

This is my first small business banquet as the parish president. As I look around the room I see a lot of familiar faces and some new faces. I enjoy seeing the familiar faces of course but also excited to see the newcomers as well. Within the last year we've had about 15 new businesses join our community.

That means the growth of the parish has increased, proving that St. James Parish is a wonderful place to work and live... That is because of all of you. Together we are the Champions of St. James Parish. I truly believe that.

Do you know how many businesses we have within the parish or how many businesses it takes to make our parish successful?

- ❖ Success is not measured by what a person has but by their measure of creativity. The larger corporations and industries along with the smaller businesses and even politicians have the same thing in common...we all start out in the same place.
- ❖ Every theory, successful business, or invention stems from an idea. A passionate person takes that idea and turns it into profit or gold.
- ❖ Just like in any sport, there are several hurdles or competitors to defeat. If you are driven or passionate enough you can make it to the goal line.
- ❖

❖ There are 416 businesses in St. James.

Do you realize there are over a thousand employees working behind the levee along river road?

I have nothing but gratitude for every owner and employee in St. James Parish. Thank you for all that you do.

I also want to thank members of the parish council, the town of Lutcher and Gramercy mayors, Sheila Butler with Entergy, Mike Guitot for donating the sound equipment along with our other sponsors who contributed their time and effort tonight. Among the many businesses tonight we also have a beauty queen in the audience, Thank you Bianca Steib, the new Miss. St. James for attending our banquet tonight.

Personal Thanks:

Local Coaches

Curtis Johnson-Coconut Story

Lionel Washington-Lutcher Native

Introduce Jude Gravios-Litter PSA

Transition to dinner break