

# MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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# FRIDAY FACTS

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## MDA HOSTS MARKETING BLITZ IN ATLANTA

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) is headed to Atlanta. In a weeklong marketing blitz, MDA will host a series of activities to promote Mississippi to Atlanta area site location consultants, industry decision makers and other business professionals from June 17 to June 22, 2001.

Among the events scheduled is a luncheon at the City Grill on Friday, June 22; J.C. Burns, Executive Director of MDA, will be the featured speaker. Also, MDA representatives will be special guests at the Atlanta Chapter of the International Development Research Council's (IDRC) monthly meeting on Thursday, June 21. All activities are by special invitation only.

This marketing blitz is one of several events hosted by MDA throughout the year to promote national and international development in the state of Mississippi.

## MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST WILL HOST TRI-COUNTY JOB FAIR JUNE 19

The B.E. "Mac" McGinty Civic Center located in Pascagoula, Mississippi will be the site for the Tri-County Job Fair, Tuesday, June 19. The job fair begins at 9 a.m. and concludes at 4 p.m. The event, free to the general public, is being organized by the Mississippi Development Authority to provide opportunities for individuals seeking employment and also to assist employers with their needs.

"This administration is committed to doing everything we can to assist our most valuable resource, our people. The Tri-County Job Fair is another example of our plan to assist displaced workers utilizing the resources and talents of various organizations both public and private to join together and work quickly to address their needs," said Governor Ronnie Musgrove.

According to Joe Buckner, event director, "Response from business

and industry has been outstanding. Currently we have registered over 50 employers and anticipate more. The job opportunities with these companies are numerous and excellent, with a wide range in skill level and type, both professional and technical."

Due to an anticipated large number of participants, applicants are encouraged to arrive early. Applicants will begin the job fair process by first completing a brief registration form. Next, they receive a brochure listing all registered employers with their booth numbers and job openings.

"We know from past experience that many applicants will receive a job offer on the day of the job fair. Many others will receive job offers during the following days or weeks," added Buckner.

For additional information, please contact: Joe Buckner at 601-961-7507 or Ron Bublik on the coast at 228-377-8592.

A toll free phone number is available for displaced workers to call for information regarding services available from the Mississippi Development Authority. The number is 1-800-762-2781.

The following organizations are currently registered to exhibit at the Job Fair:

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*"Throughout the centuries there were men who took first steps, down new roads, armed with nothing but their own vision."*

*- Ayn Rand*

**JOB FAIR PARTICIPANTS**

B&D Contracting, Inc.	Beau Rivage
CDI Marine Company	Chevron
Cingular Wireless	Civilian Personnel - Keesler AFB
Coast To Coast Services, Inc.	Dancel Communications
Delta Towing, LLC	Ecoquest International
Grand Casino Biloxi	Hancock Bank
Infinity Services	John Jones & Associates, Inc.
Joule Industrial Contractors	Mary Kay Cosmetics
McDonald's - Gulfport/Moss Point/Lucedale/Gautier/Wiggins	MESC - Gulf Coast Workforce Investment Area Six
Military Sealift Command	Mississippi Air National Guard
Mississippi Army National Guard	Mississippi Department Of Corrections
MDA's Minority Business Enterprise Division	Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College
Mississippi Power Company	Mississippi State University
Mississippi Troops To Teachers	Munro Petroleum & Terminal Corp.
New Orleans Metal Trades/Pascagoula Metal Trades	Nissan North America
Non-Appropriated Funds (NAF)	Keesler AFB
Northrop Grumman Ingalls Shipbuilding, Inc.	NPC International
President Casino	Primerica (Member Of Citigroup)
RGT Management/Taco Bell	Schwan's Sales Enterprises, Inc.
Seabulk Offshore Ltd.	Simple2net/Incomnet
Singing River Federal Credit Union	Singing River Hospital System
Singing River Mental Health Services	Tidewater Marine
Treasure Bay Casino Resort	Universal Personnel
University Of South Alabama	University Of South Alabama - Adult Degree Program

