With excellent schools, a thriving business community, an influx of new residents and jobs and a steady rise in home sales, Williamson County continues to offer a high quality of life. Now with a population of more than 201,000, the county is projected to surpass the population of Chattanooga-Hamilton County by 2040, according to Williamson, Inc.’s 2015 Trends Report. Brentwood, Nolensville, Spring Hill, Franklin, Fairview and Thompson’s Station comprise the fastest-growing county in Tennessee, and have made national headlines for being an attractive place to live, work, play and do business.

In other words, it’s a great time to be in Williamson County. Currently serving his fourth term, Williamson County Mayor Rogers Anderson is set to deliver his annual state of the county address during the July 21 Williamson, Inc. membership meeting, presented by Williamson Medical Center. The meeting will begin at 11:30 a.m. at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs, 700 Cool Springs Blvd. East, and is expected to draw a crowd of more than 300 attendees.

Anderson’s speech will give an overview of how the county is performing on economic indicators such as financial health, education, public safety, transportation and job growth.

Expect from Anderson an update on the county budget for the 2015-16 fiscal year. The Williamson County Commission will vote at its July 13 meeting on the $472.8 million budget proposal, which is about a 7 percent increase from last year’s $441 million budget despite no tax hike.

“Our goal was not to have a tax

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

5 TIPS FOR MANAGING YOUR ONLINE BRAND

1. Content is king.
2. Claim your free Google business page.
3. Images never, ever go away.
4. Ask customers for online reviews
5. Is your website mobile-friendly?

Have you ever tried to book a vacation online, found a hotel you liked, then read the negative reviews and changed your mind? Join the club. Customer reviews can make or break a company’s online reputation. In fact, a study by UPS says that 55 percent of U.S. online shoppers deem customer reviews the most important factor in purchasing products on the Internet. Small business owners learned the importance of managing their online reputation at a recent Williamson, Inc. First Friday event sponsored by FirstBank. Steven Wyer, COO of Franklin-based digital marketing firm Third Coast Interactive, gave tips on becoming a 5-star rated business. Read Wyer’s five tips for managing your online brand:

**Content is king.** Only 10 percent of search engine users go to page two in search results, and less than one percent go to page three. Have fresh and frequent content across platforms to get listed on page one.

**Claim your free Google business page.** Go to google.com/business to get started connecting directly with customers.

**Images never, ever go away.** Be mindful of what you post online, as images can negatively impact the value of your business.

**Ask customers for online reviews.** First, list your business on top review sites like Citysearch, Facebook, Foursquare, Google+, Yelp and YP. Then, find a satisfied customer and ask them for a review or testimonial or to “check-in” at your business to boost credibility.

**Is your website mobile-friendly?** Take Google’s Mobile-Friendly Test to find out: google.com/webmasters/tools/mobile-friendly.
WELCOME new members

These companies and individuals have made a commitment to business growth and to their community by joining the Williamson Chamber. They will enjoy the benefits of a robust business directory listing on the Chamber website and referrals from our office and from fellow members. When you need products or services, please search the directory on the Chamber website and do business with a Chamber member.


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301 S. Perimeter Park Dr., Ste. 200
Nashville, TN 37211
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Eric Strickland

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Brentwood, TN 37027
(615) 457-2391
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Sonny Belew

Astute Communications
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(615) 294-3971
astute.co
Ryan Stoult

Big East Fork Retreat
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Franklin, TN 37064
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bigeastfork.com
Jonathan Oppenheimer

Concierge Closing Services
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dk9.thedogtrainer.org
Chris Crockett

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Tony Saggianio

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Scott Kimbro

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mommaniks.com
Niki Gilliam

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Whitney Srouji

Thank you to these volunteers for their contributions this month to the Williamson Chamber membership committees.

• NICK FIVEASH, AIG Financial Network, for attending the most Chamber meetings and ribbon cuttings as an Ambassador.

• JOHN DILLARD, Tennessee Home Inventory Services, Inc., of the Development Committee for bringing in the most new members for the month.

Kudos

THE POINT is published monthly as a partnership between the Williamson Chamber and The Tennessean. For editorial inquiries or advertising opportunities, contact Charlane Oliver at charlane@williamsonchamber.com.

