

MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

FRIDAY FACTS

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USM'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COURSE DRAWS REGISTRANTS FROM 10 STATES

Two University of Southern Mississippi officials will be among keynote speakers Monday, Sept. 30, as USM's New South Economic Development course kicks off its 10th year with a week -long program at Hattiesburg's Lake Terrace Convention Center.

Dr. David Kolzow, associate professor and chair of USM's Economic Development Department, will lead two sessions on strategic planning starting at 8:50 a.m. and 10 a.m. Dr. Angie Dvorak, USM's vice president for research, will discuss technology transfer in a session starting at 1:15 p.m. About two dozen speakers will conduct other courses throughout the week. Mississippi Development Authority Executive Director Robert J. Rohrlack, Jr. will address a closing awards luncheon Friday, Oct. 4, speaking on "The Challenge of the Future." Rohrlack received a master's degree in USM's economic development program in 1985 and was a student of Dr. Ron Swager, director of the New South course.

Swager said nearly 60 people from 10 states – some from as far away as Michigan, Illinois, North Dakota and Utah – have registered for this year's course, which actually begins Sunday with continuing registration, orientation and a reception. USM President Shelby Thames was invited to make welcoming remarks.

"The registrants come from various backgrounds and places," said Swager. "Many are fairly new economic developers and many are from Mississippi. However, some are elected officials and representatives from Delta State University, Mississippi State and University of Mississippi; as well as port officials, railroad officials, representatives of the Jackson Medical Mall Foundation and some of our economic development students."

Hattiesburg Mayor Johnny DuPree, who completed the USM course a couple of years ago, said, "It kind of gets you into the economic developer's shoes... gives you an understanding of some of the things you have to contend with in economic development."

The course, one of only 19 economic development courses in the country accredited by the American Economic Development Council, offers participants intensive training in the basic concepts, strategies and methods of economic development in the new South.

Participants who successfully complete the course qualify for admission to the Economic Development Institute and earn points toward qualifying to take the Certified Economic Developer examination.

Swager, a USM professor of economic development, said more and more elected officials, such as DuPree, are taking the course to get a better understanding of the process of attracting industry and developing the economy in the communities they serve. Under a general theme of the changing face of economic development, the six-day course will include presentations on the changing state of the region, how to plan for strategic change, community development, workforce preparedness and marketing.

Other topics include business retention and expansion, recruiting and prospect handling, site selection and economic development on the Internet.

The Mississippi Development Authority, the Mississippi Economic Development Council, the Southeast Mississippi Economic Development Network, the Area Development Partnership, Louisiana Generating LLC, Entergy Corporation and Mississippi Power Company sponsor the course.

The cost of the course – \$550 per person – includes instruction and all course materials. An additional late registration fee has been assessed since Sept. 12. To register, contact the USM Department of Continuing Education and Distance Learning at (601) 266-4186. For more information, contact Swager or Betty Blackledge at (601) 266-6519, or email Blackledge at betty.blackledge@usm.edu.

OCTOBER 1 WORKFORCE ACADEMY CHANGED TO HALF DAY EVENT

The MetroJackson Chamber will host their final Workforce Academy on Tuesday, October 1, 2002 at the Clarion Hotel in Jackson. By request, the event has been changed from a full day to a half-day event beginning at 8:00 a.m. and ending at 1:00 p.m. No topics have been omitted from the original format.

Academy participants will: (1) learn about current local, national, and global labor market trends, (2) express concerns about their workforce needs, (3) hear about best personnel practices, (4) learn how to access training resources (5) and participate in follow-up action groups to help develop solutions and policy recommendations on workforce issues.

For a modest registration fee of \$75.00, attendees get instruction on a variety of workforce topics, lunch, a presentations notebook, and a Resource Guide for Employers.

Contact Lewis Slater at 948-7575 or e-mail him at lslater@metrochamber.com for a registration brochure or more information.

SBA SEEKING AWARD NOMINEES INCLUDING BEST OF YEAR

The U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) Mississippi District Office is accepting nominations for its 2003 Small Business Person of the Year Award and to compete for the national title. Nominees are also sought for SBA's Advocate and Special Award categories.

Small Business Person of the Year nominees must meet certain criteria, which include staying power, growth in employment, increase in sales, innovation, response to adversity and evidence of contributions to the community.

Small Business Advocate awards are presented to persons who have used their professional or personal talents to further public understanding and awareness of small business. Candidates must have taken an active role in creating opportunities to promote the interests of small business. Advocate categories include: Accountant, Financial Services, Home-Based Business, Small Business Journalist, Minority, Veteran and Women.

