



Main Street Heroes 2023

The Main Street Hero award recognizes a community leader, public figure or an organization who has made an outstanding contribution to a local Main Street Program in the last year.

Anniston – Anniston Parks and Recreation Department Programs

Anniston Park & Recreation Department, summer camps and youth programs have forged a vital relationship with the Main Street program partnering on events. They help manage the annual Christmas Parade with check-in and line up procedures, orchestrate tasks for city events, provide tables, chairs, and various assistance for these events, and co-host Main Street's Wacky Wednesday. The relationship between PARD and Main Street Anniston has fostered organization and promotion not only for the downtown district, but city-wide.

Athens – Michelle Williamson

Michelle Williamson embodies the quote "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give." She is the Marketing and Public Relations Director of one of Athens area's busiest and most well-respected Engineering Firms. In addition, she and her husband own and operate a logistics company. As a volunteer, there is no one that gives more of her time than Michelle. She is a long-time Athens Main Street Board Member, chairs the Promotion Committee, and volunteers for every Main Street event. She also plays key roles in over a dozen or more other non-profit activities in the community.

Atmore – David's Catfish House (Terrance Breckenridge)

David's Catfish House Partners, Rob & Shelio Faircloth, and Terrance Breckenridge have sponsored Main Street Atmore financially, with in-kind donations, volunteer hours, as well as philanthropic acts of kindness. Shelio has served as the Board President since 2020; Terrance, is currently the Vice President and has been a member of the Board since 2021; and Rob, long time director of one of Atmore

Main Street's largest sponsors, First National Bank and Trust. We share Main Street Atmore's tremendous respect for their dedication and endless hours of support in their downtown efforts.

REV Birmingham – Will Mason

Will Mason owns the Woodlawn Theatre, a live music venue in the Woodlawn neighborhood in Birmingham. Will is also the CEO of Mason Music, an all-ages music teaching company, and the manager of its foundation, which is helping to "to empower, inspire, and enrich the lives of children in local communities through life changing musical experiences." Will's renovation of a dilapidated building in Woodlawn into a beautiful live performance and event space as well as classrooms for music lessons has amplified vibrancy on his street and is attracting others to experience downtown Woodlawn.

Calera – Ann Davis

Ann Davis is an amazing community leader in Calera. Ann moved here as a teen, making her a life- long local that truly cares about the future of her hometown. She and her husband own the local grocery store and are founding sponsors of the Calera Main Street program. Ann has been involved behind the scenes since the beginning, officially joining the board last year as her husband rolled off. Ann has kept a focus on our fundraising. Because of her, we have been able to reach out to many more businesses. The most notable "win" was a drop-in visit to a local camper company that resulted in a \$10,000 donation! Ann serves as a board member and promotion committee chair helping with grants, murals, and events!

Centreville – Billy Thomspen

Mr. Billy Thompson, owner of TopLine Equipment of Alabama, has been a business owner in Centreville for many years, dedicating his tremendous contributions of time, interest, finances, and resources. He has worked for many years to be a consistent and thriving business owner within the district and has tirelessly supported and promoted the community. He will continue to be a staple of integrity and positivity that will encourage others to share in his love of Centreville. *Thank you for all you do!*

Decatur - Doug Bachuss

Doug Bachuss is an attorney at Nowlin, Bachuss, and Gray in Decatur. Doug is involved in the community in a myriad of ways but has a passion for Downtown. After previously serving as a DDRA board member, he now offers pro bono legal services to DDRA. He is the behind-the-scenes safety net for downtown Decatur. He never asks for recognition or reimbursement, but hopefully we can give him a little bit of recognition tonight. With over \$70MM in new development in downtown Decatur last year, he has stayed busier than he probably thought he agreed to!

Elba – Carrie Ann Whitworth

Carrie Whitworth is a past chair of the Elba Main Street Board and the owner of EDSCO located in Downtown. She is a volunteer and helps not only at Main Street events but also community and school events as well. Carrie was supportive and encouraging when we applied to become a Designated Main Street Community. She was in the group of Elba residents that traveled to Birmingham for the onsite presentation to the selection committee. She has attended numerous conferences and awards banquets as support. She also lends monetary support through sponsorships. Leadership and dependability are two words that come to mind when thinking about Carrie Whitworth.

