

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MCBL Invited to Host "League & Legislature"

What a tremendous experience for the Madison County Business League to be invited by our county delegation to host our annual "League & Legislature" event at the Mississippi State Capitol on Wednesday, February 16th, in the Senate Judiciary Committee Room! Lt. Governor Phil Bryant addressed 150 Business League members, local, county and state elected officials. The Madison County delegation comprised a panel of legislators who provided an update on current legislation being considered in the 2011 session. Madison County Chancery Clerk Arthur Johnston once again served as panel moderator.



JAN COLLINS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & LT. GOV. PHIL BRYANT

We were also very proud to have student representatives from each of our member schools in attendance. This provided them an opportunity to experience their legislature in action. Please check out the photos on our website at www.madisoncountybusinessleague.com.

A WORD FROM MCEDA

We have some great guests columnists this month with wonderful information to share. Thank you to all of them. I do want to mention that MCEDA has some great projects lining up in the hopper for Madison County that I will soon be telling you about. In these challenging times we have several very powerful rays of sunshine on the horizon and we can't wait to share the news with you. One of course one of the things we can mention is the Movie Production Studio in Canton. The renovations are almost finished and the facility will be open for business very soon. Hopefully by next month we will have more information and some pics of the campus to show you. This Studio is going to be huge for Madison County (and Mississippi) and we are excited to have such a first class facility to call our own! Also, we have decided to produce a combined MCEDA/MCBL newsletter beginning next month. This will allow us some economies of scale, a much better look, and more content to share. Please let us know how we can make it better once it comes out. Learn more at www.madisoncountyyeda.com.



TIM COURSEY, DIRECTOR OF MCEDA

SAVE THE DATE - "COFFEE with the SENATOR"



Monday, April 4, 2011 from 11 a.m. to Noon
U.S. Senator Roger Wicker

Butler Snow • 1020 Highland Colony Parkway • Ridgeland, MS • 14th Floor
Doors at 10:30 a.m. • Program at 11 a.m. • Brunch will be provided

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A NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN



BILL GUION, BANKPLUS, CHAIRMAN

Last month, Madison County Business League held its first event of 2011, "League & Legislature" luncheon held in the Mississippi State Capitol Building. I want to thank every-

one who turned out for this event, especially our elected officials who took time out of their busy schedules to share their views and perspectives on important current events affecting Madison County as well as our State. It was well attended with hardly a seat left open. My thanks to Madison County Chancery Clerk, Arthur Johnston for moderating this event

and special thanks to Jan Collins our Executive Director for organizing it. Her tireless efforts are an integral part of the success of MCBL.

In February, Madison County Business League put in to play a joint venture with the Madison County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA) to partner MCBL members with MCEDA in an effort to allow our membership the ability to take a more active role in the economic development and success of Madison County. Fortunately, we found that there are many members anxious to volunteer their services and expertise to ensure the continued success of our county. We will continue to strive to bring you quality events and information that will hopefully serve to support your efforts in your business community.

A NOTE FROM SUPERINTENDENT, MIKE KENT



MIKE KENT, SUPERINTENDENT of MADISON COUNTY SCHOOLS

When the new Germantown High School opens in August, the Madison County School District will have completed \$275 million dollars of school construction in the past 10 years. **New buildings include: Northeast Madison Middle, Madison Avenue Upper Elementary, Madison Middle, Ridgeland High School, Highland Elementary, Camden Elementary, Rosa Scott 9th Grade Academy, Madison Station Elementary, Madison Crossing Elementary, Madison Career and Technical Center, Mannsdale Elementary, Germantown Middle, and Germantown High School.**

Thirteen new schools in ten years is as remarkable as the unprecedented growth that the District has seen during the same time period. Census figures indicate that Madison County has grown roughly 20% in the past 10 years, with equal growth in the Madison County School District.

Why have so many new families chosen to live in Madison County? Obviously, housing comes into play along with low crime rates; but the availability of a dynamic public school system cannot be underestimated. There is no question that new families are doing their homework before they relocate. They want to know the District's average ACT score (21.6), and number of course offerings (187) including advanced placement courses (19). They are always impressed with our 25-30 National Merit Scholars, 80 National Board Certified Teachers, 24 championship varsity sports offerings, as well as award winning band and choral music programs.

While the Madison County School District has become the fourth largest school district in the state, it has maintained the lowest operating millage rate in the metro area. School taxes have not gone up in nine years and a recent school bond issue, which passed with a 90% approval rating, required no tax increase. Administrative cost in the District is the third lowest in the entire state and the per pupil expenditure is lower than the state average.

So, what are the challenges for the future? As long as the District continues to offer an outstanding education complete with co-curricular programs, people are going to want to live here.

Our charge is two-fold:

1. Plan for and accommodate a growing enrollment.
2. Maintain the integrity of the District, even as we seek to incorporate cutting-edge methods to educate our students.

We will be always be challenged to provide adequate classrooms, laboratories, and facilities. But perhaps our bigger and most important challenge is to continue to offer a conservative, common-sense approach to education that graduates young people into society ready to contribute to a better world.

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IMPACT SERIES: CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY

The University of Southern Mississippi's (USM) Trent Lott National Center (TLNC) is a key mechanism through which the university fulfills one of its strategic initiatives-Connecting with Community. In 2011, The TLNC is partnering with the community both inside and outside the university to present a series we are calling IMPACT Southern Miss: Turning Knowledge into Innovation. The application of university knowledge can mean greater community and economic development opportunities for Mississippi and all the IMPACT Southern Miss events help turn that knowledge into innovation and economic benefits.

Dunham-Jones, will be coming to Mississippi for the first time. She will be speaking at a public forum at the Trent Lott National Center building from 5PM to 7PM on March 24th. The topic of her presentation is being called, "Retrofitting: Creating Livable and Sustainable Communities." This event is being co-hosted by the Historic Hattiesburg Downtown Association. Registrations can be made via their website at <http://www.downtownhattiesburg.com/>. Early registrations show the topic will attract a large audience. Make your reservations early as space is limited to 200.



RICK DUKE, Director

The remaining IMPACT Southern Miss events for 2011 include a profile of USM's research in Advanced Materials on April 14th, Life Sciences on September 1st and Marine Science on November 29th. Each of these events is being co-hosted by USM's Office of the Vice President for Research and the Colleges of Science and Technology and Health. More specifics about each of these events will be available closer to the event dates. The events are scheduled for 8AM to 10AM with a format where faculty will present their research and field questions from the participants regarding how that research knowledge can be applied.

For more information, please contact Rick Duke, Director of the Trent Lott National Center at rick.duke@usm.edu



TRENT LOTT CENTER- USM

The first IMPACT Southern Miss event was held on January 20th with the USM College of Business. Over 160 participants came to the Trent Lott National Center building to hear from experts covering a wide range of business and economic-relate topics. This event set the stage for the next IMPACT Southern Miss event on March 24th.

Noted Architect, planner and author, Ellen

Madison County Youth Leadership Economic Development Day Wednesday, March 30th, 2011

Two sophomore/junior students will be selected by the administration of the 10 public and private high schools in Madison County (plus New Summit School in Jackso) to participate in this exciting one day leadership class. The students will be "educated and inspired" by some of our successful business leaders and exposed to all the many career opportunities available in Madison County. Great things are happening in our community and these students are our future!

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