Sponsors of the event include:

- Jackson County Chamber of Commerce
- Jackson County Economic Development Foundation
- Jackson County Board of Supervisors
- Mississippi Development Authority
- Mississippi Employment Security Commission
- Gulf Coast Workforce Investment Board/Business Services Corporation
- WIN Job Centers
- Harrison County Development Commission
- Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College
- Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce
- Keesler Air Force Base
- NCB Gulfport and Naval Station Pascagoula

**TWO WEEKS REMAIN TO APPLY FOR NISSAN PRODUCTION WORKER JOBS**

Persons interested in applying for a production job with Nissan only have two weeks to request an application.

The Mississippi Employment Security Commission (MESC) will take requests for applications through June 30.

MESC is taking the requests for applications, mailing out the applications, then screening the completed applications against Nissan job requirements and forwarding those resumes to Nissan. Nissan will conduct all interviews and make the decision as to who is hired. Four thousand production workers will be hired.

To request an application, send a stamped, self-addressed #10 envelope to Mississippi Employment Security Commission, P.O. Box 1247, Canton, MS 39046. The completed application must be returned to MESC by July 31. Information about the job and how to apply can be obtained by calling the MESC job line at 601-961-7697.



## **NISSAN PLANT SUBCONTRACTOR/ VENDOR/SUPPLIER INFORMATIONAL AND OPPORTUNITY WORKSHOP**

On Thursday, June 21, 2001, at 6:30 p.m. in the WEBB Center on the campus of Meridian Community College in Meridian, the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) will host the ninth of a series of statewide workshops to discuss MDA subcontractor/vendor/supplier opportunities on the Nissan project for small, disadvantaged and minority businesses.

Workshop organizers will discuss construction progress, MDA's construction opportunities on the Nissan project, and MDA's Minority Business Enterprise programs and services.

The workshop is free and open to the public.

The WEBB Center is located on the campus of Meridian Community College in Meridian (Highway 19 North, right on to College Drive, right on to 14<sup>th</sup> Street). The meeting will be held in Room 100.

Interested parties may contact the following organizations for pre-registration:

- ❑ Meridian College Small Business Development Center (Contact Milford Smith) at 601-482-7445
- ❑ Minority Business Enterprise Division of the Mississippi Development Authority in Jackson at 601-359-3448
- ❑ Systems Consultants (Contact Toni Cooley) in Jackson at 601-355-5911

## **MISSISSIPPI MARKET SETS NEW RECORD**

The Mississippi Market, presented by the Mississippi Development Authority held last week in Jackson, set a new record for the number of registered exhibitors. A total of 145 companies exhibited and over 1,000 buyers pre-registered for the show.

Mississippi Market, now in its sixth year, is a wholesale show that provides the opportunity for Mississippi manufacturers, craftsmen, wholesalers and service providers to showcase their products to retail establishments. It also provides retailers the convenient opportunity to review a large selection of products from Mississippi businesses in one location.

"I was delighted at the variety and quality of products offered. To see so many new companies along with our ever-popular returning companies was fantastic. The people and products behind these companies are what make this project so rewarding," said Jenny Wilkinson, Mississippi Market Coordinator, Mississippi Development Authority.

Mississippi Market has nearly tripled in size since its inception in 1996. The number of buyers increased 20% this year and exhibitors increased 40%. There were a number of first-time buyers, and also an increase in out-of-state participants than in previous years.

"Excellent show. Quality goods. Courteous and friendly vendors. These are but a few of the positive comments listed on the survey forms completed by buyers and vendors. The overwhelmingly positive responses indicate the buyers and vendors really appreciated the show," added Wilkinson.

For additional information or if you would like to participate next year, please contact Jenny Wilkinson at 1-888-886-3323. You can also point your browser to [www.mississippimarket.org](http://www.mississippimarket.org) to read about Mississippi Market on the World Wide Web.

