

GREATER IBERIA CHAMBER of COMMERCE

COVID-19 EDITION

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

This year was not the year that any of us expected. Sometimes methodology changed but the intention of what I wanted to accomplish as the 67th volunteer chairman of the Greater Iberia Chamber of Commerce did not. I came into the office believing that the strength of Iberia Parish is found in its diversity and during my term I wanted to see that strength recognized. In 2020, we launched a new micro business membership campaign. Through the year, forty-five businesses joined the chamber, the majority of them minority-owned microbusinesses, bringing to the chamber discussion new voices for enriched dialogue and fuller recognition of the power of small business.

The chamber vetted a tremendous influx of material and provided a wealth of information to business members and the community, during the first months of the Covid-19 pandemic, supporting business resiliency and providing direction to resources. That effort has continued through the year and will continue in 2021.

With a twist of perception, instead of bringing the world to New Iberia for the World Championship Gumbo CookOff which is hosted by the chamber, a virtual event and a video of past participants were created, enabling the chamber to continue to promote the World Championship Gumbo CookOff as well as other positive attributes of Iberia Parish to the world, keeping engagement high for the return of the gumbo event in 2021.








I am pleased to have had the opportunity to serve the chamber community and Iberia Parish in this most unusual year. For 2021 I turn the chamber's chairmanship over to Wendell Verret, Executive Director of Twin Parish Port. Wendell is experienced with creating resiliency within organizations and is an excellent choice for what comes next for the chamber and business community. I look forward to continuing my service on the board, strengthening the work that I began this year and supporting what is to come.

Chamber Leadership:
















2020 GICC Chairperson
Mark Boyance



Executive Committee

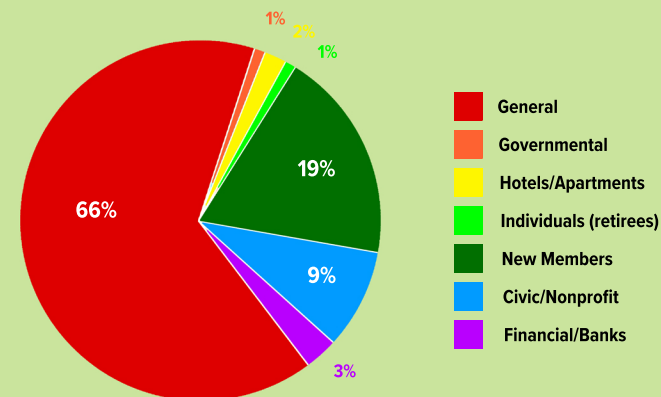
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Mark Boyance
Chairperson
Cox | 
Farrell Armentor
Third Vice Chairperson
First National Bank of Jeanerette |
| 
Wendell Verret
First Vice Chairperson
Twin Parish Port | 
Shalee Landry
Treasurer
Castaing Hussey and Lolan CPA |
| 
Lennie Fields
Second Vice Chairperson
IBERIABANK | 
Ryan Boudoin
Immediate Past Chairperson
Ryan Michael Salon |
| 
Janet Faulk-Gonzales
CEO
Greater Iberia Chamber of Commerce | |

Board of Directors

- | | | | |
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| 
Annie Bell
Promotional Images | 
Joshua Pellerin
Copynet | 
Jonathan Norris
Norris International | 
Rob Cowan
Brown & Brown Insurance |
| 
Ben Lilley
AT&T | 
Heidi Martin
Pro Log | 
Dionne Viator
Iberia Medical Center | 
Robert Burke
Edward Jones, Burke |
| 
Aaron LeLeux
Raising Canes | 
Linda Horton
Iberia Driving Academy | 
JP D'Albor
Haik, Minvielle, & Grubbs | 
Kay Breaux
Nexion Health, New Iberia Manor South |
| 
Lisa Lour
Latter & Blum | 
Karen Bashay
Loreauville High School | 
Martha Girouard
Coastal Timbers | |

45 New Members Collaborating to Build a Stronger Iberia Parish

Representing a wide range of industries...



Our member directory connected over 600 people with the right business in 2020.

