

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### 2011 is off to a great start!

Business League members and elected officials are invited to join us for the 2011 "LEAGUE & LEGISLATURE" luncheon on Wednesday, February 16, 2011, in the Judiciary Committee Room #113 (first floor east wing) of the Mississippi State Capitol! Doors will open at 11:30 and the program will begin promptly at noon. A panel of our Madison County state senators & representatives will provide a legislative update. This is good timing for the annual event because the deadline for actual bills going to the house and senate for vote will be on Monday, the 14th. Madison County Chancery Clerk Arthur Johnston will proudly serve as our panel moderator.

The Business League had a terrific response to the MCEDA/MCBL joint venture. Thank you for volunteering to serve on a 2011 special or standing committee established by the Madison County Economic Development Authority. This venture will partner Business League members

with MCEDA on projects that impact economic development in Madison County. Outstanding businesspersons with diverse areas of expertise will develop relationships and connections enabling them to work together on projects that will help to move Madison County forward. Committee assignments were announced via email on Friday, January 28, 2011. They are also posted on the BL website at [www.madisoncountybusinessleague.com](http://www.madisoncountybusinessleague.com).



JAN COLLINS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

See you at the forum!

Jan

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT - NICOLE KEMP of LEVI STRAUSS & CO.

Levi Strauss & Co. is parent to some of the most recognized name brands in the world; Levi's, Dockers, Levi Strauss Signature, and their newest brand, DENiZEN. With fiscal year 2009 annual sales of \$4.1 billion, Levi Strauss & Co. is a leader in the fashion industry. Its products are sold in more than 110 countries worldwide through a combination of chain retailers, department stores, online sites, and franchised and company-owned stores. The company is headquartered in San Francisco and has offices worldwide, which includes three distribution facilities in the United States known as CSC's (Customer Service Centers). These locations are Hebron, KY, Henderson, NV, and Canton, MS. LS&Co. opened their doors in Mississippi in June 1981 in the Central Mississippi Industrial Park area in Gluckstadt.

As of August 29, 2010, the company owns and operates 456 retail stores in 26 countries. There are about 180 retail stores across the Americas. Canton's CSC is a vital contributor to LS&Co.'s

retail business shipping many of the products to the company's stores.

Levi Strauss & Company is a Platinum member of the Madison County Business League.

For more information about Levi Strauss & Co. please visit our website at [www.levistrauss.com](http://www.levistrauss.com).



Nicole Kemp of Levi Strauss & Co.

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# MADISON COUNTY A NATIONAL LEADER IN ELECTRONIC COURTS

BY: ARTHUR JOHNSTON, MADISON COUNTY CHANCERY CLERK

In May of 2007, then Presiding Justice Bill Waller, Jr. called and asked if the Madison County Chancery Clerk's office would like to help test the Case Management and Electronic Case Filing (CM/ECF) system. CM/ECF had been very successful in our nation's federal courts, and he expressed his belief that the system might work in Mississippi's state courts. I wholeheartedly concurred, and soon, my court staff and I were in San Antonio, Texas for several weeks of intense training at the Federal Judicial Training Center. We then established a test lab in Canton and spent every afternoon for the next nine months putting the system through its paces. In May of 2008, with the blessings of the Mississippi Supreme Court and our Chancery Judges Janace Harvey-Goree and Cynthia L. Brewer, we began live use of the system in our office every day. We also continued to maintain our regular docketing and paper case filing system. In July of 2009, we moved into another phase of the pilot which involved voluntary use of the system by attorneys.



ARTHUR JOHNSTON, MADISON COUNTY CHANCERY CLERK

January 1, 2010, we abandoned paper filing altogether and became fully electronic.

In March of 2010, Circuit Clerk Lee Westbrook took the bold step and began use of the system in Madison County Circuit and County Courts. MEC is now in use in both the Chancery and Circuit Courts of Madison, Scott and Warren Counties, and many other county clerks' offices are eager to be authorized to use it. In the coming months, I expect a major roll-out of the system state-wide.

As I see it, the system offers a number of benefits to the public, litigants, attorneys, court staff, and our judges. Among these are (1) increased access to public records; (2) instant notification of an adverse filing against a client; (3) more involvement by attorneys in how documents appear on the court's docket; and (4) exponentially greater ability on the part of judges to drive the docket and push cases to resolution. I also foresee a potential cost savings to the state and to counties in a reduction of hard costs, such as paper, binders, file jackets, storage space and all the other traditional trappings of a clerk's office.

Mississippi is the only state in the nation to be allowed to use CM/ECF, and Madison County was the first county in our state to use the system in its courts. Madison Countians can and should be proud of this achievement.

Our office continues to work closely with the Administrative Office of Courts to make improvements to the system, and to insure that MEC becomes a complete e-filing and case management system.



By this time, the system had been slightly reconfigured based upon our test efforts and was now known as the Mississippi Electronic Courts system, or "MEC." In September 2009, use of the system became mandatory for attorneys, and on

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