

The Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance 2023 Annual Report



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Chamber & Foundation Executive Board



Janie Fruge
2024 Chair



Harold Rowland
Chair-Elect



Jason Guillory
Past Chair



Kirk Pellerin
Treasurer



Ross Raley
Legal Counsel



George Swift
President/CEO



Matt Koch
Education/Workforce



Tonya Richard
Quality of Life



Ken Francis
Economic Development



Ronnie Petree
Governmental Affairs



Velika Hurst-Trahan
Business Development
& Diversity

Chamber SWLA Board of Directors

1-Year Terms to Expire 12/24

- Alex Guillory, Bluewing Civil Consulting
- Sarita Scheufens, Safety Council of Southwest Louisiana
- Joanne Sovereign, PPG

Terms to Expire 12/24

- Stuart Moss, Credit Services of Southwest Louisiana
- Calvin Thibodeaux, Entergy
- Russell Deaver, Caesars Entertainment
- Scot Tyler, Phillips66
- Kathryn Shirley, Amerisafe
- Sterling Neblett, CITGO
- Velika Hurst-Trahan, Blue Cross Blue Shield
- Greg Hennagin, Golden Nugget
- Wendy Stine, Stine, Inc.
- Armando Lara, LyondellBasell

Terms to Expire 12/25

- Kristy Armand, Healthy Image/Thrive
- Blake Brignac, Woods Brignac Wealth Management
- Austin Broussard, Broussard Group
- Barry Brown, Red River Bank
- Bridget Evans, Champeaux, Evans, & Hotard
- Ken Francis, Lake Charles Coca Cola
- Tuwanna Guillory-August, Allstate-Tuwanna Guillory-August Agency
- Matt Koch, CSE Federal Credit Union
- Jennifer Spees, Louisiana Mortgage
- Greg Thibodeaux, Turner Industries

Terms Expire 12/26

- Ernie Broussard, HGA
- Tara Demarie, Century 21 Bessette Realty
- Tonya Griffith, Griffith Financial, Wells Fargo
- Steven Perez, First Horizon Bank
- Mark Peters, Lotte Chemical Company
- Ronnie Petree, The Bank
- Angela Queenan, Global Crane & Rigging
- Todd Stewart, Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana
- Angelo Torre, Louisiana Spirits/Bayou Rum
- Eric Walker, SASOL

Designated Board Seats

- Mitchell Woods, Fusion Five
- Allyson Montgomery, Leadership SWLA
- Tonya Richard, Quality of Life Task Forces
- Cameron Fultz, Arts & Humanities Council of SWLA
- Dr. Shuming Bai, McNeese State University
- Dr. Neil Aspinwall, SOWELA Technical Community College

Courtesy Seats

- Creed Romano, Jeff Davis Chamber of Commerce
- Lillian Karr, DeQuincy Chamber of Commerce
- Lisa Adams, Greater Beauregard Chamber of Commerce
- Lena McArthur, West Calcasieu Chamber of Commerce
- Jennifer Clinton, Oakdale Chamber of Commerce
- Emily Larche, Junior League of Lake Charles
- Barbara Savant, Kinder Chamber of Commerce

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- SWLA Alliance Foundation 2024 Board of Directors*
- Brian Abshire of the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury
 - Katie Armentor of the Cameron Parish Police Jury
 - Ann Barilleaux of JD Bank
 - Doug Boudreaux of Centerpoint Energy
 - Ken Broussard of Broussard Group
 - David Brosset of Brosset Architect, LLC
 - Parker Cole of HGA
 - Jeff Davis of BI Bank
 - Michael Flatt of Northrop Grumman
 - Matt Fontenot of Allen Parish Police Jury
 - Natalie Graham of CSRS
 - Tyson Grenzebach of Landlocked Aviation Services
 - Zach Hager of Entergy
 - Mayor Henry Guinn of Jennings
 - Mike Heinen of Jeff Davis Electric Co-Op
 - Devon Hyde of Lake Charles Memorial Health System
 - Bruce Kirkpatrick of Stream Companies
 - Cameron Landry of Lake Charles Harbor & Terminal District
 - Mayor Hal McMillin of Westlake
 - Chad Miller of Southwest Louisiana Credit Union
 - Kim Montie of Cameron Parish Port
 - Ryan Navarre of Navarre Auto Group
 - Mayor Gene Paul of Oakdale
 - Kristian Poncho of Coushatta Casino Resort
 - Glenn Pumpelly of Pumpelly Oil, Inc.
 - John Nichols of First National Bank of DeRidder (FNBD)
 - Mayor Misty Roberts of DeRidder
 - Creed Romano of Jeff Davis Economic Development
 - Cody Stroud of Triad Electric
 - Charles Timpa of First Federal Bank
 - Stevie Trahan of Cameron LNG / Sempra

