

JACKSON AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



“To develop and maintain an economic climate, which creates and retains jobs and enhances the quality of life for all citizens of Jackson/Madison County and West Tennessee.”

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Business professionals honored at Leadership Jackson graduation

JACKSON, TN – Thirty local business professionals graduated from the Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce 2011 Leadership Jackson class on Thursday, December 8 at the Carl Grants Events Center at Union University.

Leadership Jackson, the Chamber’s adult leadership development program, gives business professionals employed with companies that are Chamber members the opportunity to better understand the community and the challenges it faces. The three-month program gives class members the chance to visit community landmarks, meet with area leaders and participate in weekly sessions about topics impacting Jackson-Madison County, including education, healthcare and government.

“The 2011 class has already demonstrated their passion for helping others through their service projects and their desire to continue to be servants beyond their class experience,” said **Chris Ramey**, Vice President of the Leadership Jackson Alumni Association Board of Directors. “This class graduated with an entirely new perspective of what it means to be a leader and a Jacksonian. They go forward with the knowledge that leading means to serve and not to be served.”

During the graduation ceremony, class members were recognized for their achievements with an award ceremony and all class members received their Leadership Jackson graduate certificate of completion. Class Spokespersons selected by the class to share their reflections and impact of Leadership Jackson were **Scott Conger**, City Councilman/Lane College, and **Landon Preston**, Director of Donor Relations, Development, Union University.

Preston was also selected to be Vice Chair of Leadership Jackson in 2012 to serve with **Ty Cowles**, Jackson Energy Authority, who served as Vice Chair in 2011 and will assume Chairmanship in 2012. **Dr. Beverly Absher**, Union University, was recognized for her outstanding leadership as Vice Chair of Leadership Jackson in 2010 and Chair for 2011.

“The Leadership Jackson Class of 2011 was truly amazing in every way,” Absher said. “Not only were they engaged and enthusiastic participants in each of the weekly sessions, they immediately began exercising traits of leadership by finding and meeting needs within the community prior to program completion. Class members developed several new community initiatives along with providing support to some of the existing organizations that serve the

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Jackson area. It was an honor to serve as Chair, working with co-chair, Ty Cowles, and the Chamber’s Senior Vice President, Business & Community Services, Judy Renshaw, in facilitating the Leadership Jackson program for 2011. Thanks to all the participants and this year’s speakers and program sponsors. And kudos to The Chamber for sponsoring this wonderful program.”

Class members were also recognized for their commitment and personal growth with the jewel and diamond awards. Jewel award recipients were **Sonya Miller**; **Carroll Kessens**, Alexander Thompson Arnold, PLLC; **Sandy Maxwell**, Steel Martin Jones & Company, CPA’s; and **Alison Bradford**, First South Bank. **Tammy Mays**, Aspell Recovery Center, received the class’ highest honor – the diamond award, for her commitment in surpassing requirements in all aspects of Leadership Jackson.

Past alumni of Leadership Jackson were also recognized. **Bryce West**, Bancorp South, Class of 2004, received the Community Observance of Personal Excellence (COPE) Award; **Trey Rabon**, AT&T, Class of 2009, with the Emerging Leader award; **Jim Campbell**, H&M Company, Inc., Class of 1979, for the Harbert Alexander Servant Leadership Award; and **Lisa Webb**, Jackson-Madison County School System, Class of 2006, for the Distinguished Leadership Award.

“This class exemplifies servant leadership at its best,” said Judy Renshaw, Leadership Jackson Program Executive and Chamber Sr. Vice President. “They came to each session eager to engage and learn where they could make a true positive difference in the community and many have already found that area of service. Not only are the class members personally engaging, but many have also gotten their company employees involved in making our community a better place for everyone, and that’s what Leadership Jackson is all about...leading the way, setting the example and serving Jackson-Madison County as a community trustee.”

A donation of \$460 was presented by the class to Donna Agnew, director of the Hands Up program, for at-risk and under privileged pre-school children to help them and their families be better prepared to start school. Class members also gave presentations on group community projects they participated in, such as The Dream Center, the Hands Up Program and the First Tee program.

The LJ Class of 2011 graduates are: **Karley Bond**, Regions Bank; **Alison Bradford**, First South Bank; **Scott Brown**, Madison County Government; **Angela Calhoun**, Bodine Aluminum, Inc.; **Kelly Carson**, TVA; **Scott Conger**, City of Jackson; **Barry Cooper**, JACO; **Amy Dove**, WorkCare Resources; **Danny Hall**, Jackson Energy Authority; **Stephenie Hinson**, Delta Faucet

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Company; **Ryan Holmes**, TLM Associates, Inc.; **Beth James**, Jackson Center for Independent Living; **Kristina Johnson-Anderson**, Charter Business; **Carrol Kessens**, Alexander Thompson Arnold, PLLC; **Kim Laughlin**, The Bank of Jackson; **Brandon Lindsey**, Madison South Liquor & Wine, Inc.; **Ben Lovell**, Gerdau; **Sandy Maxwell**, Steel Martin Jones & Company, PLLC; **Tammy Mays**, Aspell Recovery Center; **Monique Merriweather**, City of Jackson; **Sonya Miller**; **Lisa Piercey, MD**, West Tennessee Healthcare; **Shaun Powers**, Regional Inter-Faith Association (RIFA); **Landon Preston**, Union University; **Steven Puffer**, Mighty Product Center; **Stephanie Riley**, Raines Design; **Karen Via**, Leaders Credit Union; **Lisa Silver**, Jackson Oaks Senior Living; **Jason Wells**, Pinnacle Foods; **Amy West**, Jackson State Community College.

For more information about Leadership Jackson, visit www.leadershipjackson.com or call Judy Renshaw at 731-423-2200.

About the Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce:

The Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce was founded in 1905 – seven years prior to the United States Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber consists of a diverse and talented staff, an executive committee, dedicated volunteers, and more than 1,500 business members – all committed to growing the economy and quality of life for everyone in Madison County and the region. Governed by a board of directors, The Chamber is a nonprofit that concentrates its efforts on economic development, which consists of marketing the area to potential employers, developing and enhancing minority and new business partnerships, workforce development, job creation, and the overall promotion of Jackson-Madison County as a great place to work, live, play and do business.

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