Annual Report of the

FIVE-YEAR ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES
AND STRATEGIC GOALS

for The University of Alabama, 2019-2024

Year 1: July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

September 24, 2020
Dear UA Community:

We are pleased to present the inaugural Annual Report of the Five-Year Economic Development Priorities and Strategic Goals for The University of Alabama, 2019-2024. This Year One report summarizes activities and outcomes from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020 that support UA’s economic development goals. The report is not an exhaustive or comprehensive account of all the economic development activities occurring at UA over the past year. Rather, it informs and updates the UA community on specific progress the University is making towards its stated priorities and goals.

Economic development is an important responsibility of the state’s flagship academic institution. The University of Alabama seeks to prepare a job-ready workforce, extend programs to serve rural and urban communities, forge research partnerships, transfer technologies, foster innovation and scholarship, build small businesses, support industry and create jobs.

The University of Alabama’s Economic Development Council (EDC) was created to develop, guide and coordinate UA’s efforts and progress on its five-year economic development priorities and strategic goals. This economic development plan, created by the EDC, originates directly from the University’s mission, vision and strategic plan. The EDC designated 15 units across three colleges and the Office for Research and Economic Development as UA Economic Development Assets. These assets and their missions are highlighted following this cover letter. The assets are working in a coordinated manner to make progress on aims and strategic goals relevant to each of their missions.

The Plan and Year One Annual Report is organized under four priority themes:

- **Priority Theme I.** Provide Economic Development Services (Aim #1)
- **Priority Theme II.** Prepare Current and Future Workforce and Retain Talent in the State (Aims #2-3)
- **Priority Theme III.** Start, Recruit and Partner with Companies (Aims #4-6)
- **Priority Theme IV.** Measure and Evaluate the Overall Impact of UA on the Statewide Economy (Aim #7)

Some noteworthy advances and accomplishments include:

**Aim #1. Provide Economic Development-Related Services to Business, Communities and to the State of Alabama**

- UA created the Office for Economic & Business Engagement and its outreach center in South Alabama; aligned and coordinated resources and efforts of all assets to provide valuable economic development services at or near cost; and obtained significant external funding to support the overall economic development mission. In FY 2019, UA’s Economic Development Assets had 35 externally sponsored research or service awards totaling $8,408,128.

**Aim #2. Retain UA Student Talent in the State**

- UA significantly expanded and strengthened partnerships with major industry leaders in Alabama; spearheaded and/or participated with numerous events with external economic development groups and the UA Career Center; and created several student-led research projects that led directly to opportunities for these students.
Aim #3. Prepare Statewide Workforce for Future Jobs and Jobs of the Future

✓ UA’s Business Outreach Centers were instrumental in minimizing the economic impact of COVID-19 on business across the state and protected jobs of the future; and the UA Center for Economic Development and Center for Business and Economic Research collaborated with the Alabama Department of Commerce to provide vital workforce development support for many rural counties in Alabama.

Aim #4. Foster and Support Entrepreneurship of Faculty and Students

✓ UA strategically aligned its two start-up business incubators; hosted numerous events aimed at students, faculty and the community; and assisted entrepreneurs and their new companies with obtaining nondilutive start-up funding from grants.

Aim #5. Encourage and Cultivate Industry Partnerships

✓ UA launched the Tide Research Partnership Program to provide partnership incentives with collaborating companies; launched outreach efforts to partners in South Alabama; and established several meaningful public-private partnerships to support both its academic and research missions.

Aim #6. Recruit Knowledge-Based and Technology-Based Companies to the State

✓ UA leaders were named to several state and regional economic development boards and committees. In addition, several assets, including SafeState, Alabama Productivity Center and the Center for Business and Economic Research, among others, provided substantial expertise, research and service to companies and the state of Alabama.

Aim #7. Increase the Economic Impact of UA on the Statewide Economy

✓ UA continues to have significant and growing economic impact on the state of Alabama with every $1 invested by the state returning $18.53 in economic impact, totaling almost $3 billion and providing 13,784 jobs.

We believe this Annual Report demonstrates the tremendous breadth and impact of the economic development efforts supported. These efforts led to outcomes that enhanced the Alabama economy and provided more opportunities for our students. We are proud to represent UA and its contributions toward its economic development mission.

Roll Tide!

Russell J. Mumper
Vice President
Research & Economic Development
Chair, Economic Development Council

Dan Blakley
Associate Vice President
Economic & Business Engagement
Member, Economic Development Council
The University of Alabama Economic Development Assets and Their Mission Statements

College of Engineering

Alabama Industrial Assessment Center (AIAC)
The mission of AIAC is to train the engineers of tomorrow in energy-saving practices and assist manufacturers with energy conservation, waste reduction and productivity increases. [iac.university/center/UA](iac.university/center/UA)

Center for Sustainable Infrastructure (CSI)
The mission of CSI is to serve as an innovative technical resource, knowledge center and educational provider addressing critical issues related to sustainable infrastructure, whether it is at the local, regional, national or global level. [csi.eng.ua.edu/](csi.eng.ua.edu/)

The Cube
The mission of The Cube is to be student-centered and process-oriented, fostering and creating opportunities for students to immerse themselves in creative thinking, innovative projects and experiential learning through the responsible use of today’s cutting-edge technologies. [thecube.eng.ua.edu/](thecube.eng.ua.edu/)

College of Continuing Studies

UA SafeState
The mission of UA SafeState is to improve Alabama’s environment and workforce by helping companies and organizations eliminate exposure to safety, health and environmental hazards, thereby reducing the number of job-related accidents and injuries. [alabamasafestate.ua.edu/](alabamasafestate.ua.edu/)

Culverhouse College of Business

Alabama Center for Insurance Information and Research (ACIIR)
The mission of ACIIR is to provide highly credible information and research insight for the benefit of various stakeholders – including policymakers, the public, insurance companies, intermediaries, trade groups and others who need information concerning the management of risk – that contribute to the economic development of Alabama. [aciir.culverhouse.ua.edu/](aciir.culverhouse.ua.edu/)

