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# RUTHERFORD COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

*A Year in Review: 2020*





# A WORD FROM OUR 2020 CHAIRPERSON

When I started my term as board chairperson for the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce, business for all of us looked a lot different.

As the year unfolded and things seemingly changed by the day, one constant remained - our community's resilience.

Small businesses have adapted, stretched and survived in such creative ways! And I am thankful that we are facing this storm together.

The Chamber will continue to advocate for you. We are committed to moving our community forward and appreciate the trust you have placed in us.

We remain strong. We remain proud.  
We remain Rutherford County.

**HOLLI MONTGOMERY**  
2020 CHAIRPERSON



# A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

One word comes to mind when I reflect on 2020: perseverance.

When the world came to a screeching halt - Rutherford County businesses did not. You persevered through innovation, sheer willpower and the support of our community.

The Chamber did the same. We shifted our business model, invested in new technologies and programs, and continued to move Rutherford County forward.

From restarting our economic engine to adding jobs, your partnership makes that possible.

As we look upon the uncertainty of the new year - it is my hope that we persevere together. Thank you for your continued trust and involvement.

**PAUL LATTURE**

PRESIDENT, RUTHERFORD COUNTY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



## STAKEHOLDER INVESTORS

Prepared by Kristina Troglen  
Sr. Director of Communications & Marketing



# MEMBERSHIP

*Since 1928, the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce continues to create opportunities.*

The Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce is the largest, strongest and most active business organization in the county. Through your investment, you not only commit to the growth and prosperity of the business community, but also to the future prosperity of your own business.



RUTHERFORD COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## MEMBERSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Thank you to all of our investors that remain committed to the Chamber's mission. Membership has been very challenging and also very encouraging. Our year began like every other – busy and full of events and programming. Through the shutdowns, limited capacity and reopenings, we found ways to stay connected, provide valuable information and continue to serve as a resource to our community of members.

Even in the year of change, we have businesses that are opening for business and investing in Rutherford County. In 2020, we have welcomed and celebrated with 70 businesses through ribbon cuttings, grand openings, anniversary celebrations and ground breakings. There are many more that are waiting to have their celebrations once it is safer to have larger crowds of attendees.

Members and their companies continue to be our greatest asset as we strive to tell the story of business in Rutherford County. With more than 1,200 active members that support our growing community, we strive to be the best resource for both existing and new businesses. We are a vibrant and diverse county that offers potential new residents and businesses a variety of opportunities to prosper - pandemic or not.



*-Kelli Beam, vice president of membership development  
Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce*

FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS:

**9,091**

RIBBON CUTTINGS:

**70**

CHAMBER MEMBERS:

**1,200**

# THE 2020 CLASS OF DIPLOMATS



Diplomat (dip-lo-mat) noun: A motivated individual who helps tell the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce story, while exhibiting the highest degree of professionalism and embracing an attitude that is positive, supportive and respectful to all people.

