Governor Riley issues proclamation to ASBDC Director

Governor Bob Riley presented ASBDC State Director, William Campbell, Jr. with a proclamation August 21, 2008 to commend Mr. Campbell and the ASBDC’s commitment to making the Alabama Rural Action Commission a success. The ARAC is a statewide initiative dedicated to measurably improving the quality of life in Alabama’s rural areas by working with citizens of Alabama and any other supportive parties.

Pictured standing L to R:  Andy Benefield, Special Assistant to ARAC; Chad Nichols, Assistant Director of ARAC; William Campbell, Jr., ASBDC Director; Lauren Young, ASBDC Public Relations Director; Senator Gerald Dial, ARAC Director
Seated: Governor Bob Riley

Horizon Shipbuilding, Inc. named SBA Alabama Exporter of the Year for 2008

Horizon Shipbuilding, Inc. has won the Alabama Exporter of the Year from the U.S. Small Business Administration for 2008. Horizon is a small company located in Bayou La Batre, a Gulf Coast town well-known for its shipbuilding heritage and seafood industry. This home-grown small business exporter makes very specialized workboats to the exacting standards of military, government, and commercial vessel operators in waters around the globe. True to the tenacity and leadership of the company’s owner, Mr. Travis Short, Horizon has weathered several hurricanes, rebuilt and invested in his facilities, and grown the business through exports. The firm also utilized a variety of SBA loan programs including the 504, Export Working Capital, and Disaster loans to help sustain the business along the way to its position as the largest employer in Bayou La Batre.

At a recent award ceremony for Horizon’s export performance, SBA and AITC officials toured a new 170 foot aluminum crew boat destined for a customer in West Africa’s oil industry. Horizon has produced and delivered work boats for customers in Iraq and Latin America. SBA saw first-hand the result of Horizon’s investment in plant and equipment for its new Yacht Division where people were hard at work producing vessels for overseas customers.

Congratulations to Travis Short and all the employees of Horizon Shipbuilding for providing high quality jobs, strengthening the local economy, and serving customers around the world with a great product made in Alabama. Together they continue to build a solid reputation as a quality producer of vessels made with pride in America.

The firm received technical assistance from the Alabama International Trade Center, a member of the ASBDC.

Pictured: Teresa Wilson, SBA; Travis Short, President Horizon Shipbuilding
Pictured: Horizon’s new 170 foot crew boat destined for an oil industry customer in West Africa
Eight Questions

1. **What is KidCheck?**
   ARAC’s KidCheck program is a new school health screening initiative announced by Governor Riley in May. Through KidCheck programs, K-12 students have the opportunity to receive thorough free screenings from college nursing students. This is a win/win situation where our children get free health screenings and the nursing students receive the hands-on experience of working with our children. The program is modeled after successful student health programs in Bibb and Blount County Schools. KidCheck requires communication and coordination between school administrators, school nurses, and outside groups that can lend their expertise to making the program successful.

2. **What is the strategy behind making KidCheck work?**
   The strategy is to empower communities to build partnerships between local, regional, and state organizations in order to implement KidCheck in schools. KidCheck is a simple, common sense approach to a address important health issues for our children. By building partnerships and linking schools with college nursing students, we can improve the health of our students.

3. **Who is involved in KidCheck?**
   1. School systems from top to bottom- The Superintendent adopts the program and selects the local KidCheck Coordinator. The KidCheck Coordinator will work closely with the superintendent, principal, teachers, and all staff to explain how KidCheck works and to gain their buy-in. 2. Parents- Children are screened if they have parental permission. 3. Community- Their partnership, input, and buy-in are necessary for success. 4. College Nursing School- This is a key link because they administer the screenings. 5. Regional and State Partnerships- ARAC has a KidCheck Steering Committee with representatives from many state agencies including the Department of Education, Department of Postsecondary Education, Medicaid, Alabama Department of Public Health, Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation. ARAC also has steering committee members from non-for profit organizations such as the hospital.