5005 Meridian Blvd., Suite 150 | Franklin, TN 37067 | 615.771.1912 | www.williamsonchamber.com

did you know?

If a consumer knows you’re a CHAMBER MEMBER, your business can expect a:

• 49% increase in consumer favorability

• 80% increase in the likelihood of goods purchased

• 73% increase in business awareness

• 68% increase in local reputation

Contact liz@williamsonchamber.com to become a Williamson Chamber member.
WILLIAMSON, INC. ECONOMIC DASHBOARD - JUNE 2015

POPULATION: 201,486
12% county 5-year growth
4% state 5-year growth
Nashville MSA: 1,778,483

COST OF LIVING: Q1
National Average:
- Raleigh NC: 101
- Nashville-Franklin, TN: 95
- Austin, TX: 95
- Atlanta, GA: 101
- Chicago, IL: 114

APR. UNEMPLOYMENT: 3.7%
- 6.0% TN
- 5.4% U.S.
- 99,770 Labor Force
- 120,920 Total Jobs
- $66,046 Avg. Earnings

5% MANAGEMENT
2% REAL ESTATE
19% PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES
16% OTHER SERVICES
13% RETAIL

INDUSTRY BREAKDOWN
11% LEISURE & HOSPITALITY
5% CONSTRUCTION
9% GOVERNMENT
10% FINANCE & INSURANCE
10% HEALTH CARE

181 New Business Licenses in May | 947 YTD

MAY LOCAL SALES TAX INCOME:
Up 8% from 2014
Up 12% from 2013

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
Median SF Home sale price for MAY was $409,999, up 2.5% from 2014. The # of SF home closings increased by 20% from 2014.

197 home building permits issues in APR, 735 YTD, up 14% from 2014.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT (Q1 2015)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Vacancy Rate</th>
<th>Class A Average</th>
<th>Vacant SF</th>
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<td>2.9%</td>
<td>$24.89</td>
<td>144,399</td>
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<td>Cool Springs</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>$27.44</td>
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</table>
It was only Day 68 on the job when Stuart McWhorter gave his first presentation as CEO of the Nashville Entrepreneur Center (NEC) to Williamson, Inc. members at their June 16 membership meeting at the Embassy Suites in Cool Springs.

McWhorter’s vision for the startup community in the Greater Nashville region was crystal clear. McWhorter wants an inclusive, diverse entrepreneur base and plans to focus heavily on the community’s assets: music, health care and financial technology. In a promotional video shown during the luncheon, NEC staff said they want Nashville to be the music tech capital of the world through its Project Music accelerator program. McWhorter plans to present a three-year strategic plan to the board in October.

His vision also includes expanding south to partner with Williamson County entrepreneurs, investors and talent.

“We need more,” said McWhorter, who previously served as chairman and president of the investment firm Clayton Associates. “Part of our job is to make sure we’re coming south and delivering all the great assets we have to this community as well.”

Williamson County is the largest supporter of the NEC outside of Nashville. As much as 30 percent of NEC’s mentors, alumni, donors and sponsors come from the county. Already in the works is a partnership with Williamson, Inc. Economic Development to cultivate relationships with local entrepreneurs and startups, compliment the work already being done by the EC and act as a resource for entrepreneurs.

Nick Biniker, existing business manager with the chamber’s economic development team, is looking forward to the partnership.

“A backbone of good entrepreneurs is what makes our jobs exciting,” said Biniker, who works with small- to medium-sized businesses to connect them with resources and growth opportunities. “They add diversity to the job market and keep the economy dynamic with new ideas and innovations that drive every major industry.”

As a longtime Nashville investor, McWhorter is accustomed to being pitched with ideas for startup funds. Now he finds himself as the one asking the business community to support the Entrepreneur Center, a non-profit with more than 500 registered mentors that provides resources to foster innovation and entrepreneurship, to start businesses and create jobs. Since opening in 2010, the NEC has worked with about 300 alumni and collectively raised approximately $70 million to get startups off the ground.

“This community, as you know, is on fire,” McWhorter said in his pitch to Williamson, Inc. members to become mentors, sponsors and donors. “Everyone in this room can play a role. We need ‘A’ players. There are ‘A’ players in this room.”