Alabama Center for Real Estate (ACRE)
The mission of ACRE is to advance the profession of real estate in Alabama by providing relevant resources in the areas of research, education and outreach. [acre.culverhouse.ua.edu/](acre.culverhouse.ua.edu/)

Alabama Productivity Center (APC)
The mission of the APC is to enhance economic development in Alabama using UA innovation and resources to increase productivity in organizations by solving real-world problems while providing positive experiences for students. [apc.ua.edu/](apc.ua.edu/)

Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER)
The mission of CBER is to conduct and provide sponsored and service-based research and data services for Alabama and the nation at large in advancing The University of Alabama research and service mission in support of economic development throughout Alabama. [cber.culverhouse.ua.edu/](cber.culverhouse.ua.edu/)
The **EDGE Incubator and Accelerator**
The mission of The EDGE is to provide opportunities for entrepreneurs to help start-ups and to drive growth of their businesses. The EDGE supports both new and established firms by providing space and learning opportunities, all designed to help build and grow businesses, innovation and jobs. [edge.culverhouse.ua.edu/](edge.culverhouse.ua.edu/)

**Alabama Entrepreneurship Institute (AEI)**
The mission of AEI is to promote and support entrepreneurship across The University of Alabama. [aei.culverhouse.ua.edu/](aei.culverhouse.ua.edu/)

**Office for Research & Economic Development**

**Office for Economic & Business Engagement (OEBE)**
The mission of OEBE is to lead and coordinate economic development and outreach efforts at UA and to develop strong research partnerships with external stakeholders, especially industry, with the dual goal to increase the number of sponsored research projects and, at the same time, to create career and learning opportunities for UA students through these partnerships. [ua.edu/research](ua.edu/research)

**Office for Innovation & Commercialization (OIC)**
The mission of OIC is to protect and commercialize the innovations generated by UA faculty, staff and students, either through licenses to industry partners or the formation of spin-off enterprises based on UA technologies. [oic.ua.edu/](oic.ua.edu/)

**EDGE Labs**
The mission of EDGE Labs is to nurture and support technology-based UA start-up companies requiring wet laboratory-based space. [aei.culverhouse.ua.edu/edge-labs/](aei.culverhouse.ua.edu/edge-labs/)

**UA Center for Economic Development (UACED)**
The mission of UACED is to enhance the economic well-being of Alabama communities by providing technical assistance and linkages to resources. [uaced.ua.edu/](uaced.ua.edu/)

**Business Outreach Centers (ASBDC, AITC and APTC)**
The mission of the Business Outreach Centers is to enhance economic growth by making Alabama small businesses more competitive through the provision of technical assistance for start-up, access to capital, international trade and government contracting. The Centers include Alabama Small Business Development Center (ASBDC), Alabama International Trade Center (AITC) and Alabama Procurement Technical Assistance Center (APTAC). [asbdc.org/](asbdc.org/), [aitc.ua.edu/](aitc.ua.edu/) and [al-ptac.org/](al-ptac.org/)
Priority Theme I. Provide Economic Development Services

Aim #1. Provide Economic Development Related Services to Businesses, Communities and to the State of Alabama

YEAR ONE AIM #1 SUMMARY

UA Economic Development Assets have an important role to support businesses and communities in the state of Alabama. To advance Aim #1, UA created the Office for Economic & Business Engagement and its outreach center in South Alabama; aligned and coordinated resources and efforts of all assets to provide valuable economic development services at or near cost; and obtained significant external funding to support the overall economic development mission. In FY 2019, UA’s Economic Development Assets had 35 externally sponsored research or service awards totaling $8,408,128.

Strategic Goal 1.1. UA will enhance the economic well-being and sustainability of Alabama businesses, communities, and the state by providing, at or near cost, services and technical assistance centered on planning, leadership and professional development, continuing education, economic development, and economic diversification.

