



# Newsletter

FALL 2019

## 2020 MCBL&F CHAIRMAN: BARNEY DALY



*Barney Daly*  
2019-20 MCBL & F  
Chairman

It's truly an honor to serve as your new chairman for the 2019-2020 year. I can't think of a more dynamic organization in the state that unifies the public and private sectors to enhance economic growth more

than MCBL&F. I truly believe we have unprecedented momentum to move Madison County to even further heights.

We just celebrated our Vision Celebration with close to 500 attendees who witnessed a special address from Senator Cindy Hyde Smith, as well as, honoring great companies that call Madison County home, C-Spire and MMC Materials, Inc.

I would like to offer a special thank you to Cecil Harper for his support and invaluable leadership. As your chairman, I plan to continue moving forward with the initiatives Cecil and other past chairmen have implemented.

I have four goals that I hope to accomplish in 2020.

1) Continue our strong relationship with MCEDA and our elected officials. A truly successful environment is created when our public and private sectors are unified.

2) In order to build on this relationship, we will continue to emphasize workforce development in the County. We have some great plans to implement Business Sector Councils that will bring common businesses together to solve common challenges.

3) Continued emphasis on all the committee structures that include Education, Workforce Development, Government Affairs, Entrepreneurship, Health/Wellness, Transportation, and Young Professionals. Each one of these committees are vital to enhancing our quality of life in Madison County.

4) Last, but not least, is to increase our membership. We want the entire business community to feel a "value add" when they join our ranks.

In closing, I want to thank our newly elected board, advisory board, committee chairs, and staff for their efforts in accomplishing these goals.

Let's make 2020 a special year for the MCBL&F!

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### Partner Sponsor



### Pillar Level Sponsors



# THE MADISON COUNTY BUSINESS LEAGUE & FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES THE 2019-20 BOARD OF DIRECTORS, OFFICERS & STAFF



The Madison County Business League & Foundation announces the 2019-20 Board of Directors and officers. The mission of the Madison County Business League & Foundation is to bring together, under one organization, the voice of numerous entities in order to establish a clear and concise message for the future. This organization, which is comprised of elected, appointed, business and individual leaders of Madison County, will enable all partners in business and economic development to participate collectively in bringing together the overall vision for Madison County. And, to serve as stakeholders for the Madison County Economic Development Authority.

**TOP:** Jan Collins, MCBL&F; Ray Balentine, Michael Baker International; Rodney Grogan, MMC Materials, Inc., John Geary; Copeland Cook Taylor & Bush; Johnny Brunini, Butler Snow; Brad Gatlin, BankPlus; Sam Scott, St. Dominic Health Services; Doug Jones, MCEDA Appointee; Supt. Charlotte Seals, Madison County Schools; Mary Kate Rankin, MCBL&F

**SEATED:** Samantha Lofton, Barnett's Body Shops; Vice Chairman Wesley Goings, C Spire; Chairman Barney Daly, Trustmark; Secretary-Treasurer Renee Rice, BankFirst; Immediate Past Chairman Cecil Harper, Harper Rains Knight & Company

**NOT PICTURED:** Doug Hederman, Hederman Brothers; MCEDA Appointee Gerard Gibert; MCEDA Appointee Tracy Bailey, White Construction; MCEDA Appointee Calvin Harris, Waggoner Engineering. Ex-Officio Directors are Madison County Board of Supervisors President Trey Baxter, Flora Mayor Les Childress, Madison Mayor Mary Hawkins Butler, Ridgeland Mayor Gene McGee, and Canton Mayor Dr. William Truly

Photo by Deryll Stegall

## SPIRIT OF ENTERPRISE AWARD PRESENTED TO SENATOR ROGER WICKER BY US CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



The Madison County Business League & Foundation co-sponsored a business roundtable with the Mississippi Economic Council held at the Ridgeland law offices of Adams and Reese to present the US Chamber of Commerce's Spirit of Enterprise Award to Senator Roger Wicker.

