the Ocmulgee Mounds, preserving a historic structure and adding a STEM program to engage and educate students visiting the important cultural resource.

About Leadership Macon
Each year, Leadership Macon brings outstanding individuals with unique perspectives together through a series of monthly immersive experiences, carefully curated to spark a frank and candid exchange of ideas. During the year, several community speakers and facilitators discuss challenging changes, complex situations and various viewpoints. Graduates of Leadership Macon enrich our community through active involvement in shaping Macon-Bibb’s future.

2019 Leadership Macon project leaders visit Ocmulgee Mounds National Historical Park.
BUSINESS + INDUSTRY AWARDS

During the Salute to Business Awards Luncheon featuring keynote speaker Aynn Collins of Mailchimp, the Chamber honored outstanding businesses, industries and young leaders for their exceptional community contributions.

Startup of the Year
Macon Bacon

Business of the Year
Scott’s Pharmacy

Outstanding Young Business Leader
Kaitlynn Kressin

Small Business of the Year
SparClean Premier Cleaning Solutions

“We all have a common goal to see our fair city continue to grow in prosperity and quality of life while enjoying financial stability.”

– Demetris and Kameo Hill of Sparclean

200 young professionals engaged with YPN program in 2019.

YPN at Natalia’s

YPN at Mount de Sales

1,600 graduates of Leadership Macon program since 1979.

YPN at Mount de Sales

YPN at Mt. de Sales

YPN at Mt. de Sales

YPN at Mt. de Sales
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MERCER ENGINEERING RESEARCH CENTER

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YVONNE WILLIAMS  President & CEO

CADENCE BANK

GREATER MACON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
We are Greater Together

159 years. 1,000 members. 50,000 employees. 1 unified vision.

When you do the math, it all adds up. The sum is greater than the parts when community stakeholders collaborate. The only thing missing is you.

Join the Chamber and the conversation.

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