

THE NEW ORLEANS ADVOCATE

Grand Prix of Louisiana has officials hopeful big race leads to West Jefferson boom

BY CHAD CALDER | CCALDER@THEADVOCATE.COM

April 11, 2015

Spectators' attention will be focused this weekend on NOLA Motorsports' 3-mile asphalt racetrack for the inaugural Grand Prix of Louisiana in Avondale, but economic development officials are hoping the event will put a much larger piece of real estate on the radar of visitors and, in some cases, their companies.

The 750-acre racing park developed by Laney Chouest will host an annual stop on the IndyCar Series for at least three years, a run that is estimated to have a total direct economic impact of \$100 million.

But NOLA Motorsports also is one of several economic anchors in a mostly undeveloped, 13-square-mile area at the West Bank end of the newly expanded Huey P. Long Bridge — an area that Jefferson Parish officials are betting is ripe for development.

Jerry Bologna, executive director of the **Jefferson Economic Development Commission**, said that in addition to the visitors drawn from throughout south Louisiana and neighboring states, the race will bring in a slew of representatives of corporate sponsors, from auto-related companies such as Bridgestone and Goodyear to retailers like Target.

"We get to have them as a captured audience for the weekend," he said.

"It's bringing a lot of people into an area that has a lot of raw land and space to grow," agreed Todd Murphy, president of the Jefferson Chamber of Commerce.

Jefferson Parish has branded the area as Fairfield and, along with the Regional Planning Commission, has **begun a planning study** in hopes of encouraging and guiding its future growth.

Officials emphasize three strategic advantages for the 8,500-acre area: lots of available land, improved access from **the 2013 expansion of the bridge** and anchor facilities, including the TPC Louisiana Golf Course, the Churchill Technology & Business Park, the Patrick F. Taylor Science & Technology Academy, the Alario Center and NOLA Motorsports.

Delgado Community College plans to open a **\$15 million, maritime industry-oriented River City Campus** next year that could bring as many as 3,000 students to the area every week.

Bologna said that while events like the Louisiana Grand Prix highlight NOLA Motorsports' ability to bring large-scale events to the area, the track's hosting of smaller events and use as a testing facility for auto industry companies have quietly made it an important player in Fairfield's nascent economy.

"That facility is a huge spoke in the wheel to the development of that whole area," Murphy said. "There's a lot going on on the West Bank, and we're hoping those types of venues and the expansion of the Huey P. Long Bridge will bring some expansion opportunities."

Bologna said JEDCO recently hosted a visit from representatives of an out-of-state developer of large-scale, mixed-use developments and brought them to Nola Motorsports, among other stops on the Fairfield tour.

It didn't hurt that they got to meet Indy champion Tony Kanaan while he was there.

"They're planning to come back for the race and further the discussion about what they might be able to do to spur some development in this area," Bologna said.

Events like the Grand Prix of Louisiana have the obvious impact of filling hotel rooms and seats at local restaurants, bars and entertainment venues when they occur.

But Terrie Birkel, director of marketing and communications for the Jefferson Convention and Visitors Bureau, said preparations for the race have been drawing sponsors and racing team members to the area for months. “Overall it’s been good, and (hotels) are feeling the impact,” she said.

The race, which is sponsored, in part, by The New Orleans Advocate, will have a festival-type atmosphere for the three-day weekend, with local food vendors and entertainment, along with fan activities, including the facility’s go-cart track.

Officials with NOLA Motorsports could not be reached for comment, but others hope the anticipated fan response and the partnership forged so far between NOLA Motorsports and the Indy Racing League will keep the event here longer than three years.

The **response from racers testing the track earlier this year was positive**, and Indy Series brass **have been optimistic about their outreach and marketing efforts** to drum up interest among fans.

With the help of \$4.5 million in state funding, the track was improved to make it more race-friendly. Grandstand seating was added to allow spectators to watch the entire race, and additional turns were put in the track to create more moments for the lead to change hands.

Some of the other stops on the tour are done on closed streets, meaning spectators can watch only a portion of the race and speeds don’t go as high as the 170 mph at NOLA Motorsports.

“This is professional racing,” Murphy said. “This is taking it to a whole different level.”

He said professional racing is always looking to broaden its fan base by growing geographically, and the NOLA Motorsports facility’s proximity to New Orleans — always a plus in attracting events — bodes well for the event’s future here.

“It’s like any festival or major event that we’ve had,” he said. “We have the first one, and then you continue to grow it. It seems natural to me that you can then have ancillary services that develop over time.”

This story was changed on April 11, 2015 to remove an incorrect number of estimated spectators at the Grand Prix of Louisiana.

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Indy Grand Prix economic boom for West bank



Indy Car race coming to west bank

Paul Murphy / Eyewitness News 5:39 p.m. CDT April 10, 2015

The eyes of the IndyCar racing world will be on the New Orleans area this weekend.

NOLA Motorsports in Avondale is hosting the inaugural Grand Prix of Louisiana.

If the weather holds up, it could be one of the largest events ever for the west bank of Jefferson Parish.

"This Indy race has the ability to be a staple, big event every single year that we don't have to go bid on," NOLA Motorsport President Kristen Engeron said. "As long as we get the support from the local community."

NOLA Motorsports estimates the local economic impact will be at least \$100 million over the 3 years Indy has committed to racing at the track.

"It's hiring the generator people," Engeron said. "It's hiring the lighting people, hiring the caterers. Then for people coming in town for the the race it translates into restaurant reservations, hotel reservations."

The race gives local leaders an opportunity to meet and greet Fortune 500 sponsors in town for the Grand Prix.

"You have all of these different companies like the Targets and the Firestones who are out here for the race, who are sponsors of the race who are seeing what we have to offer here," Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) spokesperson Kelsey Scram said. "I think that the biggest thing that this does for us is that it gives us a lot of exposure."

The Westbank is the fastest growing area of Jefferson Parish.

It has 9000 acres yet to be developed, anchored by the Churchill Business Park, TPC of Louisiana and NOLA Motorsports.

We want to develop it as a mixed use space. We're calling it Fairfield and I think there are a lot of opportunities for business growth," Scram said.

Thanks to the race, the region will get network TV exposure this weekend.

"You're talking about an international commercial that will be broadcast to 12 other countries," Engeron said.

