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Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce has new CEO

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James N. Hizer, the 42-year-old former head of the Bowling Green, Ky., Chamber of Commerce, is the new president and CEO of the Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce.

Pensacola chamber Chairman Blaise Adams announced Hizer's selection early this morning.

He succeeds former president and CEO Evon Emerson, who resigned under pressure in March.

"We wanted the best chamber leader in the country and we got him," Pensacola banker and chamber selection committee member Carol Carlan said.

Under Hizer's leadership, the Bowling Green chamber was named the Top Chamber in the Nation by the American Chamber of Commerce Executives in 2009.

Also in 2009, the United States Chamber of Commerce awarded the Bowling Green chamber a 5-Star accreditation for its sound policies, effective organizational procedures, and positive impact on the community.

Hizer could not be reached for comment early this morning.

Adams said Hizer would be meeting with area business leaders and other officials this week before returning to Kentucky to arrange moving his family to the Pensacola area.
