

Mississippi Development Authority
Robert J. Rohrlack, Jr.
Executive Director

Companies want to do business in Mississippi because we take an aggressive approach to economic development. We are serious about economic development and moving our state forward in terms of jobs, technology, and strategic alliances.

Our mission is one of helping to find and create new jobs for our citizens. Our work at the Mississippi Development Authority is to create and to protect jobs for our citizens ... jobs that improve their lives and the quality of their lives.

This past year has proven to be one that demonstrates our results oriented approach to fulfilling our mission. Mississippi had 748 new and expanded facilities announced last year creating over 17,000 jobs with a total investment of \$5.6 billion.

Nissan announced an additional \$500 million investment, creating 1,300 jobs. The total investment by Nissan will reach \$1.4 billion and will create 5,300 new jobs by 2004. Nissan will produce 400,000 vehicles a year, including their best selling Altima. Twenty suppliers to date have announced locations across the state and hundreds of millions of dollars are being invested in Mississippi by these new companies and thousands of new jobs will be created for our citizens.

We have come a long way since the Nissan announcement in November of 2000. The project is on time and within budget with the minority participation rate reaching 23.9% last quarter. In addition to the recognition received for landing the Nissan facility, our performance on this project is setting a new standard for the state.

Our Mississippi Market drew over 137 exhibitors and 920 buyers this year. The event, exclusively for Mississippi based companies generated over \$296,000 in sales and 1,400 orders.

The Mississippi World Trade Center opened its doors in May 2002. The center establishes our commitment to international economic development and our ability to compete at the global level. Our global exports increased by 30% last year proving that Mississippi is helping our existing industries and showing to the world that we are a global competitor.

With support from the U.S. Department of Labor, MDA worked with the Mississippi Technology Alliance and other partners to support the growth of several industry clusters which include: the communications and information technology cluster; the polymers cluster; and, the automotive and forest products clusters.

Our Employment Training Division developed an aggressive marketing campaign to promote WIN Job Centers to employers and employees.

The Minority Business Enterprise Division hosted the “Building New Partnerships Conference” in Jackson. This year’s program targeted small, minority-owned and women-owned businesses interested in contracting with government agencies. Similar conferences will be held in other parts of the state in the future.

The Tourism Development Division launched a new tagline – “Mississippi...Feels Like Coming Home” and a marketing campaign to encourage both in-state and out-of-state visitors to explore Mississippi destinations. As a result, tourism revenues were up by 2.7% over the previous year and general fund revenues related to tourism increased by 2.4%.

Our efforts have garnered national attention. Site Selection magazine awarded MDA the Governor’s Cup and Southern Development magazine named Mississippi as the “Best State Per Capita.” The Southeast Tourism Society honored MDA’s Tourism Division as the “State Organization of the Year.” The Mississippi Film Office placed 3rd in the Association of Commissioners International Location and Production Guide.

In the face of a national recession, the Mississippi Development Authority continued to create jobs for our citizens and assisted individuals, communities, businesses and industries.

In Mississippi, we continue to remain focused on the future. Our investment in Mississippi’s business climate means a better quality of life for its citizens.