NOLA Motorsports has future plans to expand and build another full race track on its property in Avondale.

THE ADVOCATE

New Orleans, Baton Rouge leaders make trip to the southwest with objective of forming regional bonds

Leaders learn from southwestern state

BY REBEKAH ALLEN | R.ALLEN@THEADVOCATE.COM

April 20, 2015

[2 Comments](#)

PHOENIX — About 150 business and civic leaders from the Baton Rouge and New Orleans metropolitan areas came together this week for the second three-day Super Region Canvas trip — this time to Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona — to learn from the Southwestern U.S. leaders how to form regional bonds in southeastern Louisiana.

The trip is a semi-annual trip to progressive U.S. cities that is organized by the Baton Rouge Area Chamber. The idea is that leaders representing government, the private sector and nonprofit organizations will see enviable programs, policy and infrastructure in other cities and try to emulate the ideas back home.

In 2013, BRAC reached out to its New Orleans counterpart, GNO Inc., and invited its members to join forces, giving leaders from the two metro areas an opportunity to form a better relationship.

John Young, the Jefferson Parish president, noted that the Tampa-Orlando, Florida, metro area — the site of the 2013 Canvas trip — has a combined 4 million people, which is almost the entire population of Louisiana.

“We need to work together to compete in a global economy,” he said Sunday morning at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport before the group departed on their chartered flight. Young, who attended the 2013 trip, appeared only to see the group off Sunday; he did not go to Arizona with them.

The group is made up of about 60 percent Baton Rouge area leaders and 40 percent New Orleans area leaders. A few people from the Lafayette area are included.

Among the attendees are East Baton Rouge Mayor-President Kip Holden, St. James Parish President Timmy Roussel, Terrebonne Parish President Michel Claudet and St. John the Baptist Parish President Natalie Robottom.

New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu is not on the trip, nor are any New Orleans City Council members. Last year, Landrieu’s office sent Deputy Mayor Andy Kopplin. This year Rebecca Conwell, an economic development adviser to Landrieu, is attending.

At least nine council members are attending the trip from East Baton Rouge, Ascension, St. Bernard and Jefferson parishes, as well as the leaders of the chambers of commerce from Lafayette, Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

“This regional experience puts us on the same road and makes sure we’re working in the same direction,” Holden said Sunday to the group.

Previous destinations have included Austin, Texas; Nashville, Tennessee; Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina; Portland, Oregon; Richmond, Virginia; Pittsburgh; Louisville, Kentucky; and central Florida.

The trips, which cost \$2,200 per head this year, are jam-packed with speakers talking about different city and industrial issues. But the getaways, always housed in plush accommodations with regular evening cocktail hours, are also ripe for networking.

Holden referred to the trip as a “reunion” for leaders, and others have joked that they have turned into a bit of a “spring break for officials.” In 2013, the group of leaders caught a basketball game and enjoyed karaoke at Universal Studios.

In March, though, Baton Rouge Community College broke ground on the Center of Excellence for Transportation Technology — an idea that was born from a trip in 2009 to Richmond, Virginia, where the group learned about how community colleges in the area were working directly with industry leaders to address workforce needs, according to Adam Knapp, BRAC’s CEO and president.

Former Louisiana Community and Technical College System President Joe May and All Star Automotive President Matt McKay were on that trip.

“Joe asked Matt if he got any of his workers from the training centers at LCTCS, and Matt said, ‘No, your product is so bad we hire from Texas,’ ” Knapp recalled. “So Joe said, ‘Let’s fix that.’ ”

Phoenix and Tucson, dubbed the Sun Corridor, were selected for this trip because they provide a good example of two regional areas working together to compete on a larger stage.

The two Southwestern cities are 108 miles apart, compared with Baton Rouge and New Orleans, which are 80 miles apart. But the Arizona super region makes up about 5.1 million people, compared to the Louisiana super region, which has 2.2 million people — a number that includes each city’s surrounding parishes.

The Arizona and Louisiana super regions are both similar in poverty rates, unemployment rates and the median age of their populations.

“We do a lot of things wrong here: We don’t spend enough money on higher education, we believe low taxes are the key to everything and we pass inappropriate draconian bills,” said Grady Gammage Jr., a speaker from Arizona State University’s Morrison Institute for Public Policy.

Some of the Louisiana delegation laughed from their seats, noting the parallels to Louisiana politics.

Gammage spoke about “megapolitans” and the relationship between Phoenix and Tucson. He made a joke about a picture of a home in Tucson, noting that he’s a Phoenix resident so he’s apt to take digs at the sister city.

“We’re dramatically different cities, still learning how to get along,” he said.

The south Louisiana group is staying at a first-class resort just outside of Phoenix in Scottsdale for the first two days and then heading to Tucson on Tuesday before returning home. In addition to regionalism, the seminars also will focus on education, health care, transportation and infrastructure and building an entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Downtown Phoenix was a ghost town for decades until the city invested in a light rail, funded by a tax, ultimately spurring economic development, according to Christine Mackay, Phoenix’s economic development director.

Rather than focusing on attracting businesses to relocate in Phoenix, city leaders are building their economy by supporting entrepreneurs, she said.

She noted a Phoenix-based software developer called WebPT started three years ago with two employees and now has more than 300 employees.

“If you continue to approach economic development the way we used to, you will fail,” she said.

Follow Rebekah Allen on Twitter, [@rebekahallen](https://twitter.com/rebekahallen). For more coverage of city-parish government, follow City Hall Buzz blog at <http://blogs.theadvocate.com/cityhallbuzz/>

Editor's Note: This story was revised at 9 a.m. on April 20, 2015, to remove St. Tammany Parish President Pat Brister from the list of attendees. Brister was listed on the registration list but did not attend.

THE ADVOCATE

Baton Rouge and New Orleans top business, civic leaders sign on for 2015 Canvas Trip to Arizona

APRIL 14, 2015 0 COMMENTS

UPDATE: Baton Rouge Mayor-President Kip Holden is now confirmed for the 2015 Canvas Trip. New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu has been asked to give some opening remarks at the New Orleans airport on Sunday before departure.

The guest list for the 2015 Super Regional Canvas Trip to Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona is set and includes 145 of the top parish, business and civic leaders in the New Orleans and Baton Rouge regional areas.

