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SOUTHWEST LOUISIANA: PREPARING FOR PROGRESS

Southwest Louisiana – The 113th Chamber SWLA banquet took place this year in front of over 1000 business and community leaders and featured progressive advice from Mayor Mick Cornett of Oklahoma City. Mayor Cornett is highly acclaimed for his work with the business community of Oklahoma City on setting and following through on a long range plan for their city. During his time in office, Oklahoma City has invested nearly \$2 billion in schools and infrastructure dedicated to improve the city's quality of life. That investment generated nearly \$6 billion in private sector investment.

Cornett has been honored by various organizations and publications as one of the top mayors in the United States – and an international panel selected Mayor Cornett as the second-best mayor in the world. Newsweek magazine called him one of the “five most innovative mayors in the United States.” Governing magazine named him national “Public Official of the Year.” Politico placed him on the publication’s Politico 50 list of “thinkers, doers and visionaries transforming American politics in 2015.” In June, he became President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

This year’s banquet featured the passing of the gavel from 2016 Chair John Pohorelsky to 2017 Chair Ken Francis. As part of Francis’ first speech as Chair, he drove home the need for business leaders to get involved and give back to their communities.

Another highlight during the event was the awarding of the Civic Service Award to Nancy and Randy Roach of Lake Charles for their dedication to Lake Charles, and to the community as a whole as a part of his regional vision and commitment to making Lake Charles a better place to live and work.

Pam Doucet of The O’Carroll Group was also recognized as this year’s Volunteer of the Year for her service to the business community through her work with our Small Business Committee. She also has played a major role in the planning and execution of our Annual Golf Tournament.

This year’s banquet was held on January 26, at the Golden Nugget Casino Resort in Lake Charles.

About the Chamber Southwest

The Chamber Southwest is comprised of over 1500 members spanning all sizes and industries. We are a five-parish regional chamber acting as the voice of the business communities in Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron and Jeff Davis Parishes. The Chamber Southwest is part of the Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance and is housed in the Southwest Louisiana Entrepreneurial and Economic Development (SEED) Center located at 4310 Ryan Street in Lake Charles. For more information, visit www.allianceswla.org.

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