YEAR ONE

- As part of ORED’s Five-Year Strategic Plan, the Office for Economic & Business Engagement (OEBE) was developed and an affiliate vice president was recruited to lead the office.
- ORED relocated four economic development centers from the Culverhouse College of Business to OEBE. This includes UACED and the Business Outreach Centers (SBDC, AITC and PTAC).
- OEBE hired a business engagement and research operations manager to expand UA outreach in the Mobile and South Alabama area.
- OEBE met with many organizations and local businesses across the state to form relationships for the promotion of industry-sponsored research and service projects.
- ORED personnel participated in collaborative efforts in COVID-19 screenings at 14 sites in four rural Alabama communities.
- The Business Outreach Centers provided management and technical assistance to 4,277 Alabama small businesses in all 67 counties for business start-up, growth, access to capital, international trade and government contracting.
- The Business Outreach Centers assisted with the start-up of 205 new businesses. SBDC worked closely with the state’s incubators, banks, accounting firms, municipalities, economic development authorities and chambers of commerce to support and assist individuals and companies interested in pursuing new business start-ups.
- The Business Outreach Centers are creating a significant positive impact on Alabama’s economy.
- AIAC completed 17 comprehensive energy audits for manufacturers across Alabama and offered 100 recommendations for potential cost savings of over $4.8 million.
- UA SafeState conducted 120 OSHA certification training sessions, 117 environmental training sessions and presented 327 OSHA consultation visits which prevented 162 injuries and reduced workers’ compensation costs by $4,881,451 for Alabama businesses.
- UA SafeState supported COVID-19 relief efforts by providing 271 OSHA consultations and eight workplace safety seminars for businesses under limited operations.
- UA SafeState conducted 10 environmental compliance audits and 46 environmental testing events which created a cost avoidance of citations/regulatory actions of $140,000 (minimum citation) to $1,400,000 (maximum citation).
o UA SafeState led Environmental Region IV EPA Pollution Prevention activities that resulted in an average of $120,000 cost avoidance per facility review.
o ACIIR provided 1,500 hours of credited continuing education and training for 990 insurance and real estate professionals on FORTIFIED™ construction of houses and commercial structures.
o ACIIR produced applied and fundamental research on consumer and firm decision-making for resilience to catastrophic losses.
o ACRE presented two statewide conferences and four industry-organization forums for Alabama commercial and residential real estate industry professionals that provided continuing education credits for real estate licensees, attorneys, appraisers and CPAs. The Alabama real estate industry accounted for $33 billion or 14.3% of the gross state product in 2019.
o ACRE provided an on-demand instructor to the Alabama Association of REALTORS® to teach real estate technology classes, CE credit and designations for state licensees.
o ACRE provided online self-managed CE classes to assist Alabama licensees with their renewal requirements and a monthly live cram course to increase the state salesperson exam pass rates.
o APC completed 125 projects with 60 Alabama organizations to produce $11.4 million in positive impacts, including increased sales, retained sales, cost savings and workforce practice investments. In addition, industry partners reported the creation of 20 jobs and the retention of 31 jobs as a result of these projects.
o APC partnered with and/or was retained by the following key economic development and workforce development stakeholders in the past year:
  • Alabama Automotive Manufacturers Association (AAMA)
  • Alabama Community College System (ACCS)
  • Alabama Departments of Commerce; Economic and Community Affairs; and Labor
  • Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT) Aviation Training Center (Mobile)
  • Alabama Workforce Councils (Regions 3, 4, 6 and 7)
  • AIDT Maritime Training Center (Mobile)
  • AIDT Workforce Training Center (Birmingham)
  • Alabama Technology Network (ATN) Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Affiliate
  • Alabama-Germany Partnership
  • Business Council of Alabama (BCA) Manufacturer of the Year
  • Chambers of Commerce (Mobile and West Alabama)
  • Economic Development Association of Alabama (EDAA)
  • Japan-America Society of Alabama
  • Manufacture Alabama (MA)
  • The University of Alabama at Birmingham Schools of Public Health; Engineering; and Business
  • The University of Alabama in Huntsville School of Business
  • University of South Alabama School of Engineering and Department of Management Information Systems
o APC provided services through its internship and professional services model to automotive, chemical, metals/advanced materials, corporate operations, distribution/logistics, information technology, bioscience and agricultural products/food production industries.
o CBER’s annual report highlights its mission and sponsored projects, services to the state (including substate areas and businesses), collaborations, budget and revenues, publications and reports, conferences, presentations and speaking engagements, and internal to UA service and
outreach activities in support of economic development, including workforce development in Alabama.

- UACED collaborated with multiple Alabama state agencies on the following multi-year projects:
  - Strategies for Workforce Development in Alabama Rural Areas - Alabama Department of Commerce
  - Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan - Alabama Department of Economic/Community Affairs
  - Phase II Redevelopment of Gulf State Park - Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

- UACED personnel provided technical assistance to 34 counties and 42 communities throughout Alabama in the areas of community and economic development, planning, leadership development, strategic planning and promotion of the underserved areas of the state at national and international trade shows to support Alabama's $16.8 billion tourism and visitation economy.

- UACED was actively involved in the statewide bicentennial project, creating positive impacts at the local, county and regional level.

- UACED supported professional development by conducting 20 workshops focused on community, economic development and economic diversification topics that drew a total of 1,141 participants and six workshops on leadership development with a total of 399 participants.

- In FY 2019, all of UA's Economic Development Assets had 35 externally sponsored research or service awards totaling $8,408,128, which was 6.35% of UA's total external sponsored awards. The seven largest awards were:
  - U.S. Small Business Administration ($2.76 million) (Business Outreach Centers)
  - U.S. Department of Labor ($1.1 million) (UA SafeState)
  - Department of Defense - Defense Logistics Agency ($1.06 million) (Business Outreach Centers)
  - U.S. Department of Energy ($1.05 million) (AIAC)
  - Alabama Industrial Development Training Institute ($1.0 million) (CBER)
  - State of Alabama ($0.786 million) (Business Outreach Centers)
  - Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources ($0.66 million) (UACED)

**Strategic Goal 1.2.** UA will pursue its economic development related activities and services, with a specific emphasis on those activities and services that directly and substantially lead to workforce development and jobs for UA graduates.

**YEAR ONE**

- OEBE expanded the Mobile chapter of the UA National Alumni Association’s annual recruiting event, Showcase Mobile, by hosting it at GulfQuest and promoting it to students as a career fair. The event drew 40 local companies and 100 local UA students, resulting in multiple job and internship offers.

- ACIIR sponsored and participated in Alabama Insurance Day (I-Day), an event for students and professionals to interact and learn about insurance.

- ACRE launched the Collegiate Career Assistance Program to advance workforce development, internships and post-graduation employment for UA students. Partnerships were cultivated with industry leaders and UA real estate program graduates to provide mentorship, seminars, panels
and interactive Zoom sessions. ACRE coordinated the **inaugural real estate job fair** at The EDGE in spring 2020 that was attended by approximately 100 students.

- CBER conducted research covering **Alabama Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act** (WIOA) regions that focuses on workforce development. The work is sponsored by the Alabama Industrial Development Training and the workforce reports are published on the [Alabama Department of Labor](http://www.labor.alabama.gov) website.

- The Business Outreach Centers provided internships for 20 UA students who gained real-life experience working on research projects for Alabama’s small businesses. The internship experience enhances the students’ ability to secure jobs after graduation.
Priority Theme II. Prepare Current and Future Workforce and Retain Talent in the State

Aim #2. Retain UA Student Talent in the State

YEAR ONE AIM #2 SUMMARY

A core objective of UA-supported economic development activity is to create opportunities for our students to engage in ways that promote their personal growth and prepare them to make a meaningful impact on society after graduation. Ideally, high-demand jobs are available, and students choose to stay in the state of Alabama to pursue their career interests. Aim #2 focuses on the efforts by UA Economic Development Assets to address the needs of a talented, career-ready graduate of the University. These needs include available jobs in targeted industries and communities that offer attractive, quality work, life and play lifestyles.

