

**MDA E-News February 2, 2009****New Jobs, Program Update, G&G Steel, Speights Resignation and  
"Changing the Face of Transit"****ATK to Locate Aviation Composites Operations in Iuka, Miss.,  
Facility; Hundreds of New Jobs to be Created**

Governor Haley Barbour announced on February 2, 2009, that Alliant Techsystems (ATK) will begin manufacturing composite structures for commercial aircraft applications at its facility in Iuka, Miss. Here, the company will produce composite stringers and frames, or "backbones" and "ribs," which together form the "skeleton" of the aircraft. ATK's CEO Dan Murphy stated that expanding ATK's presence in Mississippi with its talented workforce, strong university system and pro-business environment is the right move for the company.

The expansion is expected to retain the 176 jobs currently at the facility, and the workforce will grow to a total of 800 employees in the next eight years. Upon legislative passage, MDA will provide necessary funding for public building improvements for the project. MDA, TVA, Tishomingo County and the [Tishomingo County Development Foundation](#) all worked together to land the project.

According to Gray Swoope, MDA Executive Director, this announcement further confirms Mississippi is a prime location for companies involved in advanced material-making processes for the aerospace industry. ATK's decision to locate these operations in Mississippi will provide a future for many of Mississippi's college graduates in this field.

Based in Minneapolis, Minn., ATK operates more than 50 facilities in 21 states. To learn more, please visit [www.atk.com](http://www.atk.com).

**MDA's Model Contractor Development Program Update**

MDA's Minority and Small Business Development Division recently conducted a presentation on the Model Contractor Development Program (MCDP) for Governor Haley Barbour to highlight the success of the program and introduce contractors whose businesses have thrived since graduating the program. The MCDP, a nine-session training course, teaches small construction contractors the business practices required to improve their company's operations and increase their bonding capacity. To date, the program has graduated 237 participants.

During the presentation, representatives from companies that have benefited from the program and instructors shared their insights and

success stories with Governor Barbour. MDA Executive Director Gray Swoope also commented on the remarkable results the program has achieved since its inception, and he spoke enthusiastically about the program's future. Sam Carradine, Jr., Director of Diversity and Development of The Surety and Fidelity Association of America, Harry Alford, President and CEO of the National Black Chamber of Commerce and Mike Anderson, Program Director of the Mississippi Minority Business Enterprise Center, were also in attendance.

In appreciation of their unfaltering support of the MCDP, MDA presented plaques to: Doug Garland, Owner, Heiden and Garland Insurance and Bonds; Robin Word, Word CPA Group; Adam Stone, Watkins, Ludlam, Winter and Stennis, P.A.; Ben Crosby, W.G. Yates Construction; Harry Alford and Sam Carradine, Jr.

To learn more about the MCDP, please visit [www.msccpc.com](http://www.msccpc.com).

### **G & G Steel to Locate in Tishomingo County**

G & G Steel, producer of some of the world's largest fabricated metal components, has announced it will locate a metal fabrication facility in the Tri-State Commerce Park in Iuka in Tishomingo County. The company, which fabricates metal components for large-scale projects including bridges, locks and mining equipment, will initially hire 25 employees at its new facility. MDA has provided \$650,000 in CDBG funds to assist with public infrastructure and building improvements; Tishomingo County also provided \$300,000 for public infrastructure needs.

Based in Russellville, Ala., G & G Steel joins other metal fabrication and steel companies already located in Tishomingo County. The area's available workforce, prime location and access to key transportation networks have been key factors in the companies' decisions to locate to the area.

To learn more about G & G Steel, please visit [www.ggsteel.com](http://www.ggsteel.com).

### **Speights Announces Resignation as Director of MDA's Minority and Small Business Development Division**

After five years of successfully leading the state's minority business growth and outreach efforts, Richard Speights, director of MDA's Minority and Small Business Development Division, has announced that he will be leaving the agency in February to pursue other personal and professional opportunities. Upon joining the MDA team in 2004, Speights brought seven years of experience as the executive director of the Mississippi Procurement Technical Assistance Program. He has helped Mississippi businesses receive well over \$3 billion in government contracts, and he has also helped inspire many Mississippians to pursue their dreams of owning and operating their own businesses.

MDA Executive Director Gray Swoope expressed his appreciation and

gratitude for Speights' service to the state's small and minority-owned businesses, and he noted its impact on the economic development of the state. Swoope said that Speights' guidance and leadership over the past five years have proven to be invaluable, and he has been a tremendous asset to the development of many businesses in Mississippi, playing a key role in their success.

Anyone needing assistance through the Minority and Small Business Development Division may contact Bob Covington for Business Development at (601) 359-9226 or Carol Harris for Procurement and Technical Assistance at (601) 359-2386.

**MDOT to Host "Changing the Face of Transit" February 18 - 19**

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) will host its 3rd Annual Statewide Transportation Summit, "*Changing the Face of Transit*," February 18-19, 2009, at the Jackson Convention Complex in downtown Jackson. The summit will begin at 1:30 p.m. on February 18 and conclude at 4:00 p.m. on February 19. MDA is a co-sponsor of the event.

According to Larry L. "Butch" Brown, MDOT Executive Director, progress continues to be made in the coordination of transportation in Mississippi. This positively impacts economic development in the state by increasing access to jobs, healthcare, social services, education and shopping. The summit's agenda is designed to discuss solutions to local and regional transportation issues, showcase successes and refine MDOT's collective action plan for the future.

For additional information, please contact Charles Carr, MDOT Public Transit Director, or Shirley Wilson, MDOT Public Transit Manager, at (601) 359-7800. To obtain a registration form, please send an e-mail to [ccarr@mdot.state.ms.us](mailto:ccarr@mdot.state.ms.us), or send a fax to (601) 359-7777. On-site registration is also available.