## MCBL&F RECEPTION HONORING MADISON COUNTY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT



The Madison County Business League & Foundation hosted an event to honor the new Madison County Superintendent of Schools, Charlotte Seals, in the law offices of co-sponsor Adams and Reese in Ridgeland. Over

200 MCBL&F Members, elected officials, school administrators and guests attended the event.

*Shown (l-r): Phil Buffington, MCBL&F Past Chairman and Adams & Reese Partner; Sam Kelly, MCBL&F Past Chairman and Madison County School Board Member; Charlotte Seals, Supt. Madison County Schools; Scott Jones, Adams and Reese Managing Partner; Jan Collins, MCBL&F Executive Director; John Hooks, Adams and Reese*



# MADISON COUNTY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

## 2019 OUTSTANDING MADISON COUNTY YOUNG PROFESSIONAL



*Cecil Harper and Grant Montgomery*

The Madison County Business League & Foundation (MCBL&F) presented the 2019 Outstanding Young Professional Award to BancorpSouth's Madison County President Grant Montgomery. Cecil Harper, MCBL&F 2018-19 Chairman, presented the award to Montgomery at the 11th annual Vision Celebration at the Country Club of Jackson on October 1st to a group of 485 Members, guests and elected officials. MCBL&F created the award in 2017 as a means of recognizing their efforts during the past year.

Montgomery is an experienced professional with a successful 14 year career in corporate banking, commercial real estate, business development, branch management and sales management. His proactive approach and

delivery of value added banking solutions has resulted in capturing new accounts and an expanded client base, in addition to growing and retaining existing relationships.

The mission of the MCYP is to develop future MCBL&F members and leaders by providing opportunities to build professional development and relationship skills, engage with business, political and civil leaders and serve the community.

Under the leadership of Chairman Grant S. Montgomery, the Madison County Young Professional Steering Committee has made great strides over the past year. Membership in the Young Professionals group has grown to over 250 members. Peer to peer networking socials were held during 2018-19 with a turnout of over 250 YPs. The MCYPs enjoyed a fall executive leadership development CEO forum and a Spring Executive Leadership forum on Communication among different generations. Plans are underway for a soft skills forum luncheon in November.

The Young Professionals have been involved with many projects over the past year, including assisting with the Canton High School Reality Fair and philanthropic projects.

## MCBL&F YOUNG PROFESSIONALS TOUR MADISON COUNTY SCHOOLS CAREER TECHNICAL CENTER



A group of Madison County Business League & Foundation Young Professionals toured the Madison County Schools Career & Technical Center located in Gluckstadt on September 25. The tour was led by Blaise King, Director of Career & Technical Education/Director of Career Academies. Blaise provided valuable insight and information regarding the many career academies and technical programs being offered within the Madison County School District to provide a skilled workforce for Madison County.

## MCBL&F YOUNG PROFESSIONALS STEERING COMMITTEE 2019-2020



**Bottom Row (L:R)** Julia Bradley, Harper Rains Knight & Company; Immediate Past Chairman Grant Montgomery, BancorpSouth; Secretary Treasurer Hank Waterer, Trustmark; Chairman Austin Stewart, Adams & Reese; Vice Chairman Anne Marie Smith, 4Top Catering; Philanthropy Chairman Krystal Minor, BEAC.com; Past Chairman Chris Roberts, BankPlus

**Middle Row (L:R)** Chris Johnson, Renasant; Melody Rosenbaum, Citizens Bank; Bradley Barnes, Adcamp, Inc.; Jamaal Holloway, Nissan North America; Lauren Scheel, MCEDA; Tim Brister, Atmos Energy; Lauren Hillery; Copeland Cook Taylor & Bush, P.A. Athena Chapin, Merit Health Madison

**Top Row (L:R)** Scott Parenteau, C Spire; Parker Berry, Butler Snow; Pate DeMuth, Southern Ag Credit; Cori Hill, Levi Strauss & Company; Jonathan Werne, St. Dominic; Alex Reeves, Yates Construction

*Photo by Deryll Stegall*



# MADISON COUNTY YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

## MCYP FALL SOCIAL



The Madison County Young Professionals hosted a Fall Networking Social at the Roof Top Bar at Georgia Blue's new location in Madison September 9, 2019.

## MCYP VOLUNTEERS FOR WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S



The Madison County Young Professionals volunteered for the Walk to end Alzheimer's Saturday, October 12th. Thanks to those who contributed to our goal!



