

# MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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# FRIDAY FACTS

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## MDA'S WEBSITE HAS A NEW LOOK AND MUCH MORE . . .

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) has unveiled a sharper, more user-friendly website – [www.mississippi.org](http://www.mississippi.org). We invite you to visit the new site and discover the wealth of information available right at your fingertips.

The site includes databases of sites and buildings, maps, details about our publication library, and the list goes on - it's all here! Also quickly link to other useful websites, such as the Office of the Governor, Mississippi Division of Tourism and WIN in Mississippi.

(Information from the previous version of our website has been imported into this site. Changes, corrections and additions will be made weekly to maintain the accuracy of the information provided.)



VISIT [WWW.MISSISSIPPI.ORG](http://WWW.MISSISSIPPI.ORG) TODAY!

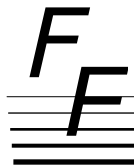
**GOVERNOR MUSGROVE PARTICIPATES IN DEDICATION CEREMONIES FOR NISSAN SUPPLIER**

Governor Ronnie Musgrove and Akihiko Shido, President and CEO, Yorozu Corporation and area dignitaries participated in a dedication ceremony for Yorozu Automotive Mississippi, Inc., a division of Yorozu Corporation, Japan on Wednesday, December 5 in Vicksburg, Mississippi. The event took place at the Ceres Research and Industrial Interplex.

When completed, the company will employ 120 people and will have invested \$17,500,000 constructing an 83,000 square foot building.

Founded in 1948, in Yokohama, Japan the company has expanded to Mexico, Thailand and the United States. The company will supply various suspension components for the Nissan plant in Canton.

“We’re now seeing the ripple effect created by Nissan’s massive operation in Canton,” said Governor Ronnie Musgrove. “The investments made by this plant continue to demonstrate that Mississippi is a great place to do business. The partnership between the state of Mississippi and Nissan forever changed the economic outlook for our state and heightened Mississippi’s position as a world leader in economic development.”



**MDA HOSTS AREA DEVELOPMENT MEETINGS TO DISCUSS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Economic development partners can gain information on a variety of issues at one of seven seminars presented by the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA).

MDA Executive Director, Robert J. Rohrlack, Jr., along with members of his staff will present a series of briefings across the state to explain the agencies vision for economic development and to gain input about economic develop issues facing our state beginning Monday, December 10.

Sponsors for this project include: Mississippi Partnership for Economic Development, MEDC and the Mississippi Economic Council

DATE	TIME	CITY	LOCATION
Monday, December 10	9:00 a.m.	Gulfport	Orange Grove Community Center, Highway 49 North
Monday, December 10	2:00 p.m.	Hattiesburg	Lake Terrace Convention Center, Highway 49 North
Tuesday, December 11	9:00 a.m.	Tupelo	Ramada Inn Conference Center, 845 North Gloster Street
Tuesday, December 11	2:00 p.m.	Meridian	Meridian Community College Campus, Meridian Room, Meridian Hall
Wednesday, December 12	8:00 a.m.	Jackson	Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Museum, Forestry Center, 1150 Lakeland Drive (Park at Smith Wills Stadium)
Wednesday, December 12	1:00 p.m.	Brookhaven	Bank of Brookhaven, 411 Brookway Blvd.
Thursday, December 13	9:00 a.m.	Cleveland	Delta State University Campus, Delta Room, Ewing Building *

*\* The meeting on Thursday, December 13 will be held at the Ewing Building, not the Union Building as previously announced.*

## **GOVERNOR MUSGROVE ANNOUNCES MISSISSIPPI MARKET JUNE 14-15 IN JACKSON**

Governor Ronnie Musgrove announced Monday the start of an advertising and promotional campaign to kick-off Mississippi Market, a wholesale show featuring Mississippi products. The event will be held June 14 and 15 at the Mississippi Trade Mart building in Jackson.

Surrounded by Mississippi products such as original artwork, ceramics and various food products, the Governor explained how Mississippi Market is unique in that it is one event that is suitable for all types of manufacturers, wholesalers and artisans – new and old, large and small. All Mississippi-based companies with products for re-sale in stores can exhibit, as well as companies with products or services to be used by exhibitors or retailers. “We are all well aware of the wide array of the products made by Mississippi businesses. Through the Mississippi Market, the rest of the country and beyond can learn also, what Mississippi has to offer,” said Governor Musgrove.

Robert J. Rohrlack, Jr., executive director of the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), also shared with the audience his enthusiasm for the event and its importance to Mississippi businesses. “We are delighted to serve as organizers for Mississippi Market. It is evident that the show has been a success. Since 1996 it has nearly tripled in size.”

