

CLAYTON



CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

MEMORANDUM

TO: CLAYTON COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

FROM: BEN CASEY, LTI; 2020 CHAMBER CHAIR
CHARLES REED, CLAYTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS; SEARCH COMMITTEE CHAIR

DATE: JUNE 9, 2020

RE: CHAMBER BOARD APPROVES NEW PRESIDENT AND CEO

We are excited to announce a new President and Chief Executive Officer for the Clayton County Chamber of Commerce. The Board of Directors has voted unanimously, based on the recommendation of the Search Committee, to employ Valencia Williamson, a seasoned chamber of commerce executive, for the position. Her first day at the chamber will be Monday, July 6.

Valencia is currently serving as Executive Vice President of the Area Development Partnership in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. The partnership is a regional chamber of commerce and economic development organization serving three counties and a diverse population of 150,000 residents in South Mississippi. She has been with the organization since 2010.

Prior to her position in Hattiesburg, Valencia served in various roles with the Walton Area Chamber in Santa Rose Beach, Florida and spent 2002 – 2004 working in the Atlanta region for The Kroger Company.



Valencia Williamson, IOM

Valencia earned an MBA from The University of Southern Mississippi; an Economic Development Certificate from The University of Southern Mississippi; and a BS in Agricultural Business from Florida A&M University. She is a graduate of the US Chamber of Commerce Institute for Organization Management which is recognized as a significant milestone in the chamber world.

The search process was broken into three phases. The first stage centered on determining the skill sets and focus points for the position. Chamber members and other stakeholders were interviewed in order to provide input on a position description and weighting scale to the Search Committee. The second phase was the casting of the net for candidates and specifically identifying professionals who fit the role. The final segment was to interview candidates best suited for the position.

In addition to the two of us, others serving on the Search Committee included Charisse Braxton, Kaiser Permanente; David Crow, Heritage Bank; Jack Hancock, Freeman Mathis & Gary, LLP; Dr. Tim Hynes, Clayton State University; Audrey King, Georgia Power Company; and Mark Wilson, Chime Solutions.

We also want to give a strong accolade to Page Estes, our Interim President and CEO. She has provided outstanding leadership, guidance and organization for the chamber and community over the past five months. Page is already speaking with Valencia on a transition plan.

There were many professionals interested in the chamber's leadership position. The committee was extremely pleased with the response from candidates and their desire to be a part of our business organization and community.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we want to thank you for your continued support of the Clayton County Chamber of Commerce. This is your organization. We ask that you join with us in welcoming Valencia and become a part of her success here by engaging in the chamber. The opportunities are endless.