## OFFICERS



Alan Brown  
Edward Jones  
Investments



Michael Busey  
State Farm



Jeff Carlton  
Franklin's  
Printing



Judy King  
Reliant Bank



Angela Lyles  
Wilson Bank  
& Trust

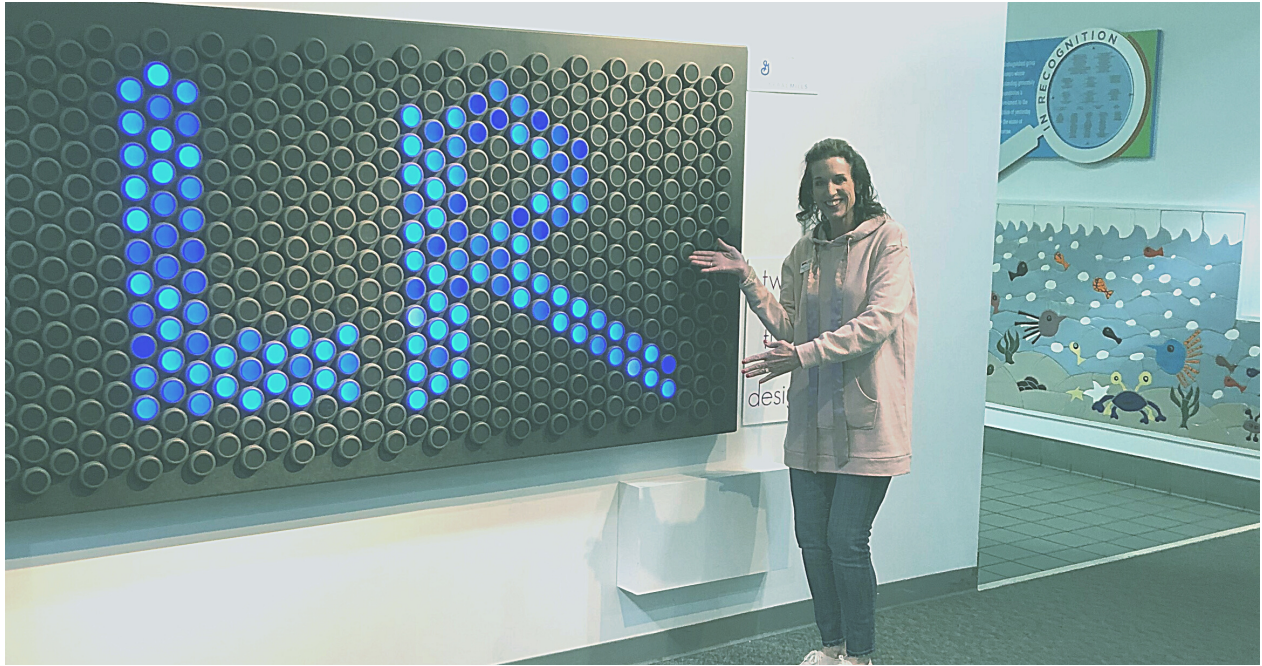


Bryan Nale  
IBERIABANK  
Mortgage



Nikki Sasser  
Crimson  
Security

# LEADERSHIP RUTHERFORD



Leadership Rutherford is a personal development program designed to motivate participants to develop and enhance the quality of their leadership in addressing pertinent community needs. It aims to help leaders prepare for voluntary responsibility, provide a practical and sophisticated understanding of major problems and opportunities facing Rutherford County and facilitate access and improve the communications network between emerging and current leaders, and stimulate increased community participation and commitment.

LEARN

LEAD

CONNECT

## LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Chair: Terry Schneider, FASTSIGNS | Chair Elect: Lori Cutler, Redstone Federal Credit Union | Past Chair: Ronnie Smith, Cardinal Health  
Treasurer: Larry Miller, Pinnacle Financial Partners | Secretary: Jessica Vantiegham, simpliHÖM | Advisor: John Shepherd, River Oaks Community Church | Pete Adams, Adams + Swann, LLC | Joey Alvarez, TwelveStone Health Partners | Alan Brown, Edward Jones | Buffy Bundshuh, Fifth Third Bank  
Blake Finney, Shelter Insurance | Jay Jackson, First Horizon | Adam Milam, Willis Towers Watson | Angi Morgan, John Jones Real Estate, LLC  
Candi Panesi, Weichert Realtors The Andrews Group | Casey Rainey, Raymond James & Associates Inc. | Matt Stearns, Murfreesboro Medical Clinic  
Jimmy Turner, Oliver & Turner | Teuna Upshaw, Schwan Cosmetics USA



## LEADERSHIP IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY

Thank you to all of the Leadership Rutherford alumni and supporters for sticking with us during such a challenging year. I am so grateful for everyone's trust and guidance as we worked through our vision for both Leadership Rutherford and Youth Leadership Rutherford. As you know, we made the tough decision to hit pause on the adult program in 2020. One of the greatest benefits of LR is the shared connections, experiences and sense of community that develops between classmates - this past year we knew it wasn't possible to deliver that opportunity.

