



## APPRENTICESHIPS – OBSOLETE OR STILL RELEVANT TO OUR INDUSTRY?

### WHAT IS AN APPRENTICE?

According to Wikipedia, an apprenticeship is a system for training a new generation of practitioners of a trade or profession with on-the-job training and often some accompanying study. Apprenticeships can also enable practitioners to gain a license to practice in a regulated occupation. Wikipedia

While some states have eliminated their auctioneer license apprenticeship requirement altogether, The Alabama State Board of Auctioneers believes the apprenticeship program is still relevant and serves as an important element in the education of those wanting to pursue a career in our industry.

Our business is complex, and we believe you should have some oversight from a seasoned professional before you head out on your own. Some may pursue a license simply to become a contract bid caller for a flat fee and think that they will never perform any other duty than the ones required to call the bids at an auction.



**Larry "Chip" Pearce,**  
AARE,CES,GPPA,ATS

Pearce & Associates Auction Company

ASBA – District 1 board member

President – Alabama Auctioneers Association



Another person may want to get into the fundraising auction business with no intent on ever contracting to sell estates, business liquidations or real estate. The next person may want a license to offer their clients an alternative way to sell their assets in an online auction. In the auction industry, it is not uncommon for a licensee to expand their services to other areas of assets to meet the needs of their clients.

In Alabama, once you receive your auctioneers' license, you are now legally able to conduct any type of auction, regardless of your area of knowledge or specialty! As I stated earlier, our industry is complex. We provide a service for many types of industries such as government agencies, lending institutions, corporate clients, small business owners, estate executors, seniors downsizing, automobile dealers, wholesalers, collectors and individuals. We sell an enormous

variety of assets including real estate, equipment, industrial machinery, collector automobiles, art, antiques, firearms and all types of estate assets. The contracting, marketing and selling of these assets require a great amount of knowledge in order to meet our sellers' needs and to deliver to a buyer what you are promising. Simply purchasing a license does not equip you with the knowledge and ability to understand and navigate in the auction business. This is why we believe the best way to learn about our industry is by serving as an apprentice under a licensed seasoned professional with years of experience.

Most of us old timers are fans of the Waffle House! I'm no exception. I've cut business deals with clients there over a cup of coffee and celebrated many late nights with my staff and other auctioneers with a plate of cheese and eggs after a long auction day. When my wife and I can't decide on what's for dinner while traveling, we can always agree on a fine meal at a Waffle House.

A few weeks ago, we stopped for a late-night dinner at a Waffle House off I-65 near Montgomery, Alabama. After we sat down, it quickly became apparent that the staff didn't know what they were doing. We found out everyone was new, including the manager. The coffee was old, the eggs were overcooked, the bacon was undercooked, and they forgot my waffle. It was obvious the staff didn't know what they were doing and had no training or oversight whatsoever. They were simply winging it and it showed.

Another weekend, we were traveling through South Mississippi and

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# UNDER THE GAVEL

MESSAGE FROM THE FORMER BOARD CHAIR PETE HORTON, CAI, CES, GPPA



## THE ONLY CONSTANT IS CHANGE

I know it's an old cliché, but I do believe it to be true that "the only constant is change." When I think about how this old saying applies to the auction industry, it's almost overwhelming. Fifteen or 20 years ago I would have thought it to be ludicrous that we would be selling robots in an online auction — or as a matter of fact, anything in an online only auction. Fifteen years or so is almost like the blink of an eye and it seems as if the auction business changed overnight.

The good news is that now days we can conduct auctions in whichever manner is in the best interest of our sellers, whether it be live onsite only, online only or a hybrid. All methods are working when we auctioneers do our homework — and have reasonable sellers (that's a whole 'nother subject). The bottom line is that AUCTIONS WORK!

I know there is a lot to ponder here. But one thing I am grateful for in being an auctioneer is that there is always opportunity out there. There is always something new and different around the corner. Whatever changes come down the pike, we as professional auctioneers need to adapt and be nimble and ready to take advantage. I know that's not an easy task. From a personal standpoint, I admit that there was some fear involved when we did our first auction using a buyers premium around 30 years ago. And the same is true for our first online only auction. My only regret afterwards were that we didn't start using these tools sooner.



