

## PROBLEM SOLVED

How an investment in golf courses has transformed the state's visitor industry and economic profile

## GLOBAL IMPACT

Inside the companies, industries and institutions that are connecting Alabama with the world beyond

## STATE TOUR

Our suggestions for some of the things to see across the state, from world-class sports to civil rights history

# Spotlight

AN AMERICAN WAY SUPPLEMENT

DECEMBER 2018

# ALABAMA

A look at the trends and developments that are shaping the Yellowhammer State today



# WELCOME TO ALABAMA

As **Alabama** approaches its bicentennial, in December 2019, it's time to think back upon a history that's put the state at the center of some of America's most momentous events, from the Civil War to the Civil Rights Movement.

It's a time to reflect upon an economic

blossoming, and the logistical, workforce and cost-of-living advantages that have seen it become a favored destination of international employers in such diverse fields as bioscience and auto manufacturing.

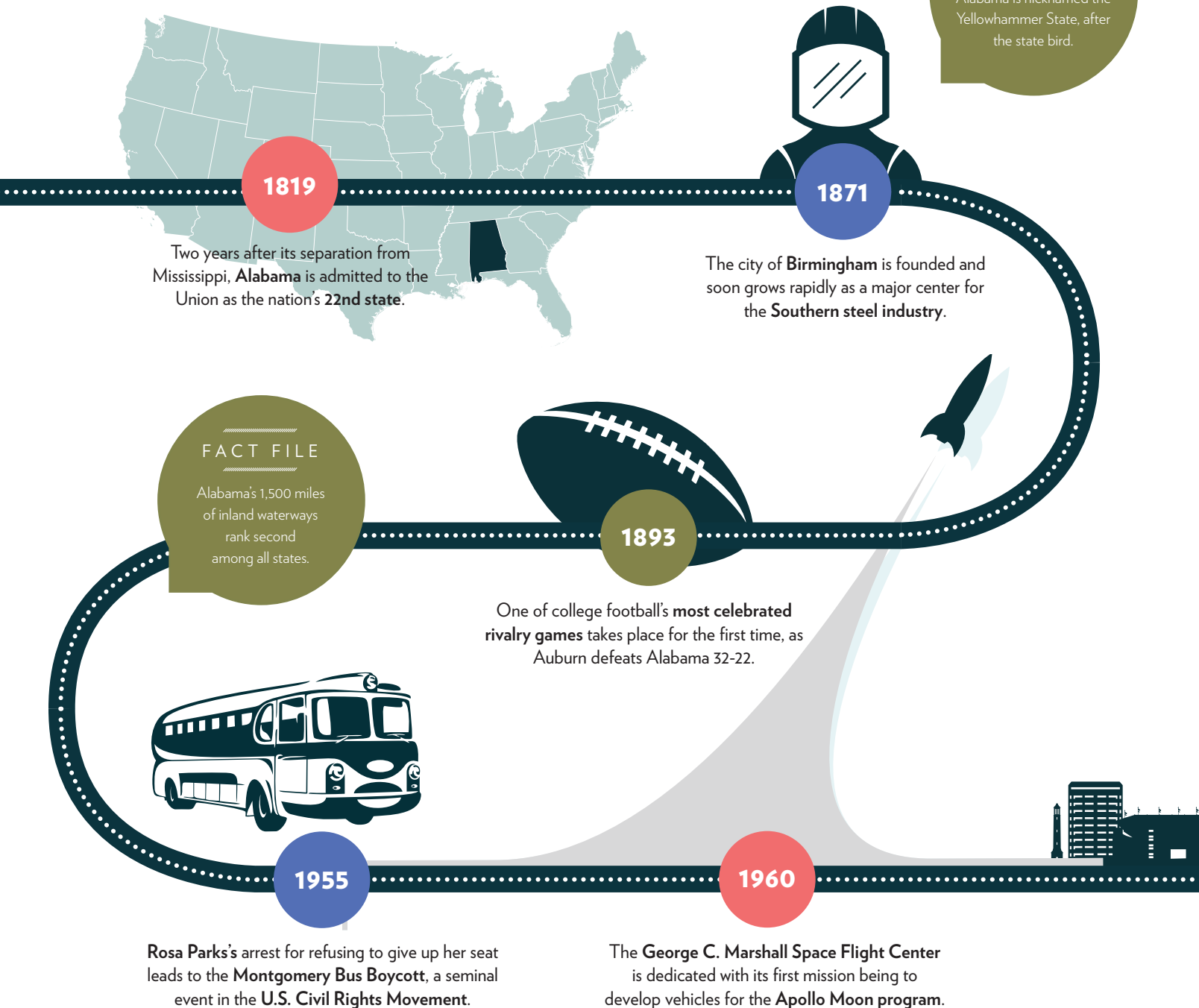
And it's also time to celebrate the variety of landscapes and the widespread Southern

hospitality that now draw more than 25 million visitors to Alabama in a single year—all of which we'll look at in the coming pages, as well as some of the other major trends, investments and industries that continue to define the state today.

## FACT FILE

Alabama is nicknamed the Yellowhammer State, after the state bird.

## MAKING OF A STATE





## Need to know



**Population:**  
**4.9m**

**GDP:**  
**\$246bn**



**Annual visitors:**  
**26.6m**



**Exports:**  
**\$21.7bn**



### BEST FOR BUSINESS

In 2018, *Business Facilities* magazine named Alabama's business climate number-one in the country, citing the state's regional cooperation, diverse growth strategy and world-class workforce training as key factors in its ranking.



### PRIME LOCATION

Located in the heart of the American South, Alabama offers easy access to some of the nation's fastest-growing economies through four Class 1 railroads and an interstate system that connects more than 160 metros in a 600-mile radius.



### Q&A: KAY IVEY GOVERNOR OF ALABAMA

#### What makes Alabama a great place to do business?

"Aside from our Southern hospitality and diverse, natural resources, I believe what sets Alabama apart from the rest of the nation is our pro-business mindset. It's not just about getting companies to come to Alabama, it's about making sure that these businesses flourish when they get here. When a company decides to invest in our people, we go above and beyond to invest in their success."

#### What does it mean to be an Alabamian?

"To understand Alabamians, you first must understand our history. We helped send a man to the Moon. We are both the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement and home to the Cradle of the Confederacy. We have deep roots in America's manufacturing and agricultural enterprises. We are proud of our heritage and are strong in our faith. We are a hardworking, strong-willed people with caring hearts. We are a people focused on community and helping one's neighbor. We value our family traditions and appreciate those who serve this country."

### FACT FILE

Workforce development in Alabama is supported by 30 four-year colleges, 26 community colleges and state-sponsored AIDT training programs.

#### What would you like the state to be known for?

"I want people to know when they come to Alabama, they are going to meet some of the kindest, most talented people in the world. They are going to be astounded by the natural beauty across the state from our rolling green mountains to our pristine gulf beaches. They are going to have a great time exploring our state parks and learning about events that helped shape the world in our museums. Whether you're visiting, looking for a place to raise a family or even start a business—look no further, we've got you covered in sweet home Alabama."

**1993**

Mercedes-Benz announces it is to build an assembly plant in **Tuscaloosa**, establishing Alabama as a destination for FDI.

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Since we first put down roots in Alabama in 1870, Bradley has been growing to serve our clients better. With more than 500 attorneys and nine offices strategically located across our footprint, we provide business clients around the world with a full suite of legal services in dozens of industries and practice areas. Our clients rely on us for innovative solutions, dependable responsiveness and a deep commitment to success.



14

Ranked the 14th largest  
healthcare law firm in the  
U.S. by *Modern Healthcare*



6

Represent 6 of the 10 largest  
banks and 16 of the 20 largest  
mortgage servicers in the U.S.



#1

Named U.S. “Law Firm of the Year”  
for Construction Law for 2018 by  
*U.S. News & World Report*



\$25 billion

Handled economic development  
projects in 30 states that invested  
\$25 billion and created 30,000+ jobs



236

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Contact: John D. Watson, Esq., 205.521.8436, [jwatson@bradley.com](mailto:jwatson@bradley.com), Bradley Arant Boult Cummings LLP, 1819 Fifth Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203. © 2018



# THE TRAILBLAZERS

A LOOK AT THE PROJECTS AND DEVELOPMENTS THAT ARE CREATING EXCITEMENT  
FOR SOME OF ALABAMA'S MOST INNOVATIVE ORGANIZATIONS



*“We need to drive the economy by keeping jobs in Alabama and creating jobs in Alabama”*

**STEVEN LEATH, PRESIDENT AUBURN UNIVERSITY**

As one of a select group of public research universities with land-, sea- and space-grant missions, Auburn balances its responsibilities to its students with a research agenda aligned with long-term state and national priorities, such as cyber systems, health science, agriculture and energy.

In doing so, it has become a desired collaborator with industry and government agencies—for example, at its National Center for Additive Manufacturing Excellence, where NASA represents

just one of the 40-plus organizations that can now call Auburn its partner.