## **CENTRAL PARK EVENT PROVES SUCCESSFUL**

For the past 22 years, Mississippians along with residents of New York have enjoyed what is known as "Mississippi in Central Park." This year's event, held last Saturday, was no exception. By all accounts, the picnic proved to be enjoyable as well as productive in promoting the economic enhancement of Mississippi.

The event highlighted economic and educational efforts the state has developed to make Mississippi more competitive for higher wage jobs. Under the theme "Mississippi The Right Location," the event promoted Mississippi as the right location for economic development efforts, tourism and film opportunities and retirement locations across the state.

Prior to the picnic on Saturday, staff of the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) scheduled appointments with a number of economic developers in New York to share with them the advantages of doing business in Mississippi. Project

managers with MDA were able to share Mississippi's new vision for economic development - the Advantage Mississippi Initiative - with these prospective clients.

Sponsored by The New York Society for the Preservation of Mississippi Heritage, along with the Mississippi Development Authority, other state agencies, colleges and universities, the picnic brings together Mississippians and New Yorkers with ties to the Magnolia State for a Southern-style picnic in the heart of Central Park.

The Mississippi picnic began in 1979 when a group of Mississippians in New York City, wishing to strengthen ties with their native state, formed The New York Society for the Preservation of Mississippi Heritage. The event continues to grow in popularity each year. The crowd this year was estimated to be over 1,000.

## **NEW, EXPANDED FACILITIES TOP \$2 BILLION IN INVESTMENT**

The Mississippi Development Authority has released its "Summary of New and Expanded Facilities Announced in Mississippi, January thru May 2001," The report found that approximately \$2.056 billion have been invested in new and expanded facility projects throughout Mississippi during 2001.

There have been 102 expansion projects announced, representing an estimated 2,479 jobs and an estimated investment of approximately \$1.024 billion. The largest expansions, ranked by estimated capital investment are:

- Mississippi State Port (Gulfport) – marine cargo handling (\$160,000,000)
- Clarksdale Public Utilities – electric power upgrades (\$130,000,000)
- Federal Correctional Facility – Yazoo City – prison (90,000,000)
- South Lake Centre (Southaven) – shopping center (\$60,000,000)

New facilities announced created an estimated 4,117 new jobs and a capital investment of approximately \$1.032 billion. The largest new facilities are:

- LS Power-Duke Energy, LLC (Holmesville) – electric generation plant (\$600,000,000)

- Chauvet Square (Hattiesburg) – residential/commercial development (\$60,000,000)
- MG Industries (Pass Christian) – air separation unit manufacturer (\$33,000,000)
- Walnut Grove Youth Correctional Facility – prison (\$29,000,000)
- Exel Logistics (Olive Branch) – farm product warehousing (\$25,000,000)
- Navel Small Craft Training School (Stennis Space Center, Hancock County) – Navel training (\$25,000,000)



### **VISITOR PARKING AT THE WOOLFOLK BUILDING**

When visiting the Woolfolk Building, please note that there are reserved visitor parking spaces on Level 2W of the parking garage. Upon entering the garage from the Lamar Street motor court, follow the ramps to the west side Level 2. Take the stairs down to the east side and enter the garage elevator from there to reach the atrium level of the building. Several reserved handicapped spaces are also available for visitors displaying a handicapped license plate or hanotao

### **NAME CHANGE ADOPTED FOR REGIONAL AIRPORT**

By resolution of the Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport Authority, the name has been officially changed to the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport. The airport name change will be phased in over the next several months. Plans are for a ceremony reflecting the name change to be held in October.