Setting new records for developing businesses in Iberia Parish with 15 ribbon cuttings in 2020!



Above and Not Beneath Outreach Ministries



Tilly & Co Boutique



Amore & Kisses



Pullin Hair Salon



Perro's Blessing Outreach Ministries



Partners Paint & Body



Guadalajara Mexican Grill



JD Bank



Lifeline Safety



Moms and Babes Boutique



Next Level Fitness and Nutrition



Glamour Closet



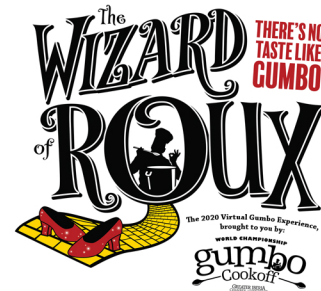
Blast A Bin



Fixin' 2 Be Fit



Get Wet Carwash



Connecting the public and our members to elected officials

The 2020 Iberia Parish Political Forums featured **47 candidates** who were running for office. The streamed event had over **190 live viewers**.

The footage was also posted to the Chamber's Facebook page where it reached over **9,500 community members!**

This informational event was sponsored by:



Celebrating over a year of positive stories from Iberia Parish

In our first year, *Positively Iberia!* celebrated everything from one day fundraisers like "Hot Dogs for Seniors" to a month-long feature during National Black Business Month. We introduced our parish to new doctors, new technologies, new businesses and along the way reminded everyone about the treasures that have always been right here in our own backyard. We talked to artists, authors, musicians and innovators. We've ridden the *Coronacoaster's* highest of highs and hopefully helped everyone roll thru some of the lows... but we've always been here looking for the silver lining that makes Iberia Parish a great place to live, work, play and visit again!

Before "stay at home" guidelines were introduced, *Positively Iberia!* hosted **11 interviews on KADN**, totaling **83 minutes** of positive stories on television.

Through the pivot of *Positively Iberia!*'s programming due to the pandemic, the weekly radio programs continued throughout the year, although virtually, utilizing now familiar technologies, like Zoom. This year featured **48 panel discussion interviews**, from over **130 guests**, totaling almost **2,000 minutes** of feature radio time.

And on Facebook, **over 2500 likes**... nearly **1,000 new in 2020!**

Like/follow Positively Iberia! on Facebook, listen to KANE 107.5FM/AM1240 every Thursday at 10am, and watch KADN/KLAF News15 for promos! Got a story or interview ideas? Let us know! @positivelyiberia on Facebook or call 337-352-2892.



Pivoting one of the state's largest events

As was the case for most tourism events this year, it became clear that hosting 30,000 gumbo lovers in Boulogny Plaza wasn't going to happen. In a search to offer an alternative experience, the Chamber hosted a virtual event. This event's extraordinary global reach engaged users and attendees from all over the world. Our most engaged countries outside of the United States were The United Kingdom, Canada, China, Finland, India, Luxembourg, Philippines, Portugal, and Brazil. Within the United States, our most engaged states were Texas, Oregon, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, and California.

shop.iberiachamber.org

was born this year and offered a Virtual Live Cooking Demonstration, a leisure learning Cooking with the Champions MasterClass, and all of the 2020 merchandise a gumbo fan could want, all still available for purchase!

We shared gumbo with over 1,000 people across the globe this year who visited the online shop.

We are looking forward to the 2021 Cookoff October 9-10, and over a million dollar economic impact for Iberia Parish.



Thank you to the Chamber's Premiere Communication Sponsor in 2020:



Sustainability in the Time of COVID-19

We believe that one of the pillars of a strong community is thriving small businesses. During this crisis, your chamber worked to bring business owners timely and important information while keeping the community at large connected via social media, our website, email, and one-to-one outreach.

During the initial “Stay at Home” Order, your Chamber was...