This allowed us the time to focus on strategic planning, program elements, communications and alumni development. However, we were able to move forward with the implementation of YLR - which went very well given the challenges of 2020. This is truly something to celebrate! As we move forward, our intention is to stay connected to our alumni while preparing to resume our traditional programming.

I want to close with a reminder: it is an honor and privilege to be a part of Leadership Rutherford. It is also an honor and privilege to live in our great community. I challenge you to continue leading wisely and serving as many as you can. Thank you for your commitment and dedication to our organization.

**-Stephanie Brackman, executive director  
Leadership Rutherford**





# TOURISM

*If it were not for state and local taxes generated by tourism, each Rutherford County household would pay \$289.77 more in taxes.*

The Convention and Visitors Bureau is the primary marketing arm of the county. Marketing efforts include print ads in national publications, maintaining a presence on the internet, social media, and in Tennessee state welcome centers as well as working with the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development. The CVB works closely with event organizers, sporting groups like TSSAA, group tour operators and individual visitors to promote Rutherford County as a destination. For more information, visit the CVB's website at [VisitRutherfordTN.com](http://VisitRutherfordTN.com).

RUTHERFORD COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## SAFELY TRAVEL TO RUTHERFORD CO.

This year has been extraordinarily hard on our venues, hotels and attractions. How do you market tourism when people are uncomfortable traveling? The research resoundingly tells us the answer is providing a safe experience. With that in mind, the TN Dept. of Tourist Development created a plan of support backed by CARES Act funding to promote a "safe travel" experience for the return of tourism to destinations across the state. With these funds, we were able to invest in new digital marketing tactics and strategies. The results of this campaign are staggering - nearly 600,000 Facebook and Instagram users were encouraged to #RediscoverRutherford.

Our expanded social media presence allowed us to spotlight Rutherford County's tourism-related facilities with a focus on family fun entertainment, outdoor activities, virtual tours at our many attractions, and feature restaurant pick-up delivery and curbside services.

In addition, our website now features information that visitors need - how to #SafelyTravel to all the places that make our county great. So whether people are ready to travel now or plan a trip for down the road, Rutherford County will be top of mind.

Despite the decrease in hotel demand, our hotel occupancies remain much higher than the national and state averages. Rutherford County's October 2020 Smith Travel Research hotel occupancy report continues to show a slow but steady increase with YTD occupancy at 54.7% while the state is at 45.5% the national occupancy is 45.2%.

We remain optimistic and are ready to welcome our visitors back.

*-Barbara Wolke, senior vice president*  
Rutherford County Convention & Visitors Bureau



**RUTHERFORD**  
COUNTY | TENNESSEE  
MURFREESBORO • SMYRNA • LAVERGNE • EAGLEVILLE



# TOURISM HIGHLIGHTS



## HOTEL STAYS

1,178,984 room nights in 2019,  
(35,208 above the year before)



## VISITOR VOLUME

A record-breaking 2.62 million  
visitors - a 10.9% increase



## TRAVEL EXPENDITURES

\$385.22 million - placing us in  
the top 10 counties in the state



## TSSAA SPRING FLING

5,000 athletes, 27,000 spectators  
generating \$3.5 million dollars



## AWARD

Winner of the 2019 Convention  
South "Best Meeting Sites in the  
South" Readers' Choice Award



## CHAMPIONS

Winner of the TSSAA Spring Fling  
Champions of Economic Impact  
in Sports Tourism award



# REDISCOVER THE **MAGIC** OF THE SEASON

## SAFELY TRAVEL TO



# RUTHERFORD

COUNTY | TENNESSEE  
MURFREESBORO • SMYRNA • LAVERGNE • EAGLEVILLE

LEARN MORE



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OFFICE

*“Rutherford County’s resilient economy had some great success stories in a very challenging 2020.”*