*Terms are one-year appointments

DID YOU KNOW?



This year, Chamber SWLA created a specific group on Facebook to share the events and great news of our members. Join the group at www.facebook.com/groups/chamberswlam2m

BUSINESS COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Located on our website, Alliance staff keeps up with the events being held by Chamber SWLA members and other organizations for events that would be of interest to the business community and residents of Southwest Louisiana.

Visit the page at www.allianceswla.org/businesscommunitycalendar

Cut 55 Ribbons

Completed 56 Regional RFPs

Hosted 31 Events

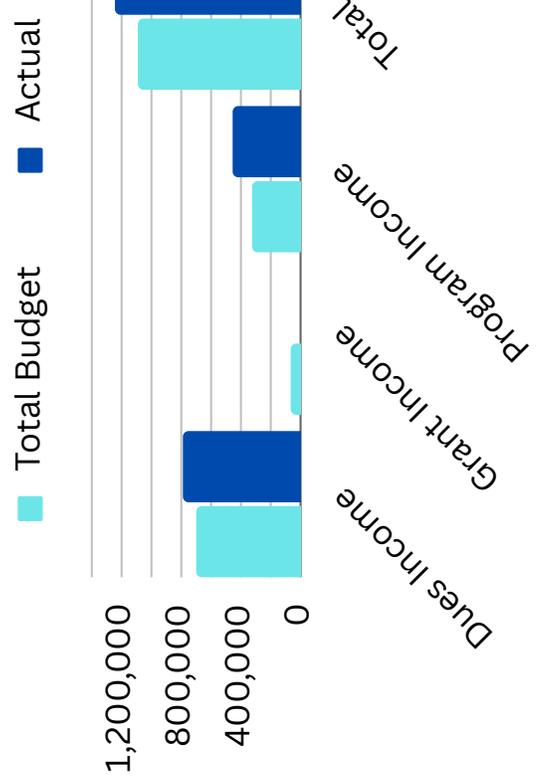
Sent 136 E-newsletters

Long-Term Chamber SWLA Members

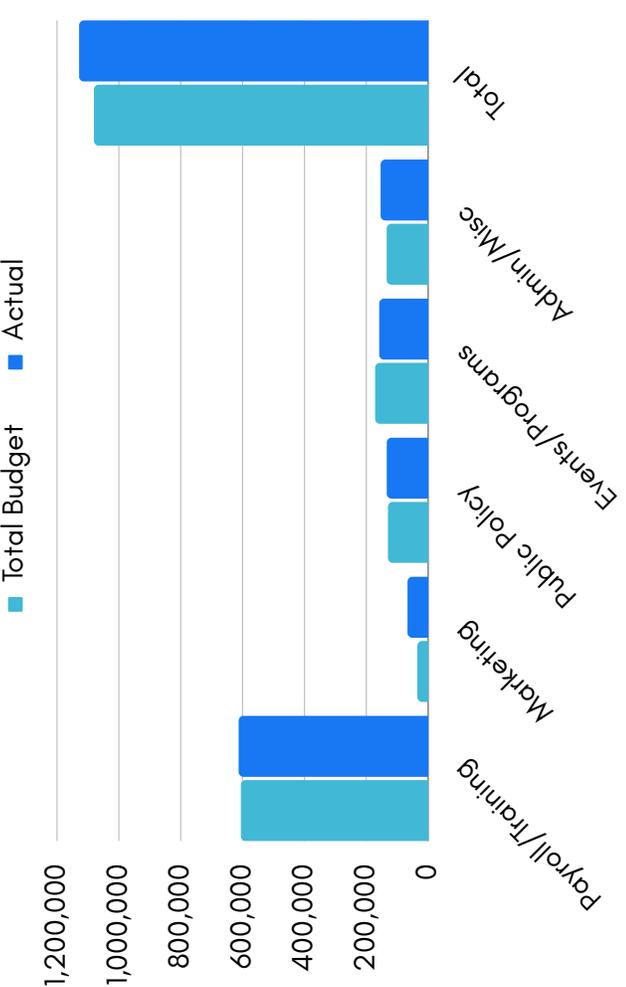
- American Press - 129 Years!
- Chase Bank - 122 Years!
- Lake Charles Coca-Cola Bottling - 117 Years!
- CHRISTUS Ochsner St. Patrick - 116 Years!
- PWK Timberland, LLC - 104 Years!
- Lacassine Company, Inc. - 95 Years!
- Arxada - 90 Years!
- 89 Years: The Bel Group; Capital One Bank; Entergy; Scofield, Gerard, Pohorelsky, Gallagher & Landry; and Stockwell Sievert, Viccellio, Clements, & Shaddock
- 88 Years: CenterPoint Energy & Insurance Unlimited