Special Award categories include Small Business Exporter, Young Entrepreneur and Entrepreneurial Success.

"I encourage every Mississippian to take advantage of this great opportunity to bring statewide, regional or national recognition to a deserving small business owner or advocate," said SBA Mississippi director Janita R. Stewart.

A panel of judges will select state winners. Local events honoring the winners will take place in May 2003 just prior to the National Small Business Week celebration scheduled for June 1-5, 2003. The SBA Mississippi District Office must receive nominations no later than Nov. 22, 2002.

To obtain a nomination form, category criteria and submission guidelines, contact Gary Reed at (228) 863-4449, extension 14, or by e-mail at gary.reed@sba.gov.

ENERGY DIVISION CELEBRATES ENERGY AWARENESS MONTH

On October 1, MDA's Energy Division will celebrate Energy Awareness Month with a press conference at Walton Elementary School. Governor Ronnie Musgrove will present MDA executive director, Robert J. Rohrlack, Jr., a proclamation declaring October is Energy Awareness month in Mississippi.

Following the press conference, a kick-off luncheon will be held at the Clarion Hotel in Jackson, Mississippi. The luncheon, which begins at 11:30 a.m., will feature the Secretary of Energy as keynote speaker. The Energy Division of MDA will also present special recognition awards to five outstanding energy projects in the State of Mississippi.

Space is still available for individuals to participate in the Southern Swing Bus Tour to be held on October 15. The tour will highlight energy projects in Hattiesburg, Ellisville, and Collins. Also planned are mini-tours of energy projects such as Red Hills Mine in Ackerman, the Mississippi River Corporation in Natchez and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indian's Pearl River Resort.

If you would like to participate, please contact Jim Becker at 601-359-6600 or E-mail him at jbecker@mississippi.org. Deadline to register is Monday, September at noon.

ANGIE COGNEVICH HONORED BY SOUTHERN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Angie Cognevich, Regional Manager in the Southeast Regional office of the Mississippi Development Authority, was the recent recipient of the Southern Economic Development Council's (SEDC) Chairman's Award at the organizations 2002 Annual Conference in Birmingham, Alabama.

The Chairman's Award is given each year to the member that demonstrates outstanding leadership through service to the organization and the states represented. Angie is Mississippi's Alternate Director to SEDC.

The Southern Economic Development Council is the largest and oldest economic development council in North America and has the mission of providing useful information and dynamic leadership to economic practitioners throughout the South. Southern Economic Development Council supports its members by providing a network of more than 1,200 economic development professions in 17 states.

Angie received her Bachelors' degree in Paralegal Studies and her Masters' degree in Economic Development from the University of Southern Mississippi. As Mississippi's economic development organization, the Mississippi Development Authority serves business, industry, chambers of commerce, and local government throughout the State of Mississippi. Angie manages those efforts for nine southeastern Mississippi counties from her office in Hattiesburg.

JIMMY WILSON RECOGNIZED BY SEDC AS MISSISSIPPI'S VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Jimmy Wilson, of Tylertown, Mississippi was honored by the Southern Economic Development council as Volunteer Of The Year for Mississippi during their held this week in Birmingham, Alabama.

As a volunteer director of the Walthall County Industrial Development Authority, Williams has explored various grants available to the county to aid in economic development. He has also taken advantage of programs through Entergy and Magnolia Electric Power Association, as well as making both county and the town aware of programs available for economic development.

In addition to attracting industry, Williams has played a role in developing the county's Southwest Events Center, an arena and meeting facility that has already become an economic asset to the area. He served on the volunteer group charged with developing the site into a facility capable of hosting a variety of meetings and events, evolving from a single, open-ended livestock show facility as originally constructed by the county.

MDA RECEIVES BEST OF SHOW AWARD

General Purpose Promotion Garners Top Award

The Mississippi Development Authority won the Best of Show Award at the Southern Economic Development Council recently held annual meeting. MDA was also honored with the following awards:
Superior Award – Publication Advertising: Domestic Campaign
Superior Award – General Purpose Promotion
Best of Class Award – General Purpose Promotion
Excellent Award – Newsletters and Newspapers
Merit Award - Direct Mail Campaign

The Mississippi Technology Alliance (MTA) was also recognized with a Merit Award in the Web Sites: Local, State, or Regional Economic Development category. MTA also received the Excellent Award in the Magazines and Advertorials category.

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 Sherry Vance, Communications Office, telephone 601.359.3041, fax 601.359.3596, email svance@mississippi.org. Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.mississippi.org.

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