4. **What do you ultimately want to see KidCheck accomplish?**
   We all agree that education is the key to the future of our state and healthy children are best able to reach their full potential in the classroom and beyond. We believe that KidCheck is a common sense initiative to improve the health of students and decrease absenteeism. By achieving these goals, we can also lead to improved academic performance and lead to a more healthy, productive workforce for our state. KidCheck is designed to not just conduct screenings, but to assist in making sure that every child who needs follow-up care is either covered through private or public insurance. Students without private insurance may qualify for state insurance programs, such as Medicaid or AllKids. If a student fails a screening and is not covered through public or private insurance, the Alabama Child Caring Foundation will automatically provide insurance for the child.

5. **Who should participate in KidCheck?**
   The program is open to any interested school system. Programs can be administered at the elementary, middle, and high school level.

6. **Are you in need of volunteers or any other type of assistance?**
   YES, we need your assistance in a number of ways. Once you find out the details of the program, we encourage you to contact your local school superintendent to find out if the program is right for your school system. Once the program is adopted in a school system in your area, they will form a Local Steering Committee which will be comprised of local representatives from the school system, hospital, small businesses, corporations, community and civic groups, churches, non-for profit organizations, etc. We encourage local businesses to get involved and to assist in the planning and implementation of the KidCheck Day.

7. **Will small business owners experience any benefits from the implementation of KidCheck?**
   There is a direct correlation between healthy students and increasing student achievement and decreased dropout rates. The healthy student is more likely to stay in school and to reach his or her full potential. This means that they will have a great chance at being a productive worker once they enter the workforce. Also, by diagnosing and treating key health issues early on in life, students will have a better chance at a successful career.

8. **What’s the next step for KidCheck?**
   Our next step is to complete a KidCheck Booklet entitled “A Superintendents’ Guide to KidCheck”. This booklet coupled with our KidCheck Training Video and pamphlet will serve as a great way to introduce school leaders to our program. We will be working to get these informational materials into the hands of every superintendent in the state. We will then identify the schools around the state who will be implementing the program and match them with a college nursing school to administer KidCheck. We will guide the schools through the process of getting ready for KidCheck Day. The local school will be responsible for picking a local KidCheck Coordinator and a local KidCheck Steering Committee. ARAC will work with the local school coordinator and each steering committee to ensure that local, regional, and state resources are all lined up to make KidCheck a success.
Eight Questions for Ralph Stacy, President / CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama

1. How and when was the CCAA created?
   CCAA was originally formed as “The Alabama Association of Commercial Organizations” in 1937. Its goal was to “foster the commercial, industrial, and recreational welfare of the state…” It was formed by the Chambers of Commerce and their CEOs from Birmingham, Huntsville, Tuscaloosa, Anniston, Mobile, Dothan, Alexander City, Selma, and Demopolis. In the late 1950’s, it was renamed the Chamber of Commerce Executives Association, which it remained until 1996, when it realized that its reach was beyond just Chamber executives and adopted the name under which it now operates: The Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama.

2. What is the primary mission of the CCAA?
   CCAA’s primary mission is summarized in this statement: “to build a better Alabama…through strong Chambers of Commerce”. CCAA does this through professional development opportunities, issue advocacy, and through the creation of partnerships, most importantly and impressively with the Business Council of Alabama, as well as other strong advocates of the business community of Alabama.

3. What type of individuals should participate in the CCAA?
   Our typical CCAA member is a local Chamber executive. Since there are over 120 Chamber CEO’s across Alabama, they might represent a many-thousand member metro Chamber with an extensive staff, or be the ultimate “go-to” person in a small two-person Chamber. Regardless of the size of the Chamber staff, the efforts of them are felt across the business community as a whole, and their membership and participation in CCAA helps build both their professionalism and their network of contacts. We also have affiliate members who support CCAA through their investment of resources.

4. Who are your partners?
   Our most visible and largest contributing partner is the Business Council of Alabama. Other key Sustaining Investors include Alabama Power Company, Balch and Bingham, the Alabama Small Business Development Consortium, Protective Life, and the Alabama Trucking Association. We have many other groups in Alabama, including the Alabama Gas Corporation, who are consistent program and event sponsors for CCAA, as well as a large group of vendors and other statewide professions that support the efforts of Chambers of Commerce. We constantly are in search of visionary businesses and allied groups who can help create an even stronger CCAA through their investment in our programs and members.

5. Are you in need of volunteers or any other type of assistance?
   This is a unique situation in that our volunteers are the heads of organizations that use great numbers of volunteers to accomplish their mission. We’re always looking for partners to invest in CCAA to help fund its programs and expand the voice and reach of the business community of Alabama. CCAA is a small business, not a government entity, so we search for resources daily.