To advance Aim #2, UA significantly expanded and strengthened partnerships with major industry leaders in Alabama; spearheaded and/or participated in numerous events with external economic development groups and the UA Career Center; and created several student-led research projects developing further opportunities for these students.

**Strategic Goal 2.1.** UA will develop a Workforce and Talent Retention plan that aligns with Accelerate Alabama 2.0/3.0 and partners with key stakeholders (e.g., Alabama Workforce Council, Chambers of Commerce, Development Authorities, Alabama Department of Commerce, Economic Development Partnership of Alabama, Economic Development Association of Alabama, and businesses).

**YEAR ONE**

- The EDC is in the planning stages to develop a comprehensive workforce and talent retention plan, building on a number of current initiatives as highlighted below.
- ORED partnered with the Division of Advancement to secure a $1.4 million endowment from the Alabama Power Foundation to support business innovation, entrepreneurship, small business growth and talent retention in the state. The gift established the [Alabama Power Endowed Innovation and Talent Retention Fund](#), managed by the vice president for research & economic development through the OEBE.
- OEBE sourced and led multiple industry introductions and exploratory conversations between business and UA institute and center directors, faculty and staff to create collaborative research projects that will enhance the statewide economy and create jobs.
- OEBE established partnerships and coordinated efforts with economic development organizations across the state including chambers of commerce, economic and industrial development authorities, business alliances and others to enhance outcomes.
- OEBE is in the process of formalizing a major public/private partnership with Alabama Power Corporation related to EnergyTech and smart cities concepts. EnergyTech, a first iteration of TechStars, focuses solely on supporting start-up companies seeking to commercialize technologies related to the energy industry – battery storage and charging, smart home/business/community, electric vehicle, connectivity, renewable energy and cyber. This partnership will provide unique opportunities for UA students and faculty to directly engage with cohort start-up companies and EnergyTech in order to broaden their skill sets and help advance Alabama’s economy. This partnership will extend to and involve several UA colleges and schools.
- ACRE partnered with Alabama Secretary of Labor to begin developing a real estate-related workforce and talent retention plan.
CBER's workforce reports, demographic projections and economic forecasts provide insight to workforce and economic development planning at the state, regional, county and community levels as well as for businesses. Workforce reports can be found at the Alabama Department of Labor website under, Reports and Surveys.

**Strategic Goal 2.2.** Each year, UA will work with partners to increase the number and percentage of UA students remaining in the state after graduation to pursue employment or educational opportunities. Each year the UA Career Center asks students who graduate from UA to complete the First Destination Survey. As a benchmark, in 2018 about 41% of UA’s graduating students who completed the survey reported that they, “remained in the state after graduation to pursue employment or educational opportunities.”

**YEAR ONE**

- OEBE is collaborating with the CBER and the UA Office of Institutional Research and Assessment to develop a more quantitative method for collecting and measuring student retention data.
- OEBE, in partnership with the UA Career Center and over 20 Alabama-based company stakeholders, conducted the inaugural virtual Hired in Alabama Career Fair attended by over 100 students. The Alabama Secretary of Labor and Alabama Workforce Councils were included to promote careers with company operations in the state.
- OEBE partnered with UA Career Center to promote Alabama as a place for students to begin their career after graduation. Chamber and city officials of Birmingham, Huntsville and Mobile were included to host virtual community/career fairs for students.
- OEBE introduced faculty to potential industry partners to explore sponsored research projects with the potential to involve students and lead to future employment.
- ACRE worked with Alabama real estate industry professionals to identify employment opportunities and match UA graduates with those jobs; and maintained a database of real estate student profiles to showcase the next generation of real estate talent to employers.
- APC had a total of 70 UA student interns working in the program, 39 of which have graduated. Based on feedback from APC intern surveys, 54% of graduating interns received offers and are currently working in Alabama.
- CBER collaborated with the Alabama Department of Labor to identify high-wage, high-demand, fast-growing and critical career opportunities useful for graduate retention purposes.
- APC’s internship model allowed UA students to participate in real industry projects, learning industry-based practices that enabled them to shorten orientation periods. APC programs have trained 350 individuals, including UA students and Alabama employees in various industries.
- EDGE Labs graduated start-up companies that employed six former UA students.
- The EDGE incubating companies created more than 20 jobs for the local economy.

**Aim #3. Prepare Statewide Workforce for Future Jobs and Jobs of the Future**

**YEAR ONE AIM #3 SUMMARY**

Economic Development Assets supported statewide workforce development through the enhancement of programs, partnerships with industry and other colleges and universities. To advance Aim #3, UA’s Business Outreach Centers were instrumental in minimizing the economic impact of COVID-19 on business across the state and protected jobs of the future; and UACED and CBER collaborated with the Alabama
Department of Commerce to provide vital workforce development support for many rural counties in Alabama.

**Strategic Goal 3.1.** UA will develop initiatives and collaborative programs to enhance the skills of the current Alabama workforce, particularly among underserved areas, through continuing studies and continuing educational programs in an effort to ensure a strong workforce for existing and new businesses.

