



Celebrating Diversity

Alabama's diverse population is one of its greatest strengths. Using that strength as a resource is key to business success. In today's interconnected world, leaders who recognize and encourage ideas and individuals from varied backgrounds and incorporate them into their corporate structure are able to adapt to ever-changing market dynamics.

Businesses that encourage networking and mentorship opportunities, both within the business and outside in the community, are not only building leaders but also informing future workers of the many opportunities provided by their business and by the state of Alabama.

Here, Business Alabama highlights some of the state's corporate barrier-breakers — those companies that not only say they encourage diversity, but actually put the idea into practice. From automotive to banking, these Alabama companies are employing and molding one of the state's best resources — its people — into tomorrow's leaders.



ASI Alabama
Self-Insured
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THE FUND proudly
celebrates **THE DIVERSITY**
of Alabama's workforce!

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THE FUND HAS RETURNED **\$271 MILLION** in retro renewal credits **SINCE 1978**.

Student Leaders Paving the Way



Christian Watkins and Rachel Mixon
Black Student Union, Birmingham-Southern College

Rachel Mixon and Christian Watkins are two of many students on campus who are moving our community forward through action and inspiration. Mixon is a BSC Community Coordinator and a Panther Peer Mentor. Christian Watkins is a member of the Cross Cultural Committee and a student leader on C3's DREAM (Disability Rights, Education Activism, and Mentoring), which offers programs related to accessibility. When creating the design for BSC's recently installed Black Lives Matter mural, Black Student Union members were inspired by the city of Birmingham, and Birmingham-Southern itself. "We included important symbols to our school," says BSU President Rachel Mixon, "but we also included Birmingham landmarks that remind us of the larger community outside of the gates and the legacy that Black people have in Birmingham as movers and shakers throughout history."



One of the
TOP 20
BEST VALUE
schools in the U.S.

TOP 10
colleges that lead to
GRADUATE
SCHOOL

250+
COMMUNITY AND
BUSINESS LEADERS
MENTOR STUDENTS

T H E E Q U A L I Z E R S



ASBCC NETWORK



"The mission of the Alabama State Black Chamber of Commerce (ASBCC) is to promote, create and foster economic development opportunities for Black communities and our members. The ASBCC also seeks to increase overall business and economic growth for its members through leadership, support and collaboration with current and potential partners." (pictured ASBCC Founder/CEO Jerry Mitchell)



R I V E R R E G I O N B L A C K
C H A M B E R O F C O M M E R C E

Our mission is to uplift and educate local businesses to facilitate economic growth, business expansion and sustainability in the communities including Autauga , Elmore, Lowndes , and Montgomery counties.

Contact Us:

334.399.9099

RRBlkchamber@gmail.com

Officers:

Lisa Ann Williamson, Chair

Shannon Pickett, Co-Chair

Ja'Lisa Grissom, Secretary

Joshua Byrd, Director

Mekie Grant, Treasurer



Connecting the Disconnected

Encourage | Engage | Empower

TUSCALOOSA AREA BLACK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**NOW ACCEPTING
MEMBERSHIPS**

We offer the following services:

- **Advocacy**
- **Start-Up Business Consulting**
- **Business Management
Counseling**
- **Marketing Support**
- **Educational Seminars & Workshops**
- **Monthly Members' Meetings**
- **Annual Business
Conference/Expo**
- **Chamber 2 Chamber
Networking**

Get in touch with us!

**Visit our official website at
www.tusblackchamber.org**

**For more information email
Patricia Cade at
pcade@tusblackchamber.org**





Huntsville Metro Black Chamber of Commerce is committed to business and economic development, job creation, and advocacy that is critical to the growth and future success of it's members and the Rocket City Metro at large.



