

Heroes Toast to Excellence

Presented by



REGIONS



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Main Street Hero

Award given in recognition of individuals, businesses and organizations that have made an outstanding contribution to their local Main Street Program.

Wetumpka ~ Mayor Jerry Willis



Mayor Jerry Willis is a long-serving public figure and dedicated community leader who has played a pivotal role in revitalizing downtown Wetumpka. Since his first term nearly 20 years ago, Mayor Willis has consistently and passionately advocated for historic preservation, economic development, and community pride. His leadership and vision have transformed Wetumpka's downtown into a vibrant and welcoming destination for both residents and visitors. Through his unwavering support, the organization has been able to leverage additional resources, secure crucial funding, and expand its network of collaborators. Mayor Willis's belief in the power of place has not only advanced Main Street's mission but has also elevated the importance of downtown revitalization as a central strategy for community and economic development throughout Wetumpka.

Talladega ~ First Bank of Alabama



First Bank of Alabama, a for-profit financial institution and founding sponsor of Talladega Main Street, is deeply rooted in the Talladega community. The bank is dedicated to meeting the diverse financial needs of local citizens and businesses. As a cornerstone of the community, its mission goes beyond traditional banking; it actively promotes local economic growth, enhances quality of life, and contributes to the overall well-being of the downtown district and beyond. Through its various initiatives and extensive community support, First Bank of Alabama embodies the collaborative spirit essential for downtown revitalization. Its commitment and multifaceted involvement make it an unparalleled 'Hero' in the downtown's development journey.

South Huntsville ~ Brooke Bell



Brooke Bell is a dedicated community leader and longtime resident of South Huntsville. She serves as the Operations Manager at Nova Bank, a role she has held since 2018. Brooke has held multiple leadership roles within the organization, including Secretary, Vice President, and President of the Board of Directors. She has chaired the Promotions Committee and the Economic Vitality Committee, going above and beyond to support SHMBA's mission. Brooke is the driving force behind many of the annual events and has contributed countless volunteer hours. Her selfless commitment, leadership, and reliability make her an invaluable asset to both SHMBA and the greater South Huntsville community.

Scottsboro ~ City of Scottsboro Street Department



We are proud to nominate the Scottsboro Street Department, a dedicated public service department within the City of Scottsboro, for its outstanding support of our Main Street organization. As a government entity, the Street Department plays a crucial role in maintaining and enhancing the appearance of our downtown district. They consistently go above and beyond to support Main Street's efforts, including hanging banners and Christmas lights, organizing the Christmas parade lineup, and assisting with various event logistics throughout the year. Their hard work, reliability, and willingness to help make them an invaluable partner in creating a welcoming and vibrant downtown for the community.

Oxford ~ City of Oxford Maintenance Department



The City of Oxford Maintenance Department is composed of three dedicated staff members: Justin Abernathy, Mason Yates, and Jonathan Nelson. They play a vital role in maintaining city-owned properties, handling tasks such as repairing traffic lights, installing seasonal decorations, and pressure washing public areas. Their work ensures that Oxford remains safe, functional, and welcoming for residents and visitors alike. The Maintenance Department's dedication ensures that Historic Downtown Oxford remains clean, beautiful, and inviting, directly contributing to the revitalization and success of the district.

Opelika ~ Shree Summerlin



Shree Summerlin is a member of the Opelika Main Street board and the Economic Vitality committee. She is a small business owner, a downtown resident, and a long-time community volunteer. She also serves on the Opelika Character Council and recently graduated from the Opelika Chamber's 20 under 40 Program. Shree has been involved since 2019. She has helped organize events, volunteered, attended the Main Street Now conference in Birmingham, and taken advanced Maestro classes. Shree is an asset to the Opelika Main Street organization. She is a community advocate. Opelika Main Street is delighted to have her on the board this year and look forward to the new partnerships and resources she brings to the table.

Montgomery ~ Kyser Property Management



The Kyser Family has been a long-time supporter, investor, and advocate for Downtown Montgomery. Jerry Kyser, his son Jake, and other family members have made significant contributions to the development of essential buildings in the area. They have invested in unique restaurant concepts and worked to promote vibrancy in the heart of the Main Street District. Additionally, they have participated in efforts to preserve historic buildings throughout downtown and have donated retail space for Montgomery's downtown ambassador program. They have also supported the establishment of the Main Street Montgomery program and provided retail space to assist this initiative.