# MADISON COUNTY YOUTH LEADERSHIP

## 2019-20 MADISON COUNTY YOUTH LEADERSHIP CLASS



The Madison County Business League & Foundation and MCEDA are proud to announce the 2019-20 Madison County Youth Leadership Class. Two juniors from each of the public, private and parochial schools in Madison County, plus Jackson Academy, Jackson Prep and New Summit School were selected by their administration to represent their respective schools in this year's class. The MCBL&F and MCCT will award scholarships to each student upon the successful completion of the program. The students are all Madison County residents.

**Bottom Row (L:R):** Karen Solano-Ortega, Delaney Ralston, Mackenzie Coburn, Leah Clark, Mika Maehata, Edrea Magee, Victoria Chough. **Second Row (L:R):** Alissa Burgess, Ann Parker Baldwin, Hanna Nowell, Lucy Blaylock, Sofia Rodriguez, Mary Hazel Bellan. **Third Row (L:R):** Joseph Sharp, Mary Addison Gregory, Kayla Young, Kyle Brasher, Ava Kump, Sara Kennedy Lampkin. **Top Row (L:R):** Logan Nowell, Ian Harris, Conner Ivey, Terence Garrett, Will Scoggins, Chadwick Collins  
Not pictured: Alex Summerford

## 2019-20 MCYL LIFESTYLES DAY



The 2019-20 Madison County Youth Leadership Class participated in Lifestyles Day on Wednesday, October 23, 2019. The class visited Adams and Reese, C Spire, Nissan North America, MadCaap and the Madison County Detention Center. Business leaders and law enforcement provided tours and community service projects, career opportunities, and discussed integrity as the leadership theme of the day. Madison County Business League & Foundation and MCEDA sponsor the program. Madison County Youth Leadership's mission is to provide students with a deeper understanding of the careers available in Madison County in an environment that develops their leadership skills and encourages graduates to take their knowledge and their experience into the community for the betterment of Madison County as a whole.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

|                              |  |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| 12.04.2019<br>7:30am–9:00am  | 4TH Quarter Economic Development<br>OUTLOOK Breakfast<br><i>Embassy Suites Hotel</i>                 | 12.17.2019<br>11:00am–1:30pm | 4th Quarter HR Roundtable<br>/Existing Industry Luncheon<br><i>Culinary Cowboy, Canton</i> |
| 12.11.2019<br>8:00am–9:00am  | MCBL&F Government Affairs Committee<br>Breakfast Meeting<br><i>C Spire Corporate Office Building</i> | 12.18.2019<br>8:00am–9:00am  | Government Affairs Committee<br>Legislative Breakfast<br><i>Butler Snow</i>                |
| 12.12.2019<br>11:30am–1:00pm | MCBL&F/MCEDA Boards Christmas luncheon<br><i>Anjou</i>   | 02.19.2020<br>11:30am–1:00pm | 2020 League & Legislature Luncheon<br><i>Old Capitol Inn</i>                               |
|                              |  | TBA                          | Transportation Committee Meeting   |

## MMC MATERIALS, INC. PRESENTED 2019 VISION AWARD



(l-r): Joey Deason and Rodney Grogan

The Madison County Business League & Foundation (MCBL&F) and the Madison County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA) presented the 2019 Vision Award to MMC Materials, Inc. MCEDA Executive Director Joey Deason presented the award to MMC Materials, Inc. President Rodney Grogan at the 11th annual Vision Celebration held at the Country Club of Jackson on October 1st before a group of 485 members, guests and elected officials.

The Madison County Economic Development Authority and the Madison County Business League created the VISION award in 2010 as a means of recognizing and thanking certain outstanding Madison County businesses for their contributions to the community. By contributions we mean their unique or remarkable accomplishments, their investments in people and the resulting impact that their operations have on the local area economy. Past winners include C Spire, Levi Strauss & Company, Nissan North America, St. Dominic Health

Services, Merit Health Madison, Madison County Schools, BankPlus, Butler Snow and the DeBeukelaer Corporation.

In 1927, “Mississippi Concrete and Material Company” was formed in Jackson, Mississippi by the Dunn family from Birmingham, Alabama. The Dunn family began operations in 1878 in Virginia, principally in the railroad construction industry.

