

# DEVELOPMENTS

THE MISSISSIPPI ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



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Winter 2008

Mississippi Economic Development Council, Inc. (MEDC)

## Elected Officers & Directors

**President - George L. Freeland, Jr.**  
*Jackson County EDF, Pascagoula*

**President-Elect - David P. Rumbarger**  
*Community Development Foundation, Tupelo*

**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. - Chandler Russ**  
*Tennessee Valley Authority, Starkville*

**Secretary-Treasurer - Dianne Carson**  
*Clinton Chamber, Clinton*

**Immed. Past President - Rick Byars**  
*Entergy Services, Inc., Baton Rouge, LA*

**Director - District 1 - Lyn C. Arnold**  
*Tunica Co. Chamber & EDF, Tunica*

**Director - District 2 - Stephen Surles, Jr**  
*Union Co. Dev. Assoc., New Albany*

**Director - District 3 - Sue Stidham**  
*EDP of Montgomery Co., Winona*

**Director - District 4 - David Vowell**  
*Community Dev. Partnership, Philadelphia*

**Director - District 5 - Tom Troxler**  
*RankinFirst Economic Dev. Authority, Brandon*

**Director - District 6 - Cliff Brumfield**  
*Brookhaven-Lincoln Co. Chamber / IDF, Brookhaven*

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

**Director - District 8 - Larry S. Barnett**  
*Harrison County Dev. Commission, Biloxi*

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

**Director - At-Large - Beth Stevens**  
*Greenwood-Leflore Co. Chamber, Greenwood*

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

**MS SEDC Director - Sandy Holfield**  
*EDA of Jones County, Laurel*

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

**Committee Chairpersons:**

**Chamber Dev. - Barbara Smith**  
*Community Dev. Foundation, Tupelo*

**Communications - Elizabeth Fargason Stanga**  
*JBHM Architects, Jackson*

**CEDA - Christy Knapp**  
*Oxford-Lafayette Co. EDF, Oxford*

**Conferences - David P. Rumbarger**  
*Community Dev. Foundation, Tupelo*

**Finance/Sponsorships - Chandler Russ**  
*Tennessee Valley Authority, Starkville*

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

**Membership - Elizabeth Taylor**  
*Mississippi Dev. Authority, Jackson*

**Scholarships - Joy Foy**  
*Mississippi Dev. Authority, Jackson*

## Staff:

Executive Director/COO – Carol Hardwick  
Manager, Member Services/Admin. – Chris Hinton

## MEDC 2008 Winter Conference – LOCAL TO GLOBAL CONNECTION – Linking Mississippi to the World

MEDC 2008 Winter Conference – LOCAL TO GLOBAL CONNECTION – Linking Mississippi to the World

While international is the overall theme, conference speakers will cover a global gamut of topics during the 2008 MEDC Winter Conference at the Hilton Hotel in Jackson Feb. 20-22.

Attendees will hear about the Mississippi Development Authority's investment strategy from Mississippi's own investment representatives in London, Japan and Germany. "We're very excited to have the international representatives from MDA play an integral role in this conference," said MEDC president-elect David Rumbarger.

From local Mississippi companies gone international, to global giants being welcomed to the state, international strategies will be revealed. And from an internationally-known local chef touting Southern cooking, to European and Asian representatives touting investment in Mississippi communities, the advantages our state offers will be made apparent.

*continued on page 3*

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS MEDC Legislative Reception Hilton Hotel

February 20 6-7pm

Members are encouraged to personally invite their legislators to attend.

## MEDC Honors MDA

More than 300 professionals working in economic development gathered at the Mississippi Museum of Art on Dec. 12 to honor the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) economic development staff for their work moving Mississippi forward in 2007.

"Tonight, we're recognizing two teams, but it's everyone at MDA – all 277 people – who make the wheels turn," said Gray Swoope, executive director, who called on all MDA staffers in attendance – nearly 100 -- to join him at the podium. "We're making a difference in the way the world views Mississippi."