Promoting the day-to-day changes
of over **180 local businesses**



Advocating for **3 efforts** in the
State Legislature that align with
GICC’s public policy objectives

Making over **250 calls** to Iberia Parish
business owners, informing them of
resources and responding to concerns



State Public Policy Advocacy:

Supporting the Oil and Gas Industry to help ensure that Louisiana’s opportunities for oil and gas rebound are as solid as other states reducing misguided lawsuits. **(SB359)**

Workforce Development clearing barriers to additional higher education credentialing by prohibiting post-secondary institutions from withholding academic transcripts for debt collection purposes, for adults desiring to improve career and job training. **(HB 676)**

Reduction of the Cost of Motor Vehicle Insurance by legislation in regard to civil law and insurance policies. **(SB418)**

**UP
NEXT**

A Webinar Series for Iberia Parish Resiliency,
hosted by the **GREATER IBERIA
CHAMBER of COMMERCE**

Up Next is a webinar series that was created by your Chamber to keep community members informed and engaged as we navigated through the rapidly changing year.

Valuable information, from emergency preparedness to relief opportunities, were provided at the most important times to over **1,170 community members** in 2020.

The Chamber’s annual **Eggs & Issues** program was converted to a virtual event this year and featured Iberia Parish state legislators Senator Fred Mills and Representatives Blake Miguez, Beau Beaulieu, and Marcus Bryant together as a panel for the first time.

iberiachamber.org/upnext

20 newsletters were distributed containing critical COVID-19 updates,
making a total of **6,987 impressions**.

Your Chamber deferred dues until July 1st for over
95 member businesses, to ensure members of continued
Chamber support while offering financial relief.

At least **80 posts** were made to Facebook, making over **32,000 impressions**,
and over **3,000 users** found business sustainability resources via iberiachamber.org.



Developing leadership within Iberia Parish

This year's class focused on developing their leadership skills, as well as learning more about Iberia Parish's economy, infrastructure, and most importantly- the people and stories that make it great. Class members participated in a wide variety of leadership development, from team building to learning about sugar cane production, offshore pipelines, the local education and judicial system as well as aviation opportunities and the importance of tourism to the economy. This year presented a challenge to the typical in-person meetings, but the impact of the program was not lost on **class XXII**.



This year's class spent a total of **136 hours** enriching their connection to Iberia Parish



The Fire Starter Project, a leadership program for high school students in Iberia Parish is set to show young leaders how they can impact their community. Sixteen high school juniors, one male and one female from each school as well as 4 at-large additional students, enrolled in public or private high schools in Iberia Parish were nominated to participate by administrators from each of their respective schools. The year-long program aims to provide learning experiences in leadership, communication skills, team-building, and networking. Participants will take part in monthly seminars and/or field trips to develop skills as future leaders of their community.



Increasing our Community Visibility

Informing through
7 Facebook pages,
with a combined
12,487 likes!



Over **1990 active email contacts**

Our emails had a reach of **over 27,000** in 2020
87 emails were sent in 2020 that exceeded the national average open rate



iberiachamber.org

was visited over **10,700 times** in 2020

The most visited pages on our website were
/gumbocookoff with **over 1,700 users**, and
/forums/2020 with **over 750 users!**



Hear from our members...

"Being a member of the Greater Iberia Chamber of Commerce has been great for my business. From attending networking events and ribbon cuttings, to sponsoring Inspire and partnering on the Town Planner, my business would not be as successful as it is today without being a member of the Chamber. They work hard to make sure their members are successful and have the tools they need. Of course, as a member, you have a responsibility to be involved and take advantage of the opportunities that the chamber makes available. I highly encourage all businesses to be members of the Chamber of Commerce."

-Mandi Pooler with Town Planner

Joining the chamber was one of the best decisions made for Partners Paint and Body in 2020. We were welcomed into an elite group of people that have the same vision for our business as well as Iberia Parish's advancement. The chamber members and staff are eager to lend ideas that help promote business. We are looking forward to upcoming events that will allow networking for business, along with forming life-long friendships.

-Jamie Hebert with Partners Paint and Body

Let us help you meet your business goals for 2021. Join the Chamber today at iberiachamber.org/become-member

Greater Iberia Chamber of Commerce · 337-364-1836 · info@iberiachamber.org · www.iberiachamber.org