

MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

FRIDAY FACTS

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From the Executive Director . . .

As we begin our new fiscal year let me take this opportunity to express my appreciation to everyone involved with the economic enhancement of Mississippi. Your efforts are to be commended for the work you do each day to improve the lives of our greatest resource, our people.

Let me reiterate to you our commitment and dedication to our new vision for economic development, the Advantage Mississippi Initiative. Reflecting upon the year, I've seen how true public-private collaborations set priorities that have given Mississippi the competitive edge.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the professional staff we have here at the Mississippi Development Authority. This past year has been a productive one as a result of their efforts to provide the best in service. Highlights of this past year from each division include:

- Administration – Enhancement of support services to all areas
- Congressional Liaison – Pursuing and expanding defense, aerospace and federal projects
- Community Services – The Mississippi Main Street Association was named the top Main Street program in the United States, reaching the milestone of \$1 billion in investment in downtown properties as a result of its program.
- Employment Training – Implementation of the Workforce Investment Act
- Energy – Recipient of two U.S. Department of Energy State Energy Plan special grant awards
- Existing Industry and Business – Developing a statewide entrepreneurial policy initiative
- Minority Business Enterprise – Conducted numerous conferences and workshops across the state
- National/International – Participated in a number of major locations, expansions and recruiting efforts
- Trade and Development – Continued coordination with Tier One suppliers for the Nissan project
- Tourism – Launched a new advertising campaign and redesigned website

This list is by no means inclusive of the various divisional activities of MDA. I offer this to share with you the wide scope of work we are involved with daily. This next year also promises to be just as productive for each of the divisions. Our purpose is to move the state forward, improve competitiveness and raise awareness about Mississippi nationally and internationally. Your interest, involvement and support are critical components to our continued success.

In closing, thank you again for your support. A lot has been done this year; a difference is being made in Mississippi. Let's keep the momentum going.

J.C. Burns

*"Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance
to work hard at work worth doing."*

Theodore Roosevelt

SBA DECLARES HARRISON COUNTY DISASTER AREA

Homeowners, renters, landlords, and business owners, located in Harrison County and the contiguous Counties of Hancock, Jackson, Pearl River, and Stone are now eligible to apply for low-interest disaster loan assistance from the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Disaster Assistance Program. If you had some insurance, or no insurance, and had any damage caused by Tropical Storm Allison that occurred on June 11, 2001, you're eligible to apply for this help, according to SBA Disaster Area Director Michael C. Allen.

Allen announced that a temporary SBA disaster loan assistance office opened on Monday, July 2 at the Harrison County Court House in Gulfport. Beginning Monday, July 11, help will be available Monday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., until further notice.

"We want everyone who had any damage caused by Tropical Storm Allison to come in and personally meet with an SBA loan officer. Our loan team will be glad to answer any questions about the disaster loan program, give you a disaster loan application, and provide any extra help you may need or want with completing the application," Allen said.

SBA offers loans of up to \$200,000 to repair disaster-damaged homes. Homeowners and renters are eligible for up to \$40,000 to replace personal property. Loans to businesses and non-profit organizations of up to \$1.5 million are also available to repair damage to real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory, etc. and leasehold improvements. Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) also may be made to small businesses unable to pay bills and meet expenses because of this disaster. Interest rates can be as low as 3.312 percent for homeowners and renters and 4 percent for businesses with terms up to 30 years. Actual loan amounts and terms are set by SBA and are based upon each applicant's financial condition.

The deadline for physical damage applications is August 27, 2001; the deadline for economic injury applications is March 26, 2002.

Information about the disaster program is available on SBA's homepage at www.sba.gov.

TECHNOLOGY MEETINGS SCHEDULED FOR SUMMER AND FALL

Mississippi Technology Alliance has announced the "Technology @ Home in Mississippi" meetings, which are designed to explore ways Mississippi communities can benefit from the advancement of technology.

HOST COMMUNITY	DATE OF MEETING
Biloxi	July 9
Brookhaven	July 16
Hattiesburg	July 20
Meridian	July 30
Oxford	July 31
Natchez	August 15
Greenwood	August 20
Clarksdale	August 21
Cleveland	August 22
Greenville	August 23
Starkville	August 27
Corinth	August 30
Tupelo	August 31
Laurel	September 18
Hernando	September 21
Jackson	September (TBD)

The first session - "Community Conversations about High Technology on the Coast" - is scheduled for Monday, July 9 at the Business Technology Center at 1636 Popp's Ferry Road in Biloxi. The session will run from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m. Contact Mike Olivier at 228-863-3807 for more information about the Biloxi meeting.

The meetings are free. Individuals can register or get more general information by calling 601-960-3610 or visiting www.technologyalliance.ms.

LAUREL LUMBER AWARDED ENERGY INVESTMENT LOAN

Laurel Lumber Company, a division of Thomasson Lumber in Laurel, Mississippi, was recently awarded a loan of \$300,000 by the Energy Division, Mississippi Development Authority (MDA). The loan, made possible by MDA's Energy Investment Loan Program, will be used to install wood-fired burner/boiler systems for two kiln drying units. By installing the burner and attached boiler, the kilns are modified to steam operation. The result will be an energy savings of approximately \$15,000 – \$25,000 per month for Laurel Lumber.

The Energy Investment Loan Program is one of the many programs that the Energy Division is employing to help business and industry cut energy costs and preserve natural resources.

HOME AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS COMING THIS MONTH

The Community Services Division, MDA, will host two workshops in the month of July. The workshops target local units of government, nonprofit organizations, community housing development organizations (CHDOs), concerned citizens and other interested parties.

The first event will be a HOME Investment Partnership Program Implementation Workshop scheduled for Thursday, July 19. The second workshop is a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Implementation Workshop scheduled for Friday, July 20.

Both workshops will be held at the Ramada Inn Southwest Conference Center on Highway 80 West in Jackson. The workshops will run from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. each day.

The workshops will provide valuable information regarding the implementation process for the HOME or CDBG Program. For more information, contact Patricia Bratton at 601-359-3179.

KUDOS TO PAT WERNE

The Mississippi Development Authority would like to congratulate Pat Werne on successfully completing the requirements for the Certified Public Manager (CPM) designation.

Pat is a part of the Events Planning Bureau of the National/International Division, MDA.

For more information about the CPM program, contact Nikki Butler, CPM Program Coordinator, at 601-957-8723.

OPENING FOR DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AT HCEDD

The Hinds County Economic Development District is searching for a Director of Business Development to implement programs to attract new business investment to Hinds County. Other responsibilities include, but are not limited to, assisting in developing and maintaining a database of available buildings and sites in Hinds County and attending trade shows.

Requirements for the position include:

- Previous experience in economic development
- Bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university
- Must be a Hinds County resident within six months of employment

Salary commensurate with experience.

Please submit resumes by **July 13, 2001** to the following address: HCEDD, PO Box 248, Jackson, MS 39205

For more information, contact HCEDD by phone at 601-353-6056, fax at 601-353-7179 or email at jasonb@hcedd.com.

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. Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.mississippi.org.