**YEAR ONE**

- OEBE hosted Civil Air Patrol Day at GulfQuest. The Montgomery-based Civil Air Patrol executive team met with UA leaders from UA Cyber Initiative, Center for Advanced Public Safety (CAPS) and Alabama Transportation Institute (ATI). Through this partnership, ATI and CAPS are now planning an annual teacher workshop to provide drones and encourage high school students to pursue STEM careers.
- OEBE supported the development of College of Engineering’s Alabama iMaDE, focused on creating a workforce aligned with the needs of “Industry 4.0” by increasing awareness and collaborative support from industry, government and other academic institutions.
- UA SafeState presented 52 Health and Safety Management (HSM) online certifications to workers in Alabama. The HSM certificate program involves 10 courses that comprise over 100 hours of training.
- UA SafeState successfully led 124 students through virtual learning opportunities using online resources after COVID-19 restrictions were put in place.
- UA SafeState trained 1,200 workers in OSHA compliance and safety regulatory guidelines, and 700 workers in environmental and sustainability methods.
- UA SafeState conducted the Governor’s Safety and Health Conference with 400 attendees for three days of training in August 2019. This conference addressed key issues affecting the work environment and provided pertinent information on current topics of interest. Topics covered a wide range of occupational safety and health subjects plus updates on regulatory matters.
- ACRE began developing an initiative to increase diversity in the real estate industry through outreach to historically black colleges and universities, including Tuskegee University and Stillman College, to promote careers in real estate and create programs to teach the essential skills necessary for a successful career. This includes working closely with the Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM), CCIM Institute and International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC).
- APC personnel provided technical assistance and training to business and industry all over Alabama. These programs include plant layout and flow, advance manufacturing practices, lean manufacturing training, quality and environmental management system training, and leadership development and training. APC workforce development model has been recognized by the Alabama Department of Commerce.
- APC served 60 businesses and industries in Alabama located in 15 rural counties. These counties included the rural and underserved areas of Franklin, Limestone, Morgan, Marshal, DeKalb, Blount, Bibb, Green and Coffee counties.
- CBER interacted with the Governor's Office of Education and Workforce Transformation, the ADOC and the ADOL on issues regarding preparation for the workforce of the future as well as forecasting future workforce needs of the Alabama economy.
Business Outreach Centers conducted 187 workshops with over 4,000 attendees and assisted with the start-up of 219 small businesses. Clients reported the following outcomes as a result of UA assistance:

- 2,115 jobs created and retained
- $94.7 million secured capital
- $183 million government contracts for the procurement of Alabama goods and services

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, SBDC delivered 55 Small Business Association Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) and Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) training events to 5,500 participants. Funding in the amount of $117 million was issued to small businesses as a result of SBDC assistance.

- EIDL advances awarded to 434 businesses
- EIDL awarded to 106 businesses
- PPP awarded to 773 businesses

PTAC conducted three government procurement matchmaker events in Huntsville, Montgomery and Mobile, which brought together 100 government purchasing officials for individual meetings with 305 potential small business suppliers to discuss specific contracting opportunities.

UACED collaborated with CBER over funding from Alabama Department of Commerce to focus on improving the current conditions of the workforce in 40 Alabama rural counties. This work included assessments, strategic planning and technical assistance to nine city school systems, 18 county school systems and five training programs with a total of 282 participants.

**Strategic Goal 3.2.** Each year UA will evaluate its initiatives and collaborative programs related to enhancing the Alabama workforce, concerning the number and types of participants, quality and quantity of activities and achievement of targeted goals and outcomes.

**YEAR ONE**

The EDC recognizes the positive impact the UA Economic Development Assets had on preparing the current and future workforce and retaining talent in the state. These efforts created career opportunities for our students and for the statewide labor force. Collaborative efforts between UA, industry and other organizations have led to enhanced skills training, new jobs and a more dynamic statewide economy.

With support of the Alabama Power Innovation and Talent Retention Fund, UA was able to create more opportunities for innovators to excel and focus on creating the jobs of tomorrow. Our commitment to innovation extends beyond campus as we have engaged with technology incubators across the state, including the newly formed partnership with the EnergyTech accelerator. These expanded relationships will support the successful development of start-up companies across the state and provide opportunities for our students to engage while in school and perhaps be employed upon graduation. Additionally, seven of 10 technology companies incubating at EnergyTech are from out of state. Our aim is to demonstrate the value of remaining in Alabama after completion of the three-month course due to the vast resources available, including a strong partnership with UA.

All the efforts listed in Aim #2 and Aim #3 added value to our students on campus and/or to communities and businesses across all 67 counties in the state. In this last year, partnerships were strengthened with major metropolitan areas in Alabama which have enhanced their city’s brand and
created awareness of local opportunities for our students to remain in the state after graduation. In addition, our Economic Development Assets focused on rural counties to assist local leadership with creation of the right conditions for successful workforce development, industry growth and recruitment.

Finally, OEBE is collaborating with the Center for Business and Economic Research and the UA Office of Institutional Research and Assessment to develop a more quantitative method for collecting and measuring student retention data, including statewide labor data.
Priority Theme III. Start, Recruit and Partner with Companies

Aim #4. Foster and Support Entrepreneurship of Faculty and Students

YEAR ONE AIM #4 SUMMARY

Entrepreneurship provides economic growth through innovation. UA’s commitment to supporting the success of entrepreneurs has never been stronger. There have been significant actions taken over the last year to demonstrate this commitment. To advance Aim #4, UA strategically aligned its two start-up business incubators; hosted numerous events aimed at students, faculty and the community; and assisted entrepreneurs and their new companies with obtaining nondilutive start-up funding from grants.

**Strategic Goal 4.1.** UA will ensure that its two start-up company incubator facilities (The EDGE Incubator and Accelerator and the Bama Technology Incubator, BTI) meet or exceed best practices as university-based incubator facilities and remain financially sustainable. The EDGE Incubator and Accelerator and BTI will collaborate to develop mutually beneficial and synergistic programs.