- 84 Years: United Way of Southwest Louisiana
- 82 Years: Phillips 66 Lake Charles Manufacturing
- 81 Years: CITGO Petroleum Corporation
- 80 Years: Dunham Price Group, Firestone Polymers, and R.E. Heidt Construction
- 78 Years: Schlesinger's Wholesalers
- 76 Years: Reinauer Real Estate Corporation
- 75 Years: First Federal Bank of Louisiana & McElroy, Quirk & Burch
- 74 Years: Hixson Funeral Home/2585
- 72 Years: McKenzie Pest Control, The Plumbing Warehouse/LCR, and W.R. Grace
- 70 Years: KPLC/Gray Media Group
- 68 Years: D.W. Jessen & Associates & PPG Industries - Silica
- 68 Years: Imperial Health
- 67 Years: Better Business Bureau Serving SWLA & Pumpelly Oil, A Reladyne Company
- 65 Years: Lake Charles Rubber & Gasket
- 63 Years: AT&T Louisiana, Brask, Inc - IEE, and Levingston Group, LLC
- 61 Years: Lamar Advertising Company & Visit Lake Charles
- 60 Years: Southwest Beverage Company
- 59 Years: Howell Industries, Inc.
- 58 Years: The Pathology Laboratory
- 57 Years: Bolton Ford; Coburn's; Farmers Rice Milling Company; Jones, Tete, Fonti & Belfour; Lake Charles Memorial Health System; The Pioneer Club; Plauche, Smith, & Nieset; Pumpelly Tire Center; Setpoint Integration Solutions; and Sweet Lake Land & Oil Company