MMC Materials, Inc. has experienced many changes and has significantly grown since its humble beginnings in 1927. MMC has expanded its operations throughout the State of Mississippi, West Tennessee and South Alabama employing over 400 employees with approximately 75 plant locations. MMC specializes in supplying ready-mix concrete to a wide-variety of customers including commercial and residential construction, highway, roadway and bridge work as well as small home projects.

MMC entered the Madison County market in 1988 with a plant in Canton and has grown as the county has grown. In the mid-1990’s, the Corporate Office relocated to Highland Colony Parkway being the first building on the Parkway. The Canton plant eventually relocated to Gluckstadt and was instrumental in supplying concrete for the Nissan project, the Renaissance and Township shopping venues, as well as many other Madison County building projects.

MMC has been and continues to be committed to Madison County especially through training and development of people for career opportunities in our industry. This is evidenced when in 2014 MMC partnered with Holmes Community College Workforce Development to form a concrete truck driving school, the only such program in the nation. MMC donated equipment and materials and Holmes provided land and a classroom. The initial investment MMC made in this program is over \$200,000. In 2015, the National Ready-Mix Concrete Association presented its Innovation in Training Award to MMC for this program. In July of this year MMC opened its new facility on 72 acres of land on New Ragsdale Road. This new facility combines the corporate support staff with our Central MS Area operations to better serve customers in Madison County and to provide better training opportunities, including obtaining a CDL, becoming a diesel mechanic, quality control, managing a plant to just name a few. The location and proximity of the facilities offers such opportunities to students ranging from high school through college, including workforce development.

MMC is proud of its connection with Madison County. We are excited about the opportunities afforded us by living and working in a forward-moving, business-friendly environment.

**MMC Materials, Inc. is a Gold Sponsor of the MCBL&F.**

## C SPIRE'S HU MEENA RECEIVES 2019 VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AWARD



*Cecil Harper and Hu Meena*

The Madison County Business League & Foundation (MCBL&F) and the Madison County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA) presented the 2019 Visionary Leadership Award to C Spire Chairman and CEO Hu Meena. Cecil Harper, MCBL&F 2018-19 Chairman, presented the award at the 11th annual Vision Celebration at the Country Club of Jackson on October 1st to a group of 485 Members, guests and elected officials. MCEDA and the MCBL&F created the VISIONARY Leadership Award in 2011 as a means of recognizing and thanking certain outstanding Madison County individuals for their visionary leadership contributions to the community. By contributions we mean their unique or remarkable accomplishments, their investments in people and the resulting impact that their operations have on the local area economy.

Hu Meena is chairman and CEO of C Spire, a Madison County-based telecommunications

and technology services company that is leading Mississippi forward with an emphasis on state of the art wireless services, fiber optic broadband, managed cloud services, workforce development and technology innovation.

Meena has fostered a culture at C Spire that is passionately focused on excellence, competitiveness and world-class customer service. In fact, the company put customers at the center of its name when it changed from Cellular South in 2011. C Spire is an abbreviation of "customer inspired."

Under Meena's leadership, C Spire operates the nation's largest privately-owned wireless communications unit - the sixth largest in the U.S. C Spire provides ultra-fast broadband access to homes, businesses and governmental entities via 9000 route miles of fiber optic cable.

The company has over 1,600 employees, nearly half of which live and work in Madison County, and generates over \$2 billion annually in incremental positive economic impact on local and state economies in Mississippi, Alabama and Tennessee through payroll, capital investments and corporate philanthropy.

From fostering smartphone adoption at twice the national rate to launching in 2013 one of the nation's first Gigabit-speed Fiber-to-the-Home initiatives, Meena has guided C Spire's leadership in helping spur consumer adoption of the latest technology. In 2014, the company opened a new \$25 million state of the art commercial data center in Starkville to service businesses.

In 2017, Meena was instrumental in the launch of the C Spire Tech Movement, an initiative designed to move its service areas forward with an emphasis on broadband access, workforce development and technology innovation.

Last year, Meena guided the company into the next phase of its continued growth with the acquisition of Birmingham, Alabama-based TekLinks, which gave a big boost to the company's expansion of its business services unit and the availability of innovative voice, data, IT and cloud solutions to firms of all sizes. A leader with devout Christian faith, Meena is an officer in his church, serves as a board member of the Reformed Theological Seminary and First Presbyterian Day School. He served as past board chair of the Associated Carriers Group and the Competitive Carriers Association.

