



# CHAMBER

## BUSINESS PLAN OF ACTION

It is an honor to serve as your Chairman for 2023. I will continue the trend of representing you with the utmost integrity and dignity. Our Chamber has weathered many storms over the years, the most recent being the COVID-19 pandemic, and because of our strong foundation, we have emerged stronger than ever. We owe a great deal of gratitude to our members, as it is all of you, at every level, who provide our strength and ensures our success.



Craig Johnson

For 2023, we will keep programming alive and vibrant, as well as offer new and exciting opportunities. Below are just a few programs we feel strengthen our business community.

- **Leads Groups**- Four groups currently meet weekly, representing 90 local businesses.
- **Entrepreneur Academy** – In its 20th year, this program continues to benefit rising and existing entrepreneurs.
- **Leadership Rockdale** – This program is 37 years strong and continues to provide participants with a broader understanding of the promises and challenges of our community so they are better prepared to help lead Rockdale County towards a brighter future.
- **we3 Women's Events** – Seeking to educate, empower and engage women, this program will bring NEW and exciting opportunities in 2023.

These are just a few of the programs that make us proud. We have a tremendous legacy in our chamber to respond to the needs of our business community. In 2023, we will prepare for our 70th Anniversary celebration (2024), starting with a commemorative magazine that will celebrate many people and events who have helped shape the Conyers-Rockdale Chamber of Commerce's legacy of service.

Finally, we will continue to support the diversified economic development in our community. We recognize that growth always brings about change, and sometimes pain. We will work to ensure our members and community have the least amount of pain as we grow, and the most amount of positive change. We have so much potential and work to do. Let's go to work, together!

Sincerely,

Craig W. Johnson  
Chairman, 2023 Board of Governors

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## Our Council System

Your Chamber's goal is to address the various needs of the Conyers-Rockdale community. To accomplish this, your Chamber focuses its efforts in three councils:

1. *Economic Development Council*
2. *Community Development Council*
3. *Member Services Council*

Each is composed of committees and task forces to accomplish the goals outlined in this publication.



## Economic Development Council

A strong business community means a healthy economy and better quality of life. The Chamber's Economic Development Council addresses this goal by bringing more businesses to our area and strengthening the economy for existing businesses and new entrepreneurs. Goals for the Economic Development Council include:

- Promote Rockdale County as a potential business destination through the distribution of our **Quality of Life Magazine**, providing relocation information for businesses and individuals.
- Enhance **economic development** activity by serving as a liaison with other economic-related organizations such as the Conyers Rockdale Economic Development Council (CREDC), the Development Authority of Rockdale County, and City and County Governments.

- Maximize efforts to **attract visitors** to our area by marketing Conyers and Rockdale County to potential visitors through print advertising, including joint promotional efforts with the City of Conyers CVB.
- Provide Chamber members the opportunity to **list job openings** on the chamber website.
- Promote Conyers and Rockdale County to potential visitors by producing and distributing the Chamber's **official street map**.
- Host **Economic Development Breakfast Series** in partnership with CREDC to keep Chamber members and community up to date with economic development activity.
- Expand and improve the curriculum of the **Entrepreneurial Academy**, which is designed to provide entrepreneurs the basic knowledge to begin their own business as well as provide existing business owners new insights to assist in solving business-related challenges.
- Support the junior entrepreneur program, **Rockdale FLEX** (Fostering Leadership, Entrepreneurship and eXcellence). This program offers RCPS students in grades 9-12 advisory and administrative support services in the establishment of their small businesses. Students will compete with their business plan for reward money.
- Partner with UGA's **Small Business Development Center** to offer in depth, no cost business counseling and mentoring to current and potential businesses.
- Celebrate the Chamber's legacy of service to the community by publishing a **70th Anniversary Magazine**. This commemorative piece will honor many people and events that have helped shaped us throughout our history.
- In conjunction with the Conyers Rockdale Economic Development Council, conduct **driving tours** of Rockdale County, visiting industry expansion sites, new developments and film/production sites, keeping local leaders up to date on key economic development initiatives and activity.



## Community Development Council

Strengthening our business community translates to a better economy and quality of life for the Conyers-Rockdale area. The Community Development Council will work to build and maintain productive relationships between your Chamber and local, state, and federal governments and their various agencies.

