The Partnership between the Business Council of Alabama and Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama is going strong in its second decade of representing and fighting for business interests at the local, state, and national levels.

The Partnership unites local Chambers of Commerce through the CCAA, takes the grass-roots members to the next level, and enhances the BCA’s strength in the state and nation’s capitals. The BCA shares its expertise on state and federal business issues as well as its contacts in those areas.

At the time of its creation, The Partnership represented some 50,000 businesses and 1 million working Alabamians.

Thousands of Alabama businesses of all shapes and sizes depend on the BCA as the state’s most powerful and effective advocate for business and industry at the Alabama Legislature and in the halls of the U.S. Congress.

The BCA is the premier business association in the Alabama capital and Washington, D.C., and is Alabama’s exclusive representative of the National Association of Manufacturers and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Now in its 31st year, the BCA’s issues are common to all businesses: rising health care costs, complicated tax laws, a shortage of skilled workers, unfair labor laws, workers’ compensation fraud, predatory trial lawyers, and burdensome regulations.
The CCAA consists of Chambers of Commerce, their executives and staff, and members of business and community organizations that directly serve chamber of commerce work in Alabama. State chambers united in 1937 at the height of the Depression and in 1997 the CCAA name was created to represent the preeminent organization serving Chamber of Commerce professionals, and the Chambers of Commerce they represent.

The CCAA exists to strengthen the vital role local Chambers of Commerce play in economic and community development. The CCAA provides members with exceptional services in the areas of advocacy, professional development, and communication of issues that affect the local business community.

In 2003, the BCA and the CCAA strengthened their efforts by forming The Partnership.

BCA President and CEO William J. Canary worked with then-CCAA President Ralph Stacy, among others, to finalize The Partnership agreement.

“Each chamber has a voice,” Canary said. “Put together we have the largest shout.”

“The Partnership is the first of its kind in the United States and has become a model for other states,” CCAA President and CEO Jeremy Arthur (pictured on cover) said. “Together, we represent the interests and concerns of over 1 million working Alabamians.”

Wiregrass businessman and BCA treasurer Charles Nailen Jr. was BCA chairman in 2003-04 when The Partnership was finalized. “When you get to the point of combining chambers of commerce throughout the state with the BCA you’ve really got a lot of boots on the ground,” said Nailen, who is president and owner of BBG Specialty Foods Inc./Taco Bell in Dothan.

The Partnership provides a complimentary membership to the BCA for CCAA members, access to conference calls during legislative sessions with members of BCA’s Governmental Affairs team and local chamber professionals, and access to BCA events including the annual Legislative Reception, Alabama Manufacturer of the Year Awards, Governmental Affairs Conference, and Chairman’s Dinner.

“Collectively, through the CCAA and The Partnership, local chambers can now band together to form one voice for business and expand that voice beyond their local community to affect an even greater good,” Arthur said.

The CCAA/BCA Partnership Annual Meeting highlights yearly accomplishments. The 2015 annual meeting will be from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Dec. 4 at the Harbert Center in Birmingham.

For more information visit bcatoday.org or alabamachambers.org. TBADV

EXECUTIVE EDITOR: Nancy Wall Hewston
MANAGING EDITOR: Dana Beyerle
ART DIRECTOR: Joshua Vaughn

The Business Advocate is published by the Business Council of Alabama, Alabama’s foremost voice for business. The BCA is a non-partisan statewide business association representing the interest and concerns of three-quarters of a million working Alabamians through its member companies, and is Alabama’s exclusive representative to the National Association of Manufacturers and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. For information on becoming a member of BCA, contact Elaine Fincannon, 334.240.8750, or elainef@bcatoday.org. For more information, visit bcatoday.org.