*–Bill Jones, Industrial Development Board*

Rutherford Works, the umbrella for the collaborative work of the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce offices of Economic Development (ECD) and Workforce Development (WFD), oversees programs and services that help businesses start, grow and locate to Rutherford County. Guided by the mission of Destination Rutherford, Rutherford Works helps ensure a strong and diverse economy helping to increase our County’s commercial tax base through business attraction and retention, and helping to prepare our workforce for the 21st-century economy.

# TAPPING INTO ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Rutherford County, Tennessee, is currently one of the hottest places to do business and one of the fastest growing counties in the United States. **Twenty** new people a day are calling our county home, drawn to its central location, business-friendly climate, fantastic school system and quality of life.

*“We are truly excited to call La Vergne, Tennessee the new home of The ICEE Company. Nashville is an incredible city and the region is experiencing growth that we felt was a perfect fit for our organization. This puts us in the greatest position to best serve our customers and to offer our team a fabulous quality of life. It is an honor to be a part of this vibrant community.”*

*- Dan Fachner, CEO, The ICEE Company*

## BY THE NUMBERS



**NEW JOBS: 1,634**



**CAPITAL INVESTMENT:  
\$206 MILLION**



**EXPANSIONS: 6**



**RELOCATIONS: 14**



**6TH BEST CITY TO  
BUY A HOUSE IN  
THE US**

-Wallethub.com 2020



**8TH FASTEST  
GROWING MIDSIZE  
CITY IN THE US**

-US Census, 2019



RUTHERFORD COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## FORWARD, TOGETHER

At the beginning of 2020, we were gearing up for another busy year of recruiting and hosting prospective companies, visiting our existing partners, attending trade shows for our target industries and strengthening relationships with site consultants. The 2019 data showed that Rutherford County led the state's growth again with 20 new people per day, which accounted for 25% of the growth in the Nashville region.

Then, we all were impacted by the pandemic. Despite such a wild and unpredictable year with unemployment spiking to 16% at one point, we have bounced back to 5.8% (Oct. data) and have some good news to share.

In 2020, German Tier-1 auto supplier **MAHLE** expanded its presence in Murfreesboro by adding 345 jobs and investing \$34M. Additionally, **Amazon** built two new facilities in La Vergne with over 1,000 new full-time and part-time jobs. **Vi-Jon**, one of the country's leading private label hand soap and sanitizer manufacturers, added 250 jobs to its Smyrna facility.

We work tirelessly to attract more corporate and tech opportunities to further diversify our economy and provide more opportunities for our residents. We were thrilled to welcome several new headquarter operations to our community this year. Governor Bill Lee's first HQ announcement was in our lobby, February 2019, welcoming one of America's most iconic brands, **ICEE**, to its new home in La Vergne. In 2020, ICEE moved into its new HQ and has already made a major impact in our community.

In addition, Hunter Fan Industrial moved its Divisional HQ, R&D, manufacturing, and supply chain operation to Rutherford County. They've built out a beautiful space in the Smyrna Airport Business Park and have a great customer experience center.