Noticeably missing from the list are New Orleans and Baton Rouge mayors Mitch Landrieu and Kip Holden.

St. Tammany Parish President Pat Brister, St. James Parish Parish President Timmy Roussel, and St. John the Baptist Parish President Natalie Robottom are attending the trip. Baton Rouge City Council members Chandler Loupe, Ryan Heck and John Delgado have signed on as well as city council members from Jefferson Parish, St. Bernard Parish and Ascension.

The semi-annual destination workshop started off as a Baton Rouge Area Chamber organized trip to allow the parish's leaders to learn about other cities' successful economic and community development policies and implementation. Previous canvas trips have included Austin, Nashville, Raleigh-Durham, Portland, Richmond, Pittsburgh, Louisville, and Central Florida. In 2013, BRAC partnered with GNO Inc. in an effort to make create a regional alliance.

This year the trip will focus on Phoenix and Tuscon which have recently embraced a sense of regionalism, according to organizers of the trip.

Last year, Holden was the highest ranking elected official on the trip of 175 regional leaders. [But he caused some friction with Electronic Arts Inc. during a workshop](#) where he spoke for several

minutes, commanding the attention of the room and questioning the business's commitment to Baton Rouge. People in attendance referred to Holden's actions as "embarrassing" and "confusing." He later said he didn't intend to insult EA officials.

Here's the 2015 guest list:

- **Michael Airhart**, Capital Area Finance Authority, Executive Director
- **Barney Arceneaux**, City of Gonzales, Mayor
- **Jane Arnette**, South Central Industrial Association, Director
- **Paul Arrigo**, Visit Baton Rouge, President & CEO
- **Cheri Ausberry**, East Baton Rouge Mortgage Finance Authority, Chairperson
- **Rhonda Bagby**, Humana, Market President
- **Bob Barton**, Taylor, Porter, Brooks & Phillips, Partner
- **Mark Baum**, Chenevert Architects, LLC, Principal
- **Dennis Blunt**, East Baton Rouge Mortgage Finance Authority, Vice – Chairperson
- **Buddy Boe**, St. Charles Parish, Chief Administrative Officer
- **Jerry Bologna**, Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission, Executive Director
- **Pat Brister**, St. Tammany Parish Government, Parish President
- **Chris Brooks**, Launch Media, Business Development & Marketing Director
- **Sarah Broome**, THRIVE, Baton Rouge
- **Patricia Calfee**, Baton Rouge Area Foundation, Special Projects Officer
- **Stephanie Cargile**, ExxonMobil, Public and Government Affairs Manager
- **Teri James Casso**, Ascension Parish Council, Councilwoman
- **Kerry Chauvin**, Terrebonne Economic Development Authority, Commissioner
- **Norman Chenevert**, East Baton Rouge Mortgage Finance Authority, Board Member
- **Michel Claudet**, Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government, Parish President
- **Byron Clayton**, Research Park Corporation, President & CEO
- **Astrid Clements**, EBR Mortgage Finance Authority, Board Member
- **Kahli Cohran**, Civil Solutions Consulting Group, Inc., President
- **Kenny Cole**, BCBSLA, Assoc. Chief Medical Officer and VP of Care Delivery
- **Rebecca Conwell**, City of New Orleans, Senior Advisor to the Mayor for Economic Development
- **Richard Cortizas**, Jones Walker, LLP, Special Counsel
- **Helena Cunningham**, East Baton Rouge Mortgage Finance Authority, Board Member
- **Ronnie Daigle**, R. J. Daigle & Sons Contractors, Inc., President
- **John Delgado**, City of Baton Rouge, Metro Councilman
- **Sherrie Despino**, Ascension Chamber of Commerce, President/CEO
- **Eric Dexter**, Civil Solutions Consulting Group, Inc., Director of Business Development
- **Carling Dinkler**, Ochsner Health System, Director, Government Relations
- **Rachel DiResto**, Center for Planning Excellence, Executive Vice President
- **Michael DiResto**, BRAC, Senior VP for Economic Competitiveness
- **Jill Dyason**, EBR Parish School Board, Board Member
- **Jason El Koubi**, One Acadiana, President & CEO
- **Eugene T. Eski**, Kenilworth Science & Technology School, CEO/Superintendent
- **Eliza Eugene**, St. John the Baptist Parish, Economic Development
- **Connie Fabre**, Greater Baton Rouge Industry Alliance, Executive Director

- **Corey Faucheux**, St. Charles Parish Dept. of Economic Development & Tourism, Director
- **Stephanie Ferry**, Raymond James, Managing Director
- **John Foley**, Pan-American Life, Senior Vice President – Domestic Markets
- **Tommy Fonseca**, GNO, Inc., Vice President of Corporate Relations
- **Penny Font**, Business Report, Executive Editor
- **Charlie Freeburgh**, Baton Rouge Community College, Sr. Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development
- **Barbara Freiberg**, EBR School Board, Board Member-VP
- **John Paul Funes**, Our Lady of the Lake Foundation, President/CEO
- **David Gaines**, Ochsner Health System, CEO-System Retail Services/Marketing and Senior Vice President-Public Affairs
- **Melissa Gibbs**, Gibbs Construction, LLC, Business Development & SBE/DBE Outreach
- **Shabaka Gibson**, ExxonMobil, Public and Government Affairs
- **Kristin Gisleson Palmer**, Louisiana Super Region Rail Authority, Chair
- **Fran Gladden**, Cox Communications, Vice President – Government Affairs
- **Blair Green**, One Acadiana, Director – Events & Special Projects
- **Jake Greig**, NRG Energy, Director – Origination & Business Development
- **Phil Gunn**, Postlethwaite & Netterville, Managing Director, New Orleans Office
- **Gwen Hamilton**, New Schools for Baton Rouge, Community Engagement Director
- **Greg Hanly**, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana, Regional Sales Director
- **Brian Haymon**, SGS Petroleum Service Corporation, CEO
- **Cordell Haymon**, SGS, Senior Vice President
- **Michael Hecht**, GNO, Inc., CEO
- **Ryan Heck**, East Baton Rouge Parish / City of Baton Rouge, Metro Councilman
- **Kasey Henry**, Forum 35, President
- **Scott Hensgens**, Breazeale Sachse & Wilson, Managing Partner
- **Bill Hines**, Jones Walker, LLC, Managing Partner
- **Scott Howard**, Regions Bank, President – New Orleans
- **Jim Hudson**, IBERIA BANK, Southeast Regional Chairman
- **Councilman Casey Hunnicutt**, St Bernard Council
- **Andrew Jacques**, St. Bernard Economic Development Foundation, Executive Director
- **Bryan Jones**, HNTB Corporation, Government Relations
- **Ric Kearny**, Capital One Bank, Baton Rouge Market President
- **Scott Kirkpatrick**, Roedel Parsons Koch Blache Balhoff & McCollister, Attorney
- **Adam Knapp**, BRAC, President and CEO
- **Gus Kousoulas**, Louisiana State University, Associate Vice President (STEM)
- **Mathew Laborde**, Forum 35, Vice President of Development
- **Julie Laperouse**, BRAC, Director of Talent Development
- **Ray Lauga**, St. Bernard Parish Council, Councilman
- **Walter Leger**, Leger & Shaw, Attorney
- **Tony Ligi**, Jefferson Business Council, Executive Director
- **Larissa Littleton-Steib**, Delgado Community College, Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development
- **Chris Loar**, Ascension Parish Council, Parish President Candidate
- **Jared Loftus**, MasteryPrep, COO
- **Chandler Loupe**, City of Baton Rouge, Metro Councilman/Mayor Pro-Tem