Meena is excited about the next chapter of C Spire's growing influence on the future of Madison County, the state of Mississippi and its other service areas in Alabama and Tennessee. Among other new opportunities, the company is testing new 5G technologies and is poised to be a major player in the telehealth and smart home sectors in the future.

Past Visionary Leadership Award winners include Mike Kent, Joel Bomgar, JoAnn Gordon, Dr. David Powe, David Landrum, Doug Hederman, H.C. (Buster) Bailey and Dr. Nancy New.

CSpire is a Pillar Investor of the MCBL&F.

## MCBL&F & MCEDA HOST 11TH ANNUAL VISION CELEBRATION

The Madison County Business League & Foundation and the Madison County Economic Development Authority hosted the 11th annual Vision Celebration at The Country Club of Jackson on October 1, 2019, with keynote speaker the honorable US Senator Cindy Hyde Smith and special guest Miss Mississippi Mary Margaret Hyer.

A crowd of 485 of the business league members, and elected officials attended the event. Congratulations to the three award recipients, Vision Award MMC Materials, accepted by Rodney Grogan, Visionary Leadership award presented to Hu Meena, C Spire CEO and the Outstanding Young Professional Award presented to Grant Montgomery, Madison County President at Bancorp South.

*Happy Thanksgiving*

It is this time of year that the  
Madison County Business League and Foundation  
is especially grateful for your membership



*Wishing you the blessings of  
health, happiness, and success*



## MCEDA + MCBL&F CONGRATULATE FASTENAL AND REGIONAL OPERATIONS MANAGER KRIS ROBINSON ON THE OPENING OF THEIR DISTRIBUTION CENTER LOCATED IN MADISON COUNTY



Jackson, Miss. (Oct. 17, 2019) – Gov. Phil Bryant and executives from leading industrial supply company Fastenal celebrated the grand opening of the company’s new distribution center in Madison County on Thursday. The project, which was announced in June 2018, is an \$11.5-million corporate investment and will create 60 jobs over the next three years.

“The opening of this new Fastenal distribution center is monumental for Madison County and the Central Mississippi region,” Gov. Phil Bryant said. “This company’s decision to locate this facility in our state is a testament to our prime location in the Southeast, our skilled workforce and our supportive business environment, which we strive to maintain so industry leading companies, like Fastenal, can attain long-term success in our state.”

Fastenal provides companies with fasteners, tools and supplies needed to manufacture products, build structures and maintain facilities and equipment. The new 264,000-square-foot Madison County distribution center, the company’s 15th in North America, is located on Old Jackson Road.

“Speaking for the entire Fastenal family, we are excited about the opening of our new

distribution center in Madison County. From the early stages of acquiring land to today, the good folks at the Madison County Economic Development Authority, the state and the local community have welcomed us with open arms and made us feel like a part of the community,” said Fastenal Vice President of Operations Walter Tate. “We are proud to call Madison County home to our newest distribution center and look forward to being a great employer and community partner for many years to come.”

The Mississippi Development Authority provided assistance for site preparation and infrastructure improvements. Madison County also provided assistance for infrastructure improvements.

Distribution is a strong economic driver for our state, employing thousands of Mississippians who work hard to ensure the timely delivery of goods to customers, so leading companies like Fastenal can achieve their goals in Mississippi,” said MDA Executive Director Glenn McCullough, Jr. “We congratulate the Fastenal team and our economic development partners at the Madison County Economic Development Authority and Madison County on this significant milestone.”

## MC ENTREPRENEURSHIP COMMITTEE LAUNCHES NEW RESOURCE WEBPAGE



ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
IN MADISON COUNTY

Madison County, MS – September 26, 2019- Are you in an entrepreneurship state of mind?

The Entrepreneurship Committee of the Madison County Business League and Foundation, together with Madison County Economic Development Authority are pleased to announce the launch of our new webpage aimed at helping Madison County citizens learn more about entrepreneurship and the resources available to them ([www.madisoncountyed.com/entrepreneurship/](http://www.madisoncountyed.com/entrepreneurship/)). Whether you are running a business or a household, pursuing a new business or expanding a current business – having an entrepreneurship state of mind means thinking about how you can do, whatever you do, wherever you are, in a more creative, productive and efficient way. Please check out our new webpage to see what’s already happening in Madison County, and learn how you can embrace the entrepreneurship state of mind.