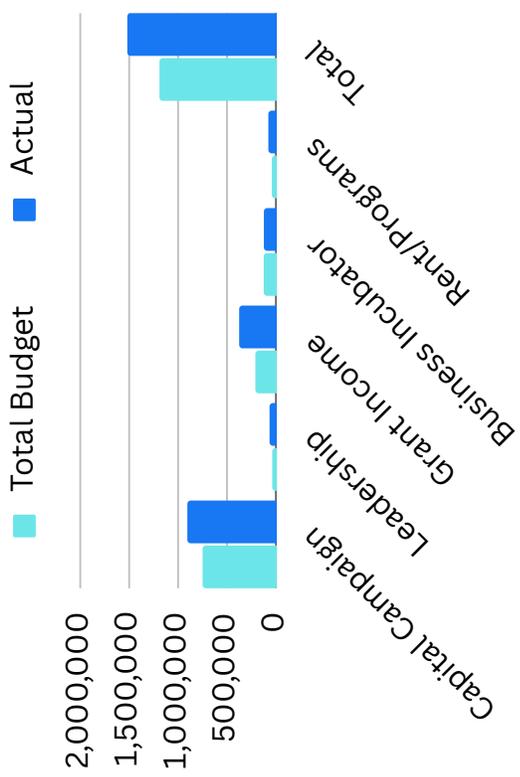
2023 Revenue: Budget Vs. Actual



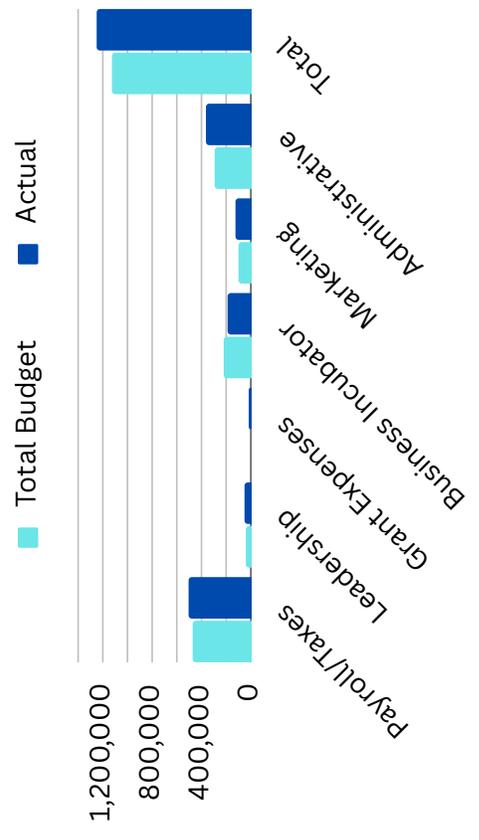
2023 Expenses: Budget Vs. Actual



2023 Revenue: Budget Vs. Actual



2023 Expenses: Budget Vs. Actual





CHAMBER
SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA

2024 Budget

Public Support & Revenue

Dues.....	\$700,000.00
Interest Income.....	\$1,600.00
Grant Income.....	\$66,250.00
Miscellaneous Income.....	\$6,000.00
	<u>\$773,850.00</u>

Program & Publication Revenue

Annual Banquet.....	\$85,000.00
Annual Golf Tournament.....	\$50,000.00
	<u>\$135,000.00</u>

Project & Committee Revenue

Business After Hours.....	\$8,000.00
SWLA Day at the Legislature.....	\$15,000.00
Women's Business Network.....	\$2,000.00
Impact Luncheons.....	\$15,000.00
SWLA PRO's Income.....	\$5,000.00
LegisGator Luncheon.....	\$125,000.00
Small Business EXPO.....	\$12,250.00
	<u>\$182,250.00</u>

Total Revenue: \$1,091,100.00

General & Administrative Expense

Audit & Accounting Fees.....	\$13,500.00
Bank Fees.....	\$13,500.00
Depreciation.....	\$700.00
Dues.....	\$10,000.00
Employee Benefits.....	\$65,000.00
Incentives & Commissions.....	\$35,000.00
Information Technology.....	\$7,000.00
Insurance (Liability & Workers).....	\$8,000.00
Office Supplies & Expense.....	\$25,000.00
Payroll Taxes.....	\$40,000.00
Payroll Expense.....	\$2,500.00
Postage.....	\$7,000.00
Rent Expense.....	\$22,000.00
Salaries.....	\$450,000.00
Staff Training.....	\$5,000.00
Telephone.....	\$9,000.00
Travel & Registration.....	\$10,000.00
Vehicle Expense.....	\$12,000.00
	<u>\$735,200.00</u>

Program & Publication Expense

Annual Banquet.....	\$70,000.00
Annual Golf Tournament.....	\$20,000.00
Member Relations.....	\$5,000.00
Marketing & Membership Dev.....	\$30,000.00
	<u>\$125,000.00</u>

Project & Committee Expense

Business After Hours.....	\$2,500.00
Build Our Bridge.....	\$35,000.00
SWLA Day at the Legislature.....	\$7,500.00
Executive Committee Expense.....	\$1,500.00
Board of Directors Expense.....	\$3,000.00
Public Policy Expense.....	\$95,000.00
LegisGator Expense.....	\$50,000.00
Small Business EXPO.....	\$7,500.00
PROs Expense.....	\$2,500.00
Impact Luncheons.....	\$12,000.00
Project Expense.....	\$2,000.00
Women's Business Network.....	\$2,000.00
	<u>\$220,500.00</u>

