Swiss Krono Group, one of the world’s leading producers of laminate flooring, and its American subsidiary, Swiss Krono SC, LLC, held a groundbreaking ceremony on July 13, 2016, for its $230 million high-density fiberboard (HDF) mill and laminate flooring production expansion. South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley and Ms. Ines Kaindl, President of the Swiss Krono Group Board of Directors, joined local leaders for the special celebratory event.

Swiss Krono anticipates adding 105 new highly-skilled technical and management jobs to the Barnwell area, increasing its total employment to 275 employees. The project commences this summer and HDF operations will likely begin by the summer of 2018.

This expansion will allow Swiss Krono to produce 300,000 cubic-meters of HDF per year, which the company will use for JGBR Brings Manufacturing Operation to Walterboro

JGBR, a manufacturing company headquartered in Rugao, China, has announced the establishment of its South Carolina operations. The company is investing $7.2 million to establish a facility in Colleton County, creating 65 new jobs.

“We looked at sites globally and selected Colleton County, South Carolina because we believe it is the perfect location to serve our existing customers in South Carolina and to grow our North American business,” said JGBR Walterboro Corp. Vice President of Operations Billy Strickland.

“We couldn’t be more excited to welcome JGBR to the South Carolina family. Another great win for one of our state’s rural communities, this $7.2 million investment, and the 65 new jobs it means for Colleton County, will have a real impact on the local community and is a real reason to celebrate across our state,” said Gov. Nikki Haley.

Supplying a global market, JGBR manufactures high-precision steel balls and ball bearings with a focus on the mechanical and automotive markets. The new Colleton County operation will serve not only North America, but the Mexican and South American markets as well.

“SouthernCarolina Alliance welcomes JGBR to our region (continued on page 2)
laminate flooring manufacturing operations and sell to furniture, cabinet, fixture, door and other wood-based manufacturers. In total, the project will increase the company’s annual laminate flooring capacity by an additional 8 million square-meters.

“Strong consumer demand for our quality laminate flooring drove our decision to expand,” said CEO Zeb Portanova. “And our strong retail partners who choose to sell our innovative products are the real foundation on which this expansion is built.” According to Portanova, “The company gratefully acknowledges the collaborative efforts of South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley, the South Carolina Department of Commerce, the South Carolina Forestry Commission, the SouthernCarolina Regional Development Alliance and various Barnwell County governmental agencies. Their patience, perseverance and continuous support have been and will continue to be instrumental in the future success of this project.”

The SWISS KRONO GROUP has its origins in a company founded in Menznau, Switzerland in 1966. Today it is one of the world’s leading producers of engineered wood products with more than 4,500 employees working in Switzerland, France, Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Hungary and Russia as well as in the United States.

Further information is available at www.swisskronoUSA.com.
Masonite International Expanding Bamberg County Operations
Company expanding operations with additional workforce

Masonite International, one of the world’s leading manufacturers of decorative interior doors and entry door systems, is expanding its existing Bamberg County operations. The expansion will result in the creation of 50 new jobs over the next year, with additional growth expected in the years to come.

Featuring a wide array of patented designs for frames, stain kits and building materials, Masonite International operates more than 70 locations around the world—with 37 sites in the United States alone. Headquartered in Tampa, Fla., the company employs more than 10,000 people worldwide.

“South Carolina continues to build on its reputation as a leader in manufacturing, and Masonite’s decision to expand in Denmark is another big win for our state. It’s special any time we see a company succeed and grow in one of our rural communities, and we couldn’t be more excited to celebrate the 50 new jobs this expansion means for Bamberg County,” said Gov. Nikki Haley.

“The success that we’ve seen in economic development in South Carolina is due to great companies like Masonite International, which continue to invest in our communities and people. We look forward to watching this company continue to grow and support the Bamberg community,” commented Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt.

“Masonite is a fine company that has been an asset to our county,” said Bamberg County Council Chairman Isaiah Odom. “Every good job they provide in our area creates a better future for a family here, where Masonite continues to expand. We congratulate the company and want to help Masonite flourish in Bamberg County.”

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“We appreciate Masonite’s continued investment in our region, where they already employ nearly 200 people. We are proud of the fact that our workforce has been a part of Masonite’s success at the Denmark facility, where Masonite continues to produce the world’s finest products in the industry. We extend our gratitude and our pledge to continue to support Masonite’s success in any way that we can,” added SouthernCarolina Alliance President and CEO Danny Black.

The 50 new positions will allow Masonite’s Denmark, S.C. facility to add another auto line shift. Additional growth and capacity increases are expected to take place through the first quarter of 2017. There are also plans for the creation of a weekend shift, which will require additional staffing in auxiliary support departments.

If you are interested in applying for any of the new positions, visit the company’s careers page online for more information. Applications must be submitted in person at the facility, which is located at 1349 Locust Avenue in Denmark.

For more information on Masonite International, visit www.masonite.com.