The mission of the Madison County Entrepreneurship Committee is to inspire and support citizens in their pursuit of new business ventures by offering networking opportunities to encourage the sharing of ideas and information, and educational events focused on developing the skills necessary to build and run sustainable businesses.



**Top Row (L:R)** Tony Jeff, Innovate MS; Stephen Thompson, CMU; Ken Melichar, Dominion Payroll; Greg Hinkebein, MSET; Wesley Goings, C.Spire. **Middle Row (L:R)** Janet Parker, Innovate MS; Sharon Nichols, UM Small Business Development Center; Krisstel Hunt, Matthews, Cutrer & Lindsay. **Bottom Row (L:R)** Jan Collins, MCBL&F; Committee Chairman Wendy Mullins, Bradley; Danielle Winningham, MCEDA; LeAnne Brewer, Millsaps; and Mary Kate Rankin, MCBL&F.



YEAR OVERVIEW // OCTOBER 2018 - SEPTEMBER 2019

- Systems Electro Coating
- Logista
- B&B Electrical & Utility Contractors, Inc.
- The Village at Madison

**4**  
Projects Won

**\$64,500,000**  
Investments Committed

**\$870,639**  
Madison CCS Estimated Revenue

**435**  
Jobs Committed

**\$55,345**  
Average Annual Wage

**\$265,000**  
Grants Awarded

 Purchased 325 acres of Industrial Property

 Achieved Work Ready Community Status

 Announced Industry Donation Agreement

 Initiated Quarterly HR Roundtables

 Initiated Quarterly Economic Updates



MCEDA's mission is to encourage the growth of the county's existing business and industry, attract new investment and higher-paying jobs, and to increase Madison County's competitiveness leading to a diverse, vibrant economy benefitting all the county's citizens.





## SYSTEMS ELECTRO COATING EXPANDING IN MADISON COUNTY, MISS.

Madison County, Miss. (September 30th, 2019)- The Madison County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA) is proud to announce that Systems Electro Coating is expanding their warehouse and manufacturing space in the Central Mississippi Industrial Center in Madison County.

SEC was formed in 2001 to serve as a Tier 1 supplier of electrocoated frames and many other vehicle components for Nissan North America's Canton, Mississippi plant. Since the 133,000-square-foot facility's formal opening in April 2003, SEC has rapidly become a proven leader in quality electrocoating and related value-added services with a customer

base that spans numerous automotive and industrial companies.

"Systems Electro Coating is excited about the opportunity to make an additional investment to our local economy and to provide an additional service offering for our current and future customers," said Michael Thomas, President of Systems Companies.

"MCEDA has been working with SEC for nearly a year on this project, and we are pleased to be able to announce their expansion in Madison County," said Joseph P. Deason, Executive Director of MCEDA. "This will be SEC's third building expansion, and

Madison County continues to flourish because of continued company investments. We appreciate their dedication to Madison County.

"The Madison County Board of Supervisors is extremely happy that SEC has chosen to expand its operations in Madison County," said Trey Baxter, President of the Madison County Board of Supervisors. "We are truly thankful for the company's continuous commitment to our area."

SEC plans to be operational in the new warehouse by October 2019. This addition will add approximately 19,000 square feet to the existing building.

## LAUREN SCHEEL: CERTIFIED ECONOMIC DEVELOPER (CECD)



Lauren Scheel, Director of Business Development, Madison County Economic Development Authority, Madison County, MS earned

the designation of Certified Economic Developer (CEcD), a national recognition that denotes a mastery of skills in economic development, professional attainment and a commitment to personal and professional growth.

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) administered the CEcD exam on October 12-13, 2019 in Indianapolis, IN at the JW Marriott. With 6 years of economic development experience, Lauren Scheel has a background of working with existing industries and businesses in the area, as well as assisting in recruitment efforts for the location of new businesses to Madison County.