YEAR ONE

- Bama Technology Incubator’s name was changed to EDGE Labs.
- ORED and the Culverhouse College of Business enhanced support of UA innovation and entrepreneurship by strategically and programmatically aligning The EDGE and EDGE Labs.
- The EDGE hosted more than 200 events with an estimated attendance of more than 3,500 people.
- AEI and EDGE personnel were featured as guest speakers for four classes and widely promoted EDGE events, services and benefits to the student population.
- AEI and EDGE personnel presented at events across the state (e.g. economic forums, Ignite Alabama) and participated in networking with other incubators, businesses and alumni in the state.
- AEI and The EDGE conducted over 70 recorded business consultations with student entrepreneurs and business owners and engaged other units including the Business Outreach Centers and OIC.
- AEI and The EDGE hosted a five-part series of workshops titled "Building a Business" that served a total of 54 individuals. No fees were charged to participate hence, the series was able to draw an audience that included underserved community members.
- AEI hosted the Alabama Upstarts TV show at The EDGE and 12 teams participated. Alabama Upstarts advertises itself as an Alabama-centric version of Shark Tank. The program provided increased visibility to the participating student, faculty and community companies and increased their chances of finding customers, partners or investors.
- The EDGE hosted 61 Culverhouse College of Business LIFT open-to-the-public events that offered no-cost workshops for basic computer skills, public speaking and more to community members.
Strategic Goal 4.2. UA will increase the number of knowledge-based and technology-based start-up companies in and successfully graduating from its incubator facilities each year.

YEAR ONE

- ORED and the Culverhouse College of Business began co-management of the National Science Foundation (NSF) Innovation Corps (I-Corps) program that trained 60 start-up teams, 202 students and 15 faculty, leading to $1,725,000 in technology commercialization grants from NSF.
  - UA continues success in the national business start-up program
  - Two UA technologies are part of a national start-up program
- Several UA Economic Development Assets (AEI, OEBE, The EDGE, EDGE Labs and the Business Outreach Centers) collaborated throughout the year to develop, support and enhance numerous programs and events including:
  - The inaugural Faculty/Staff Innovation Pitch Competition
  - 2019 and 2020 Crimson Entrepreneurship Academy (CEA)
  - 2020 Aldag Business Plan Competition
  - Entrepreneurship Minor
  - 2019 River Pitch Competition
  - 2020 Community Competition
- OIC provided technical and intellectual property assistance to two start-up companies located in the EDGE Labs.
- In 2019, EDGE Labs incubated five high-tech start-up companies: 525 Solutions, ThruPore Technologies, JAQ Energy, ForeSense Technologies and Sand Spirit. Within the last year, four companies graduated, and another start-up company moved into EDGE Labs.
- The EDGE saw growth in knowledge-based start-ups being served. In June 2019, 50 individuals across 28 business operated out of The EDGE. By June 2020, this grew to 90 individuals across 38 organizations.
- The EDGE has incubated many student and community-based start-ups including High Five Studios, Trips4Trade, Gravitate and TankR, all of which operate in Tuscaloosa. The EDGE also supported the recruitment and growth of Ambulnz, Camgian and Curbside Commissary.

Aim #5. Encourage and Cultivate Industry Partnerships

YEAR ONE AIM #5 SUMMARY

As a flagship university, UA strives to be the go-to partner for industry in the state. These partnerships lead to the creation of opportunities for our students, new technologies and jobs. Over the last year, UA has sharpened its focus on building and creating mutually beneficial partnerships with industry. To advance Aim #5, UA launched the Tide Research Partnership Program to provide partnership incentives with collaborating companies; launched outreach efforts to partners in South Alabama; and established several meaningful public-private partnerships to support both its academic and research missions.
**Strategic Goal 5.1.** UA will refine its expertise in strategic research and academic areas, allowing industries to rely upon us for expert knowledge, advice, performance and talent.

**YEAR ONE**

- OEBE hosted industry partner campus visits to meet with Cyber Institute and Institute of Business Analytics and explore potential research opportunities.
- Through our outreach center at GulfQuest, OEBE facilitated connections in South Alabama between multiple industries and the Alabama Transportation Institute, including Millard Maritime, Amtrak, Mobile Airport Authority, CSX and Mississippi Export Railroad, to discuss grants and partnership opportunities in collaborative research projects.
- OEBE and the executive director of GulfQuest facilitated a meeting with UACED, which led to the “Rebranding GulfQuest” marketing proposal. GulfQuest’s board has indicated future economic projects will be considered with UACED.
- AIAC employed, mentored and trained 17 undergraduate students and three graduate students in manufacturing energy usage and management.
- AIAC organized and held a one-day "Fundamentals of Compressed Air" workshop on campus, co-sponsored by Blake and Pendleton (regional compressed air sales and service providers). Seven of our IAC students and two faculty members attended this workshop, among many others from local industry in the area.
- AIAC supported 10 students and three faculty that successfully passed the Understanding ISO 50001 online course offered at Georgia Tech. ISO 50001 is the international standard for energy management systems.
- CSI formed a working group with the Wind Hazard and Infrastructure Performance Center, a center of the NSF Industry-University Cooperative Research Center, to intensify collaboration with insurance and construction companies.
- UA SafeState answered 4,517 regulatory and educational questions related to COVID-19 for Alabama businesses.
- UA SafeState published articles, wrote reviews and presented scientific applied research for the American Society of Safety Professionals (including Professional Safety, a peer-reviewed journal), American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) and the Journal of Environmental Occupational Health as well as gave 15 presentations at local, regional, state, national and international conferences.
- ACIIR developed two data analytics tools to help insurance companies and regulators detect problematic developments at an early stage.
- ACRE served as a data warehouse and provided monthly data reports servicing Alabama's residential real estate market. The center regularly produced and published articles, webinars and podcasts on relevant topics to Alabama's real estate industry and were routinely interviewed and invited to speak at local, state and national events.
- APC engagement model leveraged its longtime relationship with the NIST-MEP and ATN organizations. These included adapting a service delivery model to accommodate Alabama small and medium sized manufacturers with technical assistance and training. Through industry relationships, APC Advisory Board referrals, ATN referrals and marketing efforts, APC engaged both large and small industry in Alabama.
**Strategic Goal 5.2.** UA will develop engagement and contracting policies and processes that are beneficial to maintaining sustainable industry partnerships.

