



ANNUAL REPORT 2020



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Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce

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Gina Spagnola, President and CEO

Lindsay Touchy, Vice President

Laura Blacksher, Vice President of Finance

Lorraine Grubbs, Director of Membership Development

Maria Romero-Rato, Director of Membership Engagement, Services & Visitors Center Operations

Jill Pyles, Director of Events & Sponsorship

Robert Evans, Executive Assistant to the President & CEO



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OUR MISSION:

TO PROMOTE AND ADVOCATE FOR BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Galveston Island is a thriving city filled with committed businesses, community leaders and a booming tourism industry. As the oldest chamber in Texas, established in 1845, the Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce takes pride in the role we play to foster a healthy community where businesses thrive, not just locally but regionally.

A MESSAGE TO OUR INVESTORS

Galveston Island plays an important role in today's economy, not only in Texas, but across the entire nation. In March of 2020, the world changed with the invasion of the COVID-19 pandemic. While adjusting to the pandemic, our coastal world shifted even more when a tropical storm and hurricane loomed, placing even more strain on our community.

COVID-19 forever impacted how we do business. Faced with financial hardship and uncertainty while adapting to health and safety guidelines forced upon us by legislative mandates, our businesses were catapulted into uncharted waters.

When the pandemic hit our community, the chamber team reacted quickly to develop a rapid response plan to ensure our members had access to resources and information they would need to survive. This 2020 Annual report outlines a brief overview of chamber activities undertaken throughout this year to help our businesses; activities such as:

- Making one-on-one calls to inform members of tools and resources available to help.
- Redesigning our website home page as a one-stop resource for all things COVID-19.
- Encouraging the community to shop locally through a "Buy Galveston First" and "We're Open for Business" social media campaigns.
- Adding a "Virtual Mall" to our home page driving the members and community to connect with local businesses to purchase goods and services.
- Composing and distributing a comprehensive weekly newsletter highlighting the ever-evolving tools and resources.
- Providing webinars with subject matter experts on financial aid, updates on COVID-19 mandates, and live conversations with federal, state and local leaders.
- Partnering with the Galveston County Health District and seven surrounding chambers of commerce to form the Galveston County COVID-19 Task Force.

We were most inspired by the resilient spirit of our community who, despite the severe and ongoing economic and social impact of this pandemic, kept finding ways to move forward. This reinforces the legacy of fearlessness we know to be Galveston Island and makes it one of the best places to live. We are strong, we are authentic, we are courageous.

In 2021, the Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce remains committed to our core mission – to promote and advocate for business and community development. There is much work to be done and we embrace this opportunity to continue finding ways to help our community.

We extend a sincere and heartfelt gratitude to our members for your investment and continued support of the work we do on behalf of the business community. You make Galveston Island a great place to live, work and conduct business.

Be well,



Howie Bentley
2020 Chair



Gina M. Spagnola
President and CEO

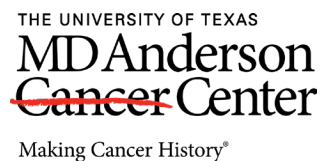
2020

THANK YOU TO OUR SUSTAINING MEMBERS

Admiral



Captain





MEMBERSHIP

The Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce represents more than 800 members comprised of businesses, organizations and individuals from across the region. Despite the many obstacles of this year, we continued to see growth with a 4% increase in membership retention and 11% increase in overall membership.

We want to thank all of our members who renewed their membership and continued to support the work we do on behalf the business community. We also welcome the 132 new businesses who joined our organization during the two-day membership campaign, and we thank the 75 volunteers who helped make that event a success.

The Chamber's visitor center is the island's official visitor center and is open seven days a week. The visitor's center offers member brochures and personalized recommendations to the visitors who stop by. We also produce a multi-award winning Membership Directory, Relocation & Island Guide that we distribute to potential residents as well as to our membership and throughout the community.



MEMBERSHIP STATS

227 NEW MEMBERS

640 RENEWING MEMBERS

30 RIBBON CUTTINGS



ACTIVE MEMBERS



85%
RETENTION
RATE

In 2020, the chamber partnered with the Galveston Island Convention & Visitors Center to become the official visitors center. While our office was closed the entire month of April and had minimum traffic in May due to the pandemic, over 5,000 visitors walked through our doors.



