

DEVELOPMENTS

THE MISSISSIPPI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



WINTER 2007

WWW.MEDC.MS

Mississippi Economic Development Council, Inc.

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Energy MS, Jackson

President-Elect - George Freeland
Jackson Co. EDF, Pascagoula

V. P. - Chamber Dev. - Marie Shoemake
Covington Co. Chamber, Collins

V. P. - Community Dev. - Christy Knapp
Oxford-Lafayette Co. EDF, Oxford

V. P. - Economic Dev. - Tim Coursey
Madison Co. EDA, Canton

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RankinFirst Economic Dev. Authority, Brandon

Director - District 6 - Garrick Combs
Mississippi Dev. Authority, Summit

Director - District 7 - Angeline Godwin
Area Dev. Partnership, Hattiesburg

Director - District 8 - Larry S. Barnett.
Harrison Co. Dev. Council, Gulfport

Director-At-Large - Alecia C. Crawford
Mississippi Power Co., Meridian

Director-At-Large - Chandler Russ
Tennessee Valley Authority, Tupelo

MDA Exec. Dir. (ex-officio) - Gray Swoope
Mississippi Dev. Authority, Jackson

MS SEDC Dir. - Ms. Sandy Holifield
EDA of Jones County, Laurel

Alt. MS SEDC Dir. - David Thornell
Gr. Starkville Dev. Partnership, Starkville

Committee Chairpersons:

By-Laws Co-Chair - Angela Cognevich
Mississippi Dev. Authority, Hattiesburg

By-Laws Co-Chair - Mitch Stennett
EDA of Jones County, Laurel

Chamber Dev. - Marie Shoemake
Covington Co. Chamber, Collins

Communications - Elizabeth Fargason-Stanga
JBHM Architects, Jackson

Community Ec. Dev. Awards - Christy Knapp
Oxford-Lafayette Co. EDF, Oxford

Conference Committee - George Freeland
Jackson Co. EDF, Pascagoula

Finance/Sponsorships - Chandler Russ
Tennessee Valley Authority, Tupelo

Legislative - Phillip D. Hardwick
Stennis Institute, MSU, Jackson

Membership - Elizabeth Taylor
Mississippi Dev. Authority, Jackson

Scholarships - Steven C. Hardin
Mississippi Dev. Authority, Jackson

Staff:

Executive Director/COO - Carol Hardwick

Manager, Member Services & Admin. - Amy Wilson

MEDC Honors Swoope

Hundreds of colleagues and public officials poured into the ballroom of the Old Capitol Inn in Jackson to congratulate and show their support for Gray Swoope on his newly appointed position as Executive Director for the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA). Governor Haley Barbour announced the appointment of Swoope in December after Leland Speed resigned the position to return to the private sector.

MEDC hosted the premier reception for its members, business leaders, legislators, and other public officials with the support of over sixty sponsors. More than 300 guests listened attentively as Gov. Barbour, Swoope, and MEDC President Rick Byars briefly addressed the crowd. During his remarks Swoope thanked the governor for the opportunity and Speed for his leadership and guidance over the last three years.

The evening was complete with the sounds of blues and jazz musician Jessie Robinson on the electric guitar, along with a variety of wonderful foods in the beautifully decorated ballroom.

Swoope is a Mississippi State University graduate and worked in the broadcast industry selling television commercials until he answered his professional calling into economic development. In 1985, friend and college fraternity brother Steve Hardin called Swoope to inform him of an opening within the North Mississippi Industrial Development Association (NMIDA) in West Point. Bill Barrett who was the Executive

continued on page 4



Gray Swoope addresses the friends, colleagues, and supporters at the MEDC Reception honoring him.

IN THIS ISSUE...