“We feel that our research needs to be meaningful,” says Auburn president Steven Leath, whose university adds \$5.4 billion to the state’s economy each year. “If we do great science and it sits on the shelf, we’ve only accomplished a small part of our mission. We need to drive the economy by keeping jobs in Alabama and creating jobs in Alabama.”

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*“Space Launch System is the backbone and will be the enabling capability that will allow us to take humans and their systems deeper into space”*

**JODY SINGER, DIRECTOR MARSHALL SPACE FLIGHT CENTER**

As one of NASA’s largest field centers, Marshall has been responsible for tackling some of the organization’s biggest scientific and technical challenges for almost six decades—from developing the Saturn launch vehicles for the Apollo Moon program to coordinating experiments aboard the International Space Station.

Today, it leads the design and management of the Space Launch System, the most powerful rocket that NASA has ever built. More than 1,000 companies across the country are support-

ing the development of SLS, with the first launch targeted for 2020.

“If you think about the Apollo program, and you think about the evolution, innovation and great steps for mankind that we made, I see Space Launch System being in that same vein,” says the center’s director, Jody Singer. “Space Launch System is the backbone and will be the enabling capability that will allow us to take humans and their systems deeper into space than we have ever gone before.”



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*“This is the way that we believe homes and neighborhoods will be developed in the future”*

**MARK CROSSWHITE, CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO ALABAMA POWER**

As well as serving more than 1.4 million customers with reliable and affordable electricity, Alabama Power has also long been a valued economic development partner for the state and a source of innovation within and beyond its traditional business.

For example, it has led a collaborative effort to construct what it calls its Smart Neighborhood in the Birmingham suburbs—the first project of its kind in the Southeast—where it has outfitted 62 high-performance homes with ener-

gy-efficient systems and appliances, connected devices and a solar microgrid, with a view to collecting data and insights that will guide future smart developments.

Says chairman, president and CEO Mark Crosswhite, “This is the way that we believe homes and neighborhoods will be developed in the future, where everything has a chip in it, everything communicates with everything else, and it provides customers with more comfort, better service and more affordable prices.”





***“We want to be known for our ability to provide great young people who want to be leaders of solutions for whatever field that they are in”***

**STUART BELL, PRESIDENT UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA**

Courtesy of one of the nation’s most acclaimed football programs, the University of Alabama is an institution known throughout the U.S., but what may be less recognized is the enviable academic pedigree that comes, in part, from its ability to marry a comprehensive research mission with a student-centered environment.

“Today, to be a research university and to be a flagship university, it is about discovery in a very broad sense, but then it is also about engaging students in that experience,” says president Stuart

Bell. “We want to be known for our ability to provide great young people who want to be leaders of solutions for whatever field that they are in.”

Opening its doors in 1831 as the state’s first public college, UA has been one of the fastest-growing universities in the U.S. over the past decade. It now produces around 9,000 graduates a year and consistently ranks as one of the country’s top three producers of Goldwater Scholars and as a leader in the number of National Merit Scholars enrolled.

***“This is a model that doesn’t exist anywhere else”***

**RICHARD MYERS, PRESIDENT AND SCIENCE DIRECTOR HUDSONALPHA**

Established to translate the promise of genomic research into real-world results, the HudsonAlpha Institute of Biotechnology has done much over the past decade to advance our understanding and treatment of conditions ranging from ALS to childhood genetic disorders, while becoming a global leader in whole genome sequencing.

Notably, and unusually, it has done so by co-locating its researchers with for-profit life science companies, educators and clinicians across its 152-acre campus, seeing this as a way to encourage collaboration and innovation, while reducing the

time it takes to commercialize new ideas.

“We have this unique combination of researchers, companies that try and turn the discoveries that we and others make into useful products that can be applied, and have now added a clinical component,” says president and science director Richard Myers. “This is a model that doesn’t exist anywhere else.”

Today, the Institute’s Huntsville campus supports 35 life science companies, contributing to an economic impact of about \$1.85 billion between 2006 and 2016.



***“Our outcomes are far superior to our competition when you look at our ability to help a patient progress in their functional capabilities”***

**MARK TARR, PRESIDENT AND CEO ENCOMPASS HEALTH**

With a footprint that includes 127 inpatient rehabilitation hospitals and 237 home health and hospice locations across 36 states, Birmingham-based Encompass Health is one of the nation’s leading providers of post-acute healthcare services—providing care to those recovering from illness or injury, living with a chronic medical condition or coping with end-of-life transitions.

In 2016, the company treated more than 270,000 patients, while approximately one in three patients in the U.S. receiving inpatient rehabilitative care receive it through an Encompass Health hospital.

And in doing so, it has established the experience, resources and best practices that leave it well positioned to manage America’s aging population in the coming decades.

“Our outcomes are far superior to our competition when you look at our ability to help a patient progress in their functional capabilities,” says president and CEO Mark Tarr. “We will be known as the post-acute provider of choice not only by referring physicians but as patients and the general public becomes more and more educated on their choices for healthcare.”



# *Journey Beyond* **YOUR EXPECTATIONS**



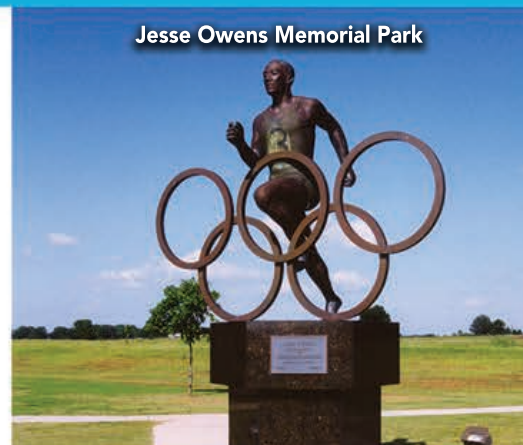
Reach for the moon and beyond at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center, Earth's largest space museum and home to Space Camp. From the Jesse Owens Memorial Park and Helen Keller Home & Museum, to the winding trail of waterfalls that await to welcome you into the great outdoors, look no further than North Alabama to *journey beyond* your expectations.

**#iHeartHsv #VisitNorthAL**

Helen Keller Home & Museum



Jesse Owens Memorial Park



# Samford University

samford.edu



#**4** in the South  
among regional  
universities  
—U.S. News & World Report

#**1** in Alabama

#**12** nationally  
for student  
engagement  
—The Wall Street Journal

Students from **44** states and **30** countries

#**50** private university in the U.S.  
for value and affordability  
—Kiplinger's Personal Finance

**One of the nation's premier  
Christian universities**

—College Choice and College Atlas

## 10 Academic Schools

School of the Arts  
Howard College of Arts and Sciences  
Brock School of Business  
Beeson Divinity School  
Orlean Beeson School of Education  
Cumberland School of Law  
Ida Moffett School of Nursing  
McWhorter School of Pharmacy  
School of Health Professions  
School of Public Health

**97%** of undergraduate alumni  
are employed, attending  
graduate school or in a post-  
graduation internship within six  
months of graduation

**51,926**  
alumni  
worldwide

More than **170**  
majors, minors and  
concentrations

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# PROBLEM SOLVED

HOW THE ALABAMA STATE PENSION FUND BECAME ONE OF THE STATE'S BIGGEST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSETS

**WHEN DAVID BRONNER** was appointed the head of the Retirement Systems of Alabama, the pension fund for the state's public employees, the year was 1973 and he had a challenge on his hands. At that time, the RSA was underfunded with around \$500 million to its name, representing only 25 cents on every dollar it was owed, and Bronner saw that some creativity was needed to turn things around.

"Alabama has tremendous beauty, tremendous assets and tremendous people, yet it hangs out as the fifth-poorest state in the country, so something had to be done to change the dynamics," he says. "In a state like this, if you are going to keep the pension fund sound, you have to make the whole state financially better off. My philosophy was the stronger that I could

make Alabama, the stronger the pension fund would be."

By the end of the 2017 fiscal year, the RSA had grown to where it now managed 23 funds, with aggregate assets in excess of \$41 billion. And it had done so while making a series of investments in Alabama that have elevated the state as a place to live, visit and do business.

For example, Bronner put his support and resources behind the efforts to attract Mercedes-Benz to the state, which has since proved to be the catalyst for Alabama's large auto manufacturing sector. A slew of investments in Montgomery and Mobile real estate, including the state's tallest building, the RSA Battle House Tower, have transformed each of the cities' skylines. And the acquisition of one of America's largest

local television companies, Raycom Media, allowed the RSA to promote Alabama in houses all across the country.

Perhaps most notably, starting in the early 1990s, the RSA financed a string of golf courses and hotel developments all around Alabama. The Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail now includes 468 holes at 11 sites, with more than 12 million rounds played to date, and has been instrumental in the state's evolution as a visitor destination.

"We've done factories in the Shoals, we've done factories in Birmingham, we've done factories like Mercedes in Tuscaloosa, but that only affects probably a 50 or 75-mile radius," says Bronner. "The Trail was something that would take tourism from roughly \$1.8 billion a year, and most of that was beach traffic, up to \$14.3 billion."