Enterprise – Enterprise Fire Department

The Enterprise Fire Department sprang into action in the early hours of October 16 when a fire ripped through several downtown businesses along Main Street. Five businesses and one residential structure were damaged. Without the efforts of the Enterprise Fire Department, that number could have been significantly higher. The firefighters did what they could to stop the fire from spreading to other connecting structures, including the nearby historical society building, which housed hundreds of volumes of newspapers, dozens of priceless artifacts, and countless photographs and historic documents.

Eufaula – Eufaula Horticulture Department

The Eufaula Horticulture department has been in operation twenty-five plus years. This productive city dept. has been involved in a multitude of projects making Eufaula a better place to visit and live. The heart of downtown is a breathtaking sight thanks to Eufaula Horticulture. Many cities around the south try and duplicate the beauty and picturesque qualities. Eufaula Pride is an organization that is made up of volunteers that assist the Horticulture Dept. in planting, buying different items needed such as planters, weeding, and monetary contributions. No matter what is needed, what time of year or how big a project is, a staff member from the horticulture department is always willing to help out. Eufaula Main Street greatly appreciates them!

Foley – Foley Art Center

Since 1966 The Foley Art Center has served the Gulf Coast area with their Cultural Enrichment Programs in local schools, Grants to Art teachers at area schools for ages 4-18 and art classes for children and adults. From the dreams of fifteen local citizens, it has become a vital force in the Cultural Development of Baldwin County. Foley Art Center was a sponsor for the Foley Main Street CATalyst event - sponsoring the art contest for \$2500.00. The art contest went out to over 3,000 students, teachers, and parents. As a sponsor, and a downtown business, they volunteer their time and talents to Foley Main Street.

Fort Payne – Mayor Brian Baine

Mayor Brian Baine leads by example. He is an incredibly involved and active board member of Fort Payne Main Street. He helps with every event and activity that Main Street implements. He does all of this while also leading the city and community. He is an amazing leader!

Gadsden – Eric T. Wright

Eric has been active in the community since moving to Gadsden in 2006. He was instrumental in the growth of the local Alabama Extension office. His most recent adventure has taken him to the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission, where he continues to support the area with his skills. Eric has served as a DGI Board member since 2020. He is a faithful volunteer at First Friday and in other areas and has been involved in various committees. Most

recently, he spearheaded the search for an arborist to determine the health and future of the trees in the downtown district.

Heflin – The Spouses of Main Street

The Spouses of Main Street are Heroes. Often, they are left out and do not get the credit earned. These spouses are not named on programs, nor are they thanked publicly. These spouses work behind the scenes, often performing the "grunt" work that it takes to put together events. If they are not there helping, they are home holding down the fort. The most important thing they do is put up with tired grumpy board members for a few days. This is a very thankless job and Heflin Main Street appreciates all they do!

Jasper - Curt Ballard

Curt Ballard is the Executive Manager for Carl Cannon Chevrolet Buick GMC in Jasper located on I-22 outside the downtown district. He fulfills the role of Vice-President of Jasper Main Street. Curt, a CPA, leads the organization in making financial decisions that impact them for years to come. Most recently, he took the lead on loan proposal breakdowns for the building Jasper Main Street now have under contract to become their new permanent home. Curt, a valued community member and board member, places his money where his mouth is every single time. Even though his dealership is located outside the district, he understands and places great value on the revitalization of Downtown Jasper through all of his resources.

LaFayette – Maci Harmon

If you spend any time in LaFayette, you are sure to run into Maci Harmon! She is always hard at work as a licensed agent with Dori Harmon Agency and LaFayette Main Street. Maci is one of the most dedicated volunteers and loves LaFayette! She serves as a LaFayette Rotary member and is always giving back to her community. As a promotion committee member and dedicated volunteer, Maci is a hero to LaFayette Main Street and the community. Maci is always willing to help where needed, one of the first to show up and last to leave and is a perfect example of a dedicated volunteer.

Leeds – Jessica Kennedy

Jessica is a high school teacher who is a Main Street Leeds volunteer, committee leader and board member. There is no better example of someone who gives of their time, talent, and treasure than Jessica Kennedy. She is an all-around supporter, helper, and cheerleader for the City of Leeds. From the start, she has been instrumental in helping Leeds Main Street grow and flourish. In their initial phase she helped get the organization off the ground, then became a committee lead, and stepped into a board role.