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Upcoming Events

## New Members List:

- John Abbate**  
Marketing Alliance, Inc.  
Jackson, MS
- Robin Austin**  
Nucor Building Systems  
Terrell, TX
- Mike Chadwick**  
Mississippi Development Authority  
Jackson, MS
- Phakhini "Kim" Charukammerdkanok**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, MS
- Charles Childress**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, MS
- Dorothy Cole**  
Perry County Chamber of Commerce  
Richton, MS
- Jon David Cole**  
Watkins & Young, PLLC  
Jackson, MS
- Christian Corral**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, MS
- Martha Davis**  
Dr. Arenia C. Mallory Community Health  
Center, Inc.  
Lexington, MS
- James Steven Dorough**  
First Community Development, Inc.  
Norcross, GA
- Angela Edison**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Tylorsville, MS
- Jennifer Edwards**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, MS
- Judson Edwards**  
Troy University  
Troy, AL
- Mahlet Gessesse**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, MS
- Angela Glissen**  
Community Development Foundation  
Tupelo, MS
- Warren Greenlee**  
Watkins & Young, PLLC  
Jackson, MS
- Joey Grisham**  
The Retail Coach, LLC  
Tupelo, MS
- Frank Halbert**  
Worsham Brothers, Inc.  
Corinth, MS
- Angela Harper**  
Marion County Development Partnership  
Columbia, MS

## Letter from the President



As an association of professionals working within the economic development community, we all understand the reality of the ever-changing global economy. It seems as though the landscape of economic development changes on a daily basis. As such, we're all keenly aware that we must continuously improve and adapt our organization's strategies and programs of work if we are to keep pace in the increasingly competitive pursuit of new jobs and investment. I believe that a recognition of these realities served as a guiding principle as your MEDC staff and board of directors worked to craft this year's scope of work and as president-elect David Rumberger and his committee developed their program for this year's Winter Conference.

The MEDC board and staff are committed to a process of continuous improvement and have dedicated themselves to providing the membership with programs and services that enhance and support professional growth and organizational development. Just as our respective communities and boards deserve nothing less than the highest caliber of professionalism, the MEDC leadership understands its responsibility of providing each member with unparalleled value.

On behalf of the MEDC board and staff, I want to commend each member for the work done to improve the quality of life in their communities and the collective economic betterment of all Mississippians. I can commit to you, with all confidence, that MEDC will keep up the pace of change with programs that help sustain us as professionals and positively impact the communities for which we are responsible.

George L. Freeland Jr., CEcD, EDFP  
Executive Director  
Jackson County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.

## Legislative Report

By Phil Hardwick, MEDC  
Legislative Chairperson



The 2008 session of the Mississippi Legislature kicks off in January, and MEDC's legislative committee will follow the session. MEDC will also be involved in several legislative events during the year. Normally, the first year of a legislative term lasts 125 days, and the last three years lasts 90 days, but there has been some discussion of the 2008 session lasting only 90 days to save money. Look for this to be decided during the first two weeks of the session.

Mississippi has now become a two-party state. One has to look no further than the makeup of the Mississippi Legislature to see why. There will be 75 Democrats and 47 Republicans in the House of Representatives. In the Senate, there will be 28 Democrats and 24 Republicans. Both the governor and Lt. governor are Republicans. Consequently, political experts look for some legislative issues to boil down to partisanship.

Major issues of interest that are certain to be considered during the session are inventory tax reduction or elimination, eminent domain and tax reform. These are complicated issues that tend to get boiled down to simple "for it or against it" statements. There are even a few issues where some MEDC members do not agree with each other. Nevertheless, the one issue that MEDC members have always supported is adequate funding of the Mississippi Development Authority, the state's



lead economic development agency. MEDC was well-represented at the Legislative Budget Office hearings in August on this matter.

The MEDC legislative reception will be held during the Winter Conference at the Hilton Hotel, as was done last year. Members will be encouraged to personally contact their legislators to attend. There will also be a legislative committee meeting during the conference. Details will be announced in conference materials.

In October, we will again host regional meetings for the purpose of getting MEDC members and legislators from each district together to discuss mutual issues. These regional sessions were held year before last and proved to be very successful. At these meetings, we will update legislators on MEDC activities and provide an opportunity for legislators to report to MEDC members on activities and issues during the past session. Regional meetings will be hosted by the MEDC director from their respective region.

It is the intent of the legislative committee to educate members and keep them informed via e-mail updates as the session moves along. To get on the list to receive the legislative updates, please send your e-mail address to [phil.hardwick@msstate.edu](mailto:phil.hardwick@msstate.edu).

## Winter Conference 2008 *cont.*

Bill Crump, director of governmental affairs and executive assistant to the president of Greenwood-based Viking Range Corporation, will tell how their product went global and what an impact that and international visitors have had on Greenwood.

David Copenhaver, a key leader in the world's leading automotive manufacturing operation, will share with MEDC members the role Mississippi plays in Toyota's global arrangement. "We're fortunate to have David Copenhaver from Toyota keynote our Winter Conference," said MEDC president-elect David Rumbarger. "Hearing his point of view will benefit economic developers."