US Roto Molding Locates in Hampton County
Manufacturer Will Make Plastic Molding Products in Yemassee

US Roto Molding, a manufacturer of plastic molding products headquartered in Quakertown, Pennsylvania, has established operations in Hampton County.

“US Roto Molding is thrilled to be operating in Hampton County at the former Dixie Poly Drum site,” said US Roto Molding plant manager Dennis Johnson. “The area provides an excellent strategic location to grow our business. We look forward to serving our current and future customers.”

The company recently purchased the former Dixie Poly Drum facility at 28 Dixie Poly Drive in Yemassee. Their initial investment of $500,000 has created five jobs in Hampton County with plans for further expansion as their market penetration grows.

The company specializes in a variety of plastic moldings. Its product line includes drums, step stools, building protection and material handling. Custom molding is also available.

According to Johnson, the company will be meeting with many of Dixie Poly Drum’s former customers in the coming months and introducing other products at the site in Yemassee.

“We are happy that US Roto Molding has invested in Hampton County,” said County Council Chairman Shedron Williams. “We hope the company will be a viable entity in the county and we look forward to working with them through the county council to support job creation and investment.”

“US Roto Molding will be a great addition to our industrial community in the region,” said Hampton County EDC Chairman Bill Hager. “Every job created by the company affects a family in our community, and we value their investment in our people.”

According to Brantley Strickland, project manager for SouthernCarolina Alliance, the regional development organization representing Hampton County, “Dennis and his team can rely on us to assist them as they establish manufacturing operations and seek to grow their company. We welcome them to Hampton County.”

For more information on US Roto Molding, visit the website: www.usrotomolding.com.
J&L Wire, headquartered in St. Paul, Minn., has announced the establishment of its first South Carolina operations. The company is opening a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in the former Press Printing building in Colleton County. Located at 387 Mable T. Willis Boulevard in Walterboro, S.C., the 31,000-square-foot facility is situated on 5.1 acres. The company is investing $2.5 million in the project, which is expected to create 50 new jobs.

“We are excited about the market opportunities in the Southeast and believe the South Carolina site will position us to profitably expand our core business,” said J&L Wire General Manager Gary Hyde.

“It’s exciting to see a company like J&L Wire, which is dedicated to making products right here in the U.S., make the decision to establish operations in South Carolina. J&L’s $2.5 million investment and the 50 new jobs it means for Colleton County are real reasons to celebrate in Colleton and across our entire state,” said Gov. Nikki Haley.

“South Carolina continues to lead the nation’s manufacturing renaissance, and today’s announcement by J&L Wire reinforces that notion. We congratulate the company on all of their success and look forward to supporting them as they establish operations in our state,” added Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt.

“We are thrilled to welcome J&L Wire to South Carolina. We are confident that their investment in Colleton County will prove beneficial not only to their customers, but also to the citizens of Colleton County. J&L Wire has a proven record of success and we are delighted to have the opportunity to help carry that forward in the years to come,” commented Colleton County Council Chairman Steven Murdaugh.

“We are proud J&L Wire has chosen Colleton County for their expansion. Our economic development professionals on the local, regional and state levels work diligently toward this kind of growth. We will continue to support J&L Wire as they become an established South Carolina manufacturer,” remarked Bill Workman, Chairman, Colleton County Resource & Development Board and Co-chair of the Colleton County Economic Alliance.

“We appreciate the 50 direct jobs that J&L Wire will bring to Colleton County, as well as the economic impact that these jobs and this investment will ultimately have on Colleton County and the surrounding region,” said Danny Black, President and CEO of SouthernCarolina Alliance. “At SouthernCarolina Alliance, we believe that good jobs build communities and opportunities, and we look forward to working with the company to improve the quality of life for our residents through their success and job creation.”

J&L Wire is a leading manufacturer of galvanized wire decking and shelving used in warehouse storage, material handling and logistics. The established product line includes Galva-Deck® wire decking and Boss Hog™ woven wire flooring for agricultural confinement panels.

For additional information on the company, visit www.jlwire.com.

SouthernCarolina Alliance partnered with the S.C. Department of Commerce in bringing Boeing’s “Soar to Success” program to local schools and communities on May 10. Boeing visited the schools in Allendale, Bamberg and Barnwell Counties to discuss career opportunities with students. SouthernCarolina Alliance sponsored community events at the Southern Carolina Business Center in Barnwell and at Richard Carroll Elementary School during the evening of May 10 to share with the business community and adults the opportunities that Boeing brings to our region for both the emerging and current workforce.
Carolina Metal Castings Expanding Operations in Jasper County

Expansion projected to bring more than $3 million of new investment

Carolina Metal Castings, a full-service provider of aftermarket metal castings located in Hardeeville, South Carolina, is expanding its manufacturing operations in Jasper County. The project will result in 13 new jobs and an investment of more than $3 million over the next five years.

“Carolina Metal Castings’ decision to expand its South Carolina operations is a huge win for the company and for our state as a whole. We’re excited to congratulate the company on the success they’ve found here, this $3 million investment, and the 13 new jobs it means for Jasper County,” said Governor Nikki Haley.