According to Jenny Wilkinson, Manager of Mississippi Market, “This year we are offering something special to a company that has never before exhibited in the Mississippi Market, a free booth, valued at \$425.00.” To qualify for the drawing, businesses interested in exhibiting should call 1-888-886-3323. They may also enter by sending e-mail to [jwilkinson@mississippi.org](mailto:jwilkinson@mississippi.org) or a fax to 601-359-3458 with their business name, address and phone number. The deadline to enter the drawing is December 31, 2001.

Live ornamental plants are the newest addition to the Mississippi Market. “The Gardens of Mississippi will feature plants, as well as garden accessories and furniture. Plant wholesaler and retailers interested in participating should call or visit our website at [www.mississippimarket.org](http://www.mississippimarket.org),” added Wilkinson.

During the 2001 Mississippi Market, 800 buyers from 8 states attended. These buyers represent

some of the 30,000 retail stores throughout the southeast that will receive invitations to the Mississippi Market. They will be purchasing items for retail businesses such as specialty stores, department stores, gift shops, and garden centers.

For additional information, contact Jenny Wilkinson at 888-886-3323. Also you may visit Mississippi Market on the web at [www.mississippi.org](http://www.mississippi.org).

## **SBA LOAN PROGRAMS AID ECONOMIC GROWTH AND RECOVERY IN MISSISSIPPI**

During fiscal year 2001, ending September 30, 2001, 489 loans were approved in Mississippi for approximately \$123.2 million by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) according to Janita R. Stewart, district director of the Mississippi District Office. The loan volume and dollar totals represent an increase of roughly 26% and 36% respectively compared to FY 2000.

Statewide, 125 loans were provided to minority borrowers accounting for almost 26% of total loans approved in FY 2001. The Mississippi SBA increased its lending to women entrepreneurs over last year, by making 77 loans for approximately \$11.8 million, accounting for almost 16% of total loans made in FY 2001. The office also vastly improved its number of loans to veteran entrepreneurs (45 loans) by 61% compared to FY 2000 when 28 loans were made.

“This past year, Mississippi lenders enthusiastically responded to the capital needs of entrepreneurs by offering competitive commercial rates and low loan transaction costs,” said Stewart.

Also in fiscal year 2001, SBA’s Disaster Assistance loan program made 48,852 disaster recovery loans nationwide, amounting to about \$1 billion. Of that amount, assistance to Mississippians totaled \$28.4 million due largely to Tropical Storm Allison, tornadoes, and severe thunderstorms. The Mississippi total includes \$17.7 million for home loans, \$7.3 million in business loans, and \$3.4 million for economic injury.

For more information, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA or TDD 704-344-6640 or visit the SBA website at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).

## **STATE ANNOUNCES PARTICIPATION WITH CUBAN TRADE CONFERENCE**

Officials with the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) announce they will be sponsors of the first official Cuban Business Conference in Mexico, January 30-February 3. The sponsorship provides discounted registrations for Mississippi companies to take advantage of this rare opportunity to gain qualified commercial information to assess Cuban business opportunities and meet senior Cuban contacts to provide entrée to the opening Cuban economy.

Amendments to U.S. sanctions laws last fall allow for direct sales of a broad range of goods related to agriculture, food, beverages, wood and medical products. The first negotiated sales to Cuba under the guidelines are currently taking place, with \$25 million of a projected \$40 million expenditure completed with Cargill Inc., Archer Daniels Midland and Riceland Food consisting of corn, wheat, and soybean oil. Sources for additional products to be purchased from the United States will be sought by the Cubans attending the conference in Mexico.

“The recent passage of new trade regulations with Cuba paved the way for major new markets for the Mississippi business community. The Cubans, who currently pay costly overseas transportation and brokerage fees, are receptive to dealing directly with the closer proximity of U.S. producers,” said Governor Ronnie Musgrove.

According to Liz Cleveland, manager, International Trade Office, MDA, “The Cuban Business Conference will present the most current information on the transactional procedures for sales to Cuba including identification of buyers, sales terms, financing and shipment of goods. In addition, participants will be apprised of factual market assessment, procedures and policies related to doing business with Cuba.”

The conference is open to both agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, even though U.S. trade policy regarding Cuba to date has been focused on agricultural and health-related sectors.

In addition to the conference, there will be an exhibition on-site at which Mississippi products will be promoted by MDA. There is also an additional optional trip to Havana immediately following the conference to allow each participant the opportunity to complement the information presented at the conference, visit facilities and sites of interest, meet

with Cuban officials and build on the professional relationships established through the conference.

