

## JA GRAPHIC DESIGN: PASSION FOR LIFE INSPIRES DESIGNS OF ALL KINDS



Many out-of-state residents relocate to the Tuscaloosa area every year. Some immediately dive into the culture and learn about the history and traditions of West Alabama. Julie Atallah, owner of JA Graphic Design, and her husband Jason have certainly painted the town red with enthusiasm and newfound love for Tuscaloosa.

Julie and Jason Atallah, along with their 12-year-old black lab Smokey, have lived in Tuscaloosa for just over two years. Jason Atallah was brought to Tuscaloosa to represent AFFLINK as the Global Accounts Operations Manager. Julie, a graphic artist, soon followed her husband and relocated her freelance business to Tuscaloosa. They previously resided in Charlotte, North Carolina for six years.

“Having both been raised in the Northeast where everything is ‘Go, Go, Go!’ we really made our first Southern transition in moving to Charlotte,” Julie said. “But relocating out of the city has given us even more exposure to the Deep South with its traditions and way of life.”

JA Graphic Design specializes in small business, offering products such as logos, posters, menus, business collateral advertising and media placement, trade show graphics, and much more. Julie offers an online ([www.julieatallah.com](http://www.julieatallah.com)) portfolio of her work, exhibits her degree in communication and over 10 years of experience in the creative marketing and print industry.

“I can translate your ideas and goals through the design process so you will be seen, not just noticed,” Julie said. “The results are unique, one-of-a-kind designs at about half the cost of agency fees.”

The Atallahs met in 1991 at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania, while working on their Bachelor’s degrees. Julie is originally from Topton, Pennsylvania, a tiny rural town just outside of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania Dutch country, while Jason moved to the US from Montreal, Quebec in Canada. The Atallahs celebrated their 5th wedding anniversary in 2005.

“Alabama immediately reminded us of Pennsylvania with its rolling hills and open spaces,” Julie said. “There’s a lot of local beauty between the greenways and the water.” The Atallahs have three great loves: travel, music and food. They set aside time every year for at least one special trip. Most recently the Atallahs traveled to London for the holidays. Julie lived and studied in London for a semester, and always wanted to return and take Jason for a visit. Julie also recently traveled to New York City to view Christo and Jean-Claude’s “The Gates” exhibit in Central Park. “We’ll be heading to Negril, Jamaica this summer for a little relaxation, snorkeling and catch-up reading,” Julie said. The Atallahs thrive on music, and have a vibrant passion for live music. They have an eclectic CD collection with over 1100 discs, and attend as many live shows as possible in Tuscaloosa and nearby cities. Julie is trained in classical piano while Jason plays the guitar and drums.

The Atallahs also have a passion for the culinary arts, and even traveled to the famous Morimoto restaurant in Philadelphia for their anniversary dinner last year. The Atallahs were greeted by Morimoto, from the popular television show, *The Iron Chef*, and received a menu autographed in Japanese. The Food Network Channel is a staple in their everyday television watching.

The most interesting part of living in Tuscaloosa for Julie is the growing arts community. “The Kentuck Festival is just fabulous,” Julie said. “And Art Night is a newfound love!” On the other hand, Jason has grown to love the casual, low-key sports atmosphere. “We can go nearly anywhere for a quick bite and never miss a game, no matter what season it is,” Jason said.

“We appreciate UA’s influence on the community and overall, the ‘college town’ atmosphere is vibrant.” One of the highlights of living in Tuscaloosa for the Atallahs is the Alabama football season. “There is just nothing quite like the feel of a warm, sunny home-game Saturday,” Julie said. “We learned very quickly that a smile and a ‘Roll Tide’ are a great way to make friends,” Julie said.

## BEAUTY WORKS IS UNIQUE DESTINATION



**Mike and Catherine Burnett sample a distinctive candle at BeautyWorks**

“A customer destination unlike any other” was the goal of Beauty Works and its three owners: Mike, Catherine and Chris Burnett. They met that goal by setting up what amounts to three separate businesses under one roof.

“We have a full-service salon, a gift store, and a large stock of beauty supplies,” Mike said. “We try to make our business distinctive. It’s a word we don’t take lightly.

“We have, essentially, three lifetimes of experiences that help us create a truly unique shopping experience for our

customers,” he said.

