

MDA E-News April 13, 2009**Cardinal Health, MAC LLC, Workforce Housing Facility, Conference Speaker Lineup, MDA's Asset Development Division, 2009 Tourism Inquiries Surpass 2008****In this Issue:**

- [Cardinal Health Locating Distribution Facility in Olive Branch](#)
- [MAC LLC Opens with a Bang in Hancock County](#)
- [Governor Barbour Announces Workforce Housing Facility in Gulfport](#)
- [Speaker Lineup for 2009 Mississippi Business and Procurement Opportunities Conference Designed to Cover Wide Array of Topics](#)
- [MDA's Asset Development Division Presents Asset Mapping Presentations to Ellisville, McComb, Petal](#)
- [Tourism Inquiries for 2009 Surpass those for Same 2008 Time Period](#)

Cardinal Health Locating Distribution Facility in Olive Branch

Cardinal Health, a Fortune 20 company and a global provider of products and services that improve the safety and productivity of health care, recently announced it will relocate a medical/surgical distribution facility to the ProLogis Park DeSoto in Olive Branch. The move will bring approximately 60 new jobs to the area. ProLogis Park DeSoto is a recently-constructed 860,000 square foot distribution facility; Cardinal Health will lease roughly 211,000 square feet of this space.

From this facility, Cardinal Health will distribute medical and surgical products to hospitals, clinical laboratories, ambulatory facilities and physician offices across northern Mississippi, western Tennessee and the entire state of Arkansas. MDA provided \$50,000 in Momentum Mississippi incentives to assist with this project.

To learn more about Cardinal Health, please visit their Web site at www.cardinalhealth.com.

MAC LLC Opens with a Bang in Hancock County

A non-traditional ribbon-cutting ceremony was held recently in the Port Bienville Industrial Park for MAC LLC's new lightweight ammunition manufacturing facility in Hancock County; gunshots rang out in celebration of the company's new venture in south Mississippi. Once fully operational, the plant is expected to create 50 new technology and light manufacturing jobs. MDA provided CDBG Economic Development Disaster Recovery Program funds to Hancock County for renovations to the Katrina-damaged public facility now occupied by MAC.

MAC is focused on developing and producing new, proprietary, lightweight ammunition technologies for military applications. The company's lightweight ammunition is made with a high-tech polymer casing. The 50 caliber bullets MAC produces for machine guns weigh just under two ounces, significantly less than

conventional 50 caliber ammunition. This lighter-weight ammunition will drastically reduce the load our military men and women have to carry.

The plant, which has several high-tech production areas and a live fire testing facility, is capable of producing up to five million rounds annually - enough to fill most of the Marine Corps' 50-caliber requirement.

MAC is a Mississippi corporation under contract with the U.S. Department of Defense that specializes in developing and commercializing lightweight, polymer-based solutions for the military and aerospace markets. To learn more, please visit www.macammo.com.

Governor Barbour Announces Workforce Housing Facility in Gulfport

Governor Haley Barbour recently announced that \$2 million of the federal Hurricane Katrina disaster recovery funds the state received will fund a transitional workforce housing facility in Gulfport. MDA has committed \$2 million in CDBG funds through the Long-Term Workforce Housing Initiative for this project.

The 10,000-square-foot, 60-resident facility will be built on the north side of 19th Street, just west of Highway 49, in close proximity to schools, public transportation facilities, hospitals and emergency responders. It will include semi-private, dormitory-style housing, laundry and recreational space for males whose incomes are well below 50 percent of the area median income. The center will also provide job opportunities for qualifying individuals. This facility is one of 36 workforce housing projects that will provide more than 6,000 affordable housing units in the counties hit hardest by Hurricane Katrina.

The project is being sponsored by the Pass Christian DeLisle Community Center, a Mississippi chartered non-profit corporation created after Hurricane Katrina to address social, recreational and educational issues in Harrison and Hancock counties. In addition to MDA's \$2 million commitment, the Gulf Coast Community Foundation is providing \$250,000 from its hurricane recovery fund.