How do we adapt and embrace change? Without a doubt I think the very best way is by being involved with The Alabama Auctioneers Association and The National Auctioneers Association. The education and mentoring I have received from fellow auctioneers is immeasurable.

So that being said, I hope to see y'all in Orange Beach on August 28th and 29th where the educational opportunities await us. It's going to be a great experience for us all. Thanks for listening.

God Bless

## 2023 BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

AUGUST 22, 2023

NOVEMBER 14, 2023

All meetings are open to the public in compliance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act. If you would like to be included on the agenda, please submit a request in writing (email is acceptable) two weeks prior to the meeting, along with the topic to be discussed. Please submit requests directly to Keith Warren, [keith@alstateboard.com](mailto:keith@alstateboard.com). Thank you.

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stopped at a busy Waffle House near Gulfport. The place was packed with travelers. Every seat was taken, and people were waiting in line to be seated. We counted nine employees with seven working in unison behind the counter. A manager was overseeing every order as it was taken, called out, cooked and delivered to each table with precision. Within a few minutes, my wife and I had our food, and it was cooked to perfection. My ticket was put on my table before I had finished eating and when I was ready to check out, a cashier was already anticipating my arrival and was waiting on us. I left a big tip and we left. We were so impressed that my wife called the national Waffle House information line and told the operator about our positive experience at this location.

The Waffle House near Montgomery seemed so desperate for employees they must have hired anyone who filled out an application. They had no training and absolutely no oversight. Most of the customers left angry over the quality of food and the service.

The Waffle House in Gulfport was a well-oiled machine that was operated with precision. Even the newest employee with limited experience knew exactly what their duties were and performed them well. Because of great management and oversight, this Waffle House location is highly successful and profitable! The employees are all serving in an apprenticeship role and in time will be able to move up into a management position or at least take the skills they learned and use them to be successful in other careers.

### CONSIDER BEING A MENTOR (SPONSOR)

One of the biggest obstacles to entering our profession is finding someone who is willing to be your sponsor. It can be difficult to find a licensed auctioneer who lives in the same geographic area as you do, has the time to devote to being your mentor and sells the type of assets that you are interested in learning how to sell. You also must be “equally yoked”

meaning that you must have the same goals, ethics, principles, values and interest to pursue success in our industry. Keep in mind the sponsoring auctioneer carries a lot of responsibility including liabilities since he or she is the one agreeing to oversee all the apprentice auctioneer’s activities. Becoming a sponsor of an apprentice auctioneer should not be taken lightly!

If you are looking for a sponsor, please understand you need to bring something to the table or in other words, have something to offer to your sponsor. Most apprentices become part-time or full-time employees of their sponsor by serving in another capacity such as setup, cashier, equipment hauler, back-up bid caller or salesman. Your sponsor is making a major commitment to help you while you are also making a commitment to them. Regardless of the financial agreement, you will now be working exclusively for your sponsor on anything auction-business related,

especially when it comes to “bid calling” or “contract sales.”

### WHERE DO I FIND A SPONSOR?

If you do not already have a relationship with a licensed auctioneer, you need to meet some! The best place to meet other auction professionals is through the Alabama Auctioneers Association.

The Alabama Auctioneers Association exists to represent the auction industry within the state and to provide education and networking to auction professionals. As the current Vice President of the Alabama Auctioneers Association, I can tell you that our members are always willing to help others regardless of whether you are new to the business or have been in business for years. Each year we hold an annual conference where we meet, fellowship and offer educational opportunities that fulfill continu-

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## BOARD APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Governor Ivey appointed Mr. Scott Barnes to represent Congressional District 6 and appointed Mr. Chip Pearce to represent Congressional District 1 with Mr. Pete Horton’s term expired. These are two excellent appointments for the Board of Auctioneers, and both will do an excellent job representing the auction profession and protecting the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the State of Alabama.

As required by statute, election of officers is required after each new appointment by the governor and that was held at the board meeting on Tuesday, June 6, 2023. The following members were elected to the board offices: Mr. Mike Fisher, Chair; Mr. Chad Curvin, Vice-Chair; and Mr. J.D. Gray, Secretary. All members were present and great plans are in place for the following new goals and plans moving forward.