The airport was originally constructed in 1942 and used to train B-25 and B-29 flight crews for WWII. After the war, Gulfport Field was conveyed from the War Department to the City of Gulfport in 1949 for use as a civil airport. Then, in 1977, the cities of Gulfport and Biloxi joined Harrison County to create the Gulfport-Biloxi Regional Airport Authority. During

the two following decades, passenger growth increased fourfold and the Airport Authority completed \$46 million in capital improvements. Following the legalization of dockside casino gaming in 1991, south Mississippi has become recognized as an international resort destination. Passenger enplanements grew an additional 434% in just the past 8 years alone, reaching almost 1 million total passengers in 2000. International passenger traffic is an important and increasing segment of this growth.

Airport commissioners, airport staff, community leaders and the general public all agreed that changing the name of the airport to the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport is an essential step in the ultimate development of the airport. The name now accurately represents the airport and the community to the world.

### **USM TO ADVANCE MOLECULAR RESEARCH**

The work of analyzing materials just got a lot easier at the University of Southern Mississippi. Through a grant to the School of Polymer Science and High Performance Materials the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, the university now has a state-of-the-art, 500-megahertz nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer. The equipment, and its accompanying supercomputer, allows researchers to analyze material at a molecular level, to discover what is happening within the individual molecules.

"It works under the same principle as an MRI that doctors use," said Lon Mathias, professor of polymer science. "An MRI looks at water molecules in the human body. This will enable us to look at other chemicals and polymers."

Mathias said USM was able to land the \$960,000 National Science Foundation grant largely because of interdepartmental cooperation between polymer science and chemistry.

"Both departments worked very hard to get this grant," Mathias said.

In addition to Mathias, principal investigators for the grant were Bill Jarrett, Instrumentation Manager in Polymer Science; Bob Lochhead, Chair of Polymer Science; and Stella Elakovich, Chair of Chemistry. Jarrett said the 500-megahertz spectrometer puts USM in select company.

"Not only is this state-of-the-art, it is as good as any in a department our size," Jarrett said. "There's nobody anywhere near us in the region."

Mathias said the new spectrometer will be used for several projects, including biomaterials in the polymer science school. That, he said, includes work with natural polymers to develop new drug delivery systems, a new bone cement for joint replacement surgery and a new bone scaffolding procedure for reconstructive surgery.

In addition, the equipment will be used by the Mississippi Polymer Institute to help industry in the state solve manufacturing problems.

### **SEA FLOOR DATA STATION PLANNED**

America's insatiable appetite for energy has led oil and gas producers into increasingly deeper waters in the Gulf of Mexico, where they may encounter hurricanes, sharks and other menacing creatures.

But perhaps the biggest threat to their efforts looks like nothing more than blue ice.

That ice, known as gas hydrate can wreak havoc on drilling operations and cause catastrophic damage to pipelines and other equipment. It also represents a vast, untapped resource that could be harnessed as a clean energy source within a couple of decades.

Scientists at the University of Mississippi's Center for Marine Resources and Environmental Technology (CMRET) are working with an international team of experts to gather data on how hydrate deposits form, how stable they are and what compounds they contain.

"We don't have a whole lot of good information about the long-term stability of these hydrate deposits, or even a reliable way to detect them in all cases," said Robert Woolsey, Director of the Center. "Our first step is to develop a better understanding of the physical conditions in and around these hydrate mounds, so we can help oil and gas companies protect their investments."

CMRET has formed a research consortium with several government agencies, private companies and other colleges to build a monitoring station that will collect data from the sea floor. The team hopes

to have the station installed in the Gulf of Mexico by 2004.

Gas hydrates are created when hydrocarbon gases blend with seawater and freeze beneath the sea floor, forming deposits of blue or sometimes yellowish ice. Changes in the water temperature may cause hydrate deposits to melt, destabilizing the surrounding sea floor.

Woolsey hopes to eventually connect the station with an oil platform or other structure and transmit the data to the Stennis Space Center.

Further down the road, hydrate deposits may be developed as a major energy source, said Rudy Rogers, a Mississippi State University chemical engineering professor who's researching hydrates in the project.

"They could contain two to three times as much carbon as in all the crude oil, conventional natural gas and coal ever discovered," Rogers said.

