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Stark Aerospace Celebrates Grand Opening, MDA Awards More Than \$2.8 Million for Improvement Projects, MDA Joins Solar Energy Training Network

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Stark Aerospace Celebrates Grand Opening of New Facility at Golden Triangle Regional Airport with Ribbon Cutting Ceremony; \$30 Million Project to Create 100 Jobs over Next Three Years

Stark Aerospace, a Mississippi-based global defense contractor, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony Monday in celebration of the opening of its new 86,000-square-foot facility at the Golden Triangle Regional Airport in Columbus. With this new facility, the company is consolidating its corporate offices and Unmanned Aerial Systems Division (UAS) under one roof. The project represents a \$30 million investment by Stark Aerospace, and it will create approximately 100 new jobs over the next three years. Currently, the facility employs 76 workers with plans to increase to 100 by the end of the year. To help facilitate the project, MDA provided \$1.9 million in CDBG funds for infrastructure improvements, a Development Infrastructure Program grant in the amount of \$167,500 and a Training Assistance grant in the amount of \$582,000. Additionally, the Appalachian Regional Commission provided a \$150,000 grant, and the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Lowndes County Industrial Development Authority contributed \$150,000 and \$360,000 respectively for the project. The new facility is currently undergoing an expansion, to be completed in early 2010, to accommodate the company's Electro Optics (EO) Division.

Stark Aerospace, a subsidiary of IAI North America, the U.S. division of Israel Aerospace Industries Ltd., was established in 2006 at Mississippi State University's Raspet Flight Lab in Starkville, and a second division

was added in 2007 in Columbus. The company produces the Hunter MQ-B5, an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), for the U.S. Army. The Hunter UAV has tens of thousands of hours in Afghanistan and Iraq. Stark Aerospace also produces the Heron UAV and assembles and services plug-in optronic payloads for other UAVs and surveillance purposes. To learn more about Stark Aerospace, please visit www.starkaerospace.com.

MDA Awards More Than \$2.8 Million for 14 Improvement Projects in Mississippi

MDA's Community Services Division recently awarded **Capital Improvements Revolving Loan Program (CAP)**, **CDBG Emergency Public Facilities**, **Emergency Shelter Grants Program (ESG)**, **Mississippi Freight Rail Service Revolving Loan Program (RAIL)** and **Mississippi Rural Impact Fund Program (RIF)** funding for 14 improvement projects throughout the state. The **CAP Loan Program** provides loans in order to finance capital improvements. To receive **CDBG Emergency Public Facilities** funding, a project must prove a particular urgency due to existing conditions that pose a threat to the health or welfare of a community. The **ESG Program** provides grants to fund shelters for homeless individuals and families. The **RAIL Program** provides loans to municipalities and counties for freight rail service projects, and 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 approximately \$2.8 million, are:

- **CAP Loan**
 - Tishomingo County - \$165,000 for a new fire truck and other improvements
 - City of Charleston - \$700,460 to purchase an existing building for economic development
 - City of Southaven - \$691,753 for a new fire truck and training facility
 - City of Southaven - \$221,103 for an infrastructure improvement
 - Town of DeKalb - \$200,000 for a new fire station
- **CDBG Emergency Public Facilities**
 - Tishomingo County - \$84,725 for infrastructure improvements
 - City of Starkville - \$100,000 for infrastructure improvements
 - Tippah County - \$88,130 for infrastructure improvements
 - Town of Noxapater - \$100,000 for infrastructure improvements
- **ESG**
 - Laurel - Domestic Abuse Family Shelter - \$26,071 for operations/maintenance

- Laurel - The Salvation Army - \$22,460 for operations/maintenance
- Pascagoula - The Salvation Army - \$51,469 for operations/maintenance
- **RAIL**
 - Lowndes County (Mississippi Steel Processes, LLC) - \$225,000 for a rail spur
- **RIF**
 - Town of Tishomingo (Jamco Furniture Industries) - \$149,940 for a building expansion

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

MDA Joins Solar Energy Training Network to Prepare Workforce for Future Renewable Energy Jobs; Network Further Builds on State's Capacities as an "Energy State"

MDA's Energy Division has announced it is one of several partners in the creation of a Southern Solar Energy Training Network in the southeastern U.S. A part of the U.S. Department of Energy's efforts to invest in solar workforce development, the network is being created through the Florida Solar Energy Center (FSEC) at the University of Central Florida (UCF), one of nine national institutions to operate the newly-created Solar Installer Instructor Training Network. A \$2.8 million award from the Department of Energy will provide solar workforce "train the trainer" programs for states and territories in the Southeast. MDA Energy Division Director Motice Bruce is one of eight state and territory partners helping develop the network.

The Department of Energy plans to invest \$27 million, including \$10 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funds, to establish a network of regional resource and training providers. The new Solar Installer Instructor Training Network promotes high-quality training in the installation of solar technologies. By providing workforce training in this emerging field, Mississippi will be able to create new jobs and business development opportunities in the energy sector that can have a real and lasting impact on the state's communities.

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