Speaker Lineup for 2009 Mississippi Business and Procurement Opportunities Conference Designed to Cover Wide Array of Topics

MDA is encouraging its partners to inform their local businesses about the *2009 Mississippi Business and Procurement Opportunities Conference* to be held May 5-6 at the Jackson Convention Complex in downtown Jackson. The event, which is expected to attract hundreds of participants, will cover such topics as: *"Navigating the Federal Procurement Process," "Bonding and Insurance for Emerging Small Business: Often the Show-Stopper in Getting the Contract," "How to Analyze, Question and Process a Request for Proposal," "Procurement Opportunities with the Mississippi Gaming Industry"* and much more.

This informative two-day event will also feature guest speakers including Mississippi's Lieutenant Governor Phil Bryant, Dr. Robert Wallace, Founder/President of BithGroup Technologies and Mr. Leland Speed, Chairman of EastGroup Properties/Parkway Properties.



MDA Executive Director Gray Swoope will speak to conference attendees during the May 5 lunch session, followed by Harry Alford, President and CEO of the National Black Chamber of Commerce, and Sherriel Moore, President of the Mississippi Association of Governmental Purchasing and Property Agents. On May 6, speakers will include Leland Speed, Robert Walker, Chief Administrative Officer of the City of Jackson, and Janita Stewart, Mississippi District Director of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

For more information about the *2009 Mississippi Business and Procurement Opportunities Conference*, including a complete agenda and information regarding the May 6 "reverse" trade show, please visit www.conference2009.msccpc.com.

MDA's Asset Development Division Presents Asset Mapping Presentations to Ellisville, McComb, Petal

MDA's Asset Development Division, along with approximately 20 team members from economic and community development organizations around the state, recently completed asset mapping for the cities of Ellisville, McComb and Petal and presented their findings to the communities' leaders. Asset mapping involves identifying assets in communities throughout Mississippi and pinpointing them on a GPS interactive website. Assets vary throughout the state, but by identifying, improving and promoting them, communities can improve their quality of life, increase their competitiveness and increase tax revenues. Examples of assets include natural geologic formations, historical buildings and landmarks that have the potential to attract tourists to the area, remarkable health care facilities or exceptional school systems, such as Petal High School; Petal High School operates a polymer technology program for its students. A few of the assets identified for these three cities include:

- Ellisville - Jones Community College, Howard Industries, Ellisville State School and the historic downtown area
- McComb - Location/access to interstate/rail, medical facilities, historic downtown
- Petal - Schools, Twin Pines Golf Club, Civic Center/Library and the Leaf River

Following each presentation, the asset mapping team provides each community with recommendations for improving and promoting their assets to generate jobs and economic wealth. The team also works with the community to locate resources to accomplish the recommendations. To learn more about asset mapping in your area, please contact Joy Foy, MDA's Asset Development Division Director, at (601) 359-2659.

Tourism Inquiries for 2009 Surpass those for Same 2008 Time Period

Tourism inquiries for the state were up 20 percent through February 2009 as compared to the same time period in FY 08. According to MDA's Tourism Division, the current softened economy has travelers seeking new vacation destinations that offer more value for their travel dollar and are less expensive. As a result of the division and local tourism offices' diligent marketing and advertising efforts, travelers are aware that the Mississippi Gulf Coast is "back and open for business." Additionally, vacationers are aware that Mississippi's tourism product offers variety and value, as well as new experiences involving the state's rich culture and heritage.

The top ten tourism requests for information through February 2009 were: outdoor

recreation, scenic byways, educational attractions, retirement, golf, history, dining, festivals/events, casinos and blues heritage. Tourism inquiries vary from season to season. MDA's Tourism Division tracks the inquiries through an Inquiry/Fulfillment Reporting System. The inquiries are then compiled in-house within the Welcome Centers/Visitor Services Bureau. The requests are received via e-mail, the division's Web site, telephone and postal mail; the Web site and e-mail generate the most inquiries.



Hole #5, Dogwoods Golf Course, Hugh Ward State Park, Grenada, MS.

To learn more about Mississippi's tourism product and upcoming events taking place throughout the state, please visit www.visitmississippi.org.

For more information on any of these articles, contact us by clicking on the links below. If you have been forwarded this email and would like to subscribe, please contact [Melissa Medley](#) or [Tammy Craft](#).