- **Ben Louviere**, Waldemar S. Nelson and Company, Inc., Business Development
- **Courtney Maciasz**, Capital Region Planning Commission, Economic Development/PIO
- **Mandi Magill**, BRAC, Director of Events
- **Derrick Martin**, Algiers Economic Development Foundation, Executive Director
- **Todd Matherne**, *Biz New Orleans*, Publisher
- **Marty Mayer**, Stirling Properties, President & CEO
- **Van Mayhall**, Baton Rouge Area Chamber, Chairman of the Board
- **Guy McInnis**, St. Bernard Parish Council, Councilman
- **Carolyn McKnight**, BREC, Superintendent
- **Patty McMurray**, Adams and Reese, LLP, Partner
- **Earl Meador**, Fletcher Technical Community College, Chancellor
- **Chris Meyer**, New Schools for Baton Rouge, CEO
- **Philip Meyers**, GEC, Inc., Senior Vice President
- **Walter Monsour**, CSRS, Inc., Business Unit Leader
- **Beverly Moore**, Baton Rouge Area Foundation, Director of Civic Leadership Initiatives
- **Carlo Mulvenna**, Pan-American Life Insurance Group, Vice President
- **Todd Murphy**, The Jefferson Chamber of Commerce, President
- **Michelle Octave**, St. James Parish Government, Chief Administrative Officer
- **Laverne Osiris**, St. John the Baptist Parish, Special Assistant – Economic Development
- **Nial Patel**, Cornerstone Government Affairs, Vice President
- **Abhay Patel**, New Orleans Business Alliance, Vice President of Business Development
- **Skip Philips**, Taylor, Porter, Brooks & Phillips, Managing Partner
- **Tina Rance**, Commercial Properties Realty Trust, Director of Marketing/Leasing
- **Davis Rhorer**, Downtown Development District, Executive Director
- **Coleman Ridley, Jr.**, Business Council of New Orleans and the River Region, Managing Director
- **Paul Rivera**, JEDCO, Chairman
- **Chris Roberts**, Jefferson Parish Council, Councilman, At-Large Division A
- **Kimberly Robinson**, Jones Walker, LLP, Partner
- **Natalie Robottom**, St. John the Baptist Parish, Parish President
- **Deborah Sternberg**, Starmount Life, Executive Vice President
- **Randy Roussel**, Phelps Dunbar, LLP, Partner
- **Timmy Roussel**, St. James Parish Government, Parish President
- **Shelby Russ**, aos interior environments, President/CEO
- **Ryann Sanchez**, City Year Baton Rouge, Development Director
- **Shane Sandefer**, Kean Miller, LLP, Partner
- **Monique Scott-Spaulding**, Jani-King, Franchise Owner
- **Henry Schexnayder**, Whitney Bank, Baton Rouge Market President
- **Rachel Shields**, GNO, Inc., Chief of Staff
- **Pam Shows**, Humana, Health Solutions Client Executive
- **James Slaton**, Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann, L.L.C., Member
- **Bill Slaughter**, SSA Consultants, President
- **Ronnie Slone**, The Slone Group, President
- **Mark Slyter**, Baton Rouge General, President and CEO
- **Jared Smith**, Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport, Chairman Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport Commission

- **John Spain**, Baton Rouge Area Foundation, Executive Vice President
- **Mark Spansel**, Adams and Reese, LLP, Partner
- **Allen Square**, PosiGen, Chief Technology & Innovation Officer
- **Ralph Stephens**, Postlethwaite & Netterville, Director
- **Trevor Theunissen**, Ride New Orleans, President
- **Boo Thomas**, Center for Planning Excellence, President and CEO
- **David Thornton**, Thornton, Musso & Bellemin, Inc, President
- **Tina Tinney**, Northshore Technical Community College, VC for Strategic Initiatives
- **Ann Forte Trappey**, Forte and Tablada, CEO/President
- **Raul Travieso**, NRG Energy, Inc., Director, Cooperative & Customer Relations
- **Gabe Vicknair**, Downtown Development District, Assistant Executive Director
- **Czarina Walker**, InfiniEDGE Software, CEO
- **Donald Washington**, Jones Walker LLP, Partner
- **Scott Whittaker**, Stone Pigman Walther Wittmann, L.L.C., Member
- **Dr. David Winwood**, Pennington Biomedical Research Center, Chief Business Development Officer
- **Travis Woodard**, CSRS, Inc., Business Unit Leader
- **Maggie Woodruff**, Regional Planning Commission, Director of Economic Development
- **Ansley Zehnder**, BRAC, Senior Vice President of Marketing
- **Devin Zito**, Teknarus, President

The Advocate will also be in attendance this year.



Baton Rouge Canvas trip participants bring big ideas back from Arizona's Sun Corridor

Penny Font

April 21, 2015

Establish a new medical school. Build more citizen engagement in education. Nurture entrepreneurship. Incorporate light rail.