FRANK WILLIAMS

**DEALER PRINCIPAL & GENERAL MANAGER ||
LANDERS MCLARTY DODGE, CHRYSLER, JEEP, RAM,
FIAT, ALFA ROMEO, AND SUBARU OF GALLATIN**

Frank Williams served in the United States Army for three years before transitioning into the automotive world. Following Williams' military career, he went on to a sales position in the automotive industry. After three years of outstanding sales volume, he was promoted to sales manager, where he continued to excel into the position of general manager at the age of 26. He served as general manager for multiple stores until the age of 41, when he purchased his first dealership, and now owns and runs three dealerships.

With more than 30 years of experience his secret to success has been to always strive to excel and exceed expectation. That drive has propelled Williams' career and his dealerships to continuous awards and recognition from industry leaders, as well as customers. His dealerships are currently ranked within the top dealerships in the country and have received numerous awards from Dealer rater, Customer First Award of Excellence, and Stellar Care/Customer Community Commitment Award. Williams' philosophy is to support the community through partnerships, sponsorships and community involvement. His core values are integrity, transparency and credibility.

Williams strives to reflect the diversity within the community via his workforce. The automotive industry has, historically, been a male dominated industry. Frank Williams' dealerships employs more female managers than most automotive dealers. As an owner and managing partner, Williams continues to stay actively engaged in the hiring process and strives to reach all potential candidates personally by networking outside of his industry to discover new and promising talent. His employees are encouraged to communicate and grow within the organization. This, coupled with enrichment from the community, leads to the singular goal of Frank Williams Dealerships: Providing superior customer service.

Becoming the Change We Seek at Cadence Bank



Myra Caldwell
Chief Diversity Officer



Eula Jackson
Community Development Officer



Mark Washington
CRA Manager

Cadence has long been an advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion. We have focused on increasing the representation of women and minorities in our company starting with our board — there are currently three women, two of whom are African American — and this spring we established a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Council.

The deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and others, however, motivated us to set our sights higher. We have embarked on a process that will lead to transformational change and enable us to better realize our full potential as an organization. One way we signaled this commitment was to create the position of chief diversity officer. Veteran banker Myra Caldwell accepted this challenge and is leading our DEI efforts.

Moving Forward on Multiple Fronts

The DEI Advisory Council, composed of 50 committed associate volunteers, is exploring ways Cadence can support economic and social justice efforts that strengthen historically marginalized communities. At its recommendation, Cadence donated \$20,000 to the Alabama-based Equal Justice Initiative to further its work of redressing the destructive economic impact of overpolicing and mass incarceration. Cadence also plans to double its spending with vendors from diverse groups by the end of 2021.

Additionally, the council is concentrating on steps Cadence can take to recruit, retain, cultivate and sustain a diverse workforce, one that mirrors the communities Cadence serves. Thanks to its efforts, Cadence has built closer

relationships with historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in our footprint, securing and expanding our pipeline of diverse talent and will launch a series of employee resource groups in 2021.

Strengthening Communities Through Partnerships

In 2019, after consulting with scores of stakeholders including member organizations of the National Community Investment Coalition (NCRC), Cadence Bank partnered with NCRC to formalize a five-year Community Benefits Plan. We committed to lend or invest more than \$2.5 billion by the end of 2024 in underserved communities in our six-state footprint. This includes mortgages, small business credits, and community development loans and investments as well as grants and donations to charitable organizations serving a community development purpose. During the pandemic, when people are working at home and small businesses are struggling, our infusion of support was more important than ever.

In 2020, Cadence invested \$165.3 million in community development, funded \$55.4 million of community development loans and \$133.5 million of affordable home loans, and extended \$721.9 million in credit to small businesses in low-to moderate-income census tracts. Even in the face of lockdowns and social distancing requirements, Cadence volunteers contributed 11,547 hours last year.

Our determination to strengthen communities is a deeply engrained part of our culture that can be found across our organization.

LEARN MORE AT [CADENCEBANK.COM](https://www.cadencebank.com).

EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES



Cadence Bank is committed to empowering underserved communities by providing lending, investment and financial products to support revitalization efforts.

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