The Council will also continue to provide strong programs for future community leaders and recognize community achievers. The Council will continue to strengthen education through Partners in Education. In 2023 the Community Development Council will:

- Represent the **needs of the business** community at the local, state and federal levels of government, and with all appropriate governmental organizations. Seek input from membership on major legislative issues.
- Keep membership up to date with **key legislation** and other activities of interest to business that takes place during the 2023 State Legislative Session.
- **Strengthen public/private** communication by:
  - *Conducting political forums/events*
  - *Ensure adequate representation from all sectors on Governmental Affairs Committee*

(see COMMUNITY Page 3)

- Show support and appreciation of our **local law enforcement agencies and first responders** by partnering with businesses and other community groups to host events in their honor.
- Continue to provide the **Leadership Rockdale** program which identifies and inspires potential community leaders who are willing to become involved, serve, and help solve community concerns.
- Continue to support the efforts of the Leadership Rockdale class with the annual **Leadership Legacy** community service project.
- Continue to develop programming and communication avenues for **Leadership Rockdale Alumni** to stay connected with each other and the community.
- Recognize the volunteers and leadership at the Chamber's 69th **Annual Meeting**.
- Continue to engage, educate and empower women through signature **we3 events**. In 2023, we3 will host a series of events featuring dynamic speakers and topics, as well as an evening gala event where the "Woman of the Year" will be announced.
- Continue to award the Annual "**Education Partner of the Year**", recognizing an outstanding supporter of our public schools.
- Continue to work with Rockdale County Public Schools to enhance the **Partners in Education** program by marketing the RCPSpartner.com website, where projects and other opportunities in need of support are promoted.
- Continue to support **RCPS Foundation and Rockdale Career Academy** with representation on their Board of Directors.

- Bring together local leaders from the city, county, school system, hospital and economic development to collaborate and have meaningful discussions. This effort, dubbed "**Front Porch Discussions**," aims to keep local leaders in regular communication with each other, as well as collaboratively with the community at large, to strengthen the community's position as a great place to live and work.



## Member Services Council

The Member Services Council is charged with ensuring your Chamber grows in the numbers and dollars necessary to best support the programs that serve our community. It is also responsible for developing networking opportunities and services to members. This year the Council will:

- Provide quality member-to-member contact through monthly **Network Luncheons, Business Trade Show**, and quarterly **Jump Start Your Morning** events.
- Promote member businesses by producing an on-line **Member Business Directory** which lists all members at no charge and provides an opportunity for additional promotion through advertisements.
- Educate new members on Chamber programs and benefits so members can understand how to maximize the

value of their investment through monthly **Biscuits & Benefits** events. These meetings will also include the opportunity to share business and community concerns with Chamber leadership.

- Communicate your Chamber's accomplishments, positions on important issues, and benefits of membership through professional weekly e-news, emails, and other **social media** outlets.
- **Market your Chamber** and maximize acquisition of new members using volunteer referral program and staff resources.
- Continue to develop **new programs** that bring more value to employers and their employees for their membership investment paid to your Chamber.
- Reduce high shrinkage rate of membership in our Chamber through the **Member Action Program (MAP)** which concentrates on two aspects of membership: (1) The activation and/or education of a new member (2) Retention of the year old member.
- Provide extensive exposure to member companies at no cost and attract new customers to their business through our member-to-member discount program called **Hot Deals**.
- Increase business leads for chamber members through **business leads groups**. These are business referral networks that help businesses interact and increase sales.
- Promote new members and support current members through our **Ambassador** program. Ambassadors serve a very important function of the chamber by visiting members and representing your Chamber at Ribbon Cuttings and Grand Openings.
- Host the annual **Golf tournament** which helps fund Chamber programs.
- Enhance small business owners' knowledge and productivity by conducting **Empower Hour** seminars.
- Host annual **Clays for Commerce** as a networking and fundraising opportunity.

## CHAMBER MISSION STATEMENT

*We strive to provide leadership and be the catalyst for promoting and maintaining a pro-business environment, and to continue enhancing the quality of life for our community.*

# 2023 Executive Committee



**Chair**  
**Craig Johnson**  
Kumon of Conyers



**Treasurer**  
**Ken Gaylord**  
Truist



**Chair, Economic Development**  
**Yvette Morton Williams**  
Conyers Best Laundry



**Chair-Elect**  
**Steve Bromell**  
Pro Cutters  
Lawnscaapes, Inc.



**General Counsel/ Secretary**  
**John Nix**  
MaddoxNix,  
Attorneys At Law



**Chair, Member Services**  
**Michael Hutcheson**  
Rockdale Coalition for  
Children and Families



**Past-Chair**  
**Darlene E. Hotchkiss**  
Hedrick Family Dentistry



**Chair, Community Development**  
**Christie Phillips**  
Keller-Williams Realty



**President**  
**Fred J. Boscarino,**  
**GCCE**  
Conyers-Rockdale  
Chamber of Commerce

## 2023 Board of Governors

Your Board of Governors is responsible for assuring the programs the members have determined to be important are carried out successfully. The Board is comprised of an 8 member Executive Committee and 23 Board Members.