In operation for more than 40 years, Carolina Metal Castings is a full-service jobbing foundry that specializes in custom and limited production work. Producing its own tooling in-house, the company also completes its own moldings, castings and heat treatments in-house.

According to Carolina Metal Castings President Jim Harwood, “We are very excited to take this next step in our development. The SC Department of Commerce along with other government agencies have been very helpful in making this expansion possible.”

“While the recruitment of new businesses to our state is a major part of our economic development strategy, the success of our existing industries is just as important. Today, we celebrate the achievements of Carolina Metal Castings in Jasper County and look forward to their continued success in the future,” added S.C. Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt.

SouthernCarolina Alliance Chairman Buddy Phillips congratulated the company, “Jim Harwood and Carolina Metal Castings have invested in our workforce and our community, and we appreciate his commitment to growing the business in our region.”

“Every job created makes a difference for a family in our county,” said Jasper County Council Chairman Marty Sauls, who also serves as Vice Chairman of SouthernCarolina Alliance and Chairman of the Jasper County Chamber of Commerce.

Located at 354 Industrial Park Road in Hardeeville, S.C., the project will double the facility’s production capacity and consolidate the company’s operations into one location.

For more information on Carolina Metal Castings, visit www.carolinametalcastings.com online.

GTI to Offer Defense Training to the Public

For over 10 years Government Training Institute (GTI), located at the S.C. Advanced Technology Park in Barnwell, has exclusively trained law enforcement, military, and first responder personnel from around the world, including fighting forces from around the United States, its territories and partner nations. GTI has not offered training to the public until now.

According to CEO Von Bolin, GTI will now offer new courses designed for the average person, “to be able to build a life-saving capability. Everyone should have the right to protect themselves and their families. GTI’s instructors have years of real world, combat training and competition experience.”

Bolin stated that the instructors at GTI have backgrounds that include professional experience in SWAT, Delta, Special Operations Command (SOCOM), Special Response Team (SRT), and Subject Matter Experts from almost every tactical aspect.

Classes that are currently being offered include: Gunfighter Pistol; Gunfighter Carbine; Home Defense; Women’s Unarmed Defense; Realtor Readiness Training; Corporate; and Custom Civilian Preparedness Training designed and taught by some of the most skilled trainers in the world.

For more details, contact: Taylor Freeman, Training Coordinator at 803-624-2938 (cell), 803-259-1979 (office) or taylorf@gtitraining.org. Students may also register online for classes at www.gtitraining.org/civilian-training.
Regional Landscape Getting a New Look

With the $531,650,000 in private capital investment and 623 new jobs announced in our region since January 2015, our regional landscape is getting a new look. With the new companies coming in and the existing industries expanding, some of our existing buildings are getting additions and others are getting facelifts, while several speculative buildings are now occupied and new ones are being constructed. Here are a few recent photos taken around the region.
New Industrial Building to Attract Jobs to Jasper County

Jasper County leaders gathered at Cypress Ridge Industrial Park in Ridgeland on June 14 for a groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate the construction of a 40,000 SF promotional industrial building to attract new industries to the area. Located at 4427 Grays Highway on Highway 278, the expandable building is located 5 minutes from Exit 21 on Interstate 95, 35 minutes from the Port of Savannah, GA, and 80 minutes from the Port of Charleston, SC.

Led by SouthernCarolina Alliance, the regional economic development organization marketing Jasper County, and Jasper County Council Chairman Marty Sauls, who also serves as Vice Chairman of the Board for SouthernCarolina Alliance, the group ceremoniously broke ground with gold shovels at the construction site.

Joining Sauls for the event were Tray Hunter, Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations for Palmetto Electric Cooperative; Richard Lindler, Director of Business Development for Carlisle Associates; Jasper County Councilman Henry Etheridge; Jasper County Councilwoman Barbara Clark; Jasper County Council Chairman Marty Sauls, Vice Chairman of SouthernCarolina Alliance; Mayor Joey Malphrus of Ridgeland; Daniel Beatty of the S.C. Department of Commerce; and Ted Zanders, Vice President of Carlisle Associates.

"Jasper County’s location, with I-95 and easy access to the Ports of Charleston and Savannah, creates a perfect situation for manufacturing, assembly and distribution,” said SCA President and CEO Danny Black. “However, many companies are looking for existing buildings as a way to shorten their start-up time and to begin operation more quickly. An expandable industrial building like this one, which can be finished to suit the company, is ideal for attracting these companies."

Expandable to 98,000 square feet, the industrial speculative building will be close to the aerospace hubs surrounding Boeing in Charleston, South Carolina, and Gulfstream in Savannah, Georgia. The Cypress Ridge Industrial Park, where the building is being constructed, is a S.C. Certified Site, which means all of the due diligence has been completed at the park, including cultural, historic and geotechnical studies.