6. What benefits will small business owners experience from joining the CCAA (or their local chambers)
   Membership in the local Chamber is the best way to benefit CCAA. This local membership creates a stronger business community, which in turn creates more resources and programs for the local Chamber, which gives the local Chamber a greater and more powerful voice in local issues and makes it a stronger, more viable business advocate, which in turn increases the influence and depth of CCAA regarding issues that affect the business community of Alabama as a whole and Chambers of Commerce in particular.

7. How do small business owners get involved with the CCAA?
   Join your local Chamber…become involved in its programs…accept the role of leadership…and support your Chamber’s involvement in CCAA. That ongoing support of local Chambers to their professional staff is paramount in maintaining a strong state Chamber association, and that is tied directly to strong volunteer leaders who understand and support the role of local CEO’s and their involvement at a state level through CCAA.

8. What do you consider the CCAA’s biggest accomplishment during your tenure?
   Hands down, no question, without any doubt it is The Partnership of 2003 with the Business Council of Alabama. This first-of-its-kind linkage of local Chambers with the titular State Chamber in BCA has proven to be not only the first, but the only such program in America. It has created a grassroots business organization the likes of which is unseen in America. The program began in 2003 as a result of the vision of BCA President and CEO William J. “Billy” Canary, who used his experience as a member of the George H.W. Bush White House staff and former President of the American Trucking Association to create this first-ever formal link between local Chambers of Commerce and the nearly 60,000 businesses they represent locally with the 5,000 BCA members. It’s in the process of being emulated in other states. The synergy of this Partnership has shown that the ability to advocate policy is enhanced through the BCA’s stellar record of governmental affairs coupled with the Chamber’s local component of delivering the message to the end user- Alabama’s business community. The ability of the constituency of Alabama to receive a clear, concise, consistent message regarding the business issues of our state, then to be able to communicate via an informed decision with their elected officials as to what is best for them only bodes well for the future of Alabama businesses.
Alabama Small Business Development Consortium Director William Campbell, Jr., announced that Louise Grover has been selected as the 2008 State Star of the Alabama SBDC.

“I am pleased to make this announcement, and to recognize Mrs. Grover for extraordinary contributions to the work of the Alabama SBDC and small business in Alabama,” said Campbell.

Louise Grover is the MIS coordinator and webmaster at the Alabama SBDC state office. Mrs. Grover was chosen by the SBDC for being an exemplary performer, making a significant contribution to the Alabama SBDC program, and showing a strong commitment to small business in Alabama.

“It is an honor to accept this award,” said Grover, “and to have the opportunity to help so many people achieve the dream of starting and succeeding in their own business.”

The ASBDC Professional Development Training Conference, held in Pensacola, Florida from July 29th to August 1st, was by all accounts a huge success.

Attendees were led through two days of training sessions covering topics such as accreditation, case narratives, professional development and continuing education, business compliance, branding and marketing, and database systems.

Guest speakers included Deborah Schueneman with SBDCNet, Sheri Guenster with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Barry Johnson with FedEx and Tracey Priest with FranNet.

“I appreciate all the center directors and their staff for taking the time to attend this conference that I believe is vital to the continuation of this organization,” said William Campbell, Jr., ASBDC State Director. “I would also like to thank Dr. Jackie DiPofi, the state office staff, all presenters and guest speakers and our sponsors for putting this conference together and making it not only educational but enjoyable.”


“We are proud of the leadership and commitment exhibited by Dr. Jackie DiPofi during this process and the support given her by the accreditation committee composed of Robbie Medders, Brian Davis and Lorenza Patrick,” said William Campbell, Jr., ASBDC State Director. “They each contributed their time and energy to ensure the Alabama SBDC’s accreditation status.