Donald R. Allee, executive director and CEO of the Mississippi Port Authority in Gulfport, and Mark L. McAndrews, port director for the Port of Pascagoula, will explore "Deep Water, Big Dollars," telling how companies can interact with the ports and become involved in shipping. Barbara Travis, executive director of the Mississippi World Trade Center and state coordinator for Sister Cities International, will explain opportunities available to communities.

The conference opens Thursday at 8 a.m. with executive chef, restaurateur and cookbook author Robert St. John talking about the local people and local food and will end Friday with the president of Protocol & Diplomacy International of the Protocol Officers Association, Sonia Garza-Monarchi, sharing with us the benefit of her experiences with hosting international visitors.

Marie Shoemake, MEDC vice president of chamber development, remarked: "As locals go global, the Winter Conference will offer our chamber executives excellent training, an opportunity to network with others, and make new contacts across the state."

Shane Moody, president and CEO of the Destin Area Chamber of Commerce, will provide a unique look at membership sales. In addition, he will conduct a session on non-dues revenue that will address how to determine what's right for your community and your members so that your efforts in creating valuable non-dues revenue programs are beneficial.

Kimberly Medlock, Mississippi's own productivity expert, will provide guidance in an area of interest to any attendee on how to "Get More Time in Your Day!"

For a complete conference schedule and registration form, see the 2008 Winter Conference brochure. If you did not receive one in the mail, call (601) 352-1909 to request one, or go to [www.medic.ms](http://www.medic.ms) and click on Conferences.

**Carol Harris**  
Mississippi Development Authority  
Jackson, MS

**Betty Laws**  
North Mississippi Regional Center  
Clarksdale, MS

**Gena Lentz**  
Mississippi Power Company  
Gulfport, MS

**Stacy Stromeier Lester**  
Mississippi Development Authority  
Jackson, MS

**Michael Lorence**  
L-3 Vertex Aerospace  
Madison, MS

**Andrew Murff**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, MS

**Mary Ann Myers**  
Mississippi Development Authority  
Jackson, MS

**Yvette Parker**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, MS

**Jesse Quillen**  
City of Bruce  
Bruce, MS

**Kunxuan "May" Ren**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, MS

**Benjamin Requet**  
PVY Development LLC  
Oxford, MS

**Larkin Simpson**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, MS

**Taunya Smith**  
Mississippi Development Authority  
Jackson, MS

**Joycelyn Stabler**  
Mississippi Technology Alliance  
Ridgeland, MS

**Aarthi Subramaniam**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Hattiesburg, MS

**Nonie Taylor**  
PPM Consultants, Inc.  
Ridgeland, MS

**Drew Troxler**  
Mississippi Development Authority  
Jackson, MS

**Matthew Vitart**  
The University of Southern Mississippi  
Saltville, MS

**Mark Weilenman**  
Marketing Alliance, Inc.  
Jackson, MS

**Brittany Wilson**  
Clinton Chamber of Commerce  
Clinton, MS

## MEDC Hosts MDA Appreciation Reception

### MEDC Honors MDA *cont.*

Swoope pointed to the state's key economic development projects, particularly landing the Toyota automotive assembly plant near Tupelo, emphasizing, "we're finding out all supplier projects are not a given. We're devoting time and personnel to the Japan office to capture all of the supplier business possible for Mississippi."

In 2008, MDA will focus on regionalizing economic development efforts, Swoope noted, adding "for the next four years, we'll stay focused on changing lives and changing minds about Mississippi."

"I'm a blessed individual to have a great management team that plays their cards face up all the time so we can advance together," he said.

MEDC executive director Carol Hardwick said: "We wanted to show our appreciation to the outstanding staff at MDA who work with MEDC members throughout the state. This was a great opportunity to meet new MDA staff members and greet those with whom we've worked in the past and thank them for all they do to help us make our communities better places to live and work."

Also at the late afternoon reception, MDA staffers honored for their service to MEDC included Garrick Combs for serving on the MEDC board of directors along with Steve Hardin, who has chaired the MEDC Scholarship Committee for the past six years, and Elizabeth Taylor, for continuing to chair the MEDC Membership Committee, a post she has held for the past eight years.