The building is being constructed through a partnership among SouthernCarolina Regional Development Alliance, Jasper County, and Santee Cooper. Key partners include the S.C. Department of Commerce, Palmetto Electric Cooperative, Inc., the Town of Ridgeland, St. Peter’s Parish/Jasper County Public Facilities Corp. and Cypress Ridge Business and Industrial Design and Review Committee.

The building, which was designed by Carlisle Associates, is already being marketed by the SouthernCarolina Alliance marketing team to prospects, who have already begun visiting the building site. Brunson Construction Company, Inc. is the general contractor.

For more information on the project or to learn more about SouthernCarolina Alliance and Jasper County’s economic development efforts, please contact Kay Maxwell at 803.541.0023 or visit the website: www.SouthernCarolina.org.
SCA Names Promise Zone Coordinator

A Savannah River Site executive with broad strategic experience has been named the new coordinator for the six counties in the federally-designated S.C. Promise Zone, officials announced on June 16.

Dean Van Pelt, who has 28 years of experience of management and engineering support at the site as a contractor, has been named a loaned executive by Savannah River Nuclear Solutions (SRNS). He will coordinate efforts to improve economic, employment, educational and other outcomes, said Danny Black, President and CEO of SouthernCarolina Alliance (SCA). The Alliance is lead organization of the Promise Zone, which includes all or parts of Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper Counties.

"Dean will be an asset to the Promise Zone and to our organization in our regional efforts to identify and implement the benefits of the Promise Zone program and related community, workforce and economic development opportunities," Black said. "We appreciate the support that SRNS has demonstrated in providing services in this effort through Dean's leadership in our Promise Zone endeavors."

Van Pelt, who most recently has served as director of Program Support for SRNS Environmental Stewardship and Safety and Health (ESSH), will focus on implementing economic initiatives throughout the Promise Zone, one of 22 special federal areas of economic focus across the nation. He will take over the position from longtime SCA economic development consultant Ed Burgess, who has served as interim coordinator for the last year.

"I'm excited to partner with SouthernCarolina Alliance to continue to bring economic growth and employment opportunities to the area through Promise Zone initiatives," Van Pelt said. "SCA and our 40 partner and supporting organizations will work with the federal government to gain access to critical resources and expertise to help these counties grow and thrive."

Van Pelt said he looked forward to leveraging his years of service at Savannah River Site (SRS) to bring more jobs to the region.

"With more than 4,000 jobs already created in the six-county region and more than $1 billion in capital investments in those areas since 1996, SCA has proven that some of our most rural counties have the potential for tremendous economic advancement," he said.

Van Pelt has more than 28 years of experience at the U.S. Department of Energy's SRS, providing engineering support to chemical separation facilities, technical support and management of the Site's electronic security system, and management of the Emergency Preparedness organization.

In his most recent assignment, he was responsible for staffing and financial resources, continuous improvement and strategic planning for the ESSH enterprise. In addition to his ESSH responsibilities, he also served as an organizational culture resource for SRNS. Dean, who lives with his wife and two sons outside of Aiken, has a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Ohio University.

Promise Zone Holds Leadership Sessions

The SC Promise Zone is committed to enhancing the viability of our communities and improving the quality of life throughout the zone. One of the goals identified in the 2015 Promise Zone community listening sessions was training on leadership, asset development and other community growth skills. As a result of these sessions, leadership training was provided to elected officials and law enforcement organizations within the six-county region of Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Colleton, Hampton and Jasper.

These workshops were provided at no charge to the attendees through grant funding provided by the USDA. A total of 17 workshops were conducted with participation from every county within the Promise Zone. A total of 115 individuals participated. Workshop topics included: Leadership in 3D; successfully managing conflict; addressing real world specific challenges; and diversity. Sessions were led by Kirk Randazzo PhD, Director of the Carolina Leadership Initiative.

Nobles Joins Promise Zone Team

Pam Matheny Nobles of Barnwell has joined the SouthernCarolina Alliance staff, working part-time as an administrative assistant. Her duties will include providing assistance with S.C. Promise Zone programs and activities. She will continue to serve as the administrative assistant for the Barnwell County Economic Development Commission, currently a part-time position.

"We are fortunate to have someone with Pam’s skills and leadership capabilities working with us at SCA," said SCA President Danny Black. "A resident of Barnwell, Pam grew up in Bamberg and has worked for businesses in Allendale and Barnwell Counties. She is highly regarded in our communities and will serve as an excellent liaison for the alliance."


Nobles is a graduate of the University of South Carolina-Aiken, with a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education and is married to Jade Nobles; they have three children. The family spends much of their free time competing in rodeo, team roping and Southern Stockhorse competitions, and Pam is their biggest fan and cheerleader. She also enjoys photography and has assisted the Barnwell EDC and SCA with photographs for marketing and publication. She is currently attending the S.C. Economic Developers Association Institute. Pam may be reached at pnobles@southerncarolina.org.
SCA Welcomes John Fleming

Mr. John Fleming, P.E., has accepted the staff position of Director of Development with SouthernCarolina Alliance.