## FACT FILE

With 26 different courses across its 11 locations, the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail hosts more than 1,100 events each year.



IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR THE *sweet spot,* YOU JUST FOUND IT.



Alabama's Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail offers 468 holes of world-class golf on 11 sites across the state. Paired with eight resorts and six spas, relax after your round in Four Diamond luxury. Great meeting options also available. Visit [rtjgolf.com](http://rtjgolf.com) or call 800.949.4444.

ANNISTON/GADSDEN » AUBURN/OPELIKA » BIRMINGHAM/HOOVER » DOTHAN » FLORENCE/MUSCLE SHOALS » GREENVILLE » HUNTSVILLE » MONTGOMERY/PRATTVILLE » MOBILE » POINT CLEAR

THE *Resort Collection* ON ALABAMA'S ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF TRAIL





## FACT FILE

With \$125bn in assets, Regions is a member of the S&P 500 Index.



## FACT FILE

By the end of 2018, Shipt plans to grow to 100,000+ Shipt shoppers.



# HOMEGROWN >>> NEW HOME

**FORMED IN 1971** from the merger of three historic Alabamian banks founded between 1856 and 1928, Regions Financial is the state's largest public company and sole member of the Fortune 500, ranking 460th in 2018 on revenues of just over \$6 billion.

Today, it operates around 1,500 banking offices and 1,900 ATMs across the South, Midwest and Texas, but remains headquartered in Birmingham, putting the city at the core of the bank's Regions360 approach to customer service, where bankers collaborate with departments across the company to offer one team to each client it serves. From here, Regions has also put out a clear strategy around supporting inclusive growth

*"We are dedicated not only to doing good work but to making good things happen in the places where we do business"*

throughout the places in which its people live and work, through a variety of economic and community development, education and workforce readiness, and financial wellness initiatives.

"We are truly committed to fulfilling our company's mission, which is to make life better for our customers, associates, communities and shareholders," says Alan Register, Birmingham market executive and Commercial Banking regional executive. "We are dedicated not only to doing good work but to making good things happen in the places where we do business."

"When our communities succeed, we succeed," adds Register. "We want people to recognize Regions as a partner in Alabama's success."

**BACKED BY INSTITUTIONS** including UAB and Innovation Depot, the largest tech incubator in the Southeast, Birmingham has emerged as one of the South's brightest hubs for technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Once known for iron and steel, it can now point to success stories such as the rapid development and expansion of Shipt, an online grocery marketplace that enables same-day delivery from a variety of retailers via its app and community of shoppers. Only founded in 2014, its services are already available to 70 million households across more than 220 metro areas nationwide, while its potential was validated in late 2017 when Target acquired the company in a deal worth \$550 million.

*"Southern hospitality and a heart for service is something that is special about Birmingham"*

To do all this from Birmingham, far away from Silicon Valley and other such famous tech hotspots, may seem remarkable, but founder and CEO Bill Smith believes its Alabamian upbringing has much to do with Shipt's meteoric growth: "I'm a firm believer that the culture and the heart of the company is really credited to Birmingham. The Southern hospitality and a heart for service is something that is special about Birmingham, and that's been a big part of our success."

Today, the company has more than 500 headquartered employees, 400 of those in Birmingham, and signaled its commitment to the city in August 2018 when it announced plans to add more than 800 jobs to its Alabama office over the next few years.



## A NEW CHAPTER IN A WORLD - CHANGING CITY



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**Montgomery, Alabama is a dynamic city of firsts with a bold vision for the future.**

Fueled by tech, innovation and today's ambitions, it offers an unparalleled vibrancy.

Home to an active military population, the Maxwell Gunter Air Force Base, Hyundai's only North American assembly plant, the Equal Justice Initiative and soul-stirring civil rights experiences, along with a thriving culinary and arts scene, Montgomery is a world-changing city. From the Alabama Shakespeare Festival to an award-winning downtown revitalization with an expansive riverfront, Alabama's capital offers charm, culture and great company.

Montgomery



# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ALL ACROSS ALABAMA, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES CONTINUE  
TO BE A LEADING SOURCE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

## SAMFORD UNIVERSITY

**RANKED FOURTH** among regional universities in the South by *U.S. News & World Report*, Samford is a private university in the Birmingham suburb of Homewood that has provided the region and the world with educated, well-rounded workers and citizens since 1841. More than 50,000 Samford alumni are now making a difference across all 50 states and 60 countries, while 97 percent of undergraduate alumni are employed or in graduate school within six months of graduation.

In addition, the university's Baptist heritage is reflected in its encouragement of social and civic responsibility, plus service to others, which is perhaps most evident in a report that found Samford students performed more than 900,000 hours of community service during the 2015/16 academic year—no mean feat for a student body that only numbers around 5,500.

"I often say that Samford is a private university but we have a very public purpose, directly tied to the economic and social development of our region and beyond," says president Andrew Westmoreland. "I'm not so much worried about trying to create slogans for Samford as I am in turning out people who will roll up their sleeves and work to make the world a better place."

### FACT FILE

*U.S. News* named Samford as the 7th-most innovative university in the South.

## UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA

**LOCATED IN** West Mobile, USA's contributions to the region and the state are diverse and wide-ranging, from developing new disease biomarkers at its Mitchell Cancer Institute, to creating nanomaterials that one day will benefit Alabama's aerospace industry, to producing the cyber curriculum of the future through its School of Computing. Founded in 1963, the university has graduated more than 82,000 alumni, including one-third of the Mobile area's doctors and 85 percent of professional employees in the local school systems.

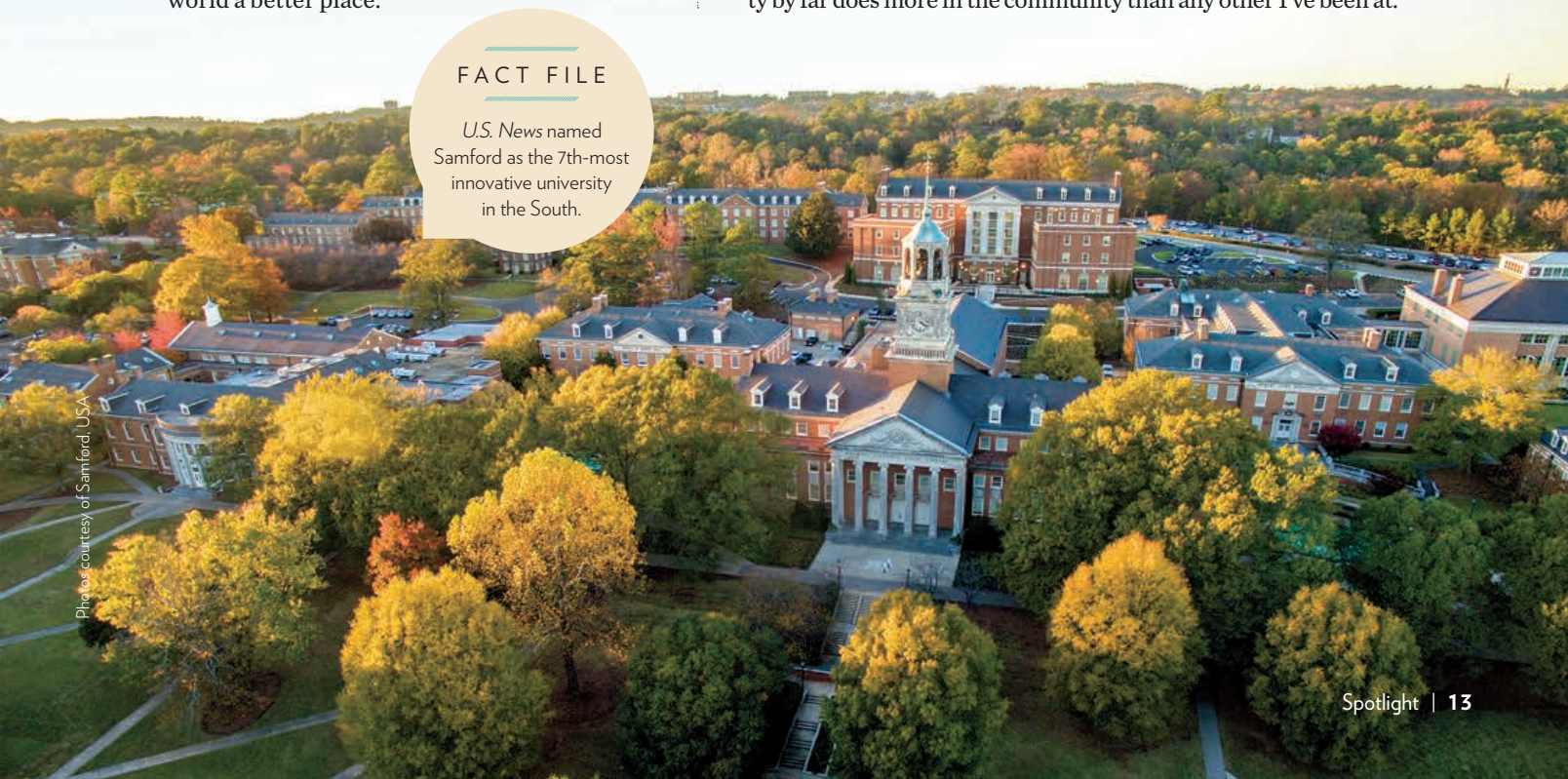
Meanwhile, its support of Mobile's Innovation PortAL business accelerator has been crucial as the city looks to establish a bustling entrepreneurship ecosystem, while the USA Technology and Research Park has been at the center of the university's efforts to foster relationships with industry since it was launched in 2002.