**Muddessar Ahmad**  
Omega Builders

**Dee Barnes**  
Evans Tool & Die

**Bridget Benito**  
Integrity Professionals Realty

**Stephen Boyle, Chairman**  
Rockdale County  
Development Authority

**Pamela J. Brown, Chairwoman**  
RCPS-Board of Education

**Gail Carrouth**  
Conyers Animal Hospital

**Vince Evans, Mayor**  
City of Conyers

**Leigh Gant**  
Georgia United Credit Union

**Derrick Grissom**  
Clearwave Fiber

**Kevin Hanna**  
Conyers Rockdale Economic  
Development Council

**Bradford Jackson**  
Bradford Jackson, CPA

**Terrill McFarland**  
Kaiser Permanente

**Oz Nesbitt, Chairman**  
Rockdale County Commission

**Terry Oatts, Superintendent**  
Rockdale County Public Schools

**Faye Phillips**  
Corner Market

**Amaris Rasheed**  
Snapping Shoals EMC

**David Roper**  
Eastmore Development Co., LLC

**Paulette Simpson**  
High Priority Plumbing & Services

**Bernard Stanford**  
United Community Bank

**Rondah Thomas**  
Georgia Power Company

**Keon Turner**  
Klean Team Power Washing

**Scot Ward**  
Scot Ward Funeral Services

**Blake Watts**  
Piedmont Rockdale Hospital

# Organization Structure

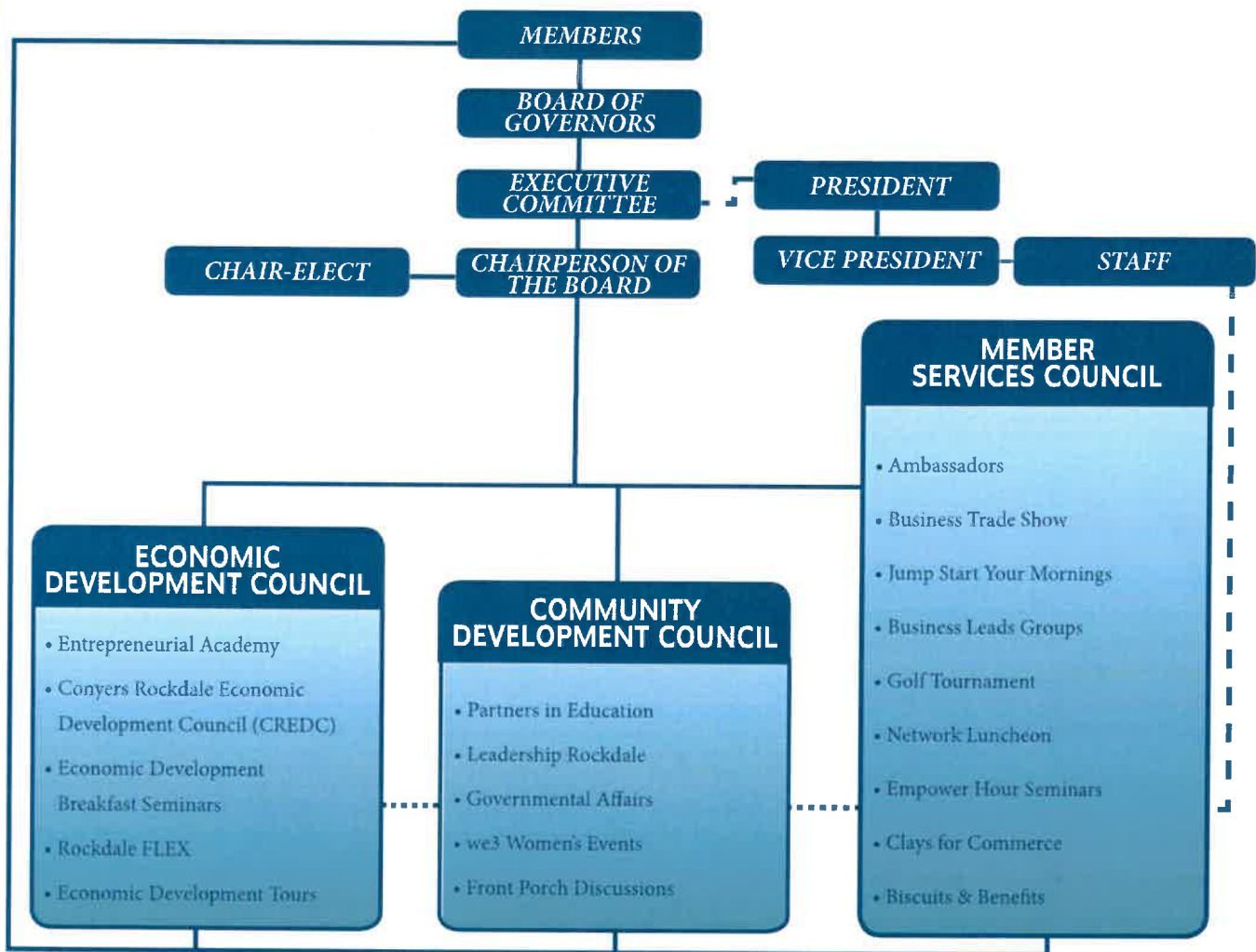
Your Chamber's ultimate responsibility is to you, our members, since the Chamber is comprised of, and mostly financed by, the membership.

