

THE BUSINESS ADVOCATE

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An Opportunity for Progress

The Business Council of Alabama's 2018 Governmental Affairs Conference focused on making the most out of transitional periods.

It featured Q&As with members of Alabama's congressional delegation and state legislative leaders, informative speeches by Governor Kay Ivey and the Israeli consul to the Southeast and Puerto Rico, release of a new education report, and an inspiring keynote address by adventurer, author, and

motivational speaker Alison Levine, who has conquered the highest mountains on each continent, including Mt. Everest.

The annual BCA conference at the Marriott Grand Hotel and Spa at Point Clear was attended by BCA members, elected officials, and honored guests.

The conference kicked off with a networking reception designed to give attendees the opportunity to meet and mingle with candidates running for election this year.

1: The BCA board of directors at the annual meeting in December elected BCA officers for 2018. They are from left, Rey Almodovar, chief executive officer Intuitive Research and Technology Corp. in Huntsville, secretary; Perry Hand, chairman of Volkert Inc. in Mobile, BCA 2018 chairman; BCA treasurer Charles Nailen Jr., president/owner of BBG Special Foods Inc./Taco Bell in Dothan, reelected; Mike Kemp, president and CEO of Kemp Management Solutions in Birmingham, first-vice chairman; and BCA secretary Denson Henry, vice president of Henry Brick Co. in Selma, elected second-vice chairman. Not pictured is Fournier J. "Boots" Gale, general counsel, Regions Financial Corp., who was re-elected BCA general counsel.



2: 2018 BCA Chairman Perry Hand, chairman of Volkert Inc., in Mobile, is chairman of a leading engineering firm and has had a distinguished career in politics and business. He was elected to the state Senate in 1983, reelected, and has served as secretary of state and as state Highway Director, now the Department of Transportation. He became president, CEO, and chairman of the board of Volkert in 2011 and serving now as chairman is guiding a strategic succession plan for Volkert into the next generation of growth and leadership.



The reception was hosted by the Alliance for Alabama's Infrastructure, a grassroots advocacy coalition focused on fixing Alabama's infrastructure crisis and making our roads safer, generating economic growth, and improving the quality of life for all Alabamians. BCA Chairman Perry Hand, chairman of Volkert Inc., presided over the board of directors meeting and unveiled the BCA's 2018 book, *The Future is Now*. This publication is a 355-page historical record of the BCA's substantial work during the last year of the 2014-18 legislative quadrennium. Prepared by the BCA staff and published by the BCA Press, the book includes state and federal legislative agendas, the BCA's legislative advocacy,

a written and photographic record of BCA events and activities, press releases, state and federal blogs, published *Business Advocates* and op-eds.

Saturday started with a panel discussion with Alabama's state legislative leaders: Senate President Pro Tem Del Marsh, R-Anniston, Alabama House Speaker Mac McCutcheon, R-Huntsville, and House Minority Leader Anthony McDaniels, D-Huntsville.

BCA Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Fred Blackwell led the discussion that covered topics such as early childhood education, Medicaid expansion, workforce development, and the need to increase investment in Alabama's roads and bridges.

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Lior Haiat, Israel's Consul General to Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Puerto Rico, spoke of Israel's ties to Alabama and the United States. The U.S. – Israeli relationship is critical to the world's stability making Consul General Haiat's job and the services his office provides so critical.