"We're one of the drivers in economic development, partnering with companies and providing our resources in terms of students, faculty and in some cases grants that are done together," says president Tony Wal-drop, whose institution currently boasts 6,000 employees and nearly 15,000 students. "I've been at a number of universities and this university by far does more in the community than any other I've been at."



### FACT FILE

USA Health employs 3,800 people and receives 250,000 patient visits a year.





## FACT FILE

Between 1991 and 2017, 555 U.S. patents were awarded to UAB members.

# UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

**FOUNDED AS RECENTLY** as 1969, UAB is arguably the most important agent in Birmingham's ongoing economic and cultural renaissance. As a comprehensive research university and academic medical center, it is well equipped to support the community's emergence as a hub for the technology and life science industries, not only through more than \$550 million in annual research expenditures but also in the development of new majors that are applicable to today's tech-oriented society.

In fewer than five decades, UAB has grown to be Alabama's largest employer with an annual statewide impact exceeding \$7 billion, while its potential to make a difference on a broader level was recognized when *Times Higher Education* named it the number-one young university in the United States in 2018.

Says president Ray Watts, "I want UAB to be seen as a place where we really tackle major problems facing society with committed, bright young people, with mentors in our faculty and staff, that have a great impact not only in Birmingham or Alabama, but around the world."

## FACT FILE

Troy operates four campuses in Alabama plus sites in seven other states.

# TROY UNIVERSITY

**BEYOND A LONGSTANDING** relationship with the U.S. military that has taken its name around the world, Troy University continues to emphasize the value that a global perspective can provide its students in their work and personal lives, and backs this up with a commitment to foreign exchange programs and the recruitment of students from abroad.

"We have evolved into Alabama's international university," says chancellor Jack Hawkins. "We have students from 76 countries enrolled with us, well over 400 from China alone, and on any given day you can hear between 85 and 90 lan-

guages spoken on this campus. So I think we've done a remarkable job in inviting the world to Troy."

Plus, the university has not been shy in taking Troy out to the world. Today, it can boast of partnerships with universities across China, Vietnam and Malaysia, while it established Alabama's first Confucius Institute in 2007, designed to support Chinese language and cultural education, and to open economic development opportunities between the state and China.

# UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT HUNTSVILLE

**WITH A GENESIS** strongly tied to rocket scientist Wernher von Braun and his desire to establish a research institute that would serve those working to put man on the Moon, it's no wonder that UAH has long considered its support of industry to be a vital part of its mission. Located in the Rocket City, it still maintains strong partnerships with NASA and the Department of Defense, while also expanding its reach into the region's thriving technology community.

"We're involved in economic development activities both from the point of view of recruitment of companies but also in the development of the workforce to support those companies," says president Robert Altenkirch. "We find out what they need as far as workforce support and try to provide that, and we also provide facilities that the individual company may not have to conduct research."

Plus, all this could hardly be easier to access, with the university's 505-acre campus and 16 high-tech research centers serving as the anchor tenant for Cummings Research Park, the second-largest park of its kind in the country.

## FACT FILE

UAH ranks 13th in the U.S. for NASA-funded research, and 25th for DoD-funded.

Photos courtesy of UAB, Troy, UAH

# The right connection is important.



## DEPARTURES

CARRIER	FLIGHT	DESTINATION
EHC	2018	Compassionate expertise
EHC	2018	Patient-centered innovation
	2018	Collaborative partnerships
	2018	High-quality care
		Transparency and integrity
		Positive patient experiences

HealthSouth is now Encompass Health. Based in Birmingham, Alabama, our nationwide network of inpatient rehabilitation hospitals and home health and hospice locations connect you to where you need to be.

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**Connected care. Superior outcomes.**





# GLOBAL IMPACT: ALABAMA

INSIDE THE TRENDS AND COMPANIES THAT ARE BRINGING  
ALABAMA AND THE WORLD TOGETHER

**T**he world is getting smaller, and that's something that's easy to see in Alabama, which has become established as an international destination for business. Since 1999, Alabama has attracted more than \$30 billion in FDI through projects involving nearly 90,000 jobs.

"Alabama has been a destination for foreign direct investment for many years," says Secretary of Commerce Greg Canfield. "The presence of these international industry leaders in Alabama transmits a strong signal about the state's competitiveness to corporate decision-makers and site selection professionals around the globe."

In addition, Alabama's influence on the international stage extends even further when you take into account its emerging innovation ecosystem and an ability to launch globally significant scientific and technical projects. From developing and building the world's most powerful rockets and fastest ships, to breaking new ground in genomics and precision medicine, Alabama institutions are pushing the boundaries of what is possible, and changing the way people live across America and beyond.

"Innovation is not just a tech or a startup

*"The presence of these international industry leaders in Alabama transmits a strong signal about the state's competitiveness"*

word anymore," says Steve Spencer, president of the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama. "Every company is going to have to innovate, no matter whether you are in agriculture, heavy manufacturing or everything in between. We are very focused on trying to be a leader in helping folks across the state not only stay up but get ahead in that arena."

## ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

When Mercedes-Benz selected Tuscaloosa for its first U.S. auto assembly plant, in 1993, it was a gamechanger in how the international business community viewed the state, and a catalyst for an auto manufacturing industry that has become an integral part of the economy.

In the years since, Alabama has welcomed assembly plants operated by Honda and Hyundai, as well as a Toyota engine plant. Mazda and Toyota have established a joint-venture company that will employ up to 4,000 Alabamians when its facility opens in Huntsville, in 2021, while Mercedes-Benz has repeatedly expanded its operations to where it has now committed almost \$7 billion in investment within the state.

All told, nearly 40,000 people work within the





Alabama auto manufacturing sector, producing around 1 million cars and light trucks plus 1.7 million engines annually. Vehicles now rank as the state's number-one export, and are shipped to around 85 nations. Meanwhile, the industry's success has also helped attract companies from other related fields, such as Australian shipbuilder Austal, which has grown near the Port of Mobile four times over the past decade. 'Made in Alabama' has become a mark that is truly appreciated by global manufacturers and, according to state leaders, a platform for Alabama's future growth.

"Alabama workers know how to make world-class products, and they're good at it," says Canfield. "To complement that, I want to see them play a larger role in activities such as R&D, engineering and product design, and testing. These are the kind of brainpower jobs that will accelerate Alabama's transformation, and they are a strategic focus of our economic development efforts going forward."

#### AVIATION AND AEROSPACE

Building upon more than a century of aviation history—the Wright brothers established the nation's first civilian flight school in Montgomery, in 1910—Alabama remains central to how America takes to the skies, thanks to the presence of the Redstone Arsenal and the Army's critical missile defense and aviation programs, Marshall Space Flight Center, and a thriving aerospace cluster that includes more than 300 companies from 30-plus countries.

*"We believe Alabama is the right place to build a facility, not just because of its logistics but also because of the workforce and the community"*

These include Airbus, which chose Mobile for the company's first U.S.-based production facility. Opened in 2015, more than 600 direct and indirect employees contribute to the assembly of four A320 passenger aircraft monthly—and now Airbus has its sights set on expansion with a second manufacturing facility on the same site for A220 aircraft promising to add another 400-plus jobs when it begins production in 2019.

"We believe Alabama is the right place to build a facility, not just because of its logistics, which are very good with our ability to transport different parts in and out of the port, but also because of the workforce and the community, which has been very welcoming," says Jeff Knittel, chairman and CEO of Airbus Americas, whose company has spent around \$48 billion in the U.S. over the past three years. "That combination is very powerful. We're very positive on what's been done so far, and think that the opportunities are numerous going forward."

#### HEALTH AND LIFE SCIENCES

With around 780 companies employing close to 18,000 Alabamians—plus a vibrant entrepreneurial environment that's only driving those numbers up—the bioscience sector is an important contributor to the state today. Its annual economic impact has been estimated at \$7.3 billion, but its value extends even further when you consider the life-changing discoveries taking place at some of its leading institutions.

#### FACT FILE

In 2018, *Global Trade* magazine selected Alabama as the nation's top state for manufacturing, citing industry growth and a skilled workforce as key reasons.





## HUDSONALPHA

INSTITUTE FOR BIOTECHNOLOGY

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Alabama's manufacturing expertise has become its signature offering. Bottom: Adtran has R&D centers in Huntsville, India and Germany

These include the HudsonAlpha Institute of Biotechnology and Birmingham-based Southern Research, which has discovered seven FDA-approved cancer drugs, as well as the University of Alabama at Birmingham, a research university and academic medical center that operates the third-largest public hospital in the nation.