PAGE 2

*President's Letter
Executive Director
New Members*

PAGE 3

Legislative Forum

PAGES 4 & 5

Swoope Reception

PAGE 6

*Winter Conference - E.D. Sessions
2006-2007 Executive Committee
Swoope Reception Sponsors*

PAGE 7

*Winter Conference - Chamber Sessions
Cognevich Elected to SEDC Position*

PAGE 8

Upcoming Events

NEW MEMBERS

Ms. Trisha Webber

Southwest Regional Office,
Mississippi Development Authority
SUMMIT, MS

Tracey Giles

Mississippi Development Authority
JACKSON, MS

Mr. Dean Patterson

Mississippi Development Authority
JACKSON, MS

Mr. Onwuham Akpa

Graduate Student
The University of Southern Mississippi
RAYMOND, MS

Mr. Stanley Budraitis

Graduate Student
The University of Southern Mississippi
PETAL, MS

Ms. Penny Dunaway

Graduate Student
The University of Southern Mississippi
RAYMOND, MS

Mr. Charles Durr III

Graduate Student
The University of Southern Mississippi
HATTIESBURG, MS

Mr. Christopher Hinton

Graduate Student
The University of Southern Mississippi
RAYMOND, MS

Mr. John Henry Jackson

Asia-Pacific Trade Manager
Mississippi Development Authority
JACKSON, MS

Mr. Peter Jones

Graduate Student
The University of Southern Mississippi
HATTIESBURG, MS

Ms. Melissa Kohr

Graduate Student
The University of Southern Mississippi
HATTIESBURG, MS

Mr. Cory Long

Graduate Student
The University of Southern Mississippi
HATTIESBURG, MS

Mr. Edwin A. Sory

Manager Agribusiness
Mississippi Development Authority
JACKSON, MS

Ms. Carsha Stromas

Graduate Student
The University of Southern Mississippi
HATTIESBURG, MS

Ms. Stacy Stromeyer

Graduate Student
The University of Southern Mississippi
HATTIESBURG, MS

Mr. Robert Van Geons

Graduate Student,
The University of Southern Mississippi
ALBEMARLE, NC

Mr. Joseph P. Deason

Chief Financial Officer
Mississippi Development Authority
JACKSON, MS

continued on page 3

MEDC President Rick Byars

I would like to wish each of you a Happy New Year. I am honored to serve as President of MEDC for the 2006 – 2007 fiscal year.

Our year is off to a great start at MEDC. You are reading our return to a printed newsletter. It is my hope that this newsletter serves as a valuable resource to all of our members, as well as an informational piece for economic development issues for our local, state and federal officials.

There are many key initiatives underway at MEDC this year. These initiatives are designed to strengthen and grow our membership at MEDC. The primary initiative will be the development of a professional training program for economic development practitioners and elected officials. With better trained practitioners and key stakeholders, the State of Mississippi will be poised to win more economic development projects.

Finally, I want to congratulate Gray Swoope for being named the new executive director of the Mississippi Development Authority. Gray has worked very hard to prepare himself for this position. I want to commend Governor Barbour for recognizing Gray's talent and selecting him to lead MDA.

These are exciting times at MEDC. I want to invite all our members to participate. We have many opportunities for your leadership skills!

Serving you in MEDC,
Rick Byars, President



MEDC Grows with Executive Director Carol Hardwick



MEDC made a major organizational change in July 2005, when the Board of Directors voted to hire a full-time Executive Director/COO and a part-time Manager of Member Services. Carol Hardwick was named as the Executive Director/ COO after serving as the MEDC Association Manager for three years.

“Carol has worked with the Board to bring MEDC to a point where we were ready to grow our mission and services,” states MEDC President Rick Byars. After Hardwick took the new position in September 2005 she hired Amy Wilson as the Manager of Member Services.

“We now have the structures in place on which to build and offer even more to our members,” states Hardwick. Over the last year MEDC has produced a membership brochure, conducted regional Legislative Forums across the state, reintroduced a printed quarterly newsletter, and continued its commitment to quality programs during the two conferences each year.

“The dedication and enthusiasm that Carol brings to MEDC is key to accomplishing the goals of the Board of Directors,” states Byars

“We have even bigger plans now to provide more informative networking events such as member luncheons, and to enhance the website so it can be used as a resource, not only by our members, but also by non-members outside the state to know who's who in economic development in Mississippi and the successes they are having in their communities,” Hardwick related.

Hardwick and her husband Phil have son, Clay, who is a sophomore at Millsaps and a daughter, Kimber Burgess, who lives in Atlanta with her husband Matt.