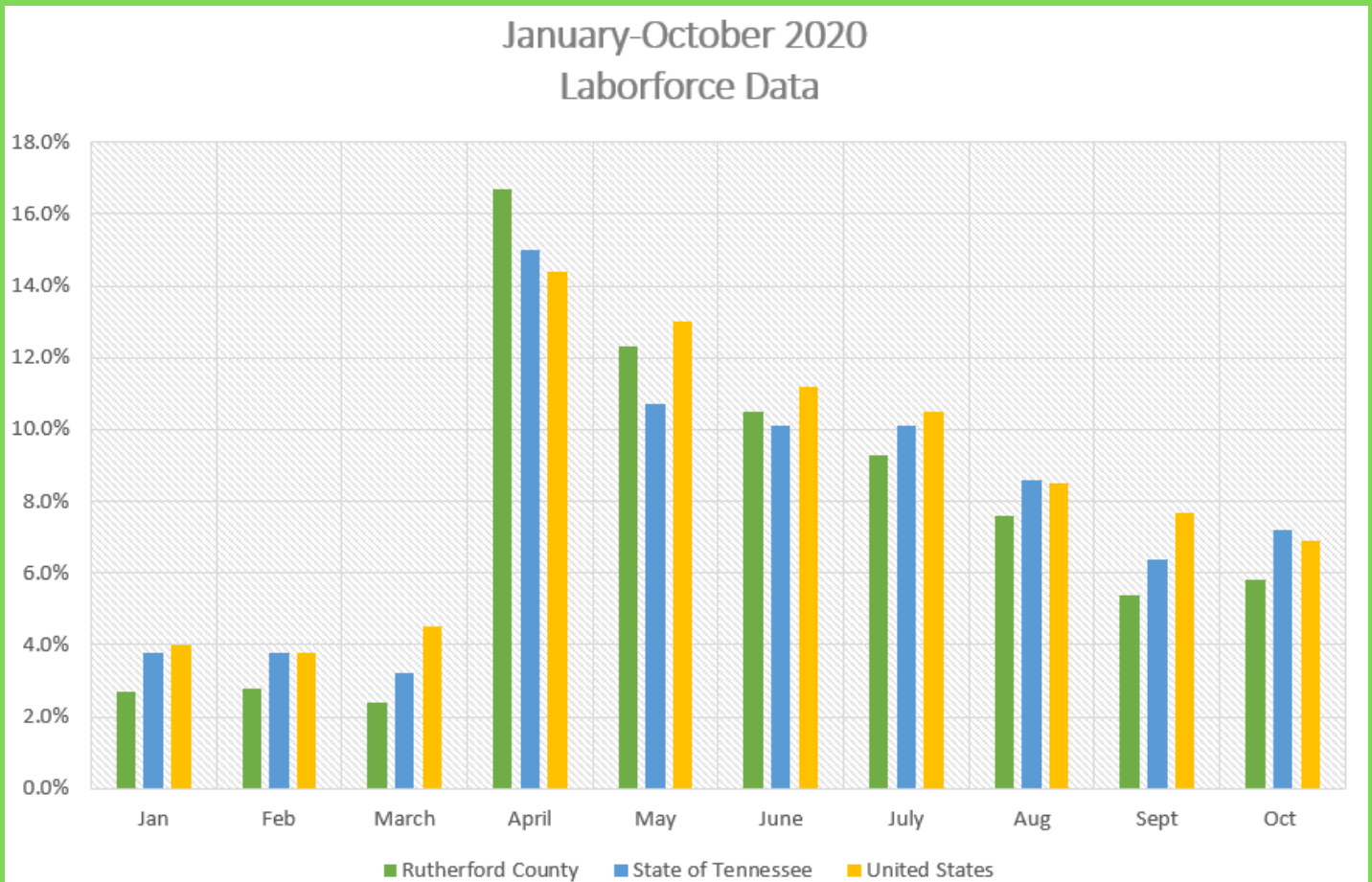
Murfreesboro's newest HQ is Tier-1 auto supplier **SteelSummit**, which has built out a top-notch office in the Fountains at Gateway. SteelSummit is the Fountains' first significant HQ office and largest tenant.

We are very fortunate to have two airports in our county. Murfreesboro Municipal Airport opened up a \$4.5M state-of-the-art terminal, which has led to more commercial jet traffic. Additionally, **Stevens Aerospace** is bringing 105 new maintenance, repair and overall (MRO) jobs to the Smyrna Airport.