Montevallo ~ Jackson McNeely



Jackson McNeely joined Montevallo Main Street's Design Committee in January 2024. She quickly took the lead in organizing the inaugural Monte Gras Ball on February 1, 2025, and partnered with Owen's House to create "Painting the Town Blue" displays downtown for Child Abuse Prevention Month, which began in April 2024. While she supports the overall goals of the Design Committee, she focuses on Child Abuse Prevention Month and fundraising activities. Jackson is an essential part of Montevallo Main Street.

Monroeville ~ Chuck Downing



Chuck Downing is the Director of the Emergency Management Agency for Monroe County and serves as the Vice President of Monroeville Main Street. A dedicated volunteer, Chuck embodies the spirit of service, whether chairing the Farm-to-Table Dinner or cooking holiday meals for the board. His advocacy led to the Monroe County Commission's first investment in Main Street, and his ability to connect with sponsors has opened up new resources. As EMA Director, he brings credibility and visibility, reinforcing Monroeville Main Street as a trusted partner in downtown renewal. Chuck is the person every Main Street needs!

Marion ~ 1st Sgt. Ernest Donaldson



1 SG Ernest Donaldson is the director of the First Responder Program and deputy director of the Anthony J. Rane Center for Leadership. He holds four degrees, including a Doctor of Ministry. Sergeant Donaldson has coordinated volunteer work in the Harris Technology Hub. His efforts contributed to the demolition, construction, and renovation of the building. He transported cadets back and forth, collaborating with other staff members to ensure all cadets had volunteer opportunities. His group has accumulated dozens of volunteer hours. Without the leadership of Sergeant Donaldson, the Harris Technology Hub would still be nonfunctional. Because of Sergeant Donaldson's selfless service, Marion is a better place to live.

Madison ~ Shannon Fisher



Shannon Fisher is the co-owner of Lemon & Lavender, North Alabama's first refillery and eco-friendly home goods store in Historic Downtown Madison. Shannon quickly became a champion of Main Street. As a respected business owner, she recognized the program's potential and inspired others to get involved. Shannon rallied fellow merchants and became a key partner in realizing the vision for Main Street Madison. She is the reason Main Street has found its home in Madison.

Leeds~ House Representative Susan DuBose



House Representative Susan DuBose is a dedicated public servant and community leader who embodies the spirit of Main Street. She supports Leeds Main Street through both high-level advocacy and hands-on volunteer work. She volunteered her time to help make Mistletoe on Main a success, attended and promoted Mardi on Main, and helped secure grants from both the Jefferson County Cooperative Fund and the Alabama Tourism Department. Beyond Leeds Main Street, she has also been instrumental in obtaining funding for key downtown partners. Her consistent presence, enthusiasm, and effectiveness make her a vital champion of our downtown district.

LaFayette ~ Cindy Henderson



Cindy Henderson is an outstanding volunteer whose unwavering dedication and compassion have made a lasting impact on the community. She has generously donated her time to making LaFayette Main Street successful. She volunteers at events, prints promotional materials, and consistently exceeds expectations. Cindy's warm personality, reliability, and leadership inspire those around her, and she is the first to arrive and the last to leave. Her efforts have helped hundreds get to know LaFayette better, and her ability to connect with people from all walks of life makes her a beloved and respected figure. Cindy embodies the true spirit of volunteerism through her selfless service.

Jasper~ Mark Wilson



Mark Wilson exemplifies the essence of Main Street heroes and is a driving force behind downtown revitalization. As the founder and CEO of Bank of Walker County, he has had an impact far beyond banking. With Eagle Scout values, he has served as a Youth Leader at Jasper First Methodist Church and as the former Habitat for Humanity Coordinator for Walker County. Mark's commitment is evident in his work at the Welcome Center, where he ensures visitors receive a warm and knowledgeable greeting. His engagement inspires other banking professionals and CEOs to get involved in the community. Mark Wilson doesn't just support Main Street - he IS Main Street.

Historic 4th Ave ~ Paulette Roby



Paulette Roby has been a dedicated civil rights activist since childhood. At just 13, she participated in the 1963 Children's Crusade in Birmingham, standing bravely against segregation. Now, as Chairwoman of the Civil Rights Activist Committee, she preserves the stories of those who fought injustice. Paulette played a key role in securing the National Monument designation for the Birmingham Civil Rights District from President Obama and actively participates in local initiatives, such as 4th Avenue Forward. Her strength and leadership continue to inspire future generations, making her a deserving recipient.