Marion – Col. David J. Mallahan

Colonel David J. Mollahan, USMC retired, is the President of Marion Military Institute. MMI is the oldest military junior college in the United States. Colonel Mollahan is a charter member of the Main Street Marion Board and has brought along his personal support for Marion Main Street programs as well as the weight and influence of MMI in supporting and partnering in their initiatives. As the largest employer in Marion, MMI has a tremendous impact on the community, under Col. Mollahan's leadership, Marion Main Street is thankful for his dedication.

Monroeville – United Bank

Founded in 1904, United Bank serves the needs of consumers, small businesses, agriculture, and commercial customers. Their employees are committed to making a difference not only in the lives of their customers, but also in their communities. United Bank is a Charter member of Monroeville Main Street, and has multiple employees who serve on the board, as board officers, committee chairs and volunteers.

Montevallo – Karen Kelly

Karen Kelly makes Christmas magic on Main Street by leading Montevallo's Holiday Window Decorating Contest. A Montevallo native and University of Montevallo alumna, Karen gives back to her hometown in numerous ways by not only serving on the Design Committee, but also as chair of the UM Foundation Board of Directors, on the planning commission for UM's College Night Centennial Celebration, on American Village's Board of Directors, and with several other alumni initiatives and professional organizations. *Well done, Karen!*

Opelika – Crawford Willis Group (Evan Crawford & Matt Willis)

Crawford Willis Group is a real estate company located in Opelika. Crawford Willis Group has participated in Opelika Main Street's Merchant Monday's, Downtown Discount Pass, and also committed to assist with their Downtown Business of the week award by putting the highlighted business on their digital illuminated smart board outside of their office. They also have one of the best Airbnb lofts downtown.

Oxford – Oxford Cleaners

Oxford Cleaners, located in Historic Downtown Oxford, has served the community continuously since 1946 at its Main Street location. The dry cleaners are the oldest operating business downtown by the same family. They have continued business well beyond economic and global obstacles. Oxford Cleaners have consecutively won numerous Reader's Choice Awards by The Anniston Star and Main Street Alabama's Excellence in Historic Preservation.

Russellville – Julie McKinney

As a community leader, Julie McKinney recognized the need to collaborate with the City of Russellville and gather the data needed to complete the 2022 Main Street Alabama Application. Thanks to the foresight of Mayor David Grissom, the city enrolled as a Main Street Alabama Network Community in 2016 and had been following guidance provided in the Main Street Alabama resources. The 2022 application committee, led by Julie McKinney, resulted in Russellville being named as the pilot program for the Aspiring Tier. Russellville was selected as a designated city in 2023. Julie currently serves as the Board President.

Scottsboro – Julie Gentry-Michaels

In memorial: Julie Gentry-Michaels served on the board for Main Street Scottsboro, as well as on the Main Street Design Committee. She retired from Scottsboro City Schools where she taught both first grade and kindergarten for

many years. After her retirement, she served as the director for Cumberland Presbyterian's Mother's Day Out program. She also served on the board for Scottsboro City Schools. She was a long-time member of Scottsboro Woman's League and Cumberland Presbyterian Church. *Scottsboro Main Street greatly misses their friend and wanted to show their appreciation to her family for all she meant to them.*

South Huntsville – Brenda Conville

Brenda Conville has served on the South Huntsville Main Business Association Board for over four years. Prior to joining the board, she was the association's primary contact for Diamond-level sponsor, Freedom Real Estate and Capital. After joining the Board, she quickly jumped into action as one of their most involved Board members. Not only did she step in to finish out a previous Board president's term willingly and without question, but she also went on to serve a full term as Board President and now serves as Past President. Brenda is the epitome of an ideal board member.

Wetumpka – Samantha Brantley

Samantha is a dedicated promotions committee volunteer for Wetumpka Main Street organization. She is a creative thinker who brings exciting promotional events and ideas to the community. Samantha has been the event organizer for the Galentine's on Main event for two years and is also in charge of organizing the Christmas in July shopping event. Without Samantha's ideas and love for her community and its small businesses, Wetumpka Main Street would not have had these outstanding promotional events that help highlight their retail and restaurant successes.