These are just a few of the concepts that a delegation of 145 business and community leaders from south Louisiana plans to bring home from its Super Region Canvas trip to Arizona's Sun Corridor that began Sunday and concludes today.

Metro Councilman John Delgado says past Canvas trips have resulted in new initiatives for the Capital Region, and this year's trip will be no different. Organizers note the idea for a Baton Rouge Health District and subsequent discussions about building a clinical trials program here began with a Canvas trip, as did the pressure put on LSU to expand technology transfer and the Automotive Technology Center at Ardendale.

"If we live in a bubble and never expose ourselves to other communities and regions, we're just doing the same things over and over again," Delgado says. "You have to get out there. To me, we should be doing these more often than every 18 months. I think we should do it as often as possible."

Many delegates say they were most impressed by entrepreneurial efforts taking place in Arizona that were detailed by a Monday afternoon panel at the University of Arizona at SkySong. Panelists included Dr. Mitzie Montoya, vice president and dean of entrepreneurship at the university, and Courtney Klein, co-founder and CEO of Seed Spot, an incubator that supports early stage social entrepreneurs.

Byron Clayton, CEO of Research Park Corp., says Arizona's focus on collective impact is a concept that could benefit Louisiana.

"Instead of just thinking, 'I'm this organization, and I'm just focused on Phoenix or Scottsdale or whatever,' they're looking broader," Clayton says. "They talk about reaching out and gaining support outside of the state to bring back resources to the state. That is a major takeaway."

Arizona also has a state-financed one-stop website for entrepreneurs in any stage to identify critical resources.

"Somebody needs to provide that umbrella for entrepreneurs to find the support that they need to grow," Clayton says. "As a region, we need to come together and understand how to nurture entrepreneurship in all the stages."

Also of interest was a Monday morning discussion about the positive impact a Phoenix campus of the University of Arizona's College of Medicine has had on addressing a physician shortage. The Baton Rouge Health District is exploring the idea of a four-year medical school in Baton Rouge.

"It's a great analogy to discussions of whether LSU Health Center or Tulane could establish a four-year medical school," says Baton Rouge Area Chamber President and CEO Adam Knapp.

"We have physician shortages on the horizon," noted Knapp, adding, "There's clearly a demand for it."

The Super Region Canvas trip concludes this afternoon in Tucson following sessions on transportation planning and economic growth. [As previously reported](#), an executive with BASIS—one of the most academically demanding charter programs in the nation—announced at a Canvas event on Sunday that BASIS wants to bring five schools to Louisiana, with the first campus tentatively set to open in 2017.

The Canvas trip is a joint venture between the Baton Rouge Area Chamber and Greater New Orleans Inc. that is meant to give participants greater perspective on how peer cities handle critical issues common to all communities. The trips have taken place about every other year since 2003. BRAC formerly organized the trips on its own, but in 2013 partnered with GNO Inc. to increase regional cooperation among south Louisiana's business communities.

Knapp says such excursions are critical to ongoing discussions to improve the Capital Region.

"Change doesn't just come from intuition or from brainstorming on a whiteboard in an office in Baton Rouge," Knapp says. "So much of it comes from this active inspiration, of seeing other examples and making them fit for our context."

—Penny Font



West Bank high schoolers get bus tour of potential employers



Jefferson Chamber Foundation Academy students tour National Oilwell Services during a tour sponsored by Harvey Canal Industrial Association, Delgado Community College and Jefferson Parish Public Schools. *(Rosalie Simmons)*

[Print Email](#)



By **Rosalie Simmons, Marrero Musings columnist**
on April 22, 2015 at 7:32 AM, updated April 22, 2015 at 7:33 AM

West Bank high school students recently took a four-hour bus tour of three industrial companies during an event sponsored by Delgado Community College Executive Dean

Larissa Littleton-Steib, Harvey Canal Industrial Association President Chris Breaux and board members. Thirty-five students participated.

Schools included in the tour were Jefferson Chamber Foundation Academy and Helen Cox High School. The program was monitored and facilitated by members of Delgado Community College's Dual Enrollment Program, who were present at each site as students arrived.

West Jefferson Executive Director Jennifer Steel, a board member of the Harvey Canal Industrial Association, and members of the West Jefferson Medical Center staff hosted a luncheon recap/wrap-up for students after the tour.

Breaux and Littleton-Steib gave an overview of the objectives of the tour, which were to acquaint students with "industries that are right in their backyard" along the Peter Road and Destrehan corridors that offer good-paying job opportunities for high school graduates.

Fastorq/Superior Energy Services Executive Steven Kirsch told the group that students who need to enter the world of work immediately after high school graduation can begin these jobs at the entry levels and work their way up in a few years and earn salaries ranging from \$25,000 to \$200,000.

They were told that within six years, some employees earn as much as \$160,000 yearly. He said that these salaries will depend upon the degree of advancement and level of knowledge acquired for the job and number of hours worked.

Typical salaries range from \$40,000 to \$50,000 for onsite mechanic shop jobs.

Kirsch said that they prefer to promote from within. Persons can become supervisors by knowing everything about the job, how to deal with people and never stop learning. The company offers hands on training so employees must be fit for duty and for the physical demands of the job. Transportation is provided for employees.

During his presentation Quality Health Safety and Environmental Auditor Rayshard Allen said that there is a zero-tolerance for drug use, cell phone use on the job, profanity and falsifying time sheets.

Allen, a former basketball forward and graduate of John Ehret High School who majored in sports management and social science, monitors the Safety Operations at Superior Energy. Some members of the group remembered Allen from his days of playing basketball at Ehret.

During the tour, students were introduced to various educational and job opportunities through PowerPoint presentations by employees, personal accounts of job experiences, and actual tours of the three physical plants. Students were also given the opportunity to have their questions answered take notes and pictures.

Students learned about the various types of drilling, names for equipment used in the oil industry, exporting, safety for workers and what life is like in living quarters off shore and many other things that they seem to find extremely interesting about the broad employment opportunities.

Several agencies came together to help the Harvey Canal Industrial Association make this tour beneficial for students. They included staff members at Delgado Community College/Jefferson Technical Division, Well Services, Fastorq/Superior Energy Services, National Oilwell Varco (NOV), Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO), Delgado's High School to College Transition Program, West Jefferson Medical Center and Jefferson Parish Public Schools' Department of College and Career Readiness Executive Director Kris Labruzzo.

