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MTD Announces Expansion in Tupelo

MTD, a lawnmower manufacturing company, recently announced an expansion of its Tupelo operations into a 525,000-square-foot, county-owned building adjacent to its current facility in the Tupelo-Lee Industrial Park South. The expansion represents a \$6.25 million company investment and will create 107 new jobs.

The expansion includes the introduction of a new mower platform and the addition of injection molding capabilities. Operations at the new facility are expected to begin this spring; MTD is continuing operations at its current Tupelo facility, as well.

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) worked closely with MTD and local officials to help facilitate the expansion, providing assistance to Lee County through the Community Development Block Grant Program to help with infrastructure improvements. The Appalachian Regional Commission and Lee County also helped with the company's expansion.

MTD, which was founded in 1932 and produced its first lawn mower in 1958, is now a global manufacturer of outdoor power equipment for the residential and commercial markets. The company's family of brands includes Cub Cadet, Cub Cadet Commercial, Cub Cadet Yanmar, Troy-Bilt, White Outdoor, Yard-Man, Yard Machines, Bolens, Arnold, GardenWay, MTD Pro and MTD Gold. MTD Products can be found in home improvement stores, hardware stores, mass retailers, independent dealers and farm supply stores. To learn more about the company, please visit MTD's Web site at www.mtdproducts.com.

Hudson Salvage, LLC to Locate Distribution Center in Tippah County

A leading purchaser of retail salvage merchandise, Hudson Salvage, LLC, will locate a distribution center in northeast Mississippi. The company's new distribution facility will be housed in the one million-square-foot building in Tippah County formerly occupied by furniture manufacturer BenchCraft. The distribution center represents a significant investment by Hudson Salvage and offers the potential to create several hundred new jobs at the facility over the next several years.

The distribution center will serve the company's Dirt Cheap and Treasure Hunt stores in north Mississippi, Tennessee and Alabama. With the location of this new facility in northeast Mississippi, Hudson Salvage officials plan to significantly increase the company's retail presence in the area.

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) worked closely with both local officials and the company to help facilitate the expansion. MDA provided funding to Tippah County through the Development Infrastructure Program to help with infrastructure improvements for the project.

Hudson Salvage purchases name brand merchandise from the insurance industry that may be damaged due to fires, tornadoes or other acts of nature. The company also purchases end-of-season merchandise and merchandise that is left over following closeouts and bankruptcies. More than 1,100 workers are employed in over 49 Hudson Salvage retail stores totaling approximately 1.1 million square feet in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi. To learn more, please visit the company's Web site at www.hudsonsalvagellc.com.

Mississippi Unveils Country Music Trail

The State of Mississippi recently unveiled its newest tourist attraction, the Mississippi Country Music Trail, which will celebrate Mississippi's rich heritage of country music legends and chart toppers and will feature a variety of country music artists. The first 30 markers across the state will honor Jimmie Rodgers (known as the "Father of Country Music"), Charley Pride, Conway Twitty, Jerry Clower, Faith Hill and Paul Overstreet, among others.

The Country Music Trail has garnered significant support since before its inception. In early 2009, Mississippi country music legend Marty Stuart, an artist who will be featured on the trail, lobbied the State Senate to pass legislation to create the landmark-based attraction. The Country Music Trail will build on the success of the Mississippi Blues Trail, which now boasts over 100 markers across Mississippi and in Muscle Shoals, Ala., Helena, Ark., Chicago and Memphis.

For more information about the Mississippi Country Music Trail, visit Mississippi's official tourism Web site, www.VisitMississippi.org, or call 1-866-SEE-MISS.

MDA to Hold Stimulus Funding Opportunities Conference for Minority Contractors March 16

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) will host a conference to explain opportunities for Mississippi-based certified minority contractors associated with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). The conference will be held **Tuesday, March 16**, at the River Room Conference Center located at 100 Ridge Drive in Flowood, Miss., from **8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

The conference will offer attendees an overview of MDA stimulus programs and requirements; an overview of MDA minority outreach programs, including the Mississippi Procurement Technical Assistance Program; tips on doing business with the State of Mississippi; a panel discussion on residential housing opportunities; a panel discussion on energy opportunities and a vendor fair to give contractors the opportunity to network with other contractors, vendors and MDA grantees. The conference will conclude with an hour-long question and answer session.

The conference is free-of-charge, and interested persons should register before the event. Details are available online at www.msccpc.com; select the "Events" link from the left menu, then select the stimulus funding opportunities conference from the March 16 box. A registration link is available at the bottom of the information page. For more information, please call MDA's Minority and Small Business Development Division at (601) 359-6678.

MDA, MSWTC to Host Luncheon on Doing Business in Israel

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) and the Mississippi World Trade Center (MSWTC) will host a luncheon on **Monday, March 15, 2010**, for Mississippi companies interested in learning more about doing business with Israel and the Middle East. The luncheon will be held in Jackson, Miss., at the Capitol Club at 125 South Congress Street from **11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** Cost to attend will be \$20, which includes lunch; attendees must register for the luncheon by Friday, March 12, 2010.

All Mississippi business owners interested in trade opportunities with Israel and other countries in the Middle East are encouraged to attend. Attendees will learn why Israel is the United States' twentieth largest export market, find out how to take advantage of the free trade agreement with Israel, understand why Israel has more start-up companies than all European countries combined, hear about opportunities throughout the region for U.S. exporters, see why the

Middle East was less affected by the current economic downturn and receive suggestions on establishing or increasing sales to this region.

To make reservations or for more information about the luncheon, please call or email Ann Atkins at (601) 353-0909 or aatkins@mswtc.org.

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