The full-service salon is where it all starts, Mike said. “We try to give consistently excellent service in a professional manner and in a smoke-free, tip-free environment.”

In describing the gift store at Beauty Works, the adjectives come out in an almost endless torrent. “Enlightening.” “Colorful.” “Soothing.” “We have gifts for women, for men, and children of all ages,” Mike said. “We have brightly colored purses, fun jewelry, cool candles, fine fragrances, gourmet food and spa music. And, of course, Bama souvenir gifts.

“We offer many personalization services, stationery, and complimentary gift wrapping,” he said.

In the beauty store, Beauty Works has a large selection of professional hair, nail and skin care products, ionic blow dryers, flat irons, and brushes. “We have a lot of the exclusive lines that are hard to find—Phyto and Murad, to name just two,” Mike said.

He added that Beauty Works, located on McFarland Boulevard, across from the Old Navy store and next to Firestone, is open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday. The salon is open Tuesday through Friday, and although walk-ins are welcomed, appointments are suggested. “Those people who’ve never been in our store or haven’t been in recently are going to be pleasantly surprised with the quality of our service and the products and services we offer,” Mike said.



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## TUSCALOOSA VA RIBBON CUTTING

If you can judge the success of a ribbon-cutting ceremony by the number of people who attend it, the recent ceremony opening a new branch of the Tuscaloosa VA Federal Credit Union has to be judged an outstanding success.

Why the opening even drew two mayors: Mayor Harvey Fretwell of Northport and Mayor Al DuPont of Tuscaloosa. The new branch is located in Northport, at the Essex Square shopping area, and the credit union also has a branch in Tuscaloosa on Loop Road.

In the photo to the right are, left to right, are: Patricia Franks, Northport Branch manager; Carl Moss, chairman of the board of directors for the credit union; Mayor DuPont, Mayor Fretwell, John Goldman, director of the VA Medical Center; Patrice Ryan, secretary of the credit union's board of directors; Cathy Bolling, manager/president of both credit unions; Carolyn Booth, a member of the board of directors; Adena Whitman, representing the Alabama Credit Union League; Nina Cephus, treasurer and board of directors member; Randy Davis of the board of directors, and Herbert Newell, member of The Chamber of Commerce's board of directors.

"Our new full-service branch office will help us to better serve our members in the Northport area," said Cathy Bolling, president. "We invite everyone in both Tuscaloosa County and in Sumter County (where the credit union has another outlet) to join our credit union family."



## WHEAT'S CARPET AND FLOORING



*There were a lot of excited people at Wheat's Carpet and Flooring on June 2, when John Myers, a member of the Northport City Council, cut the ceremonial ribbon to officially open the company's brand new store on McFarland Boulevard in Northport. Standing in front of the spacious, ultra-modern showroom floor are, left to right: Tracy Waldrop, a Chamber Ambassador who works for the First National Bank of Central Alabama; David Morrow; Councilman Myers, Gordon Aplin; John Gray; Mark Wheat; Terry Wheat; Chamber President Johnnie Aycock; Patti Jackson, Chair of The Chamber Ambassadors, who works for Jamison, Money & Farmer, and Dave Crenshaw, Chamber Ambassador who works for SouthTrust Bank. In the rear is Michael Albritton.*

An enthusiastic crowd joined 2005 Chamber Chairman Howard Garrison at a groundbreaking ceremony on August 24. Several shovels of dirt were turned over to signal the beginning of construction of a new office for Peoples Bank and Trust Company. Garrison, second from the right, is president of the bank, which will be located on McFarland Boulevard near its intersection with Watermelon Road. Tuscaloosa Mayor Al DuPont was on hand, as were (far right) Bob Young, chairman of the bank's local advisory board and president of Owen Meredith and Sons Real Estate, and Ted Henry, chairman of the Peoples Bank and Trust Co., and chairman and chief executive officer of the Henry Brick Company. Some twenty people will work at the new office, which is scheduled to be open in the summer of 2006.

## GROUNDBREAKING FOR THE NEW PEOPLES BANK & TRUST



# Welcome

We want to welcome the following people and organizations into The Chamber. If you know these people and/or do business with them, take time to tell them you're glad they're a part of The Chamber Team. Since the first of the year more than 60 companies have invested in The Chamber and the community it serves.