For more information www.superiorenergy.com; www.dcc.edu and click on Admissions then Dual Enrollment or www.HCIA.com .



Baby Boomer Conference Series Featuring Health, Financial, and Relationship Wellness is Three Days Away

New Orleans, LA, April 16, 2015 --(PR.com)-- Boomers Lifestyle Network (BLN) will host its Your Life – Re-Created! Conference Series on Saturday, April 18, 2015 at the **Jedco Conference Center** 700 Churchill Parkway, Avondale, LA from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Your Life – Re-Created! is sponsored by BLN, Day Haven Adult Day Care, Edward Jones Financial, JEDCO, Loretta Petit Professional Services, TruthLink2150, Inc., Dog Griggs, and many more.

Workshops will be headlined by elder care specialist Sinder Coleman Miller, BSHA-LTC, relationship expert and motivational speaker Dr. Danna Andrus, business expert Loretta Petit MBA, ABD, health and fitness advocate Dr. Eric Griggs, MD, and financial expert Yulonda T. Griffin, PhD.

Sinder Coleman Miller, BSHA-LTC specializes in elder care and Alzheimer/Dementia diagnosis; chronic illness in the elderly and caregiver support. Miller is a 15 year long term care provider and owner of Day Haven Adult Day Health Care in Gretna, LA. She is also CEO of Boomers Lifestyle Network, LLC which is the parent company of Boomers Lifestyle Magazine and internet radio station KBLN.net.

Dr. Danna Andrus, D.D., LMFT owns TruthLink2150 and has been locally and nationally recognized as a consultant, arbitrator, mediator, and urban youth specialist. Dr. Andrus is a licensed marriage and family therapist practicing in New Orleans, LA.

Loretta Petit MBA, ABD is a management and leadership trainer with a specialty in public speaking and personal coaching. Petit is the Chief Empowerment Officer for Loretta Petit POWER Seminars; a program focusing on women's empowerment and personal development.

Dr. Eric Griggs, MD appears weekly on Fox 8 WVUE as a health educator and contributor. Dr. Griggs can also be heard on WBOK and his weekly internet show, "Health Talk with Doc Griggs". Dr. Griggs is passionate about his health and wellness initiative, "Get checked. Get fit. Get Moving!"

Author and motivational speaker, Yulonda T. Griffin, PhD, is the owner of LIV, LLC and provides workshops on credit, finances, insurance, estate and emergency planning. Griffin also provides counseling to startup businesses and new entrepreneurs.

You can register for the Your Life – Re-Created! Conference Series online at www.boomerslifestyle.net or www.eventbrite.com/boomerslifestyle. Registration is \$30 and includes all workshops, continental breakfast, and lunch.

To learn more about Boomers Lifestyle Network, please visit www.BoomersLifestyle.net or contact Sinder Coleman Miller at the information below.

Boomers Lifestyle Network's mission is to enrich the lives of aging individuals by coaching, consulting, and counseling creatively through media.



PRESS RELEASE
April 9, 2015

JEDCO & Jefferson Chamber to Host Social Media Seminar

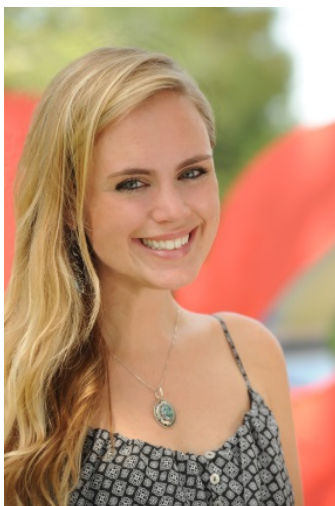
Part of Prosper Jefferson Seminar Series

(Metairie, La) -- In 2015, social media should be a part of your overall marketing strategy. Whether you're a small business owner, an entrepreneur, or working out of a corporate headquarters, you should be aware of the benefits that a social media strategy can afford your business. Not only does having a social media presence provide your company with increased exposure and the potential to generate sales leads, but it also welcomes a new level of customer engagement. It's a great, cost-effective tool that can help your company find increased successes.

That's why the [Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission \(JEDCO\)](http://www.jedco.org) and the [Jefferson Chamber of Commerce](http://www.jeffersonchamber.org) teamed up to bring you "Social Media 101 for Businesses," a [Prosper Jefferson](http://www.prosperjefferson.org) seminar focused on helping you navigate the social media landscape.

In this seminar, you'll be schooled on social media strategy, content, and analytics. Our panel of experts will bring you an educational morning jam-packed with tips and techniques to ensure your social media success.

Join us **Wednesday, April 29th**, at the **East Bank Regional Library's Jefferson Room from 9:00-10:30 AM**. Admission is free, but registration is required to attend. The event is open to all businesses and entrepreneurs. Register online at www.jedco.org/events. For more information contact Kelsey Scram at kscram@jedco.org or Emilie Riser at emilie@jeffersonchamber.org.



Meet Our Speakers:

Gretchen Hirt
Communications Strategist
Gambel Communications

A graduate of Loyola University of New Orleans, Gretchen received her Bachelors of Arts degree in theater and mass communications with a concentration in public relations. Gretchen is the VP of Communication for the Public Relations Association of Louisiana - State Chapter and is an active member of the Young Leadership Council, 504ward, the Jefferson Chamber and the New Orleans Chamber. She graduated from the 2013 Bryan Bell Metropolitan Leadership Forum, the 2014 Junior League of New Orleans' Get on Board Training Program and is a member of the Leadership Jefferson class of 2015.

As Communications Strategist, Gretchen strategically handles media relations, social media, special events and community relations for her clients. Currently, Gretchen leads a variety of accounts including Taste Buds' popular restaurants (Zea Rotisserie & Grill, Mizado Cocina and Semolina), the Steamboat NATCHEZ, Hibernia Bank, Preservation Resource Center, Ocean Conservancy and the Jefferson Chamber Foundation Academy.

Gretchen has worked on projects with the Greater New Orleans Foundation (GiveNOLA Day), Renaissance Publishing (New Orleans Sushi Fest), Entergy (NOLA Bike to Work Day), Companies With A Mission (Super Service Challenge), Louisiana Department of Education, the American Nurse Project, the Hotel Monteleone, ZukaBaby, Baudry Therapy Center and City Park, among many others. For her work in public relations, Gretchen has received an Award of Excellence, a Lantern Award and Best in Show from the Southern Public Relations Federation

Jeff Januszek

Founder

Jeff Januszek Social Media Marketing

With 17 years as a successful morning radio host, Jeff Januszek has a knack for creating captivating content on a daily basis.