Heflin ~ Frank Tant



Frank Tant is the owner of Cleburne Pharmacy on Heflin Main Street and a respected leader within the community. Frank brings professional expertise and a passion for community service. Frank brought a transformative public art idea by offering the side of his pharmacy building for a mural, a location that sits prominently in the heart of downtown. The mural helped foster new partnerships, which have become valuable resources. Frank's willingness to lead, invest, and collaborate has inspired other property owners to explore improvements and get involved. His journey is rooted in a commitment to the community. His story embodies the spirit of Main Street and makes him a truly deserving Main Street Hero. ty

Gadsden ~ Tom Banks



Tom has dedicated most of his life to serving others at the Mary G. Hardin Center for Cultural Arts. He began working part-time at the Center as a teenager in 1998 and continued while studying at the University of Alabama. After graduating and returning to Gadsden, he became the Deputy Director of the Center, and in 2019, he was promoted to Executive Director. Saying that he can do it all is an understatement! Tom has a "can do" attitude about everything, making him an asset to downtown Gadsden and the community. DGI is proud that he chose to come back home to Gadsden!

Fort Payne ~ Amy White



Amy White serves as the Vice-President of the Fort Payne Main Street board. She is involved in any activity or event that Fort Payne Main Street sponsors or presents. She owns and runs two businesses while serving on the Fort Payne Main Street board and taking care of a family. Despite juggling her professional commitments and family life, she works diligently and always wears a smile. She sees challenges as opportunities and is a role model for her children and the community. Fort Payne is blessed to have her on Main Street.

Foley ~ Deborah Nixon



For Deborah Nixon, community service is a way of life. After a 23-year teaching career in Foley, retirement opened a new chapter of dedication to her city. Her leadership is evident across the community. She serves as Chair of the Beautification Committee, sits on the Planning Commission, and is a guiding force for Foley Main Street. She sits on the Board and has spent five years as its chair. Deborah's impact is felt through her hands-on work, where she tackles any job with enthusiasm. She has laid sod for public murals, unloaded furniture in the cold, pulled weeds, and tirelessly decorated downtown for the holidays. When leading historic tours, she treated every guest to homemade cookies. Deborah's warm, easygoing personality, combined with her willingness to do the hard work, makes her an invaluable asset to the community. She is, without a doubt, Foley 's Main Street Hero.

Eufaula ~ Kasey Sims



Kasey Sims has been a vital part of Main Street Eufaula for over 5 years as the promotions chair and volunteer. She is always ready for anything, showing up for events even before the flyers are printed. Kasey plans her outfits for themed events for months, and her creativity helps enhance operations and events. Main Street Eufaula is incredibly grateful to have Kasey in Eufaula!

Enterprise ~ Lila Faulk



Lila Faulk has served as a student worker at Main Street Enterprise since 2024. During this time, she has shown a natural capacity for leadership, service, and problem-solving. She joined Main Street as a senior in high school, and despite her young age, she consistently demonstrated her dedication to the downtown area, its business owners, and community members. In the five months without a program director, Lila stepped up without hesitation. She guided the team with clarity, tackled complex challenges, and ensured that the program not only remained on track but also continued to grow and thrive. Her ability to inspire others, make strategic decisions under pressure, and maintain momentum is a testament to her strong commitment to our program's mission and the people we support. Lila is highly proactive and has always followed up on any tasks assigned to her. Her impact on Main Street Enterprise will be felt well beyond her tenure.

Elba ~ Beverly Hamilton



Beverly Hamilton, the Elba Main Street Chairman of the Board, a Financial Officer at Elba City Schools, and an officer at her church, consistently demonstrates her commitment to the well-being of the community. Beyond her formal roles, her authentic leadership shines through her tireless work as a community volunteer and, most notably, as the founder of Camp Excell. This vital summer camping program for children in Elba addresses a crucial need, providing engaging and enriching experiences for the city's youth. Her initiative in creating and sustaining the camp, alongside her contributions to Main Street events, establishes her as a driving force for positive change in Elba. You can count on Beverly to lead and inspire others with her dedication.

Demopolis ~ Hugh Overmyer



Hugh Overmyer, owner of multiple hotels in Demopolis, is a key supporter of Main Street and serves on the Planning Commission, and is set to join the City Council this year. He has provided ongoing financial support and played a vital role in developing the recent incentive plan for downtown developers, collaborating with advocates to assess needs and gain City Council approval. His commitment to the downtown district has led to significant infrastructure upgrades and has helped attract more investment than the city has seen in decades.

