

MDA E-News March 29, 2010**In this issue:**

- [Lane Furniture Expanding Operations in Lee County; Expansion to Create 186 New Jobs](#)
- [Grenada Stamping and Assembly Announces Expansion of Operations; Project Will Create 40 Jobs](#)
- [Mississippi Businesses Invited to Join Business Development Mission to South America; Companies Looking to Expand Sales to Chile, Ecuador and Peru Encouraged to Participate](#)
- [Governor's Community Projects of Excellence Awards Presented for 13 Outstanding Improvement Projects in Mississippi](#)
- [Mississippi Launches 360° Virtual Tours to Promote State's Attractions](#)

Lane Furniture Expanding Operations in Lee County; Expansion to Create 186 New Jobs

Officials from Lane Furniture Industries, manufacturer of recliners, motion upholstery, stationary, cedar and home entertainment furniture, recently announced the expansion of two of the company's Lee County locations to accommodate an increase in production. The expansion is creating a total of 186 new jobs, bringing the total number of Lane Furniture employees in Lee County to 2,051. Eighty-five of the jobs created through the expansion are already in place.

Lane Furniture officials utilized the Mississippi Development Authority's (MDA's) Existing Manufacturers Job Rebate Program to help facilitate the expansion.

Headquartered in Tupelo, Miss., Lane Furniture Industries is owned by Furniture Brands International, which also owns well-known brand companies such as Broyhill, Thomasville, Drexel Heritage and Maitland Smith. To learn more, please visit the Lane Furniture Industries Web site at www.lanefurniture.com.

Grenada Stamping and Assembly Announces Expansion of Operations; Project Will Create 40 Jobs

Officials from Grenada Stamping and Assembly, a supplier of parts to the

appliance, automotive, HVAC/R and off-highway markets, recently announced the company is expanding its Grenada, Miss., operations.

The expansion includes the installation of a new air compressor and air handling system to help the company streamline its production lines and make them more efficient, as well as the installation of a new assembly line to manufacture appliance parts for Electrolux® mini-ovens. A \$300,000 investment by the company, the expansion will create 40 new jobs, bringing the total number of employees at the Grenada facility to 180.

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) worked closely with company and local officials to help facilitate the expansion and provided assistance to Grenada County through the Community Development Block Grant Program for infrastructure improvements to the publicly-owned building leased by Grenada Stamping and Assembly. The county also assisted with the expansion.

A subsidiary of Ice Industries, which is headquartered in Sylvania, Ohio, Grenada Stamping and Assembly has a broad menu of capabilities, including the ability to blank, form, weld and assemble a variety of materials of various strengths and thicknesses. In addition to Electrolux®, the company provides parts to Ford Motor Company in Argentina, First Solar Panels in Canada, Copeland in Northern Ireland, Belgium, Thailand and China and Toyota Boshoku in Indiana. For more information, please visit www.iceindustries.com/grenada-stamping.html.

Mississippi Businesses Invited to Join Business Development Mission to South America; Companies Looking to Expand Sales to Chile, Ecuador and Peru Encouraged to Participate

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) will lead a delegation of business leaders on a business development mission to Chile, Ecuador and Peru from **June 16-25, 2010**. The trip is designed to connect Mississippi businesses looking to expand trade and create business relationships with opportunities in the three markets. During the mission, participants will be able to meet one-on-one with qualified agents and distributors regarding their products and services.

In recent years, prior to the recent earthquake in Chile, Mississippi exports to Chile have steadily increased. Rebuilding efforts following the earthquake will focus on hospitals, housing and schools, increasing the demand for building materials, including steel, wood and prefabricated housing.

By participating in the business development mission, businesses can take advantage of administrative support from MDA before, during and after the event. MDA will provide participating companies with:

- Scheduled appointments with buyers, distributors, agents and brokers
- A detailed mission guide and customized itineraries
- Logistical coordination, including local transportation assistance
- Language interpretation services

Space is limited and businesses are encouraged to sign up early. The participation fee is \$400 per business per country, and the registration deadline is **April 19, 2010**. Participants are responsible for travel and personal expenses. For more information, contact Rose Boxx, MDA's Latin American trade specialist, at 601.359.3045 or rboxx@mississippi.org. Interested parties can also visit MDA's Web site at www.mississippi.org to learn more about the agency's international marketing services and events or to request a consultation with an international trade specialist.

Governor's Community Projects of Excellence Awards Presented for 13 Outstanding Improvement Projects in Mississippi

Governor Haley Barbour and Gray Swoope, executive director of the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA), recently presented 13 *Governor's Community Projects of Excellence Awards* during a ceremony in Jackson.

The awards were presented to community and government leaders and representatives from non-profit organizations for their outstanding use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), Capital Improvements Revolving Loan Program (CAP), Emergency Shelter Grants Program (ESG), Rural Impact (RIF) and Small Municipal and Limited Population County Grant Program (SMLPC) funds over the past year. The funding programs, which provide assistance for community improvement projects, are administered by MDA's Community Services Division.

In addition, three Gulf Coast municipalities were presented awards for their use of federal Hurricane Katrina Disaster Recovery CDBG funds, which are administered by MDA's Disaster Recovery Division.

Winners of the *Governor's Community Projects of Excellence Awards* include:

- **Lowndes County - Best CDBG Economic Development (ED)**
- **City of Morton - Best Rural Impact**
- **Town of Anguilla - Best CDBG Public Facility**
- **City of Waynesboro - Best CDBG Self-Help**
- **Institute of Disability Studies - Best HOME Homebuyer Assistance**
- **Town of Cruger - Best HOME Homeowner Rehabilitation**

- **We Care Community Services - Best HOME Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO)**
- **DeSoto County - Best Capital Improvement Revolving Loan (CAP)**
- **Care Lodge Domestic Violence Shelter - Best Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG)**
- **Town of Puckett - Best Small Municipal and Limited Population County Grant (SMLPC)**
- **Hancock County - Best Katrina CDBG Community Revitalization**
- **City of Gulfport - Best Katrina CDBG Long Term Workforce Housing**
- **Jackson County - Best Katrina CDBG ED**

To learn more about these programs, please visit www.mississippi.org and select the Community and Asset Development link located near the top of the page.

Mississippi Launches 360° Virtual Tours to Promote State's Attractions

Mississippi Development Authority's Tourism Division recently launched its newest promotional tool: high definition, 360° photography (known as HD-360) of select sites around the state. The new HD-360s are full-screen, interactive 360° virtual tours of more than 40 locations throughout Mississippi.

Now available online at www.VisitMississippi.org, the HD-360s can be accessed by selecting the Spotlight box to open the presentation and can be navigated by clicking on the image and dragging the view left, right, up or down. To see other HD-360 images, Web users utilize a dropdown menu on the top left or the interactive map on the bottom left. The current HD-360 has embedded photo galleries and detailed information for each image. The presentation also includes interactive maps that offer regional and city views along with location-specific weather widgets and a Google map widget for each HD-360.

The new tourism tool can be seen [here](#). For more information, contact MDA's Tourism Division at (601) 359-3297 or (866) SEE-MISS.

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