The CEcD designation recognizes qualified and dedicated practitioners in the economic development field and sets the standard of excellence within the profession. Candidates must pass a rigorous and comprehensive examination, which has three parts and spans two days. The exam tests a practitioner's knowledge, proficiency and judgment in the following key areas of economic development:

- Business Retention and Expansion
- Finance & Credit Analysis
- Marketing and Attraction
- Strategic Planning
- Entrepreneurial & Small Business Development
- Managing Economic Development Organizations
- Neighborhood Development strategies
- Real Estate Development & Reuse
- Technology-led Economic Development
- Workforce Development Strategies
- Foreign Direct Investment & Exporting

As highly competent economic development professionals, Certified Economic Developers work with public officials, business leaders and community members to create leadership to build upon and maximize the economic development sector. Excellence in the economic development profession improves the wellbeing, quality of life and opportunities for individuals, businesses and communities. There are currently over 1,100 active CEcDs in the United States.

## DRA ANNOUNCES \$1.48 MILLION INVESTMENT TO STRENGTHEN MISSISSIPPI'S INFRASTRUCTURE



"The Madison County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA) is grateful to the Delta Regional Authority for its investment in our mega site access road project," said MCEDA Executive Director, Joseph P. Deason. "We look forward to beginning construction on the access road during the fourth quarter of 2019."

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA) made a \$1,481,587 investment to strengthen basic public infrastructure to grow the region's economy and create jobs, DRA Federal Co-Chairman Chris Caldwell announced.

Four new investments will provide funding for projects supporting water and sewer line extensions and transportation improvements in four communities through DRA and other public and private resources.



## MCBL&F AND MCEDA HOST 2ND QUARTER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OUTLOOK BREAKFAST



The Madison County Business League & Foundation and MCEDA hosted the 2nd quarter Economic Development Outlook Breakfast on June 21st at Embassy Suites Hotel

in Ridgeland. Golden Triangle Development Link CEO, Joe Max Higgins, was keynote speaker.

## MCBL&F AND MCEDA VISIT USM



The University of Southern Mississippi hosted MCEDA and MCBL&F for an informative campus tour of The Accelerator, The Mississippi Polymer Institute, the School of Polymers and High Performance Materials, and the Trent Lott National Center for Economic Development and Entrepreneurship. The meetings and tours provided an

opportunity for our team to better understand resources that are available through USM for Madison County, our emerging and current workforce, local businesses and industries, and to prospective businesses that are considering Madison County as their new home.

## MCBL&F & MCEDA SPONSOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT/CAREER READINESS BEST PRACTICES MEETING AT NISSAN



Training Center in Canton. Beth Duffield, Sr. Vice President of the Rutherford County, TN Chamber of Commerce, facilitated the discussion around education and career readiness while providing insight into the workforce development structure for her work in Rutherford County.

To further workforce development and career readiness in Madison County, MCEDA and the Madison County Business League & Foundation sponsored a best practices meeting for local educators and business leaders at the Nissan North America

Hot topics of discussion included: Career and Technical Education, Work based learning (internships/externships), credentialing (such as ACT NCRC, FANUC Robotics, NCCER, ASE, etc.), and industry sector led meetings to name a few.



SAVE THE DATE

*2020 League & Legislature Luncheon Reception*

*Honoring the MS State Legislature*

**Wednesday, February 19, 2020  
11:30 – 1:00 PM**

**Old Capitol Inn, Jackson, MS**

*Formal invitation to follow*

### THE MISSION OF THE MADISON COUNTY BUSINESS LEAGUE & FOUNDATION

The mission of the Madison County Business League is to bring together, under one organization, the voice of numerous entities in order to establish a clear and concise message for the future. This organization, which is comprised of elected, appointed, business, and individual leaders of Madison County, will enable all partners in business and economic development to participate collectively in bringing together the overall vision for Madison County. And, to serve as private stakeholders for the Madison County Economic Development Authority. Simply put, one vision, one voice.

## MADISON COUNTY CREATES A PATH FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DONATIONS



Seated (l-r) MCBL&F Chairman Cecil Harper, Canton Public Schools (CPS), Supt. Gary Hammah. Standing (l-r): CPS Director of Career Technical Education Rodney Harris, MCBL&F Executive Director Jan Collins, MCEDA COO Danielle Winningham, Chairman of the Canton Public Schools Board Johnny Brown

Madison County Creates a Path for Workforce Development Donations Madison County, MS - August 9, 2019- To further workforce development initiatives in Madison County, the Madison County Business League and Foundation (MCBL&F) and the Madison County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA) have defined the process to enable companies like Nissan to donate excess and idled equipment to workforce development training centers and career and technical education centers at public schools and colleges located in Madison County.

that allows the donation of vehicles, engines, robots, equipment and components to public schools.

by enhancing technical education for our emerging workforce.”