Learn more about the Nashville Entrepreneur Center at www.ec.co.
Williamson’s booming economy tops national lists

Have you heard? Williamson County has been in the national spotlight more times than a few lately. Whether it’s our peaceful neighborhoods, low cost of living, unique festivals, dining and shopping options, or ability to attract top job talent, Williamson County is getting noticed by experts as one of the best counties to live, work, play and do business. Check out which communities made the lists:

10 BEST NASHVILLE SUBURBS TO LIVE IN

The cities of Brentwood, Nolensville, Thompson’s Station and Spring Hill captured the first, second, fifth and eighth spots, respectively, ranked by Movoto.

NATION’S TOP 5 COUNTIES FOR JOB GROWTH

Of the 340 largest counties in the nation, Williamson County was fifth in terms of the employment percentage increase, growing by 6.1 percent according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

AMERICA’S 10 BEST CITIES FOR RETIREMENT

Franklin rounded out the list at the 10th spot, ranked by Bankrate.com.

BEST PLACES TO START A BUSINESS IN TENNESSEE

NerdWallet considered Brentwood (#5) and Franklin (#8) among the top 10 places to launch a business.

50 BEST MASTER-PLANNED COMMUNITIES IN THE U.S.

Franklin’s Westhaven community made the short list of the country’s 50 best master-planned communities selected by Where to Retire magazine.

10 MOST BEAUTIFUL TOWNS IN TENNESSEE

Second on this list by TheCultureTrip.com is Franklin, for its rich history.

TOP 5 CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE IN NASHVILLE

Williamson, Inc. made Nashville Business Journal’s Book of Lists as the third largest chamber based on number of members.

what’s new IN WILLIAMSON

WE CELEBRATE WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES AS THEY OPEN, EXPAND AND RENOVATE!

ADVANCED HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTER

2001 Mallory Ln., Ste. 301 • Franklin

Ribbon Cutting – June 25

Advanced Health & Wellness Center seeks innovative solutions to help people achieve their optimal health. The health care team provides a range of specialties including chiropractic, spinal decompression, medical and neuropathy treatments, and laser and massage therapy.

DUNKIN’ DONUTS

4030 Thoroughbred Ln. • Brentwood

Ribbon Cutting – June 16

Get your morning brewing with a hot cup of coffee from Dunkin’ Donuts. They have a new location in Brentwood, offering a variety of menu items including breakfast sandwiches, donuts and other baked goods, and hot, iced and frozen beverages.

THE LICE PLACE COOL SPRINGS

8115 Isabella Ln., Ste. 6 • Brentwood

Ribbon Cutting – June 19 • 5 employees

The Lice Place is the first for-profit, full-service lice treatment center in Tennessee. They offer pesticide-free, non-toxic lice removal services and products with the aim to treat, educate and send families out the door lice-free. The opening marks the eighth for the Houston-based franchise.

MONROE CARELL JR. CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL VANDERBILT AT WILLIAMSON MEDICAL CENTER

4321 Carothers Pkwy. • Franklin

Grand Opening – June 24

The new 75,000 square-foot facility at Williamson Medical Center offers pediatric emergency and inpatient care by Vanderbilt pediatric physicians and WMC clinical staff.

YOUTHFUL REFLECTIONS

213 Overlook Blvd., Ste. B3 • Brentwood

Ribbon Cutting – June 15 • 6 employees

Led by board certified plastic surgeon Dr. Michael A. Boggess, Youthful Reflections provides comprehensive facial rejuvenation to address age related changes and achieve a youthful, natural appearance for their clients. Procedures are performed in an office with light sedation, local anesthesia and based on an individualized treatment plan.

SKIN 2NV

103 International Dr. • Franklin

Ribbon Cutting – June 17 • 7 employees

Skin 2NV, located in the Cool Springs area, is a natural solution to needles and invasive skin care techniques. Book your next appointment to get a relaxing facial, back facial or anti-aging hand treatment.

Franklin’s historic downtown square is home to many shops, eateries and festivals.

— PHOTO FROM VISITFRANKLIN.COM
Get tips on tailoring your personal brand

Companies spend millions in advertising dollars to make sure consumers know who they are and the brands they represent. But how much time and effort do we as individuals spend marketing ourselves and our careers?