“Mississippi is a serious player in the world market. We believe it's time people outside the borders of Mississippi realize we can compete any time, anywhere and with any one,” added Governor Musgrove.

A conference brochure and additional information on the conference is available by contacting Liz Cleveland or Marsha Hamilton, MDA International Trade Office, telephone, 601-359-6672.

## **COGNEVICH NAMED TO SEDC'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Southern Economic Development Council (SEDC) recently announced Angela Cognevich as the new Mississippi state alternate director to serve on the SEDC Board of Directors. Effective September 25, 2001 at the SEDC 2001 Annual Conference in Kansas City, Missouri, the state alternate director will serve a two-year term on SEDC's board.

The Southern Economic Development Council is a 1,200 member non-profit organization composed of a broad cross-section of active and influential industrial and economic developers from business and industry, utilities, transportation, financial and education institutions, chambers of commerce, and local, regional and state development agencies.

Members in the 17-state area share a common interest: the promotion and enhancement of the economic development profession. The SEDC region includes the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland and the District of Columbia, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

For more information about SEDC please visit our website at [www.sedc.org](http://www.sedc.org)

## **SBA LAUNCHES NEW INTERNET SITE FOR AMERICA'S SMALL BUSINESSES**

Small business owners now will have access to legal and regulatory business information at their fingertips through *BusinessLaw.gov*—a new Web site designed to help reduce the burden of complying with laws and regulations, the U.S. Small Business Administration announced.

"Today, I am proud to announce this important project. The creation of *BusinessLaw.gov* is in keeping with President Bush's mandate that the information on government websites run across agency lines and be citizen-centered," said SBA Administrator Hector V. Barreto.

"Understanding federal, state and local laws and regulations that affect day-to-day operations is critical to small business success. Because it provides interagency and intergovernmental information arranged by subject, *BusinessLaw.gov* will simplify the way government at all levels interacts with small businesses," Barreto added.

The Web site consolidates and indexes links to credible sources of information on 39 areas, such as licenses and permits, to highly specialized topics, such as e-commerce and exporting. The site also offers information specific to each state and territory including sections on "Hiring Employees," "Paying Taxes" and "Selecting a Location." It features interactive tools, searchable frequently asked questions and answers, downloadable forms and publications, electronic regulatory compliance guides and portal capability.

For more information, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800-U ASK SBA or TDD 704-344-6640 or visit the SBA website at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).

## **BUSHMAN NAMED EMBDC AMBASSADOR OF THE MONTH**

Jan Bushman, account executive for The Radio People, was named the East Mississippi Business Development Corporation (EMBDC) Ambassador of the Month for November 2001.

Bushman achieved the honor through her participation in ribbon cutting ceremonies, presentation of a Welcome Aboard briefing to NAS personnel, signing up a new member to the EMBDC, and supporting the EMBDC through other activities.

"Jan is an outgoing, highly enthusiastic Ambassador," said Carolyn Smith, chairman of the EMBDC Ambassadors. "We're lucky to have her as part of our team."

Also recognized in November were Ambassadors Noel Coward of Cellular South for second place and Sylvia Thornhill for third place.

## **USM HOSTS NEWEST SESSION IN ITS EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP SERIES**

On Wednesday, January 23, 2002, the University of Mississippi (USM) will host the newest session in the 2002 Executive Leadership Series, "Cures in an Ailing Economy." The session is scheduled from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. at the Hattiesburg Lake Terrace Convention Center on Highway 49 North.

The one-day event will examine organizational performance in today's economy. Noted commentator and writer Dr. Don Ratajczak will open the conference with an overview of the United States economy. Other presenters include: Tom Davenport and Tommy Mann of Accenture and Dr. Jim Loehr, Chairman/CEO of Performance Systems.

The Executive Leadership Series, sponsored by Forrest General Hospital, is a joint effort of USM's College of Business Administration and College of Health and Human Sciences. The mission of the leadership series is to help top-level managers in business, health care, government, military and nonprofit organizations achieve their objectives, maximize their performance and enable their organizations to flourish.

For more information about the leadership series, call 601-266-4657 or 601-266-4180 or you may send an email request to [Bill.Smith@usm.edu](mailto:Bill.Smith@usm.edu) or [Joan.Exline@usm.edu](mailto:Joan.Exline@usm.edu).

The Mississippi Development Authority's *Friday Facts* is distributed to MDA staff, economic and community development professionals, legislators and other interested parties. Inquiries regarding this publication or information should be submitted to Stephen Martin, Communications Office, telephone 601.359.3555, fax 601.359.3596, email [smartin@mississippi.org](mailto:smartin@mississippi.org). Visit us on the World Wide Web at [www.mississippi.org](http://www.mississippi.org).