Typical of all academic medicine, UAB balances its clinical care with a commitment to education and research, in which it ranks 15th nationally among public universities for federal funding. What results is an environment that encourages innovation—such as in its precision medicine program where it leads the world in customizing treatments tailored for each individual.

“Academic medical centers have to keep reinventing themselves because we want to be on the cutting edge,” says Will Ferniany, CEO of the UAB Health System. “When I started in this business, it took about 10 years for our innovation to get from the academic medical center into practice in the community. Now it’s about a year and a half, so you have to reinvent yourself in a hurry.”

## TECHNOLOGY

Similar to bioscience, the IT industry is an increasingly significant part of the Alabama economy, as the state sees startups such as Shipt attain national prominence, while also welcoming global leaders such as Google, which is building a \$600-million data center in North Alabama.

It’s also home to companies like Huntsville-headquartered Adtran, a provider of telecommunications networking equip-

ment and software that serves customers in 68 countries. Founded in 1985, it has long been a critical fixture in the growth of global connectivity—next time you use the internet, there’s a good chance your data will travel through a piece of Adtran equipment or be managed by its software—and it continues to invest approximately 20 percent of its revenue back into R&D as it looks to define the network of the future.

“This is a highly competitive area with some large companies and smaller startups that are innovating. The differentiator for us is that we have the strength, size and relationships to pull off major projects in the space, but we are still very innovative,” says chairman and CEO Tom Stanton. “We consider ourselves a large startup, and listen to customers and customize development for them the way a small company would do.”

## FINANCIAL AND LEGAL SERVICES

Alabama’s tech capabilities have also been a boon for BBVA Compass, which has led its digital transformation efforts from its home in Birmingham, including the development of a \$360-million tech platform that allowed it to become one of the first banks to have real-time capabilities.

The company, as it is today, was formed in 2007 when Compass Bank was acquired by BBVA, Spain’s second-biggest bank, and became part of a global company that now has \$800 billion in assets and 140,000 employees around the world.

“It’s unique for us that we have the opportunity to bring a truly worldwide bank to an ever-increasing worldwide economy,”



## PORT OF MOBILE

*“We put into play about \$1bn in assets and new capabilities”*

Currently the tenth-largest seaport in the U.S., moving around 60 million tons annually, the Port of Mobile is a vital partner in Alabama’s economic development, not only in supporting international trade by existing companies across the Southeast but also in attracting new investment—as it did with Airbus, and in ThyssenKrupp’s decision to build a \$5-billion plant in South Alabama (now owned by ArcelorMittal and Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal Corp.)

“We are a 90-year-old organization that was formed to help support Alabama’s agriculture and industrial base, and trade with the global economy,” says James Lyons, director and CEO of the Alabama State Port Authority. “We build facilities and expand facilities geared around what we see as the needs of the state and region for global trade. In the last 20 years, we put into play about \$1 billion in assets and new capabilities, and have plans for about another \$300 million in the next few years.”

Today, the port ranks as the second-largest steel port in the nation, while its container terminal is one of the fastest-growing. In all, Port of Mobile cargo and vessel activities support more than 134,000 indirect and direct jobs, and have a total economic value of \$22.4 billion.







Left: Exports of Alabama-made vehicles and parts totaled \$9.5bn in 2017. Below: UAB Hospital is home to the world's longest living kidney chain



says EVP and East region executive Lee Smith. “Compass did not have any real international capabilities, and so by becoming part of the BBVA family, we immediately gained that skillset as well as many others that have allowed us to meet the needs of our larger corporate clients.”

That international outlook also applies to Protective Life, founded by former Alabama governor William Jelks in 1907, which became part of Japan’s

Dai-ichi Life in 2015. Together, the group of companies represents one of the largest global life insurers, endowing Birmingham-based Protective with insights and resources it can apply to a business that had \$862 billion of coverage in force at the end of 2017.

Meanwhile, Bradley began as small Birmingham law firm almost a century ago, but has since grown with its clients to where it now boasts a national

reputation and nine offices around the country. In particular, it has developed leading expertise in areas such as construction, energy and economic development, in which its teams have worked on projects across 30 states that collectively have resulted in more than \$25 billion in investment and created more than 30,000 new jobs.

“We will continue to follow our clients and their industries, and we will

Photos courtesy of Toyota, UAB

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continue to grow in a disciplined way,” says Dawn Sharff, managing partner of Bradley’s Birmingham office. “We’d like to be known for our clients’ successes. We want to be known as the law firm that helped some of Alabama’s and the country’s most dynamic companies become leaders in their respective fields.”

## TOURISM

Finally, it often can be overlooked as a bona fide industry, but tourism represents a major economic driver for Alabama—and that’s something that’s immediately apparent when you look at the numbers.

“In the year we’re just ending, travelers have spent \$15.5 billion, which is an increase of seven percent over the previous year,” says Alabama tourism director Lee Sentell. “We estimate that more than 27 million people visited the state during the past year, and there are 187,000 people employed in the hospitality industry, which is nine percent of

non-agricultural employment.”

Plus, there are indirect effects to be considered, such as the quality-of-place amenities created for visitors that locals can enjoy year-round, or the opportunity for a visit to act as a first date for prospective residents and companies. And, above all, it’s a way to connect Alabama with people the world over that are drawn here by everything from the state’s civil rights history to the ac-

claimed Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail.

“We are somewhat unique in that the northern part of the state is in the Appalachian Mountains, and 350 miles to the south, the state is on the Gulf of Mexico,” adds Sentell. “We have four distinct seasons and a wide variety of altitudes so people who are interested in rock-climbing have options to choose from, as well as people who enjoy watersports on the Gulf.”



### FACT FILE

Visitors to Alabama in 2019 can join in its bicentennial celebrations—a milestone that will be marked across the state with traveling exhibits, events, festivals and community programs.

A large advertisement for ADTRAN. It features a white door standing on a sandy beach, with the ocean and a dramatic, cloudy sky in the background. The ADTRAN logo is centered above the word "WONDER" in large, white, serif capital letters. Below "WONDER" is the phrase "What's Next?" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom, the website "adtran.com/wonder" is displayed, followed by a small copyright notice: "AD10774A Copyright © 2018 ADTRAN Inc. All rights reserved."



# GUIDE TO ALABAMA

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SOME OF THE STATE'S LARGEST COMMUNITIES



BIRMINGHAM

**A.K.A.** The Magic City

**POPULATION** 210,710

**THE STORY** One of the South's foremost industrial hubs in the early 20th century, Alabama's largest city now boasts a diversified economy with a blooming tech ecosystem, and accounts for more than 30 percent of the state's gross domestic product

**BUSINESS SUCCESS** Innovation Depot is the Southeast's largest business incubator and the epicenter of Birmingham's tech scene, housing more than 100 startups across 140,000 square feet of office, lab and coworking space in its downtown facility

**CAN'T MISS** Covering nearly four acres of the city's cultural district, the Birmingham Museum of Art has one of the finest collections in the Southeast, with more than 24,000 paintings, sculptures and other artworks

**VETERANS** Birmingham was the first city to celebrate Veterans Day, in 1947, while tens of thousands of attendees continue to make it one of the largest parades in the country

**WHAT THEY SAY** "When people come to Birmingham, the first thing they say to us is, 'We had no idea you have all this here,' and they all want to come back. Whether it's for a leisure visit, a casual weekend or bringing a meeting or convention back, we get a lot of repeat business as a result of the unique and authentic experiences you can have here." — John Oros, president and CEO of the Greater Birmingham Convention & Visitors Bureau

**WHAT OTHERS SAY** In September 2018, *Barron's* explained why you could "add Birmingham to tech's growing list of hubs"

**FACT FILE** Birmingham's 56-foot-tall Vulcan Statue is the largest cast-iron statue in the world and reflects the city's roots in the iron and steel industry



HUNTSVILLE

**A.K.A.** Rocket City

**POPULATION** 194,585

**THE STORY** Known by many as the watercress capital of the world before becoming the home of the U.S. rocket program in the 1950s and 60s, Huntsville has emerged as a progressive, innovation-heavy city anchored by NASA, Redstone Arsenal and Cummings Research Park, the fourth-largest in the world, with 300 companies and 26,000 employees on site

**BUSINESS SUCCESS** United Launch Alliance chose to build its Vulcan Centaur rocket in nearby Decatur, and Blue Origin is building the BE-4 engine plant in Huntsville to provide the booster engines, putting the region at the forefront of commercial aerospace

**DIVERSITY** Nearly half of Huntsville residents were born outside of the state, and more than 10% born outside of the U.S.