Formerly Vice President of Hussey, Gay, Bell & DeYoung, Inc. (now Hussey Gay Bell), Fleming has already played a vital role in working on economic development projects in the region over the last decade.

Mr. Fleming received his Bachelor’s degree in Civil Engineering from Clemson University and is a licensed professional engineer in more than 10 states. In 2014, John was elected in a national election as the governor of Region 4 of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) for a three-year term, representing members from Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia. An active member of ASCE, he has served as a member of the National Committee on Career Development. He and his wife, Dawn, have two children and reside in Summerville.

John will work with all six SCA member counties and the SCA board and staff on product development. He may be reached at jfleming@southerncarolina.org.

SCA Economic Development Director
Bill Robinson Retires

The SouthernCarolina Alliance Board of Directors and staff bid farewell to Bill Robinson, who retired from the SCA staff in June. Bill had served as Director of Economic Development for SouthernCarolina Regional Development Alliance since 2005. A member of the economic development team at SCA since 2003, Bill joined the Alliance team after a career with the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, where he was employed for over 30 years, including 15 years of service in the Human Resources Division.

During Bill’s service with the Alliance, he was involved in industrial recruitment, product development, workforce development and community development throughout the region, with an emphasis on Allendale County. In this capacity, he worked closely with community and business leaders, and elected officials at the local, state, and federal levels and with prospects and industry leaders from around the world. The $400 million Grant Forest project announced in 2005, the state’s largest project for that year, has been Bill's major achievement for the region.

Bill grew up in Allendale and graduated from CV Bing High School and is a graduate of Benedict College in Columbia. While a student at Benedict he spent two summers at Harvard University and was selected to participate in NSF research project at MIT. Also, Bill spent his senior semester at the University of Chicago’s Argonne National Laboratory in their undergraduate Honors Research program.

Bill and his wife, Donella, have three children and have lived in Allendale since 1974, where Bill has served for over thirty years as a municipal and county elected official.

While Bill is enjoying his retirement, he may be reached at: robinson8109@bellsouth.net.

Welcome to Our Newest SouthernCarolina Alliance Investors:

Silver Investor

Dominion Carolina Gas Transmission Corporation

Bronze Investors

SCA President and CEO Danny Black congratulates Robinson on his retirement
Business and industry leaders from the six-county region and allies from around the state gathered in The Atrium at the University of South Carolina-Salkehatchie in Allendale on May 28 to kick off the celebration of SouthernCarolina Alliance’s 20th Anniversary.

“This year we are celebrating twenty years of partnership and collaboration,” said SCA President and CEO Danny Black, who has been with the organization since its inception in 1996.

According to Black, when the leaders of Allendale, Bamberg and Barnwell Counties met in 1995 to organize what was then called, “Tri-County Alliance,” the group was attempting to offset the job losses from downsizing at the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, as well as the jobs lost from the offshoring of the textile industry.

“We knew we had to diversify our regional economy, and that we needed to work together,” said Black. “By 1996, we were in full operation and had landed our first project, Kinsouth, which is still manufacturing in Bamberg County and celebrating their 20th anniversary in September.”

The evening’s lively presentation included a promotional video from the late James Brown, a native of Barnwell County, who supported the alliance’s economic development efforts and had taped a recruitment video featuring his signature dance moves to the song, “I Feel Good,” and ended with Brown’s message, “SouthernCarolina, gotta’ love it!”

Black told the crowd of more than 300, “That’s how the alliance got started, by people who cared about this region enough to sacrifice their time and resources to bring new industry to the region, to work together across county lines, and to create a better future for our people.”

He recognized some of the founding members of the non-profit economic development organization, including the late Calvin Melton, Jasper Varn, Jim Kearse, James Pinkney, Carl Gooding, Johnny Williamson and Billy Johnson.

Black also recounted how the alliance purchased the 1600-acre S.C. Advanced Technology Park under the leadership of General Jasper Varn, who served as Chairman of the Alliance in 1999, in the historic multi-county revenue sharing agreement which has benefited the region for the last two decades.

Since then, the regional industrial park has brought in more than $621 million dollars in private capital investment and more than 400 jobs, including the recent Swiss Krono expansion announcement.

Shortly after the development of the SCAT Park, the Alliance developed other multi-county parks, Point Salk in Allendale and CrossRhodes in Bamberg.

In 2008, the counties in the alliance formed a multi-county agreement that allows SCA’s member counties to make any project a multi-county one, providing additional incentives to the companies recruited and shared tax revenue to the counties in the region.

Black also talked about the organization’s growth, with Hampton, Colleton and Jasper Counties now members of the alliance. The region now includes one-third of the I-95 exits in South Carolina, which opens up the region for greater potential for commercial and industrial development, as well as distribution opportunities.