MEDC Hosts Regional Legislative Forums

Kudos to Phil Hardwick, MEDC Legislative Chairman, for developing the first series of regional legislative forums. In October and November, MEDC hosted six of these informative and beneficial gatherings. The forums provided an opportunity for members of the Mississippi legislature and local economic developers to meet in local settings to discuss matters of mutual interest. Meetings were held in Greenwood, Gulfport, Tupelo, Philadelphia, Madison, and McComb.

Education and workforce issues were major topics of discussion in Tupelo and Greenwood, while the topic of building relationships between legislators and economic developers was a mainstay of discussion in Madison and McComb.

Legislators at the Gulf Coast meeting emphasized that the wind pool insurance issue must be resolved before the Coast can recover. George Freeland, MEDC President-elect, told legislators that Coast economic developers faced a quandary when prospects asked specific questions about matters related to recovery. "Unfortunately, we just don't have answers yet to many of the questions," he said.

After the Philadelphia meeting, the Neshoba Democrat reported, "Highway improvements along with continued funding for the Mississippi Development Authority and workforce training were among the wish list of items regional economic development leaders said were vital Monday. They were joined by about 50 area legislators and community and regional leaders at the first annual Mississippi Economic Development Council's Legislative Forum in the Integrated Technologies Training Center on the Choctaw Indian Reservation. Legislators talked about the past and upcoming sessions after economic development and community college officials shared their concerns and ideas. While Hurricane Katrina changed many of the state's priorities, Ivy Owen, the Tribe's economic developer, said the region which included Neshoba County needed help from the Legislature as well."



George Freeland, Executive Director, Jackson Co. Economic Development Foundation, Inc. visits with Senator Tommy Moffatt of Gautier after the forum in Gulfport.



Larry Barnett, Executive Director, Harrison Co. Development Commission and Representative Jessica Sibley Upshaw share ideas at the Legislative Forum in Gulfport.

Carol Hardwick, MEDC Executive Director, praised regional board members who acted as hosts for meetings. "They secured meeting facilities, encouraged attendance, provided refreshments and opened each meeting with a welcome. They are tremendous ambassadors for MEDC."

Regional board members hosting forums in the following locations were Larry Barnett - Gulfport, Tim Coursey - Madison, David Rumbarger - Tupelo, Sue Stidham - Greenwood, Garrick Combs - McComb and David Vowell - Philadelphia.

"This meeting was a great benefit to the members of the legislature," said Biloxi Senator Tommy Gollott, who serves as Chairman of the Ports & Marine Resources Committee and is a member of the Economic Development Committee. "We look forward to doing it again in the future."

LOOKING AHEAD...

At each meeting, legislative members reflected on the 2006 session and then looked ahead to 2007. Most legislators said that the 2007 session will be about education and funding, pointing out that "...it will be an election year and everybody will have two hands out," adds Senator Gallott.

MEDC will host a legislative reception the winter conference on February 7th at the Jackson Hilton from 6:00-7:00

NEW MEMBERS

continued from page 2

Mr. Bill Harris

*Director, Public Policy, BellSouth
JACKSON, MS*

Mr. Blake Wallace

*Executive Director, Hinds County Economic
Development District
JACKSON, MS*

Ms. Gina Black

*Mapping & Graphics Coordinator, Community
Development Foundation
TUPELO, MS*

Ms. Cecilia B. Derrington

*Manager, Industrial & Community Relations
Peavey Electronics
MERIDIAN, MS*

Ms. Lenita Knight

*Manager, Administration & Finance
Madison County Economic Development Authority
CANTON, MS*

Mr. Jim Pilgrim

*Executive Director, Vicksburg-Warren Co. Economic
Development Foundation
VICKSBURG, MS*

Mrs. Kathleen Shaughnessy

*Manager, External Affairs, BellSouth
GULFPORT, MS*

Mr. Jesse W. Smith

*Manager, Business & Economic Development,
Mississippi Polymer Institute
HATTIESBURG, MS*

Mr. Mitch Stringer

*Existing Industry & Business Development, Madison
Co. Economic Development Authority
CANTON, MS*

Mr. Kel Young

*President/Owner, William Gus
FLOWOOD, MS*

Mr. Robert Berry, Jr.