**YEAR ONE**

- ORED hired an assistant vice president for research and technology agreements.
- ORED developed and launched the Tide Research Partnership (TRP) Program. The TRP Program significantly promotes industry research partnerships with the goal of growing research enterprise and its impact while providing opportunities for UA students. The TRP Program allows a company the option to prepay a fee when executing a sponsored research agreement in exchange for 1% royalty fee for exclusive worldwide rights to all intellectual property resulting from the research.
- OIC completed a one-year pilot partnership with an outside firm to assess and market UA intellectual property. The pilot informed future types of partnerships OIC will pursue.
- ORED changed the name of the Office for Technology Transfer to the Office for Innovation & Commercialization and will hire a director.
- ORED created a working group for commercialization of UA innovations that do not meet patentability requirements.

**Strategic Goal 5.3.** UA will engage industry and other external partners around core research and service disciplines at UA with the primary goal to increase the number of sponsored research awards and contracts and service leading to demonstrable impact and outcomes.

**YEAR ONE**

- Through a coordinated effort led by OEIBE, UA emphasized to key external partners its excellence in signature research initiatives demonstrated by the Alabama Research Institutes including Transportation, Water, Cyber and Life Research, as well as the Alabama Analytical Research Center. In addition, there were emerging research initiatives in in-space and advanced manufacturing, rural health and advanced materials. UA placed a strong emphasis on how its annual federal priorities were aligned to Alabama research institutes. For FY 2020 and FY 2021, 11 and 21 projects were put forward by UA as major federal priorities, respectively.
- The vice president for research & economic development led efforts in collaboration with the Colleges of Engineering, Business and Arts & Sciences to expand the partnership between The University of Alabama and NASA’s Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC). UA and NASA’s MSFC signed a memorandum of understanding to further develop mutually beneficial areas relating to advanced and in-space manufacturing.
- Alabama Transportation Institute (ATI) assisted the state with the passage of the Rebuild Alabama Act and spearheaded a successful $16.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation to support traffic management through technology development and deployment.
- ORED created a shared economic development incubator and industry outreach center located at GulfQuest in Mobile.
- OEIBE planned and prepared for an inaugural Industry Engagement Day at GulfQuest in Mobile. Originally scheduled for April 3, 2020, the event has been moved to 2021. The event is being planned as a model for similar events across the state.
- Important current or planned on-campus collaborations were solidified:
  - United States Army Corps of Engineer Tribal Nations Technical Center of Expertise
- **United States Geological Survey’s Hydrologic Instrumentation Facility**
  - ORED developed the UA Rural Health Commitment with the College of Community Health Sciences.
  - OEBE identified several industry partnering opportunities for UA faculty in the areas of manufacturing, cyber security, ecological management, global health and telemedicine. Discussions with key faculty and potential partners are ongoing.
  - ACIIR personnel presented at several state and national meetings:
    - **Alabama Association of Floodplain Managers** Fall Conference for engineers and certified floodplain managers (CFM), “Resilience in Alabama,” Gulf Shores, AL (October 2019)
    - **State Insurance Trade Association (SITA)** Conference, “Risk-Based Pricing of Property and Liability Insurance,” Gulf Shores, AL (October 2019)
    - **Insurance Information Institute** joint industry forum/communication board meeting, “Communicating Effectively about Insurance Pricing and Affordability,” New York, NY (January 2020)
    - **Louisiana Department of Insurance (LDI)** Conference for insurance agents and adjusters, Baton Rouge, LA (February 2020)
    - **National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies (NAMIC)** Management Conference (June 2020)
  - UA continued building partnerships with industry sponsors related to grants and contracts. As a result, industry-sponsored awards increased 59.2% from $4.1 million in FY 2018 to $6.6 million in FY 2019 and accounts for almost 5% of sponsored awards. As of May 31, 2020, UA was awarded over $3.5 million industry-sponsored contracts with an expected increase as the fiscal year continues.

**Strategic Goal 5.4.** UA will increase the number of license agreements with companies annually.

**YEAR ONE**

- ORED developed and launched the new Intellectual Property (IP) Gap Fund to both enhance the value of intellectual property to UA and increase the likelihood for licensing and industry partnerships. The specific objectives of the IP Gap Fund are:
  - Further reduce an invention to practice
  - De-risk the technology
  - Increase the value of the IP
  - Increase the likelihood for licensing
  - Enhance the opportunity to parlay the IP into a long-term partnership with industry
- Through the IP Gap Fund, ORED made a joint investment with the College of Education for the commercialization of body composition assessment technology developed within the college.
- EDGE Labs increased opportunities for potential technology licensing to student start-ups through collaboration with UA STEM Path to the MBA program. Student teams validated and built business models around selected NASA-patented technologies through the participation of our I-Corps Site program (ME 491 - Lean Product Development course).
- OIC provided technical assistance to over 35 faculty and community members regarding intellectual property protection, intellectual property patentability, patent applications and start-up companies.
The number of license agreements held steady between FY 2018 and FY 2019 at two per year. To date in FY 2020, one license agreement has been executed.

**Aim #6. Recruit Knowledge-Based and Technology-Based Companies to the State**

**YEAR ONE AIM #6 SUMMARY**

UA’s most valuable assets are its students and intellectual capital. These assets are attractive to industry leaders considering Alabama for relocation or expansion. We strive to support external economic development groups in their mission to recruit companies to the state. To advance Aim #6, UA leaders were named to several state and regional economic development boards and committees. In addition, several assets, including SafeState, APC and the Center for Business and Economic Research among others, provided substantial expertise, research and service to companies and the state.

**Strategic Goal 6.1.** UA will be a strong partner with local, regional, and state entities by quickly and effectively accessing data and communicating insights vital to recruit knowledge-based and technology-based companies to the state, as well as supporting existing companies in the state.

