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## Henry County Chamber of Commerce Names Joseph Henning New President and Chief Executive Officer



*Joseph Henning*

### **New Contact Information**

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*(McDonough, Georgia)* The Henry County Chamber of Commerce has named Joseph Henning the new president and chief executive officer of the business organization. He currently serves as president and chief executive officer of the Aurora Regional Chamber of Commerce in Aurora, Illinois, a position he has held since 2005.

Current chamber president and chief executive officer David Gill, who has led the organization since 2012, announced his retirement several months ago and will be working with Henning through the transition process.

“Joe’s expertise and understanding of the important role a chamber plays in the growth and development of a community in terms of leadership, infrastructure and creating an inclusive, pro-business environment are the key reasons the search committee identified him as the right leader for Henry County,” according to Sharon Ponder, 2019 chair of the chamber and vice president of finance for Bennett International Group. “The chamber has a solid foundation that David, the internal team, and our membership have established over the years. The search committee and the board of directors are committed to continuing the long tradition of a strong business-focused organization.”

Henning served as chair of the National Board of Trustees for the US Chamber Institute for Organization Management in 2016-17 and continues as an instructor for classes throughout the country. The Institute is renowned as the leading training program for chamber executives. He is also recognized as the catalyst behind the Aurora Regional Chamber achieving the highest award in the industry with a five-star accreditation distinction by the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation in 2012 and re-affirmed in 2017.

“The Henry County Chamber position is a great opportunity for me to put my skillsets to work in a very fast-paced, growing area,” says Henning. “Georgia is known for its progressive business climate and I look forward to working with the leaders in Henry County, the region and state to build an even stronger chamber. I believe my experiences

in Aurora, which is a suburb of Chicago, will match the needs well in Henry County. I look forward to becoming a part of the leadership team in the community.”

During Henning’s realm as president of the Aurora Regional Chamber, the organization became the intermediary for a community-wide workforce development initiative. He also implemented on-boarding programs with multiple access points for new and re-engaging members; initiated a re-branding and re-naming strategy that resulted in increased engagement including website traffic and social media reach; determined membership needs through annual surveys which resulted in engagement growth of attendees and sponsorships over five years.

Prior to serving in Aurora, Henning was chief development officer for Summit Schools, Inc. and director, marketing & business development for Provena Saint Joseph Hospital, both in Elgin, Illinois. He earned a Master of Education, Instructional Technology and Bachelor of Public Relations/Journalism from Northern Illinois University.

In 2014, Henning was named the Outstanding Chamber Executive of Year by the Illinois Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives. He also earned the Accredited Chamber Executive status from the association. Other organizations Henning is associated with include the Illinois 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce Development Fund Advisory Committee, Business Leads Fellowship Program with the US Chamber of Commerce, and the Education Attainment Division Advisory Board of the American Chamber of Commerce Executives Association.

Members of the chamber’s search committee, in addition to Ponder as chair and Gill, included Christy Chewing, member engagement coordinator, Central Georgia EMC; Josh Duncan, financial advisor, FS Financial; Morelle McCrary, principal, RAM-Tech PC Solutions; Leonard Moreland, chief executive officer, Heritage Bank; Rod Meadows, past chair of the chamber and managing partner of Meadows, Macie and Sutton PC; Wayne Lowery, immediate past chair of the chamber and executive vice president of United Community Bank; and Laura Turner, community development officer, Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta.

**About the Henry County Chamber of Commerce.** More than 50 years since the Henry County Chamber was formed much has changed in the community. Many of these changes were stimulated by the chamber of commerce through its committees formed to tackle a variety of issues. Over the years, the chamber has been instrumental in the expansion of Piedmont Henry Hospital, successful passage of SPLOST and ESPLOST referendums, the presence of Southern Crescent Technical College’s (SCTC) Henry Campus, the state’s largest College and Career Academy and the implementation of dual enrollment in the Henry County School System with Clayton State University, Gordon State College and SCTC as participating institutions. The chamber also led the effort to have Henry County designated as “Entrepreneurial Friendly”. With over 700 members, the professional team of six staff members operate the chamber as well as the Convention and Visitors Bureau which is the Destination Marketing Organization for Henry County and the cities of Hampton, Locust Grove and Stockbridge.

**About The Chason Group.** The executive search for Henning was conducted by The Chason Group, an executive search firm specializing in tourism, economic development, chambers of commerce, foundations and other non-profit organizations. The Chason Group also led the executive search for Leonard Sledge who serves as the executive director of the Henry County Development Authority.