



**Shop Local. Shop Huntsville and Madison County.
Official 2014 Kickoff and Press Conference Held May 9 -**

By: Nicole Jones

"I Shop Local" buttons are everywhere in Huntsville! Why? On Friday May 9, 2014, The Chamber of Commerce of Huntsville/Madison County conducted a press conference at The Village of Providence to feature the Small Business Administration's National Small Business Week. Small Business Administration Alabama District Director Tom Todt, Huntsville Mayor Tommy Battle, Huntsville City Council District 5 Representative Will Culver, and several local business leaders joined in to promote the campaign.

How will Huntsville contribute in this effort? From May 9 through May 19, Chamber Emissaries and Ambassadors will visit local businesses in the Huntsville metropolitan area, thank their owners, and distribute hundreds of "I Shop Local" buttons in commemoration of the year-round campaign.

Huntsville contains a myriad of locally-owned retail shops and restaurants that give our area a distinct flair. While many immediately associate tangible items with "shopping local," it is also important to highlight the outstanding service providers as well, including, for example, accountants, printers, landscapers, physicians, and real estate firms. Whether they provide goods or services, many small business owners in our area take pride in hiring local personnel and providing employees with the most up-to-date training in their fields, and the benefits of their efforts are then passed on to clients as well as the community as a whole. The underlying message of the "I Shop Local" campaign is clear - ***When patrons choose to purchase goods and services from locally owned businesses, a portion of tax revenue stays in our area, which strengthens our local economy.*** Small businesses are of vital importance to the economic development process of the Huntsville metropolitan area. As Huntsville and Madison County residents, let us continue to support our neighborhood businesses and allow the "I Shop Local" theme to resonate in our community throughout the year.