

The players

A sampling of the region's movers and shakers



Donald "Boysie" Bollinger
CEO, Bollinger Shipyards Inc.,
Lockport

As head of a major shipbuilder that operates 14 construction and repair shipyards in Louisiana and Texas, he has been a key member of nearly every major business, civic and charitable organization in New Orleans. He helped lead early efforts to organize the post-Katrina recovery and served on the mayor's Bring New Orleans Back Commission and the governor's Louisiana Recovery Authority. A prominent member of the Louisiana Republican Party, he is a frequent campaign contributor and Republican power broker.



Aaron Broussard
Jefferson Parish President

Elected in 2007 to his second term as parish president, he is a lawyer and longtime resident of Kenner and has a lengthy history in business and Jefferson Parish politics. Though he drew widespread criticism for ordering the ill-fated closure of parish pumping stations during Hurricane Katrina, he remains a powerful force in business circles and a major figure in the Louisiana Democratic Party.



Kevin Davis
St. Tammany Parish President

Heading parish government since January 2000, he has focused on improving parish business and financial practices, addressing water and drainage issues, and developing improved planning models for residential and commercial growth. He has aggressively lobbied state government to upgrade state roads and spearheaded modernization of emergency preparedness systems.



Leslie Jacobs
President and CEO, Strategic
Comp, Metairie

A business leader and venture philanthropist, she spearheaded and funded 504ward, an Idea Village initiative to attract and retain young movers and shakers in New Orleans. A longtime insurance and workers compensation executive, she is the founder of Educate Now!, a nonprofit dedicated to sustainable reform of New Orleans public schools. She has been an elected member of the Orleans Parish Public School Board, served on the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education, was instrumental in creating the Recovery School District and is considered the architect of Louisiana's accountability reform.



James "Jay" Lapeyre Jr.
President, The Laitram Corp.,
Harahan

Head of a manufacturing company that employs more than 1,000 workers, he is the immediate past chairman of the Business Council of New Orleans and the River Region and is involved in a host of area business and civic organizations. He has led numerous business-recruitment efforts and played a leading role in New Orleans' recovery from Hurricane Katrina, heading up efforts to reform the city's property tax assessment system.



Patricia Schuster LeBlanc
Partner, LeBlanc Butler LLC,
Metairie

A prominent trial attorney, she has been a leading voice for organizing and strengthening business in Jefferson Parish. She helped found and chaired the Jefferson Chamber of Commerce and twice chaired the Jefferson Business Council. She chaired the Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission, and last year Gov. Bobby Jindal named her to the board of the Louisiana Recovery Authority.



Walter Leger Jr.
Partner, Leger &, Shaw, New
Orleans

The prominent local lawyer and civic leader has worked tirelessly to expedite housing recovery in the New Orleans area since Hurricane Katrina and is a board member of the Louisiana Recovery Authority. He has chaired the New Orleans Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Metrovision Economic Development Partnership [precursor to Greater New Orleans Inc.] and sits on the latter's board. He is a co-owner of the New Orleans Zephyrs and serves on the New Orleans Saints Community Advisory Committee and the NFL Stadium Advisory Commission.



Martin Mayer
President and CEO, Stirling
Properties Inc., Covington

This year he became the first St. Tammany Parish chairman of Greater New Orleans Inc., a regional economic alliance of 10 parishes. With a history of activism in St. Tammany Parish, he is a past chairman of the St. Tammany West Chamber of Commerce and a board member of the St. Tammany Economic Development District and the Northshore Business Council. He is also a member of the national Urban Land Institute and the International Council of Shopping Centers.



Karen Carter Peterson
Member, Louisiana House of
Representatives

Representing the 93rd District since 1999, she has been Speaker Pro Tempore of the House since 2008. Her legislative district encompasses the heart of New Orleans, including the French Quarter, the central business district and the Port of New Orleans. As such, she plays a key role in guiding state policies and legislation that affect New Orleans.



Gregory Rusovich
CEO, Transoceanic Trading
and Development Co., New
Orleans

Currently chairman of the Business Council of New Orleans and the River Region, he has taken a leadership role in both business development and crime-reduction efforts in the metropolitan area. He has been a board member of Greater New Orleans Inc., Young Leadership Council, Metropolitan Crime Commission, New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau, New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation and the World Trade Center.



David Voelker
CEO, Frantzen, Voelker,
Conway Investments, New
Orleans

The manager of a private equity firm, he sits on the boards of all the firm's portfolio companies and has advocated widely on behalf of local entrepreneurial development. He is a member of many business and philanthropic organizations and has been deeply involved in local recovery efforts. He has chaired the Louisiana Recovery Authority since 2005 and is a steering committee member for Blueprint Louisiana.



Roderick "Rod" West
President and CEO, Entergy
New Orleans Inc.

Formerly an attorney with Jones Walker, West has been with Entergy Corp. since 1999 and was named to head its subsidiary, Entergy New Orleans, Inc., in 2007. As a member of the Super Bowl XLVIII bid committee, he recently helped lead the way in landing the event for New Orleans in 2013. He also has served on the board of Allstate Sugar Bowl, is a past chairman of the Louisiana State University System Board of Supervisors, and is a commissioner of the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad and Ernest N. Morial Convention Center.