“The national accreditation committee agrees that ‘there is a bright future ahead for the ASBDC’ as it awarded full accreditation to the Alabama Consortium,” says Dr. Jackie DiPofi, ASBDC associate state director. “Now it is important for the consortium members to work together to help small businesses during these hard economic times.”
**Alabama State University SBDC hosts Veteran’s Procurement and Business Opportunities Conference**

The ASU SBDC hosted their annual Statewide Veterans Procurement & Business Opportunity Conference on Thursday, August 28, 2008 from 8:30am – 4:00pm, in the John L. Buskey Health Science Center Auditorium, on the campus of Alabama State University. The purpose of the conference was to inform and educate veterans and the general public of procurement, contracting and business opportunities with federal, state and local government agencies. The Procurement and Business Opportunities Conference was sponsored by the ASU SBDC, ASU College of Business Administration, ASU, Maxwell Air Force Base, “42nd Contracting Squadron”, Alabama Procurement Technical Assistance Program and Alabama Small Business Capital.

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**Jacksonville State University SBDC host the Chococolocco Economic Activity Zone Exposition**

The Jacksonville State University (JSU) Center for Economic Development (CED) and Small Business Development Center (SBDC) hosted the Chococolocco Economic Activity Zone (CEAZ) Exposition at the Anniston City Meeting Center on Thursday, September 11, 2008. The Chococolocco Economic Activity Zone was initiated in 2005 to promote area wide economic development through the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data from the a tri-county area that includes Calhoun, Cleburne, and Talladega. In the adjacent picture, Dr. William A. Meehan, President of JSU, addresses conference attendees.

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**University of West Alabama SBDC Receives U.S. DOT grant!**

The University of West Alabama Workforce Development Program, under the leadership of John McCarter, has been awarded a $200,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to undertake a two-year workforce development project in partnership with the Sumter County Public Schools. Donald Mills, the Director of the UWA SBDC, will be a key partner in this program as he will be called upon to use his extensive knowledge of transportation-related procurement opportunities.

The program will take a group of twenty-six 9th graders on a two-year exploration of the many facets of the national, and international, transportation system. Through a combination of guest speakers, research projects, and field trips, the students will be exposed to the myriad opportunities available in careers focused on water, land, and air transportation. Additionally, the students will work through the NxLevel® for Youth Entrepreneurship curriculum to begin to lay the groundwork for the next generation of successful entrepreneurs in transportation-related fields. Donald Mills will teach this exciting component of the course, and seeks to build upon the success he has had teaching NxLevel® throughout the UWA SBDC’s five county service area.
On August 21, 2008 small business owners and managers who are considering getting into the federal government market attended a special program entitled, “Marketing Your Business to the Federal Government,” on the Phenix City Campus of Troy University. The program was cosponsored by both the Small Business Development Centers at Auburn and Troy Universities, Phenix City – Russell County Chamber of Commerce and the Alabama Small Business Development Consortium-Procurement Technical Assistance Program.

Featured speakers for the program were representatives from the Fort Benning Directorate of Contracting, the Corps of Engineers Savannah District, and the U.S. Small Business Administration Birmingham District Office. Stephen A. Magner, Procurement Analyst/Small Business Specialist, Fort Benning Directorate of Contracting discussed the Army’s program of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) as related to the growth of Fort Benning and associated contracting opportunities. Mr. Magner also addressed the Federal Government Acquisition programs used by the Directorate of Contracting. Representing the Army Corps of Engineers Savannah District was Leila Hollis, Chief of the Office of Small Business Programs. Ms. Hollis talked about contracting opportunities with the Corps including those associated with the BRAC related growth at Fort Benning.

One of the biggest challenges faced by government contractors once they have identified a bidding opportunity is financing the project – obtaining the working capital and/or bonding. To address this important issue L. D. Ralph, Lender Relations Specialist, U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) provided information on contract financing through the SBA and the SBA’s Surety Bond Guarantee Program.

The U.S. government is the world’s largest buyer of products and services. Purchases by military and civilian installations amount to nearly $200 billion a year, and include everything from complex space vehicles to janitorial services to construction services. In short, the government buys just about every category of commodity and service available. This means that thousands of contracts worth billions of dollars each year may by-pass small firms that do not understand how to do business with the federal government. The program was a success and both Auburn and Troy personnel plan to offer similar programs in the future.

The Better Business Bureau of North Alabama and the University of North Alabama SBDC sponsored the “Four Generations in the Workforce” event held in Decatur on August 11, 2008.

The Alabama A&M University SBDC hosted a successful Matchmaker event August 7th in Jackson County.
• Alabama A & M University SBDC
October 1
ABC’s of Starting Your Own Business
Women’s Business Center of North Alabama (WBCNA) 185 Chateau Dr. Huntsvill, Al. 1 pm - 4 pm. Cost is $25. Register online at www.wbcna.org or call 256.213.2727.

