

**MDA E-News July 27, 2009****Handy Hardware Breaks Ground, MDA Awards \$745,000, Neighborhood Stabilization Program Funds Granted, Governor's Cup Awards winners, Magnolia Honey Company Wins Gold Honor, Deadline, Registration for Business Development Mission Extended****MDA WEBINAR**

August 4th • 10:30 a.m.

Featured Speaker: Tonia Williams, Economic Development Administration  
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**Handy Hardware Breaks Ground on New Distribution Center in I-20/59 Industrial Park**

Handy Hardware, a member-owned hardware buying group, held a groundbreaking ceremony on July 27 at the site of its future distribution center in Meridian's I-20/59 Industrial Park. Once operational, Handy plans to employ at least 150 workers at the facility. The project represents a \$15-\$20 million investment by Handy. MDA provided \$3.6 million in Katrina CDBG funding for public infrastructure.

The company is one of only five member-owned hardware buying groups in the country, serving over 1,200 members in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee and

Texas. The company also serves retailers in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. To learn more about Handy Hardware, please visit their website at [www.handyhardware.com](http://www.handyhardware.com).

### **MDA Awards \$745,000 for Two Improvement Projects**

MDA's Community Services Division recently awarded CDBG Economic Development (ED) and Mississippi Rural Impact Fund (RIF) Program funds for two improvement projects in the state. CDBG ED funds are designed to help local units of government ensure basic community services, environmental quality and economic opportunities for their residents. The RIF Program is designed to assist with the location or expansion of businesses in rural areas by providing grants to rural communities. The awards, which total \$745,000, include:

- **CDBG ED** - Yazoo County (Yazoo County Regional Correctional Facility) - \$650,000 for public infrastructure
- **RIF** - Town of Calhoun City - \$95,000 for public building improvements

To learn more about the funding programs available through MDA's Community Services Division, please visit [www.mississippi.org](http://www.mississippi.org), and click on the Community and Asset Development link located near the top of the page.

### **Five Mississippi Non-Profits Awarded Neighborhood Stabilization Program Grant Funds**

Five Mississippi non-profit organizations have been awarded Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) grant funds to implement the City of Jackson Housing Program. Established through the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008, NSP is designed to offer assistance to communities impacted by the increasing number of foreclosures, home abandonments and other issues brought about by the current softened economy. According to Gray Swoope, MDA Executive Director, the five non-profit organizations chosen to implement the program will be vital to the ongoing effort to provide affordable housing for the citizens of Jackson.

The five non-profits chosen to administer the NSP include: University of Southern Mississippi/Institute of Disabilities Studies - \$3.56 million; Jackson State University Foundation/University Park of Jackson - \$1.4 million; Habitat for Humanity of Metro Jackson - \$6.37 million; Jackson Medical Mall Foundation - \$2.68 million; and Voice of Calvary Ministries - \$1.96 million. The Jackson Housing Program will specifically target the following communities, all of which have been drastically affected by the

current mortgage crisis and declining property values: North Jackson; West Jackson; Midtown; Farish Street Historic District and Alta Woods.

To learn more about NSP and other stimulus programs, please visit [stimulus.mississippi.org](http://stimulus.mississippi.org).

### **Metal Tech, Inc., Entergy Mississippi Honored at Recent Governor's Cup Awards in Biloxi**

Metal Tech, Inc. of Gulfport and Entergy Mississippi of Jackson were honored last week as the 2008 Governor's Cup Award statewide winners during the 2009 MEDC Summer Conference in Biloxi. The award, one of the highest honors presented by the governor, recognizes private-sector businesses that have made a significant impact within their communities. This year, three small businesses (50 or fewer employees) and three large businesses (51 or more employees) were selected for the award. Of these, Metal Tech, Inc. was chosen as the statewide small business winner, and Entergy Mississippi was chosen as the statewide large business winner. Each business is evaluated in three areas: 1) community involvement, 2) economic impact and 3) human resources. Both companies were presented a Governor's Cup trophy and a \$5,000 match grant for their local nominating entity.

Metal Tech, Inc. specializes in custom welding, fabrication and machining of small batch jobs. The company has a strong base of Mississippi customers and vendors, and its custom steel parts are sold and shipped all over the nation as well. Metal Tech was nominated by the Harrison County Development Commission.

Entergy Mississippi has an impressive 86-year history in the state. Through the decades, the company has had a strong positive impact on the state's economy and its communities. Entergy Mississippi was nominated by the Hinds County Economic Development District.

For more information about the Governor's Cup Awards or other programs for businesses through the Mississippi Development Authority, visit [www.mississippi.org](http://www.mississippi.org).

### **Magnolia Honey Company of Woodville Wins Gold Honor at Recent sofi™ Awards**

Magnolia Honey Company of Woodville was recently honored as a Gold winner for its Raspberry William Honey Jelly at the 37th Annual sofi™ (specialty outstanding food innovation) Awards, which were held during the Summer Fancy Food Show in New York. Presented by the National Association for the Specialty Food Trade, the sofi™ Awards recognize outstanding foods and beverages of the last year in 33 different categories. The Raspberry William Honey Jelly won the top honor in the Jam, Preserve, Honey or Nut Butter category.

Shan Miller founded Magnolia Honey Company in Woodville in 2003, setting out to create a jelly using honey as an alternative to refined sugar. She began showcasing her products at MDA's Mississippi Market Wholesale Show in 2004. To learn more about Magnolia Honey Company, please visit [www.magnoliahoney.com](http://www.magnoliahoney.com).

**Deadline to Register for Business Development Mission to Chile and Peru Extended to August 7**

The deadline to register for a business development mission to Chile and Peru has been extended until Friday, August 7. MDA urges any Mississippi businesses interested in expanding trade and creating business relationships in these two markets to register for this unique event. MDA will provide administrative support before, during and after the event by scheduling appointments with buyers, distributors, agents and brokers, providing a detailed mission guide and customized itineraries, logistical coordination (including local transportation assistance) and language interpretation services.

To learn more or to register, please contact MDA's Latin American Trade Specialist Rose Boxx at (601) 359-3155, or e-mail [rboxx@mississippi.org](mailto:rboxx@mississippi.org).

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