

Economic Development Staff Changes

George Harris has been named chairperson of the Economic Development Association of Alabama's governmental affairs committee for 2002-03. Harris is a partner with Bradley Arant Rose & White LLP and chairs the firm's State Governmental Affairs and Economic Development Practice Group.

Slaton Crawford replaced Richard Kinne, who recently retired as executive director of the Wilcox Development Council.

Joanne Randolph, president and CEO of Huntsville technology incubator BizTech, has been elected to the board of directors of the National Business Incubation Association (NBIA).

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July 2002

Honda doubles production, employment in Talladega County

Honda Motor Co. will invest \$425 million and add 2,000 employees to its workforce to double production at its Lincoln plant. The investment will fund a 1.1 million square-foot expansion for a separate plant that will mirror its existing facility. The expansion will increase production to 300,000 vehicles annually. Start-up on the new line is scheduled for early 2004.

Honda Manufacturing of Alabama President Masaaki Kato said the new line will have the ability to turn out Odyssey minivans, which are currently produced at the site, and models such as the Pilot SUV.

Alabama Industrial Development Training and the Alabama State employment service will advertise the jobs in newspapers statewide on Sunday.

State officials say the expansion could mean up to 4,500 spin-off jobs.

Oxford breaks ground in Jefferson County, ups investment

Oxford Automotive celebrated its groundbreaking in the Jefferson County Metropolitan Park by announcing that they will invest \$200 million and hire more than 300 at the 370,000 square-foot plant. The company had originally planned to invest \$100 million and employ 250. Oxford's 50-acre site, along Alabama's automotive corridor of Interstate 20/59 will place it at an advantageous position for automotive manufacturers throughout the Southeast. The facility will produce finished assemblies and underbody stampings.

According to Oxford, the company produces parts used in more than 150 vehicle models made at 40 different auto plants around the world.

Airbus UK contract brings jobs to GKN Aerospace

GKN Aerospace Services won a \$600 million contract from Airbus UK for the design and manufacture of the Wing Trailing Edge panels for the Airbus A380 Superjumbo. The contract will mean the addition of 100 jobs between GKN's two Alabama plants in Montgomery and Tallassee. The Retirement Systems of Alabama helped facilitate the deal with a \$25 million loan to

assist with start-up costs. Design will be undertaken in Bristol and Cowes in the UK. Manufacturing will be shared between Cowes and Alabama, which already produce wing components for other Airbus aircraft.

Selma celebrates new growth

Selma and Dallas County has had much to celebrate lately. Crown Health Care Laundry will employ 35 to 40 at its facility in the South Dallas Industrial Park. They hope to grow to 150 employees in three years.

Rayco Industrial recently acquired Advanced Welding Services, which should increase local employment by 80 to 100 jobs.

Composite Technology Inc. will locate its countertop and sink manufacturing facility in the Craig Field Industrial Park. It will employ 25 initially, with plans to increase to 100 within one year.

And, American Apparel will expand in Selma with the location of its distribution center in the former Oakline Chair building. The distribution center will increase employment by the company to around 200.

Winfield Service Zone begins operations

Service Zone announced it will begin hiring at the Winfield, AL facility that recently finished construction.

Service Zone's new inbound call center plans to hire 120 before the end of July with projections to be at several hundred before the end of the year.

The majority of new jobs created will be for technical support representatives who handle inbound telephone inquiries and manage customer relationships for Service Zone clients.

Interested parties should fax their resume to: Attn: Winfield Jobs; Fax 205-921-1301 or email: WinfieldJobs@servicezone.com. Also, candidates can apply online at: www.servicezone.com/currentopenings.html.

Elmore County EDA formed

Elmore County has a new recruitment tool. The Elmore County Economic Development Authority is sponsored by the chambers of commerce in Millbrook, Wetumpka and Tallassee and the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

Board Members are: Robert Houston, Coosada; Charles Keith, Eclectic; David Mercer, Elmore; Homer Smith, Deatsville; Ann Harper and David Sikes, both of Millbrook; Steven Schmitt and Gary Morgan, both of Tallassee; Samuel Turner and Janice Wood, both of Wetumpka; and Travis Cosby, Percy Gill and Charles Mask, of Elmore County.

McClellan wins NAID award

The Fort McClellan Joint Powers Authority was recently awarded the National Association of Installation Developers 2002 marketing awards in the categories of general-purpose brochure and newsletter. The brochure award was for McClellan's 12-page color booklet "Aggressively seeking to attract prosperous and growing business entities," which highlights land and building space available for redevelopment. The full-color, glossy newsletter is published quarterly.