**YEAR ONE**

- UA enjoys key participation and collaboration with key economic development partners in the state. This helps to effectively support and address key company prospects’ needs pertaining to innovation, research and development, and workforce development. For example:
  - The vice president for research & economic development serves as an ex-officio member of the executive committee of the Tuscaloosa County Industrial Development Authority and of the board of directors of the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama.
  - The associate vice president for economic and business engagement has been selected to serve as an ex-officio member of the board of directors of the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama and as a member of the Shelton State Community College ACCS ASPIRE 2030 Workforce and Economic Development Subcommittee.
  - AITC’s senior trade advisor serves on the BIO Alabama trade association’s board and assisted the association with a survey of Alabama biotech-related companies.
  - ACRE’s director of research was also the chief economist for the Certified Commercial Investor Member (CCIM) Institute, and ACRE jointly published three research papers with CCIM.
- ORED and OEBE worked closely with economic development leaders across the state to position UA resources in support of targeted industry recruitment.
- OEBE’s GulfQuest obtained an invitation for ATI to attend a PEP (Partners for Environmental Progress) reverse trade show to speak to hundreds of local businesses at their annual transportation seminar on Oct. 17, 2019, on the topic, “Transportation: Red Light or Green Light for Economic Development?”
- AIAC worked closely with Alabama utility account representatives to identify three manufacturing facilities in need of energy advice and worked directly with industry partners on these assessments.
- ACIIR worked with the Alabama Department of Insurance to encourage new insurance companies to enter Alabama. ACIIR specifically provided analysis of the relationship between insurance premium tax rates and insurance employment at the state level.
ACRE and CBER provided sponsored research and services to assist local, regional and state entities with recruitment of knowledge- and technology-based companies.

APC supported recruitment of companies to the state by working with chambers of commerce, Alabama Department of Commerce, AIDT and the Alabama Community College System.

APC was an important collaborator of the Alabama FAME Program to support major automotive manufacturers in Alabama and is currently working with their supply chain companies.

The EDGE worked with the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama to recruit a former UA student-led company, Ambulnz, an on-demand ambulance service provided to Tuscaloosa, in 2019. Ambulnz is now growing their business at The EDGE.

AITC hired a director of international business development to focus on assisting existing Alabama technology and biotechnology businesses.

The AITC organized two workshops on the SBIR and STTR programs with 181 attendees from the state’s engineering, scientific and research and development companies. The content also included government-funded research opportunities on COVID-19 solutions.


**Strategic Goal 6.2.** UA will build regional and state capacity to translate innovations into career opportunities for UA students through industry partnerships and commercialization assistance to innovators and entrepreneurs.

**YEAR ONE**

OEBE worked with Alabama utility to assist in matching their business customers, UA researchers and their grant specialists to seek funding opportunities.

APC supported work at The Edge Incubator and Accelerator in Tuscaloosa and Innovation Depot in Birmingham. A recent project included supporting Slade Environmental at Innovation Depot through an internship project that assisted in implementing an ISO 9001 QMS, allowing the organization to bid on projects with new clients.

AEI established relationships with the Alabama Capital Network, the Alabama Futures Fund and the AIM Group. As AEI’s angel network further develops, there will be additional commercialization opportunities for EDGE start-ups.

AEI established relationships with other incubator and accelerator facilities, including Innovation Depot in Birmingham and Innovation Portal in Mobile. These facilities could be a landing pad for UA entrepreneurs who choose to exit Tuscaloosa yet remain in Alabama.

The AITC hired one UA graduate for a full-time professional position to assist companies with export market development. The position also provides support to the SBDC capital access team on financing projects for small businesses.
Strategic Goal 6.3. Each year, UA will document and measure its successful contributions to recruiting companies to the state, and its support of existing companies in the state.

YEAR ONE

- APC completed its annual report on supporting existing companies in the state and helping the state recruit new companies.
- ACRE worked closely with its external partners, including its national network and Alabama cabinet, to provide real estate data and economic insights that assist with recruiting companies to the state. For example, a REIT utilized ACRE expertise in their site selection and eventual acquisition of the Walmart distribution center in Mobile.
- CBER provided economic impact analyses for ADOC and others to aid industry recruitment. The website that assisted economic developers in the state with this activity (UA Economic Development Web Tools for Alabama state and counties) is currently suspended.
- The Business Outreach Centers tracked the outcomes and impact of their technical assistance services with its small business customers. For this reporting period, the results included 205 new business start-ups; 4,158 jobs created; $217.4 million of capital infusion; $132.2 million in prime contract awards; and $3.3 million in subcontract awards.
Priority Theme IV. Measure and Evaluate the Overall Impact of UA on the Statewide Economy

Aim #7. Increase the Economic Impact of UA on the Statewide Economy

YEAR ONE AIM #7 SUMMARY

UA continues to have significant and growing economic impact on the state of Alabama with every $1 invested by the state returning $18.53 in economic impact, totaling almost $3 billion and providing 13,784 jobs.

*Strategic Goal 7.1.* UA will increase its economic impact on the state of Alabama each year. As a point of reference, in 2016-2017, UA’s economic impact was $2.8 billion statewide. This translates into $17.87 of impact for every $1 of state appropriation.

YEAR ONE

- Overall impact of UA on the statewide economy is shown in Table 1. The annual impact report is completed by CBER. Economic impact is measured by expenditure impact analysis using the Regional Input-Output Modeling System (RIMS II) and data from the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA).

Table 1. Overall Impact of UA on the Statewide Economy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Economic Impact ($, in billions)</th>
<th>Return on Investment per $1 Invested by the State</th>
<th>Jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>$2.600</td>
<td>$17.50</td>
<td>13,217</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
<td>$2.800</td>
<td>$17.87</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017-2018</td>
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<td>$18.53</td>
<td>13,784</td>
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<tr>
<td>2018-2019</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>Pending</td>
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