**CAN'T MISS** The Huntsville Botanical Garden is home to the nation's largest open-air butterfly house, woodland paths and a variety of gardens across its beautiful 120-acre site

**WHAT THEY SAY** "Huntsville has such a unique mix of arts and science, and we try to create memories for others when they come here and learn more about our community. We really have a lot of different experiences for visitors and we continue to grow our product with our attractions, meeting spaces and our downtown core adding retail and restaurants." —Judy Ryals, president and CEO of the Huntsville/Madison County Convention & Visitors Bureau

**WHAT OTHERS SAY** *Livability* named Huntsville first on its list of the top 10 cities for STEM workers in America, in June 2018

**FACT FILE** The world's largest working jukebox is located just outside A.M. Booth's Lumberyard in Huntsville, where it plays musical hits that were recorded in Alabama

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and Orange Beach, you can take it all in.

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to the tall grass sing of  
the surrounding beauty



*Feel*

a connection to  
everything around you



*See*

the sun disappear  
over the Gulf





## MONTGOMERY

**POPULATION** 199,518

**THE STORY** At times the ‘Cradle of the Confederacy’, and the birthplace of the Civil Rights Movement, the Alabama capital is first and foremost a government town, while also significantly influenced by a large military presence, cyber and tech community, and a considerable advanced manufacturing sector

**BUSINESS SUCCESS** Since 2005, Hyundai has built more than 3.5 million vehicles in the Montgomery area, and helped draw four of the top 10 global automotive suppliers

**TECH SAVVY** In MGMix, Montgomery is the only non-Tier-One city with an internet exchange, endowing it with the bandwidth and speed that is enabling research, innovation and economic development, and Montgomery’s emergence as a cyber city

**MILITARY MATTERS** Department of Defense related activities contribute an estimated \$2.6bn to the Montgomery economy each year, and got a boost in late 2017 when it was announced that the region would be home to one of two new F-35 jet squadrons

**CAN’T MISS** Stretching across six blocks in downtown Montgomery, Old Alabama Town is a 50-strong collection of historic homes and buildings restored and furnished to accurately depict life in Alabama during the 19th and early-20th centuries

**WHAT OTHERS SAY** The opening of the National Memorial for Peace and Justice saw the *New York Times* name Montgomery as one of its 52 places in the world to visit in 2018

**FACT FILE** The city’s Alabama Shakespeare Festival is among the 10 largest in the world, with 400+ performances annually



## MOBILE

**POPULATION** 190,265

**THE STORY** Once called the Paris of the South, Alabama’s oldest city has maintained its status as a cultural center for the Gulf Coast while exploring economic opportunities in advanced manufacturing, aviation and through the operations of its deepwater port

**BUSINESS SUCCESS** Over the last decade, Mobile’s economic development efforts have resulted in \$8.2bn in capital investment and more than 14,000 jobs

**CAN’T MISS** Moored in Mobile Bay, the USS Alabama is a World War II battleship and the centerpiece of a memorial park dedicated to the state’s veterans. Since it opened in 1965, more than 15m visitors have explored this iconic attraction

**FESTIVAL TIME** Forget New Orleans, Mobile hosts America’s oldest Mardi Gras, with around 39 parades over the three-week carnival period drawing nearly 1m visitors to the region

**WHAT THEY SAY** “In Mobile you really have it all. This is a 300-year-old city rich in history, where you can be in a downtown urban setting, and then in 10 minutes you can be in a kayak in the second-largest river delta in the country. That’s an experience that you really can’t have anywhere else.” —David Clark, president and CEO of Visit Mobile

**WHAT OTHERS SAY** *Business Facilities* ranked Mobile second for economic growth potential among cities with fewer than 300,000 residents, in 2017

**FACT FILE** With five members of the esteemed group, including Hank Aaron, Mobile has produced the most baseball Hall of Famers per capita among U.S. cities



## GULF COAST

**POPULATION** 212,628

**THE STORY** From the quaint downtown and charm of Foley to the soft sand and turquoise waters of Gulf Shores and Orange Beach, the coastal cities of Baldwin County have long been a magnet for visitors, with around 6.4m tourists making their way to the area in 2017 alone

**BUSINESS SUCCESS** As well as being one of the fastest-growing counties in Alabama for overall population growth, *Business Facilities* found Baldwin County to be one of the nation’s top 10 small MSAs for job growth in its 2018 Metro Rankings Report

**MAJOR PROJECTS** In Gulf Shores, a \$15m beachfront revitalization project is set to be followed by a downtown mixed-use development anchored by a new \$85m, 229-room Embassy Suites hotel

**CAN’T MISS** Some 370 bird species and three species of nesting sea turtles are among the rich fauna and flora that can be found across the 7,000 acres of Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge, which includes some of Alabama’s last remaining undisturbed coastal barrier habitat

**NATURE POWER** The 6,150-acre Gulf State Park shows off all the beauty of the Alabama coastline with 28 miles of trails and nine different ecosystems, and has recently seen the construction of The Lodge at Gulf State Park, a Hilton hotel that is drawing attention for the attention paid to sustainability and resiliency in its design

**WHAT OTHERS SAY** In April 2018, *CNN Travel* nominated Gulf Shores as one of 15 cities in the South that know how to charm

**FACT FILE** With more than 17,000 reefs off its coast, Alabama has the largest artificial reef program in the U.S.

# THIS IS *Alabama*

From the McWane Science Center in  
Birmingham to the U.S. Space & Rocket Center  
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the draw of exploration  
and discovery

### *See*

history that propelled  
us into the future

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rocket science from  
real rocket scientists

U.S. Space & Rocket Center, Huntsville



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12:25 Boeing  
12:25 HudsonAlpha  
12:30 Siemens  
12:30 GE Aviation  
12:30 Under Armour  
12:35 NASA

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# BUILDING ALABAMA

HOW DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION AND QUALITY-OF-PLACE ELEMENTS  
ARE CONTRIBUTING TO THE STATE'S GROWTH

1

## BIRMINGHAM

Founded relatively late compared to many large Southeast cities, in 1871, Birmingham's origins are rooted in the iron and steel industry, where its competitive advantages saw it rapidly emerge as a major industrial center. The speed of its development was so great around the turn of the century that it even earned the moniker, 'The Magic City.'

Fast forward to the 21st century, and Birmingham is still Alabama's most populated city and metro area, but that doesn't mean it has ceased to reinvent itself. Its diverse economy now spans strengths from automotive to banking and life sciences, while a downtown core anchored by the likes of UAB and the Innovation Depot business accelerator has become established as a premier destination to live, work and play.

"Downtown Birmingham is undergoing a significant resurgence as we are attracting new companies, including technology-based employers," says Brian Hilson, president and CEO of the Birmingham Business Alliance. "Most of them are small, but they cumulatively represent a lot of jobs and enormous impact—not only economic impact, but a psychological impact because it proves the notion that downtown Birmingham is an attractive place for companies to be and therefore for people to live."

This renaissance has been aided by more than \$1 billion in projects under construction or recently completed, including retail, apartments, offices and hotels. Authentic buildings from the early 20th century have been restored as modern commercial and residential spaces, while catalytic public developments such as the 19-acre Railroad Park and Regions Field baseball stadium, home to the Double-A Birmingham Barons, have done much to drive visitor and local traffic to the area.

This pattern of development is likely to continue through to 2021 and what could be a great

1. Birmingham had 3,068 new jobs and \$572.7m in capital investment announced during 2017

2. Amazon is building a \$325m fulfillment center in Bessemer, near Birmingham, that will support 1,500 jobs

3. The Regions Field baseball park houses 8,500 fans and was a catalyst for downtown's revitalization

opportunity for Birmingham, when it hosts the World Games. Set to draw athletes and media from more than 100 countries to compete in sports that don't feature in the Olympics, it's estimated that it could generate \$256 million in economic impact for the city over its 11 days.

Meanwhile, municipalities around Birmingham are also set to benefit from some of these developments—with Irondale perhaps foremost among them because of its close proximity to downtown, putting it in prime position for residents and companies that want to be near to the action without actually moving to the city core.

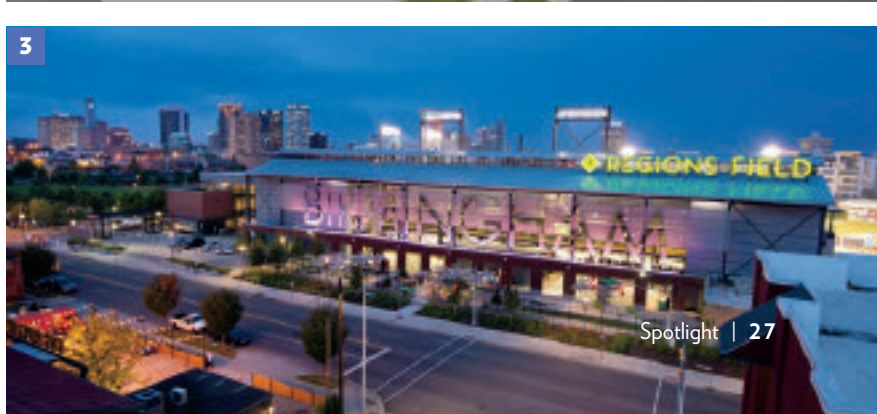
"You've got a bedroom community, you've got interstate access anywhere you need to get to, and you're literally minutes to the airport if you need air access," says David Pugh, chairman of the Irondale Commercial Development Authority. "If you're a business looking to relocate or add an additional location, this is the logical choice."

