



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 19, 2013

**Chamber to Host “Crime Hurts Kids...and Business”**

Wilmington, NC—The Wilmington Chamber of Commerce and Wilmington Chamber Foundation will share the realities of crime in our community, how it affects economic development, and ways to lower the risk that our young people will get involved in illegal activity at an event on Wednesday, January 22, 2014, from 7:30-9:00 am in Union Station at Cape Fear Community College. Speakers at the “Crime Hurts Kids...and Business” event will include 2014 Chamber Chairman Rickey Godwin, John Monteith (Monteith Construction Corp.), District Attorney Ben David, Wilmington Mayor Bill Saffo, and Jana Jones Halls (Executive Director, Blue Ribbon Commission on the Prevention of Youth Violence).

“There are many ways that crime negatively impacts our community, but one that isn’t often noted is economic development,” said 2014 Chamber Chairman Rickey Godwin (McGladrey). “When business site selector Jay Garner spoke at the Chamber’s Annual Meeting this year, he stated that an area’s crime rate is a prime consideration for relocating businesses and start-ups. We want the business community to take a more active role in helping us attract and retain businesses by reducing the chances our young people will become involved in gangs and other illegal activities.”

“We need to bring light to the harsh reality of summer slippage,” said Chamber President & CEO Connie Majure-Rhett. “In the summer months children from low income households fall behind in their education while others progress, creating a gap that the low income students can’t bridge. Every year of elementary school it gets worse, setting a path of underachievement academically and the potential to be lured by criminal activity instead of staying in school and seeking a stable profession.”

District Attorney Ben David will share what he sees in the courtroom and initiatives his office and other stakeholders have undertaken to influence children and put them on a better path.

Attendance is open to Wilmington Chamber members and non-members. The Chamber encourages all area business people to attend to learn easy ways they can help stop the cycle that leads to crime in our community.

Additional details about the event will be released the first week of January 2014. For questions please contact Connie Majure-Rhett: [majure@wilmingtonchamber.org](mailto:majure@wilmingtonchamber.org) or (910) 762-2611 ext. 214.

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