The highlight of the program was the announcement that SouthernCarolina Alliance has played a role in the announcement of more than 1.4 billion dollars in private capital investment and the creation of 4,270 jobs in the rural region of less than 138,000 people.

The evening’s program included nostalgic presentations from several regional leaders and allies, including SouthernCarolina Alliance Chairman Buddy Phillips, consultant Ed Burgess, U.S. Department of Energy’s Dave Hepner, Bamberg County Councilman and SCA Board Member Isaiah Odom, Barnwell County Councilman Freddie Houston, USC’s Dean Ann Carmichael, Maceo Nance of the SC Department of Commerce, former Barnwell County Councilman Jim Kearse, engineering ally Mickey Parker, Delores DeCosta of U.S. Senator Tim Scott’s office, Allendale County Councilmen James Pinkney and Carl Gooding, and SCA Vice Chairman Bill Workman of Walterboro.

The evening’s event ended with recognition of retiring Director of Economic Development, Bill Robinson, and the recognition of graduates of the regional leadership program.

Chairman Buddy Phillips announced that SouthernCarolina Alliance would continue the commemoration of the 20th anniversary with marketing events and opportunities throughout the year.

For more information on SouthernCarolina Alliance, visit our website at www.SouthernCarolina.org. For more photos from the 20th Anniversary Celebration, visit our Facebook page, SouthernCarolina Alliance.
USC Salkehatchie and SCA Leadership Graduates Recognized

Pictured L-R: Mason Sullivan, Office of Senator Lindsey Graham; Gloria Duryea, Coastal Community Foundation; Jeremy Ware, Walterboro Colleton Chamber of Commerce; Jess Wilbanks, Bamwell County United Way; Brantley Strickland, SouthernCarolina Alliance; Denise Miller, Richard Carroll Elementary School; David Reuis, Augusta Fiberglass Coatings, Inc. Not Pictured: Porter Smith, Archroma; Matt Popovich, Hampton County Guardian

www.southerncarolina.org
SCA Advisor Leads Delegation

Barnwell businessman Mahesh "Mike" Patel, who is the South Carolina Regional Director of the Asian American Hotel Owners Association (AAHOA) and serves on the Advisory Board for SouthernCarolina Alliance, led the AAHOA delegation during their recent State Capital Day, meeting with members of the state legislature and the governor. During the visit, they met with elected officials to discuss issues of concern to business owners including minimum wages, unions, joint employer issues and the state's travel tourism budget. The AAHOA is a 16,000-member association, representing 40% of the hotels located in the United States, a $40 billion investment and a $10 billion payroll.

Pictured here, from left: Brandon Vallrado, AAHOA Government Affairs; Chetan Patel, AAHOA Ambassador; Dharmesh Patel, AAHOA Member; Mahesh (Mike) Patel, AAHOA SC Regional Director; Gov. Nikki Haley; Atul Patel, AAHOA Ambassador; John Durst, SC Restaurant and Lodging Association President & CEO; and Susan Walters, SCRLA Director.

SC Economic Ambassador Meets With Governor

Vittorio Musso, CEO of Meter Bearings and Colleton County’s 2016 Economic Ambassador, met with Governor Nikki Haley recently at the State House to thank her for his recognition as one of S.C.’s Economic Ambassadors.

A manufacturer of ball and cylindrical roller bearings, Musso located his U.S. operations in Walterboro, South Carolina, in 2014, resulting in a $4.5 million investment and the creation of 50 jobs.

Mr. Musso was instrumental in another Italy-based company, BUSCOT LLC, locating in South Carolina. His decision to expand Meter Bearings to the U.S. greatly influenced BUSCOT LLC to announce their decision earlier this year to establish manufacturing operations in Colleton County as well, investing $1.15 million and creating 10 additional jobs.

SouthernCarolina Alliance Continues Pilot Welding Program

SouthernCarolina Alliance’s Advanced Manufacturing Skills Training Program recently graduated another class of NCCER-certified welders through a regional pilot program funded partially through the USDA and EDA’s Rural Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge grant. Since the alliance began offering the training program in 2013, welders from across the region have been certified and placed in jobs with both local industries like TICO and Collum’s Lumber, as well as other SC industries, such as Boeing and Savannah River Site. Currently, 140 welders have been certified, and all certified welders were offered job placement, with the placement rate averaging 90%. For more information on the program, please visit our website, www.scweldingjobs.com.

USC Salk Recognizes Outstanding Community Contribution

Mr. Rad Free, representing the Western Carolina Higher Education Commission, recognized Bamberg County Councilman Trent Kinard for his “Outstanding Contribution to the Community” at the University of South Carolina Salkehatchie’s Commencement Exercises on April 29.