Speaking of Birmingham-Shuttlesworth In-

2



3







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4



5



6

4. A new master plan for Cummings Research Park includes the addition of new outdoor amenities

5. CityCentre will contain only the 10th custom-designed AC Marriott hotel in the world

6. At least 70% of the businesses coming to MidCity will be new-to-market for Huntsville

ternational Airport, that too is enjoying the fruits of Birmingham's momentum, with passenger numbers up around 14 percent in 2018 over the prior year. In 2014, it completed a \$200-million terminal expansion and modernization, leaving it well equipped to cope with any future growth coming the region's way.

"Our goal is always to be the best airport in the United States. We want to be the most efficient airport and we want to have a level of service that reflects the citizens of Birmingham and Alabama," says Sylvester Lavender, interim CEO of the Birmingham Airport Authority. "In the next five years, I see large growth in the city of Birmingham and I see large growth at the airport as a result."

## HUNTSVILLE

Few cities across the country can have changed as much as Huntsville over the past half-century, as the formerly rural community has been able to successfully harness the intellectual capacity presented by the advent of the U.S. space program and multiply that across a variety of high-tech, high-skill industries, while drawing world-class talent from around the globe.

"We have an interesting cross-section of very talented people in our

community that have a rich history of solving very hard problems," says Chip Cherry, president and CEO of the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce. "Bringing all those unique people to seize upon opportunities puts us in a unique place within the Southeastern U.S."

Backed by these strengths, North Alabama can point to more than a dozen major projects set to complete over the coming few years, from a Toyota-Mazda manufacturing plant to data centers for Google and Facebook. Together, they are expected to bring more than 6,000 jobs, continuing a trend that has seen Huntsville become established as the second-largest metro in the state, as well as its fastest-growing.

Beyond employment opportunities, these new residents have also been drawn by a city that's been thoughtful and proactive around the concept of quality of place. An extensive trail network, burgeoning craft beer scene and numerous outdoor arts festivals only scratch the surface of what Huntsville now offers when the workday is over. In April 2018, *U.S. News & World Report* identified the city as the seventh-best place to live in the U.S.

All of these factors then come together

in a variety of significant real estate developments. These include MidCity Huntsville, a \$350-million mixed-use project that ranks as the nation's fourth-largest commercial development for 2018 and will include 350,000 square feet of specialty retail, 560 residential units and a 100-room boutique hotel across 100 acres of Cummings Research Park. CityCentre at Big Spring is redeveloping a former Holiday Inn site in downtown Huntsville with two new hotels, 240 multi-family units and an artisanal food hall, while an expansion of the city's Von Braun Center will add a new music hall and event space.

## MONTGOMERY

As the first capital of the Confederacy, as well as a major center for the Civil Rights Movement, Montgomery is steeped in history but—like its peers around the state—that doesn't mean it isn't building towards the future as well, identifying lifestyle amenities as a critical component of economic development in the 21st century.



8

7. Montgomery was named the number-two "Best Value Destination" in the country for 2017 by trivago.com

8. Montgomery received a State Urban Design Award for its revitalization of Dexter Avenue

7







9. *Southern Business & Development* named Montgomery to its list of 10 shining examples of economic development working in the South

“In the past, people came to a city for a job, and nowadays young people are making a decision on where they want to live, and then they’ll find a job,” says Ellen McNair, senior VP for corporate development at the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce. “In all of our efforts, whether it’s in the tech and military side, or the visitor and tourism side, or in the workforce development and industrial recruitment side, we all have a

huge interest and desire to make Montgomery a really cool place, for not only the people that live here, but for future educated, talented people as well.”

As seen in cities all around the country, that effect may be most pronounced in its downtown area, in which there has been a concerted effort over recent years around redevelopment and rejuvenation. It can be argued this began in 2004, when the Montgomery Biscuits

Double-A baseball team moved to town to the brand-new Riverwalk Stadium, converted from a retired train depot.

In the years since, this has been joined by hotels, the Montgomery Performing Arts Center and mixed-use projects such as nightlife hotspot the Alley Entertainment District. The city’s riverfront has been reactivated, and historic streets such as Dexter Avenue revitalized, all resulting in a downtown residential boom with a variety of new multi-family residences.

At the same time, the city has continued to explore new economic opportunities—especially in the tech and cyber fields, following the alignment of public and private-sector partners to establish one of only four internet exchanges in the Southeast—all culminating in 2018 becoming the region’s most notable year for economic development since Hyundai arrived in 2002, with more than \$500 million in investments made and committed.

Photo courtesy of Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce

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10



11

10. A new I-10 bridge is set to reduce congestion and improve connectivity across the Mobile Bay

11. Founded in 1702, Mobile is the oldest city in Alabama, and one of the oldest in the South

## MOBILE

Located at the mouth of the Mobile River, leading into the Gulf of Mexico, Mobile has played a role in global commerce since it was founded more than 300 years ago—something that continues today with the deepwater Port of Mobile, ranked tenth among U.S. seaports in total trade, and a diversified economy that's drawn investment from all over the world.

Over the last decade, southern Alabama has witnessed \$8.1 billion in capital investment and the creation of more

than 14,000 jobs, as well as the arrival and expansion of such international behemoths as Airbus and Austal, and plans for distribution centers for both Walmart and Amazon. In 2017, *Area Development* ranked Mobile as the nation's second-best city for business among mid-sized metro areas.

Meanwhile, as the urban core of the region, it only seems fitting that Mobile's downtown should share in such energy. More than \$240 million in new investments have been announced or

completed here since 2013, while the business environment will only become more vibrant in 2019 with the opening of the Innovation PortAL incubator and accelerator on the city's former 'Auto Alley.' Close by, the city recently opened a new \$90-million federal courthouse, the waterfront is welcoming new life with public spaces and venues such as GulfQuest/National Maritime Museum of the Gulf of Mexico, and there is no shortage of restaurants, shops and residential units finding homes in Mobile's historic buildings.

"We're seeing downtown absolutely boom right now, with new restaurants coming on board every day and lots of housing projects underway," says Bill Sisson, president and CEO of the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce. "I've been in this market for 17 years, and in the last five, downtown has really hit a cliff unlike any I've seen before, and that's a direct result of the economic development that has been occurring here."

Photos courtesy of Visit Mobile, Alabama Department of Transportation

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# STATE TOUR

IN ALABAMA, THE EXPERIENCES ARE AS DIVERSE AS THE LANDSCAPES, MEANING THERE'S MUCH TO GET OUT AND DO ONCE THE MEETING'S OVER

## THE CIVIL RIGHTS TOUR

Through the 1950s and 1960s, Alabama was at the heart of the U.S. civil rights movement, and that legacy is preserved today with a number of trails, museums and historical sites across the state. In Montgomery, such landmarks include the Rosa Parks Museum and the Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church, where Martin Luther King Jr. served as pastor, as well as the **Civil Rights Memorial (1)**, where a large granite sculpture honors those that lost their lives during the struggle. To the west, Selma is known as the starting point of the 1965 voting rights marches and for the **Edmund Pettus Bridge (2)**, site of the Bloody Sunday violence and now a National Historic Landmark. Meanwhile, the **Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (3)**, opened in 1992 within the city's Civil Rights District, is a cultural and educational research center affiliated with the Smithsonian Institution that touches more than 150,000 people annually; or for something a little different, the **Tuskegee Army Airfield National Historic Site (4)** at Moton Field remembers the African-American military pilots of the Second World War.

## THE OUTDOOR RECREATION TOUR

From the hills that make up the southern end of the Appalachian mountain chain, to extensive forests and white-sand beaches, Alabama's landscapes are diverse and varied, and provide plenty of opportunity to get out and explore. Not far from Huntsville, **Lake Guntersville State Park (5)** is one of a number of popular outdoor destinations, with more than 30 miles of hiking trails, beautiful vistas and a reputation for being one of the best spots to see the American bald eagle. The **Little River Canyon National Preserve (6)** sits atop Lookout Mountain, and is as picturesque as it sounds, with waterfalls, sandstone cliffs and verdant woodland allowing for everything from rock-climbing to whitewater paddling. **Bankhead National Forest (7)**, one of four in the state, can claim some of the best mountain biking trails in the South, while the 631-mile Alabama Scenic River Trail is the longest such trail in a single state. Finally, Alabama's 32 miles of **Gulf Coast beaches (8)** are the rival of any in the country, and more than 100 fishing charter boat captains are on hand if your interests lie further offshore.