Alabama cities rank high for retirees

Research by the Center for Economic Development at Jacksonville State University shows that Alabama has at least 25 cities that rank favorably for retirees.

The study, funded by a grant from the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, matches amenities desired by retirees with those provided by cities. Factors considered included good medical facilities, low cost of living, low crime, mild climate, low housing and an active social environment.

Cities cited in the study are: Andalusia, Atmore, Auburn, Bayou LaBatre/Coden, Centre, Clanton, Cullman, Decatur, Dothan, Fairhope, Foley, Gadsden, Guntersville, Huntsville, Jasper, Madison, Monroeville, Montgomery, Pell City, Prattville, Russellville, Selma, Shoals area, Troy and Wetumpka.

South Alabama promoting aviation

Sixteen counties in south Alabama have organized a marketing effort to attract and grow aviation business in the region. The team includes the counties forming a triangle between Montgomery, Mobile and Dothan.

The south Alabama triangle, which has a substantial aviation base, has identified its collective resources in aviation including attractive skill sets, wages, defense facilities, airports, training and existing industries.

The group will make its first group marketing trip in September to the National Business Aviation Association show in Orlando.

Propulsion Research Center to help "move space travel into the 21st Century"

Officials at the Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville recently broke ground on a \$30 million administration and lab building for the Propulsion Research Center.

The Propulsion Research Laboratory will be housed on a 21-acre site on Redstone Arsenal. It will be occupied primarily by propulsion scientists and technologists from the Marshall Center's existing Propulsion Research Center.

The 108,000-square-foot facility will provide office and laboratory space for propulsion research and small-scale experiments supporting cheaper, more efficient and safer access to space.

Studies will be conducted in a number of fields, including solar energy, advanced chemical propulsion technologies, and processes based on fission, fusion and antimatter.

Construction is expected to be completed in April 2004.

UA offering auto industry training

The University of Alabama College of Continuing Studies will offer five one-day seminars to help the state's automakers and their suppliers shift to industry-specific quality standards.

Sessions will be held this October and November in cooperation with the Alabama Institute for Manufacturing Excellence. Repeat courses are set for

next March and April. All sessions will take place at the Bryant Conference Center on UA's Tuscaloosa campus.

For more information, visit <http://bama.ua.edu/~cstudies> or www.aime.ua.edu/

Events

AARC annual training conference in October

The Alabama Association of Regional Councils will hold its annual conference at Perdido Beach Resort on Oct. 20-23.

Several different tracks will be held, including one on economic development, which will be run by Eric Canada. Other tracks include: APA Planning Track, Environmental Track, Medicaid Waiver Track, Program Resources Track, Senior Services Track, Fiscal or Title V Track, Transportation Track and Homeland Security Track.

Attendees can receive basic hours toward the Alabama League of Municipalities Certified Municipal Official Program and Continuing education credit is available for Nursing, Social Work, NBCC counselor, and AICP.

Early registration is \$325 and must be received by Oct. 10. Registration forms are available on the association's website, www.alarc.org.

AUM to hold Korean Business Etiquette Seminar

Auburn University Montgomery will host "Lunch and Learn: Korean Culture and Business Etiquette" on Aug. 2 and again on Aug. 16. A buffet lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. and the presentation will follow at 12 noon. The program ends at 1:30 p.m. The cost is \$39. For reservations, call 334-244-3804.

Birmingham hosting SEDC annual conference

Birmingham will host the Southern Economic Development Council's 51st Annual Conference from Sept. 21-24.

This year's conference will focus on "The Southern Advantage." Speakers will discuss what gives the New South an advantage in four key areas: Automotive, energy, transportation and biomedical/biotechnology.

Personal development seminars will also be held on interviewing and negotiating skills.

This will mark Alabama's first time to host the conference. Optional activities will afford opportunities to see the area, including tours of the Talladega International Motorsports Hall of Fame and the Mercedes-Benz Visitor's Center; golf on a Robert Trent Jones course; skeet shooting; and baseball on the nation's oldest baseball park.

For online registration visit www.sedc.org and click on the annual conference information icon.

Want your news in developments?

Do you have news that you would like to have considered for inclusion in *Developments*? Send it via one of the three methods below to the attention of Wendy Wallace:

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