“This new process provides access to valuable training assets that previously were inaccessible to our Madison County Public Schools” said Cecil Harper, Chairman of the Madison County Business League and Foundation. “Nissan will donate the surplus equipment to the Madison County Business League & Foundation and the MCBL&F will donate the assets to the schools.”

The Madison County Business League & Foundation was created in 2008 by the Madison County Economic Development Authority (MCEDA) and the Madison County Board of Supervisors as a 501©6 nonpartisan economic development support organization which connects chief executive leadership with elected officials, on all levels, to promote economic planning and development.

“Workforce development and support of existing businesses are key components of economic development”, said Joseph P. Deason, Executive Director of the Madison County Economic Development Authority. “The partnerships we have built are providing a foundation for more opportunities in Madison County

As the leader of economic development for Madison County, MCEDA’s mission is to encourage the growth of the county’s existing business and industry, attract new investment and higher-paying jobs, and to increase Madison County’s competitiveness leading to a diverse, vibrant economy benefitting all the county’s citizens.



Pictured: Seated (l-r) MCBL&F Chairman Cecil Harper, Madison County Superintendent of Schools Charlotte Seals. Standing (l-r): MCBL&F Executive Director Jan Collins, Madison County Schools Director of Career and Technical Education and Career Academies Blaise King, and MCEDA COO Danielle Winningham

The Madison County Business League and Foundation, private sector partner for Madison County Economic Development Authority, has worked with Nissan Canton to create and establish a donation agreement between the two parties

## JAN COLLINS (MCBL&F) & DANIELLE WINNINGHAM (MCEDA) ACCEPT THE 2019 ACT WORK READY COMMUNITY AWARD



Madison County was recognized for its workforce development achievements over the past year at the ACT Workforce Summit in Charlotte, N.C. on Tuesday, Oct. 29, along with 48 other participating ACT Work Ready Communities. The annual summit, which brings together experts in business, education, workforce and economic development, included the ACT Work Ready Communities Awards Ceremony and Recognition. During the ceremony, representatives from participating ACT Work Ready Community counties and parishes received awards for becoming certified or completing a new set of goals to maintain their certification.

skills gaps and build common frameworks that link, align and match their workforce development efforts.

“We are so happy to recognize and award our Work Ready Communities at our annual convening of workforce experts,” said ACT President of Measurement, Suzana Delanghe. “These participating communities have demonstrated a commitment to developing a strong workforce pipeline, which is paramount to building stronger communities and fostering business and economic growth.”

“We are proud of Madison County’s designation as a Work Ready Community, which has strengthened our workforce partnerships throughout Madison County and the State of Mississippi,” said Danielle Winningham, Chief Operating Officer of the Madison County Economic Development Authority. “This designation was achieved as result of the successful efforts by community, education and business leaders working together to strengthen workforce development in order to meet the economic development needs of our community.”

The ACT® Work Ready Communities (ACT® WRC) initiative empowers states, regions and counties with data, processes and tools that drive economic growth by identifying skills gaps and quantifying the skill level of their workforce. Participants leverage the ACT® WorkKeys® National Career Readiness Certificate® (ACT® WorkKeys® NCRC®) to measure and close

“The Madison County Business League and Foundation was extremely proud to participate and support the efforts required to achieve ACT Work Ready status for Madison County through its members’ participation,” said Jan Collins, Executive Director of the Madison County Business League and Foundation. “MCBL&F awarded grants to local schools to facilitate ACT Work Keys assessments which led to National Career Readiness Certificates for our Career Technical students.”

The ACT Work Ready Communities Luncheon included welcome remarks from North Carolina Chamber President and CEO Gary Salamido. Tennessee Department of Labor Commissioner Jeff McCord shared advice with the Work Ready Communities awardees during a keynote presentation. The ACT Work Ready Community initiative includes 486 participating counties and parishes in 29 states.

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