## THE SCIENCE AND DISCOVERY TOUR

NASA and the Apollo space program put Huntsville and Alabama at the forefront of discovery during the 1960s, and also laid the foundations for the **U.S. Space & Rocket Center (9)**, the world's largest space museum and the state's top paid attraction. Opened in 1970, its exhibits include the only full-stack Space Shuttle and an authentic Saturn V rocket, while more than 750,000 trainees have graduated Space Camp over its lifetime. Elsewhere, on the Mobile riverfront, **GulfQuest (10)** is the only fully interactive maritime museum in the world, with 90 exhibits and displays dedicated to the heritage and culture of the Gulf of Mexico, while its local focus is shared by the **Estuarium (11)** at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab, an educational aquarium that explores the various habitats of Mobile's estuary. Land animals are also easily accessible in the state through destinations such as **Birmingham Zoo (12)** and the 350-acre Alabama Safari Park, while McWane Science Center, also in Birmingham, features an IMAX theatre and four floors of kid-friendly exhibits.

## THE SPORTS TOUR

It may not be home to a major league sports team, but that doesn't mean Alabama isn't home to some of the most fervent fans that you're likely to find anywhere. In particular, that begins with college sports. Home to the Southeastern Conference, Alabama is the regular host of events such as the SEC Baseball Tournament, while on the gridiron, legends such as Bear Bryant and Bo Jackson have contributed to some of college football's most historic moments, and Alabama's **Bryant-Denny Stadium (13)** and Auburn's Jordan-Hare Stadium rank among the largest in the nation. The state has also become known as a destination for golfers because of the success of the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail, which boasts 468 holes over 11 sites and helped draw the PGA Tour back to Alabama in 2015, when the **Grand National course (14)** in Opelika hosted the Barbasol Championship. Finally, there's plenty for motorsports fans to also get their teeth into, from the world's fastest and most competitive superspeedway in **Talladega (15)** to the **Barber Vintage Motorsports Museum (16)**, which houses the world's largest motorcycle collection and a world-class 2.3-mile racing track.

Photos courtesy of iStock, Alabama Tourism Department, Ted Tucker, Ed Hall, Montgomery Chamber of Commerce, the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail

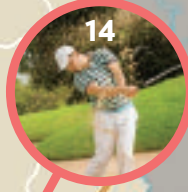
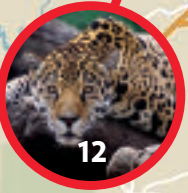




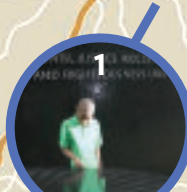
TENNESSEE

## FACT FILE

Located on Fort Rucker, the U.S. Army Aviation Museum has the largest collection of helicopters of any museum worldwide.



ALABAMA



## FACT FILE

Muscle Shoals Sound Studio rewrote the American songbook in the 60s and 70s, and remains a mecca for music lovers.

GULF OF MEXICO





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## SERIOUS RELAXATION: ALABAMA'S SPA TRAIL

Originally created for golf, a new trail has emerged along Alabama's Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail. From traditional warm stone massages to red carpet ready facials, the RTJ Spa Trail features six spas in Marriott, Renaissance and Autograph Hotels across the state. Experience innovative treatments in exquisite settings. Relax and be pampered in four diamond luxury.

*Spa Trail sites are located in Point Clear, Mobile, Montgomery, Hoover, Florence and Opelika. For details, visit [rtjresorts.com](http://rtjresorts.com).*

*SPA Trail*  
ON THE ROBERT TRENT JONES GOLF TRAIL



# MY ALABAMA

FRANK STITT

## FACT FILE

Raised in North Alabama, Frank Stitt earned his culinary chops in the Bay Area and Europe before opening Highlands Bar & Grill in Birmingham, in 1982. A nominee every year since 2009, it received the James Beard Foundation Award for the most outstanding restaurant in America in 2018.

**Your restaurant was recently named most outstanding in America. What has been the reaction back home?**

"In a small way, it's a bit like the Crimson Tide winning the national championship. For a restaurant to be considered one of the best restaurants in the country, and then to finally get that acknowledgment, it is very much a thing that people throughout Alabama can feel a sense of ownership in and a sense of pride, so it really has been a wonderful experience."

**What are your thoughts on the Birmingham culinary scene?**

"It's been really gratifying to have a number of chefs that have worked with me and gone on to open restaurants. I think about Brian Somersshield who opened up El Barrio, an incredibly high-quality Mexican restaurant downtown, and this was really the event that helped create this blossoming and renaissance of downtown Birmingham.

"Now there is a great, diverse food culture. There is an incredible Indian restaurant at which my wife and I are regulars. There's a really cool, hip place called Cycle Cafe in the neighborhood of Woodlawn. So there are these little pockets of creativity and quality throughout downtown Birmingham and our area. There's a sense of community and diversity, with young people and old people, of all different incomes and from all different background, and it's great to have this little urban environment in Alabama."

**How gratifying was it to not only win the James Beard award, but shine a light on what Birmingham can offer?**

"I think people have some stereotypical ideas about Birmingham or Alabama, but then when you're faced with the idea that the most outstanding restaurant in America is in Birmingham, it causes everyone to refocus and think about the city in a different way. It's about a cultural sophistication. It's about a quality of life that you may not expect."

**How would you spend a free day in Birmingham?**

"If it were a Saturday morning, my wife and I would go to the Pepper Place farmers market and then continue that walk into our urban parks. We have an incredible downtown trail, the Rotary Trail, that leads to Railroad Park, which has won all kinds of awards for being one of the greatest urban parks in America. It is this gathering place for all of Birmingham, where you can see the cityscape, and makes me think of the High Line merged with Central Park in a very small way. That is part of it, and then I'd love to take a visitor out to the Barber Motorsports Museum, which is the greatest motorcycle and automobile museum in the world. If we could indulge in the time to participate in the Porsche driving school at the racetrack there, it is one of the most fun days you will ever have."

*"There are these little pockets of creativity and quality throughout downtown Birmingham"*



Governor Kay Ivey has set a goal to prepare 500,000 more highly-skilled Alabamians to enter the workforce by 2025.

# LOOKING AHEAD

WHAT'S ON THE HORIZON FOR ALABAMA?



**HISTORY HAS PROVEN** that economies aren't stationary. Industries rise and fall, and fortunes swell and fade.

In its early years, most of Birmingham's growth came via iron and steel, and now it's just one relatively small element in a much more diverse ecosystem. Seventy years ago, who would have imagined Huntsville becoming one of the South's leading innovation

hubs? Employment in Alabama's textile industry has fallen dramatically in recent decades, while the state has gone from zero to one of the nation's largest auto manufacturing centers in the space of just 25 years.

That raises the question, what's next? That's something that leaders across Alabama have been asking, and their response is manifest in the number

of incubators and entrepreneurial centers that have been emerging in every corner of the state. We're seeing growth in the number of tech and bioscience companies opening up here, both homegrown and from elsewhere, and the creation of the Alabama School of Cyber Technology and Engineering is illustrative of how the state is looking at the workforce needs of tomorrow's industry.

As we enter 2019, and Alabama's bicentennial, this could be considered one of the most exciting times in Alabama history. The last two years have seen more than 8 billion business dollars invested across the state, while here are more people at work—more than 2 million Alabamians—that at any time in its history.

"Our number-one objective is to accelerate the evolution of Alabama's economy to broaden prosperity for its citizens," says Secretary of Commerce Greg Canfield. "We want Alabama to be seen as a place where there are no obstacles blocking the path to success and a state where the odds aren't stacked against dreamers."

## THE ALABAMA OF TOMORROW

2020



### Blast off

The hard work of Marshall Space Flight Center is put to the test as NASA's Space Launch System is used on its first mission, marking a major moment in man's journey to deep space.

2021



### Fun and games

As the World Games comes to a close in Birmingham, media and visitors from around the planet reflect upon the state's welcoming nature and ability to put on major events.

2023



### Tourism blooms

Reports of a thriving food scene, world-class golf and heralded cultural and historical attractions bring more than 30 million visitors to Alabama in a single year.

2028



### Cyber center

The combined efforts of state government, its research universities and military installations have successfully established Alabama as a national hub for defending against cyber attacks.

2032



### Startup success

Alabama's emergence as an innovation capital is fully realized, as the state celebrates the establishment of a new Fortune 500 company that began life in one of its accelerators.

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POWERED BY **PEOPLE**.

# THIS IS Huntsville

ALABAMA



[asmartplace.com](http://asmartplace.com)



[cummingsresearchpark.com](http://cummingsresearchpark.com)



[hsvchamber.org](http://hsvchamber.org)

## BIOSCIENCE IS BOOMING IN BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

Anchored by UAB and Southern Research, life science companies are starting, growing and flourishing. With companies like Evonik, Oxford Pharmaceuticals, BioGX, Incysus and many others leading the way, Birmingham offers competitive advantages for researchers and life science startups.

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) is a world leader in research and patient care with \$562 million in annual research funding, ranking it 15th among public universities.

Bioscience companies like Evonik, Oxford Pharmaceuticals, BioGX, Incysus and others serve international markets from Birmingham.

The Alabama Drug Discovery Alliance is a partnership between UAB and Southern Research, a scientific research organization with seven FDA-approved drugs, that facilitates drug discovery and development and funds pilot projects.



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