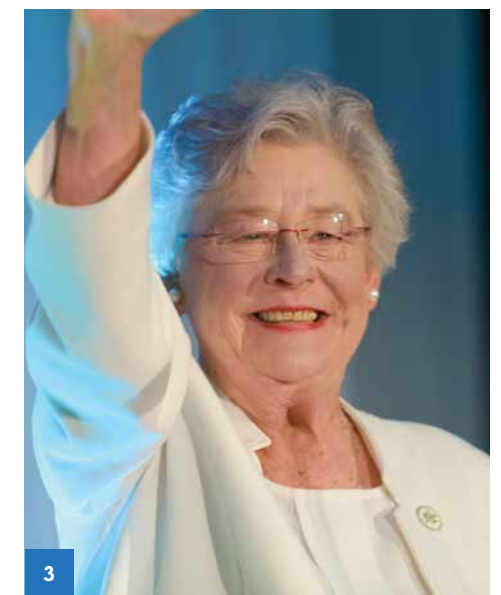
The final feature of the breakfast program was a congressional forum sponsored by Electric Cities of Alabama, a coalition of municipally owned electric utilities. Alabama's electric cities span the state serving approximately 1 million customers in 36 cities.

This year's congressional forum was hosted by Moore Hallmark, executive director of the Southeast region of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and featured U.S. Reps. Bradley Byrne, R-Fairhope, Gary Palmer, R-Hoover, and Mike Rogers, R-Saks.

Following the discussion, Hallmark presented the three with the U.S. Chamber Spirit of Enterprise Awards for their support of Chamber issues. The BCA is the exclusive affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Alabama.

The second part of the morning's program was the Feature Presentations, presented by Austal USA.

First up, Dr. Joe Morton, chairman and



3: From left, Business Council of Alabama President and CEO William J. Canary, Altec Chairman and CEO Lee Styslinger III, National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) President and CEO Jay Timmons, and Alabama Secretary of Commerce Greg Canfield, meet at BCA member Altec Inc. in Birmingham for the Alabama segment of the NAM's State of Manufacturing Tour.

4: Alabama House Speaker Mac McCutcheon, R-Huntsville and...

5: Senate Pro Tem Del Marsh, R-Anniston, were two of the 12 legislators who spoke at BCA Tuesday Briefings during the 2018 regular legislative session. Governor Kay Ivey's chief of staff, Steve Pelham, also spoke at a Tuesday Briefing. Briefings are held during regular sessions for the BCA's Governmental Affairs Committee provide the opportunity for committee members and guests to get an in-depth look at the week's activities.

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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, 334.240.8749, or elaine@bcatoday.org. For more information, visit bcatoday.org.



president of the Business Education Alliance of Alabama, released the BEA's fifth "white paper" report, Leadership Matters: A Blueprint for Reinventing Schools for Student Success.

Prepared by the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama, the 2018 BEA report examines the crucial role leadership plays in shaping educational outcomes and showcases six examples of where leadership makes a difference and where data indicate students are achieving higher levels of success.

The white paper builds on four previously released BEA reports: the 2014 BEA research report, Obstacles Into Opportunities: A 90% High School Graduation Rate in Alabama by 2020 Provides the Educated Workforce That is Key to Expanding Our Economy, the 2015 BEA report, Teachers Matter: Rethinking How Public Education Recruits, Rewards, and Retains Great Educators, the 2016 report, Exceeding Expectations: Keys to Alabama's Student Success," and the 2017 report, Student Achievement Matters.

Next, Craig Perciavalle, Austal President of USA Operations, presented a video of the Mobile-based shipbuilder's U.S. Navy warship

production and the 4,000 Alabama-jobs the company provides.

Governor Ivey then took the stage and reiterated her support for education, workforce development, and Alabama infrastructure efforts, which are being led by the Alabama Alliance for Infrastructure. "We remain committed to infrastructure in our state," Governor Ivey said.

Then, keynote speaker Alison Levine, adventuress and author of *On The Edge, Leadership Lessons from Mount Everest and Other Extreme Environments*, awed the audience with her experience of two trips climbing Mount Everest and skiing across Antarctica. She said in business as in extreme sports, preparation and the ability to adapt to uncontrollable conditions can be the difference between success and failure.

The conference ended with the traditional interfaith service featuring Tom Benz, founder of Bridge of Faith International Children's Fund that supports Ukrainian adoption efforts, and BCA board member Fred Blackwell, a certified trainer and chair of the BCA's Governmental Affairs Committee. **TBADV**