MDA executive director Gray Swoope thanking his team members



MDA's Whit Hughes, Melissa Medley, and Joey Deason



Gray Swoope, Carol Hardwick and George Freeland



Dianne Carson chatting with Max Hipp



Some of the many MDA team members recognized at the reception

**MDA/MEDC  
Reception Sponsors:**



Bill Benson and Ronnie Bell chatting with Elizabeth Stanga.



Brad Stringer discussing holiday plans with Carmen Evans and Jennifer Turner.



MDA's Garrick Combs, Elizabeth Taylor and Steve Hardin



A good crowd enhanced the holiday spirit



Gloria Harvey, Natalia Diaz, and Joy Foy



Gray Swoope and MDA team members

- Applied Geo Technologies, Inc.
- AT&T
- Area Development Partnership
- Balch & Bingham LLP
- Brookhaven Lincoln County Chamber of Commerce & I.D.F.
- Burns Cooley Dennis, Inc.
- Butler Snow O'Mara Stevens & Cannada, PLLC
- Columbus Lowndes Development Link
- Community Development Foundation
- Community Development Partnership
- DeSoto County Economic Development Council
- Economic Development Authority of Jones County
- Entergy Mississippi, Inc.
- Government Consultants, Inc.
- Greater Jackson Alliance
- Greater Starkville Development Partnership
- Hinds County Economic Development District
- Jackson County Economic Development Foundation
- JBHM Architects
- JESCO, Inc.
- Mendrop Wages, LLC
- Mid-Delta Empowerment Zone Alliance, Inc.
- Mississippi Economic Council
- Mississippi Power Company
- Oxford-Lafayette County Economic Development Foundation, Inc.
- Panola Partnership, Inc.
- RankinFirst Economic Development Authority
- Simpson County Development Foundation
- Tunica County Chamber of Commerce / EDF
- W. G. Yates & Sons Construction Company
- Waggoner Engineering, Inc.
- Watkins Ludlam Winter & Stennis PA
- The West Point/Clay County Community Growth Alliance
- Worsham Brothers, Inc.

## MEDC CEDA Winners at SEDC

Christy Knapp was thrilled when the Southern Economic Development Council (SEDC) selected three of Mississippi's Community Economic Development Awards (CEDA) winners -- The PUL Alliance, The Oxford Powerhouse Project, and The Village of Mantee -- at an awards luncheon held at SEDC's annual conference in Little Rock, Ark.

"To win ... in three of the five population categories is truly outstanding," said Knapp, MEDC vice president of community development. "Mississippi has some exceptional community projects being created and implemented throughout the entire state. I'm so glad that our economic development offices are bringing our attention to them and that MEDC and SEDC have chosen to honor such excellent community efforts."

The winning communities demonstrated exceptional contributions in four categories: business retention and expansion, business recruitment, community development and community involvement. Other local CEDA winners were Leake County's Mississippi's Career-for-a-Day Program and Lauderdale County's

## Creating a Tailwind

Mississippi's aerospace industry has taken off and is now taking advantage of the tailwind, MEDC president George Freeland told attendees at the fourth quarter Member-to-Member Seminar Series session, "Catching the Tailwind -- The Growing Aerospace Industry in Mississippi."

Held Oct. 9 at Denney's Restaurant in Jackson, Freeland pointed out considerable aerospace activities sprinkled throughout the state.

The Columbus area has emerged as a significant center for aerospace activities with American Eurocopter, Aurora Aerospace and Stark Aerospace. ATK Alliant Tech System in Iuka and Lockheed Martin in Meridian also are involved in aerospace activities. Mississippi State University in Starkville is home to a National Science Foundation Engineering Research Center and offers undergraduate, masters and doctoral degrees in aerospace engineering. Starkville is home to Raspet Flight Research Lab and an aerospace engineering school that specializes in the design and testing of materials to support rapid prototyping for lighter weight aircraft.

After comparing national and state industry trends, Jackson County's economic development chief outlined the future for the Gulf Coast region, an emerging aerospace corridor that branches into south Louisiana and northwest Florida. Activities include the construction of space vehicles; aircraft repair and fabrication; propulsion testing; military pilot/navigator training; aircraft weapons development; and air-to-ground and air-to-air test facilities.

South Mississippi is at the center of this Gulf Coast aerospace corridor and has activities that include rocket and jet engine testing, satellite construction, remote sensing applications, composites fabrication and fabrication of unmanned aerial systems. Sizable aerospace companies with operations in south Mississippi include Northrop Grumman, Lockheed Martin, Rolls-Royce and Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne. The area's aerospace infrastructure at the Stennis Space Center include the Center of Higher Learning and University Research, Mississippi State University Engineering Research Center-GeoResources Institute, Enterprise for Innovative Geospatial Solutions, NASA's Engineering and Science Directorate, Science and Technology Division, and NASA's Engineering and Science Directorate, Propulsion Division.

