

The **Anderson County Chamber of Commerce**, founded in 1932, has enjoyed a long and distinguished operation. The Chamber is organized to advance the general welfare of Anderson County so that its citizens and all areas of the business and education community and local government shall prosper. All necessary means of promotion shall be provided and particular attention and emphasis shall be given to the economic, commercial, retail, industrial, civic and educational interests of the economic region.

The Chamber is an organization of over 450 business professionals and individuals from every profession, field and industry who actively support the community through the Chamber. The organization's strength is in the number and diversity of its membership manifested in both large and small businesses.

The Chamber is the number one information resource for prospective business owners and developers, future residents and tourist. The Chamber's **Business Directory and Consumer's Guidebook** included in the Chamber's relocation package has a Newcomer's Resource Directory and a membership directory by business category.

The Chamber's Board Retreat, facilitated by Remotec's Mike Knopp, Board Chairman, established goals for 2009. The following is a brief summary of the major goals and highlights of 2008's accomplishments.

Economic Development

The Chamber received the **State Three Star Economic Incentive Certification** for Anderson County in 2008. This certification qualifies the County and all municipalities within Anderson County for economic incentive points that reduces the local match funding for CDBG and Fast Track economic development grants. The Chamber has qualified Anderson County for this certification since 2001.

In 2001, the Chamber coordinated a Community Leaders Workshop and developed Anderson County's **Five Year Economic Development Plan**. The Chamber coordinates quarterly workshops with countywide representatives to review the established goals, update and prepare the plan for Anderson County Commission's approval.

The Chamber's **Business/Retail Development Council**, chaired by Aaron Madron of Regions Bank, is designed to recruit new and promote existing retail business throughout Anderson County. The Council developed a Retail package with a demographic CD and the newly published super map of Anderson County to distribute to potential businesses. A listing of available property and space for lease is maintained on the Chamber website.

The Chamber supports existing small and medium size businesses and entrepreneurs through our partnership with the Economic and Community Development's Business Enterprise Resource Office, This organization brings a

support team to the table to help write a business plan, identify available funding, etc. This team provides long-term counseling, guiding the individuals step-by-step through the process of starting or maintaining a business. BERO has interviewed and is currently counseling over twenty-five individuals.

The Chamber promotes existing businesses and tourism through business referrals, networking opportunities, and community events, i.e., the Clinch River Antiques Festival estimated over 10,000 in attendance. The Chamber, Clinton City and local merchants partner to promote Historic Downtown Clinton.

Education/Workforce

With ORAU's Tony Lester as Chairman, the **Education/Workforce Development Council** is restructured to research how the Chamber can support the community's need for workforce preparedness. The Council also supports the Anderson County Chamber Education Foundation established by the Education Council in 2003. This is the Education Foundation's third year to award mini grants to local teachers for special projects.

The Chamber is scheduled to host the Annual Teacher's Appreciation Banquet, now in its 20th year, honoring teachers from Anderson County and Clinton City School Systems. The Chamber is a Platinum Sponsor for the ACES (Anderson County Exemplary Students) Program.

Regional/Community/Government Relations

Wackenhut's Martin Anderson, Council Chairman, has established new major goals for 2009 with emphasis on regional involvement. The Council oversees the Three Star Certification Program and Community Leadership Programs.

Adult Leadership Anderson County begins its 21st year in May 2009. This program is a true "Community Connection" to Anderson County for existing and potential leaders. The Chamber, in partnership with the Anderson County School Administration, sponsors a Youth Leadership Program certified by the State of Tennessee. The Program includes a Leadership Skills Class for credit toward graduation. The Council and the YLAC Board's goal is to expand the program countywide.

Chamber Operations Council

Memorial Methodist Church Pastor, Laurence Hesser, Chairs this Council. This Council oversees a very important role of the Chamber, **Membership Development and Retention**. It guides and supports the Chamber staff in numerous areas, member benefits, public relations, events, etc. The Council oversees the Chamber's Ambassador Program that is responsible for our high retention rate of 85%. The Chamber promotes members by hosting groundbreaking ceremonies, ribbon cuttings, and networking activities, i.e., bi-monthly coffees, business after hours and quarterly lunches. Chamber members, listed on the Chamber website, receive a free link as part of the membership

package. The Chamber also hosts an annual “New Member Appreciation Breakfast”.

For more information about the Anderson County Chamber of Commerce, please contact us by phone at 865 457-2559, email acc@andersoncountychamber.org or our website at www.andersoncountychamber.org.