Visitors Center at a glance 2020



5,387

TOTAL VISITORS

↓ 32% COMPARED TO 2019



6,076

TOTAL MAIL OUTS

↑ 173% COMPARED TO 2019



4,967

TOTAL CALLS

↑ 105% COMPARED TO 2019



Galvestonian of the year

Programs & events 2020

Programs and events are an integral component of membership and our annual budget.

The Galveston Regional Chamber of Commerce marked its 175th year and celebrated with a historic annual meeting on January 31, 2020 at the Galveston Island Convention Center. With over 500 attendees, we celebrated our rich history and expressed our appreciation to our members.

The coronavirus disrupted several scheduled events and forced us to postpone events like the annual women's conference several times. However, the Chamber team persevered and hosted twelve virtual Good Morning Galveston meetings, three in-person mixers, 21 workshops, the 31st annual golf tournament and the 13th annual women's conference.



Judi Holler, Women's Conference Keynote



Golf Tournament



Leadership Galveston

532

ANNUAL MEETING
ATTENDEES

627

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
ATTENDEES

124

GOLF TOURNAMENT
ATTENDEES

45

NETWORKING
EVENTS

32

NAVIGATORS

30

LEADERSHIP GALVESTON
PARTICIPANTS

176th Annual Meeting Highlight

2020 Award recipients

"Nonno" Tony Smecca Galvestonian of the Year / COL Michael E. Fossum, Texas A&M University at Galveston
Legacy Award / Galveston-Texas City Pilots, Port of Galveston, The Daily News
Heritage Award / City of Galveston and Mills Shirley L.L.P.
Christie Mitchell Beachcomber Award / Galveston Hotel & Lodging Association
Large Business of the Year / Port of Galveston
Small Business of the Year / Hey Mikey's
H. Rudy Teichman Maritime Wheel of Excellence / Texas A&M Maritime Academy Corps of Cadets
Vic Pierson C-Crewe Award / Ben Peterek, Gulfside Cleaning Services
Board Member of the Year / Theresa Elliott, Casa del Mar Beachfront Suites
Carol and Fred Wurst Navigator of the Year / Kyle Albright, Edward Jones
C-Crewe Member of the Year / Lauren Millo, Moody Bank
Leadership Volunteer of the Year / Carrie Davis, The Grand 1894 Opera House

Thank you sponsors

First-in-Texas

The Daily News

Legacy

Galveston-Texas City Pilots

Hey Mikey's

Moody Bank

Port of Galveston

West Galveston Island Property Owners Association

Heritage

BP America

Casa del Mar Beachfront Suites

CenterPoint Energy

City of Galveston

Classic Auto Group Galveston

Encore

Evia/Sullivan Interests

Frost Bank

Galveston Hotel & Lodging Association

Galveston Independent School District

Galveston Insurance Associates (GIA)

Galveston Island Park Board of Trustees

Galveston Restaurant Group

Gulfside Cleaning Services

Ham, Langston & Brezina LLP

HomeTown Bank of Galveston

Joe Tramonte Realty, Inc.

Landry's, Inc.

Mayes Middleton

Mills Shirley LLP

Minuteman Press - Galveston

Mitchell Historic Properties

Port of Galveston

Prestige Oysters

Texas A&M University at Galveston

Texas First Bank

T&T Marine

UTMB Health

GALVESTON REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Celebrating

175

1845

Years

2020

SPECIAL LEGACY EDITION ★ MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

MAKING HISTORY



NEWSPAPERS • NEWSSTAND • MAGAZINES





COMMUNICATIONS

We worked hard to increase our brand awareness, maximize engagement and provide business development opportunities for our members. Our marketing team supports the entire chamber by communicating with numerous audiences including Chamber members, prospective members, government officials, the community and media.

We are constantly adapting to digital advancements to better serve our members and provide enhanced exposure opportunities.

In 2021, the Chamber will launch a new website with advanced features and advertising opportunities to connect our brand and our members to targeted audiences.

GALVESTON ISLAND, TX

TEXAS' OLDEST CHAMBER



MEMBERSHIP

Join the Chamber Today >

EXPLORE CITY

Discover the City of Galveston Island >

SUBTITLE HERE

Support Local

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation.