Originally from Detroit, Jeff married a New Orleans girl in 2011. This explains why, in 2014, Jeff left his radio career behind and made a home for he and his wife in Lakeview. After years of connecting with audiences via social media, it was only natural for Jeff to launch his own social media management and consulting firm. Jeff has worked with clients like the Cincinnati Reds, The Grand Prix of NOLA, Fix My Streets New Orleans, and many more, to help get their message to millions.

Now, with his wife expecting their first child in June 2015, Jeff continues to grow his business in the New Orleans metro area. Simply put, you won't meet anyone more passionate about teaching organizations how to expertly use the most powerful advertising tool ever, social media

Margaux Maizlish

Social Media Accounts Manager

FSC Interactive



Born and raised in Baltimore, Margaux found herself in New Orleans by way of New York City. As the Director of Social Media at FSC Interactive, a leading digital marketing agency in New Orleans, Margaux, works with the Social Media Department to ensure that all accounts are being managed properly and being given the appropriate attention. Her primary role is to provide guidance, structure and accountability to her team, as well as oversee Zatarain's social media presence. Her efforts with Zatarain's have resulted in a benchmark-defying Twitter partnership, an award-winning surprise and delight campaign, and, most importantly, a loyal online community. When she's not working, Margaux loves keeping up with digital trends and emerging tech, pop culture, and a good Sazerac.

###

About JEDCO: [The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission \(JEDCO\)](#) is an independent, yet complementary arm of Jefferson Parish government with the main objective of attracting, growing and creating new business in our area. JEDCO's mission is to proactively influence the economy through the retention and

creation of quality jobs, entrepreneurship and investment in Jefferson Parish. Located in the growing [Churchill Technology and Business Park](#), JEDCO is home to a [business incubator](#) and it also runs a state-of-the-art [Conference Center](#). For more information, visit www.jedco.org and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) & [LinkedIn](#).

About the Jefferson Chamber: The [Jefferson Chamber](#) is a leading voice for Jefferson Parish's business community. As a non-profit, membership-driven organization, the Chamber is an effective advocate for small and large businesses at the local, state and federal levels. The Chamber's mission is to work for the advancement of the business community; to enhance the economic, civic and cultural environment; and to improve the quality of life in Jefferson Parish. The Jefferson Chamber is Four-Star Accredited by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and was awarded the 2013 Chamber of the Year Award by the Louisiana Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives in the Large Chamber Category.

For more information about the Jefferson Chamber, visit www.jeffersonchamber.org, and follow on [Facebook](#), Twitter [@jeffersoncoc](#), and [YouTube](#).

Contact:

Kelsey Scram
JEDCO Marketing and PR Manager
(504) 875-3927
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“There are just so many different funding sources and so many different rules.”

Hugh Eley

Incoming deputy secretary

Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals

But LHC Group CEO Keith Myers said most of the company's increase in profits was attributable to growth outside of Louisiana. He said that's partly because the state's Medicaid reimbursement policies make it unprofitable to accept Medicaid clients, only offering reimbursement of 50 percent of the cost of care.

“LHC is based here and this is our home...but we've given up on Medicaid in the state and we've moved on,” said Myers, explaining that future growth and acquisitions would take place outside Louisiana.

Myers said the industries will become more specialized. People who need less daily care will gravitate toward home care options, if possible, while the more elderly and infirm would end up in homes.

That means nursing homes would need to be equipped to deal with an influx of high-need clients, but Donchess said they are already providing more rehabilitative and acute care due to more clients choosing assisted living over nursing homes.

LHC Group plans to continue relying on its partners at 56 locations in Louisiana, which include Humana, Blue Cross and Blue Shield and People's Health, while focusing growth efforts in states it finds more business-friendly, according to Myers.

Eley said ultimately the market will have to figure it out. He said the DHH had made home care a priority in the past to start addressing the issue of elderly population growth, and he added that he's pleased to see the near 50-50 mix of nursing homes and home care today. But he said the current Medicaid structure is making it hard.

“There are just so many different funding sources and so many different rules,” Eley said.

“Unsustainable” financing

In 2013, a legislative study group called for a report on long-term care in the state, which culminated in a six-month study on financing.

