

*Remarks for the
Mississippi Technology Alliance Press Conference
January 30, 2002*

Thank you, Angie.

For generations, Mississippians have made a living off the land. Farming and other agricultural practices have been the lifeblood of our economy for so long.

Today, we are seeing an expansion into areas such as science and technology.

Telecommunications, manufacturing and high-tech industries are becoming the norm.

For us to succeed in these industries, we have to build the strongest, most prepared and most capable workforce possible – and we're doing it today.

The Computers in the Classroom initiative is putting an Internet-accessible computer in every public school classroom in the state. Children in every corner of Mississippi will be able to explore the world with this technology.

Imagine children in the most rural districts having access to the same technology and the same information as children in the most urban areas.

We're making an investment today for our children, so we can reap the dividends tomorrow.

By making sure we have a workforce that is trained and ready, we will have a greater chance of continuing our economic development successes.

With the release of the Mississippi Innovation Index, we will have a report card on how we are accomplishing our mission of building science and technology-based economic development in Mississippi.

More and more companies are looking for an infrastructure based on technology, and we're making that happen.

In the movie "Field of Dreams," there's a voice that says "if you build it, they will come."

We're building the infrastructure for new technology based businesses and industries.

We're building the educational foundations necessary for our children to become the best workforce for tomorrow.

We're building a new future in jobs, education, health care, and public safety, and we're making good progress. In the face of a national recession, we're making a positive difference for the people of Mississippi.

And now, we're going to have the Mississippi Innovation Index to help us measure our success.

I want to thank Dr. Dvorak and the Mississippi Technology Alliance for the tremendous work they are doing to promote our technological future.