October 9
Government Contracting Fundamentals
Hunstville/Madison County Chamber; 225 Church Street. 10 am - 12p. Cost is $25. Register online at www.wbcna.org or call 256.213.2727.

November 5
ABC’s of Starting Your Own Business
Women’s Business Center of North Alabama (WBCNA) 185 Chateau Dr. Huntsvill, Al. 1 pm - 4 pm. Cost is $25. Register online at www.wbcna.org or call 256.213.2727.

November 13
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Hunstville/Madison County Chamber; 225 Church Street. 10 am - 12p. Cost is $25. Register online at www.wbcna.org or call 256.213.2727.

December 3
ABC’s of Starting Your Own Business
Women’s Business Center of North Alabama (WBCNA) 185 Chateau Dr. Huntsvill, Al. 1 pm - 4 pm. Cost is $25. Register online at www.wbcna.org or call 256.213.2727.

• Jacksonville State University SBDC
November 5
Starting a Child Care Center
JSU Campus, 114 Merrill Building. 1:45 pm to 3pm. Speaker: Robbie Medders, JSU SBDC Please call 256.782.5271 or visit www.jsu.edu/depart/sbdc for more information.

• Procurement Technical Assistance Program
Seminars and workshops TBA. Please call 205.307.6513 or log onto www.asbdc.org/procurement.htm for more information.

• Troy University SBDC
October 9
Business Start Up Seminar
Geneva, Al. Please call 334.674.2425 or visit http://cbed.troy.edu/sbdc for more information.

• University of Alabama SBDC
Seminars and Workshops TBA. Please call (205) 348.7011 or visit http://sbdc.cba.ua.edu for more information.

• University of Alabama Huntsville SBDC
October 13
Business Start-Up; 3 pm
October 20
Financing Your Business; 10 am
October 23
Huntsville / Madison County Chamber of Commerce Business Expo; 1 pm to 6 pm
October 27
Franchise Ownership; 10 am to 12 pm
November 3
David Stacey International - Capital & Financial Planning; 3 pm
November 10
Planning for Employees - EEOC; 3 pm
November 17
Government Contracting 101; 3 pm
December 1
GSA Proposal Training; 3 pm
December 8
Business Start-Up; 3 pm
December 15
Business Start-Up; 3 pm

• University of South Alabama SBDC
November 13
Tax Workshop for New Businesses; Alabama Dept. of Revenue
Mobile Taxpayer Service Center Conference Room. 955 Downtowner Blvd.; Mobile, Al. 3 pm - 5pm and 6pm - 8 pm To register call 251.344.4737.

December 9
Tax Workshop for New Businesses; Alabama Dept. of Revenue
USA SBDC 3 pm - 5pm and 6pm - 8 pm To register call 251.344.4737.

University of West Alabama SBDC
October 16
SBA Program(s) 8(a) Certification and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program
UWA Campus, Livingston, Al. 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm.
November 6
Workplace Safety Seminar
UWA Campus, Livingston, Al. 8:30 am - 12p.
November 13
Small Business Loan Clinic
UWA Campus, Livingston, Al. 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm.
December 2
Small Business Start-Up Workshop
Jackson Alabama Chamber of Commerce; 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm.
December 11
Small Business Start-Up Workshop
University Center Campus of Alabama Southern Community College; Demopolis, Al. 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm. Please call 205.652.3665 or go online to www.sbdc.uwa.edu for more information.

• University of North Alabama SBDC
Seminars and Workshops TBA. Please call 256.765.4629 or go online to www.sbdc.uwa.edu for more information.

• University of South Alabama SBDC
November 13
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The ASBDC is comprised of 10 member universities, a procurement technical assistance program and an international trade center. Our mission is to enhance economic growth by making Alabama small businesses more competitive through the provision of entrepreneurial assistance.

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If you would like to be added to the ASBDC newsletter list please send your name and address to Lauren Young at lryoung@uab.edu

* The ASBDC operates in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration. The support given by the US SBA through such funding does not constitute an express or implied endorsement of the cosponsor or participants' opinions, products, or services. SBDC programs are nondiscriminatory and available to individuals with disabilities.