The organizational structure, shown below, graphically illustrates how this occurs. Starting at the top of the chart, we show the general membership who serves three main functions:

- 1) You determine what programs the Chamber will undertake.
- 2) You finance these programs through your dues investment.
- 3) You staff the committees and task forces that work to accomplish the goals and objectives.

The graph shows that the committees are comprised of and draw from the general membership. The areas of responsibility are divided into three basic councils. Each committee has a chairperson who reports to the chair of the council. The chairs are members of the Executive Committee, which is responsible to the Board of Governors, who are ultimately responsible to the membership.

The President who is responsible to the Board of Governors, leads the professional staff. The staff assists the volunteers in carrying out their duties.



STAFF DIRECTORY					
Fred J. Boscarino, GCCE President	Katy Zahradnik, IOM Vice President	Stephanie Meissner Membership Services Coordinator	Cheryl Young Membership Account Executive	Carmenza Whitley Special Projects	Guin Garibay Administrative Assistant

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# 2023 Committee Chairs

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

**Yvette Morton-Williams**, Chair  
Conyers Best Laundry

### Entrepreneurial Academy

- **Steve Bromell**, Chair  
Pro Cutters Lawnscares, Inc.

## MEMBER SERVICES COUNCIL

- **Michael Hutcheson**, Chair  
Rockdale Coalition for Children and Families

### Ambassadors Committee

- **Bridget Benito**, Chair  
Integrity Professionals Realty
- **Jason Bryant**, Co-Chair  
State Farm

### Golf Committee

- **Alan Sherrill**, Co-Chair  
Conyers Flower Shop
- **Scot Ward**, Co-Chair  
Scot Ward Funeral Services

### Clays for Commerce Committee

- **Dee Barnes**, Chair  
Evans Tool & Die

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

**Christie Phillips**, Chair  
Keller-Williams Realty

### Leadership Rockdale

- **Claire Cline**, Co-Chair
- **Susan Paul Smith**, Co-Chair  
SPS Communications
- **Scot Ward**, Co-Chair  
Scot Ward Funeral Services

- **Jason Redmond**, Co-Chair  
Rockdale County

### we3 Committee

- **Pam Gornicki**, Chair  
Evans Tool & Die

### Governmental Affairs Committee

- **Darlene Hotchkiss**, Chair  
Hedrick Family Dentistry

### Education Committee

- **Leigh Gant**, Chair  
Georgia United Credit Union

Would you like to serve on a Committee?

Complete the enclosed Chamber Involvement Card and return to the chamber.