Whether you’re a recent graduate or a career veteran, making the conscious effort to cultivate a personal brand is essential to advancing your career.

What do people associate you with when they think of your name? Do your social media profiles represent you in a positive light? What steps are you taking to (re) invent and shape one’s perception of you? In other words, what’s your story?

Ready to help answer these questions is Kia Jarmon, the award-winning public relations and brand strategist for The MEPR Agency, a boutique public relations and brand strategy firm she launched in 2006.

Jarmon will give Williamson, Inc. members advice on how to navigate their personal brand during the Women in Business luncheon, slated for Tuesday, July 28 at Brentwood United Methodist Church, 309 Franklin Road in Brentwood.

Jarmon brings a decade of experience in public relations (PR), storytelling, brand coaching and strategic consulting and works to bridge traditional PR with digital and social platforms. She has received several awards, most notably Top 40 Under 40 and Women of Influence from the Nashville Business Journal and the Middle Tennessee Diversity Forum’s ‘Woman to Watch’ award. A graduate of Belmont University, Jarmon received a bachelor’s degree in business administration. She is an adjunct communications and marketing consultant for the Center for Nonprofit Management.

The luncheon, presented by Williamson Medical Center, is open to the community. Registration and networking begins at 11 a.m. followed by the program at 11:30 a.m. The cost to attend is $22 for members and $42 for guests. Register online at williamsonchamber.com.

Nolensville luncheon spotlights local owners

Entrepreneurship will be the focus of the Nolensville Area Business Council luncheon, Thursday, July 16 at 11:30 a.m. at Providence Baptist Fellowship, 1668 Sunset Road in Brentwood. The quarterly meeting, presented by Williamson Medical Center, goes inside the minds of Nolensville’s successful entrepreneurs during a panel discussion on what it takes to achieve business longevity.

The panelists include: William Bradford, president and CEO, United Communications; Corrine Chapman, owner, the Nesting Project; and Patrick Martin, owner, Martin’s Bar-B-Que Joint.

Williamson, Inc.’s Vice President of Economic Development Amanda Murray will serve as moderator.

As head of Middle Tennessee’s leading communications provider, Bradford is responsible for being the first to bring Gigabit fiber Internet service to the Nolensville area. The expanded service will offer fast Internet speeds of up to one Gigabit per second to residential and business customers.

United Communications is the meeting sponsor for the luncheon. The Wake Forest University graduate has served as president and CEO of United Communications for nearly four years. Previously he held management executive roles with small startups and large public companies, including JB Capital Advisors (formerly Bradford Advisory Company), American Broadband and FairPoint Communications.

Launched in 2010, Chapman’s Nesting Project creates custom designed t-shirts, stationery and other themed items for parties and showers. When she’s not operating her storefront, Chapman can be found performing on stage as an established singer-songwriter.

Martin brings West Tennessee-style smoke and meat traditions as one of the country’s most renowned pitmasters. His restaurant has been featured on the Food Network’s popular broadcast, “Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives” and in publications such as Bon Appetit, Esquire, Conde Nast Traveler and Men’s Journal.

Guests will get a taste of Martin’s saucy creations as the event’s caterer. For just $15 the public is invited to bring questions for the panelists. Register online at williamsonchamber.com by July 14 or pay at the door.

Visit williamsonchamber.com to find a complete calendar of events, register online and more.
County schools’ transition program needs business partners

The Point stopped by to chat with Williamson County Schools (WCS) Student Support Services Specialist Maria Griego to learn how businesses can partner with the Transition II Program. 

**What is the Transition II program?**

Transition II is a state-mandated program that prepares students with disabilities, ages 18-22, who have graduated with a general education diploma, for whatever life holds when they leave high school. We connect students with job training skills to become gainfully employed and teach life skills for those entering a day program. We work with 51 students across eight high schools in the county. Each school has a special education teacher, two job coaches, an occupational therapist and speech pathologist. During the school day, students are transported to our partner sites to work in a job that matches their interests.

**What types of life skills does the program teach?**

Our curriculum teaches independent living skills regarding health and safety, food preparation, budgeting, social skills and home care. Students gather for monthly social outings, student council meetings and end-of-year celebrations. Through skills-based learning, we help students develop soft skills and job-specific skills, which include serving food, delivering meals at a hospital, cleaning and sanitizing, and operating cash registers.