*Executive Director, North Central Planning &
Development District
WINONA, MS*

Mr. Joe Jordan

*Director, Mississippi State University
MISSISSIPPI STATE, MS*

Ms. Pamela Martin

*Grants Manager, City of Olive Branch
OLIVE BRANCH, MS*

Ms. Rachel J. Mitchell

*Membership Coordinator, The Alliance
CORINTH MS*

Mr. Curt Noel

*Managing Director, Eclypse Ventures LLC
ATLANTA, GA*

Ms. Rachael Seymour

*Director, Mississippi Gulf Coast
Chamber of Commerce
GULFPORT, MS*

Mr. Marcus "Marc" Tucker

*Facilities Manager
Community Development Foundation
TUPELO, MS*

Mr. Roger Whitlock

*Director, East Central Mississippi Community College
DECATUR, MS*

MEDC HONORS SWOOPE

continued from page 1

Director of NMIDA, hired Swoope and so began his path into economic development.

“Mr. Barrett gave me a sound foundation for my approach to economic development. It was under his direction that I garnered organizational skills and detailed ability to track leads and to followup,” Swoope reflects. “Bill Barrett is the Master of Sales Organization!”

Barrett expressed his admiration for the new MDA Executive Director. “He gives me too much credit. Gray is bright, talented, energetic and consummately successful. We are blessed to have him leading our state’s program.” Barrett is a honorary life member of MEDC and was president of the organization in 1966.

Del Boyette is a well respected site selection consultant in the field who Swoope identifies as a strong influence on his career. “Del and I may have different approaches to things, but I admire his ability to see the whole picture.” Boyette is a principal with Boyette Levy in Atlanta, GA.

Swoope has been a member of MEDC since 1985 and served as President in 2002-2003. “I see MEDC as a vital tool for me at MDA. Although MEDC is an independent voice, we will continue to work together with professionals at all levels throughout the state.” Swoope continues, “This is a built-in network with good, honest feedback. I think we will see a strengthening of MDA through MEDC as they continue to be a focus group for us.”

Swoope has two primary

continued on page 5

MEDC Honors Gray Swoope



Gray Swoope with MEDC Board Member Chandler Russ



Mississippi State Treasurer Tate Reeves and Gray Swoope



MEDC President Rick Byars



Max Hipp, MEDC Past President, Gray Swoope and Christy Knapp, MEDC Vice President, Community Development



Gray Swoope with wife Mary and parents Frank and Carolyn Swoope



Gray Swoope and Leland Speed, past Executive Director of MDA

Swoope With Reception

MEDC HONORS SWOOPE

continued from page 4

strategies for leading the Mississippi Development Authority which reflect his perspective on economic and community development in the state. "First this work has meaning. We can impact peoples' lives," expresses Swoope. "It's not just a matter of a community receiving a grant. That grant can lead to more and better jobs, an improved water system, basically improving quality of life."

Secondly, Swoope believes that what his organization does can change the perception of Mississippi both to people outside of the state as well as the citizens. "Great things are happening here in Mississippi and we can demonstrate this from our most brief contact with someone to staging large events. MDA is here to show everyone that Mississippi can compete with other states and we have great things to offer!"

Gray Swoope lives in Madison with his wife Mary and their two daughters Grace and Anne Carrie.

To view more Swoope Reception pictures visit www.medic.ms

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Phil Hardwick, MEDC Legislative Chairman, with Connie Moran, Mayor of Ocean Springs and MMA President Jay Moon



Governor Haley Barbour



Gray Swoope and MEDC Executive Director Carol Hardwick



Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong, President, Mississippi State University and Jeffrey Rupp, MSU Director of Community and Government Relations with Rick Byars, MEDC President



Balcony View of the Swoope Reception

Congratulations, Gray!