Many experts expect companies to reduce the amount of office space they use. We could see some of the following trends play out locally: more people moving here with their remote jobs for a more cost-efficient, high-quality life; more flexible, smaller office offerings such as the Studio at the Fountains; and more Nashville-based companies opening satellite offices.

After such a volatile year, we remain extremely fortunate to be in a collaborative, growing region - and in a county with a career-focused K-PhD educational ecosystem with diverse industries and engaged corporate partners.

**-Patrick Cammack, senior vice president of economic development  
Rutherford Works**



# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

*"A strong economy begins with a strong, well-educated workforce."*

*-Bill Owens*

Over the past six years, the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce and Destination Rutherford have funded the Rutherford Works Workforce Development Strategic Plan. This plan was developed with input from our high wage, high demand industries of construction, health care, information technology, supply chain management and advanced manufacturing along with our K-12 partners at Murfreesboro City Schools and Rutherford County Schools. The plan places importance on career exposure in elementary school, career exploration in middle school and career experience in high school. Our mission is to bring employers and education together in what we call an uncommon partnership, to help make sure students (and parents) are better prepared to make good choices about what is next after high school and to develop a talent pathway from K-12, through post-secondary and into the workplace — in Rutherford County.



## WORKFORCE IN A VIRTUAL WORLD

January 2020 brought with it much promise for a highly impactful year for Rutherford Works Workforce Development. In January, we crowned our 2020 Rutherford County Amazing Shake winners.

Then in February, we announced the 2020 Rutherford Works Teacher Externship program with a record high of 11 employers planning to host middle school teacher cohorts in June. And by early March, we had conducted the ACT WorkKeys assessments for 494 Rutherford County Schools seniors with 94% of seniors earning at least a bronze-level National Career Readiness Certificate. This catapulted Rutherford County to 85% of the goal toward becoming an ACT Work Ready Community.

And then we all know the rest of the story. . . momentum came to a screeching halt and plans were postponed and finally canceled as weeks of lockdown stretched to months and the virtual world became our new reality.

Virtual meetings.  
Virtual training.  
Virtual job fairs.

We all know that “when in Rome”, you have to be resourceful and flexible. Jumping feet first into the virtual world, Rutherford Works converted the previously planned in-person job fair for high school juniors and seniors (Jump Start Job Fair) to a virtual job fair for recently graduated seniors. With lessons learned, we began planning additional virtual job fairs to help employers fill thousands of job vacancies as companies reopened and even expanded operations. We also created virtual learning opportunities for job seekers to navigate online job searches, successfully complete a Zoom interview and find ways to upskill for new job opportunities.

As the Rutherford County economy began a rapid rebound, employers across our key industry sectors began realizing a new level of recruiting challenges.



Three manufacturing employers announced expansions in the third quarter but struggled to find qualified candidates. In response, Rutherford Works turned to our partners, Workforce Essentials, the American Job Center and Rutherford County Adult Education to launch Ready2Work short term credential training. We were also able to capitalize on federal recovery dollars to fund these training courses.

As of December

- 20 employers conducted and recorded virtual company introductions
- 32 employers participated in a Premier Virtual job fair
- Over 600 job seekers registered to participate in video presentations, Zoom workshops and the Premier Virtual job fair
- Ready2Work Construction Training launched at TCAT Murfreesboro in November with 11 students

2020 has required us to rethink how we support industry, job seekers and students. It has required that we look at programs through a new lens, and it has forced us to change strategic direction. Change can be hard, but it can also bring refinement. We believe that 2020 has brought a change in perspective that will enable us to more effectively support industry, job seekers and students in 2021.