Decatur ~ Nucor Steel



For 15 years, Nucor has partnered with the Downtown Decatur Redevelopment Authority (DDRA) to enhance the downtown area. They have pledged over \$250,000 to support the DDRA/Main Street organization and donated materials for steel arbors at Founders Park and Casa Grande Park. Nucor's commitment to community service and local businesses significantly contributes to the district's vitality. Their partnership has also attracted more businesses to the DDRA.

Centreville ~ Crystal McMeekin



Crystal McMeekin serves on the Centreville Main Street Board of Directors and is the owner of G&H Building Supply, located in the district. Crystal is a great and talented asset to Centreville Main Street's Board, bringing in experience as an attorney and former Executive Director of the Birmingham Bar Association. She is a lifelong investor in the City of Centreville and is always looking for ways to give back to the community. Crystal is one of the most humble community leaders, and that is why we are excited to present her with this honor of being named Centreville's Main Street Hero.

Calera ~ Calvin Morgan



Calvin Morgan is a respected community leader and a public servant. As a founding board member of Calera Main Street, he has been a strong advocate for downtown revitalization. Currently serving as City Councilman, he continues to emphasize the importance of a vibrant, connected, and economically resilient downtown. His unwavering support has helped Calera Main Street maintain its momentum, even when faced with challenges. Calvin's presence reinforces the belief that downtown is worth fighting for, and he continually envisions its potential for the future. His leadership keeps the conversation about downtown revitalization alive and serves as an inspiration to residents, city staff, and business owners alike. Calvin remains a consistent and vocal champion, laying the groundwork for future progress by prioritizing hope, collaboration, and long-term planning.

REV Birmingham ~ Raymond and Kwamell Laseter



REV Birmingham is proud to nominate brothers Raymond and Kwamell Laseter, the owners of Voltron Printing, located in the heart of Woodlawn's historic commercial district. Voltron Printing is a custom print shop that specializes in screen printing, embroidery, and branding solutions, featuring a line of original designs. Housed in a historic storefront, the business plays a crucial role in the revitalization of the district. Their dedication to collaboration over competition, along with their vision of Voltron as a hub for artists, designers, and creatives, has made them essential to the ongoing growth and vibrancy of Woodlawn's commercial core. Additionally, Voltron has supported local youth and education initiatives, reinforcing its position as a true community hub. Raymond and Kwamell are not just business owners; they are community leaders whose commitment to collective success continues to drive Woodlawn's transformation.

Atmore ~ Alfredo Alvizo



Atmore's Main Street Hero is Alfredo "Freddy" Alvizo, a board member and leader of the Design Committee for the Atmore Historical Society. His leadership has been instrumental in fundraising and restoring historic landmarks like the Webb-Peavy House and Watson Cabin. As co-owner of Creek Clean LLC with Tori Rodriguez, Freddy exemplifies the entrepreneurial spirit of Atmore. What began as a two-person startup has grown into a business with over 80 employees. A graduate of United Bank's Church Street Incubator, he revitalized downtown by transforming a vacant building on North Main Street into the site of the iconic "Evermore" mural, celebrating Atmore's heritage.

Athens ~ City of Athens Public Works



City of Athens Public Works is a municipal department dedicated to maintaining and improving the infrastructure and quality of life for residents, businesses, and visitors in the city. They are responsible for essential services, including street maintenance, sanitation, stormwater management, and upkeep of public facilities. Public Works plays a critical behind-the-scenes role in keeping the city safe, clean, and functional, especially during emergencies and community events. Their ongoing commitment and hands-on involvement have been instrumental in enhancing downtown's appearance, functionality, and economic resilience, making them a deserving recipient for the Athens Main Street Hero Award.

Anniston ~ Toby Bennington



Toby Bennington has served as the Director of Planning and Economic Development for the City of Anniston since 2007. With over thirty years of experience in urban and regional planning, Toby has been instrumental in shaping the city's economic landscape. He played a key role in overseeing the Main Street Anniston program during its formative years. As Toby approaches retirement, it is important to recognize and honor the significant contributions he has made in driving the success of Main Street Anniston.

Alexander City ~ Laurie Sturdivant



Laurie has been a dedicated member of the Main Street Board for over 15 years, playing a crucial role in the revitalization and enhancement of the district. As the chair of the Promotion and Fundraising Committee, she generously shares her time, talents, and financial resources, inspiring others to become involved. Her efforts have resulted in numerous successful activities, fundraisers, and innovative ideas that have significantly improved the downtown area over the past decade. Laurie's strong support and advocacy make her a highly valued member of the community and a true asset to Main Street.



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