PUBLIC POLICY

Advocate for the Region >

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Regional Economic Prosperity >



Preview of newly designed website

WEBSITE STATS



44,477 WEBSITE USERS

58,977 IMPRESSIONS

SOCIAL MEDIA STATS



21,897 FOLLOWERS

646 POSTS

658,708 TOTAL POST REACH

25.9% INCREASED FOLLOWERS



3,513 FOLLOWERS

59.3% INCREASED FOLLOWERS

EMAIL MARKETING STATS



31% OPEN RATE

16% ABOVE INDUSTRY AVERAGE



COVID-19 BUSINESS RESOURCES & RESPONSE

When the state shutdown on March 17, 2020 and COVID-19 began to negatively impact businesses, we transitioned to the new guidelines. The pandemic may have slowed down business, but we were busy as ever to remain a valuable resource for the business community.

MEMBER SUPPORT

Under the president & CEO's direction, the chamber team conducted personal calls to all 700 members to provide support and to understand the effects of the crisis. While the team was busy calling all members, Gina Spagnola personally visited 50+ businesses and produced video spotlights to promote open businesses.

These conversations and videos were instrumental in shaping our save small business initiative which helped businesses navigate and reopen safely.

700+ PERSONAL CALLS

Chamber staff reached out to every member.

39,633 IMPRESSIONS

To the Chamber's website which was redesigned to create a one-stop COVID-19 hub of business and community resources.

7 DAYS A WEEK 24 HOURS A DAY

Chamber staff was on call and provided 24-hour support to members.

E-COMMERCE VIRTUAL MALL

Launched an online platform on the Chamber's homepage for small businesses to sell products and services.

5 SURVEYS

Conducted to all members to understand the impact and assess and address urgent needs.

13 HOSTED WEBINARS

Including topics like legal support, how to get funding, State, County, and City updates regarding public health and city ordinances, marketing your business, current state of education, and workforce solutions.

44 MEETINGS ATTENDED

Facilitated meetings to advocate on behalf of the business community including a meeting with local, state and federal representatives and the General Land Office (GLO) to discuss beach closure during Memorial weekend and potential business impacts for other closures.

ADVOCACY & COMMUNICATIONS

We pivoted quickly to provide COVID-19 updates to the membership and community. With a high volume of information flowing, we acted as a filter to get the most crucial information to members in a concise and easy-to-use format. These resources contained information regarding health orders, Paycheck Protection Programs, Economic Injury Disaster Loans, educational updates, and more.

We also developed *Buy Galveston First* and *We're Open for Business* social media campaigns to encourage the community to support local businesses.

In addition, we worked with local media outlets to share updates and resources for every business in the region (members and non-members). The Chamber's president and CEO, Gina Spagnola, was interviewed by media outlets such as The Austin Statesman, AccuWeather, KHOU-11, and Texas Association of Business regarding COVID-19's impact on the Galveston business community.

From March 2020 - July 2020

SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

350 POSTED VIDEOS

477,302 VIEWERS REACHED

EMAIL MARKETING

309 EMAILS SENT

32% OPEN RATE

14 COVID-19 NEWSLETTERS

PUBLIC RELATIONS

21 PRESS RELEASES

6 NEWS INTERVIEWS



GALVESTON COUNTY BUSINESS TASKFORCE

The Galveston County Business TaskForce, in tandem with the surrounding chambers of commerce and Galveston County Health District, created and established reactive plans to support the county and community in reopening safely.

The group meets weekly to discuss strategies to support the county business community and encourage businesses, consumers, residents and visitors to wear masks and practice social distancing, and promote shopping local.



10 PARTNERS

Comprised of seven surrounding chambers of commerce, Galveston County Judge, and the Galveston County Health District.

23 TASK-FORCE MEETINGS

This group met weekly to discuss strategies to support to the county business community.

CHAMBER HEALTH DURING COVID-19

The Chamber never missed a beat, remaining open and working 24 hours a day/7 days a week to provide tools and resources to our members and the community.

Prior to essential businesses reopening, the Chamber team met via zoom every morning to collaborate and construct a recovery plan to help businesses navigate and survive the global pandemic.

As a 501c6 organization, we were not eligible for PPP loans, therefore; we received minimum financial support. The chamber applied for funding in round two when 501c6 organizations were allowed, however, we still did not receive any funding.

We adjusted and monitored our budget and lowered expenses to ensure our organization remained financially healthy.

So, like many other small businesses, we had to respond quickly and find creative ways to persevere against all odds. We remain in business with our team intact, and we continue to maintain our relevancy to the regional Galveston business community.

We are proud of our legacy, and we look forward to moving into our 176th year as the voice of business.

PROMOTING AND ADVOCATING FOR

BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY

DEVELOPMENT SINCE 1845



galvestonchamber.com