Total Expense: \$1,080,700.00

Net Operating Income (Loss): \$10,400.00



2024 Budget

Public Support & Revenue

Interest Income.....	\$300.00
SEED Center Rental Income.....	\$10,000.00
SEED Income.....	\$125,500.00
IMCAL Rental Income.....	\$30,000.00
Tier 1 Grant (Admin).....	\$125,000.00
Disaster Supplement Grant.....	\$85,000.00
	<u>\$375,800.00</u>

Project & Committee Revenue

SWLA On the Move	\$750,000.00
Leadership SWLA.....	\$38,000.00
Miscellaneous Income.....	\$1,000.00
	<u>\$789,000.00</u>

Total Revenue: \$1,164,800.00

General & Administrative Expense

Audit & Accounting Fees.....	\$15,000.00
Bank Fees.....	\$3,500.00
Contract Labor.....	\$30,000.00
Depreciation.....	\$12,500.00
Dues.....	\$5,000.00
Employee Benefits.....	\$60,000.00
Incentives & Commissions.....	\$25,000.00
Information Technology.....	\$4,000.00
Insurance (BOD/Liability).....	\$3,500.00
Office Supplies & Expense.....	\$15,000.00
Payroll Taxes.....	\$37,000.00
Postage.....	\$800.00
Rent & Facility Expense.....	\$8,400.00
IMCAL Rent.....	\$13,500.00
Salaries.....	\$365,000.00
Staff Training.....	\$2,500.00
Telephone.....	\$6,000.00
Travel & Registration.....	\$10,000.00
Vehicle Expense.....	\$5,500.00
	<u>\$622,200.00</u>

Program & Publication Expense

Marketing & Promotion.....	\$100,000.00
Research Expense.....	\$2,500.00
	<u>\$102,500.00</u>

Project & Committee Expense

Economic Development.....	\$90,000.00
Regional Coalitions.....	\$5,000.00
MSU/Economist Expense.....	\$30,000.00
Retail Development.....	\$12,000.00
SEED Center Support.....	\$95,000.00
Business Incubator.....	\$125,000.00
Investor Relations & Accountability.....	\$1,500.00
Committee Expense.....	\$500.00
Board of Directors.....	\$1,500.00
Executive Committee.....	\$500.00
Leadership.....	\$40,500.00
	<u>\$401,500.00</u>

Total Expense: \$1,126,200.00

Net Operating Income: \$38,600.00

2024 STRATEGIC PLAN: Action Items

Quality of Life

- Stage a "Better Bayou" event on McNeese State University Campus to highlight the Community Foundation's Just Imagine projects, Bayou Greenbelt and the McNeese Resilience District Project. This project would also incorporate the Keep Louisiana Beautiful program with a cleanup effort of the bayou.
- Highlight Just Imagine's Nellie Lutcher District with an awareness event at the new Nellie Lutcher Pavilion currently under construction.
- Schedule a panel of public officials to update the Board of Directors on their efforts to address blighted properties and litter problems. (Area Mayors, Police Jury Representatives, Ward 3 & 4 Marshalls)

Workforce & Education

- Expand upon the Career College pilot which took place at F.K. White last year.
- Recreate the Career Expo, similar to the Chem Expo and replicate across the region.
- The Workforce & Education Committee is working with CPSB Partner's in Education (PIE) to match schools who do not have partners with members of the business community. We will also work with PIE on career college goals.
- Workforce Roundtables

Governmental Affairs & Infrastructure

- Advocate for tax abatements and training grants, expanded broadband, and physical infrastructure such as water, sewer, electricity, roads, etc.
- Continue to Advocate for a New I-10 Bridge
- Advocate for the Dredging the Ship Channel and Insurance Reform
- Support Human Services Funding and Early Childhood Education