Sponsors of the reception:

- Area Development Partnership*
- Balch & Bingham, LLP*
- BellSouth*
- Brookhaven-Lincoln Co. Chamber/IDF*
- Brunini Grantham Grower & Hewes PLLC*
- Butler Snow O'Mara Stevens & Cannada, PLLC*
- Cleveland-Bolivar Co. Chamber*
- CN*
- Columbus-Lowndes Development Link*
- Community Development Foundation*
- Community Development Partnership*
- CREATE Foundation*
- Delta Council*
- DeSoto Co. Economic Dev. Council*
- Downtown Jackson Partners*
- East Central MS Economic Council*
- East MS Business Development Corp*
- Economic Dev. Authority of Jones Co.*
- Electric Power Associations of MS*
- Entergy Mississippi*
- Government Consultants, Inc.*
- Gray Construction*
- Greater Starkville Dev. Partnership*
- Grenada Co. Chamber of Commerce*
- H & M Company, Inc.*
- Harrison Co. Development Commission*
- Hemphill Const./Suncoast Infrastructure*
- Hinds Co. Economic Dev. District*
- Industrial Fdn. of Washington Co., Inc.*
- Itawamba Co. Development Council*
- Jackson Co. Economic Dev. Fdn., Inc.*
- JBHM Architects*

continued on page 7

“Tools . Targets . Technology” Right on Target for Winter Conference

MEDC Winter Conference focuses on “Tools . Targets . Technology.” Economic developers will once again convene in Jackson, not only to hear from experts on these topics, but to get an update from Governor Barbour on how the state is doing since he spoke to the group last year following Katrina.

“We were all still in somewhat of a state of shock in the wake of Hurricane Katrina when Governor Barbour spoke at our conference last year, but this year we have to marvel at the progress of our recovery. The rapid pace of our recovery is a testament to the Governor’s leadership and vision,” said George Freeland, Conference Chairman and Incoming President, and also Executive Director of the Jackson County Economic Development Foundation. “We look forward to having him and members of the legislature on our program.”

A regular focus of the Winter Conference is the legislature. The conference opens with the legislative reception on Wednesday, February 7, at the Hilton on County Line Road. MEDC members should encourage their legislators to meet them at the reception. On Friday Phil Hardwick, MEDC Legislative Chairperson, will host legislators and special guests in a talk show format.

On Thursday, after hearing from Walt Grayson about his television program “Look Around Mississippi,” conference attendees will learn more about the LocationOne Information System (LOIS) from Lisa Franklin of Kansas City, Missouri; and targeted markets from Del Boyette, of Atlanta, Georgia.

New economic development allies are scheduled to speak as well - Trudy Fisher, Director of the Department of Environmental Quality and Dr. H. Randall Goldsmith, President and CEO of the Mississippi Technology Alliance. Conference favorites Gray Swoope, Executive Director of the Mississippi Development Authority and Jay Moon, President of the Mississippi Manufacturing Association will also present the conference with valuable information and insights.

“While the conference committee has done a great job choosing speakers our professionals are eager to hear, their favorite activity is networking, and we have plenty of time for that, too,” said Carol Hardwick, Executive Director and COO.

For more information about the conference call 601-352-1909 or go to www.medic.ms



2006-2007 MEDC Executive Committee



Carol Hardwick, Executive Director/ COO stands with Executive Committee 2006-2007 Board Members Jason Brookins, Immediate Past President; George Freeland, President-Elect; Rick Byars, President; Marie Shoemaker, VP-Chamber Development; Christy Knapp, VP-Community Development; Tim Coursey, VP-Economic Development. Not pictured Dianne Carson, Secretary-Treasurer.

Winter Conference Offers Chambers Tools To Grow

Mississippi is moving forward at a rapid pace. A good way to be informed of the challenges and opportunities facing our communities is to attend the MEDC Conference in February. The program, "Tools . Targets . Technology" will provide information to help communities keep pace with this change. It is by networking and sharing ideas that our communities and the state can move forward together.

In surveying the chamber membership, one of the main requests was to share best practices. Therefore, Chuck Ueltschey will be facilitating the session, Wow! That's a Great Idea! "Bring your innovative ideas and success stories. Why reinvent the wheel when we are working for the same goal....MOVE MISSISSIPPI FORWARD!" said Marie Shoemake, Vice President for Chamber Development and Executive Director of the Covington County Chamber of Commerce.