## Past Chamber Chairs

Jack Turner	1954-1959	Archer R. Rose	1989	Danny Stone	2005
A.R. Barksdale	1959-1971	Robert W. Maddox	1990	Betty Straw Brown	2006
James Culpepper	1972	E.A. Thomas, Jr.	1991	Mike Hilleboe	2007
F.W. Waldrop	1973	Samuel F. Wishon	1992	Don Cannon	2008
R.L. Montgomery	1974	Michael P. Jones	1993	John Kelley	2009
T.O. Morgan	1975	John T. Abbot	1994	Bill Daniel	2010
Leonard Epstein	1977	Kim S. Hubbard	1995	Mo Talley	2011
Dr. William A. Weaver	1978	Paul Mills Herndon	1996	Lorraine Harrison	2012
Harold Breazeale	1979	Robert G. Coston	1996	Thua G. Barlay	2013
Ron Simpson	1980	John T. Higginbottom	1996	T. Pat Cavanaugh	2014
Paul Christenbury	1981	Fred R. Vick	1997	Deborah Armstrong	2015
Ed Holcomb	1982	Suzanne E. Chappell	1998	Earl Wise	2016
Larry Mauldin	1983	Guy M. Dabbs, III	1999	Deanne "Dee" Barnes	2017
Rick Ramsey	1984	Nelson E. Toebbe	2000	Tim Baker	2018
Wayne Ingle	1985	Larry D. Miller	2001	Faye Phillips	2019
Dan L. Hill	1986	C. Dean Alford	2002	Scot Ward	2020-2021
T.A. Schmidt	1987	Chris M. Ingle	2003	Darlene Hotchkiss	2022
William Pridgen	1988	J. Nelson Geter	2004		

# 2022 Annual Report



It was an honor to serve as you Chair for 2022. I am very grateful for the dedicated Chamber team of staff and members that accomplished so very much this year. Please take the time

to read and take pride in all of these accomplishments.

## Here are a few of the year's highlights:

- Enhanced member relations by challenging members to tell the story of the Chamber and refer new members. Sixty-seven new members were the result of this effort through our referral program.
- Strengthened the Chamber's membership base by bringing in over 174 new members.
- Encouraged business relocation and expansion by producing and distributing the Conyers-Rockdale Quality of Life magazine and producing the Conyers-Rockdale street map.
- Promoted the Partners in Education website that hosts a variety of opportunities for involvement with and support of schools in Rockdale County.
- Secured 49 members as Pacesetter/Commerce Club members, which provided great benefits to those members as well as assisted in making our programs stronger and more successful than ever.
- Held the 6th Annual Clays for Commerce event and hosted a record number of participants. This event provides a great day of fun and networking for our members, and is a great fundraiser to help support the Chamber's mission.
- Supported four Leads Groups which offer business support, referrals and networking to nearly 90 small business members on a weekly basis.
- Provided expert instruction for individuals seeking to go into business for themselves through Entrepreneurial Academy.
- Held 10 Twelve at Twelve Luncheons, where participants met with Chamber, City, County and School leadership for an informal luncheon to express their community and business concerns.
- Promoted Conyers-Rockdale County and its tourist attractions to 1,000,000 visitors and residents through the Georgia on My Mind magazine.
- Responded to business relocation inquiries, providing professional commercial and real estate assistance.
- Maintained the Chamber website design by keeping members, visitors and community up to date with Chamber news and other helpful information.
- Selected 40 community members to participate in Leadership Rockdale program, our largest class in the program's history.
- Hosted 116 golfers at the Chamber's annual Golf Tournament.
- Assisted business' start-up by distributing the "Starting a Business in Rockdale County" informational manual.
- Offered member-to-member discounts through Hot Deals program.
- Held 3 Economic Development breakfast events, keeping business and community leaders informed.
- Ensured Rockdale County's representation throughout the area and state by Chamber President's participation on the Georgia Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives, and Rockdale Rotary.
- Promoted members' businesses and services by providing an online Membership Business Directory, featuring enhanced listings.
- Kept the membership updated on key issues and happenings during the 2022 Legislative Session via weekly emails.
- Awarded Premier Flooring Group as Education Partner of the Year, recognizing the importance of business support of our schools.
- Celebrated new members with 58 ribbon cutting events. These events seek to welcome and introduce new businesses to the community and Chamber.
- Awarded Yvette Morton Williams with Volunteer of the Year for efforts to the support the Chamber in 2022. Yvette was also awarded the we3 Woman of the Year for continuing to encourage and inspire women in business.
- Began the Front Porch Discussions initiative, which aims to keep local leaders in regular communication with each other, as well as collaboratively with the community at large. In 2022, we worked to establish the foundation of the group in preparation to host community-wide events in 2023.
- Hosted nine Empower Hour seminars to educate our members on various business-related topics.
- Awarded the Community Spirit Award to Springfield Baptist Church for their tireless efforts to support our community above and beyond the church's mission.
- Celebrated the achievements of Garland C. "Gary" Moore by awarding him with the A.R. Gus Barksdale Lifetime Achievement Award.

*Again, these are just a few of the highlights. Congratulations on a great year!*

***Do Business With  
A Chamber Member First!***

For a list of  
Chamber members,  
visit our website at  
[www.conyers-rockdale.com](http://www.conyers-rockdale.com)