Business Incubator

- Biz Pitch
- Business Trainings in all five parishes
- Expand digital Incubator training and participation general public
- Food business program
- Improve access to capital for Incubator Participants
- 10 to 12 Business Incubator of SWLA Meet, Greet and Eat seminars
- Business Focuses seminars for the public
- Market Incubator/Enhance digital footprint
- Fundraising
- Community outreach and brand building
- Add five to 10 new Incubator Program participants
- Increase annual individual engagement statistics
- Share business trends with incubator participants and general public

Economic Development

- Explore and Plan a Best Practice Peer Visit
- Continue to serve the "green economy" and its jobs
- Promote The Port of Lake Charles and The Cameron Parish Port as a prime location for wind components manufacturing and installation vessels.
- Advocate for CCS projects and job creation in clean energy technologies

Membership Development

- Set Recruitment Targets of at least 10% growth in dues with Board Involvement
- Outline Incentives of Joining the Chamber: Clearly articulate the benefits and incentives for business to join the Chamber, promoting a compelling case for membership. Educate Chamber members on this to better help them recruit.
- Explore Co-marketing Opportunities:
 - Investigate potential co-marketing opportunities, such as utilizing already paid-for digital billboards or partnering with other entities willing to share resources.
 - Additionally, seize the opportunity to target local vendors that current members support or utilize but are not currently members of the Chamber.
- Enhance Social Media Effectiveness: Evaluate and optimize our social media presence across all channels, with a specific focus on connecting with a younger audience effectively.
- Simplify the Path to Membership: Testing the website and ensuring information is readily available for a seamless membership process.

2024 Chamber & Foundation Committees

Involvement is the key to maximizing the future opportunities of the Chamber SWLA and the SWLA Alliance Foundation. The skills, talents and experience of our members are vital to the future of Southwest Louisiana and utilized through our volunteer committee/council structure which has been designed to promote and fulfill our organizations' missions.

Business Development & Inclusion Task Force

Chair: Velika Hurst-Trahan of Blue Cross, Blue Shield

Staff Liaison: Eric Cormier, ecormier@allianceswla.org

Harnesses the professional economic development talent across the region, promoting the sharing of information, the development of common regional goals and activities which support the development of a globally competitive economy in Southwest Louisiana.

Economic Development Workgroup

Chair: Ken Francis of Lake Charles Coca Cola Bottling

The Economic Development Workgroup's mission is to educate and advocate for issues impacting economic development in Southwest Louisiana. The committee will present programs for economic development such as ITEP, Broadband, Site Development, the Business Incubator, and Entrepreneurship.

Environmental Affairs Committee

Chair: Amy Courtney of State of Louisiana

Staff Liaison: Gus Fontenot, gfontenot@allianceswla.org

Explores the environmental issues and opportunities for businesses of all sizes across Southwest Louisiana, developing and implementing programming that is educational and supportive of pro-business environmental policies.

Golf Tournament

Staff Liaisons: Michelle McInnis, Paula Ramsey

Governmental Affairs Committee

Chair: Ronnie Petree of The Bank

Staff Liaison: George Swift, gswift@allianceswla.org

Works with our professional public policy staff to monitor legislation and administrative policy at the federal, state, and local level, recommending Chamber action as necessary to the Board of Directors.

Will provide foundation of grassroots advocacy network. This committee will also monitor and promote the development of infrastructure necessary to sustain and improve the health of the business climate in Southwest Louisiana.

Leadership Southwest Committee

Chair: Allyson Montgomery of The Children's Museum

Staff Liaison: Michelle McInnis, mmcinnis@allianceswla.org

Develops and directs the curriculum of Leadership/SWLA, a comprehensive nine-month program for middle managers and other professionals nominated by their companies and selected by the committee. Only open to Leadership Graduates.

Quality of Life Task Forces

Chair: Tonya Richard of Imperial Health

Staff Liaison: Amanda White, awhite@allianceswla.org

Tackles projects to improve the quality of life in Southwest Louisiana

Small Business

Chair: Mason LeBlanc of Southern Style Enterprises

Develops and implements programming to encourage small business growth across the five parishes of Southwest Louisiana, focusing particularly on the needs of Chamber SWLA members.