A 1989 graduate of Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School and a veteran of the US Air Force (1990-1993) serving in Desert Storm, Kinard joined the SC Highway Patrol in 1993. Upon retirement from the highway patrol, he joined the USC Salkehatchie staff in 2005 as their first sports information director. He and his wife, Bridgett, and their four children reside in Bamberg, where he is a volunteer coach for his children’s teams and where he has served on Bamberg County Council since 2013.
Alzena Robinson

Bamberg County Councilwoman Alzena Robinson, who served as a member of the SouthernCarolina Alliance Board of Directors, passed away on April 22 at age 64. Ms. Robinson had a long career in public service, making history when she was elected to Bamberg County Council in 1987 as the only African-American woman to serve as a member of council. She also holds the distinction of being the first black woman to chair the S.C. Association of Counties. Robinson then made history in Bamberg County again in 1994 when she won re-election as an independent petition candidate.

Unsuccessful in a bid at returning to council in 2002, she was re-elected to the District 2 seat in 2006. She held the seat from then until her death, also having the distinction of serving as council chairwoman four times.

Alzena graduated from Richard Carroll High School in Bamberg in 1970. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Social Science from Claflin College in 1974 and later earned a Master’s degree in Social Work from the University of South Carolina in Columbia. Ms. Robinson’s professional career as a Licensed Master Social Worker included serving as a program coordinator with the Department of Health and Environmental Control and the Department of Social Services. In 2009, she retired from Denmark Technical College as the head of the Human Services Department. She also served as Chair of the Lower Savannah Council of Governments.

Other accomplishments include the establishment of the African American Oral Histories Collection on DVDs and Books Reserved Section at the Bamberg County Library and book-signing receptions for African-American authors; in addition, she researched and published a booklet of African-Americans’ accomplishments in Bamberg County. Ms. Robinson was an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., Nu Tau Omega Chapter. She was a life member of the Claflin University National Alumni Association and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Her awards include a Claflin College Presidential Citation and plaques for outstanding community service from Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Nu Tau Omega Chapter; Bamberg Job Corps; and Delta Sigma Theta, Denmark Alumnae Chapter. She was a member of Capernaum Missionary Baptist Church, where she served as secretary. Ms. Robinson was a licensed foster parent for the State of South Carolina and was active in her local foster parents’ association.

Jim Harrison

The SouthernCarolina Alliance Board of Directors and staff extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Mr. Jim Harrison, renowned artist and beloved Denmark resident. Jim was not only an advocate for community development; he was a proponent of economic development, often hosting industrial prospects for SouthernCarolina Alliance at his gallery. A former member of the SouthernCarolina Alliance Board of Directors, he was a true friend to the alliance, and he sincerely loved his hometown and his region. Mr. Harrison’s presence and friendship will be missed as we continue our work in economic and community development.
In The Spotlight:
SCA Board of Directors

Zeb Portanova
President and CEO, Swiss KRONO USA

Zeb Portanova has held numerous leadership roles throughout nonprofit and for profit companies and currently serves as President and CEO of Swiss KRONO USA (formerly Kronotex USA), a subsidiary of Swiss KRONO Holdings. Prior to joining Swiss KRONO, Zeb held sales and marketing positions at Eli Lilly and Company, most recently serving as a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt.

Zeb serves on numerous boards of directors, including the Alumni Council at Duke’s Fuqua School of Business, the Nicholas H. Noyes Jr. Memorial Foundation, Mavuno (focusing on economic development in the Congo), and as Past-President of the Harvard Club of Indiana. Past board service includes the Boys and Girls Clubs and Chairman of the Board for Habitat for Humanity.

Zeb has an MBA from the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University, a Master’s in Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and a Bachelor’s Degree from the University of Florida. He is a Crossfit enthusiast, five-time Tough Mudder participant, and Shodan (black belt) in Shotokan Karate.

Zeb has an amazing wife, two little girls, and an English Bulldog named Rosco P. Coletrain.

Kevin Strickland, PE
Managing Director, Hussey Gay Bell, Columbia

An engineering and site development veteran, Mr. Strickland has nearly 30 years of experience including the design, planning, permitting and project management of water/wastewater treatment plants, wastewater collection systems, water distribution systems, transportation systems and site development for clients throughout the Carolinas.

Of unique note, Mr. Strickland has been involved in greenhouse gas emissions reduction and industrial pre-treatment projects throughout North and South America and South Africa. As a direct result of his work, over 400 digesters were built throughout the country of Mexico to remove greenhouse gas emissions from wastewater plants under the Kyoto Protocol.

As Managing Director for Hussey Gay Bell’s Columbia operations, Mr. Strickland is responsible for overall management of operations, executive strategy development and execution, contractual negotiations, resource allocation and overall client management. Mr. Strickland’s long-term, established relationships and thought leadership in water/wastewater, transportation and site development have been instrumental in the firm’s growth strategy in the Columbia region.

A native of Scranton, South Carolina, Mr. Strickland is a licensed professional engineer holding registration in South Carolina with a Bachelor of Science, Civil Engineering degree from Clemson University. Mr. Strickland enjoys working with youth in his community. He presently serves in his church as a Royal Ambassador leader and regularly volunteers for speaking engagements to engineering and science classes within Lexington School District Two. Prior to joining Hussey Gay Bell, Mr. Strickland served in executive leadership roles, including Columbia Water & Sewer Program Manager, for other firms in the Columbia region including Strickland Engineering, Inc., which he founded in 2004.