The recent Stennis Space Center announcement of groundbreaking for the new J-2X rocket engine test stand bodes well for south Mississippi's aerospace industry future, as does news that NASA turned over an A-1 test stand from the Space Shuttle to the Constellation program, and that Rolls-Royce will test Trent 900 and 1000 engines at Stennis Space Center.



## MEDC Member-to-Member Seminar Series

Mark your calendar for these Tuesdays in 2008:

April 8 • June 10 • September 9 • October 14

**MDA's Plan for 2008**

In 2007, the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) experienced momentous successes that further put Mississippi in the economic forefront, nationally and globally. To continue this growth throughout 2008, MDA will continue to implement its "Plan of Work," the agency's mission, goals and strategies. MDA's goals are:



1. Foster the development of livable, vibrant communities.
2. Promote Mississippi as an attractive location for growing businesses as well as for tourism and as a retirement destination.
3. Prepare communities to compete for jobs and investment in today's global economy.
4. Identify, inventory and wisely use Mississippi's assets through innovative strategies to create economic wealth.
5. Aid Mississippi's existing industry and businesses to become more competitive and positioned for growth.
6. Promote the globally competitive products made and services offered in Mississippi, and maximize the state's transportation features for export of Mississippi products.
7. Identify, articulate and consistently communicate MDA's identity and purpose both internally and externally.
8. Review all agency systems to align to the MDA mission and agency goals, provide direction and training for staff and all levels, and to create a sustainable system for the agency's customers.
9. Take steps to make Mississippi more energy self-reliant.

"Our 'Plan of Work' was developed under the premise that through its programs, MDA is changing minds and changing lives here in our state," said MDA executive director Gray Swoope. "With each of the agency's divisions implementing the 'Plan of Work,' 2008 should be another positive year for the state of Mississippi."

**Mississippi's Lights On After-School Program.**

"The CEDA program is a new initiative by SEDC to recognize outstanding communities in our region for their efforts in advancing the economic viability of their community through economic and community development programs," said SEDC chairman Tucson Roberts. The entries were evaluated on the programs' innovativeness, transferability, community commitment and leverage, measured objectives and secondary benefits.

**IEDC Honors Jay**



Former MDA deputy director Jay C. Moon, president and CEO of the 2,200-member Mississippi Manufacturers Association, was recently recognized for exceptional contribution through service related to economic development. The prestigious International Economic Development Council (IEDC) presented its Fellow membership designation to Moon on Sept. 17 at IEDC's annual conference in Phoenix, Az.



**MEDC CEDA Winners at SEDC**

Front row: Rebecca Bourgeois, business manager for the Yoknapatawpha Arts Council and Oxford Powerhouse Community Arts Center; Wayne Stokes, president, Pontotoc County board of supervisors and vice chairman of the PUL Alliance; Mary Frances Baker, Mayor, Village of Mantee; Waynette Clark, Alderwoman, Village of Mantee. Back row: Max Hipp, President/CEO, Oxford-Lafayette County Chamber of Commerce/Economic Development Foundation; Christy Knapp, Vice-President, Oxford-Lafayette County Economic Development Foundation; Randy Kelley, Executive Director, Three Rivers Planning & Development District; Cynthia Wilson, Executive Director, Webster County Development Council.



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**MEDC Calendar of Events**

- Jan. 24** "The Economic Impact of the Defense Industry and the Military in Mississippi" - Economic and Technology Symposium  
JCJC Advanced Technology Center, Ellisville, MS
- Feb. 20** **MEDC Legislative Reception**  
6 p.m. **Hilton Hotel, Jackson**
- Feb. 20-22** **MEDC Winter Conference**  
**"LOCAL TO GLOBAL CONNECTION - Linking Mississippi to the World"**  
Hilton Hotel, Jackson, MS
- April 2-4** **"From Main Street to Global Markets"**  
Gulf Coast Trade Alliance Annual World Trade Day Conference
- April 22-23** **Innovation-Led Economic Development Training Course**  
MTA and USM Trent Lott Center for Economic Development
- July 23-25** **MEDC Summer Conference**  
IP Hotel & Casino, Biloxi, MS

For more information on these and other events please visit the MEDC website at [www.medic.ms](http://www.medic.ms).