## COMPLAINTS

You can now complete a complaint form directly from the website – [auctioneer.alabama.gov](http://auctioneer.alabama.gov). The online form is available under the Consumer Section and along with information that outlines the complaint process. Once you complete the form, it is emailed directly to the legal assistant, Karen Harlow, and is assigned a number and distributed to the investigator, legal counsel and the executive director. The Board investigates complaints within 30 days of receipt for the Investigative Committee to review to determine probable cause and violations of the Auctioneer Board Statutes, Rules and Regulations. An auction company shall not employ a licensed auctioneer nor conduct auctions without holding an auction company license. If you have any questions, please email them to [complaints@alstateboard.com](mailto:complaints@alstateboard.com). Thank you.





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ing education requirements of the Alabama State Board of Auctioneers in order to maintain a license here. Our next conference will be August 28th and 29th in Orange Beach, Alabama. I would encourage anyone, whether currently licensed or someone interested in joining our profession to join us. For more information on the conference, go to <https://alabamaauctioneers.org>

### CELEBRITY APPRENTICE

Over the past few weeks, I have been working with a good friend to help him submit his documentation to become a new Alabama apprentice auctioneer. He has just been given the green light to take his exam and he hopes to be licensed soon. He is excited to become one of the State of Alabama's newest apprentice auctioneers and I am just as excited about being his mentor as he pursues this new adventure. Let me tell you about Noah.

Sgt. Noah Galloway, a native of Birmingham, Alabama, is the personification of valor and resilience. This Purple Heart recipient, double amputee decided to join the military as a result of the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks. However, his battles didn't

end in the field when he was forced to adapt to a life with only two limbs after an IED attach during Operation Iraqi Freedom, which would take his left leg below the knee and his left arm below the elbow. Noah's incredible journey to mental and physical wellness is one he shares in his memoir, "Living with No Excuses: The Remarkable Rebirth of an American Soldier." The words, no excuses, became Noah's mantra, as he rose out of post trauma depression via his reinvigorating passion for fitness.

His victories in competition and obstacle races, which most would see as impossible, would find Noah gaining the national spotlight. He became the first veteran and amputee to be featured on the cover of Men's Health magazine when he earned its "Ultimate Guy" title in 2014. This title landed Noah on "The Ellen DeGeneres Show." Noah also became a finalist on the hit ABC show, "Dancing with the Stars" and won the debut season of Fox's "American Grit."

As a result of gaining a national platform, Noah wanted to give back, so he launched the No Excuses Charitable Fund. The fund raises money and awareness for organizations that support causes, which mean the most

to Noah. Now, as a fitness enthusiast and a much sought-after motivational public speaker, Noah shares his story to encourage audiences and his fans to embrace the "No Excuses" lifestyle on their way to enhanced mental and physical wellness.

"Looking back, I've had a successful military career, success in the entertainment world, and as a keynote speaker and now to be apprenticing as an auctioneer is an exciting opportunity for me. Starting something new at age 40 can be intimidating, yet it fits perfectly with my motto — living with no excuses," said Noah. "I am so excited to be learning all about auctioneering from my good friend, Chip Pearce, whom I truly respect. Chip is a man of fine character and also lives a life with the 'never quit mentality.' He has an incredible amount of knowledge and experience as a professional auctioneer and being an apprentice auctioneer under his management will allow me to learn all I can about this amazing industry. I'm excited about being able to help nonprofits with their fundraising needs, but to also be able to work with corporate clients, banks and estate executors with our auction marketing services."

*All photos provided by Larry "Chip" Pearce.*

## WEBSITE

The website has been "refreshed" and updated with a current and modern look as well as to make it more user friendly. If there is information you would like to see on the site, please send us an update at [auctioneer@alstateboard.com](mailto:auctioneer@alstateboard.com). Thank you!

## CONTINUING EDUCATION

The Alabama Auctioneers Association provides several continuing education programs throughout the year. You can contact them directly at [AlaAuctioneers@gmail.com](mailto:AlaAuctioneers@gmail.com) or by phone at 580-327-7525.