**-Beth Duffield, senior vice president of workforce development  
Rutherford Works**

rutherford  
works



*"The Rutherford County Chamber through its Rutherford Works program has done a fantastic job bringing together education and industry to take on our workforce challenges of both the present and future. Rutherford Works is a key and valued partner in helping educators understand the workforce needs of our Rutherford-based employers while helping industry partners understand that education provides a critical pipeline of talent. Rutherford Works has proven to be a premier leader and innovator of workforce development in Tennessee and the Southeast Region. I cannot think of a more valued program for the future of our community."*

*-Chris West, National HealthCare Corp.*

# READY2WORK

REGISTERED JOBSEEKERS

470

AVAILABLE JOBS

613

REGISTRATIONS

272

VIEWS ON YOUTUBE

900

RUTHERFORD COUNTY  
EMPLOYERS PARTICIPATED

188

## VIRTUAL JOB FAIR

Rutherford Works hosted a free virtual career fair featuring 32 employers and six higher education institutions. By partnering with state agencies and utilizing a virtual hiring platform, the Rutherford Works team offered job seekers and recruiters a COVID-19 safe job fair experience. Candidates were able to view current job openings, company details and submit resumes directly to recruiters through the platform. Participants were also able to talk about open positions, degree programs and share information through the live chat and video features.

## VIRTUAL JOB EXPO

Rutherford Works hosted a virtual jobs expo featuring free career development sessions and 20 employer showcases to help job seekers prepare and apply for job openings in the county. Job seekers learned resume and interviewing tips from local human resource professionals. Following the free coaching sessions were four weeks of employer showcases offering participants an intimate conversation with recruiters. Participants learned about company culture, benefits packages, where to apply for jobs and the meaning behind job requirements.

## WORK ETHIC DISTINCTION

This program benefits both students and employers by verifying students have participated in work readiness education while in high school. Seniors who earn the distinction are guaranteed job interviews from partnering employers across Tennessee as long as they meet all other job qualifications. In the spring of 2020, **296 seniors** completed the Work Ethic Distinction despite school closures and a shortened spring semester.



# WHERE WORKFORCE IS HEADED

Downtime in 2020 allowed us to reimagine how our vision statement, “Where Passion Meets Opportunity,” will be manifest in 2021 and beyond.

## **Advocacy –**

Rutherford Works will continue to advocate for career readiness with K-12 and higher education partners. We want to expand our reach by informing parents through Rutherford Works Parent Council and the newly created “Success After High School” podcast, and provide timely education and workforce data to decision-makers through a new lunch and learn series.

## **Skill Development –**

We launched Ready2Work short-term training programs in the 4th quarter of 2020 through our partnerships with Workforce Essentials, the American Job Center and TCAT Murfreesboro. These training opportunities will be continued in 2021 to ensure a work-ready workforce for existing and future Rutherford County Employers.

## **Talent Management –**

In 2020, Rutherford Works and the Rutherford County Chamber of Commerce joined a growing number of communities who are a part of the United States Chamber of Commerce Talent Pipeline Management Network.

In 2021 and beyond, this supply chain management style framework will allow us to refocus the work of our industry councils to produce better outcomes more quickly by reducing turnover and improving retention rates.



# A WORD FROM OUR 2021 CHAIRPERSON

Our Rutherford County Chamber stands as a bridge to promote economic development and quality of life. Now more than ever, our business community thrives on this connection and the power of standing with each other. I'm honored to serve our Rutherford County Board and Chamber Staff, as Chair to promote our community as a community that continues to stand stronger together.

**YOLANDA GREENE**  
2021 CHAIRPERSON

Yolanda Greene serves as the Rutherford County Market President for First Horizon Bank. Greene has served in many banking capacities including leading as a TN Business Bank Market Manager, Commercial Relationship Manager and Credit Portfolio Manager with other institutions. She's been recognized twice as a Murfreesboro Women in Business (2011 & 2016), Leadership Rutherford Graduate, Young Leader's Council, 2017 40 Under 40 Recipient from the Nashville Business Journal and the 2018 Young Professional Athena International Award Recipient by the Rutherford County Cable. Greene's greatest joy comes from her Husband Dwayne Greene and children Madison, Dwayne Jr and Selena.



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