Women's Business Network

Chair: Erica McCreedy of First Federal Bank of Louisiana

Staff Liaison: Amanda White, awhite@allianceswla.org

Plans the quarterly Women's Business Network lunches and annual awards luncheon.

Workforce Development / Education Committee

Chair: Tristan Hager of Lyondell Bassell

Staff Liaison: Michelle McInnis, mmcinnis@allianceswla.org

Promotes and enhances workforce development and educational opportunities across Southwest Louisiana.

2024 Leadership Southwest Class

The SWLA Alliance recently welcomed this year's Leadership Southwest participants at their mixer on January 11, 2024. Nearly 60 applications were submitted for this year's class, and the class was whittled down to 36 participants by the Leadership Southwest Committee. We are proud to welcome the participants of the Class of 2024:

- Louie Barbe IV, H C Drew Estate
- Erica Barrios, Arts & Humanities Council
- Joseph Booth, Calcasieu Parish Police Jury
- Shelby Broussard, ReCon Management Services
- Joseph Darbonne, JD Bank
- Ana Denison, SOWELA
- William Ducotey, Phillips 66
- Shelly Flores, Southwest Louisiana Credit Union
- Jill Galmarini, Community Foundation of SWLA
- Missy Griffin, Autism Services of SWLA
- Paul Grigg, Coca-Cola Bottling Company United
- Stephanie Huck, Cheniere
- Michelle Jinks, Access of Louisiana FCU
- Megan Koegelenberg, Sasol
- Megan Leger, LyondellBasell
- Brandon Lestage, Fusion Five/FNBD
- Paige Manuel, Citadel Completions
- Kim Montie, Cameron Parish Port
- Tabitha Nicholas, Junior League of Lake Charles
- Makayla O'Brien, McElroy, Quirk, and Burch
- Ada O'Quain, Lake Charles Memorial Hospital Foundation
- Blake Pemberton, Pemberton Mortgage Group
- Ashley Reed, Pelican State Credit Union
- Brady Renard, Visit Lake Charles
- Crystal Reyes, First Federal Bank of Louisiana
- Austin Ross, CITGO
- Alex Shows, VSG Architects
- David Smith, Jr., Second Harvest Food Bank
- TL Stegall, CSE Federal Credit Union
- Matthew Todd, Grace
- Kyle Townsley, AMERISAFE, Inc.
- Jaina Turner, L'Auberge Casino Resort
- Mayson Victor, Beauregard Electric Cooperative, Inc.
- Adam Walker, Westlake Corporation
- Ann Warner, McNeese State University
- Hiren Zaveri, Prosperity Hospitality Management



The Leadership Southwest program will begin with an overnight opening retreat and continues through the year with full-day monthly experience-based training sessions conducted by recognized leaders whose decisions affect the region in areas such as economic development, business, workforce development, human services, education, government, coastal restoration, and infrastructure. The class will travel throughout the region to see hands-on how each parish contributes to our local economy.

They will also visit Baton Rouge for a glimpse into how our state and local government works together for our region. After completing the sessions, which end in November, the class will graduate and join over 900 Leadership Southwest Alumni to help guide our region into the future.

For more information on Leadership/Southwest Louisiana, contact Michelle McInnis at (337) 433-3632 or at mmcinnis@allianceswla.org.



WE GET **BUSINESS** DONE

*in Southwest
Louisiana*

Southwest Louisiana boasts a thriving and diverse economy with numerous opportunities across various sectors such as energy, manufacturing, healthcare, and tourism.

The area benefits from robust gulf coast transportation and logistics networks —including the Port of Lake Charles and Chennault International Airport which touts a 10,000+ foot runway— facilitating easy access to domestic and international markets.



SWLA is home to a skilled and educated workforce, supported by excellent educational institutions and vocational training programs such as SOWELA Technical Community College and McNeese State University.

The region offers a business-friendly environment, characterized by low taxes, favorable regulations, and a supportive network of organizations and government entities that provide resources, guidance, and incentives to entrepreneurs.

The natural beauty, rich culture, and recreational offerings make it an attractive destination, providing access to a vibrant customer base.

CONTACT GEORGE SWIFT
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SWLA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ALLIANCE

www.ChooseSWLouisiana.com