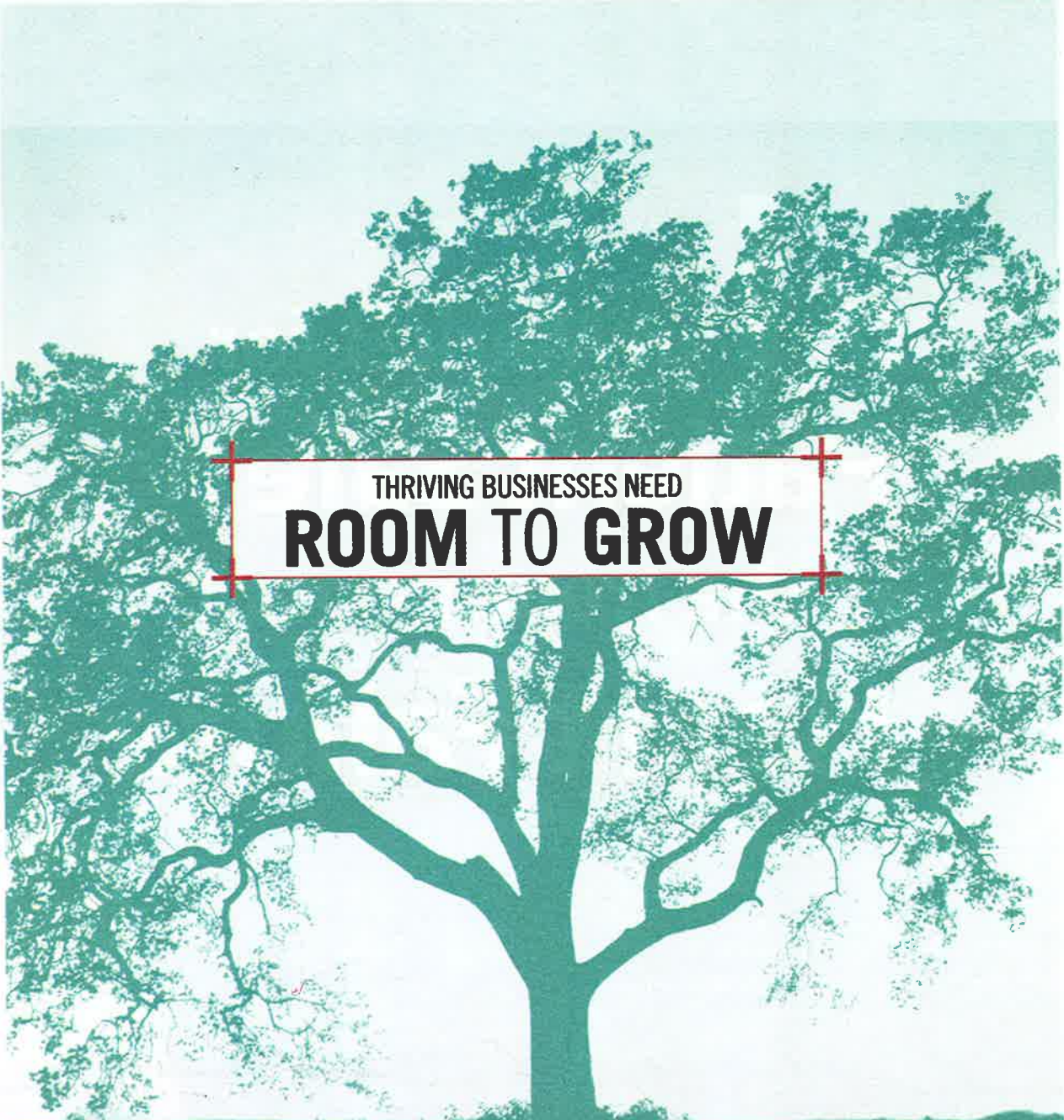
The study developed a framework to stabilize the industry through increasing revenue and maximizing Medicare utilization as opposed to Medicaid, otherwise, it warned of an impending crisis;

“Louisiana cannot expect to meet the future demand for long term care services...with the state already failing to meet the current demand...,” the report read.

It resulted in a follow-up resolution in 2014 that called for funding of a demand-spending study, but the resolution failed to pass, according to DHH.

Between 2005 and 2010, Louisiana's change in home-based long term care spending grew faster than any other state, changing its ranking from 49th to 14th, demonstrating the high demand for these services. Yet the percentage of people using Medicaid to pay for the services was far below the national average, just 3.6 percent, compared to 8.8 percent.

The state went from 49th nationally for spending on home and community based services in 2000 to 14th in 2009, according to the report.



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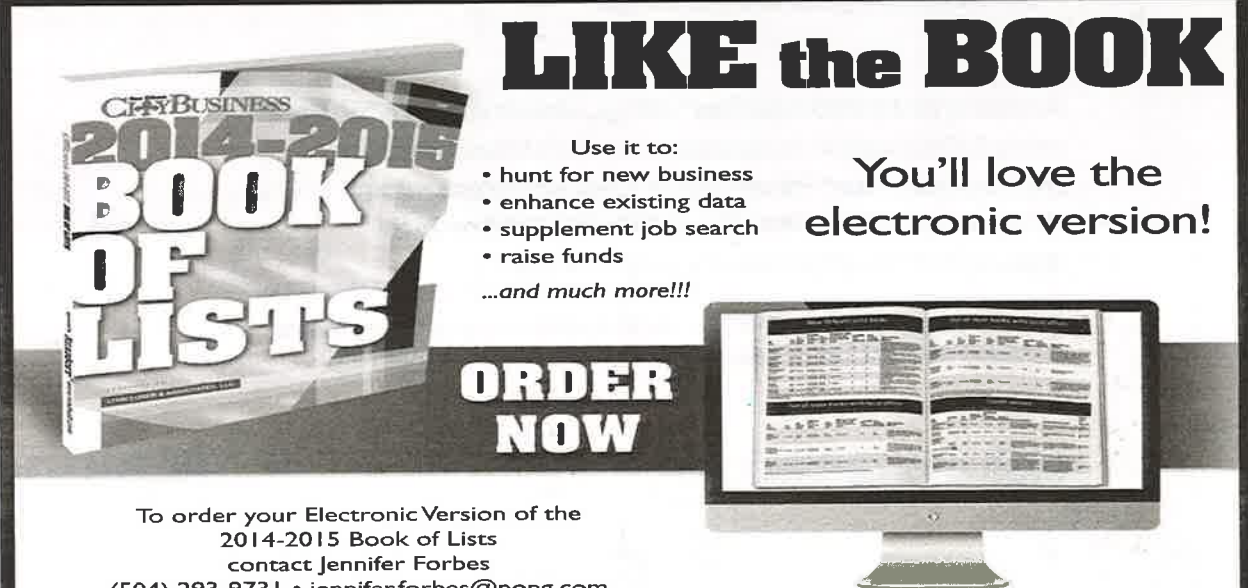
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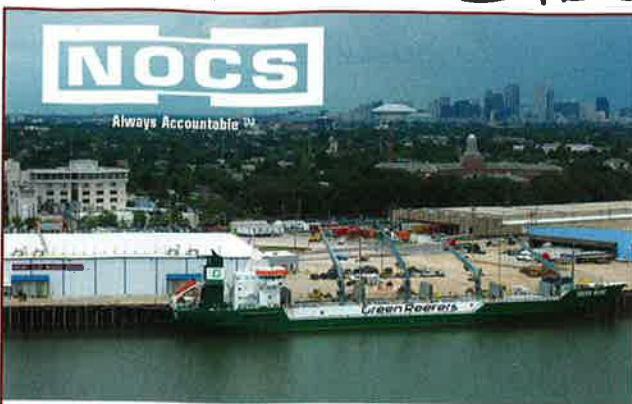
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From tax incentives and financing options to customized demographic reports and site selection, JEDCO is here to help your business thrive in our community. Through our award-winning business outreach program, we connect with Jefferson Parish business owners to understand their needs and to determine how we can assist. At JEDCO, your business is our number one priority.

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