Mr. Strickland is a member of Trinity Baptist Church. He enjoys spending time with his wife, Kelly, and their three children, Grant, Rachel and Elise.
Harry Williams
Mayor of Hardeeville

Harry Williams of Hardeeville, South Carolina, was elected Mayor in 2016 after having served as a city councilman. Prior to his service in Jasper County, Mr. Williams served for over 30 years with municipal government and civic activities in Mahwah, New Jersey, serving on various boards and commissions, including five years on city council and terms as chairman of the city pool commission, a volunteer recreation commission, and ten years as a youth sports coach and president of a youth soccer club.

He is a 42-year veteran of the footwear industry, including experience as the Vice President/Sales for Oshkosh, Body Glove, US Polo Assn., FUBU, Rawlings and Lotto. He is the former owner of The Cruiser Swim and Tennis Club in Sparta, NJ, and is currently retired.

A 1971 graduate of Rutgers University with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics, Harry was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and is the 2nd child of a family of 10. Harry and his wife, Beth, have been married for 31 years. They have two children, Lauren, 27, and Jared, 23.

Tray Hunter
Vice President, Marketing & Public Relations, Palmetto Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Tray Hunter serves as Vice President, Marketing & Public Relations at Palmetto Electric Cooperative, where he has been employed since 2008. Prior to working for Palmetto Electric, he served as the Community Relations Manager for Hargray Communications.

Mr. Hunter is very involved in his community, currently serving as a board member of the Coastal Carolina Council of the Boy Scouts of America, a member of the Southern Beaufort Corridor Beautification Board and member of the Bluffton Business Council. He also served on the Greater Beaufort Chamber of Commerce Board, the United Way of the Lowcountry Board and the Bluffton Self Help Board as Chairman. A member of the Bluffton Methodist Church, Tray is an Eagle Scout and the recipient of several awards, including the Savannah Business Report’s “40 under 40” Business Achiever, Outstanding Young Professional CIVITAS from the Greater Beaufort Chamber and the Young Professional of the Year from the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce. He is a member of the Bluffton Rotary Club and a Paul Harris Fellow. Tray earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from The Citadel. He and his wife, Leslie, have a son, Ellings, and a daughter, Ella.

Al Matheny
Vice President, South State Bank

Al Matheny, a Vice President and Commercial Loan Officer, has worked with South State Bank in Denmark, South Carolina, since 2004. He has extensive experience in working with small businesses and manufacturers.

Prior to joining South State Bank, Matheny worked as sales manager for Tobul Accumulator, a manufacturer of hydraulic accumulators for the global market. A licensed real estate broker, Matheny managed his own realty company, Matheny Realty, from 1988 to 2002. A graduate of the University of South Carolina with a Bachelor of Arts in Banking and Finance, Matheny has been a member of the Denmark Masonic Lodge since 1990 and an Omar Shriner since 2012. He and his wife, Martha, reside in Denmark.
The South Carolina Economic Developers' Association (SCEDA) announced its 2016-17 board of directors and officers during the organization's annual conference in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, on May 31. Nelson Lindsay with the South Carolina Department of Commerce will serve as the new SCEDA president, and SouthernCarolina Alliance President and CEO Danny Black has been elected to the Board of Directors. SCEDA includes local and regional economic developers, as well as officials from municipal, county and state government agencies, construction and engineering firms, utility companies, attorneys, consultants, financial institutions, and higher education.

“SCEDA represents the 600 professionals and 46 counties engaged in economic development in our state. Since 1965, the organization has served as the voice of economic development, and I believe that serving with SCEDA will enhance my ability to advocate for our region at the state level, while helping other leaders around the state incorporate the challenges of rural development into SCEDA's initiatives,” said Black. “The organization assists developers with professional development, best practices and networking, as well as legislative issues in economic development.”

Danny Black has served as President and Chief Executive Officer of SouthernCarolina Regional Development Alliance since 2001, and his professional experience includes more than three decades in administration, government relations and human resources leadership positions with Milliken & Company and Westinghouse Savannah River Company. A graduate of the University of South Carolina with degrees in Political Science and Public Administration, Black is also a Certified Economic Developer.

Black and SouthernCarolina Alliance have been recognized for their economic development accomplishments, including being named the first recipient of the “Individual Initiative Award for Rural Economic Development” given by the S.C. Department of Commerce. Danny has also received the “2001 Leadership Award for Rural Development” given by Commerce, and the Alliance, under Danny’s leadership, was given the “1999 Special Recognition Award for Rural Development” at the Governor’s Rural Summit. The S.C. Economic Developers Association named him “South Carolina’s Economic Developer of the Year for 2005-2006.” Black currently serves as a member of the Savannah River Regional Community Reuse Organization (SRRCRO), a Congressional appointment.