With growth of retail development in the State, what better ally than the Mississippi Development Authority to assist communities in preparing a retail recruitment strategy. Pat Werne and a panel of retail real estate consultants will address this topic and share opportunities for local communities to participate in the International Council of Shopping Center trade show.

The integration of technology into community development is essential in today's workplace. A prospect's first visit is often to a community's website. Marlo Dorsey, Community Developer of the Jones County Junior College Advanced Technology Center, will discuss the latest trends in website design and offer tips on making sites informative and attractive.

"The MEDC Conference Committee has taken your recommendations in planning an outstanding program. Contact other chamber execs in your region and tell them not to miss out on the chamber sessions at Winter Conference," Shoemake added.

MEDC is offering a one-day rate on Thursday for those who want to attend only the chamber sessions that day.



Cognevich Elected Secretary/Treasurer of Southern Economic Development Council



Angie Cognevich, MEDC By-laws Committee Co-Chair was elected Secretary/Treasurer of the Southern Economic Development Council (SEDC) in November at their annual conference in Orlando, Florida. She will ascend through the officer positions to become Chairman of this seventeen-state professional association.

"I am honored to be elected to a leadership position in this prestigious organization. I look forward to serving in this new role and I hope to make a difference as we move this organization forward," Cognevich stated.

Cognevich is only the third female in the 60-year history of the organization to be given this honor. She has served as Mississippi's state director for SEDC for the past two years.

She also received a 2006 Chairman's Award for her outstanding contributions and dedication to the regional association.

Cognevich is manager of the Southeast Regional Office of the Mississippi Development Authority. She has also served on the MEDC Board of Directors as vice president of community development and Volunteer of the Year Awards chairman.

continued from page 6

Sponsors of the reception:

Madison Co. Economic Dev. Authority

Madison The City Chamber of Commerce

Mendrop Wages, LLC

MetroJackson Chamber of Commerce

MetroJackson Economic Dev. Alliance

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

Mississippi Economic Council

Mississippi Manufacturers Assoc.

Mississippi Power Company

Mississippi Technology Alliance

MS South, Inc.

NAI Mark S. Bounds Realty Partners

Neel-Schaffer, Inc.

North Mississippi Industrial Dev. Assn.

Oxford-Lafayette Co. Econ. Dev. Fdn.

Panola Partnership, Inc.

Pike Co. Econ. Dev. District & Chamber

RankinFirst Economic Dev. Authority

Rosedale-Bolivar Co. Port Commission

Southern MS Planning & Dev. District

Southwest Mississippi Partnership

Stephens, Inc.

Tennessee Valley Authority

The Alliance

Tippah Co. Development Foundation

Tunica Co. Economic Dev. Foundation

Union Co. Development Association

Vicksburg-Warren Co. Econ. Dev. Fdn.

Wagoner Engineering, Inc.

Watkins Ludlam Winter & Stennis, P.A.

West Point/Clay Co. Growth Alliance

Yates Construction/JESCO



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MEDC DEVELOPMENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS

- January 24** **Northeast Mississippi Economic Forecast Conference**
Community Development Foundation; Tupelo

- Jan. 29 - Feb. 2** **Economic Dev. Finance Course - National Development Council**
Economic Development Finance Professional (EDFP) Certification Program, USM

- Feb. 7** **MEDC Winter Conference Legislative Reception**
6:00 to 7:00 p.m. - Hilton Hotel & Conference Center, Jackson

- Feb. 7 - 9** **MEDC Winter Conference - TOOLS . TARGETS . TECHNOLOGY**
Hilton Hotel, Jackson, MS
Go to www.medc.ms for agenda and online registration
or call 601-352-1909

- April 18 - 20** **Southern Economic Development Council Spring Workshop**
IP Resort and Casino, Biloxi, MS

- April 23-27** **Business Credit Analysis Course - National Development Council**
Economic Development Finance Professional (EDFP) Certification Program, USM

- May 17-18** **2nd MSU Economic Development Forum**
Industrial Outreach Service and Technology Resource Institute

- July 18-20** **MEDC Summer Conference**
Pearl River Resort, Philadelphia, MS

For more information on these and other events please visit our website at www.medc.ms