**What types of businesses are you interested in partnering with?**

Some of our current partners include Williamson Medical Center, Embassy Suites and MorningPoint. We are grateful to our business partners who provide valuable learning opportunities, but we need more. We’d love to accommodate a variety of different interests. We have students who have excellent data entry skills but don’t have a job site for them. Our greatest need is for jobs in warehouse, stocking, clerical, hospitality, retail, sports and banking. We also would like to partner with more bus companies to transport students.

**For business owners who may be reluctant to participate, what would you say to them?**

I recognize that a business owner may be nervous of the unknown and unsure of how a customer may react to a person with a disability. However, I would like to see companies step up to create a more inclusive business community regardless of ability level. We take care of the logistics to ensure all job sites adhere to labor laws and pass a safety test based on the nature of the business. There is no cost to the employer as these are non-paid positions, although they have the option to hire the student full-time if it’s a great fit.

Another great benefit is that the company is getting a loyal employee that takes pride in their work. These jobs often fill a displaced need in the workplace that allows full-time employees more time to focus on bigger projects.

**Interested in becoming a business partner? Contact Maria at maria.griego@wcs.edu or 615-472-4125 to schedule a time to meet and conduct a site visit.**

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**Youth Leadership Brentwood awards scholarships**

Youth Leadership Brentwood (YLB) awarded college scholarships to three outstanding Ravenwood High School graduates during Williamson, Inc.’s membership luncheon June 16 at the Embassy Suites Cool Springs.

The scholarship recipients are Jie Chen, Ellie Marquardt and Aditya Sathe, who were competitively selected among a pool of Youth Leadership Brentwood applicants. Chen was not able to attend the luncheon.

Sathe will attend Vanderbilt University in the fall and major in biomedical engineering in hopes of pursuing a career in medicine. Marquardt plans to double major in elementary education and communications.

Youth Leadership Brentwood is a leadership development program of the Williamson County Chamber Foundation (WCCF), the nonprofit affiliate of Williamson, Inc., for high school sophomores and juniors who live or go to school in Brentwood. This year, the student scholarships were supported by a Brentwood Noon Rotary grant and funds allocated through the YLB Steering Board. Scholarship funding also comes from present sponsor Brentwood Academy, the Leadership Brentwood Alumni Association and parents of YLB alumni.

Williamson County Chamber Foundation awarded scholarships to Youth Leadership Brentwood graduates Aditya Sathe, left, and Ellie Marquardt, middle right. They are pictured with foundation director Lynn Tucker, middle left, and scholarship committee member Denny Thompson.

YLB will begin accepting applications for the class of 2016 in August and kick off the program year in October. For more information, visit www.leadershipbrentwood.org or contact foundation director Lynn Tucker at lynn@williamsonchamber.com.
Just past green pastures and farmhouses sits a future residential community tucked away in the rolling hills of Arrington. The Hideaway at Arrington, a luxury home development with a championship golf course slated to open spring 2016, was the site of Williamson, Inc.’s annual Golf Classic on June 24.

More than 240 golfers were eager to test the newest course in town, and make no mistake, the green fairway did not disappoint. Filled with scenic vista views of Williamson County’s landscape, players appreciated the mild, sunny weather and serene locale.

The evening lent itself to networking at the 19th Hole Awards Mixer to award the tourney’s winners amid a beautiful, orangey sunset horizon. Morning team winners were: Eddie Finley, Brett Johnson, John Teas and Ron Turk (first flight) and Jimmy Felker, Jimmy Franks, Marabeth Poole and Katrina Roberts (second flight). Afternoon team winners were: Bert Dargie, Philip McCutchan, Carl Reneger and Brian Shelton (first flight) and Mike Kriel, Bill Ship, Ron Suedekum and Ken Williams (second flight).

A special thanks to Nissan North America for again serving as presenting sponsor. Centaur Building Services, Guaranty Trust Bank and Vanderbilt Health also partnered as championship sponsors. Several businesses provided promotional coverage, food, drinks and giveaways. The Golf Classic is one of the Chamber’s signature events.

Proceeds support the leadership programs of Williamson, Inc. and the Williamson County Chamber Foundation.