**Adcox Winter LLP**

Bryan Winter  
2201 Jack Warner Parkway  
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Tuscaloosa, AL 35402  
(205) 345-4115  
Attorneys

**Custom Built Homes**

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Tuscaloosa, AL 35401  
(205) 343-0203  
Construction

**Holiday Inn Express**

Liz Obradovich  
1120 Veterans Memorial  
Parkway  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35404  
(205) 464-4000  
Hotels.Motels

**Tuscaloosa VA Federal Credit Union**

Cathy Bolling  
3701 Loop Rd., East  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35404  
(205) 556-7819  
Credit Unions

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Johnna Hold  
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Tuscaloosa, AL 35402  
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**Tuscaloosa VA Federal Credit Union**

Cathy Bolling  
50 McFarland Blvd., Essex Sq.  
Northport, AL 35476  
(205) 556-7819  
Credit Unions

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Tuscaloosa, AL 35404  
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**El Rincon Latino Bar And Grill #2**

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Tuscaloosa, AL 35401  
(205) 366-0855  
Restaurants

**Serendipity Needleworks**

Ellen Johnson  
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Tuscaloosa, AL 35401  
(205) 758-0108  
Specialty Stores

**West Alabama Food Bank, Inc.**

Craig Young  
P.O. Box 1222  
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Non-Profit Organizations

## THE WEST ALABAMA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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## DAVIS, SKAGEN ARE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Two industry leaders recently were elected to The Chamber's Board of Directors.

They are **Ron Davis**, general manager of ZF Lemforder Corporation, a supplier for Mercedes-Benz, and **Randy Skagen**, general manager of Nucor Steel of Tuscaloosa.



*Ron Davis*

**Davis**, manager of ZF since 2002, is a graduate of Purdue University and has an extensive background in the automotive industry. He started that career with General Motors, and his industrial itinerary eventually took him to Meridian, MS, where he was general manager of a Delco Remy plant. He

returned to General Motors in 1997 and led the lean manufacturing efforts for the Saginaw Steering Division plant in Athens, AL. Davis came to Tuscaloosa from Orangeburg, SC where he worked for Federal Mogul.

**Skagen** is a native of Ontario, Canada, and received a degree in mechanical engineering technology from Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology. He spent 11 years with Algoma Steel in Ontario, before moving to Arkansas with Nucor Steel. He's managed plants in Charleston, SC, and Hertford County, NC, before coming to Tuscaloosa as general manager of Nucor Steel Tuscaloosa in 2004.



*Randy Skagen*

## HAMPTON INN IS HONORED

A local motel chain recently grabbed some top honors in the industry.

Hampton Inn, the national brand of more than 1,300 mid-priced hotels, has reclaimed the honor of "Highest Guest Satisfaction Among Mid-Price Hotel Chains With Limited Food Service" award from J. D. Power and Associates. Hampton Inn has achieved this recognition four times, the last being in 2001.

For the fourth year in a row, Microtel Inns & Suites has been ranked highest in guest satisfaction among economy/budget chains by J. D. Power and Associates. The chain is the only one in the industry to have achieved the award four times.



### Important Information about Chamber E-mails

**If you're not getting e-mails from The Chamber--action alerts, special invitations, the weekly Wednesday round-up of events and so on, check your spam filter to make sure The Chamber is not blocked from getting into your system.**

**If you have technical questions about this matter, call Donny Jones at The Chamber at 391-0552.**

**Normally, the e-mails include a lot of helpful and important information for Chamber members. We want you to get that information; it will help you maximize your investment in The Chamber.**

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# Together

## We're building a brighter future for West Alabama.

True understanding, in life as well as law, depends upon recognizing the connections among seemingly diverse issues, problems, and personalities.

Through their client representation, as well as their involvement in a variety of community organizations, attorneys at Phelps, Jenkins, Gibson & Fowler L.L.P. are helping to build bridges that lead to greater insight and understanding.



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*Seated left to right:* Sam M. Phelps, J. Russell Gibson, III and James J. Jenkins.

*Standing left to right:* W. David Ryan, A. Courtney Crowder, Farley A. Poellnitz, Randolph M. Fowler, Stephen E. Snow and Bruce H. Henderson.



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